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1 WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6  
7 VOLUME II

8  
9 PYKE'S WATERFRONT LODGE  
10 Fairbanks, Alaska  
11 February 25, 2026  
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15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

16 Jack Reakoff, Chair  
17 Donald Honea  
18 Tim Gervais  
19 Darrell Vent  
20 Jenny Pelkola  
21 Tommy Kriska  
22 Robert Walker

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26 Regional Council Coordinator, Nissa Pilcher  
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 2/25/2026)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, good morning. We're going to -- let's see. We've got everybody and then, we have Darrell? Do you see Darrell on there?

(No response)

Darrell, are you on the phone or on the, on your computer? Darrell Vent?

(No response)

So, bring the meeting back to order. We're going to start out -- where's my -- we're going to start out with public comments this morning and on non-agenda items. So, I got Vince Mathews, and Brooke. I'll have Vince come up. You want to come to the mic there, Vince? Vince used to be the coordinator for the Western Interior Council for a long time. Robert Walker and his brother -- and his cousin Jimmy used to call him the warden, because he was -- kept them punctual. So, go ahead, Vince.

MR. MATHEWS: Okay. I apologize, I meant to come yesterday, but when you retire, dates on the calendar don't always mean much, so. Anyways, I wrote this down, and it's -- anyways, I want to thank you for allowing me to visit many villages. It was very rewarding. And I just noted a couple that were highlights. And some of you will remember this. It was facilitating and coordinating at 40 below a meeting in Huslia. I just could not believe how we all survived there at that one. And then the several rewarding meetings in Allakaket when your Chair was Ron Sam and those were meetings that were very memorable. And then for Robert Walker was the Aniak meeting. I never felt so welcomed in the community than at Aniak. For those that weren't on the Council then, you can ask others. But we were welcomed with posters and a whole bunch of other stuff.

Okay, I want to also thank you for learning and understanding what a subsistence lifestyle is. And the word subsistence is not the most appropriate word, but that's what the government came up with. I'm

1 also very sorry, and Jack helped me with my comments to  
2 the Department of Interior, but it is so sad that  
3 subsistence users have to defend and define themselves  
4 over and over again over the years. It's just -- anyways,  
5 it's a lifestyle. I want to thank you, the Council in  
6 general for the rewarding time with your departed  
7 members. And I'm sure I'm going to miss some. But Henry  
8 Deacon was a gentle elder who stood his ground. And then  
9 Ron Sam taught me so much. He was a very strong defender,  
10 and I can still see his hand going up like this in Galena  
11 when an F-16 took off. And then the balanced leadership  
12 of Ray Collins. He was one that once you got to know  
13 him, he opened up his knowledge, which was very deep.  
14 And then the depth of subsistence knowledge of Benedict  
15 Jones, who passed away recently. And there's others I  
16 know I've missed.

17  
18                   The other thing that needs to be  
19 recognized in the record, where somebody in Washington  
20 reads this: it is now probably 40 below or lower in your  
21 communities and windy, and you come all the way, in  
22 here, for this bureaucratic process. You know, that's  
23 unbelievable. You're getting on planes that some of them  
24 look like they've been put together with baling wire,  
25 and you come all the way here to participate in this.  
26 And then finally, I want to thank you for the -- your  
27 dedication to protect and defend your way of life that  
28 is called subsistence. It is way more than just  
29 subsistence. And that's what Ron kept drilling in my  
30 head and then Ray would just politely remind me of. It's  
31 really important. And it's under attack again. And any  
32 which way they can do it -- I personally am attached to  
33 the Dalton Highway for various reasons. It never ends.  
34 I don't know how it'll ever -- I don't know. It's a big  
35 education process, and you guys are doing that, and I  
36 bought a paper. So, anyways. And then for Robert, I  
37 appreciate it, hit me hard in that McGrath meeting, but  
38 I'm wearing them now, hearing aids, because of Robert  
39 Walker. Because I learned then that my ability to  
40 anticipate responses and reading lips was not working.  
41 My hearing is still going down, so you're lucky I'm not  
42 working for you, but I -- that really, I want to thank  
43 Robert for doing that, because it pushed me over the  
44 edge to say, okay, what's the problem? What's the way I  
45 can work on it? So, I appreciate that. And I'll stop.

46  
47                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks for all  
48 those reminiscing about the good old days. So, Vince was  
49 our coordinator for years. And any questions for Vince?  
50 Robert? Comments?

1

2 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Vince. I mean,  
3 you know, when we were together, you were one of our  
4 outstanding leaders to show us young people how to be  
5 very direct and how to work in the proper channels and  
6 how to use them and so forth. You know, and we were kind  
7 of like a small, wild bunch, but we were in a good way.  
8 You know, we weren't like, troublemaker or anything.  
9 Even Jenny was involved with us, too. Like we'd say,  
10 hey, dad, can we use the car tonight? And he'd say, no.  
11 Why? Just don't ask, don't go there, okay? And that  
12 would be -- so. And one night we were sitting around and  
13 said, okay, guys, you know, it's time to go to bed here  
14 pretty quick. Okay. Then he -- that's how he got the  
15 name the warden, because we had bed check. But this was  
16 all good, though, Vince. You know that. We were so glad  
17 to work with you, Carl Morgan, myself, James Walker, Ron  
18 Sam and, you know, some of these other guys. It just  
19 kind of make me want to laugh a little bit, but I just  
20 really appreciate your time. Thank you for all the work  
21 that you did for us. We really appreciate that. Mr.  
22 Chair.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Robert.  
25 I never did really get to say goodbye, sort of like  
26 vamoosed on us. And we never got to -- gave you an award  
27 or anything. But we do want you to know that you, we  
28 highly appreciate all those years you put into  
29 coordinating our meetings and Nissa, and all these  
30 coordinators know how frustrating it is when things get  
31 canceled and weather and trying to keep up with all that  
32 stuff. That is -- the coordinators, all of these  
33 coordinators. And there's two of them in the room here.  
34 They do a monstrous job. And coming off of this  
35 government shutdown and then getting our meeting, a  
36 joint meeting and Fairbanks with EIRAC, coordinated to  
37 where we landed together and had a really productive  
38 meeting right -- immediately after the shutdown. These  
39 coordinators do an exemplary job, and you were a great  
40 coordinator and we really appreciate that.

41

42 You're talking about Ron waving his  
43 arms. And Ron trained me to be a chairperson. I was a  
44 little shy and stuff and -- but I remember the elders  
45 that came. I remember a old, you know, Sidney Huntington  
46 would show up at our meeting and he'd advocate strongly,  
47 and he had -- he always had a subject. It's like he came  
48 with a subject and he would, and he was going to tell,  
49 I didn't care if it was his relatives in the room,  
50 they're not trapping enough wolves, there's wolves right

1 across the river kill a moose. And he would start chewing  
2 out his family in the room and tell us what we're going  
3 to do. And he's warned us what was going to happen. He  
4 had foresight, he had wisdom. And the last time he came  
5 to our meeting in Galena and he was almost 100, he was  
6 99 years old, he says his subject was bears, brown bears.  
7 These brown bears, they're going to control your lives.  
8 They're going to eat all the moose. Then they're going  
9 to eat all the black bears, and they're going to control  
10 your lives. And you got to get out there and start  
11 killing these, take these brown bears, because they're  
12 getting to be too thick. That's exactly what they did.  
13 We hardly have any black bears. And there -- when salmon  
14 declines, they really go after the moose. So brown bears  
15 are -- you know, these elders that testified before this  
16 Council, there's -- it's in our archives. There's like  
17 some anthropologist could, like, suck all that stuff out  
18 of those testimonies. Those are gold mines of  
19 testimonies right before this Council. So, I appreciate  
20 all your years you put into it, Vince. And you always  
21 got a plate at the table when you come back up to, around  
22 Wiseman again. So, we've got a new house, you can have  
23 to come see our new house and have dinner with us when  
24 you get up that way. So, go ahead, Jenny.

25  
26 MS. PELKOLA: Vince, you were a  
27 coordinator when I first got on the Council almost 20  
28 years ago. And I remember being with Robert and all the  
29 guys he named before, but I wasn't really involved in  
30 their mischief so, I sort of watched over it. I sort of  
31 watched over them. I remember when we were leaving  
32 Anchorage, and that's the first time I met Ron Sam and  
33 he was, you know, from next day off of whatever he did  
34 the night before. And I remember you running after him  
35 and, you know, sort of make sure he's going to get on  
36 the plane. We're going to Aniak, and we started to board,  
37 and then there's this martin hat sitting on the chair,  
38 and I said, holy crap, you know, he's going to just walk  
39 away. And sure enough, he was going on the plane. So, I  
40 grabbed his martin hat and brought it to him. But I  
41 remember you were just like, you know, and I was watching  
42 you. And I said, wow, is that, is he a father or, what  
43 is, you know, what was his role? I didn't really know  
44 your role at the time. But I enjoyed working with you.  
45 And you are always very open, very friendly and always  
46 laughing. Always. I don't know, the boys would tease  
47 you, and you just took it in, and I thought, wow, this  
48 is a great guy. So, thank you for, you know, your  
49 knowledge and for teaching me a lot of things. And I'm  
50 always pushing for women to be on the Board. No success

1 yet but one day, because I'm looking at the end of my  
2 term coming up and I feel like that's going to be it for  
3 me. But I'd like to see a woman because a man and a  
4 woman, men have their certain ways but a woman I think  
5 will add -- you need, you know, somebody on there to see  
6 the other side of what they're seeing. But I enjoyed  
7 being under, you know, working with you. And like Jack  
8 says, all these coordinators, they work very hard and I  
9 just want to thank you, Nissa, I know you do a lot of  
10 phone calling and texting and, you know, try to get us  
11 here, but just thank you very much.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
14 So, Don?

15  
16 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess  
17 Jenny and Robert here have taken a lot of my thoughts,  
18 my very thoughts. But I've always appreciated, you know,  
19 when I first got on that you were somebody able to talk  
20 to or to relate to you about certain things, and, you  
21 know, you kind of took us under your wing there, so to  
22 speak, and it felt like a mentorship. And I believe  
23 you're probably still doing that, whether it's through  
24 Four H or whatever activities you do. And I really  
25 appreciate the relation we had over the years, whether  
26 it was meeting in different places and there was some  
27 obstacles but I appreciate that. Nothing fazed you, and  
28 I just, you know, I just appreciate that I could call  
29 you, like I could call our present coordinator and  
30 discuss things and, you know, it's that -- really means  
31 a lot. And so, it's been a few years, and but it's good  
32 to see you and wish you well on -- in your retirement.  
33 Thank you.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Don.  
36 Tommy.

37  
38 MR. KRISKA: Yep, thank you there, Vince.  
39 Been seeing you around since the 90s, and I was first  
40 on the Western Interior Regional Council. I was on there  
41 for 12 years, and I had to end that in 2005, once I  
42 moved to Fairbanks. And I was here for 12 years and then  
43 went back and gone on it again. But I was on there for  
44 maybe ten years before that, so. And thanks to you, too,  
45 for all that you did and coordinating and you still look  
46 young. I'm just kidding.

47  
48 (Laughter)  
49  
50

1                   Anyway. But, yeah, there was a lot of  
2 names here that you mentioned. There's -- I remember a  
3 lot of those guys. All that goes back to, like, Sidney,  
4 John Honea, down the river. There was quite a few guys  
5 from different villages, all those. When I first started  
6 doing this, there was a whole table of them and I was  
7 only like maybe 30 years old or maybe in my 20s when I  
8 started going to these meetings with them and still here,  
9 just because of all their inspiration and yours and  
10 everyone else that been doing this and I really thank  
11 you for all of that. And, yeah, stay intact. Thank you.

12  
13                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Tommy.  
14 Tim.

15  
16                   MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah,  
17 Vince, I would just like to emphasize that your work  
18 ethic, your professional conduct, and your commitment  
19 to subsistence and the WIRAC has had lasting and  
20 meaningful impact for myself, for our communities and  
21 for the Western Interior region. So, you had basically  
22 one assignment and you were successful with it. So,  
23 congratulations. And thank you so much.

24  
25                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. So,  
26 Nissa.

27  
28                   MS. PILCHER: I also wanted to say thank  
29 you. Some of the members at the table have expressed  
30 thanks to you and for me, for our coordinating abilities,  
31 but you were always there, when I was learning, because  
32 it's a pretty steep learning curve when you're learning  
33 how to coordinate, because you came from the state as  
34 well. And while I was learning how to figure out what  
35 ACs were and how they functioned, even though you worked  
36 for the federal government, at the time, I knew that I  
37 could pick up the phone call -- pick up the phone, and  
38 I frequently did, to call you and figure out how to  
39 solve a problem or how to work through something. So,  
40 thank you very much. I very much appreciate it, because  
41 you've very much helped create the coordinator that I  
42 am today. So, thank you.

43  
44                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Nissa.  
45 Robert. Go ahead.

46  
47                   MR. WALKER: You remember Vince when Tim  
48 took my shoes and you had to walk around Galena to find  
49 shoes for me to go home? You remember that, Tim?

50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. They're warm. I  
2 appreciate you lending them to me.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, okay. Thanks so  
7 much, Vince.

8  
9 (Applause)

10  
11 So, we got Brooke coming up. Come on up,  
12 Brooke. And she's EIRAC's Coordinator. Go ahead.

13  
14 MS. MCDAVID: Good morning, Mr. Chair and  
15 Council Members. As Jack mentioned, I'm Brooke McDavid,  
16 I'm the Coordinator for the Eastern Interior Council,  
17 and I'm here on behalf of EIRAC to get some feedback  
18 from your Council about two different topics. And the  
19 first topic is about adding Native corporation lands and  
20 allotments to regulatory maps. That's something that the  
21 Eastern Interior Council would like to see. They've  
22 noted that there are lots of trespassing issues,  
23 especially in more accessible parts of their region. And  
24 they think that having those Native corporation lands  
25 shown clearly in the Red Book maps could potentially be  
26 one way to help raise awareness about where those lands  
27 are and potentially decrease trespassing issues.

28  
29 So, the Board and OSM wanted us to run  
30 that by the other Councils to see what you all thought  
31 about that idea. Because I think they're hoping that it  
32 would be consistent across all units if we move towards  
33 that. So, that is the first topic, and there is a draft  
34 map that Nissa has passed out to you, and there's a  
35 slightly updated version on the screen behind me. And  
36 this is just sort of a mockup of what this could look  
37 like. The brown/orange lands are the Native corporation  
38 lands. This is an example for the North Slope for Unit  
39 26.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Brooke, I'm in the  
42 reg book, federal reg book, page 132. And it shows  
43 exactly the same map, except you can see the difference  
44 between the two. So, your display should actually show  
45 both. And this, I'm highly supportive of this because  
46 we've had trespass issues down around Galena and stuff  
47 and allotments and Native corp lands. So, we've had these  
48 trespass issues. You know, if you look at this, the  
49 other lands are -- the public seems to think that they're  
50 all state lands, but they're not. They're private

1 properties. And they go down to a ranch down in Montana.  
2 And you got to get permission to go on that private  
3 property to go hunt there. If the lands are closed,  
4 posted, and they don't let you go, you're not hunting  
5 there. These Native corp lands are the same thing. So,  
6 I'm -- I think EIRAC's on to a real good thing here. I  
7 think this is -- I support that. Don.

8  
9 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brooke,  
10 I was wondering with EIRAC where this is coming from?  
11 And I was wondering if there was any kind of movement  
12 in the past, AFN or whatever, because it that has always  
13 been kind of a divisive issue. I mean, Native allotment  
14 should be exempt, but they fall under state management  
15 whatever. So, in kind of doing this, is it -- do you  
16 know of any passed legislation where they have attempted  
17 to try to get that exempt from state? And what is the  
18 attempt right now with Eastern Interior to do exactly  
19 that? Thank you.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Brooke.

22  
23 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Thank  
24 you, Don, for the question. So, Eastern Interior RAC is  
25 just asking for these lands to be shown on the map. This  
26 wouldn't be any sort of change to who manages those  
27 lands. Like you mentioned, that would require actions  
28 much higher above, you know, the jurisdiction of the  
29 federal program. So, their hope is that this could just  
30 help raise awareness about that and make it more clear  
31 that these are private lands, that you need permission  
32 to hunt on. It wouldn't change the fact that corporation  
33 lands are -- fall under state regulations. So, thank you  
34 for that.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
37 Any other questions? Tim.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
40 Thanks for bringing up the communication with EIRAC,  
41 Brooke. I -- for my purposes, I would support having the  
42 regional and village corporation lands on the maps  
43 because they're major landholders in the area and it  
44 helps to understand the issues better if the land  
45 ownership is available to us.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One question for  
48 further -- their question -- us and OSM. So, the public  
49 gets a map that shows this, but they're going to hunt  
50 this place. Can OSM have a mapping program on their

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1 website where you could actually zoom in on the areas  
2 that delineate the actual drainages and stuff? Have they  
3 talked about something like that? So, the public, these  
4 non-subsistence users can actually see more closely what  
5 that looks like. That all could be done online. They  
6 could do that on their phone before they go hunting.  
7 Have they discussed that?

8  
9 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That  
10 was actually brought up in one of their past annual  
11 reports, I believe, last year's that they would also  
12 like to see maps available online and maybe even the  
13 development of some sort of app that you could take into  
14 the field with you. Something -- I think ADG&G has  
15 something like that. I'm not sure that there's been any  
16 time or funding available to work towards that yet. So,  
17 this would -- getting it on the paper maps would be a  
18 first step. Maybe getting at least those maps put on the  
19 website in PDF form and then, potentially, in the future,  
20 moving towards something more savvy.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The other, you  
23 know, this is in the Federal Subsistence book. But it's  
24 not going to be out to the public. Can something like  
25 the mapping like this on the road system for the Dalton  
26 Highway, Steese Highway, Taylor Highway, this kind of  
27 mapping can, you know, they put posters on the on the  
28 billboard at Coldfoot. There's a sheep closure, was a  
29 sheep closure. There's posting along the road. These  
30 kind of mapping needs to be in place for the literally  
31 thousands of hunters are traveling on the Dalton  
32 Highway. This kind of mapping needs to be available and  
33 postered in a larger format strategically, and it'll  
34 just -- it'll really get the word out there that these,  
35 you know, because right now, if you get on the State  
36 Book or, or the Federal Book, it looks like all white  
37 up north, it's like, no, it's not all -- it's all --  
38 there's a lot of corp land up there. So, they talked  
39 about that over at EIRAC?

40  
41 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
42 they have, not so much about the Dalton. And maybe that's  
43 something that you could raise and ask OSM to prioritize  
44 or the BLM, but they have talked about that a lot about  
45 the Yukon River bridge because that provides a lot of  
46 access into the Eastern Interior region. Also, Y-K Delta  
47 RAC has talked about this. They have seen a large  
48 increase in the number of folks coming to hunt moose in  
49 the lower river because the population is really  
50 thriving down there. And they would like to see these

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1 large format maps posted at, you know, community  
2 airstrips and boat launches, things like that. So, yes.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: EIRAC, they got  
5 about 60 miles of the Dalton Highway going north of the  
6 bridge. And there's -- they have -- there are people in  
7 the Eastern Interior that actually hunt in that part,  
8 and they're going to hunt there more when these Porcupine  
9 Caribou keep coming more and more in that area. So, they  
10 need to delineate where those Native corp lands are  
11 there. So, you know, I'm just using the Dalton Highway  
12 because it's where I live, it's in the Western, basically  
13 the only highway we have in the Western Interior region.  
14 So, I think it's a great idea. I think it should be  
15 moved forward. I think it should be -- it also should  
16 have like posters at strategic points for the public,  
17 you know, the Fish and Wildlife Protection or U.S. Fish  
18 and Wildlife Protection or whoever's, BLM rangers. We  
19 don't have a BLM ranger on the -- at Central Yukon right  
20 now. So, this -- the word has to be out. You know, if  
21 you're going to do this, you're speaking to the choir  
22 kind of, because the public is under federal  
23 subsistence. They're qualified users. They know where  
24 the where the corp lands are. But it's the public that  
25 we have the problem with. So, we need to get this out  
26 to the public. And so, I think it's a great idea. And  
27 so, you got another -- you got a response or you got.....

28  
29 MS. MCDAVID: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
30 One last thing before we move on to the next subject is  
31 I believe it came up during Secretarial Review comments  
32 that this is something that folks would also like to see  
33 in the state handy dandy regulation book. So, of course  
34 we don't have much input into that, but if that's  
35 something that we could work towards collaborating with  
36 the state on, it's an opportunity.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That would be a  
39 good thing to do and get it into the State Book also.  
40 But that's why they need a memorandum of understanding  
41 with the state to actually do stuff like that. Right  
42 now, we don't have that. That's one of the issues. So,  
43 another point you have for it?

44  
45 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, thank you. The next  
46 topic that Eastern Interior has raised is, well, if you  
47 recall, at the last meeting, one of the proposals that  
48 you all reviewed was about the wildlife delegation of  
49 authority and having that move into unit specific  
50 regulations. Eastern Interior requested that their

1 wildlife delegation of authority letters be modified to  
2 also act -- to require consultation with Tanana Chiefs  
3 Conference Tribal Resource Stewardship Department for  
4 management actions similar to how they consult with the  
5 Chair and Fish and Game, the land -- the other land  
6 managing agencies. They think this is a step towards co-  
7 management. And they would also like to see something  
8 similar done with the Yukon River fisheries delegation  
9 of authority letter. And so, they have suggested that  
10 the fisheries delegation of authority letter be modified  
11 to also include consultation with TCC, with YRDFA and  
12 with the Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission. And I  
13 assume that AVCP would also be invited, since they're  
14 the lower river tribal consortia. So, that's what they  
15 wanted to bring before you all since, you know, the  
16 Yukon River transects all three of those regions. will  
17 be asking each of the Yukon RACs for feedback on that.  
18 Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I'm supportive  
21 of that. I, you know, I deal with the managers contacting  
22 me about various issues. And so, I'm very supportive of  
23 them contacting. And who at TCC did they designate?  
24 That's Wildlife and Parks or who are they going to  
25 contact there?

26  
27 MS. MCDAVID: The Tribal Resource  
28 Stewardship Department. And I believe none of the  
29 delegation of authority letters are specific about the  
30 exact person. So, it might just be a position, maybe the  
31 executive director for them.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, that's  
34 true. So, is there any comments on that? Tommy, you had  
35 a comment or question?

36  
37 MR. KRISKA: It's going back to your --  
38 about the lands to be included with the, maybe, the  
39 regulation. I think, if you went to TCC and their Lands  
40 Department, they have all the allotments, all the  
41 corporation lands and everything on little maps. That's  
42 where I get them from. Possibly, if they can -- I don't  
43 know how that could work, but to get all those lands,  
44 corporations, all along the river. And for the areas  
45 like Koyukuk, Nulato and send the -- this maps for --  
46 of the allotments and the corporation lands to each one  
47 of the villages, because they're all going to be  
48 different. They have different corporation lands in  
49 different areas. So, I think, maybe if they wanted to  
50 do something like that, they could go to the TCC, get

1 those, all those allotments, the Native corporation, and  
2 send it to the -- each one of these villages out there  
3 like to protect the Koyukuk area, Nulato area, send it  
4 right to the Koyukuk area for them to going up to Koyukuk  
5 River or I don't know how that would work. Maybe you'd  
6 have to give it to the people that are actually selling  
7 the permit license for -- license for permits and stuff.  
8 And once they know the area, they're going in just to  
9 have a bunch of copies at the check stations or whatever.  
10 And this -- and these are the Native allotment lands.  
11 And I mean, that's the only way I could see it being  
12 done ASAP, is that we got to do the footwork ourselves.  
13 But, yeah, I really think that needs to be because I got  
14 myself into some arguments that I didn't want to get  
15 into with some hunters over lands -- people or 80 -- 60,  
16 80 years old and can't talk for themselves and go to  
17 their hunting ground and there's a big camp there where  
18 the -- with the airplane and three boats right on there,  
19 right where they land their boats, right where they hunt.  
20 And took a little while to get them out of there. They  
21 were reported, but was, nothing was still never done.  
22 They brought it to our meeting a couple years ago in  
23 Galena. It's still nothing done. So, I think, yeah, I  
24 think something needs to be done, because now that the  
25 boys are thinking, maybe we should just get the tribe  
26 and get our votes and go right over there ourselves and  
27 give them the paperwork and may hopefully they move or  
28 I don't know how it's going to be done, but that's what  
29 the boys are going to do. They're not going to let this  
30 happen. I mean, it's hard to see heartbroken 80-year-  
31 old folks that want to just enjoy their selves in the  
32 camp, so. I hope something would be done about this.  
33 Thank you.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, that's a real  
36 problem in that particular case. In general, if the  
37 troopers have been completely derelict, they seem to be  
38 buddies with the -- maybe it's troopers. How do I know  
39 why they're not enforcing this trespass issue? We wrote  
40 letters to the Fish and Wildlife or the troopers in  
41 Fairbanks. They didn't even respond to us. They --  
42 there's something going on. There's some kind of -- these  
43 people have political pull somehow and that's just on,  
44 --and it's just not the way it's supposed to be. So,  
45 whether it's right up against refuge land. Isn't that  
46 up against refuge land over there, where the allotment  
47 is?

48  
49 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, it's it is a Native  
50 allotment.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Whether it's.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. KRISKA: Four miles from our village.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Koyukuk or Nowitna, your enforcement officers got to help these people out. But can you enforce trespass, Tina? Cody?

MR. SMITH: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so. You may -- you get a hold of them. Don't send your boys there. You get a hold of them, they'll go talk to them.

MR. KRISKA: Oh, no. They can come talk to us after we take care of them, because that's the only way it's going to be done.

MR. REAKOFF: Trying to be civil.

MR. KRISKA: I mean, I know it. It's that maybe put yourself out there and it don't matter to me, but something going to have to be done.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You can talk to them back in Galena about this whole issue. This is -- this thing's been boiling, simmering with foam on top for three years now or four. We're not happy about this one. Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brooke, I'm actually glad that you brought that up. And I appreciate Tom's talk on that, which is true. We were discussing something yesterday where I had mentioned (indiscernible) corporation in Ruby went from land almost up to the Novi River, Nowitna. And so, we put no trespassing signs at the mouth, and hey, it helped. There's no outside hunters, Fairbanks hunters, etc. in there. And so, anything that we can do -- and I know exactly what you're talking about when Eastern Interior has a concern like that because a lot of that land, right on the Novi River, within 30 miles up or something is Native allotments from Tanana. I think there is more to -- they have more allotments from Tanana than they do from Ruby, and Ruby is closer. So, I appreciate that. And I just, you know, as a deterrent, you know, why don't you just put up big signs, no trespassing.

1

2 I mean, I can relate to what Tom  
3 mentioned here. We have a cabin at the mouth at Novi,  
4 and this was 10-15 years ago. We went there and there  
5 was [sic] four hunters from Fairbanks. They were really  
6 reluctant to get out of there. They didn't want to, in  
7 fact, it was, maybe it was raining, I forget, but I  
8 almost had to go over and get -- check station is just  
9 right over here, to get the law involved. But anyway.  
10 So, I appreciate that. And, you know, if we, you know,  
11 I could go up to these refuge, I mean Native allotments  
12 and see these Tanana people on there, and I don't see  
13 any sign about no trespassing or, you know, they could  
14 put it at the start and the end of the thing, but it's  
15 a deterrent. I mean, I -- other than that, I just don't  
16 know what to, you know, law enforcement, but I appreciate  
17 that. And I'm glad that they're doing that. I, you know,  
18 it's the least that we can do to help ourselves. I mean,  
19 if you have a Native allotment there and somebody is on  
20 there, that's not the right. But they -- how did they  
21 get there? Why did they get there? Well, I didn't see  
22 no trespassing signs or anything. So, anything is a help  
23 and I appreciate that. Thank you.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Tom.

26

27 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I think now that Don  
28 just mentioned that they have no trespassing signs, the  
29 Doyon and (indiscernible) have a bunch of signs. And in  
30 that prior year, we helped them put all those signs up.  
31 But then they -- this -- where this happened was on a  
32 Native allotment and that wasn't on a map. And I'm glad  
33 that, hopefully, you can get that on some sort of, you  
34 know, at the check stations or somewhere, so where they  
35 can actually, when they're handed their permit or they  
36 bought their permit that they're handed this Native  
37 allotment areas. So, that way none of this will happen.  
38 And we don't get ourselves in trouble or, because it's  
39 getting frustrating and we need to do something about  
40 it, so. Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. I, you  
43 banged on the hornet's nest. I mean, we're just as  
44 unhappy as EIRAC. So, I think it's a great idea trying  
45 to get the definite -- the define, you know, the fineness  
46 of the mapping. That can be done online way better.  
47 These hunters, you know, a lot of hunters have no  
48 intention of getting onto the Native corp lands. But we  
49 have we have offenders that are literally, they  
50 need tickets, they need to get sued or something. Because

1 they refuse to leave. You got a comment there, Robert?

2

3 MR. WALKER: You know, as we go along  
4 here, we have also historic villages too, on our tribal  
5 and our corporation land and Doyon land and Native  
6 allotments that are next to that. I think I, if I  
7 remember right, we did ask, I think it was National  
8 Geographic, to take off all the historic sites because  
9 -- off the internet, off the old village sites, because  
10 we were having people come in to these old villages and  
11 going to the graveyards and opening them up. So, this  
12 is like advertising, because a lot of these stuff are  
13 antiques and there was a lot of money. Now, okay. If we  
14 go to Shageluk, when I was a kid, every graveyard had  
15 this rifle, old muskets, this old traditional stuff,  
16 everything. Within five years after they found that out,  
17 they were all gone. And they shipped them out on the  
18 barge, they didn't ship them out on the plane. So, nobody  
19 really knows about how much stuff was missing, because  
20 a lot of elders are all gone. And this one below Anvik,  
21 we caught these guys. They were just tying up -- they're  
22 having a good old time, and they were going to go up the  
23 hill and open it, because they're all buried on top of  
24 the ground. Everything they had possessions was inside  
25 wrapped in birch bark.

26

27 So, when you start looking at this, we  
28 already looked at that. We had -- Vince was our  
29 coordinator then. So, when you start looking at --  
30 through your internet on historical sites, see what you  
31 have in the Eastern Interior, because I think most of  
32 them have already been broken into and taken. And Native  
33 allotments, we do put up -- we just put in the mouth of  
34 the (In Native), the Anvik River no trespassing. That's  
35 it. Because if we put a sign up saying Native Allotment,  
36 they can go take a moose or whatever on there and we  
37 could complain, turn them over to the wildlife troopers,  
38 and we don't get any kind of feedback, or if the state  
39 fines them, the state takes the money. We don't get it.  
40 So, there's a lot of little clicks here that we went  
41 through when we were working on this. And Vince, like I  
42 said, Vince was our coordinator. So, if you could take  
43 a look at our minutes back, I don't know, 10, maybe 15,  
44 maybe 16 years ago, you will see it in there, so.

45

46 But we do have, we don't have issues  
47 anymore. We kept -- we just tell people, you know, hey,  
48 just get out of here or we're not going to sell you gas.  
49 So, this is one way of doing it, but that's kind of  
50 cruel. You know, if they break down whatever run out of

1 gas or somewhere and happen to get an accident, but to  
2 be justified, I think that would be justifiable. I'm not  
3 too sure about that. We don't have an attorney here to  
4 ask. So, you know, I mean, that's just heads up stuff  
5 for you, too.

6

7

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tom.

8

9

10 MR. KRISKA: Okay, this is starting --  
11 lot of things added on to this kind of (indiscernible).  
12 Because, you know, back in the area, I'm on the way or,  
13 you know, I live. I take care of that with the  
14 stewardship from all the inspiration we got from all the  
15 other guys that were talking about this morning. All  
16 those older folks that really wanted to protect this  
17 land. Well, us, we physically protect our -- where we're  
18 at right now. There's me and a bunch of guys right there.  
19 Every year, we're killing, like, maybe 50 wolves in that  
20 area. About 10 grizzly bears to protect the moose for --  
21 -- to -- for our children, in the future. But, you know,  
22 as we do that count of moose, their numbers are way up  
23 there. And this is where the state steps in and they  
24 said, oh, there's a big abundance of moose over there.  
25 There's enough over there to start putting permits in  
26 that area. And this is what's causing the trouble. Maybe  
27 we're -- we should just left them alone and let them  
28 kill all the moose or whatever. But we're trying to save  
29 ourselves because of the fishing and all this stuff that  
30 -- the livelihood that we're in right now. But, you  
31 know, that since the state is allowing people in there  
32 after that we're doing -- we've been doing the work for  
33 -- I've been doing a lot of wolf hunting over my days,  
34 and there's a big number that helped out with. You  
35 wouldn't believe that number, but I wouldn't want to say  
36 it here.

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Anyway, you know, we physically protect  
that area. And now to have the state come in, allow 31  
permits in our area, in that area alone. If you really  
think about it, there's 151 permits in that area allowed  
by the state. It shouldn't be there. What's once after  
-- the -- it's been there for about 19 years now that  
we've finally figured it out. But, you know, that if the  
state is going to be doing that, they should protect or  
have these allotments and stuff on their maps, and to  
protect some of these people, they can at least do that  
for all the work that we're doing. Whoever is, you know,  
say they're regulating stuff, they ain't regulating  
shit. They're not, at all.

1                   And so, I really -- happy that you're  
2 doing this, and we need this stand behind you guys and  
3 help you out. And, you know, I'm glad Eastern Interior  
4 brought that up because you know, the -- these guys that  
5 protect those moose and stuff, and they're doing a good  
6 job of it. They're the ones that are talking about going  
7 out to these hunters and, you know, let them know, hey,  
8 you're sitting on somebody's land or you need to move.  
9 And I don't want those boys getting in trouble. So,  
10 hopefully that, if you're back in the crowd there and  
11 you got the upper hand on some of this stuff, maybe you  
12 should do something about it. Thank you.

13  
14                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, this is an  
15 impassioned subject, as you can tell, and this is going  
16 to be -- the Board's going to -- EIRAC's asking all  
17 Councils to weigh on this. And I think it's a great  
18 thing. And I think that working with the state it's also  
19 very important, to work with the state that they adopt  
20 this same, you know, once they get a liaison from OSM  
21 to talk to the state, they can get the same mapping in  
22 the handy dandy of the state regulations. And then they  
23 also have to, you know, work with the state on this.  
24 That's where this posting at check stations, the roads  
25 and places where the -- lots of the public is going  
26 through. That's an important thing. So, I think we've  
27 covered that issue. We're not going to go back into that  
28 anymore. We're done. We're going to move on. What's your  
29 second point there? We got, we can't spend all day on  
30 that.

31  
32                   MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
33 thank you, Council Members for all that really good  
34 feedback. And yeah, very similar to what folks in Eastern  
35 Interior are experiencing, so. The second topic was  
36 about the fisheries delegation of authority letters, and  
37 whether or not you would support adding TCC, YR DFA and  
38 Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission to the list of  
39 folks the manager should consult with. Thank you.

40  
41                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: For Yukon only?  
42 They're discussing -- yeah, I'm supportive of that. And  
43 I feel that that's totally, you know, fair. I think the  
44 Yukon Inter-Tribal Fish Commission should be there. TCC  
45 and then the AC and Regional Council consultation, and  
46 the state. Don.

47  
48                   MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
49 know, that's been my kind of thought all these years  
50 instead of standalone things. I appreciate them bringing

1 that idea up. I mean, why not consolidate? And to have  
2 instead of -- YRDFA is over here. Whatever our  
3 organization is on the Yukon Delta and -- but to be  
4 consolidated. I like that idea, and I'm in full support  
5 of that. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Other comments on  
8 that? Nissa, go ahead.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: I did want to point out  
11 that if you guys did want to look at what a current  
12 delegation of authority letter is we were going to get  
13 to it during reports, but there's the Kuskokwim  
14 delegation of authority letter in your binder, on page  
15 155.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This is a standard  
18 delegation of authority letter. And the managers --  
19 gives what their what parameters are. Did you want to  
20 cover this Nissa or? But this is -- these are the --  
21 this is the kind of the thing that managers use. There's  
22 delegated authority for various species of animals and  
23 fish. And you got other comments, Nissa? Oh, Brooke, go  
24 ahead.

25

26 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah,  
27 that's an example for the Kuskokwim drainage. The  
28 manager that delegated authority there is the Yukon  
29 Delta Refuge Manager. And in that letter, I believe it  
30 outlines a requirement for them to consult with the  
31 Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. And so,  
32 this would be something similar, but for the Yukon side  
33 and the Yukon manager to require that consultation with  
34 those entities that we talked about.

35

36 MR. WALKER: You know that the Kuskokwim  
37 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, too. So, we kind of follow  
38 the same parallel with them with the Yukon. So, when we  
39 do go like this last fish meeting and proposals, we  
40 worked together on this on, to help us, you know, get  
41 better and understand more on -- and a lot of it is  
42 something that, I really wasn't too happy, I was there  
43 for four days, so. And we're going to have a report this  
44 afternoon, I think there's a lady coming up, her name  
45 is -- I don't know. This afternoon, I think, coming up  
46 to give us a kind of an overlay on what happened down  
47 there. So, if you're here, it'll be interesting. Thank  
48 you.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, other comments  
2 on that inclusion in the delegated authority  
3 consultation. Tim?

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
6 would -- I just support your comments and I feel it's a  
7 good idea and good collaboration.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
10 other comments? Jenny.

11  
12 MS. PELKOLA: I think that it's a good  
13 idea to have, like Don says, more you know, more groups  
14 involved with this. Make the team stronger.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
17 And Brooke.

18  
19 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah. Thank you all very  
20 much for that feedback. I think, similar to what Don  
21 said and Jenny echoed, that Eastern Interior would like  
22 to see more unity. And this is one way to try and do  
23 that across the river and, and bring tribal voices to -  
24 - into the management.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

27  
28 MS. MCDAVID: And sorry, one last thing.  
29 You probably are aware that there -- the Board of Fish  
30 is deliberating on the Area M proposals today. And so,  
31 if we hear anything, I'm going to step out after this  
32 and tune in to that meeting so, if we -- they take  
33 action, hopefully we can report back on that this  
34 afternoon, as well. Thanks.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I got a text while  
37 we're sitting here from Kevin Whitworth, deliberating  
38 proposal 128 and so, there's -- things are happening as  
39 we're speaking right now. He wanted us to -- wanted me  
40 to do something. I was like, I'm EIRAC -- WIRAC meeting.  
41 I can't do that. So, thanks so much, Brooke and for  
42 those comments. Do we have anybody else online that would  
43 like to speak about non-agenda items at this time? And  
44 you got any hands there Nissa? We're good?

45  
46 MS. PILCHER: Currently, do not. But as  
47 a reminder, if there's anyone online that would like to  
48 speak, it is star five, if you're on a phone, to raise  
49 your hand. It is star six to mute and unmute your phones.  
50 But currently I do not see any hands.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And nobody in the room. Tim, you got a comment?

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jack. I was asking permission, while we're just finished this discussion on trespass, if we could have a Fish and Wildlife officer come up, just for five minutes, and discuss what the remedies for the residents are for when they get into a trespass situation. I think it would be useful for our community to know what's available to them. And we definitely know there's a lack of law enforcement personnel power.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Come up to the mic there, Cody, and turn that mic on. And so, as you've been listening, it's a kind of a big thing. So, go ahead.

MR. SMITH: Good morning. Thank you. To speak to your comments specifically, one of the biggest things that helps us out is documentation. There's nothing wrong with taking photos of folks. Photos of boats, photos of aircraft. They shouldn't be getting in your face if you're doing things like that. That helps us identify who these people are later. Specific dates and times. Preventative stuff. Posting is probably the best thing you can do. And a lot of these folks that -- the interesting thing, you know, we're talking about these maps and it's an excellent tool. I'd say 95% of the hunters I contact in the field are all using onX, and most Native allotments are displayed in onX as private land. And so, a lot of these folks, it's negligence. And they have the information in their hand, typically, or in their pocket and just don't pay attention. And it's really disturbing to me, the amount of people that I run into that don't really know where they are, and they get dropped off by a transporter or an air taxi, and they're really not sure, they know what drainage they're in, but they don't know where they are. And I actually had a group last year that I contacted and they were -- last minute, had to change plans, and the air taxi dropped them off in a different location than where they had requested, and had inadvertently dropped them off in a completely different game management unit than where they thought they were, with different regulations. So, this is the kind of stuff some of these -- this is the mentality and the amount of information some of these folks have. And so, the more info we can put out ahead of time or have on the ground for them to see, it just helps. It's way, way

1 better. And don't -- definitely don't assume that people  
2 are going to pay attention and read stuff or take the  
3 time to pull their phone out of their pocket and look  
4 at onX. And, you know, if it gets to the point where,  
5 because we've dealt with this a couple of times, if  
6 somebody is trespassing and is politely confronted about  
7 the issue and asked to leave and has a problem with  
8 that, the best thing you can do is video it, because  
9 often, later on, you know, it becomes a he said, she  
10 said kind of thing. And we may get word from somebody  
11 that they were being very confrontational and  
12 aggressive, and the other person says they weren't. And  
13 video solves that immediately. And there's pretty hefty  
14 charges for, you know, being aggressive like that in the  
15 field, so.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Photos are a big  
18 deal. As you know, I take photos of license plates and  
19 stuff. Cody was up the road, and I was like, hey, we got  
20 to get pictures of these license plates. I do this all  
21 the time. I see -- I actually walk right up to people  
22 like, I got a phone in my hand. I take a picture of them  
23 I should be videoing, you know, for continuity. It's a  
24 big deal. We got phones. Everybody has got some kind of  
25 phone in your pocket now. Just flip the thing on video.  
26 They start videoing as you're pulling up, get a pano  
27 [sic] where you're at, kind of what's going on. You  
28 know, get the surroundings so you can get visual  
29 location. Then you have a little chat. I've deterred  
30 people from doing bad things just by having a little  
31 chat with them. They go on their little way, which  
32 happens routinely. So, you have a comment, Robert?

33  
34 MR. WALKER: Yes.

35  
36 MR. SMITH: My name is Cody Smith with  
37 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

38  
39 MR. WALKER: All right. Excuse me, Mr.  
40 Chair. How many square miles do you work under? 177,  
41 200,000 miles? Or what is your area of working when  
42 you're like, say, the fall of moose hunt?

43  
44 MR. SMITH: We're all spread really thin.  
45 And I think I speak for us and other federal and state  
46 enforcement that we're all spread thin. And I -- in a  
47 typical moose season, I may, I mean, this past moose  
48 season, one week I was down in McGrath, the next week I  
49 was in the Brooks Range. The next week I was down around  
50 Northway. Out on the Andrafsky's, down outside of

1 Bethel. So, all over the place. And we kind of, just  
2 depending on where the needs at and myself being a pilot,  
3 I support a lot of our other folks. So, we end up all  
4 over. And the difficult thing, as you can imagine, is  
5 when I might be in McGrath and get a report on the Coleen  
6 River of something very timely going on that I need to  
7 be there for. And I'm dealing with something down, you  
8 know, on the Innoko River. And so, we rely a lot on each  
9 other. And if we can, you know, if we find somebody else  
10 is closer, even if they're wearing a different patch on  
11 their sleeve, I can at least try to direct them there  
12 and say, hey, go document this for me and pass along the  
13 info later. But it's tough.

14  
15 MR. WALKER: Thank you. I mean that --  
16 that's a lot of places to be in such a short time because  
17 moose season is only, what, 21 days or 25 days? And to  
18 be here, there and everywhere, it's kind of like, you're  
19 kind of like, short staffed, too, and -- because when I  
20 talked to wildlife trooper for the state, he has 197,000  
21 square miles so, I mean, you know, I don't know why it  
22 is so to be such that there are so many incidents that  
23 go on inside the moose hunting season, it's  
24 unbelievable. I brought to this Board here, last fall,  
25 that in Anvik I have a radio 122-8 122-7, 122-9 and  
26 those working four villages: Grayling 122-9, Anvik 122-  
27 7, Shageluk 122-8 and Holy Cross 122-8. But I could  
28 hear, at night, 12, 1 o'clock, in the dark, I could hear  
29 128 clicking, somebody's clicking on the lights at night  
30 in either Holy Cross or in Shageluk and they're not  
31 talking because you have phones, you know, you can  
32 communicate with your phone, you don't have to  
33 communicate with by air anymore. But the lights are a  
34 dead giveaway, when they click them on. You know there's  
35 something going on illegal because nobody is not going  
36 to talk saying, you know, ask flight service if they  
37 could have permission to land. And this is 000 Zulu. I  
38 am a five-mile below Shageluk or five mile below Holy  
39 Cross, they don't say that. And you know darn well just  
40 as I do that there's something going on here. And I did  
41 report it to the state troopers, but they are so far in  
42 between, like you are. You know, by the time they get  
43 there, everything is gone. So, yes, I mean, I really see  
44 the point here where you are.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,  
47 Robert. Tim.

48  
49 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah  
50 so, lack of enforcement personnel and resources, that's

1 going to be a fact of life. It is a fact of life now,  
2 and it probably will be going forward. So, what -- one  
3 thing like, say you come up and somebody's on your land  
4 or somebody else in your village's land, you know,  
5 they're trespassing. You ask them to leave, they're so  
6 like, we don't have to or we don't, prove it to me or  
7 whatever. What -- how much can the person trying to --  
8 say a villager is trying to correct a situation, how  
9 much can they do before they commit an illegal act?  
10 Like, can they touch the other person? Can they untie  
11 their boat and push your boat in the river if they're  
12 resisting to leave? And then, I'll have a follow up  
13 regarding citizen's arrests, VPSO arrest, or tribal  
14 police officer arrests in the areas outside of the actual  
15 village itself. But I would first like you to address  
16 what constitutes illegal acts by somebody trying to  
17 mitigate or fix a trespass situation.

18  
19 MR. SMITH: Yeah. Thank you for bringing  
20 that up, because that is a really good point. And I  
21 think knowing what legal backing private landowners  
22 have, it can really help, you know, embolden them into  
23 doing the right thing. So, there's two sides to it, I  
24 guess, and there's what is legal, and then there's what  
25 a landowner may or may not want to do. Now, when it  
26 comes to, you mentioned citizen's arrest. That's going  
27 to a really extreme level that I would personally caution  
28 folks from even considering, just because you don't know  
29 these other people that are on your land. If it gets to  
30 the point that they're that confrontational, that you  
31 think, you know, or any landowner thinks that they may  
32 need to go to a citizen's arrest level, you don't know  
33 how they may respond or what they might consider doing  
34 in response to you trying to detain them or to forcibly  
35 remove them. Obviously, you know, the best situation,  
36 that's something to leave up to law enforcement. If  
37 someone is posing an immediate threat to you or property,  
38 you know, or is right up around somebody's cabin,  
39 legally, in the State of Alaska, a misdemeanor committed  
40 in your presence can justify citizen's arrest or felony  
41 not committed in your presence. And so, a, you know,  
42 somebody walking right up on your cabin and refusing to  
43 leave, getting aggressive, obviously, that's something  
44 that, legally you could conduct a citizen's arrest. It  
45 would be definitely not advised by me. If you have any  
46 way to contact law enforcement, I would do that first.

47  
48 Talking about untying somebody's boat  
49 and pushing it away or putting hands on somebody. Again,  
50 I just would be really, really careful doing anything

1 like that. And, even though there may be things that are  
2 legal to do, what I to be able to do, just speaking from  
3 my perspective, if I'm dealing with a trespass issue, I  
4 want to be able to back the landowner up 100%. And that's  
5 where I'm at, where I can -- we can sit in the courtroom  
6 together and I can say they did everything right, they  
7 documented, they stayed within the bounds of the law.  
8 They, you know, they acted respectfully and thought  
9 their the response through, and here's how the  
10 trespasser responded and refused to leave. The more  
11 drastic measures a landowner takes or the more  
12 aggressive they are, it can just be more difficult to  
13 make that case in court. And you know, regardless of  
14 whether the other person was doing something illegal or  
15 not, we're all having to work with the justice system.  
16 And sometimes things don't always work out the way we  
17 think they should.

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Can like, village  
20 public safety officer from any random village, say Ruby,  
21 come 20 miles out of the village and arrest a trespasser?  
22

23 MR. SMITH: I would want to double check  
24 that with my state partners, just because I'm -- as long  
25 as the VPSO had a full state commission, then the answer  
26 would be yes. That would be something I would want to  
27 double check. And I'll do that, on the next break, and  
28 I can make a couple phone calls and check on that. I'm  
29 not 100% certain that the VPSO has full state authority  
30 like a state trooper would. If they did, then the answer  
31 would be yes.  
32

33 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, can a tribal police  
34 officer come 20 miles or so off of the -- out of the  
35 village and make an arrest on a trespass on a Native  
36 allotment or tribal corporate -- or village corporation  
37 land or regional corporation land?  
38

39 MR. SMITH: It would, and I genuinely am  
40 not trying to be vague on the answer here. It would  
41 really depend on what type of commission and what type  
42 of authority they held. And there are, when you're  
43 talking about tribal police and VPSOs and, you know,  
44 city managed police officers, the authorities are all  
45 different and same with myself and the state troopers.  
46 And so, it really would depend on who they were and what  
47 type of authority they held. If we're talking about  
48 tribal police and coming, you know, off the village 20  
49 miles downriver to go to the Native allotment. If they,  
50 kind of like a VPSO, as long as they had full state

1 authority and had the ability to enforce trespass laws  
2 on private lands in Alaska, then the answer would be yes  
3 for them.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: All right, thanks for your  
6 comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for allowing us to  
7 digress into this -- or not digress, but discuss this  
8 issue.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. Okay. I  
11 think we've covered that pretty closely. Appreciate  
12 that, Cody.

13  
14 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, I see  
17 people showing up in the back of the room we're at --  
18 we're in the period of our comment period for the public  
19 on non-agenda items. So, we have Ben and Percy back  
20 there. Do you got anything to say?

21  
22 (No response)

23  
24 Who else do we have in the room? Does  
25 anybody want -- back in the room want to speak? You have  
26 to fill out a blue card if you do want to speak. But you  
27 can come up and talk to us if you have -- I'm just giving  
28 an opportunity to speak. You got to come to the mic and  
29 you'd have to -- and you can fill out the blue card in  
30 a while, after a bit. But we're at that point in this  
31 agenda so, we want to do this now. So -- oh you got a  
32 blue card. Say your name for the record.

33  
34 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, good morning. My  
35 name is Percy (indiscernible) the first. And I'm from  
36 Koyuykuk, down there in the Yukon. I'm just dropping in  
37 and saying hello and never been to RAC meeting for so  
38 many years. I think the last one I've been to was when  
39 they had one in Galena. So.....

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We had one in  
42 Koyukuk.

43  
44 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, well, whenever that  
45 was, I probably missed it. But anyway, you know, I don't  
46 really have any hot agenda items. I'm just on my way  
47 home from the Board of Fish meeting. And you know, if  
48 anything else, I think I would like to probably meet  
49 with my AC before we can come up with any items of any.  
50 But there's always something going on out there. It's

1 never a dull moment if you live in the village and I  
2 know you do. But in regards to that, there's, you know,  
3 we're always being pressured for one thing. Pressured  
4 during the season of hunting moose pressured. Now we're  
5 in a, you know, you probably heard the seven-year  
6 moratorium for fish. And trapping, I think as far as  
7 trapping goes, a lot of people are not doing it nowadays  
8 and, but I can only share this with you, that we still  
9 need to keep an eye on our backyards. So, good to see  
10 you guys.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So good to see you,  
13 Percy.

14  
15 UNIDENTIFIED Yeah.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And it -- Cody here  
18 is enforcement, and he's talking about if you see  
19 somebody on trespass, get out your phone, video the  
20 person that -- they're on your allotment and stuff. Also,  
21 if I see wanton waste, I see like -- I find a kill, I  
22 see that people have been there, I take a picture. I  
23 take videos of what they left behind. You know, like  
24 they're supposed to salvage the neck, that's mostly  
25 there, I'm going to take videos of all that stuff, and  
26 I'm going to get a hold of the troop, get all of -- get  
27 some kind of enforcement. I've talked to Cody in the  
28 field before, but I'll get ahold of people that -- and  
29 send them that. They love those photos. That's what he's  
30 talking about. I can't get there to take the video. They  
31 -- that's what they're doing. They're taking pictures  
32 and video. They're getting that forensic evidence. So,  
33 everybody's carrying a phone. You get out your phone,  
34 you video. If you see something bad going on, you know,  
35 that's how we stop this stuff. I've walked right up to  
36 people taking pictures of them. They back off. They find  
37 out that you're going to -- I says, these are going  
38 right to the trooper. You kill any moose here, you're  
39 going to get a big ticket. And so, they like, they back  
40 off. You can -- you're not bullying them, you're not  
41 actually shouting or anything, but you're documenting  
42 illegal activities. And you can tell them that you can  
43 video them. That's all constitutional, First Amendment  
44 and all that.

45  
46 UNIDENTIFIED: So, yeah, that's good  
47 information. I'm glad you're sharing that because -- and  
48 of course, for the past 20, 30 years, we've had a lot  
49 of problems up in Koyukuk River, and we did, through the  
50 state. Anyway, we did gather and, you know, compile our

1 own information. We had tribal boats running all over,  
2 doing their own thing. We had three different boats with  
3 maybe 2 or 3 people in there, and we reported a whole  
4 bunch of stuff. And that was back when they had that  
5 moose, whatever, management program ran by local people.  
6 And nothing ever became of it. And I even went -- talked  
7 to them personally about the pictures I had and the  
8 stories I had. All the moose I found with the heads  
9 gone. All the bears, black bears. I think we ran into  
10 about five different carcasses, and they took the head  
11 and the hide, they covered the rest of the meat and, you  
12 know, that sort of thing. Meats are no different, two  
13 weeks that was already no good. So, you know, at the  
14 time, you know, times are changing and we're still up  
15 against the same story and nothing ever changed.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, the problem  
18 is, when you see it and you get the evidence, you got  
19 to get it called in right away. It can't show up two  
20 weeks late, and it's all eaten up by ravens and bears  
21 and all. It's just a pile of bones and stuff. You got  
22 to, like, report it right away. Hopefully there's an  
23 enforcement officer nearby. That's the problem. They're  
24 spread so thin. There's only three troopers in all of  
25 the -- this Fairbanks area here. I live on the Haul  
26 Road. They have nobody to come to help us. There's  
27 thousands of.....

28  
29 UNIDENTIFIED: What I was saying is,  
30 everything we had put together took a lot of work and  
31 it cost a lot of money for gas and to pay whatever  
32 stipends were paying then. But this was the past. And  
33 whatever we did, we're doing the things right. But they  
34 didn't do nothing with it, that's what I'm saying. There  
35 was no information, no cases, no sites, no nothing.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're hearing out  
38 of Galena. But the troopers aren't enforcing trespass.  
39 We're -- that's a problem. We wrote a letter to the  
40 troopers in Fairbanks. They're not even talking back to  
41 us. That's why we're talking about -- you got to get  
42 this video evidence. That we have to start doing their  
43 job.

44  
45 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We got to start.  
48 We help them. We're helping them out. So, we got a lot  
49 of agenda today.

50

1 UNIDENTIFIED: Well, if they know how to  
2 read, for one thing. They can always look at, you know,  
3 read the sign. It said no trespassing because you have  
4 your Native allotment number there and that don't seem  
5 to help. But anyway, good to be here. I'm going to.....  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, this is a  
8 Fish and Wildlife protection or U.S. Fish and Wildlife.  
9 They will enforce trespass. You get the video, you got  
10 internet now. You go home, you upload that to those guys  
11 over to the Koyukuk/Nowtina office. And with  
12 documentation, they say they're going to enforce that.  
13

14 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay, I had a quick  
15 question here. I know you're the Western Interior, that  
16 you bring your recommendation to the Federal Subsistence  
17 Board. Okay, so we have -- well, I don't know of anybody  
18 have a problem, but I always seem to have a concern  
19 about this fishing stuff. We're not getting, you know,  
20 being recognized for anything or any effort we're  
21 making. But I, you know, you can correct me if I'm wrong,  
22 because the meeting is not over yet, when I came from,  
23 and I just think that we need to put the pressure on a  
24 little more from this, you know, this organization and  
25 others, because right now, the way I see it, we're the  
26 only, you know, people, like sitting at this table is  
27 the hope of bringing things forward and getting  
28 something done, so.  
29

30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have -- we're  
31 going to -- there's a program review. And we're  
32 recommending that they -- that the Office of Subsistence  
33 Management and the Federal Subsistence Board have a  
34 memorandum of understanding to consult with the -- more  
35 with the state. There's no memorandum with the state,  
36 currently. With the Department of Commerce, which deals  
37 with the Bering Sea fishery. The Secretary of  
38 Agriculture and the Secretary of State, where -- that's,  
39 we're making recommendations. We're trying to deal with  
40 this whole issue. The fish thing, we talked all day  
41 yesterday, mostly about fish. That's what we did here.  
42 So, yeah, we're on the same sheet of music. We're with  
43 the EIRAC. We're working hard with this federal program  
44 to try and force some better co-management with tribes  
45 and everybody involved in this whole thing,  
46 extraterritorial, all this other stuff. We're dealing  
47 with that.....  
48

49 (Simultaneous speech)  
50

00030

1 UNIDENTIFIED: That's good.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....Percy.

4

5 UNIDENTIFIED: I'm really glad to hear  
6 that. Everybody is trying from all different angles,  
7 whether it's the state, feds or RAC or, you know, the  
8 ACs. So, yeah, that's good news.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any questions for  
11 Percy? Tommy.

12

13 MR. KRISKA: Oh, I got a -- I have an  
14 application for you.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We need RAC members  
17 here.

18

19 MR. KRISKA: That -- what Percy was  
20 talking about, back in the day when they did all this  
21 researching or, you know, all this trying to enforce the  
22 moose hunting. There was actually three boats. They were  
23 all the way up in the Huslia area, all along the river  
24 reporting, all these reports, pictures, documents,  
25 everything about the headless moose and all this stuff  
26 is out there. And yesterday we were talking about some  
27 guys, I don't know how the heck they get to 15 miles to  
28 checkpoint, but. Just going back to the enforcement  
29 officer there, I wish you were here yesterday when we  
30 were talking about that. It'd be really nice to have a  
31 check station at the bridge or wherever these guys launch  
32 their boats that go to -- all the way down to the Innoko  
33 area and the Koyukuk River. And once they come through  
34 those check stations down there, they're -- all bear  
35 meat and horns and everything is checked. The amount of  
36 meat for every moose that they shot. And some of these  
37 boats have six, seven horns on there, six, seven guys.  
38 They need at least 2 or 300 gallons of fuel. And then  
39 hauling eight moose up there, Koyukuk River. I mean, up  
40 to the -- back to the bridge is impossible. So, I was  
41 really wanting to see if the law enforcement, can, you  
42 know, talk with Glenn Stout for his -- for, you know,  
43 his -- he record everything that when they're coming  
44 back out of there, the amount of moose that they killed,  
45 the amount of meat they have aboard. And have another  
46 check station back at the bridge where they entered the  
47 water, where they launched from. To have somebody there  
48 checking everything that was checked at the 15 mile.  
49 Because probably, guaranteed, that most of that load  
50 didn't get back out -- once it got out of the check

1 station in Koyukuk, it didn't make it back to where it  
2 was supposed to, supposedly be going. Because the weight  
3 and fuel and everything else. I don't know what to say  
4 about it, but I own some big boats, and there ain't no  
5 way I'm going to haul eight moose and the fuel and eight  
6 guys up the river. So, I just really wouldn't mind if  
7 that would be in there somewhere.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have that in our  
10 annual report, that check station thing. We're going to  
11 write that letter about that check station and the  
12 suggestions for -- the -- Glenn Stout actually  
13 highlighting these loaded boats that are beyond their  
14 capacity, that's in our letter, beyond their capacity  
15 to take that moose back up to the bridge. That one gets  
16 highlighted. That boat number, those people, those  
17 licenses are all going to get highlighted for  
18 enforcement to check them when they get back out. If  
19 they got a trooper around the bridge and that boat shows  
20 up, they better have all that meat that went through  
21 that check station. That's the way we're -- that's what  
22 our letter is going to say. We dealt with that yesterday.  
23 So, we're working on this stuff, Percy. We need you on  
24 this, we got open seats here. Look, we got -- we need  
25 people on this Council. There's a application right  
26 there. Orville! Orville! Orville will help you fill it  
27 out. Orville, give him a hand there. So, Orville Lind  
28 will help you fill that out, Percy, thanks for coming  
29 up.

30  
31 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay. All right. Well,  
32 like I say, I was just going to stop by and say hello,  
33 and move on

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert. Robert's  
36 got one.

37  
38 MR. WALKER: Thank you for all your work  
39 you did down in Anchorage, too. I really appreciated  
40 that. We won one proposal. Did we get any more after I  
41 left?

42  
43 UNIDENTIFIED: They were going to do  
44 group, I think, group. The whole committee was going to  
45 do four and five, and that was happening this morning.  
46 And then they were going to deliberate, start  
47 deliberating and it's going to take them, they said the  
48 whole day. So, probably by this afternoon we should, you  
49 know, keep in touch with whomever down there. And yeah,  
50 they were going to ask me to stay, but I couldn't stay

1 because they were going to get me home on the 2nd of  
2 March and I said, nope, I'm not going to stay in  
3 Fairbanks for 4 or 5 extra days. So, we have Mickey and  
4 Eva, Charlie -- Charlie Green. Let's see, there's about  
5 maybe four or five. Five, six of them. Speedy. Yeah,  
6 they have good people down there. They're just staying  
7 there to help Olivia, during deliberations. So, keep  
8 your phone on today.

9  
10 MR. WALKER: All right, Percy, thank you,  
11 I appreciate it.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
14 much, Percy. And -- Oh, Jenny. Jenny. Jenny's got one.

15  
16 MS. PELKOLA: I just want to thank you,  
17 Percy. But I'm glad you got an application. But I know  
18 you do a lot of work for our area. I just want to thank  
19 you and make sure you fill that out because, we do have  
20 about 2 or 3 vacant seats on our Board, and my term is  
21 going to be ending and it's going to be ending. So, but  
22 I'm always pushing for a woman. So, if you know of any  
23 women in Koyukuk or wherever that would like to be on  
24 this Board and, you know, support the guys. We all work  
25 together.....

26  
27 (Simultaneous speech)

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have about five  
30 of those apps, applications to go back to Koyukuk. You  
31 can round up some people around Nulato and take those  
32 down there. We need two members from around your -- at  
33 least -- and we would like one, at least one there.  
34 Yeah. But we need people on the Kusko.....

35  
36 (Simultaneous speech)

37  
38 MR. WALKER: Going to that, I gave him  
39 one and I had a guy yesterday wanting another one out  
40 of Nulato.

41  
42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

43  
44 MR. WALKER: So, hopefully.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, we need  
47 application -- applicants. It takes a while for the  
48 process to go through, almost a year, but if -- we do  
49 need people on this Council. We do have open seats and  
50 we're -- and Jenny's going to retire and Robert's trying

00033

1 to get away from us.

2

3 MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair, you didn't let  
4 me finish.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, Jenny.

7

8 MS. PELKOLA: You cut me right off.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, sorry about  
11 that.

12

13 MS. PELKOLA: But, I just want to thank  
14 you again and thank the rest of the Board. Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Sorry about that,  
17 Jenny. I apologize.

18

19 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay, well, I'll pick up  
20 this paper here, and hopefully I won't forget him when  
21 I grab some coffee, outside. And, you know.....

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Orville will help  
24 you fill it out, and he'll take it from you right now.

25

26 UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, yeah.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: He's right there.

29

30 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah. Okay, well, we'll  
31 see what we can do. All right. Thank you guys for  
32 listening.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don.

35

36 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Percy,  
37 I want to thank you guys. And I want to thank these guys  
38 here that also was down there. You know, you guys are  
39 backing up Olivia and you know, it's a, probably a really  
40 tough job to be on the Board of Fish, and I'm thankful  
41 that, you know, I -- in a setting like this, I don't  
42 mind this, but I'm not one to go to Anchorage and testify  
43 before the Board of Fish or the -- I'll just be honest  
44 about it. I don't even like going to Anchorage too much,  
45 but I appreciate you guys. I appreciate the Interior  
46 delegation that went down there and hey, spoke for us.  
47 So, you guys always do that. And Ben Stevens, also, I  
48 appreciate his -- he's helped over the years, whether  
49 it's our ACs or what him and Carrie does. And I wanted  
50 to call him up here and see what he had to do, but he's

00034

1 a busy man. But thank you, guys.

2

3 (Talking)

4

5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: He's EIRAC. He was  
6 on EIRAC before. Okay. Thanks so much, Percy.

7

8 UNIDENTIFIED: I just want to say. Yeah.  
9 One last thing. Yeah. Ben Stevens was the one that  
10 actually -- when we first got going -- well, in 2013,  
11 that the resolution passed before the TCC Board of  
12 Directors, they had passed it, then they start the  
13 hunting and fishing task force, and Ben was -- that's  
14 where we got started, actually got going there. And Tom  
15 was there and Robert and bunch of other people. Yeah.  
16 So, we're just kind of like the old timers in that, you  
17 know, that scenario now since we've been around for a  
18 while and. But then they formed that Fish Commission and  
19 it's moving forward. You know, we have to, you know, if  
20 you want to ask any questions, you probably talk to  
21 Charlie Wright or Jasmine or one of those, the Fish  
22 Commission staffers. So, yeah, we're doing fine. We're  
23 going to survive and we're not going anywhere so, it is  
24 ongoing. Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and appreciate your  
25 time.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. You're in the  
28 Western Interior region, so we want your application,  
29 before you leave the room, please. And thank you. So,  
30 okay, do we have anybody else in the back of the room  
31 that wants to speak to the Council on non-agenda items?

32

33 (No response)

34

35 Seeing nobody there, do we have anybody  
36 on the phone?

37

38 (Talking)

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, Cody. Oh, okay.

41

42 MR. SMITH: Cody Smith again. I just  
43 wanted to close the loop on something real quick, because  
44 I try to do that when I can in a timely manner. I just  
45 connected with one of my state counterparts, and he did  
46 confirm that a VPSO possesses the authority to be able  
47 to run down river and deal with trespass issues on Native  
48 and -- Native allotments and tribal lands. A tribal  
49 police officer would not, so.

50

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, that  
2 clarifies that.

3  
4 MR. SMITH: So VPSO would be a good  
5 resource.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tom.

8  
9 MR. KRISKA: Yeah. That's a, you're  
10 talking about a TPO.

11  
12 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

13  
14 MR. KRISKA: Okay. So, but it can be done  
15 by a.....

16  
17 (Simultaneous speech)

18  
19 MR. SMITH: A VPSO can.

20  
21 MR. KRISKA: Okay, good. Thank you.

22  
23 MR. WALKER: Robert Walker. I -- a TPO  
24 also goes down to the federal training place down in  
25 Arizona, right?

26  
27 MR. SMITH: A TPO does not.

28  
29 MR. WALKER: A tribal police officer.

30  
31 MR. SMITH: The TPO, a tribal police  
32 officer, typically would not have a federal commission  
33 like we would -- unless we're -- I'm using a different  
34 term than we're not talking about the same thing. A VPSO  
35 is commissioned through the state and goes to.....

36  
37 (Simultaneous speech)

38  
39 MR. WALKER: Right, the.....

40  
41 MR. SMITH: State academy. And so, they'd  
42 be able to write for state trespass. A police officer  
43 hired by the tribe would not have the same state or  
44 federal commission to be able to deal with that.

45  
46 MR. WALKER: The tribal police officer  
47 would not have a federal.....

48  
49 MR. SMITH: Correct.

50

1 MR. WALKER: Okay, so somewhere along the  
2 line, I think there was some misconception with this,  
3 with some of the tribal leaders. They thought that they  
4 went down to the academy with all other federal officers.  
5 But since, you know, he was considered a federal tribal  
6 police officer, so. I mean, you know, maybe somewhere  
7 along the line we have to make a clarification for this.  
8 Thank you for that.

9  
10 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir. And just to  
11 clarify, too, a -- and this may just be some terminology  
12 snafu, a tribal police officer in -- at least in the way  
13 I'm using the term, is different from a BIA enforcement  
14 officer. A BIA enforcement officer would be going to the  
15 federal academy that you're talking about. And as long  
16 as they held a state commission in Alaska, they could  
17 enforce the state trespass laws or federal trespass  
18 laws.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for  
21 that clarification, appreciate that.

22  
23 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was an  
26 important issue. So, I don't see anybody in the room.  
27 What have we got on the phone there, Nissa?

28  
29 (No response)

30  
31 Anybody on the phone wanting to raise  
32 hands? Whatever. So, we don't see anybody there. We don't  
33 have Darrell online. We had him yesterday. Darrell's not  
34 here today. So, I want the record to reflect that  
35 Darrell's not present. Do we have to do roll again,  
36 Nissa?

37  
38 MS. PILCHER: We typically don't  
39 necessarily do roll on the second day. I would note that  
40 we do have quorum in the room, and we have had it all  
41 morning. But we do normally do or try to do introductions  
42 of anybody that wasn't present yesterday to introduce  
43 themselves, just so we get everybody on the record. We  
44 do -- of course, now Leo is on the record and Ben  
45 Stevens, in the back of the room. Oh, they were here.  
46 And then we can let the record also reflect that Cody  
47 Smith and then Curtis, also with Fish Wildlife Services  
48 in the back of the room. But those are all the new folks  
49 that are in this room today for those that are listening.  
50 But I would like to take this opportunity for anybody

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1 that has called in today that did not get an opportunity  
2 to introduce themselves yesterday, if you'd please let  
3 us know that you're on, so we can get you recorded for  
4 the record. Thank you. I won't do the normal rundown of  
5 the list, because I think there's only a handful of  
6 folks that weren't on yesterday. But if you did not  
7 introduce yourself yesterday, if you could please speak  
8 up now. Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: People on the phone  
11 speak up. If you're going to participate in the meeting  
12 or if you're just listening in, we'd like to have you  
13 on our -- who's actually participating. Are they open?

14

15 DR. VOORHEES: Hi, this is Hannah  
16 Vorhees. I'm an anthropologist with OSM.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Hannah.  
19 Thank you. Anybody else?

20

21 MR. MOSES: Hey, this is Aaron Moses,  
22 Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon Delta. I called in  
23 earlier yesterday, but I had other commitments with  
24 village visits, so.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
27 Aaron. Appreciate you calling in. Good source of  
28 information from YKD. Is anybody else on the phone or  
29 online?

30

31 MS. BACH: Hi.

32

33 MS. BOECK: Yeah. Hi, this -- oh, sorry.  
34 Go ahead.

35

36 MS. BACH: This is Donna Bach. I'm the  
37 State Tribal Liaison for the BLM state office, and I'm  
38 just tuning in as my schedule permits to hear the  
39 deliberations so, thank you. I'm based here in  
40 Anchorage.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
43 And who else is there?

44

45 MS. BOECK: This is Laurie Boeck, Deputy  
46 Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge  
47 in Bethel.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning. And  
50 who else do we have? Anybody else?

00038

1  
2 UNIDENTIFIED: Good morning, my  
3 name.....

4  
5 (Simultaneous speech)

6  
7 MR. VALENTINE: Lieutenant Dan  
8 Valentine.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Say again? One.  
11 Last person speaking.

12  
13 MR. VALENTINE: Lieutenant.....

14  
15 (Simultaneous speech)

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

18  
19 MR. VALENTINE: Lieutenant Dan Valentine  
20 with the Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Hey, good morning.  
23 I appreciate that. You've heard or have you been  
24 listening to our discussion on this trespass issue?

25  
26 MR. VALENTINE: I do, and I could read  
27 for you guys the State of Alaska trespass issues if,  
28 regulations if you would want because they would deal  
29 directly with your issue.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, what we've had  
32 problems with is people submitting photos and whatnot  
33 to the troopers about trespass and no response. And we  
34 wrote a letter to the troopers, and they didn't respond  
35 to this Council. And there is no resolution to those  
36 trespass issues, which seem to be continuing. So, I --  
37 is that a glitch with the Department of Public Safety?

38  
39 MR. VALENTINE: Mr. Chair, I'm not sure  
40 where those letters went. I am the supervisor for the  
41 Fairbanks and pretty much everywhere north of the Alaska  
42 Range. But I'm new to the job, so I'm trying to get  
43 involved as much as possible. As far as trespass issues  
44 go, the way the state regulations read, there's two  
45 places where you can charge people for criminal trespass.  
46 And that's kind of part of the -- the entire issue is it  
47 has to be a criminal act. And so, the first one is  
48 criminal trespass in the first degree. And if you  
49 wouldn't mind, I'd be happy to read both of these statutes  
50 because they're very short and it would probably.....

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(Simultaneous speech)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. VALENTINE: .....shed some light on the subject.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

MR. VALENTINE: So, criminal trespass in the first degree. A person commits the crime of criminal trespass in the first degree if the person enters or remains unlawfully, on land, with the intent to commit a crime on the land or in a dwelling. So, that one -- so, they commit the act by going to someone's land. But there have -- there has to be an intent to commit a crime there. So, the crime is not trespassing, the crime would be like breaking into somebody's cabin and stealing their stuff. It's not, I'm camping out on your land, or I'm hunting on your land because there is no Fish and Game statute that says that the wildlife troopers can enforce for someone hunting moose on someone's land. That is not illegal under a state statute.

So, the second degree is a person commits the crime of criminal trespass in the second degree, if the person enters or remains unlawfully in or upon a premises or in a propelled vehicle. So, we don't have to worry about that. But so, if it's posted, the troopers can come up there and be like, hey, you're trespassing, you need to leave. So, the remains unlawfully is something that if a landowner tells somebody to get off of their land and they won't do it, then the troopers can get involved. They are now breaking the law, because they know it's private property, they're remaining unlawfully, they're not listening to the landowner. It's not something that someone's going to get arrested for if they're just on a piece of land on the side of the Yukon River, and they're camping out there, and they -- and it's a Native allotment, but they don't know about it. If someone tells them it's illegal, then the troopers have the cause to be able to charge somebody with that offense.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. That's -- and it's, there is no state statute that says that hunters can shoot a moose on a closed piece of land, a posted piece of land, and you can't do anything about it?

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MR. VALENTINE: We -- there is no Fish and Game statute that says that is illegal.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: In a Fish and Game statute, that would be like the Board of Game statute regulation?

MR. VALENTINE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we need to submit a proposal about that?

MR. VALENTINE: I would, I mean, Alaska's been a state for quite a while so, I'm surprised -- if it hasn't happened by now, there's probably a very good reason why it hasn't. But I don't know that reason.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. So I, yeah, I'm surprised, I'm -- because if you go to Montana and you go -- you see a elk or a mule deer or something out there on somebody's private property and you go out there and shoot it, you're going to get a ticket, you're going to get, you're going to get fined for doing that. You've trespassed and you've killed an animal there. So, apparently Alaska is like far behind on this issue. So, if somebody here in Fairbanks, in the Fairbanks management area and somebody shoots a moose in your front yard and you told that person not to shoot it and you're on your farm on (In Native) Hot Springs Road, you can't do anything about that?

MR. VALENTINE: If you told them that you couldn't -- they couldn't come on your land to shoot that moose, yes. Then we have a criminal trespass issue. The taking of the moose is not the illegal part.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, they've taken resource off your land. So, I think that.....

MR. VALENTINE: They don't -- and I mean all -- the state makes it very clear in the Constitution that the game within the State of Alaska belongs to the State of Alaska, not to private landowners.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, it kind of does. It belongs to, you know, the -- we, under federal subsistence regulations, it's on federal lands. It might be a disparate season and so forth. So, if the landowner actually has quite a bit of say in this, I would actually

1 disagree that, yeah, a common use on state land or BLM  
2 land or open lands, but private properties, that -- this  
3 is a glitch. I consider this a glitch. And so, I think  
4 the Tanana Chiefs should formulate a proposal to address  
5 this issue for the tribal lands and the corporation  
6 lands, at least within our region. And this probably is  
7 a statewide issue. And that would have to be under the  
8 State Board of Game call for proposals. But, or it's a  
9 legislative action. The state legislature, the  
10 department -- the Tanana Chiefs should actually get a  
11 hold of their representative. They got -- their such a  
12 wide -- they got multiple representatives in this  
13 districts of Alaska. It's a statutory thing that would  
14 be submitted to the Resource Commission and have to be  
15 a, you know, like a legislature would have to submit it.  
16 But there's, this is a problem, it's a kind of a big  
17 problem in Alaska. It's not common use on people's land,  
18 I don't agree with that. You know, somebody's got this  
19 moose, they're -- leave it alone. It's getting fat in  
20 their little farm on (In Native) Hot Springs Road and  
21 then somebody comes there and they tell them not to  
22 shoot it. They get a ticket, they get a little slap on  
23 the wrist. The person doesn't get the fine. The person,  
24 you might give them a fine, but the person doesn't get  
25 a fine, they lost this moose. So, I don't agree with  
26 that. I mean, I was born in Alaska. I can say anything  
27 I want. So, I want to give you a justification to give  
28 the person a ticket where they're actually stealing from  
29 somebody's property. You see my line of discussion?

30  
31 MR. VALENTINE: I do, but the state at  
32 this moment does not agree with you.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Currently. Maybe  
35 the legislature will agree with us in some -- but we  
36 didn't realize that. I didn't realize this until this  
37 moment, so I appreciate you letting us know that that's  
38 a fact, but we will -- what this clarifies for people  
39 who are having trespass issues is that -- so video  
40 documentation is better if the person with the allotment  
41 actually speaks to us. Cody Smith is telling us, speaking  
42 to the person, you're on my allotment and they're like,  
43 no, I'm not leaving. Then you got justification to write  
44 them a ticket for trespass under the.....

45  
46 MR. VALENTINE: 100%. Yes, 100%.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. That really  
49 clarifies that. And your name again?

50

1 MR. VALENTINE: Lieutenant Dan  
2 Valentine.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Dan Valentine.  
5 Okay.

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We got a member  
10 that wants -- go ahead, Tim.

11  
12 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
13 Thanks for your information, Mr. Valentine, Officer  
14 Valentine. So, I'm looking at State of Alaska hunting  
15 regs 25-26. The handy dandy on page eight, under private  
16 lands, it says if you intend to hunt on private lands,  
17 make sure you have permission of the landowner. So, at  
18 least in this publication, the State of Alaska is saying  
19 it's up to the hunter to gain permission to hunt on  
20 private lands. And it's not the duty of the landowner  
21 to notify anybody illegally trespassing on their land  
22 that they're not allowed to hunt there. So, I would --  
23 I think -- right now, the cycle is for fish and  
24 shellfish, I think, or that's for federal subsistence.  
25 But we should look at -- the WIRAC should look at putting  
26 in a proposal with the Board of Game to address this  
27 issue of having it not be legal for people without  
28 permission to harvest game on private land.

29  
30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I -- my impression  
31 or my opinion is that this is probably way too big for  
32 the Board. They're not going to want to go to it because  
33 of, like Trooper Valentine says, since statehood, this  
34 is the way it's been. I think it's a legislative thing.  
35 I think that Native corporations -- or not corporations,  
36 but Native organizations, AVCP, TCC collaborating with  
37 Ahtna, they need to address this issue legislatively.  
38 It has to be a legislative thing, and it will be before  
39 the resource portion of the state legislature. I think  
40 that's, I don't think the Board's going to touch this.  
41 I think that -- they're thinking about what the Board's  
42 going to do. We submitted -- this Regional Council  
43 submitted a proposal for hunting moose and a winter hunt  
44 on the Doyon lands around Allakaket in Unit 24B and the  
45 Board failed it because we told them that those lands  
46 are closed to the public, those are their private  
47 properties. They still wouldn't allow it because they  
48 must have got interpretation from the Attorney General's  
49 office that sits at their table at the Board of Game and  
50 told them that, no, it's open to everybody because

1 there's no actual statute that says it's not. And this  
2 is a statutory problem. So, I think we've identified  
3 something here. This Council -- we can't submit -- we're  
4 not -- we can't do legal things. We can't petition the  
5 state legislature to do anything. But we can suggest,  
6 we can write a letter to the Native organizations in our  
7 area, our region to reach out. TCC, I think with AVCP  
8 is like, in the portion of our area here. We need to --  
9 they need to talk to the legislature. They need to get  
10 a bill submitted by somebody to do this. And so, we can  
11 send a notation out or just an email or something, or  
12 just, you know, we got chiefs sitting at this table. We  
13 need -- you guys need to talk about this at the TCC  
14 meetings because this is something we didn't know. So,  
15 appreciate that, Officer Valentine, for speaking up.  
16 Anything else, Lieutenant? Apparently he's off. Okay.

17

18 MR. VALENTINE: No. That's it.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. We're good.  
21 Robert.

22

23 MR. WALKER: This is for our Inter-Tribal  
24 Fish Commission. I got a text, and it says we got a win  
25 at the Board of Fish. Some of our stuff passed, enough  
26 to celebrate. And it is that Area M got about a 30%  
27 reduction in fishing time. More time left to fish  
28 through. And we made some progress on this. And, you  
29 know, just to have a 30% reduction, that's like a mortal  
30 sin that has been committed.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And the 30%, if  
33 it's in the dead center, and when the -- of the run of  
34 the majority of the run, the passage of.....

35

36 MR. WALKER: Yeah, I mean, they are so  
37 irritated right now, that the fishermen Area M, they  
38 want to, I don't know what they're going to do, but I  
39 think that we're going to win some more because of our  
40 testifying, what we did. I mean, we were very thorough  
41 this time. We weren't any time sitting around just  
42 playing games, Jack. Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I think TCC should  
45 send Olivia a bundle of roses for this one, so.

46

47 MR. WALKER: So, I see what a win like  
48 this, Jack. That letter to the Fish Commissioner, Doug.  
49 I think we should just send it to him. I think that we  
50 have enough thing here just to push him about the seven-

1 year moratorium on the Yukon. I would recommend, if we  
2 have to make a motion to do it, I would make that motion.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert wants to  
5 make a motion to send a letter to the commissioner that  
6 he felt that it was the public process was violated when  
7 they adopted the seven-year moratorium without public  
8 involvement, which violates the Procedural Act of  
9 Alaska. And that's under the Board of Games, under that  
10 -- the commissioner is also somewhat underneath that  
11 Procedural Act also. So, if you'd like to make a motion  
12 that we'll send a letter to the Commissioner of Fish and  
13 Game and those powers that be, Governor's Office or I  
14 guess he's a commissioner of the governor, that if you  
15 want to make that motion and you said that this morning  
16 before the meeting, if you want to make that motion,  
17 we'll take a second and we'll make a -- we'll address  
18 that.

19  
20 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
21 would like to make a motion that Western Interior RAC  
22 send a letter to the Commissioner of Fisheries.  
23 Doug.....

24  
25 (Simultaneous speech)

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Doug Vincent-Lang  
28 at the Commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish.

29  
30 MR. WALKER: That we didn't have enough  
31 time to discuss this, when he put a seven-year moratorium  
32 on the Yukon, from the Canadian border to the mouth of  
33 the Yukon. And so, he also stated to me that we have a  
34 deal with the Canadian government to -- international  
35 agreement where we would agree to having them get their  
36 fish that are spawning grounds also but I said yes. And  
37 I did talk to you, Jack, earlier this morning, when we  
38 went over how many rivers tributaries off the Yukon we  
39 have that are spawning grounds? We have the Andreafsky  
40 River. We have the (In Native) River. We have the  
41 Bonasila River. We have the Anvik River. We have the  
42 Innoko River. We have the Koyukuk River. We have the  
43 Melozi. We have Nowitna River. We have the Tanana River,  
44 Shungnak and the others that you name.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Chandalar.

47  
48 MR. WALKER: Yes. So, we should put that  
49 all in there that we have spawning grounds, too.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Charley River,  
2 Beaver Creek, Birch Creek. There's a bunch of drainages  
3 that go into the Yukon that are on the Alaska side.

4  
5 MR. WALKER: Yes.

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: Tozitna.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, and yeah, Tozi.  
10 So, you're making a motion to send this letter regarding  
11 this, that there wasn't enough public process involved  
12 in the seven-year moratorium that we want to state, for  
13 the record, that it's actually a violation of the State  
14 Procedural Act, that they have to give notification to  
15 the public about these kind of things. And so, is that  
16 your motion, to that effect?

17  
18 MR. WALKER: Yes, that is the motion.  
19 Also, a carbon copy to the North Pacific Fisheries, if  
20 it's possible.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, are we going  
23 to send a copy to through the Board of the State -- of  
24 the Federal Subsistence Board process? You know, we have  
25 to make them aware of that also.

26  
27 MR. WALKER: Yes.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, do we have a  
30 second to that motion?

31  
32 MR. KRISKA: Second.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tommy.  
35 Any further discussion?

36  
37 (No response)

38  
39 MS. PELKIKKA: Question.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKFF: Question's called.  
42 All those in favor of submitting that letter to the  
43 Governor's office, the Commissioner of Fish and Game and  
44 the Federal Subsistence Board regarding this -- the  
45 violation of the Procedural Act and the seven-year  
46 moratorium for chinook harvest on the Yukon River  
47 signify by saying aye.

48  
49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Discussion, first.

2  
3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, oh.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: I'm just wondering if it  
6 goes to Commissioner Lang's office, do we need -- does  
7 it need to be carbon copied to the Subsistence Division  
8 for ADF&G or the state or federal managers for the Yukon?  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The commissioners  
11 in charge of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. He  
12 can share it with the managers, if he would like, but  
13 that's, he's at the top. And -- but.....

14  
15 MR. GERVAIS: So, you feel like getting  
16 to commissioners, enough?  
17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's directly to  
19 the commissioner. And if, I'm not sure. I would like to  
20 see the Attorney General's office see this thing,  
21 because it's actually -- it's there, it was in their  
22 court, when they allowed it.  
23

24 MR. GERVAIS: Well, here's the deal. Like  
25 we.....  
26

27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Wit and stop!  
28 Crystal. Are we going to violate the Hatch Act here?  
29 Even going this far? I don't want to go out in the deep  
30 water here.  
31

32 MS. LEONETTI: Why don't we take a  
33 minute? I can call my solicitor's office and find out.  
34 Yeah, and then.....  
35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We'll take a 15-  
37 minute break, stand down and so we can find that out.  
38 We can't violate this Hatch Act. And so, that's where  
39 we're going to stop this for a second, to make sure that  
40 who we're going to send this to.  
41

42 MR. GERVAIS: My comment was, when we have  
43 -- a lot of our correspondence with Commissioner of Fish  
44 and Game doesn't get responded to, potentially it's not  
45 getting acted on so, maybe the area managers or the  
46 Division of Subsistence never even knows that these  
47 things are getting transmitted, if Doug Vincent- Lang is  
48 just ignoring or putting it in the trash can. But it's  
49 generating a lot of paperwork so, maybe, just having it  
50 go to the commissioner themselves is enough of a action.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's the governor, the commissioner and the attorney general's office. That's who, actually, should have, should answer for this. This is five years late, you know, where I can, I recognize that this is five years into this thing. This would be the fifth year. So, we're going to stand down until.....

10  
11

(Simultaneous speech)

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MR. WALKER: Okay, Jack, one more. Jaz said, she said that Area M got a reduction of 136 hours in the drift fleet and 94 hours in the seine fleet. So, you know, this is going to be a lot more fishers going to be getting through. So, something, maybe, we would have to really take a good look at what the weir count would be. And, if we do have enough fish to go by or is there enough in that pod that comes through, maybe we should have to start taking a look with the state, with having a six-hour window or something like that.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If this has an effect of allowing a lot more chums to get through, of course their -- the Pilot Station sonar and the indices will affect that. And they will open if they have the fish. That's what we're waiting for, is for the fish. So, this may allow a huge boost of summer chums to come through. That would be the main thing that we're going to get is the chinook and summer chums are going to be saved in this windowed closure. So, the managers will then have the fish to have openings, and then they might allow six-hour openings with six-inch mesh or something. They might -- it's their discretion on how they're going to do that, how much fish they got and how they're going to prosecute the fishery. So, but this is good, this is a big deal. This is the first time the Board of Fish has ever wanted to own up to this bycatch problem at -- in Area M.

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MR. WALKER: Wait a minute. I think the picture that I showed from the newspaper to the Board, that all our eagles that moved out of Anvik and other places are moving to the Anchorage dump. And I had a -- there was a picture on the newspaper and I showed it to them. I think that took them back, because I -- that's our symbol. I said we can't have in our symbol going around eating trash dumps when there's, Mother Nature has food for them. Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.

00048

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're on break  
2 here. We're going to come back. Nissa.

3  
4 MS. PILCHER: So, we weren't actually  
5 done with the introductions on the phone when we veered  
6 into discussion with Sergeant Valentine. So, I just  
7 wanted to double check if there was anybody else on the  
8 phone that wanted to introduce themselves before we did  
9 take a break. Thanks.

10  
11 (No response)

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're in stand  
14 down until ten after 11 here. And we have a lot of  
15 agenda.

16  
17 (Off record)

18  
19 (On record)

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're going to come  
22 back on record. EIRAC's got a really a cool gavel that  
23 we kind of need. Charlie's got it now. So, Crystal's  
24 going to give us the legal interpretation from -- go  
25 ahead.

26  
27 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
28 the record, Crystal Leonetti. The letter that's being  
29 recommended to the commissioner would not violate the  
30 Hatch Act because it is not a partisan politics issue,  
31 it is -- and that's what the Hatch Act is about. I guess  
32 I will just add a little bit of my perspective here, and  
33 that is that we -- the Federal Subsistence program at  
34 large, and OSM is putting a lot of effort into improving  
35 our relationship with the state. We could take a  
36 different approach, maybe, and have Nissa do some  
37 research into the Public Meetings Act and see if  
38 something was violated there and maybe come back to you  
39 at your fall meeting and then determine if there was  
40 another, maybe more friendly approach. And the other  
41 thing I can do is talk to -- in my regular meetings with  
42 Deputy Commissioner Ben Mulligan, talk to him about it  
43 and see what I can find out.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don't know where  
46 Robert and Don are. I thought they were -- but I, we  
47 could table the motion until the fall meeting. I think  
48 there's probably some more information we need to gather  
49 for this motion. And I thought I saw Robert when I  
50 started banging on the table. Remember, they were

1 walking out the door when I did that. So, we're not --  
2 don't have quorum at the moment, so.

3

4 (Pause)

5

6 I hope they didn't go to lunch, because  
7 we're in the middle of issues here. We've got quite a  
8 bit of agenda and we need to have an action item, our  
9 annual report. This has to be -- and we've spent a bunch  
10 of time on this, but the public comments and the things  
11 that we did regarding this trespass issue are important  
12 to this Council, because that's what this Council does,  
13 is deal with any issue that's affecting subsistence in  
14 this region. So that's in the statute, 805, that's why  
15 we spent quite a bit of time on that. And, but we do  
16 need to move -- we do have action items that, to  
17 complete. And we're getting no response Tommy from? Are  
18 you getting anything back from Robert, did you text him?  
19 Oh, there's Don, we got we're back up to five members  
20 again. So, we need to -- we got to keep rolling here.  
21 Did you, do you know where Robert went, Don?

22

23 MR. HONEA: Yeah, he went -- I don't know  
24 what's the problem, but he went shopping, so.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh! Well, in the  
27 middle of his motion. So, we're going to -- so, at this  
28 point the motion is in discussion. We haven't called  
29 question. And as the Chair, I feel that there's some  
30 stuff that needs to be, as Crystal said, needs to be  
31 explored further about, you know, the Procedural Act  
32 stuff. So, we're going to -- I would like to table this  
33 motion until the fall meeting for further discussion.  
34 So, can we get a -- would somebody like to make a motion  
35 to table?

36

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

39

40 MR. HONEA: Second.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: To table. Go ahead,  
43 discussion. Go ahead.

44

45 MR. HONEA: Yeah, under discussion, I  
46 just got back here. Are we talking about the same one  
47 where.....

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert made a  
50 motion to write a letter to the -- to Doug Vincent-Lang

1 and the State of Alaska about the moratorium -- procedure  
2 of the moratorium on the Yukon River and then and left  
3 the meeting. So, that's going to table the -- that  
4 motion. There's a bunch of other information. Crystal  
5 told us that it, that there's some other avenues we have  
6 to document, whether the Procedural Act was actually  
7 violated. So, it'd be best to table this motion, and  
8 even if Robert was here until the full meeting. So, we  
9 get more information on it.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Okay, I, thank you, Mr.  
12 Chair. I was just, you know, it's kind of after the  
13 fact. I thought it was very good motion. And the fact  
14 that, after all these guys have trying to -- we should  
15 at least thank the powers that be that at least granted  
16 us little headway. But if there was a problem doing  
17 that, I second that emotion.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, those in  
20 favor of tabling the motion Robert and -- who seconded  
21 that one, Tommy or Don? So that we'll take up that  
22 motion.

23

24 MS. PILCHER: Tommy seconded it.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tommy. Okay. So,  
27 we'll table that until the following meeting, until we  
28 can gather more information, which will take a while to  
29 accumulate that. We have a lot of other agenda here. So,  
30 we spent a lot of time on other issues in the public  
31 comments and it was all good stuff. But we need to move  
32 now. So where are we at here?

33

34 MR. GERVAIS: We need to vote.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Oh, yeah.  
37 Correction. Those in favor of tabling the motion until  
38 the fall meeting signify by saying aye.

39

40 IN UNISON: Aye.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed.....

43

44 MR. VENT: Aye.

45

46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....same sign.

47

48 (No response)

49

50

1                   And are you, is Darrel here? Oh, you're  
2 here. Okay. Then, welcome back, Darrell. So, we're  
3 moving on to the annual report. So, we're moving on to  
4 annual report, which is on page 49. And so, some of the  
5 letters we were going to write last -- yesterday,  
6 regarding comments on the program review to include  
7 language regarding memorandum of understanding. That's  
8 kind of in our annual report. So, there's language that  
9 actually can be pulled out, you know, the subsistence  
10 issue. You know, this -- there was -- we have a  
11 discussion with the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
12 Council's not meeting national standards. We were  
13 discussing all that stuff. So, some of these points we're  
14 making in that late letter, the memorandum of  
15 understanding with the state, we were delineating the  
16 Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of State and the  
17 Department of Interior need a memorandum of  
18 understanding for trans-jurisdictional cohesion for  
19 salmon recovery. So, those can be pulled out of this  
20 annual report, which is on page 50 and 51. And so, did  
21 everybody read the annual report last night? That was  
22 the homework. And to review it. So, there is also the  
23 sheep management plan strategy. We're, that's in this  
24 finalization of the sheep management strategy. I would  
25 like, as part of this annual report, we have the sheep  
26 management strategies. Is that in the book here or the  
27 supplement, somewhere? Nissa?

28  
29                   MS. PILCHER: It is not in the meeting  
30 packet. I, for some reason did not print it. It will be  
31 included when it gets sent to the Federal Subsistence  
32 Board, though.

33  
34                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Only change which  
35 we reviewed the sheep management -- this Council's  
36 reviewed the sheep management strategy several times.  
37 The only change will be in the section -- can you? I  
38 sent you that. You did, you made that insertion into the  
39 plan. You, can you draw that up and read that into the  
40 record so that it's on the record. Because I would like  
41 to take a motion to adopt the sheep management plan for  
42 this region, Western Interior region, to submit to the  
43 Federal Subsistence Board so that they -- the managers  
44 within this region utilize the composition,  
45 predominantly the management strategies, but especially  
46 the composition of the sheep population. If you got  
47 caribou, you take Alaska Peninsula. It's small, medium  
48 and large bulls. It's moose, is the same thing. This is  
49 a management, this is science. This is what they do. The  
50 state does not delineate what the composition -- we have

1 to know when we have recovering sheep populations, we  
2 have to know what their age compositions are. So, half-  
3 curl tells you, you got three-year-old sheep that have  
4 come into the population. They've made it past their  
5 first critical parts of their life, and they're pretty  
6 much bulletproof right there. And they will -- have  
7 entered the population. Three-quarter curl tells us,  
8 also substantiate that you're maintaining those  
9 compositions. The number of the three-half and three-  
10 quarter curls tell you exactly what you're recruiting  
11 into the population. Ewe length tells you what your --  
12 what your population -- if you're recruiting. For every  
13 three-year old ram you have, you're also going to have  
14 the same amount of three-year old ewes. Three years old  
15 is when they're actually producing their first lamb. So,  
16 this is extremely important biological data that is not  
17 in any state management. It's all full curl and other  
18 rams and you can't parse this out unless you know exactly  
19 what your compositions are.

20  
21 So, we need to have science involved,  
22 and so, this management plan -- so, you're going to read  
23 that addition. We had -- I had in the -- in those, there  
24 was too many points of -- for ground survey, it was  
25 quarter curl, half curl, five-eighths, three quarter,  
26 seven-eighths, and full curl. That's okay for ground  
27 survey and (indiscernible). But from the air, half curl,  
28 three-quarter and full curl, it's easy to see. That's  
29 not hard to see. They can use videography of the ram --  
30 of the sheep when they're surveying. So, read that into  
31 the record and then we'll, I'll take a motion to adopt  
32 the sheep management plan for this region to submit to  
33 the Federal Subsistence Board at this time. Go ahead,  
34 Nissa.

35  
36 MS. PILCHER: All right. So, on page  
37 four, bullet three of your -- of the plan, the sentence  
38 now reads, all rams should be video recorded during the  
39 survey to make classification assessments after the  
40 survey. Classification of rams by curl should be one  
41 half, three-fourths and full curl, with the removal of  
42 five-eighths and seven-eighths from that sentence.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Nissa.  
45 And that's -- that was a discussion of the Gates of the  
46 Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission with the National  
47 Park Service and their ability to see the sheep clearly  
48 from the air, and that clarified that, for this  
49 management strategy. So, at this point, our sheep  
50 management plan has been out for review for two years,

1 since 2023. And so, the Chair will entertain a motion  
2 to -- with the amended language, submit that sheep  
3 management plan to the Federal Subsistence Board for our  
4 region, and the managers of sheep within our region will  
5 use that management strategy for -- as basically as real  
6 science. Because we're under ANILCA statute that says,  
7 fish and wildlife populations will be managed for using  
8 recognized scientific principles to maintain healthy  
9 populations. And I'm stating that on the record again.  
10 So, I'll take a motion to adopt.

11  
12 MR. HONEA: I'll make that motion, Mr.  
13 Chair.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion by Don. Do  
16 we have a second?

17  
18 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tim.  
21 Any further discussion on the sheep management issue in  
22 our -- at this time?

23  
24 MS. PELKOKA: Question.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Question's called.  
27 We're coming to vote. Jenny is called question on the  
28 sheep management strategy to be submitted to the Federal  
29 Subsistence Board for this region, signify by saying  
30 aye.

31  
32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And register  
35 Darrell. And so, that's -- we parse that out. That's  
36 part of our finalization of the sheep management  
37 strategy four, in their annual report. Those are the  
38 annual report. I don't see any other comments. Or do we  
39 have anything else, should we address here? Nissa, do  
40 you know of or Don or anybody? Other Council Members.  
41 The annual report is going to be submitted. So, anything  
42 for Don?

43  
44 (No response)

45  
46 No other Council <embers?

47  
48 (No response)

49  
50

1                   If not, the Chair will entertain a  
2 motion to adopt the annual report, which will be --  
3 which needs to be submitted, it's an action item for  
4 this meeting.

5  
6                   MR. HONEA: I would move to that effect,  
7 Mr. Chair.

8  
9                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved to the  
10 annual report to be transmitted to the Federal  
11 Subsistence Board Chair, Tony Christiansen. Do I have a  
12 second?

13  
14                   (No audible response)

15  
16                   Seconded by Jenny. Any further  
17 discussion?

18  
19                   (No response)

20  
21                   Is anybody going to call question?

22  
23                   (No audible response)

24  
25                   Question's called. Those in favor of  
26 adopting the annual report to be transmitted to the  
27 Federal Subsistence Board signify by saying aye.

28  
29                   IN UNISON: Aye.

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.....

32  
33                   MR. VENT: Aye.

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....same sign.

36  
37                   (No response)

38  
39                   Thanks, Darrell. Appreciate that. So,  
40 we're back into our -- let's see, we're on our agenda.  
41 So, we have these wildlife special action request 26-  
42 01. And Lisa is going to give us an overview of that.  
43 And then there's another one she's got. So, Nissa's  
44 passing this thing around. So, we're going to take a  
45 look at this. And so, and you're going to give an  
46 overview, Lisa?

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48                   MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

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50                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don.

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MR. HONEA: Yeah. Can I say something to the public here?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, go right ahead.

MR. HONEA: The reason I was a little late, I had to move my vehicle. So, I was wondering if any of you guys have vehicles out there. They're clearing that thing as we speak, and it's -- they asked me to move. Move your vehicle down there past the dining place. And so, I just want to tell you, I worry about that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks for that public service announcement, Don. So, Lisa, go right ahead.

MS. GREDIAGIN: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, my name is Lisa Grediagin with OSM. And so, I'll be presenting two wildlife special action requests regarding the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. The first request is from the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and request to reduce the harvest limit in Units 22, 23 and the southwest portion of Unit 26A, from 15 caribou per year, only 1 of which may be a cow, to 4 caribou per year only 1 of which may be a cow for the '26-'27 regulatory year. And this is due to the continued decline of the Western Arctic Herd. The most recent census is 121,000, and so the Western Arctic Working Group voted to have the status of the herd be critical/declining, and they submitted this request to the Board to help recover the herd. And they are also submitting a similar proposal to the Board of Game. But as you know, their meeting isn't until next March. So, if the Board of Game adopts this proposal, it wouldn't go into their regulation until 2027. And we also have, hopefully you guys have this map that just.....

(Simultaneous speech)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One.....

MS. GREDIAGIN: Oh, go ahead.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One moment. So, they're requesting 4 -- reduction to 4 caribou period or 4 caribou -- or 4 with 1 cow? 4.....

1 MS. GREDIAGIN: Correct. They are. The  
2 request, which I forgot to mention is on page 57 of your  
3 meeting binders.....

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

6  
7 MS. GREDIAGIN: So, yeah, sorry. Page 57  
8 of your meeting binders is the actual submitted request  
9 from the working group. And then, there's also this  
10 handout, the wildlife kind of like a flyer that provides  
11 different opportunities for engagement with the request.  
12 And then there's also this map that just depicts the  
13 federal public lands that would be affected by this  
14 request.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Where are these  
17 maps?

18  
19 MS. GREDIAGIN: They're on the back  
20 table.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, on the back  
23 table.

24  
25 MS. GREDIAGIN Okay. I don't know if your  
26 guys.....

27  
28 (Simultaneous speech)

29  
30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's okay.

31  
32 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, I kind of  
35 know where that's at. So, when I was talking to you  
36 yesterday, weren't -- didn't you say that they're  
37 planning on submitting a proposal for just, for caribou,  
38 elimination of cow?

39  
40 MS. GREDIAGIN: I don't believe so. I'm  
41 pretty sure they were submitting an identical request.  
42 (Indiscernible) was at the meeting. He's nodding his  
43 head in agreement. So, yeah, their request is 4 caribou  
44 per year, only 1 of which may be a cow. I will note that  
45 during the working group meeting, Alex Hansen, the ADF&G  
46 area biologist, you know, he really emphasized the need  
47 to completely eliminate cow harvest and feels extremely  
48 strongly that, you know, that's the best thing we can  
49 do to conserve the herd.

50

00057

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is OSM aware that  
2 the Department of Fish and Game may actually cause an  
3 issue on emergency order to eliminate cow harvest.

4  
5 MS. GREDIAGIN: Sorry. Say that again.  
6 Is the working group.....?

7  
8 (Simultaneous speech)

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is.....

11  
12 MS. GREDIAGIN: Oh. Is OSM aware?

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Aware that the  
15 Department of Fish and Game, Alex Hansen is -- may issue  
16 an emergency closure to cow harvest? If they get a summer  
17 survey and they see, like a phenomenal bad thing  
18 happening, they may issue an EO. And I would like to  
19 know what the response of the federal program, if the  
20 state issues a blanket cow closure, would that --  
21 wouldn't apply to the federal lands?

22  
23 MS. GREDIAGIN: No. I mean, the federal  
24 regulations currently are 15 caribou per year, only 1  
25 of which may be a cow. If this special action is adopted  
26 as submitted, then it would be 4 caribou per year, only  
27 1 of which may be a cow. I'll also just note, I mean,  
28 currently the Federal Public Lands in Unit 23 are closed  
29 to non-federally qualified users. The North Slope  
30 Council just voted to submit a special action to close  
31 federal public lands in that portion of Unit 26A, that's  
32 affected by this request. So, you know, the southwest  
33 portion of Unit 26A.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: To non-federally  
36 qualified users?

37  
38 MS. GREDIAGIN: To non-federally  
39 qualified users. And then the next special action  
40 request that you'll be considering from the Bering Land  
41 Bridge National Preserve is to close federal public  
42 lands in Unit 22 to caribou hunting by non-federally  
43 qualified users. Because, you know, if WSA26-01 is  
44 adopted, reducing the harvest limit to 4 caribou per  
45 year, 1 of which may be a cow, that would still leave  
46 lands open under state regulations for the 15 caribou  
47 per year, under state regs. So, yeah, there's a lot  
48 going on regarding the Western Arctic Caribou Herd with  
49 -- the North Slope just met yesterday to submit that  
50 special action, and we just received this other request

1 from Bering Land Bridge yesterday, as well, for Unit 22.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, what -- from  
4 Western Interior, they don't reference the rest of the  
5 range. Unit 24 is part of the Western Arctic Caribou  
6 Herd's range. They don't reference the rest of the range.  
7 And so, this is kind of like -- you know, closing or  
8 reducing -- federally emergency -- or special wildlife  
9 action doesn't eliminate the state hunt that now has 15  
10 with 1 cow. So, this work group had the opportunity to  
11 make us -- what do they call that when they have a  
12 special action under the Board of Game process? Nissa,  
13 not special.

14

15 MS. PILCHER: So, yeah, emergency order.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Urgent emergency  
18 order only. So, they could have requested an emergency  
19 order to -- for this year. The Western Arctic Caribou  
20 Herd group waffled. I listened to them waffle. They  
21 didn't really want to do much. They hardly want to talk  
22 about proposals. I was a little concerned. I am an  
23 alternate, but I wasn't on the -- I couldn't speak, I  
24 couldn't talk to the -- to that group. They wouldn't  
25 open my mic. And so, I feel that, if something really  
26 super bad happens, that it would behoove the Western --  
27 or Western Interior Regional Council to, you know, if  
28 they close it, close down to 4 caribou, it should happen  
29 for 4 bull caribou only, all throughout the entire range.  
30 And so, I don't feel comfortable about endorsing this  
31 proposal because it doesn't cover the range, if the state  
32 did it, then this special action should move forward.  
33 And how would that trigger if we endorse or whatever  
34 the, you know, this Council could actually say that we  
35 endorse if the State of Alaska, as an emergency closure,  
36 throughout the entire range of the Western Arctic  
37 Caribou Herd, that we would align the federal emergency  
38 special action to that emergency order. They might go  
39 to 2. I was alive in 1975 when the State Board of Game  
40 closed. We went from no closed season, no limit on the  
41 Western Arctic Caribou Herd. You could sell them, barter  
42 them, and use them for dog food. We went from that. No  
43 limit. 1850 caribou a year, no limit or thousands of  
44 caribou per year to two caribou bulls. Period. With  
45 locking tag we had to have a locking tag like a non-  
46 resident hunter. That's what we went to. And if they see  
47 this herd at 85,000 or some bad thing has happened to  
48 this herd and they have an emergency closure, our federal  
49 regulations should align because it would be 15 caribou  
50 with 1 cow, still. So how do we do that, Nissa? Lisa.

1 Not Nissa.

2

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MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah. Lisa Grediagin, for the record. And so, the Council can certainly modify this 26-01 to just say, you know, support with modification to close the cow hunt and reduce the harvest limit to 4 caribou per year. As far as, and as far as speaking for the state process, I mean, yeah, it's within their purview to do an EO, but.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It would be triggered. This -- our recommendation would be, if the State of Alaska went to emergency order closure, we would align with that closure. That's what we would like to do. Or do we submit another special action request to that effect? Do we just submit?

MS. GREDIAGIN: No.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This is a -- this is one before the, you know, this isn't going far enough. You know this, this one here is what is still allowing 1 cow. But that was written last year. We delivered in 2024. We delivered that portion of that back in '24 at the All RAC meeting. So, the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group might want to just go to 4 bulls. So, I don't feel comfortable endorsing this special action request because it doesn't cover the entire area. And it doesn't address what possibly could happen with the state, if the state freaks out and starts having an emergency closure, EO, I would be, maybe this discussion on the record here, that this Council feels strongly if, -- that if the Department of Fish and Game emergency closes cow harvest and goes to 4 caribou limit, that we would want the federal regulations to reflect that. Go ahead, Lisa.

MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin. I mean, the Council can recommend whatever you want. And so, if you want to have your recommendation be kind of contingent on state actions, you can make that recommendation.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I think that that's our best course forward is to -- because there's so much state land there. And the state has a 15 caribou bag limit right this minute, with 1 cow. So, we go to 4 caribou with 1 -- 4 caribou with only 1 cow, we're just way more restricted than everybody that just hunts on the state hunt. If the state closes everything down and

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1 it's an emergency, then we should -- the federal  
2 subsistence regulations should align with that. And so,  
3 that should be under -- contingent on if the State of  
4 Alaska has an emergency closure and that the state  
5 regulator -- the federal regulations will align with  
6 that emergency closure, with a special action request.  
7 And so, that would be triggered by that -- by the actions  
8 of the state. So that's clear, Lisa?

9  
10 MS. GREDIAGIN: I think so, Mr. Chair.  
11 And I would also just note, I mean, I'm not sure of the  
12 state process to like, initiate a petition for an  
13 emergency order. I know with Unit 20E, sheep and AC  
14 submitted some emergency petition, but.....

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're not  
17 submitting.

18  
19 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay. You're not  
20 interested in that.

21  
22 (Simultaneous speech)

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're not  
25 submitting.....

26  
27 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....a petition.  
30 We're contingent on the actions of the manager and the  
31 Department of Fish and Game, whether they're going to  
32 emergency close.

33  
34 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yes, I understand that.  
35 It was just kind of an additional, like, if you're  
36 interested in petition.....

37  
38 (Simultaneous speech)

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If they did that  
41 on the state land, we want it to happen on the federal  
42 land. This has nothing to do with the state land. This  
43 has to do with the federal land. We would like a  
44 contingent of a closure to the -- alignment with the  
45 federal -- with the state regulation on the federal  
46 public lands. Because we are within the Western Arctic  
47 Caribou Herd range, as we see on the map right here.  
48 We've got a bunch of those caribou come into our region,  
49 routinely. They're right there near Huslia all the time.  
50 So, is the Council good with the discussion to align

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1 with the State of Alaska, if there's an emergency  
2 closure?

3

4 (No response)

5

6 So how do we make a motion to that  
7 effect, Nissa? So, the Chair will entertain a motion to  
8 -- in regards to this special action request, that if,  
9 whatever actions the State Department of Fish and Game  
10 takes to protect the Western Arctic Caribou Herd this  
11 summer, if the state reduces their bag limit from 15  
12 caribou with 1 cow, a bag limit to whatever range of  
13 harvest they allow. that the Federal Subsistence Program  
14 will submit a special action request to align exactly  
15 with that, so that the state and federal regulations  
16 throughout the entire range, Unit 20, 26A 26, 23, 22  
17 entirety and 24 -- Unit 24, are aligned with that state  
18 of action, because I suspect heavily that the state might  
19 actually freak out if they have a continuing decline and  
20 they get a survey. So, that's clear for the OSM, the  
21 intention is of the motion?

22

23 MS. GREDIAGIN: Just one clarification.  
24 Lisa Grediagin for the record. So, I understand you're  
25 making the recommendation on WSA26-01. But your  
26 intention isn't for the Board -- is to submit -- is for  
27 the Federal Subsistence Program to submit a new special  
28 action contingent on what the state has.....

29

30 (Simultaneous speech)

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That has to happen.  
33 That would have, you.....

34

35 MS. GREDIAGIN: Versus just modifying 26-  
36 01?

37

38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It would be -- the  
39 Board's going to review these in April. And they're.....

40

41 (Simultaneous speech)

42

43 MS. GREDIAGIN: No, they're, sorry. I  
44 also, just in terms of the processing of this special  
45 action request, we're presenting them to the four  
46 Regional Advisory Councils. North Slope, Western  
47 Interior, Seward Peninsula and Northwest Arctic. There's  
48 a public hearing scheduled on April 9th, and then the  
49 Board is meeting on June 3rd to address it. So, I mean,  
50 that would be before -- well before the state conducts

1 a photo census. But it also takes the state a while to  
2 analyze the results of the photo census. So, they  
3 probably wouldn't have that until October, November at  
4 the earliest, the results of that photo census.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I -- my  
7 intention is to not take any action on these two special  
8 actions. We're not going to comment on them. We're not  
9 going to do anything, but we are going to be making a  
10 motion to, if the Department of Fish and Game for the  
11 Western Arctic Caribou Herd heard takes action to reduce  
12 the 4 bull caribou or whatever they may choose that we,  
13 immediately, we have a request standing with OSM to  
14 submit a special action to align specifically with that  
15 so that we're on the record, when that happens, it might  
16 happen in the summer and we're not going to be in  
17 session. So, this has to happen one way or another  
18 because I don't want people getting tickets for killing  
19 4 caribou or kill 1 cow with this special action. It'll  
20 be disparate. One way or another, it's more likely to  
21 be disparate. So, that's what I'm talking about.

22  
23 So, not taking action on these special  
24 actions, but having our own motion before the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board, OSM process to submit a special  
26 action request to align when-if that happens. It might  
27 not happen. But it's sitting there, you know, it's in  
28 the magazine. You might have to put in the chamber, sort  
29 of speak. So, is it clear what the direction that I  
30 would like this issue to go forward with for the Council?  
31 I see Tommy shaking his head. And you're good with that.  
32 So, the Chair will entertain a motion to submit a  
33 recommendation to the Office of Subsistence Management  
34 regarding the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Work Group,  
35 that if the Department of Fish and Game makes regulatory  
36 changes by emergency order, that the Office of  
37 Subsistence Management will submit a special action  
38 request to align exactly with that, so that that way we  
39 don't have disparate seasons or bag limits to the State  
40 of Alaska. And these other special actions are  
41 inadequate to address the issue because they're still  
42 not in alignment. So, is that clear, for the record?  
43 Lisa?

44  
45 MS. GREDIAGIN: Just two clarifications.  
46 I mean, we'd probably -- what OSM would do would just  
47 be submitted on behalf of Western Interior Council.

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes.

50

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1 MS. GREDIAGIN: And then, just to be  
2 clear on the units included Units 22, 23, that  
3 southwestern portion of 26A and then typically it's, I  
4 think units 24D and C, or you want all 24 included?

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: They go all the way  
7 to the Haul Road. 20, all of 24.

8  
9 MS. GREDIAGIN: All of 24. Okay. Because  
10 I think.....

11  
12 (Simultaneous speech)

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Because they've  
15 been east of the haul road, back in 2023, there were  
16 10,000 Western Arctic Caribou Herd, where the Porcupine  
17 Caribou Herd is right now. They were in the  
18 (indiscernible) Mountains. So, they go, you know, they  
19 -- that's historically, they've been way over there to  
20 the east, 24 is a minimum of where they -- where this  
21 should apply.

22  
23 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay. And then what about  
24 21D?

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 21D also, yeah,  
27 they're in the Nulato Hills. Yeah. So, this map is not  
28 actually inclusive of the Western Arctic range.

29  
30 MS. GREDIAGIN: Right. This is just  
31 inclusive of the working group's request. And I imagine  
32 the reason they did not include Units 24 and 21D is  
33 because, the last time the Board of Game acted on the  
34 proposal to reduce the harvest limits, they only reduced  
35 them in these areas. They didn't reduce them in 24 or  
36 21D.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, we would  
39 still want to protect the herd if they wandered into our  
40 region. But, you know, if they're over there in 24B, we  
41 don't want to have -- but I -- we could stay with this  
42 mapping. We would probably be best to stay with this  
43 mapping because this is probably what the department's  
44 going to do.

45  
46 MS. GREDIGIAN: Yeah, that's what I was  
47 going to say.

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we'll, yeah,  
50 we'll stay with this mapping and we'll discuss this

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1 further with regulatory discussions. Yeah, you're  
2 exactly right.

3

4 MR. VENT: Mr. Chair, this is Darrell.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.  
7 Go ahead, Darrell.

8

9 MR. VENT: Yeah. You know, I was in that  
10 meeting. You know, the concern that we started looking  
11 at, you know, with this 15 -- amount of 15 caribou was  
12 that it's going to go below 100,000 by the time we have  
13 this closure and we're trying to avoid that. So, when  
14 you say a line that -- that's what we needed there,  
15 because, if they're there near the Haul Road and you  
16 have subsistence users near the Haul Road, that would  
17 help alleviate the problem, so. And also with that, we're  
18 concerned about, you know, not only the cow caribou,  
19 it's the bulls, too. So, the size of the bull. We were  
20 discussing that, but there's no way to put that in there  
21 because we don't want them just to take it for the horn.  
22 We want them to take it for, you know, consumption. So,  
23 we didn't have any way of putting that in there either.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The Western Arctic  
26 Caribou Herd Work Groups special action request only  
27 applies to the federal public lands, but there's a whole  
28 bunch of state lands there that would still have the  
29 state -- unless the state changes the regulations to 4  
30 caribou, 1 bull on the state lands, this is only applying  
31 to the federal lands, we still have a huge bag limit  
32 under state regulations and a completely disparate to  
33 the restrictive federal hunt. That's why this plan that  
34 we have, the motion that we're trying to submit, is  
35 that, if the state reduces, you know, the state does not  
36 reduce their bag limit yet at all, under emergency. If  
37 the state reduces this summer, that we will align with  
38 the -- whatever the state's going to do. But this special  
39 action request only applies to the federal lands, and  
40 it's not addressing all of the entirety of Unit 23 and  
41 other portions. You know, mainly Unit 23 and 22 is what  
42 this is going for. So, do you understand that part,  
43 Darrell? That this does not -- the Western Arctic Caribou  
44 Herd Group's proposal only applies to the federal lands.  
45 It doesn't apply to the state lands, which is below the  
46 mean high water mark, which is where most of the caribou  
47 are killed in the Kobuk River. They shoot them in the  
48 river. So, that actually doesn't address the issue. The  
49 state has to address the issue, then we want to align  
50 with that. So, is that clear?

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MR. VENT: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. VENT: Yes. That's clear. I, you know, yeah, we were trying to figure out a way, because we need to make sure that all users agree with this. You know, it's -- it has to be put up in part of the state, too, not only just the federal.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. So, want to get that out there, in case something really happens, which I've seen that -- it happened in the summer of '75. Suddenly boom, go from like, all kinds of caribou to 2. You know, you have to find a vendor to give you this locking tag legally, because not a lot of people didn't know that. So, that's the motion, that's the language of the motion. And do we have any further discussion with that?

MR. VENT: Second.

MR. HONEA: Yeah. Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Who was the first motion to that?

MS. PILCHER: There wasn't one.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, we need a motion. So, you motion?

MR. VENT: Oh. This is Darrell. I entertain a motion, yes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, you motion, Darrell. And Don?

MR. HONEA: Second.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don, a second. Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Okay, under discussion. This thing here, an action item, we are neither supporting it nor opposing it, but we want the state to -- state and feds to.....

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: What we're doing  
2 is, we're not actually endorsing either one of these  
3 special actions. I don't think that they've addressed  
4 the issue. So, we're just going to let those lie. They're  
5 going to have to fight those on their own. But what  
6 we're saying before the Federal Subsistence Board, if  
7 the State of Alaska has a regulatory reduction, which  
8 they more than likely might, this summer, then we want  
9 the federal regulator -- we want to protect our  
10 subsistence users to be able to harvest with whatever  
11 the state regulation is, to protect the herd and do --  
12 so it's doing what, kind of what the Western Arctic Work  
13 Group is wanting, except it doesn't -- the work group  
14 is not -- proposals not addressing the whole entirety  
15 of the range. What we're doing is, is aligning whatever  
16 the state does on this map, which will entail this whole  
17 map. And so, it'll be exactly -- so we don't get --  
18 nobody's going to get mixed up, nobody's going to get  
19 tickets and we'll be good. So that's why this -- we're  
20 making the motion in this manner and in this.....

21  
22                   MR. HONEA: Thank you for clarifying --  
23 clarification on that.

24  
25                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
26 discussion?

27  
28                   (No response)

29  
30                   We're good? Anybody going to call  
31 Question?

32  
33                   (No audible response)

34  
35                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Question's called.  
36 Those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

37  
38                   IN UNISON: Aye.

39  
40                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Darrell's,  
41 affirmative. So, that addressed those special actions.

42  
43                   MS. GREDIAGIN: Mr. Chair, just to be  
44 clear for, you know, for OSM, when we're drafting the  
45 analysis. You know, you guys could either vote to  
46 officially take no action or -- on these two, or we  
47 would just say.....

48  
49                   (Simultaneous speech)

50

1 CHIARPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

2

3 MS. GREDIAGIN: We did not consider them  
4 and just, sorry, one other point is, well, we also could  
5 do for example, on 26-01, I mean, we could officially  
6 put the analysis that you voted to take no action, but  
7 then include a comment about how you submitted this  
8 contingent special action request, if you just -- that'd  
9 be a way to kind of get it on the Board's radar that,  
10 you know, it's kind of in the magazine or in the hopper,  
11 as you mentioned.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we'll take both  
14 special actions together to table them or to defer to  
15 region, rather defer to region. But well -- I will read  
16 into the record the reasoning behind why we're doing  
17 that. So, the Chair will entertain a motion to defer  
18 these special action requests. And you want to name the  
19 numbers for the record there, Lisa?

20

21 MS. GREDIAGIN: Sure. WSA26-01 and WSA  
22 26-02.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, those two  
25 special actions are bundled or deferred to region. And  
26 so, is anybody going to make a motion to that and then  
27 I'll read into the record why we're -- why they're  
28 inadequate?

29

30 MS. PELKOLA: So move.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Move by Jenny. Do  
33 we have a second?

34

35 (No audible response)

36

37 Second to deferral. So, under  
38 discussion, we're defer -- deferring those to region  
39 because they do not adequately protect the interest of  
40 the subsistence users, because there's disparities in  
41 the regulations on state and federal lands. And that the  
42 Department of Fish and Game is more likely to have a --  
43 an emergency order to restrict harvest on the Western  
44 Arctic Caribou Herd if they get an additional decline  
45 in the survey. And so, our recommendation and our motion  
46 to trigger a special action request to align with this  
47 -- with the State Department of Fish and Game's emergency  
48 order is submitted. And so, that would remedy the issue  
49 for subsistence users, protection of our subsistence  
50 users, and protection of the Western Arctic Caribou

1 Herd, as found by the State Board of -- or State  
2 Department of Fish and Game. Is that clear enough, Lisa?

3

4 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yes.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's all  
7 transcribed, also. So, that motion's before us. Do we  
8 have a question on that motion to defer?

9

10 MR. HONEA: Question.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Question's called.  
13 Those in favor of that motion signify by saying aye.

14

15 IN UNISON: Aye.

16

17 MS. PELKOLA: Aye. I said aye.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I saw you  
20 nodding your head, but. Okay. So we, that motion is  
21 adopted. Any further discussion? Lisa.

22

23 MS. GREDIAGIN: I'm looking at Nissa. Did  
24 you guys vote on your first motion to submit that special  
25 action request?

26

27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes.

28

29 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah.

32

33 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. There was two  
34 different motions that were made during that discussion,  
35 and I figured I'd clean it up later. But if it needs to  
36 get addressed now, we can. But there was two. Yeah.

37

38 (Talking)

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're thinking  
41 outside the box, so to speak. So, Nissa, what do you  
42 think about where we're at in the agenda and lunch and  
43 all that?

44

45 MS. PILCHER: So, we have 1 more -- 1 to  
46 3 more action items left. It's just the calendar.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

49

50

1 MS. PILCHER: So, I would really like to  
2 get through that during lunch.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Before lunch?

5  
6 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. Excuse me. Before  
7 lunch.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Page 61.

10  
11 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. Page 61 is the fall  
12 2026 meeting calendar. The Council currently has  
13 selected October 6th and 7th in Aniak, for your next  
14 meeting. So, these are action items so, what you can do  
15 is, you can either take up each fall, winter and fall  
16 meeting individually and do three different motions. Or  
17 you can take them up all together at the end. It's up  
18 to you, but they are an action item.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I'm still good  
21 with -- we selected October 6th and 7 down in Aniak and  
22 I'm still good with that. Is the Council still okay with  
23 -- on page 61, going to Aniak during those times? Don,  
24 go ahead.

25  
26 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was  
27 just wondering the logistics of meeting in Aniak. I know  
28 we had problems before and you know, with the, I guess  
29 with setting up the sound system or whatever, maybe  
30 something has changed, but I certainly wouldn't like to  
31 overlook McGrath when we had the set on this past fall  
32 to go there and we didn't so. Is that an option or is  
33 it set in stone that we meet in Aniak?

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We've met in  
36 McGrath multiple times since we met in Aniak, the last  
37 time we met in Aniak -- remember, we were down there and  
38 we're in this gym that was like an echo chamber. Well,  
39 it fell down. Come to find out, it fell down. So, they -  
40 - hopefully, have a new community center that we can meet  
41 and that has way better acoustics. We had people from me  
42 to Tommy, within 10-12ft of me that couldn't hear me  
43 across because the echo was in the room. There were, the  
44 public was from here to that desk in front of us, they  
45 couldn't hear us. That was completely unacceptable. And  
46 Nissa was exploring areas to meet in last year, you know  
47 this, after that, did you -- and so, we need to work with  
48 their tribe down there to come up with -- they probably  
49 have a tribal hall or some other place. They have to have  
50 a meeting besides that stupid gym. So, Don.

1

2 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Mr. Chair, I -- thank  
3 you. You know, I have no qualms about meeting in Aniak  
4 and I think it'd be great for, you know, the villages  
5 in that area to perhaps, even Aniak, to get somebody on  
6 the Board. But, you know, I thought about McGrath and I  
7 realized that we haven't been to Aniak a long time, but  
8 you know, logistics wise, I mean, how do we get there?  
9 Is it much easier or than, you know, even logistics in  
10 getting to McGrath is -- so, I don't know, I would leave  
11 that up to you know, I mean, comment from our coordinator  
12 and working that out.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, comment on  
15 that. If you look at our map, this map here, we have  
16 Robert who is going, you know, not -- is now going to  
17 retire, we have virtually no one in the lower part of  
18 this region. I'm really super concerned about that. I'm  
19 not a little concerned, I've been concerned about that  
20 for years. And if we go to Aniak and we tried to go to  
21 Aniak in 2023, and the weather got bad and whatever  
22 happened, we couldn't go there. Weather. We couldn't get  
23 down there. So, we -- I would like to go down there.  
24 It's still like, it's quite a bit later fall there. It's  
25 flat. It's kind of like going to Galena. It's not hard  
26 to get in there. They got commercial air carriers going  
27 in there and then Rights goes down in that region and  
28 possibly we could get a continuance on to charter down  
29 from there. Nissa will have to figure that one out to  
30 get us there. But the reality is, if we're in Aniak,  
31 maybe we can get some memberships and we'll have Orville  
32 there with a whole -- or at least Orville, give us a  
33 whole bunch of apps, applications, and we'll be passing  
34 those out. Because we need to have people from that  
35 area. There's a lot of people down there, and they're  
36 completely unrepresented, and they're basically --  
37 they're not -- when I see moose proposals that give  
38 right over the border in Unit 18, of allocations for  
39 villages in 18, but not in our region, I'm concerned  
40 that we're not having enough meetings down there. Really  
41 concerned about that part. I know -- you know, we had  
42 meetings down there and we had Carl Morgan. So, we spent  
43 quite a bit of time on the Aniak things that, the issues.  
44 And so, I would -- we need to have people like, that  
45 have knowledge from that area on this Council. And going  
46 to Aniak is probably one of the most important things  
47 we can do this next year is to go to Aniak. If -- that,  
48 if it can work out. So, Don.

49

50

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Mr. Chair, thank you.  
2 I completely agree with that. And I think we make that  
3 a driving force when we do go there. Make a plea to the  
4 villages and, you know, wright to the people there and  
5 put out, you know, maybe have a, some good public forum  
6 and notifying them because that's a big thing. I mean,  
7 it is a big thing to -- I really miss Dennis from Crooked  
8 Creek or Red Devil or wherever, and he passed on after  
9 we met in Galena. But that there is really lacking and  
10 it's sad to me, you know, the Kusko is not even  
11 represented, so if that is a driving force, I completely  
12 agree with you. Thank you.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead,  
15 Jenny.

16  
17 MS. PELKOLA: I also would like to go to  
18 Aniak because of -- I know they have a lot of issues  
19 down there, too that we don't know about, and we can't  
20 really help them if we don't know about it. So, I think  
21 we need to really, really push to get at least one person  
22 on there. And I don't know how to do it. I think, just  
23 maybe let them know that we're coming there and make a  
24 big announcement and send something to the schools  
25 and.....

26  
27 (Simultaneous speech)

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And they have  
30 radio.

31  
32 MS. PELKOLA: (Indiscernible).

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: They have radio  
35 stations, you know, like Galena radio. And I would also  
36 -- we have the director of OSM here. We want this meeting  
37 to be on Teams or whatever platform you're using, so  
38 that we have -- and there's a lot of people in villages.  
39 I got Starlink at home. I got 108 -- 288 megabyte  
40 download. I can do Zoom meetings, all or Teams all day  
41 long. And a lot of people got them now, or things have  
42 changed in 2 or 3 years to where everybody's getting  
43 pretty connected. You know, upriver, you know, Red  
44 Devil, Crooked Creek, you know, Chuathbaluk and down  
45 river, those people can actually -- those tribes can  
46 actually get on that -- on a meeting. If it was happening  
47 out in Aniak, they might want to travel to the meeting,  
48 but they also might just want to sit on and comment to  
49 us. They want to look at it. They want to see us. We're  
50 working with the Board support. We're having Zoom

1 meetings. You know, we actually can see each other.  
2 Darrell's on Zoom right here. But we need to be -- have  
3 the availability of the public to see this. And there  
4 are these round things that you can see everybody in the  
5 room. So, we need one of those, right there. Not over  
6 there. Because I can't see people on the other side of  
7 the room. I mean, it has to be right there in front of  
8 those -- in front of this Council. So, we're looking at  
9 -- the people can look at us and they can interact. And  
10 we have more, you know, it's like light years ahead of  
11 being on the phone. So, we want that to occur at the  
12 meeting. I've advocated with OSM, since I got you in the  
13 room and there, Crystal I'm going to keep -- I feel OSM  
14 needs to buy their own Starlink. I bought it for \$270.  
15 I pay \$90 a month for the subscription. You're going to  
16 have each coordinator, if they have a meeting, they take  
17 their Starlink with them. They set -- they put it right  
18 -- I throw it out there, on that chair and it'll point  
19 it at the satellites. I have a -- record through the  
20 door, we're not relying on these phone systems and all  
21 this garbage with a super clear platform. So, they took  
22 it away from the Russians. So, there's lots of bandwidth  
23 out there now. So, I would like to see that at that  
24 meeting. At the -- at all of these Regional Council  
25 meetings, I would like to see that available. So, I  
26 think we're good on Aniak. Is the dates good for the  
27 Council? Tommy?

28

29 MR. KRISKA: Yes.

30

31 MS. PELKOLA: Good for me.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim?

34

35 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're good with  
38 that. And then the next one is on the next page there?

39

40 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. So, the next page is,  
41 as you notice, they're completely blank, because you and  
42 North Slope are the first Councils that are meeting this  
43 cycle. So, the -- these meeting dates are entirely open  
44 to you guys right now. So, find two days in there that  
45 you guys can meet. And just remember, when I call you  
46 this summer about coming to Aniak, I'm going to remind  
47 everybody that that's where everybody wanted to meet.  
48 And I'm hoping to see everybody's faces there.

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50 MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MS. PELKOLA: I have a question. I think that both of them, they both said fall meetings, though.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: These -- yeah, there's winter meeting and fall -- see, this is the '27, and this is the way it's laid out here. We're going to address the one on page 63, would be the winter meeting of '27. And then we're going to go to the fall meeting of '27, on page 62. So, since we have a clean slate in front of us, we get to pick of when we would like to meet. If we're going to meet in the winter meeting, we're having our fall meeting in Aniak, we like to have a winter meeting here in Fairbanks, if we could, because we have better access to here. It's cold and so it's harder to do stuff in Galena or McGrath or somewhere else. So, if the Council would like to select one of these dates here, like the week of March 2nd or the, or this again, this the week of -- we have to travel on a Monday because where I live we don't -- they don't fly on weekends and that's harder to travel on weekends. So, it's best to have the meeting in the mid week time frame. So, what's the wishes of the Council on preferably the 23rd of February or the 2nd of March? We could go even into the middle of March. But then you get into these spring carnivals and stuff and people are going to dog races and then you get really bottled up. And when is TCC's meetings? Do you -- does any members here have -- see any conflicts with other meeting cycles? Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: My first choice would be meeting the 17th and 18th of February. My second choice is the 23rd or 24th of February. Most of the time I'm fishing in March, so.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. GERVAIS: That's more problematic. But I realized you've said you don't like to meet in February because of.....

(Simultaneous speech)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One week is a big deal. It could be the difference of having 60 -- I've seen 60 below zero and -- 50 and 60 below zero. And you have to -- the temperatures start to -- if it's this

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1 daytime temperature rise thing. So, the sun is  
2 increasing rapidly. This is the first week that I feel  
3 comfortable actually going into a meeting.

4

5 MR. GERVAIS: All right. Well, I can make  
6 that the week of the 22nd through 26th work.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: And then, if it's in March,  
11 I could do it by teleconference.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, the week  
14 of the 20 -- meeting dates 23, 24 or something to that  
15 effect, is that good for the Council?

16

17 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I agree with that. In  
22 February it'd be perfect. I mean, March is just, even  
23 from the 1st of March on, is so -- any dates that you  
24 choose. February 22nd on is great for me.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Well, 23, 24.  
27 Then we get travel day the Monday and we fly -- can fly  
28 on the Thursday and Friday to go, get back home again.  
29 So, Fairbanks is that a good place for this -- for the  
30 winter meeting 20 -- on the 27th -- winter '27? So,  
31 Fairbanks is the location? Affirmative with that.

32

33 MR. GERVAIS: And then what are we doing,  
34 the Tuesday, Wednesday?

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tuesday, Wednesday  
37 would be better, or we could do Wednesday, Thursday, if  
38 that works out. But what's the preference of the Council?  
39 What's as far as your travel?

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: My preference is 23rd and  
42 24th. Tuesday. Wednesday.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Nissa.

45

46 MS. PILCHER: I'll speak for Robert,  
47 since he's not here. I think he can come in on Mondays  
48 and out on Thursdays, but I think those are his  
49 restrictions. So, if we did have it Tuesday, Wednesday,  
50 that would be good for him.

1

2

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. All right. Travel 22nd, meeting 23 and 24 in Fairbanks for 2027 winter meeting. And then, in the fall meeting of '27, which would be after that, again, early -- moose season goes through the 1st of October and so, went, you know we don't have -- the earlier in October the better, as you move into mid-October, you start to get like freezing, real time freeze up. You get lots of bad weather. Locations for that winter meeting can be -- or fall meeting can be in McGrath or Galena. That's kind of our hub communities. And we have, we don't have any other options than those, Nissa? Aniak was our other.

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MS. PILCHER: I mean, you could choose to meet somewhere smaller. Like, for example, I know you guys met in Holy Cross once. If you did choose something other than those hub communities, I'd request that you give me a secondary backup in case we can't make it work. But if you wanted to meet somewhere else, other than those hub communities within the region, you can always -- we can always try.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The fall meeting is -- we had meetings in the Nulato, runways on the hill. Bad weather all the time. Ruby could barely affect -- our court recorder was stuck there for two days in '07, because that runway is in the fog bank up there. Galena is good. Holy Cross is good because the runway is flat down on the -- next to the river. Typically, they want to -- we -- they had, like, the tribe or I forget what it was at Holy Cross. We stayed -- and we could stay in like this house there when we had a meeting down there, if you know, when that was, that was a while back. So, we could have a meeting like in Holy Cross. Koyukuk, don't know about Huslia. Don't know about -- what Huslia -- are you there, Darrell?

(No response)

Still there, Darrell?

(No response)

Did you drop off? Are you muted, Darrell?

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, can I comment?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

1

2 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
3 know, just for the record and just, you know, my own  
4 opinion. We haven't met in the GASH areas for quite a  
5 while. When we did meet in Holy Cross, it was pretty  
6 good accommodations. We had rooms there, and the meeting  
7 was really good so, you know, I really think whether  
8 it's Holy Cross or Grayling or Shageluk or Anvik, we  
9 haven't met there, and maybe it's an option.

10

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And, you know,  
13 Wright Air starts -- goes down there. And what's their  
14 schedule, Monday and Thursday? It's the same schedule  
15 as Robert. So, they could -- we could go on fare flights  
16 with Wright's down there to Holy Cross, apparently.  
17 Hopefully. You could check on that.

17

18

19 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. The -- I would  
20 probably look into a charter so you guys can kind of  
21 choose whenever. Because what would end up being the  
22 bottleneck was is if you needed to be in Fairbanks to  
23 depart on a Monday. You wouldn't be able to get here  
24 until the week prior because I wouldn't be able to bring  
25 you in on Sunday. So, there's some logistics. So, if you  
26 pick dates and I'll work the summer to try to figure out  
27 what it looks like, because you'll be revisiting the  
28 dates and the locations again. And if I run into -- if  
29 we move -- if we run into -- if we just shifted a little  
30 bit, it'll work out easier. Then I can bring that up at  
31 a later point.

31

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Is that early  
34 October like 5-6 good for the Council for that fall  
35 meeting?

35

36

36 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

37

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And so, yeah,  
40 I -- well when we went to Holy Cross, we went on a  
41 charter that was Orville I think, took us down there. I  
42 think -- you went there, didn't you, Tim? Holy Cross.

42

43

43 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I was there.

44

45

46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, I remember  
47 that time. Yeah. So, that's good for those dates and  
48 that place. Holy Cross. Yeah, I -- Holy Cross we had a  
49 lot of participation. So, they actually, you know, we  
50 got people from upriver there, would come down Aniak or  
51 Anvik and there's Paimiut and there's.....

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MR. GERVAIS: If we did Anvik, that would take away a lot of Robert's excuses for not being there.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Anvik's on the hill. And we went there. We went to Anvik. It was a nice place. It was a really -- it was a good meeting. I'm really, I'm afraid of the fall with those fog sits on those ridges all the time. That -- there was happened to be nice weather when we went to Anvik. It was a beautiful meeting. Yeah, the little kids made us posters and all kinds -- it was really a cool meeting. So -- but I -- that the -- those -- Holy Cross is the runway, it's like Koyukuk, the runway right down the river, not up on the hill. So, Holy Cross is good?

MS. PELKOLA: Sounds good.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, that's affirmative for that. Fifth and sixth. Motion to adopt these meeting dates and for the -- and location that would be for the fall of 2026, the fall of -- winter of 2027, Fairbanks. Fall is in, fall of 2026 is in Aniak, October 6 and 7. Winter meeting is in Fairbanks, February 23-24. Fall meeting of '27 is in Holy Cross, October 5 and 6. That's the, oh, we need a motion to that effect.

MR. HONEA: I move.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Don.

MR. VENT: Second.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny. Darrell's there. And further discussion. You got discussion on that, Darrell?

(No response)

You're kind offline there, for a little bit.

MR. VENT: Oh, no. I'm fine with everything. Okay. Just, you know.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Okay. Question's call those in favor of those meeting locations and dates, signify by saying aye.

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IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

(No response)

So that's good. We should go to lunch break. It's 25 after 12. One hour? 1:30? Does that sound good to the Council? So, stand down till 1:30.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're going to bring the meeting back to order. And -- because we got a lot of stuff going on, we have -- let's see. Kuskowim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is up first, and then we're going to go to BLM. And get to BLM, we're time certain on that one, so. Turn the mic on and state your name for the record.

MR. LEON: Good afternoon, everyone. For the record my name is Justin Leon and I'm with the Kuskowim River Inter Tribal Fish Commission, I'm the research director.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Hi. Good afternoon, Justin. Continue.

MR. LEON: Thank you. Appreciate it. Good afternoon, everyone. Mr. Chair, Members of the Council, appreciate the opportunity to speak today. I'll be giving our RAC report. And just to remind everyone and a big shout out to Nissa for making this happen. The document I'm going to go over is provided for you in your meeting binders in the back and the additional materials pocket. Thank you for that.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. LEON: And while y'all are grabbing that, I also wanted to plug for the 2025 indices and summary, that is back there as well, which I will not be going over, but I'll make another plug for it at the end there just -- if and when you have time. But as far as the RAC report goes, I just wanted to start off with a brief introduction to the Fish Commission. I know the Yukon Fish Commission has been brought up a couple times

1 today. The Kusko has as well. And again, the Kuskokwim  
2 River Inter Tribal Fish Commission, we support the 33  
3 federally recognized tribes of the Kuskokwim River  
4 region. This is in fisheries management, research,  
5 monitoring, and then also outreach and advocacy. We're  
6 just working to blend multiple ways of knowing. We've  
7 got the indigenous traditional knowledge and then the  
8 Western science, of course. And so what I'm providing  
9 are some of the highlights from the 2025 season. Starting  
10 with the 1st page here, you can see kind of how we're  
11 composed, our leadership. Every two years we re-elect  
12 or we elect people to serve as the Chair, Vice Chair,  
13 and then the Secretary. That kind of -- the main people  
14 of our Executive Council. What you can see here is our  
15 Chair is Martin Andrew from Kwethluk. Jonathan Samuelson  
16 is from the Middle River and Georgetown. We've got Paul  
17 Cleveland in Quinhagak and -- serving as the Secretary.  
18 And I mentioned all this, and I know that this is the  
19 Western Interior RAC, and it's been talked about even  
20 before we broke for lunch, that in terms of the specific  
21 boundaries for the Western Interior, it covers the upper  
22 half of the river but us as an organization, we really  
23 try to be river wide. I'll focus on some of the  
24 positions, people to contact from the Western Interior,  
25 but just keep in mind that everything we do is river  
26 wide, and I'll speak to that a couple more times but  
27 just to throw that out there. I think moving forward,  
28 in terms of our Executive Council Members sticking with  
29 those that are in the Western Interior -- Yeah?

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If I may ask you,  
32 how many communities are within our region, Western  
33 Interior region? To be like.....

34  
35 (Simultaneous speech)

36  
37 MR. LEON: You know.....

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....8 or 10.

40  
41 MR. LEON: If it goes -- let me see. So,  
42 I know it goes from Aniak up. So, if I'm doing a --  
43 Kalskag. Thank you. Yes, Kalskag. Appreciate that. If I  
44 had to do a count on it. So, we've got 33, 10-15 or so.  
45 That's a rough just off the top of my head. I don't have  
46 a list in front of me.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I see. Yeah,  
49 I got it on my map.

50

1 MR. LEON: Yeah.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOF: So, continue.

4

5 MR. LEON: Okay. Yeah. No problem, no  
6 problem. So, yeah. And as Tim said, yeah, from Kalskag  
7 up. Executive Council Members. We divide the tribes of  
8 the Kuskokwim River Inter-tribal Fish Commission,  
9 divided themselves up according to what they saw best  
10 into seven units from the headwaters down to the coast  
11 throughout the Kuskokwim. And then we've got one  
12 representative from each unit. For the Western Interior,  
13 that's Betty Magnuson of McGrath, Jonathan Samuleson in  
14 Georgetown, Tracy Simeon and Chuathbaluk. And in terms  
15 of in-season managers for the co-management, we've got  
16 the some of the same players. We've got Betty Magnuson,  
17 we've got Tracy Simeon. And in terms of elder advisors,  
18 which put and bring forth their knowledge and everything  
19 that we do, we've got one from the lower river and then  
20 one from the upper river, which represents the Western  
21 Interior. That's Nick Alexie, Sr. And just wanted to let  
22 you all know if you didn't, that he actually recently  
23 passed away within the last week or so.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

26

27 MR. LEON: And -- yeah. And so, thoughts  
28 and prayers for him and his family's way, is a great guy  
29 and just definitely missed. Now moving forward and  
30 looking at us as an organization again, we just recently  
31 hit our ten-year mark since establishment. And with  
32 that, there's definitely been changes over the years.  
33 I'm going to the next page now. And one thing that I  
34 wanted to focus on is a current full time staff. When  
35 we started, there were multiple years where there was  
36 no full time staff. But as you can see, the slew of  
37 people here that are listed, we've got Kevin Whitworth  
38 who's been mentioned earlier today. He used to serve on  
39 this RAC. He's our Executive Director. Myself. Andrew  
40 Magel, a fisheries biologist. Erol Marotti, fisheries  
41 technician, Jesuit volunteer. Terese Vicente, who  
42 normally frequents these spaces. She's our Policy and  
43 Programs Director. And then we've got Elyssa Loughlin,  
44 who's our Communications Coordinator. So, with this, I'd  
45 like to add that we get additional support from several  
46 contractors and a number of different ways, you can read  
47 that there. But then also a big thanks to others such  
48 as Avery Hoffman, who was a fisheries biologist with us  
49 but now works with his tribe heading up natural  
50 resources. His tribe is in Bethel. And then we've got

1 Daniel O'Connor, who served in Erol's position as a  
2 fisheries technician/Jesuit volunteer in the past. So  
3 they've moved on, but really thankful for them. And then  
4 moving forward and looking at 2026, we're looking to  
5 bring on a fisheries ecologist. We're currently  
6 advertising for another fisheries biologist, and we're  
7 hoping to fill other positions such as a community -- a  
8 community knowledge coordinator.

9  
10 And going further, I'm going to start  
11 to go into some of the aspects that I mentioned at the  
12 beginning. First, I want to talk about the co-management  
13 that we do on the Kuskokwim River alongside and with the  
14 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Yukon Delta  
15 National Wildlife Refuge. You can see here that we've  
16 got ten-years of co-management celebrated. Even more  
17 than that with federal management on the Kuskokwim. And  
18 I'd like to take a second to say that it's been just  
19 very successful in a number of ways. For instance, if  
20 you look at it black and white in terms of meeting  
21 escapement goals, which I'll go a little bit more into,  
22 but not much. Every year that co-management has been in  
23 place, we have met the escapement goals, specifically  
24 the river wide one for Chinook, which is what kind of  
25 started the whole establishment of the Fish Commission  
26 in terms of trying to do better for Chinook. It's since  
27 grown to include chum and coho as well, but that's what  
28 started things.

29  
30 And so wanted to go into 2025. If we can  
31 go to the next page. Basically, the season was from June  
32 3rd to August 5th, and we were able to provide 15 fishing  
33 opportunities throughout the season. With that, you can  
34 see that on June 19th, we were able to open sections of  
35 the river to 24/7 fishing for gillnet, and then even  
36 further rod and reel fishing for all species within  
37 federal waters of the Kuskokwim was able to open on July  
38 27th. And then, if you look in the next paragraph, August  
39 7th, management was rescinded back to the State of Alaska  
40 through the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. And  
41 overall feelings that we got, feedback we got from the  
42 people, were that they were thankful for the fishing  
43 opportunities that were provided. Thankfully, it was a  
44 little better than in the last couple years in terms of  
45 opportunities and overall fish people were able to put  
46 away and you know, they were they were just thankful and  
47 hope to build on it, you know, to be able to build on  
48 and be able to practice their what they've always done.

49  
50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. I have one  
2 question.

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4                   MR. LEON: Sure.

5  
6                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the people were  
7 happy to get the fish. I'm wondering what the condition  
8 of the fish were. Did you -- were the people happy with  
9 the -- was there a size increase? Were the fish fatter  
10 than they had been? And some of those? The quality of  
11 the fish indicates the quality of the escapement. So,  
12 did you get any indication about that?

13  
14                   MR. LEON: Yeah, I can speak in, in  
15 general because we've had some work going into this based  
16 on people's feedback. In particular, the feedback that  
17 I can remember at the moment didn't speak to the 2025  
18 season. And quality, whether it's the fatness of the  
19 fish, the eggs, number or size. But in general, people  
20 of the region have noticed a decrease in both size, egg,  
21 egg size as well, fat content, that kind of a thing. And  
22 so with that, that does play into the co-management that  
23 occurs. But in terms of people's feedback that I just  
24 spoke to, it doesn't address that specifically. I could  
25 look into the feedback that we get and have an answer  
26 for you later via email, but at the time, I'm not aware  
27 of this particular.

28  
29                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'm in the Koyukuk  
30 River Advisory Committee. We had a -- the coho run was  
31 stronger than expected on the on the Yukon, and the  
32 quality of the fish had increased. They were larger and  
33 they were fatter than they had been on the Yukon. So, I  
34 was wondering if the same results -- if the trophic  
35 level in the ocean is actually increasing to where the  
36 fish on the Kuskokwim are responding with size or fat,  
37 and you don't have to get back to us now. But if you  
38 could message it over to Nissa or myself. I'm looking  
39 for that kind of information about the -- quality of the  
40 escapement is what it's actually would indicate. Go  
41 ahead.

42  
43                   MR. LEON: Yeah, you're exactly right.  
44 And just before I move on, I do know that at the  
45 beginning of the season, people talked about, you know,  
46 the fish are coming in, they're coming in strong at the  
47 beginning, and they did seem bigger. I do not know or  
48 remember if that occurred throughout the entire season.  
49 No.  
50

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Okay.

2

3 MR. LEON: Yeah. And so, in terms of  
4 looking at the numbers, we at the Fish Commission come  
5 up with harvest estimates based on in-season data that's  
6 collected on fishing. Others may speak to that later, and  
7 I'll speak to that a little bit more in terms of that  
8 project. But for now, just so that you can see what was  
9 estimated in-season was around 90,000 fish, salmon that  
10 were collected or I'm sorry, that were harvested. And  
11 that is the most that we've seen since we started doing  
12 these in-season harvest estimates through the Fish  
13 Commission. The breakdown is about 35,000 Chinook, 21,000  
14 chum, 32,000 sockeye and just under 2,000 coho. And just  
15 as a note, we -- I said we relinquished August 7th back  
16 to the state. And so, when that happens, we don't do any  
17 more harvest estimation. So, for instance, the coho 2000,  
18 we assume that would have continued to go up.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Another question  
21 is the 38 or the 34,800 Chinook, is that in the lower  
22 end of the customary range, or is that a half or, you  
23 know, what would be previous to the decline? Is that --  
24 is it approaching what subsistence needs are, or is it  
25 still like only half or something like that?

26

27 MR. LEON: So, I'll apologize again. I  
28 know it's not at that number in terms of like ANS levels  
29 and things like that. I want to say that it falls short  
30 by at least 5- to 10,000, if not 20,000. But again, I  
31 don't have that number in front of me. I could pull it  
32 up, but it didn't get there.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah.

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36 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

39

40 MR. GERVAIS: If my memory serves me  
41 right, I would say a pre-collapse estimate of  
42 subsistence harvest on the Kuskokwim was 100,000 kings.

43

44 MR. LEON: I appreciate that. Thank you.  
45 Yeah.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Thanks, Tim.  
48 So, continue. I'm just -- as I -- as you're perking my  
49 interest, I'm going to stop you. Clarify. Thank you.  
50 Continue.

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MR. LEON: Sounds great. No problem. Thank you. Appreciate the interest. Yeah. So we've got that in terms of harvest. Then we look at escapement as well. And one way that we do that is through the Kuskokwim River Sonar. So, for those people who may be familiar with the Kuskokwim, there was a long standing test fishery that ran since the 80s. That stopped as of last year, with a focus now on the Kuskokwim River Sonar is still run by the state, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and they've run it a number of years, at least a handful before that, before we switched to that or they switched to that. But now that's the main, I would say, escapement project that we kind of look at along with others. But in terms of escapement to the whole river, that's what we're using. And so, as you see that here, the numbers that I'm about to reference, other than the run reconstruction, are based off of the Kuskokwim River Sonar numbers.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Where is the sonar located?

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MR. LEON: It's basically right next to where the Bethel test fish site used to be.

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MR. LEON: Yeah, that's a good question. So, in terms of the co-management and looking at that escapement goal range that I mentioned before, which kind of started the co-management or at least was a big reason why things got started and looking for Chinook from the tribal perspective, we manage for the upper end of what the current escapement goal range is to the river of 65,000 to 120,000 Chinook. Now, what that looks like this, last year was when all was said and done and doing a run reconstruction, which took into account the sonar project along with other escapement projects, aerial surveys, the whole deal. We -- what was estimated by the state was 105,800 fish. And so that's definitely towards the upper end. And that's what we do for taking into account things like you mentioned, Mr. Chair, you know, condition of fish rebuilding of stock, not just trying to get back just enough, that kind of a thing. And if you look at some of these other numbers, if we go to the next page, you've got about 158,000 chum. Just over somewhere between 900,000 and 1 million sockeye, which have increased in the Kusko in recent years, not unlike other parts of the state. And then 390 plus

1 thousand coho salmon. And then with each of those, we're  
2 looking more at things like escapement goals on  
3 tributary levels. And we're trying to take the sonar  
4 counts and see, because, again, it's a new relatively  
5 new index of escapement or count of escapement, and  
6 seeing how that relates to meeting these goals or not.  
7 So, we're still fine tuning.

8  
9 And then in general before I move on  
10 next, in terms of talks for 2026, we're still having  
11 those conversations. We're still looking at species like  
12 we have in the past like Chinook, chum, coho. But as in  
13 unlike in previous years where we come in kind of like  
14 knowing straight off, all right, this is what we're  
15 probably going to do. We haven't had those official  
16 decisions yet. So, there's FYI there.

17  
18 And now going into the research  
19 monitoring type work along with knowledge documentation  
20 projects. I wanted to start with the research, kind of  
21 like what's the new things that we're working on or  
22 partnering with people to work on. First there you can  
23 see a picture of it. We're partnering with Washington  
24 State University to look at essentially camera-based  
25 tower systems. Counting towers, if everybody here  
26 already knows you're counting from several stories up  
27 on scaffolding, counting fish as they go by, we're  
28 looking to do the same thing, but with cameras there in  
29 place and taking video down into the water. Big shout  
30 out to the Native Village of Napaimiut. They let us run  
31 that feasibility phase last year at the salmon Aniak  
32 weir. And we took some video. We looked at images or I  
33 should say video to compare it with actual counts. And  
34 then we also have an artificial intelligence component.  
35 So not only can we look at this video, but can we speed  
36 up how we look at this video by running it through  
37 things, teach the computer what species [sic] and count  
38 and see how it works. Initial results are promising.  
39 We've only run through the first bit of data, but with  
40 the first bit of data we've looked at, we're at about a  
41 90% success rate with the AI, and even better with just,  
42 you know, looking at the video. And that season last  
43 year had a variety of conditions from like, man, I don't  
44 know if we can count; to, hey, we can count; to hey,  
45 like, you don't really have to do much to count at all.  
46 So that was.....

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Where the  
49 luminosity conditions good? You didn't have any muddy  
50 high water events that excluded that?

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MR. LEON: We had some of that too. We did. So when I say we had a little bit of everything, that's a good point. There were points where could people count or not. We had water come up. We had water go down naturally in the area where we've got the -- where we had the camera system set up, it was because we didn't have to deal with, you know, big changes in water fluctuation normally. We wanted a place to hopefully give us the best chance with something feasibility before we move forward. So, it's typically pretty clear. Typically doesn't have like really big changes in water condition. But we did have enough and have some days of definitely more turbidity where it was like, well we're good -- we're glad we're seeing a range here. So yeah.

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In terms of other research, right now we have things that we're partnering on out in the ocean, essentially getting at what others have talked about at this meeting and other meetings that are ongoing. Who's catching who's fish? Basically stock apportionment out in the ocean and getting beyond just Western Alaska stocks in general, hopefully. So, we're looking at Chinook and chum. With Chinook, we have partnership with the Fish Commission on the Yukon, also the University of Washington. And in terms of how that's being conducted, it's looking at both strontium levels. So, like a build-up on the otolith, the ear bone of a fish on freshwater. And combining that with current genetic work to see if we can use both of those combinations to get at who's catching who's fish with Chinook. And initial results are promising. There's something that's supposed to be published soon, so I'm not going to speak too much to that. But what I will say, it's potentially as good as along the lines of the previous project I talked about. There's an AI component as well, artificial intelligence. And initial results show that there is some potential to be able to do that to get to stock apportionment.

With chum, it's a different way of getting at the same thing. This is looking at a complete workup of the genome. So basically, genetics to this point only differentiates between Western Alaska stocks altogether. So, what people wanted to do and what we're partnering with, with Fish Commission on the Yukon, NOAA and ADF&G is all right, let's just work up the entire genome, get as specific as we can with what's out there right now. And hopefully something shows that we can use

1 to differentiate. And so, what that has shown initially  
2 is: one, they're looking at 80 stocks across the Arctic,  
3 Yukon and Kuskokwim. And with all those 80 stocks there  
4 was only one stock, I can't remember what it was, I  
5 apologize it was -- wasn't in the Kuskokwim, but all the  
6 other 79 stocks show enough potential detail that -- and  
7 the genetic information was good enough to go forward.  
8 So that's good. And then the other initial results that  
9 I just requested to kind of see what was out there before  
10 we met this week, was that right now, initial results  
11 show that between the Yukon and Kuskokwim, it looks like  
12 they can differentiate and between at least a number of  
13 the stocks on the Nushagak. So that's kind of what  
14 they're seeing right now. More to come. And that's as  
15 much as I know on that.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Are you genetic? I  
18 genetic -- I sampled for Alaska Department of Fish and  
19 Game. You're taking genetic profile through every  
20 season. So, you got like, a full life cycle for each one  
21 of these, where you're, like, your enumeration projects  
22 are occurring, so you get a real strong, robust genome  
23 through all -- there's, you know, like, typically would  
24 be five years, five cycle years. And for chum going  
25 through the, you know, so you get like a big profile.  
26 So that gets real stable when you're sampling on the  
27 ocean is where these fish are coming. Are you sampling  
28 at that -- to that tune or...?

29  
30 MR. LEON: That's a great question. I can  
31 tell you that with the stocks that I've seen on the  
32 Kuskokwim and the input that was taken from within the  
33 Kuskokwim, and you know, they wanted input from people  
34 that were of the region in this in selecting the stocks.  
35 They didn't just tell us what they were going to do. The  
36 stocks that were released were taken from the Kuskokwim  
37 have decent long time series collection of ASL data. In  
38 terms of the specific genetic data and a lot of it being  
39 housed, for instance, like with the Alaska Department  
40 of Fish and Game and then places like the Refuge. I  
41 don't remember the exact data sets, but I would say that  
42 it wasn't just one hit wonders kind of a thing.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. Okay.

45  
46 MR. LEON: And then moving on to the --  
47 and addressing the knowledge documentation. We had the  
48 Knowledge of Kuskokwim Salmon and People Project that  
49 just wrapped up. It was a year plus project where 25  
50 knowledge holders from throughout the Kuskokwim River

1 region were interviewed, and they gave their information  
2 as far as traditional practices as it relates to salmon  
3 and fish in general. Changes observed over the years,  
4 and then suggestions for further bettering fisheries  
5 management co-stewardship. There's going to be something  
6 that's published here shortly. I've recently reviewed  
7 what is a final version, hopefully before publication.  
8 It's citable, referenceable and speaks to all this in  
9 greater detail, but I did not lead that work. But I just  
10 want to put a plug for it because it's really well done.  
11 And as a partnership between us, the Fish Commission,  
12 Ocean Conservancy and then the (indiscernible) program,  
13 which is a program through the University of Alaska  
14 Fairbanks that's bringing together multiple ways of  
15 knowing, which is what we're about at the Fish  
16 Commission, so.

17  
18 If I go on to the next page, this is  
19 more just monitoring long term type stuff. So, this is  
20 page 5. I referenced harvest estimates. The program that  
21 we use to do that is the Community-based Harvest  
22 Monitoring Program. It takes people from throughout the  
23 lower river, the regions where harvest is occurring  
24 through the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. And  
25 we employ people locally to go out and do surveys of  
26 what they harvest when they come back from fishing after  
27 each opener. In addition, we have people flying overhead  
28 during openers to get an idea of effort out there in  
29 terms of number of boats. And we kind of combine  
30 everything and that's what's used to do our harvest  
31 estimates. In terms of the Community-based Harvest  
32 Monitoring Program last year, we were able to collect  
33 over 660 plus interviews. To my knowledge, I think that's  
34 the most we've ever had. And it isn't just us at the  
35 Fish Commission. It's a collaborative effort between us,  
36 the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and the local  
37 tribe, ONC out of Bethel. And so, you can see the people  
38 there. And happy to answer any questions to that. But  
39 moving forward, we also have a freshwater production  
40 study on the Kwethluk River, basically looking and  
41 counting smolt outmigration and trying to relate that  
42 to adult returns. I'm not going to go into too much  
43 detail on that, because our partners are going to  
44 probably be speaking a little later, and they can provide  
45 more detail on that, but it's something we're part of.  
46 In addition, we have a water temperature monitoring  
47 project that began in 2024 at the request of our tribes.  
48 They wanted to know more what was going on after all the  
49 heat waves, fish die offs, things like that. I know you  
50 all can relate to that in the Yukon as well. It's

1 something that we've started across the region in a  
2 couple of different locations. 2024 was feasibility.  
3 2025 was, what did we learn and how can we use that to  
4 fix some things, issues that we had, particularly on the  
5 main stem, big water in terms of losing things, getting  
6 things, walk off, whatever. But what we found is that  
7 we made some improvements in some places. There's still  
8 some places we need to work. And in terms of the general  
9 locations that we worked, we tried to add either in the  
10 same location or along the same stretch of a place where  
11 we had loggers already. So, we're still trying to fine  
12 tune that.

13  
14 Then I'll end it with the (In Native)  
15 River. It's a standard adult escapement weir, resistance  
16 board weir, floating weir. What I would say that's really  
17 notable about that is we had in all the, you know, 15  
18 plus years I've been working on escapement projects, I  
19 can only -- I've only had one other time where a project  
20 ran the entire season with no issues, no outages, nothing  
21 needed to be estimated, interpolated, whatever. And this  
22 was the second. So, everything ran. No problem. The  
23 counts you see there are final counts. (In Native) is  
24 in the headwaters up at the top. So the counts aren't  
25 as big in terms of total numbers, but it's just as  
26 important in terms of feeds into the run reconstruction  
27 and gives an idea of how things are doing in the  
28 headwaters as a whole, especially when the last several  
29 years it's been the only project really running reliably  
30 up there due to, you know, all the other craziness. But  
31 you can see the total counts: 199 Chinook 1946 chum.  
32 Then I'm going on to page 6: 21 sockeye, 205 coho. And  
33 in the past it's been funded through OSM, so.

34  
35 With that, before I wrap things up here,  
36 advocacy and outreach. I don't have too much to say  
37 there other than we participate [sic] those meetings.  
38 Both been mentioned in terms of the North Pacific  
39 Fisheries Management Council. The actions there. I'm  
40 sure all of you are aware of what's happened there, as  
41 well as Area M, Board of Fish. We've been getting updates  
42 even today on what's going on there. We have Teresa  
43 Vicente, who typically advocates, does outreach  
44 specifically as full time staff. But then we always try  
45 to have Commissioners, Executive Council Members, In-  
46 season Managers show up and provide testimony support  
47 at all these meetings as well. And so, before ending  
48 again that there's that 2025 indices in summary, which  
49 goes all -- into all of this in more detail. And then  
50 there's copies for people at the back table for anyone

1 who may be listening behind me who's interested. But I  
2 think that's what I've got. So, appreciate it. Thank  
3 you.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate  
6 your presentation. Any council member questions? Tim.

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you for your  
9 presentation, Justin. As previously discussed, we're  
10 really challenged -- this Council is really challenged  
11 on getting information out of the Kuskokwim because we  
12 don't have a member on board. I'm going to reach out to  
13 you right now and ask yourself or the Kuskokwim River  
14 Inter Tribal Fish Commission, if they could put us as a  
15 priority need to try to find a representative for the  
16 WIRAC from the Kuskokwim River. And if they were somebody  
17 from within your organization, that would be excellent  
18 because of the knowledge and breadth of information you  
19 guys work on and provide, so. We're in significant need  
20 of representation from your watershed. How's Kuskokwim  
21 River Inter-tribal Fish Commission funded? Where -- who  
22 pays all these salaries and travel?

23

24 MR. LEON: Yeah, that's a great question.  
25 So, Tim, through the Chair. I guess, first part I'll  
26 answer is that, yes, we have commissioners around there,  
27 and I've even texted some of our leadership when we went  
28 to lunch, because I know it was part of the conversation  
29 before breaking for lunch is like, hey, the meeting the  
30 next fall meeting is going to be, I think it's the 6th  
31 and 7th in Aniak, and they're like, all right, we got  
32 it on the calendar. We're going to have representation.  
33 We have commissioners from Aniak, Allen Simeon. I  
34 actually texted with him, that kind of a thing. So, I'm  
35 happy to reach out to him after getting confirmation.  
36 It's okay to go through it the ways that we -- it's okay  
37 to share it in that way. We've also got others in  
38 Napaimuit just right there. We've got representatives  
39 in Kalskag. Lower Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, I think, both.  
40 And I'm familiar with both of them. And so, yeah, happy  
41 to spread the word in ways that we can. And what I would  
42 say that is in, in terms of, you know, I apologize, Tim,  
43 can you remind me the second part to your question?

44

45 MR. GERVAIS: The -- where's the funding  
46 come from to run the organization? Like, I'm curious if  
47 you're operating off grants or through the BIA? What's  
48 -- I'm curious about, like, what's the risk of being  
49 defunded or reduced funding? That's where I'm coming  
50 from.

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MR. LEON: Of course. Appreciate it, Tim. It's a great question. So, when we first started, it was basically just off of BIA funding. That was what we had. That was our base budget. To a certain extent, it's still our base budget, but we've diversified. I think last time we looked, we had somewhere in the north of 15 plus towards 20 different pots of money. Some are little, some are big. Another big player is funding we've received through like gravel to gravel, things like that kind of work. What I will say is that we really tried to diversify our funding portfolio because we saw what the federal landscape may look like. And so fortunately, for instance, there are a number of projects that may have, could be, or already have gone away, but we've been able to rely on some other sources of funding to keep our projects going and support others in the community, their projects, whether it's tribal, working alongside our partners or things like that. But yeah, we've had to diversify just to make sure that we didn't face some ripple effects. And thankfully to this point, we haven't.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Do you have ichthyophonous on the Kuskokwim River.

MR. LEON: There were some reports of things like that this summer. And I know, you know Keith sitting behind me here, his Masters was on that kind of a thing. But it does come and go, it seems. In terms of, like, whether we hear about it or not, this last year, we did have at least a couple reports of it, pictures being passed around. Hey, what's this smell? What does this picture look like to you? We did at that time -- so, full disclosure, I used to work for the State of Alaska's Alaska Department Fish and Game. And so, I know the person who kind of -- and worked with them in the past. Not like -- I'm not a pathologist or anything, but I know them still. So, I reached out. I was like, this is what I think this could be. Is that what it is? They thought, yeah, it sounds like it and picture looks like it might be ichthyophonous kind of a thing, but it's nothing. That was like, you know, everybody's talking about it. But it did come up last year.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Does the Fish Commission or other people, do they have a reason why the sockeye population for the Kuskokwim drainage is increasing? That's pretty -- it's contrary to the other trends we're seeing with kings and chums and I have,

1 like, personal theory that might be doing with  
2 increasing ocean temperatures. But I'm curious if the  
3 Fish Commission has a position or understanding of  
4 what's going on there.

5  
6 MR. LEON: Yeah, I don't know that I feel  
7 comfortable speaking on behalf of the whole Fish  
8 Commission on that. I can say that there's conversations  
9 that I've been a part of where I think if I had to sum  
10 it all up, the thoughts seem to be, I guess, that  
11 whatever is harming Chinook, chum, coho, kind of getting  
12 at what you're saying too, maybe favoring the sockeye.  
13 Whether it's ocean conditions, whether it's what's being  
14 targeted, and if they're traveling together or not, or  
15 you know, the increased temperatures, whatever is going  
16 on that's affecting the rivers and the tribes [sic] and  
17 the fact that sockeye a lot of times that we're talking  
18 about are, you know, lake spawners versus river  
19 spawners. There are sockeye that river spawn. But  
20 anyways, I think there's that. And I also think there's  
21 the fact that people are just thankful. And in terms of  
22 people on the Kuskokwim, we've tried to spread knowledge  
23 that you know, even though we don't have as much here  
24 and it's not what people would -- and we acknowledge  
25 that it's not what they would like and should be able  
26 to have, but there are people and there has been a shift  
27 with people taking advantage of this surplus of sockeye,  
28 and that's really helped things too. So that's what I'll  
29 say.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

32  
33 MR. GERVAIS: A couple more, if you don't  
34 mind.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Real quick. Yeah.  
37 Go ahead.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Does the Fish Commission  
40 do their own genetics, or do you send that to the ADF&G  
41 lab here -- or not here in Anchorage?

42  
43 MR. LEON: So, we have not done any of  
44 our own genetic work. Anything that we've done is done  
45 through partners like you mentioned, like ADF&G, NOAA,  
46 that kind of a thing. So, we don't process any of our  
47 own stuff.

48  
49 MR. GERVAIS: All right. Well, thank you  
50 very much. We appreciate the existence and the work that

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1 the tribal commission does, tribal fish commission does.  
2 And thanks for letting me ask these questions.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Go ahead,  
5 Don.

6

7 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is  
8 there somebody online? Justin, I just, I mean, I see  
9 your harvest estimates, your numbers and stuff, and it  
10 drives me to the question of, are you guys hurting like  
11 us? I mean, the numbers of chum or kings or anything, I  
12 mean, what is alarming to you guys on the on the  
13 Kuskokwim because fishing on a Yukon is almost non-  
14 existent, and I'm serious. We'll -- we haven't really  
15 gone fishing yet. Your numbers seem to -- I don't hear  
16 really a whole lot of complaints. I mean, other than  
17 that, the numbers are down. Is there anything alarming  
18 with a species of maybe the chums or the kings or  
19 anything? I mean, I'm just looking at the overall  
20 picture. Thank you.

21

22 MR. LEON: Yeah. No problem. Thank you.  
23 So, Don, through the Chair. I think that's a really  
24 great question. I think, you know, again, I want to be  
25 careful not to speak for the people of the region, but  
26 what I will say from feedback that we hear is that  
27 there's acknowledgement of what's going on the Yukon and  
28 other places, and I think that really helps people keep  
29 everything in perspective and say that they're thankful.  
30 They realize that a lot of people, like people on the  
31 Yukon, aren't able to fish at all, and so they're very  
32 thankful for anything that's provided. And then along  
33 with that, a lot of people have relatives in the -- on  
34 the Yukon and, and know not just because of what they  
35 read, but because they have family that, you know,  
36 talking back and forth and know the struggles, sharing  
37 fish, that kind of thing. I guess what I would add to  
38 that is in terms of these numbers here and even, you  
39 know, Tim, helped us out there. Like if you look at the  
40 traditional ANS numbers we're still not anywhere close  
41 to what people needed, but people are happy that, you  
42 know, at least as of right now, they're still able to  
43 practice their culture. They're able to pass it down.  
44 They're able to put some fish in the freezer. And, for  
45 instance, maybe people are relying more on other species  
46 or not, whether it's fish, whether it's moose, whether  
47 it's something else, there's still struggles, for sure.  
48 But in terms of keeping it all in perspective, I think  
49 that's what -- when people say they're thankful, they  
50 realize it could be a lot worse, but they still aren't

1 able to, you know, get everything else. And then the  
2 number that I spoke to, the 90,000, that's the largest  
3 we have on record. But there's a lot that goes into  
4 that. What was the length of the season? What was the -  
5 - so, I'm giving you a total number. But what may get  
6 lost in the details, how long was the season? How many  
7 openers were we able to provide? What species are we  
8 talking about? That kind of a thing. But yes, it was  
9 better overall than the last couple years.

10  
11 MR. HONEA: Well, I do thank you, Justin,  
12 for that presentation. You guys are -- I consider you  
13 pretty fortunate to have -- to be able to harvest some  
14 of the fish. I mean, like, right now some of us, I know  
15 of a person in Tanana and myself, we -- I have a son in  
16 North Pole that, you know, we're getting fish from Copper  
17 -- from Chitina. And these are reds. I have nothing  
18 against reds. They're delicious, but they're smaller.  
19 We can't make strips and eating fish and stuff out of  
20 them, like. But yeah. So, yeah. I -- so you guys are a  
21 source of hope, and I just, you know applaud your efforts  
22 to try to, you know, in the same way, knock the numbers  
23 down in Area M or something. I mean, I would say there  
24 are so many variables to this but appreciate you. Thank  
25 you.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, any other  
28 questions for Justin? One more.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: Justin, would you say from  
31 a historical perspective is the -- what's the most  
32 important fish resource for subsistence on the  
33 Kuskokwim, chum or king or are they equal?

34  
35 MR. LEON: Historically, I can tell you  
36 that the relationship started because of the Chinook,  
37 but then at the time, the chum weren't doing as poorly  
38 as the Chinook, and it's flip flopped. And, you know, I  
39 know I keep giving this answer and I apologize because  
40 it must be frustrating, but I don't want to -- I wouldn't  
41 feel comfortable speaking to what people think in terms  
42 of that. I think in terms of it, I can tell you the  
43 ecosystem wide, the whole looking at everything  
44 holistically. It's all super important. So, for  
45 instance, you know, people for human consumption are  
46 generally having Chinook. Chum, people are eating it as  
47 well. But depending on the part of the Kuskokwim, it may  
48 be going to dog teams or going to, you know, whatever  
49 else. I know that, you know, speaking myself from  
50 personal experiences, this is me. When I used to

1 subsistence fish, I lived in Nome for ten plus years.  
2 And you know, I -- we had Chinook up there. They weren't  
3 very common. I didn't harvest them. Chum were great. And  
4 then the sockeye boomed up, they were great, too. But  
5 again, historically, I don't know if I feel comfortable  
6 speaking to that, but in terms of just different flavors,  
7 different fish, you know, people want their Chinook. I  
8 will say that those are comments, feedback we get. They  
9 do want them. But they want chum, too.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.  
12 Thank you, Justin. I appreciate your presentation.  
13 That's -- doing a lot of great work there.

14

15 MR. LEON: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFFF: And I think this  
18 whole Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission has got its  
19 feet under, its running, and we're doing really well.  
20 We're going to move over to BLM now. So, if you could  
21 come up to the table and turn the mic on and say your  
22 name for the record.

23

24 MR. SLAUGHTER: Good afternoon. I'm Kent  
25 Slaughter. I am the Acting District Manager for the BLM  
26 Fairbanks District Office.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

29

30 MR. SLAUGHTER: And I'm here mostly to  
31 report on activities or what's going on with the public  
32 land order around the Dalton Highway, the PLO 5150. And  
33 I did bring some maps and copies of the Federal Register  
34 Notice for today that I'll -- can hand out.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

37

38 MR. SLAUGHTER: But effective today --  
39 well, on Friday, the Secretary of the Interior announced  
40 that he would be signing a rule. He was signing a new  
41 Public Land Order 7966. It published in the Federal  
42 Register today, affecting 2,127,845 acres north of the  
43 Yukon River. And it effectively lifts the -- or it  
44 partially revokes two public land orders, 5150 and 5180,  
45 that reserve that land for the Dalton Utility Corridor.  
46 The Federal Register Notice published today that new  
47 public land order will take effect on March 27th at 8  
48 a.m. Alaska time, and at which time those lands affected  
49 by the new PLO will all be open for selection. So, where  
50 the State of Alaska has had top filings on those lands,

1 those top filings will attach and that will be just over  
2 2 million acres of that 2.1 million acres. And I have  
3 maps showing where the -- if you'd like me to hand those  
4 out now, I'd be happy to.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, I'd like to  
7 see that.

8  
9 MR. SLAUGHTER: Okay.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, there's -- when  
12 you say attach that refers to they're actually selected.

13  
14 MR. SLAUGHTER: Yes. So, when the state  
15 makes selections for lands that are not available for  
16 selection, such as this land that was withdrawn through  
17 the public land order or military reservations, things  
18 like that, or lands that are not undeveloped that are  
19 not vacant and undeveloped. Those selections do not what  
20 we call attach and do not become effective until those  
21 lands -- the Secretary makes a determination that those  
22 lands are available for selection. So, once the  
23 Secretary makes that determination, then the lands, then  
24 those selections do attach. And that -- at that stage,  
25 then those lands now get managed more -- those lands are  
26 no longer available for subsistence management, unless  
27 the state then subsequently withdraws its selections on  
28 those lands.

29  
30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, they're -- but  
31 they're not tentatively approved. And they've not been  
32 adjudicated either.

33  
34 MR. SLAUGHTER: That is correct. And that  
35 happens across the state. We have a lot of land that the  
36 state has selected that because the selections have  
37 attached, we -- they're not available for federal  
38 subsistence. Right now, the state still has about 5  
39 million acres of remaining entitlement, but they have,  
40 I think, 14 million acres of lands that are selected  
41 right now. Somewhere in that neighborhood.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, the  
44 presidential executive order in January 20, 2025,  
45 dictated that all public land orders were to be lifted.  
46 So, there's 28 million acres in the Western Interior,  
47 Brooke and Bering Sea. So, this gives over close to 50  
48 million acres. And there's 6.8 million acres are our top  
49 files. So, if those are lifted, they're going to be like  
50 phenomenally over their selection. And so, at this point

1 they can't be -- possibly be all stopping subsistence  
2 on those 6.8 million acres they all attach  
3 automatically.

4

5 MR. SLAUGHTER: My.....

6

7

(Simultaneous speech)

8

9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: As a Regional  
10 Council Chair, I feel that the federal -- the Bureau of  
11 Land Management is living in a -- in the dark as to the  
12 effects to subsistence, and this needs 810 analysis to  
13 delineate the impacts to subsistence users within this  
14 region, not just the utility corridor, but all of the  
15 lands that are going to be attached when all those PLOs  
16 are lifted. Which is far beyond their capability to  
17 receive. Plus, they're cherry picking of the other  
18 normal BLM lands that were not under PLO. So, there's  
19 some huge, huge legal problems with this attachment. And  
20 then automatically being selected. They're not  
21 automatically selected. There -- they haven't even been  
22 adjudicated yet. So, I said yesterday and I told you  
23 back in December and I referred to, that they are there  
24 tentatively -- they're open for selection, but they're  
25 not actually selected because the State of Alaska has  
26 made it apparent that they want subsurface value and  
27 that a lot of the utility corridor doesn't have  
28 subsurface value. So basically, from Galbraith Lake to  
29 the north, that has subsurface value as gas. There's  
30 some gold bearing ground associated to the Wiseman  
31 mining area around Coldfoot. The access to the Ambler  
32 Road. But a lot of this lands, these are sedimentary  
33 structures that was shot by U.S. Geological Survey in  
34 the mid 80s. Previous to the first RMP, it was shown  
35 that there are no hydrocarbon potentials in your first  
36 RMP from 1986, in '91 utility corridor. So, I want the  
37 record to reflect that I am -- I just -- I have  
38 displeasure with that analysis, that I still don't feel  
39 that, you know, they may be open for selection, they may  
40 attach for selection, but they're not selected. They're  
41 not -- absolutely not selected because they would have  
42 6.8 million, it would be one point something million,  
43 1.7 million acres over selected if all the PLOs are  
44 lifted. So, this is not -- this does not pan out. And  
45 you have to make a 810 analysis. Because if you're going  
46 to say that on these PLO lands, you're also going to  
47 have to say that in the Western Interior Bering Sea  
48 lands also, which is going to have a huge impact on  
49 Seward Pen, Western Interior Council, are going to have  
50 some real limitations on their subsistence access.

1

2

3 So, I want the record to be clear.  
4 That's why I'm not, like I said to you in December. It's  
5 not you. And I'm saying this into the record because  
6 this is -- if this occurs and there's a real problem and  
7 the 810 was not done as the statute demands. The statute  
8 demands that you do an analysis of the impact of  
9 subsistence and the ruling of your solicitor is  
10 completely incorrect. And if you're sued by AFN or some  
11 entity that has the money to do that, the record has to  
12 reflect the discussion at this level. So, this what I'm  
13 saying is going to be used in a future litigation. So  
14 that's why I'm talking so much. So, continue.

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MR. SLAUGHTER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
in addition to the public land or that was published  
today, on Monday, the determination of NEPA adequacy and  
signed by the BLM Alaska State Director, and the decision  
rationale signed by the Secretary were posted on BLM's  
e-planning webpage, so those are available for the  
public. Regarding the lands that are -- would no longer  
be available for subsistence, the -- and the over  
selection. Last month, the DNR Commissioner-designee,  
John Crowther, sent a letter to the BLM Alaska State  
Director pledging to go through a process this year to  
evaluate and withdraw selections -- non-priority  
selections both inside the corridor and adjacent to it,  
as well as other lands across the state, to bring the  
state closer into alignment with the law regarding over  
selection.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is there a time  
frame with that?

MR. SLAUGHTER: It is a public process  
that the state has to go through, and I'm sorry, I can't  
speak to what their time frame would be.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim has a question  
here. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. For clarification,  
this map showing the entire area of 5150, is this 2  
million acres of land?

MR. SLAUGHTER: The area inside the black  
outline on both those maps is the area under discussion  
with this Public Land Order 7966. So, it's 2.1 -- 2.13  
million acres, roughly. And those two maps that I passed  
out -- that were passed out, one of them portrays --

1 they both portray essentially the same thing. Just one  
2 uses cross-hatching to show all the lands that the state  
3 has top filings on, and the other one shows essentially  
4 the same thing, but doesn't show the top filings. It  
5 shows the land that is not top filed, so they're just  
6 showing essentially the same things.

7  
8 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then you're  
9 saying as of March 28th of this year, that all this  
10 crosshatch top filing land is going to transfer to the  
11 State of Alaska, it will BLM?

12  
13 MR. SLAUGHTER: It will not transfer  
14 directly to the State of Alaska. But effective on March  
15 27th, the state selections will -- what we call -- they  
16 will attach which effect means that they become  
17 effective. And we have to consider the state when --  
18 with managing those lands. And they are no longer  
19 available for subsistence management at that time, for  
20 federal subsistence at that time.

21  
22 MR. GERVAIS: How does this affect the  
23 like your Community of Wiseman?

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It has a dramatic  
26 effect. It affects -- PJ Simon was here yesterday, Chief  
27 of Allakaket. And they were harvesting caribou last week  
28 on these lands and he's got elders and their take of  
29 moose this year was low and I, again, I'm requesting an  
30 810 analysis for your solicitor to reevaluate the impact  
31 of subsistence users by blanketly attaching without a  
32 selection. And they say that they're going to eliminate  
33 some of the utility corridor, that should not -- when  
34 they when they attach, when they finally select what  
35 they're going to and eliminate their over selections at  
36 that time we'll abide by that selection. But at this  
37 point the attachment is having a dramatic effect on  
38 subsistence users, including myself and several  
39 communities. And I'll name them for the for the record,  
40 they would be Stevens Village, Rampart, Evansville,  
41 Bettles, Allakaket, Alatna, Coldfoot, Wiseman, Anaktuvuk  
42 Pass, Inuksuk communities are going to be affected by  
43 this ruling. Your regional office ruling that has a high  
44 effect and without a 810 analysis, it's -- ANILCA directs  
45 you to have the least adverse impact to the subsistence  
46 users. So, I caution the BLM to not -- do not throw the  
47 baby out with the bathwater. Do not eliminate  
48 subsistence users uses at such time when the state is  
49 not actually selected. They're not tentatively approved.  
50 And at that time, they can manage the lands. That's your

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1 statutory language I'm using. So again, I said it last  
2 month or two month and a half ago in December. I do not  
3 agree with your solicitor. Your solicitor is incorrect  
4 on how this shall proceed because there's so vastly over  
5 selected. It's actually illegally -- illegal for them  
6 to attach this much because they've already got 126%  
7 over even when they before these PLOs were even released.  
8 So, let the record reflect that in this discussion. And  
9 I would like this all transcribed for this Council and  
10 for our fall meeting. So, we're going to continue on  
11 other questions from the council members here for Mr.  
12 Slaughter. Go ahead Tim.

13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I was just wondering  
15 this seems like a really substantial dilemma where if  
16 in the end of March, subsistence uses won't be allowed  
17 on these lands. And you're saying based on this whole  
18 top filing and attachment process, that the land is not  
19 really transferring over to the state yet. I think we  
20 should deal with this right now between OSM and the BLM,  
21 that we -- the BLM shouldn't, shouldn't manage this in  
22 a way that disallows subsistence hunting and fishing  
23 until the land actually transfers over to the State of  
24 Alaska.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We motioned and are  
27 going to send a letter to the BLM, and to the Federal  
28 Subsistence Board yesterday. We're also going to add to  
29 that letter, and I would need a motion to add to that  
30 letter the extreme need for an 810 analysis before March  
31 27th to the detriment -- to have the major impact that's  
32 discarding the language of the ANILCA statute that says  
33 you're supposed to have the least adverse impact on the  
34 subsistence users. And this by guess and by golly,  
35 where's the state going to select? We don't know. It's  
36 the state, is not actually selected. So, attachment does  
37 not actually mean that they're selected. It's not using  
38 up their 5.2 million acres to go. So, I need a motion  
39 to add on to our letter that we're going to be sending  
40 to the -- which needs to be come forth with -- fairly  
41 rapidly move through the review process at OSM because  
42 this is a critical issue for several communities. The  
43 Chair will entertain a motion to request in our letter  
44 that we -- that the BLM before March 27th, develop an  
45 810 analysis because they do not meet the statutory  
46 requirements, and the resource management plan that was  
47 thrown out by Congress, that was thrown out by Congress.  
48 There is no 810 analysis because you don't even have the  
49 resource plan. So, you're going to have to have a new  
50 resource plan. You're going to develop that resource

1 plan before you eliminate any subsistence on March 27th.  
2 So, the Chair will entertain a motion to request an 810  
3 analysis of the BLM and the in the letter to the Federal  
4 Subsistence Board. I think it also targeted the BIA and  
5 the BLM to the Federal Subsistence Board process. Those  
6 are members of this Federal Subsistence Board. So, do  
7 we have a motion to that effect?

8

9

MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

10

11

12

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have a motion.  
Do we have a second.

13

14

MR. HONEA: Second.

15

16

17

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Second by Don. So  
any further discussion. Robert.

18

19

(Talking)

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, it's not a  
resolution. It's a motion. Motion. A motion to -- we  
have a letter that's going to be written and we're  
attaching onto the letter the need for an 810 analysis,  
which is part of the ANILCA law. Anytime the federal  
government's going to dispose of land, they're under  
statutory requirement to do an 810 analysis to the  
impacts to subsistence. And Congress is directing them  
to have the least adverse impact to subsistence users.  
So that's what the statute says. So, I don't care what  
your regional office solicitor says, there's a statute  
that says you have to have an 810 analysis. So, we're  
requesting that, that's what this motion is. The letter  
is going to be written and it's going to be transmitted.  
And the Federal Subsistence Board is going to be aware  
of it, and the regional director has to answer to that.  
Otherwise, they're opening themselves up to litigation  
by AFN or various organizations. Tanana Chiefs and  
multiple entities may sue or litigate this issue.  
Because it's going to -- when they lift -- and it's my  
opinion because the executive order says you're going  
to lift all PLOs in Alaska. The Western Interior and  
Bering Sea is going to lift, and the state is going to  
be 1.7 million acres over selected just on attachments.  
So that's not even legal according to the Alaska  
Statehood Act. So, there's big problems here. So, they  
better start thinking about a little further out in front  
of their face. They're moving way too fast at BLM, and  
so they need to start thinking about what the statutes  
actually say. They need to analyze the Alaska Statehood

1 Act. They need to analyze the Alaska National Interest  
2 Lands Conservation Act, title 8, 810 and language to  
3 effect on subsistence users. So, any further discussion?

4

5 UNIDENTIFIED: Question.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOF: Question's called  
8 those in favor of adding on the 810 analysis language  
9 to our letter to the Bureau of Land Management and the  
10 Federal Subsistence Board signify by saying aye.

11

12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Are you there,  
15 Darrell? Oh, he's not there. Okay. Motion carries. So,  
16 glad we got that on the record while we're thinking  
17 about it. So, do you have anything else there for us,  
18 Mr. Slaughter?

19

20 MR. SLAUGHTER: No. I thank you for  
21 adjusting your schedule to allow me to come in today.  
22 And I appreciate the opportunity and to listen. And I  
23 really appreciate the service of everybody on this  
24 Board. It's really valuable. And.....

25

26 (Simultaneous speech)

27

28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.

29

30 MR. SLAUGHTER: .....thank you.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate you  
33 taking time out to come over to be the messenger. And  
34 you're welcome to stop by for coffee when you're up in  
35 Wiseman. We don't take this stuff home as our previous  
36 Chair, Ron Sam says, when we get into contentious things,  
37 we don't take it home. We're professionals.

38

39 MR. SLAUGHTER: I appreciate that, and I  
40 look forward to hopefully making up to Wiseman. I haven't  
41 been up there for probably 30 years, so I need to get  
42 back up.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, it's just as  
45 pretty as you left it.

46

47 MR. SLAUGHTER: I'm sure it's probably  
48 prettier.

49

50

000103

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. So, all  
2 right. Have a great afternoon. Where are we at now on  
3 our agenda? We've moved the BLM up, so we addressed  
4 that. So, let's see. TCC. (Indiscernible). We're not at  
5 TCC.

6  
7 MS. PILCHER: So the TCC update, as well  
8 as the YR DFA update, those people that were going to  
9 give them are currently still at the Board of Fish  
10 meeting, so they are unable. So we're jumping all the  
11 way down -- well, not all the way down, but now we're  
12 at Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence  
13 Research update, c.i.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Subsistence  
16 Division. Thanks so much for coming to our meeting. Turn  
17 your mic on and speak. Speak your name for the record.

18  
19 MS. FISHER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My  
20 name is Brooke Fisher. I'm one of the researchers along  
21 the Yukon River. And this is my colleague, Tim Bembenek,  
22 and he is the lead researcher on the Kuskokwim River.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Continue.

25  
26 MS. FISHER: We have a short presentation  
27 for you. We did include the slides in your packet, so  
28 you're welcome to follow along that way. And the first  
29 project that I'd like to talk about is the Yukon  
30 Comprehensive Harvest Surveys. An increase in the  
31 Pacific Salmon Treaty Implementation Fund has helped the  
32 division survey communities in the Yukon River drainage  
33 that have -- never been surveyed before, or where data  
34 are no longer representative. In 2022, we surveyed  
35 Hooper Bay.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Let me stop you  
38 there for a second. Your slide shows on page 81 of our  
39 packet for the council members. So let me find that.  
40 Okay. Continue.

41  
42 MS. FISHER: Thank you. In 2022, we  
43 surveyed Hooper Bay and Chevak. In 2023, we surveyed  
44 Huslia and Koyukuk. And in 2024, we surveyed Kotlik and  
45 Alakanuk. These technical papers have been published,  
46 and I did include them in the presentation, and they're  
47 available at the very back. In late 2024, we received  
48 funding from NOAA 2020 and 2021 Chum Salmon Disaster  
49 Fund to continue our comprehensive harvest surveying  
50 effort in communities along the mainstem Yukon River.

1 And this past spring, we conducted harvest surveys and  
2 ethnographic interviews with residents in Ruby and Holy  
3 Cross, and are currently in the process of analyzing  
4 that data. We have plans to survey Nunam Iqua and Rampart  
5 this spring. I'm going to move on to the next slide.  
6

7  
8 The next project was a joint project  
9 with the Tanana Chiefs Conference to better understand  
10 non salmon harvest and use patterns with specific focus  
11 on humpback whitefish. This project was funded by OSM  
12 and combines biological data from spawning humpback  
13 whitefish populations gathered by TCC biologists, and  
14 harvest and use data gathered by the Division of  
15 Subsistence. Harvest and use patterns of all non-  
16 subsistence -- or excuse me, non-salmon species were  
17 documented using harvest and use surveys, and  
18 traditional ecological knowledge interviews with nine  
19 knowledgeable locals of different ages and genders with  
20 the history of fishing for non-salmon. Two researchers  
21 from the Subsistence Division also completed a  
22 participant observation excursion with a local fisherman  
23 to learn about traditional harvest methods of whitefish  
24 and other non-salmon. In June 2025, we held community  
25 data reviews for Alatna and Allakaket residents to  
26 review our analysis, ask questions and provide feedback.  
27 This paper was published and is available online. Next  
28 slide please.

29  
30 Finally, the division received Pittman-  
31 Robertson funds to investigate the ceremonial harvest  
32 and use of big game populations throughout the state.  
33 The purpose of this five-year project is to compile  
34 existing data for the ceremonial harvest of game  
35 populations statewide, to assess the data quality and  
36 gaps, and gather qualitative data regarding potlatch  
37 practices throughout the state. This synthesis of these  
38 two data sets will inform the development of a robust  
39 educational and outreach program to improve ceremonial  
40 harvest utilization, and reporting compliance. We have  
41 interviewed all area biologists, and other relevant  
42 staff and attended the Kaltag Stick Dance in March 2025  
43 for a participant-observation trip. We are currently in  
44 the process of analyzing big game ceremonial harvest  
45 data provided by area biologists throughout the state,  
46 reviewing and analyzing interviews with area biologists,  
47 reviewing field notes from the Kaltag Stick Dance. And  
48 we have identified the communities of Aniak, McGrath,  
49 and Nikolai as partner communities within the WIRAC  
50 region. Next slide please.

000105

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can I ask you one  
2 question on that?

3  
4 MS. FISHER: Yes.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: In association  
7 with that survey, did you get a feeling for how much  
8 salmon is also used for ceremonial purposes, or this was  
9 strictly game only.

10  
11 MS. FISHER: Unfortunately, ceremonial  
12 use of salmon is outside the scope of this study  
13 specifically. However, when we attended the Kaltag Stick  
14 Dance, the importance of salmon in this ceremony in  
15 particular was evident.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

18  
19 MS. FISHER: Thank you.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. Go  
22 ahead.

23  
24 MR. BEMBENEK: For the record, my name  
25 is Tim Bembenek. I work for the Alaska Department of  
26 Fish and Game as a subsistence resource specialist  
27 throughout the Kuskokwim region. And I will be  
28 presenting on two updates for two projects in the  
29 Kuskokwim region. The first project is an OSM funded  
30 project called Natural Indicators of Salmon in the Upper  
31 Kuskokwim River. So, I see here. Natural Indicators of  
32 Salmon in the Upper Kuskokwim region, as I mentioned,  
33 was funded by Office of Subsistence Management and the  
34 purpose of the project is to document local and  
35 traditional ecological knowledge of salmon natural  
36 indicators in upper Kuskokwim communities. These  
37 communities included Takotna, Nikolai, and Mcgrath. We  
38 also were seeking to review historical abundance,  
39 distribution and healthy salmon populations, as well as  
40 build relationships between local communities and  
41 government agencies. The fieldwork for this project,  
42 we've begun that in the spring of 2022. And to date, all  
43 13 ethnographic interviews have been completed,  
44 transcribed, and analyzed. We have completed the  
45 community data reviews which we did in Anchorage of last  
46 year and at a Tanana Chiefs Conference subregional  
47 meeting with community representatives of Takotna,  
48 McGrath and Nikolai present. And we're currently working  
49 on the final draft of this report, which should be  
50 published within the next month or two.

1

2                   The second project is the Kuskokwim --  
3 in the Kuskokwim River region and pertinent to the WIRAC  
4 region here today is the Postseason Subsistence Salmon  
5 Harvest Survey Project, or as we lovingly refer to it,  
6 as KPSS for short. This is an annual study funded by the  
7 Office of Subsistence Management, and we also partner  
8 with ONC in the Bethel portion of this project. So the  
9 department has been collecting subsistence salmon  
10 harvest information from Kuskokwim area families since  
11 1960. We typically survey about 28 communities  
12 throughout the Kuskokwim drainage, depending on  
13 logistics. And that includes South Kuskokwim Bay area  
14 like Kwinhagak, Goodnews Bay and Platinum. In the fall  
15 of 2025, we traveled to 24 Kuskokwim area communities  
16 after receiving approval from each community's Tribal  
17 Council for the door-to-door in-person surveys. In  
18 total, we completed 1,363 in-person surveys for the 2025  
19 salmon fishing season. This includes the community of  
20 Bethel, with -- which has the highest population  
21 throughout the -- in the KMA, follow up phone surveys  
22 were conducted if households could not be contacted in  
23 person, and we completed an additional 17 surveys from  
24 8 communities. The Division of Subsistence partnered  
25 with ONC to conduct a simple random sample of 25% of  
26 households in Bethel, and together we completed 508  
27 surveys. So, on slide 7 in your handout there this  
28 slide.....

29

30                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can I stop you for  
31 a second? How did you select the 508 surveys? Where they  
32 -- they had fish? They were seeing fishing or just  
33 random? Some people don't fish. I was -- how did you  
34 select that?

35

36                   MR. BEMBENEK: That's a great question,  
37 Mr. Chair. We use a -- we have a list of all households  
38 in Bethel, and then we have a program that's an access  
39 program that we randomly select each household and then  
40 visit. We try to go to the house three times, three  
41 contacts, one of which being a weekend one, and two at  
42 different times, three different times.

43

44                   (Talking)

45

46                   MR. BEMBENEK: Correct. If they receive  
47 fish. Yeah. Yep. So, the next slide. This slide shows a  
48 draft (indiscernible) table of harvest estimates. And  
49 keep in mind these are preliminary estimates. They still  
50 need to be finalized. But these are the harvest estimates

1 of 2025, chinook, chum, sockeye, coho, and pink salmon  
2 harvests by community, district or regional level, and  
3 the drainage. On the left-hand side of the table, you'll  
4 see a list of each community as well as a district total  
5 line. The four districts represented are the Lower  
6 River, Middle River, Upper River, and South Kuskokwim  
7 Bay. And at the top of the table, all five salmon species  
8 are listed, as well as a total of all species combined.  
9 The community is located inside the larger red box are  
10 the communities within the WIRAC region and represent  
11 the Middle River and Upper River districts,  
12 respectively. The smaller red box shows the Kuskokwim  
13 area total harvest of each species, as well as a total  
14 of all salmon harvested at the lower right-hand side.  
15 And again, just please note that these are an estimate  
16 and are not quite finalized, so they may change slightly.  
17 With this table and the remaining finalized tables and  
18 figures for the 2025 fishing -- salmon fishing season  
19 will be published in the fall of 2026.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

22

23 MR. BEMBENEK: And with that, if you have  
24 any additional comments or questions about any of the  
25 projects we discussed, you can reach myself or Brooke,  
26 and we have provided our contact information here with  
27 your handout. All of the Division of Subsistence  
28 Technical Reports and data are available on the website  
29 listed on the bottom right-hand slide. And we'd like  
30 to thank you for your time and for the opportunity to  
31 present today.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. I  
34 appreciate all that work. Looks like a lot of effort.  
35 And it's very valuable information. Council members have  
36 questions for Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
37 Subsistence Division?

38

39 (No response)

40

41 No, that was a fairly thorough report.  
42 I appreciate that. I think -- oh, Tommy. Okay. Didn't  
43 see you.

44

45 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, my name is Tom. I was  
46 just kind of curious about some things. That last guy  
47 was talking about their fishing and Kuskokwim River and  
48 allowance of salmon and all of that. And how, you know  
49 like, our salmon -- we don't, you know, we have ideas  
50 of who's catching them out, and the trawlers and the

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1 Area M. How is it that a lot of the Kuskokwim fish wind  
2 up in the Kuskokwim without being caught? I don't  
3 understand that part.

4

5 MR. BEMBENEK: Through the Chair. Member  
6 Kriska. I would like to defer to Division of Commercial  
7 Fisheries if Aaron is online, if he has a response.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Now he's not  
10 online.

11

12 MR. BEMBENEK: And I could try to get you  
13 an answer to that question.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: What was the  
16 question again, Tommy?

17

18 MR. KRISKA: I was just wondering, you  
19 know, the -- I don't know if the Yukon salmon travels  
20 the same route as the Kuskokwim salmon, and their coho,  
21 everything. They have the same fish as we do. And how  
22 the how does is it that their fish get by the trawlers  
23 and Area M and ours don't, can't, or don't. I don't  
24 understand. I mean, it's a different route? I'm not sure.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It could be timing.  
27 You know when that South Alaska Peninsula fishery is  
28 actually fishing, they might move through sooner than  
29 most of the majority of the fleets fishing. Or they  
30 might come from further down the peninsula. You know,  
31 they might be not coming exactly through the same routes  
32 as some other stocks. But yeah, that is an interesting  
33 aspect that, you know, the chinook run is considerably  
34 stronger, it's -- than the Yukon River stocks. That's  
35 somewhat baffling because, you know, Nushagak is doing  
36 really bad. Yukon is doing really bad. But the Kuskokwim  
37 are actually making escapement. And they got -- they  
38 have some -- they're chum run is increasing. There was  
39 -- we were told that the Koyukuk River that the Yukon  
40 River chums this year were -- in 2025 were a little bit  
41 better. The coho were considerably -- quite a bit better.  
42 When up to 101,000, and they were only thinking there  
43 was going to be 40 some thousand. So, there's, that --  
44 I don't think that anybody can answer that question.  
45 It's more likely that it has to be the travel routes of  
46 the -- of those various stocks, where they end up in the  
47 -- how soon they go out, how far they get on the ocean,  
48 a whole bunch of things throughout their life cycle that,  
49 you know, might not be really known or understood fully,  
50 but that is an interesting thing that the Kuskokwim fish

1 are -- never did go as low and are on a rebound slowly.  
2 And there's been considerable energy put in by the  
3 Kuskokwim River Inter-tribal Fish Commission to make  
4 sure that they made escapement goals and fought for  
5 escapement goals on the on the Kuskokwim. So, I don't  
6 think that that answer can be a -- question can be  
7 answered right now, but I do think it was an excellent  
8 question. So, thank you. So, Tim.

9  
10 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank  
11 you for your presentation. From time to time in the last  
12 decade, we've had commercial salmon fishery executed by  
13 fishermen out of the Quinhagak Village. And that may --  
14 potentially down to Goodnews Bay. And when we've been  
15 online with the ADF&G manager, he says that the -- those  
16 fish caught in that Quinhagak commercial fishery are not  
17 destined for the Kuskokwim River. I was wondering,  
18 through your survey information or other means, do you  
19 have knowledge or does the department have information  
20 about what the genetics are of the salmon? Specifically,  
21 kings and chums caught in the Quinhagak and Goodnews Bay  
22 area?

23  
24 MR. BEMBENEK: Through the Chair, Member  
25 Gervais. I don't have that answer. But I can reach out  
26 to my counterparts in Division of Commercial Fisheries  
27 and through the gene lab and see if there is any data  
28 available.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you. That'd be  
31 appreciated.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Any final  
34 questions? Don.

35  
36 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah,  
37 I guess, I had the same kind of question. That's why I  
38 asked Justin, you know, whether you guys know anything  
39 about the fish on the Kuskokwim. I mean, so my question  
40 specifically was -- is like in chum or something. What  
41 are the numbers? What is your -- what is the problem on  
42 the Kuskokwim when, I mean, like I mentioned, on the  
43 Yukon, fishing is almost non-existent. Can you -- can  
44 Justin, or somebody says on the Kuskokwim River, well  
45 we -- our fall run, our chums are below or something.  
46 And I don't know if this has to do with Tom's question,  
47 but I was just wondering, you know, what species are you  
48 lacking in? I mean, from five years ago? From two years  
49 ago? Is it, you know, can we pinpoint something here?  
50 Because, I mean, I -- our fall chum and our even summer

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1 chum used to be 500-700,000 easy. And both of those are  
2 gone. So, you know, I'm just -- I was just wondering if  
3 that.....

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: These Subsistence  
6 Division is developing harvest reporting survey. They're  
7 not the biologists. They don't -- you know, that's not  
8 their field. That's why they're referring back to the  
9 to the Commercial Fish Division, who manages the fishery  
10 for the state on the Kuskokwim River. And they're not  
11 on the, you know, Aaron's not on the phone. So we don't  
12 -- Aaron. Is his name Aaron? Who's your manager on the  
13 Kuskokwim?

14  
15 MR. BEMBENEK: Mr. Chair, that would be  
16 Sam Decker on the Kuskokwim.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, Sam Decker.  
19 Okay. Wrong person. But anyways, they're the ones with  
20 the biological stuff. This is just the harvest. This is  
21 what people caught, you know, by -- after management  
22 plus or minus. They're going to have a final report  
23 later on. So, I appreciate those. That harvest stuff is  
24 pretty important also. Thank you. So, I think we're  
25 probably done. Thank you very much. Go ahead, Nissa.

26  
27 MS. PILCHER: So, the next agenda item  
28 which is Division of Subsistence Chinook Salmon Research  
29 Initiative - What Did We Learn. That's included for your  
30 guys' information only. So, at the last Council meeting  
31 Member Walker asked about -- it was 4 or 5 years ago,  
32 there was several million dollars given to the state to  
33 kind of divvy out, to try to figure out what happened  
34 to the chinook salmon on the Yukon. And I couldn't really  
35 find one specific spot to find the answer to that other  
36 than this paper. So that's just included in there for  
37 your guys' information. Tim and Brooke, are -- they were  
38 not briefed that this was in here, so they can't really  
39 speak to it. They didn't draft it necessarily.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's this?

42  
43 MS. PILCHER: Yes. And then, of  
44 course.....

45  
46 (Simultaneous speech)

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Page 89?

49  
50 MS. PILCHER: Yeah.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MS. PILCHER: (Indiscernible) starts on page 90. Is it 95?

MR. GERVAIS: 95.

MS. PILCHER: There was a.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay here, 95.

MS. PILCHER: Yep. So that was just included for your guys' information.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MS. PILCHER: To look over as you had time.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. All right. So, we're going to move into North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

MS. PILCHER: Yep. And that was also included for your guys' information. So, it was what happened at the February meeting. There was some hope that some of the folks that were going to be here, I believe for TCC, we're going to be able to give you an update because they were there. But since, of course they aren't. But I included it in here, for your information, it's just the Council action on what they did at that February meeting, especially since at the very end of the meeting, I'll go over your guys' correspondence. And one of those letters was to the Council, to this meeting about that Chum EIA which is - - DEIS, which is what those actions are. Also included -- so that's on page 70. Also included on page 79, is the Council Chum Bycatch Outreach Report, which was drafted. And you -- this Council is part of that as it includes when they came to this room, for this Council the Eastern Interior and then also to Bethel for the Y-k Delta Councils. So, I just wanted to again include it in here for your guys' information.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So those are informational page 70 and 79.....

MS. PILCHER: Correct.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....of the North  
2 Pacific. And so, then we're moving down to U.S. Fish and  
3 Wildlife Service. And so, we're going to have  
4 Kanuti/Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko and Jeremy, are you on the  
5 phone or online? Jeremy Havener.

6  
7 MR. HAVENER: Hey, Jack. I'm here. Can  
8 you hear me?

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can hear you loud  
11 and clear.

12  
13 MR. HAVENER: Excellent. So. Yeah, I got  
14 a quick update I'll go over. I know I had Nissa print  
15 out a handout, and I'm hoping those got distributed.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: She handed it out.  
18 We have it in hand. Go right ahead.

19  
20 MR. HAVENER: Excellent. Thank you. So,  
21 thank you, Mr. Chair and Council Members. I sure  
22 appreciate the time to be here today. Introduce myself  
23 for the record, my name is Jeremy Havener. I'm the Refuge  
24 Subsistence Specialist and also the Acting Deputy Refuge  
25 Manager for the Northern Interior Refuge Complex, which  
26 includes the Koyukuk, Nowitna, Southern Innoko, Northern  
27 Unit Innoko, and Kanuti National Wildlife Refuges. First  
28 thing I want to talk about real quick is some staff  
29 updates. On page 1 of the handout I kind of put down  
30 there what our positions are looking like currently. The  
31 first one is, we have an acting refuge manager who is  
32 formerly a deputy at Kanuti and her name is Tina Moran,  
33 and I think she's there today. Yeah. Yep. And so, Tina's  
34 our Acting Manager. Again, I'm the acting deputy refuge  
35 manager out here in Galena. And then we have a new  
36 permanent manager coming to Fairbanks in April. And so  
37 we're welcoming her. Currently, we have one wildlife  
38 biologist in in Galena, a fisheries biologist in Galena.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Excuse me. Jeremy.

41  
42 MR. HAVENER: Yep, yep.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Do you want to give  
45 the name of your new permanent manager?

46  
47 MR. HAVENER: Yeah. Yeah. No, that  
48 that's. Yeah, that shouldn't be a problem at all. And  
49 it's Maria Fosado is going to be our new refuge manager  
50 here in April.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. In April.

MR. HAVENER: And so.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. HAVENER: Yep, yep. So, coming up here pretty soon. Couple months out.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.

MR. HAVENER: And so, we have one wildlife biologist in Galena, a fisheries biologist in Galena, two part-time park rangers, one in Galena and one in McGrath. The one in McGrath kind of runs the whole office down there. It's a (indiscernible) house. It's our contact station. We've got two refuge information technicians or RITs, one in Anvik that works remotely, and then one here in Galena who's just sitting outside my office door and can probably hear me talking. We've got four maintenance staff. Three are in Galena and one up at Bettles Field Station, and a budget analyst. And so, some of the big changes we saw that are really impacting us currently are the loss of our two wildlife biologist pilots. And so that's what we've been scrambling to try to figure out how we're going to approach our field seasons and get work done. You know, I think for us, we're prioritizing our surveys. Kind of towards the subsistence realm and really focusing on those moose surveys. And our process now is we have to go through regional pilots, and we have to, you know, get our requests on a calendar and then work with them to get pilots out for us. And we were, you know, fortunate enough this last year, we, you know, with the shutdown and everything going on, we were able to complete our annual trend count surveys in November. So, that was really exciting to see happening. You know, and I give a lot of credit to Tina and our biologists to make that happen. But aside from that, that's our big change. And, you know, right now we're kind of -- we're waiting on some things, we're doing some planning as we speak and waiting to see what budgets are going to look like. And then, you know, see what we can get done this field season.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And that was Brad.....

(Simultaneous speech)

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MR. HAVENER: So.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You lost Brad Scott, then?

MR. HAVENER: Yes. That is that's correct. We lost Brad's cotton. And our other pilot that was stationed out there in Fairbanks.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Bummer. Okay. Continue.

MR. HAVENER: So, Subsistence Program Updates on page 2. We did complete the Nowitna River Moose Hunter Check Station in 2025. We ran this -- the check station from September 3rd through the 29th. We did have to shut down a little bit early due to the pending shutdown. So, we took off a couple days before the federal subsistence season was over. But that worked out okay because we were able to communicate with everybody, and people kind of knew we were taking off and got all the harvest reports and everything from everybody. So, it was a non-issue. But for the 2025 season, we had 128 hunters that checked in, 30 moose were harvested and the harvest success rate was around 23%, which was slightly below average, but the biggest thing we noticed was the number of hunters checking in, and that was the highest we've had since 2006. So, for whatever reason, the number of hunters was up a little bit. Now, for the long term, when we look at it from 1988 when that check station was established, the average number of hunters is 119. So, it's just slightly above average for the long term. I kind of did a hunter breakdown for -- by residency, and that's just kind of below there in the middle of the page, you can see that 48% of the hunters was made up from other Alaska residents. So that includes, you know, Anchorage and Juneau and other places, 37% was from Fairbanks residents, 8% was non-residents. So outside of Alaska, and then 7% were local subsistence users from Galena, Ruby and Tanana.

We had our federal moose hunt FM2101, which takes place in the northern portion of the Nowitna Refuge in Game Management Unit 21B. That hunt occurs every year on September 26th through October 1st. And this last year we issued ten permits. Nine of them were to Tanana residents and one for Nowitna River resident. And three bull moose were harvested this last year.

1  
2                   And then the last thing on my  
3 subsistence updates that we're working on is the  
4 delegation of authority for a federal moose hunt and  
5 21B, 21D and Game Management Unit 24D. And right now,  
6 we're kind of in the consultation process reaching out  
7 to the affected tribes, Alaska Department of Fish and  
8 Game, Bureau of Land Management, and then the Chairs of  
9 the WIRAC, Middle Yukon AC and the Koyukuk River AC. And  
10 those hunts are, you know, we're looking at are anywhere  
11 from March 1st through the 5th and April 10th through  
12 the 15th in various areas. It's kind of complex, but.  
13 So, we'll be reaching out to discuss some of that stuff  
14 here in the very near future.

15  
16                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One moment.

17  
18                   MR. HAVENER: Yeah.

19  
20                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don's got a  
21 question.

22  
23                   MR. HONEA: Yeah. Jeremy, this is Don.  
24 On the federal moose hunt decision Game Unit 21B. Could  
25 you kind of be a little more precise on that? I mean,  
26 it says we're affected tribes and stuff. I mean, that  
27 is right at near the Village of Ruby, correct? And I  
28 just don't know why I haven't heard about it.

29  
30                   MR. HAVENER: Yeah. Mr. Honey, through  
31 the Chair. That's a great question. And I know it gets  
32 a little bit confusing, especially in these game  
33 management units. So, we have the federal hunt that takes  
34 place, you know, September 26th through October 1st  
35 every year. But the manager does have delegated  
36 authority to have a up to five day season between  
37 December 30th or, excuse me, December 1st through March  
38 31st. And you know, every year we've done consultation  
39 with the Village of Ruby. And it's kind of the, the  
40 standard response is that they're, you know, because of  
41 the moose population being in a lower density, there's  
42 no interest in a winter moose hunt because of the moose  
43 population. And that's, you know, it's -- since I've  
44 been in Galena, it's kind of been the answer I've heard,  
45 so.

46  
47                   MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Okay. Well, Jeremy,  
48 I mean, I don't understand this. Isn't this considered  
49 a winter moose hunt? I mean you know, usually in Game  
50 Management 21b, we -- you know, everybody pretty much

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1 gets something here in the fall time. And, you know, I,  
2 you know, my opinion and yours is that we -- it's not  
3 sustainable to have a winter hunt. So is this? Why am I  
4 confused here?

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Let me. Let me  
7 speak to that, Don. I -- Western Interior Council  
8 submitted this proposal a long time ago, back when there  
9 were a lot more moose. We had a meeting in 2007 in Ruby  
10 people were having a hard time getting moose then. That's  
11 when we moved this season forward up to the 1st of  
12 October. That's where that special hunt occurs, where  
13 there was three moose killed there. Ruby was utilizing  
14 that hunt on the Novi and the fall more, but I see that  
15 those nine permits were issued to Tanana people who have  
16 custom and traditional in one local person. But this  
17 winter hunt you've gotten beat up with snow so deep, and  
18 again this year, the moose population has declined to  
19 the point where -- I'm a consultant on that 21B moose  
20 hunt, no, we don't have the moose for it. But there is  
21 going to be a time when this -- when the moose -- when  
22 the weather conditions and the moose population will  
23 come back again, and people may want to use that. But  
24 that's why that hunt is there. And it was -- I don't  
25 know that you were on the Council at that time when we  
26 actually adopted that, that moose hunt for -- that was  
27 basically out of response to that Ruby meeting we had.

28  
29 MR. HONEA: This must have been a long  
30 time because we -- even the Ruby AC, we have never  
31 authorized that or wanted that because we pretty much  
32 didn't need it. And the numbers probably at Nowitna  
33 couldn't sustain it. That's all I'm saying. Thank you.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. It's on the  
36 books. It's not been approved. It's not been approved  
37 for years. And so, we've left it on the books because  
38 it's not going to be used unless the moose population  
39 can support it. And so, when we consult with any the  
40 Nowitna refuge staff, Koyukuk, Nowitna and all them,  
41 there is never enough moose population for the last  
42 several years to have that moose hunt. So don't worry,  
43 we're not going to have the moose hunt. And, so.....

44  
45 MR. HONEA: You're just saying it's on  
46 the books.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's on the books,  
49 but it's our hunt. It's your hunt. I mean, whether you  
50 knew it or not, but it's your hunt. But we don't have

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1 the moose to support it, so we're not going to have the  
2 hunt until such time. So the, you know, the Kaiyuh moose  
3 population increased by doubles. That's where that  
4 Middle Yukon wanted that winter hunt. March 1 to March  
5 10, I think it is, something like that. And that's a  
6 state hunt. But that has had really low participation.  
7 Nobody's been wanting to use winter hunts, mainly  
8 because people want to conserve their moose. But if the  
9 moose population can support it, you know, there's --  
10 there was interest and Huslia for hunt for bulls only,  
11 what, a couple of years ago? And nobody participated,  
12 right, Jeremy?

13

14 MR. HAVENER: Yep.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Nobody even wanted  
17 to go. So, I heard that they wanted to go, but they  
18 didn't want to go. So, nobody even got the permits. So,  
19 we're not going to even entertain that again. So, there  
20 -- we have -- we've -- this Council has been here since  
21 1993. We had lots of moose. We had moose populations  
22 back in the 90s that were up to 5.2 moose per square  
23 mile. We had lots of moose. We had actually opportunity  
24 for cow and state had the last five days of the moose  
25 season was cow harvest on the Koyukuk. So, things have  
26 changed. And so eventually, we keep hoping and praying  
27 that the weather will get better and the moose population  
28 will build back up again. But we've had deep snow and  
29 that's pretty hard on moose. So that's answering your  
30 question so you can continue, Jeremy.

31

32 MR. HAVENER: Okay. Yeah. No, thank you.  
33 Appreciate the history on that. And that's why I was  
34 going to mention is that, yeah, since I've been here  
35 since 2011 and we have not opened that hunt, and I don't  
36 know when the last time it was open. So it's there. It's  
37 on the books. It's an opportunity if moose numbers ever  
38 come back. But right now, the answers we've been getting  
39 from, you know, Tanana and Ruby is that they don't want  
40 to have this moose hunt because they don't want to see  
41 pressure on the moose population. But aside from that,  
42 you know, with subsistence updates, you know, you  
43 mentioned it, Jack, with the state registration hunt  
44 that's going to be taking place here and that's, you  
45 know, it's a state registration permit, and it begins  
46 March 1st and it'll run through the 15th, I believe. And  
47 that's, you know, on the south bank of the Yukon from  
48 Kelly Creek on down to Eagle Island. And so that'll be  
49 open for folks that need a moose. And I know last year  
50 we had some people from Ruby asking for potential moose

1 opportunities. And we were, you know, mentioning that  
2 could be a potential to come down. I know it's a little  
3 bit of a drive, but you know, we're happy with how the  
4 moose population is doing in the Kaiyuh and feel that  
5 that can support that hunt at this time.

6  
7 So, jumping into our biological update.  
8 So, like I mentioned earlier, we were able to complete  
9 our fall 2025 moose trend count surveys. You know, like  
10 I mentioned, we lost both of our pilots, but working  
11 through our regional pilot program and getting some  
12 observers and working in cooperation with Alaska  
13 Department of Fish and Game which has been working really  
14 well, we were able to get most of the trend counts  
15 completed for this area within the complex. And so, for  
16 the Koyukuk we did two trend count areas. That was the  
17 Treat Island, Huslia flats and then Three-Days Slough  
18 and Dulbi River. Kaiyuh, there was three trend areas  
19 there, which is the Koyukuk mouth, Squirrel Creek and  
20 Pilot Mountain, and then the Kaiyuh Slough area, which  
21 is down by Nine Mile Island near Nulato. On the Nowitna  
22 we had two trend count areas we completed that runs from  
23 basically the mouth up to the Slatna River. And  
24 unfortunately, the Innoko River because of logistics,  
25 weather time constraints, we were not able to get down  
26 there this last year and complete the trend count areas  
27 there. And a quick synopsis of basically what we saw.  
28 You know, I've got everything kind of listed, and I  
29 apologize for -- normally we have our full moose survey  
30 completed, but we're going through some edits right now  
31 and it's not quite ready, so I just grabbed some  
32 information out of it and kind of broke it down by each  
33 trend count area. But a quick synopsis is we saw really  
34 good production in all trend count areas. You know, I  
35 think I want to say it was above 30 calves per 100 cows  
36 in all areas and up to 47 up by Huslia Flats/Treat  
37 Island. And so, we're really happy with the production  
38 that we saw across the area. And then recruitment for  
39 the most part was really good and normal in areas. We  
40 did have one area that that was poor and that was the  
41 Three-Day Slough/Dulbi River area. Recruitment was for  
42 yearling bulls per 100 cows. But overall happy with  
43 recruitment and happy with the production that we're  
44 seeing. So hopefully, you know, if depending on how this  
45 year kind of pans out with the snow levels. I know we  
46 just got a bunch of snow, but it's just until recently  
47 it's been kind of a low snow year. So, we're hoping  
48 that, you know, maybe we'll see some growth start to  
49 happen, because the negative thing that we are seeing  
50 in all these trend count areas, minus the Kaiyuh area,

1 is that all -- the adult population, we're seeing a  
2 downward trend in the numbers that we're counting. So,  
3 you know, areas like the Nowitna, the northern Koyukuk,  
4 the we were kind of concerned on what we're seeing there  
5 with the -- with that trend going downward.

6  
7 And the last thing I will say on the  
8 Nowitna and again, you know, it's still a priority for  
9 us. I know we've been seeing that trend kind of going  
10 down there. And we want to get a full GSP, a geospatial  
11 population estimate completed. And it's still a priority  
12 for us. And so, we're going to keep working with the  
13 tools we have to try to complete that. I know we've been  
14 talking about it for a couple of years now. But hopefully  
15 we can try to figure something out to where we can get  
16 over there and complete that. With that being said, that  
17 kind of concludes my report. So, I'll, I'll go ahead and  
18 open it up for questions.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I'm  
21 (indiscernible) around that Novi check station. What --  
22 you are checking those bull moose there. What' the  
23 general age class of the bulls that are you seeing? Lots  
24 of big bulls? Mostly medium sized bulls What kind of  
25 moose are people taking there? And the -- you know, the  
26 ones that I've -- the Fairbanks, and resident Alaskan  
27 hunters, they would be trying to target larger bulls.  
28 What are what are the age classes? Are we missing older  
29 bulls because of the deep snow and the calf production  
30 restrictions earlier, or just timing out on some of these  
31 bulls? And we've killed off a lot of the older ones or  
32 what's going on there on the demographics of those --  
33 that moose population?

34  
35 MR. HAVENER: Mr. Chair, that's a great  
36 question. And, you know, so we do collect teeth samples  
37 there, and we send those off to Fish and Game. And they  
38 -- I think they compile the actual -- they've got all  
39 the data on, you know, exactly how old each moose is.  
40 And it might be something where this strikes me to try  
41 to get that, you know, data for myself. But just from  
42 what I'm seeing being out there, I don't really think  
43 we're missing any cohorts just off the top of my head.  
44 I feel like it's a pretty even representation of moose  
45 sizes coming in. You know, we've -- we see some big  
46 moose. I know a couple years ago I had a -- there was a  
47 70-inch bull we measured coming out of there coming up,  
48 you know, upriver aways. But, you know, we also see  
49 smaller moose, too. And it just kind of seems like it's  
50 a -- it's an even mix just off the top of my head.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Did you show any -  
- I see you have pretty high yearling-bull -- in your  
survey 11 bulls per hunter cow. Did you see any harvest  
of those yearlings in your -- in the checkout?

MR. HAVENER: You know, I know there was  
a couple. I don't know exactly how many, though. I don't  
think it was -- I don't think it made up a majority or  
anything like that.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. I just want  
to know if there, you know, that -- that's a pretty  
strong cohort. That's a pretty good survival, 11. That  
means there's 22 yearling moose, cows and bulls combined  
per 100 cow. That's a nearly a 25 -- 20 something percent  
increase in moose population. Those are survived moose.  
So that's a.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. HAVENER: Yeah, we're really excited  
about that.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....strong  
indicator of that. That's why I'm big on comp. I want  
comp on caribou. I want small, medium and large. I want  
sheep comp. I want this comp because we need to know what  
the science is. And I want to -- when you get those age  
classes of those moose that you've been giving to the  
department, I would like to see that those ages compiled  
and graphed so that we know what this -- therefore we  
would know what our moose population, harvest is also  
doing. Those are our samples. You should -- they should  
be sharing that data. They probably already got it  
graphed out for you. They're just -- we just need to get  
the info. So we got to know what this -- the Novi has had  
deep snow really, bad winters, you know. You know that  
Roger Huntington's up there by birches, and he's just  
getting pounded with snow all the time. They got all  
kinds of bad weather there in the Novi, and -- but I'm  
really surprised, well it was a little lighter snow but  
gee whiz, 11 yearlings made it per 100 cow bulls, 22 --  
basically that was -- I don't know what your calf-cow  
ratio was last year, but it was a significant survival  
of that component. So those are usually strong cohorts.  
They're usually produced real fairly soon, you know, at  
three instead of four years of age. So, any questions  
from the Council on this on this presentation? Don, you  
got a question. And then.....

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MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One last question here, Jeremy. I see on the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. You put down moderate to low density population compared -- as compared to years past or what? I don't know, you know, seems like they had a lot of hunting pressure this fall. So, did that have anything to do, you think with the numbers or with the low density? Thank you.

10

11

MR. HAVENER: Mr. Honey, through the Chair. And that's a great question. And that's why, you know, it was important for us to get down there and try to do those surveys this year. But like I said, it was, you know, with weather and just the pilots time and everything. We weren't able to squeeze it in. But you know, what we've seen in that trend count area is, I want to say we started it in 2011 and bull-cow ratios, and that's kind of an indicator of hunting pressure was around 80 to 100. And then just the last year or the year before this last. So, 2020 4th November, we counted, I want to say it was around 29 bulls to 100 cows. So, I mean, it's, you know, still in a management level, but it's the trajectory that we saw with it is what's got us concerned. As far as the population goes, you know, I think that's just based on the density per square mile in that area just kind of falls into a to a lower population density. I don't know if that answers your question.

29

30

31

MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you.

32

33

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Did you classify - in the November of 24 survey, did you classify small, medium and large bulls or yearling medium and large bulls?

36

37

38

MR. HAVENER: I know they do. But I don't have that data in front of me. And I can ask Boomer and see if she can put that stuff together.

40

41

42

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah. I would like to -- I know they got, you know, they had some deep snow there and stuff that was killing bison and whatnot, so. I want to know what those yearling components are doing and the moose population. So, it also gives you an idea of how many two-year-olds you're going to have. And we got a lot of strong cohorts, these bulls strong cohorts. Then you get you get people kill a lot of two-year-olds because they're kind of a nice moose. I like

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1 a two-year-old moose myself. You have a question,  
2 Robert?

3

4 MR. WALKER: Hey, Jeremy. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chairman. Robert Walker. I have a couple questions.

6

7 MR. HAVENER: Yeah.

8

9 MR. WALKER: On your front first page  
10 here, you got two RITs. One Anvik, one Galena.

11

12 MR. HAVENER: Yep. That's correct.

13

14 MR. WALKER: The question one in Anvik.  
15 We don't have a description of what he does back at the  
16 tribal office. I try to maintain some kind of a  
17 neutrality here to see that -- make sure that how the  
18 tribes could get a permit for, like a winter hunt or  
19 something, and.....

20

21 MR. HAVENER: Okay.

22

23 MR. WALKER: Most of the time, the RIT  
24 in Anvik is gone. So, if they would have to go to the  
25 tribe and go into the internet and pull out if they need  
26 a moose hunt for February or March. So, I'm in -- the  
27 question was, I've been brought information, but I said  
28 I can't use that because it's verbal. It has to be in  
29 writing before I -- and I can't represent Western  
30 Interior RAC. And I tell them that, but I'm on it. But  
31 the question is that how could this RIT be traveling all  
32 the time and not taking care of business locally or  
33 through the four villages? And second, is that why is  
34 the boat being used like a personal transportation that  
35 is there? And I asked specifically if they could take  
36 pictures so we could have access and bring this to your  
37 department here, Jeremy. And it just go on and on and  
38 on. And I tell these people, I can't gossip and I can't  
39 bring forth these information. So, I would have somebody  
40 from your department go down and check this out, because  
41 maybe this is true. Maybe this is not. But I've seen the  
42 boat being used for other purposes other than the RIT  
43 work going to Grayling, Holy Cross or Shageluk. So that's  
44 just a question I have for you, Jeremy.

45

46 MR. HAVENER: Mr. Walker, through the  
47 Chair. So, I think the first thing I'll say is with the  
48 position description, I don't think that's a problem.  
49 We can provide that to the tribe if they if they request  
50 it. I've not been, you know, approached by them and

1 asked for it. But if that's something they want, we can  
2 share that for sure to kind of go over the duties of a  
3 of an RIT and that's, you know, just the easy answer is  
4 it's, it's a liaison. So, talking with tribes, bringing  
5 information back to the refuge and vice versa. As far  
6 as the other matters, I think I would prefer since this  
7 could potentially be a personnel issue, that we not  
8 discuss this on record. If -- I would prefer to, to  
9 maybe discuss this directly with you. But right now, I  
10 don't know if this is an appropriate avenue to have this  
11 conversation.  
12

13 MR. WALKER: Well, also, it's also  
14 (indiscernible) too, that he is the Chairman of the Board  
15 there, the GASH Board. So I -- we -- I would look at it  
16 as a personnel as that it would be a conflict of interest  
17 because we -- I listen in on our meetings and a lot of  
18 times too, like they put a resolution in or a proposal  
19 into the AF Department of the -- Board of Game proposal  
20 to move the border from above Grayling all the way up  
21 to Eagle Slide. And I listened in on that, and that  
22 didn't pass. It was like three-three tie. And I did tell  
23 the person who ran the meeting was a guy out of  
24 Anchorage, Department of Fish and Game that according  
25 to Robert's Rules of Order, this proposal dies right  
26 here. But they still brought it to the Board of Game,  
27 and it -- and they were told directly that this was a  
28 dead on arrival. So how we do this? I just kind of  
29 questioned that. How can we do this and how is it legal  
30 for how things are run in that department. I know you're  
31 not a very -- you're not -- you're a long distance away  
32 to look at this. So, it's just a question that other  
33 people have concerns, and or whatever, you know. But I'm  
34 just saying this here, and what I've seen is that the  
35 boat leaves Anvik, and sometimes it's gone for two days.  
36 Nobody knows where it goes. And I wonder if there was  
37 any reports written up for using this boat or, you know,  
38 gas charge or whatever, because an RIT is supposed to  
39 be doing a lot more work in the four villages, and  
40 probably, I would say two other villages too, rather  
41 than just being a personal transportation. Thank you.  
42 Jeremy.  
43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

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46 MR. HAVENER: And thank you for those  
47 comments.  
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49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim, you got a  
50 question or comment?

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MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hi, Jeremy. Tim Gervais. Going forward, do you feel like Nowitna is going to rehire a pilot, or is the regional pilot going to be the model going forward?

MR. HAVENER: Mr. Gervais, through the Chair. My understanding is our program is going to lean towards regional pilots. And so the -- they'll be stationed in areas like Fairbanks and Anchorage in my understanding.

MR. GERVAIS: All right. Thank you.

MR. HAVENER: Yep.

MR. GERVAIS: Thanks for your report.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any other questions?

MR. HONEA: One last question.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah. One last question, Jeremy. Yeah. It's been a couple of years for that moose trend count. And so maybe by next year we're going to have some numbers. And you know, I think I requested that or we requested it a year ago or whatever, and I'm not too big on time and stuff because of, you know, the weather conditions and stuff. But is there any other refuges in there that are lacking a trend count? And thank you for your response.

MR. HAVENER: Mr. Honea, through the Chair. Yeah. As far as trend counts go, I know, some refuges lean heavily on working with the state to complete them. So for us, we've been pretty lucky over the years to have a pilot directly for us and actually two pilots. But now we're kind of facing the reality of trying to work with our resources and trying to balance positions that are shared. And so we're hoping, like I said, to really prioritize our moose surveys, in particular the Nowitna pop estimate. And so we're hoping we can try to work something out and see if we can make that happen in the near future.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I have pretty good growing concern for the Innoko bull-cow ratio

1 declined recognized last year, and we continue to get  
2 reports of all this meat coming into McGrath from the  
3 Innoko and the delays, and the meat comes in rotten into  
4 McGrath. Are your RIT in McGrath are they actually  
5 contacting those hunters when they come back from the  
6 field? And are they look -- observing how much meat they  
7 got and condition of the meat? Or is there any kind of  
8 idea what's going on with the air taxis bringing hunters  
9 out of Innoko?

10  
11 MR. HAVENER: Mr. Chair. Yeah. So this,  
12 this last year and I'm not sure if Cody Smith is still  
13 in there, but I know Tina mentioned we did have law  
14 enforcement in McGrath last year or this last season and  
15 you know, hope to continue that into the future because  
16 it's, you know, it's pretty easy for us to be there in  
17 McGrath and kind of see the planes coming as they go,  
18 you know, and check for things. But as far as numbers,  
19 I don't have those numbers on me. I don't know, Tina.  
20 maybe you might know more of the reports from the from  
21 the transporter.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have Tina and  
24 Cody here, and I'll have them come up to the table.  
25 Because this is a huge complex now, and we need to know  
26 some of the parameters of what's going on with this. You  
27 know. We fought hard against the complexing for this,  
28 Innoko with the Koyukuk, Nowitna and the Kanuti, we  
29 fought for that, but we were unsuccessful. First, I want  
30 to know from Cody what kind of condition the meat was  
31 coming out and was it -- did you were enumerating coming  
32 out of Innoko or where the moose were actually harvested?  
33 Is that what you were doing there? How many days did you  
34 spend, etc.?

35  
36 MR. SMITH: And just to clarify, this is  
37 Cody Smith for the record. You're talking about the meat  
38 that we were seeing coming through McGrath out of the  
39 field?

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The Innoko. Did you  
42 enumerate what was coming out of Innoko?

43  
44 MR. SMITH: So, we did. And Jared Long,  
45 who I believe is on the phone here on Teams. Him and I  
46 were both out there together and ended up working some  
47 joint stuff together and then split up, and he covered  
48 an area by watercraft and I was out on boat. And we were  
49 able to distinguish where meat was coming out of. We had  
50 a couple issues that we dealt with out there and I think

1 word got around pretty quick once we arrived. But  
2 generally speaking, the condition of what we saw coming  
3 out of the field was pretty good. Where we ended up  
4 encountering a couple of issues were in the field. And  
5 so, it was stuff before folks even made it out that we  
6 were clearing things up.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I think your  
9 presence there was a phenomenal improvement. It just  
10 takes just a pass through once in a while. Get people's  
11 attention on the road. We've said that they should just  
12 park an enforcement vehicle somewhere along the road so  
13 that they just with an emblem on the door will get  
14 people's attention. Like there's, you know, the hunters  
15 are going by it makes a huge difference. If they don't  
16 think -- if the cat's away, the mice will play. So, I'm  
17 -- and then I also have a question for Tina. Since you're  
18 complexed and you're going to use pilots to fly survey,  
19 I was -- we were assured in 2023. We had a meeting down  
20 in Anchorage and they told us that they had all this  
21 staff down there. They had all these biologists and stuff  
22 that were going to help out these refuges and the  
23 enforcement part of it. Pilot, you know, air support.  
24 Are you -- can you get a hold of them? They're good?  
25 They're accommodating to your complex, or are you having  
26 problems getting any support out of the regional office?  
27 The question was, in 2023, are you going to support this  
28 complex?

29  
30 MS. MORAN: Well, things change since  
31 2023 because we've lost a lot of folks, especially last  
32 year with the early buyout options. So, for Kanuti, we  
33 had at one point 3 biologists. Now we're down to zero.  
34 And we are right now in a hiring freeze, and we're not  
35 sure when that will be lifted, although some  
36 reassignments are available now. But for the complex,  
37 yeah, basically, our staff in Galena is what's covering  
38 Kanuti right now. So, what the staffing that Jeremy  
39 talked about, I don't know what the future is right now.  
40 The hope is that we would have at least one biologist  
41 based in Fairbanks for Kanuti. That was what was agreed  
42 upon. But at the moment we're not we're not able to  
43 hire, so.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So how many pilots  
46 do they have regionally to help on your surveys?

47  
48 MR. SMITH: I -- don't quote me on the  
49 exact number. I was just at a training with all the  
50 pilots in the region. If I recall correctly, it was 7 or

1 8, I believe in the region.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah. Well,  
4 you know, this kind of data is important on when we're  
5 managing. We watch a bull-cow ratio in Innoko go from  
6 81 to 29 from 2011 till now. That's a fairly steep --  
7 that's a pretty heavy harvest rate. And so, I'm -- I --  
8 if you need support, we can write letters to the regional  
9 director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife if that's  
10 necessary. But if -- let us know if you need assistance  
11 because we're -- you're within our -- majority of your  
12 -- within our region. So, we need to -- we are very  
13 supportive of U.S. Fish and Wildlife and these refuges.  
14 It's important to the people of this region to manage  
15 these properly. So, I'm really appreciative that we had  
16 enforcement there, that you had an actual program there.  
17 And that probably, you know, we were going to have a  
18 meeting this fall, but we got shut down out. And so, I  
19 wanted to know what people's feeling were about, you  
20 know, the amount -- last year, it was a lot of  
21 complaining about how all this bad meat coming out of  
22 the Innoko. So, appreciate that. I really appreciate  
23 that. So, Tim.

24

25 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah.  
26 So, I'm really interested in this situation of wanton  
27 waste coming off of Innoko during the moose season. Are  
28 -- is it correct that the guides -- do you have hunting  
29 guides permitted for the Innoko Refuge for moose? Like  
30 how many and how many moose?

31

32 MS. MORAN: So, we have three -- one  
33 guide for three areas. So, one guide holds three  
34 guide use areas in Innoko. And I just got all the  
35 activity reports and was just working on all the invoices  
36 the last couple of weeks. And a total for the -- all  
37 three Innoko guide use areas for moose taken was four.  
38 And just so you're aware, we have five permitted air  
39 taxi transporters in Innoko and 33 moose were taken from  
40 those hunters that were the clients, and that was maybe  
41 about a quarter or less than a half of the clients were  
42 successful.

43

44 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So, 33 moose from the  
45 five air taxis. Do they have to -- do their taxis have  
46 to be permitted or is there any kind of check station  
47 in McGrath? At the McGrath airstrip?

48

49 MS. MORAN: No, no. The transport is an  
50 air taxis and also the guides have to send me a report

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1 at the end of the year and list all their clients, and  
2 you know how many moves they were taken and the  
3 locations.

4

5 MR. GERVAIS: What dates were you there,  
6 Cody or -- excuse me. I -- yeah. Cody.

7

8 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir. This is Cody.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. What dates were you  
11 -- of the moose season were you down there in Mcgrath?  
12 Is that the reason you were.....

13

14 (Simultaneous speech)

15

16 MR. SMITH: Yes, it was.

17

18 MR. GERVAIS: .....you were there was to  
19 look for wanton waste.....

20

21 MR. SMITH: Yes.

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: .....and general  
24 violation?

25

26 MR. SMITH: It was and I ended up -- my  
27 stay down there was a bit shorter because I had to go  
28 fly but further north, Jared ended up actually staying  
29 down there for almost a week after I left. So, between  
30 the two of us, I believe we were there a total of around  
31 ten days with some overlap there. And I'd been down  
32 there a bit prior to that with the float plane as well.  
33 I would have to check my calendar to see what dates, but  
34 it was right when everything was coming out of the field.  
35 I mean, we were there, it was prime time. And so, we --  
36 at one point on the Innoko River, Jared and I were flying  
37 together, and we made a point of basically from our  
38 administrative cabin where we were staying at all the  
39 way down to Shageluk landed on every moose camp and  
40 there were times where I wasn't even up to altitude with  
41 the plane yet. You know, you'd take off and then chop,  
42 throttle and just glide back into the next camp and then  
43 take off and pull the throttle and glide, you know. So  
44 just lots of context on the Innoko River, a lot of  
45 surprise that we were there and folks saying it was  
46 their first time being contacted. And a couple -- one  
47 transporter that we talked to that had not been contacted  
48 in the field before and -- you know, but they had seen  
49 law enforcement at a runway or in town. So, I think it  
50 was really good. And, and as you mentioned, did get the

1 word out that we were willing to come contact everybody.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, I'm really glad  
4 that the refuge made an effort to have an enforcement  
5 presence. Is it -- based on your budget and personnel,  
6 is it possible with your McGrath RIT that you do have  
7 the transporters run through a checkpoint program in  
8 McGrath on their way -- like, how does it normally work?  
9 They go from air taxi to commercial air service at  
10 McGrath to get this meat to Anchorage for the non-local  
11 hunters?

12

13 MS. MORAN: Well, just a clarification.  
14 We don't have an RIT in McGrath. We have a part time  
15 park ranger. So, this is going to be on her duties to  
16 do all that. But basically, it's, you know, Cody could  
17 probably talk more to what they do, but basically it's  
18 what they take out of the field because there is no  
19 check station at McGrath.

20

21 MR. SMITH: We're starting to definitely  
22 skirt into a really interesting topic and just that --  
23 and it's something we deal with every year. The  
24 transporters are typically in air taxis are taken on way  
25 too many clients, and that's what ends up causing some  
26 of this waste issues. We -- I've personally seen hunters  
27 that were doing their due diligence, trying to take care  
28 of meat in the field, and we're getting delayed days and  
29 days. You know, in a couple specific instances, we helped  
30 reach out to the air taxi or transporter that brought  
31 them there, and they were claiming weather delay. And  
32 meanwhile, we're out in the field flying and contacting  
33 folks, and its gorgeous weather. And so, it's, you know,  
34 just a money grab, essentially.

35

36 MS. MORAN: What we're trying to do in  
37 this situation is kind of volunteer -- have people  
38 volunteer to reduce their clients. We started that last  
39 year talking to a couple of the high impact ones and so,  
40 I'm hoping this year that.....

41

42 (Simultaneous speech)

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And you set a limit  
45 on the number of clients per...?

46

47 MS. MORAN: I can't -- I don't think we  
48 can right now. It goes through a whole other process,  
49 and I don't want to speak to it yet. So not to -- know  
50 too much about it. With Kanuti, that's what we did --

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1 to do that, we sent a letter asking for voluntary  
2 rejection and we did get that. So, -- and we'll wait  
3 till the new manager comes on and talk more about  
4 strategy. But that's what we started last year. And it  
5 was a little bit late in the process to try to get that.  
6 But they're aware of it this year. So, as people bring  
7 on clients this year.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And on the Arctic  
10 refuge guides are under -- they have a limit on -- they  
11 have a set amount of Dall sheep that they can clients  
12 they can take.

13  
14 MS. MORAN: And that's the guides,  
15 this.....

16  
17 (Simultaneous speech)

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right, right.

20  
21 MS. MORAN: So far it looks like our  
22 guides -- that's not the issue.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, it's not the  
25 issue.

26  
27 MS. MORAN: Yeah. It's more the.....

28  
29 (Simultaneous speech)

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Guides are  
32 responsible for meat care and etc., etc. It's non-  
33 resident hunters that hunt on their own are the biggest  
34 problem. We had an enforcement officer, Kurt Benefield,  
35 at that Coldfoot in 2003 I think it was, he had 28 wanton  
36 waste cases and 26 were non-residents. It's just like  
37 they haven't the slightest idea how to handle one of  
38 these moose. It's just a fiasco. And they're just,  
39 they're overwhelmed with -- and so, it's just a  
40 combination of -- they have -- I had two guys pull up  
41 in my yard. They had -- they were looking at -- I got  
42 his moose antlers on a pole there, I said, well, this  
43 is a 50-inch moose. This is your legal moose. This moose  
44 is 1,200lb they're like, I says, you got packs? You got  
45 -- they're getting flown out. I says, you got pack? We  
46 got day packs. They haven't the slightest -- I said, you  
47 got knives to cut this thing? Then a little Boy Scout  
48 knives about this big on their belt, that's folding  
49 knives. It's like they don't have the slightest idea.  
50 There's a real need for your park ranger to give them

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1 some information before they even go to field. This  
2 should be on the website. You and their air -- your air  
3 taxi should be handing each client a card that says this  
4 is what the animal is. This should be their information.  
5 This should be digitally transmitted to the hunter  
6 before the -- when they book it, and then they should  
7 hand of a hard copy so that when they get out to camp,  
8 they can actually sit around the campfire and read about  
9 how big this animal is and what it's going to take to  
10 get this thing cut up. They better show up with knives.  
11 They better show up with equipment, game bags to support  
12 what they're doing. That's a big, huge problem. I'm of  
13 the opinion and I said it at our last meeting this  
14 winter, I told people at TCC, it's my opinion that non-  
15 resident hunters for moose and caribou need to be guided  
16 by guides. They're responsible for the meat. That's my  
17 opinion. Go ahead, Tommy.

18  
19 MR. KRISKA: Yeah. The -- so the Innoko  
20 River, that's the place that it doesn't really have --  
21 it's just free for all. There's no permit, no nothing  
22 there. So, thousands of hunters can go in there. And the  
23 way it is right now, it says that five planes got 33  
24 moose going into McGrath. And who knows, maybe into Aniak  
25 and wherever they're flying out of. I know there's more  
26 hunters out there. So, one of the only ways to kind of  
27 slow this down is to make, I mean, you know, to make the  
28 Innoko controlled use area for -- to limit permits. And  
29 there's a lot of talk about that around the GASH area.  
30 Some -- I know, there's some the AT and those guys, they  
31 won't -- they don't want it. But I know there's a lot  
32 of the locals want it because they're having a tough  
33 time with the moose. And a lot of this meat, you know,  
34 is going into McGrath and I'm sure that 33 moose, that's  
35 a lot of meat. And I know the locals in the McGrath are  
36 not going to throw their meat at the dump, but. And why  
37 is that dump, is loaded with moose meat. I mean, it's  
38 just like, I don't know, nothing against you or whatever,  
39 but I see that in some cases through the state, and they  
40 don't really care what happens to the meat. Seems like  
41 that all they're doing is selling this permits these  
42 places to hunt. The state is getting money for all these  
43 hunts, and I don't know it. I don't even like to say  
44 that kind of stuff, but then I don't know what's going  
45 on. And I think that they need a better -- they need  
46 somebody over there really checking these hunters out.  
47 I mean, the guides, I mean, you know, they're -- seem  
48 like the one guy is guiding for moose over here. Then  
49 the bears open over here. He's over there. Sheep open  
50 is over there. He's over there. And with that kind of

1 guides flying around and doing things like that, there's  
2 thousands of pounds of meat that's not taken care of.  
3 But it's not being used. I mean, we're the ones that  
4 suffering, like for the fish and everything, and we're  
5 fighting for our lives here and seem like the departments  
6 are just letting it go. I mean, I don't want to say that  
7 but seem like that's what's going on. Okay, I can go on  
8 and on about it, but it's really frustrating. Thank you.  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert.

11  
12 MR. WALKER: You know Shageluk is -- they  
13 have a transporter also, you know that and one of the  
14 Holy Cross and.....

15  
16 (Simultaneous speech)

17  
18 MR. GERVAIS: Excuse me, Robert, are you  
19 talking air or boat transporters?

20  
21 MR. WALKER: Boat. But there are aircraft  
22 in the area also up to Innoko River. But anyway, the  
23 corporation put a stop to having them -- gas delivered  
24 to them on corporation land. So, what they do with their  
25 fuel tanker, they go on state land, and they go to the  
26 airport and use the north end of the airport for their  
27 fueling source, because that state land. And I  
28 questioned that too, because I worked for the airport  
29 for 25 years. And if you're going to cross the runway,  
30 you're supposed to call a flight service to let them  
31 know that you are crossing the runway. And that's the  
32 law, FAA law, and that's not being enforced or anything,  
33 but the state is letting it happen. I don't know why.  
34 But it's a question that I brought up with the FAA also.  
35 You know that, how could you let a 5000-gallon tanker  
36 ride up and down the runway when they're not calling  
37 Kenai to let them know they're doing that? So, this is  
38 something that maybe -- I don't know how you could use  
39 that. But again, when you look at the hunters that come  
40 out Innoko River that go to Holy Cross that with the  
41 Holy Cross guy, they don't have any meat either.  
42 Somewhere along the line from the mouth of Iditarod down,  
43 they kind of like disappear.

44  
45 So, and my other question was that how  
46 could some people have -- okay, just the other one. I  
47 have a radio. I have 122.8, 122.7 and 122.9. Shageluk,  
48 122.8. Holy Cross 112.8, Anvik 122.7, Grayling 122.9.  
49 At nighttime, I brought this up to the RAC, but I'm  
50 going to give you the information too that about 11-

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1 12:00 every night after the 20th, somebody some aircraft  
2 will click the runway lights on. You could -- because I  
3 could hear it click, click, click, you know. And I know  
4 they're not going to talk on the radio because you got  
5 a cell phone now, that's where -- you have a range of  
6 line of sight when you're talking. So, this is going on  
7 now and I told ADF&G, the state wildlife trooper and  
8 they didn't -- they can't do anything because it's after  
9 hours or something. I don't know if they got no night  
10 flying or what, but how are these other hunters flying  
11 at night? You know, that's a question. And I've talked  
12 to FAA about this too, because I worked with, like I  
13 said, FAA for 25 years and they gave me the radios  
14 because I did a good job. I just monitor them. I don't  
15 talk to anybody if I don't have to. So, I -- this is  
16 probably happening all over the lower Yukon, everything.  
17 Because if you're going to do kind of illegal work at  
18 night, you know, nobody's there. So, you know, and  
19 there's nothing nobody can do about it. If I, like I  
20 said, I told the people, but nobody don't [sic] want to  
21 do anything. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, one final  
24 question. Go ahead, Tim.

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. Mr. Chair can the  
27 WIRAC make a motion to the refuges that if they have air  
28 transporters providing commercial services, that the air  
29 transporter provide a report on each moose coming out  
30 on where it was shot, where it was delivered to, and the  
31 condition of the meat, at what time? Because we know we  
32 have a problem in 23 and 24 with wanton waste in McGrath.  
33 And we know that they -- in 2025 there's five air taxis  
34 and 33 moose taken out of there. And we know that several  
35 -- a sizable proportion of air transporters are  
36 unscrupulous in following wanton waste regulations. And  
37 so, I feel like the refuges should have it built into  
38 their reporting system, the condition and other critical  
39 information about each moose coming out until we can get  
40 this situation in under control. I mean, I -- they made  
41 a big step by having law enforcement present for ten  
42 days, but the season's 25 days, and it's a problem. And  
43 like you said, the only way it'll be dealt with if they  
44 know there's reporting and enforcement that needs to be  
45 dealt with. So, can we make a motion to the Koyukuk or  
46 the Nowitna, Innoko complex that they have to have some  
47 kind of reporting out of these transporters?

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's us. Tina,  
50 you're getting information on the clients. You already

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1 have their names. Do you have their license numbers, all  
2 that kind of stuff, so that...?

3

4 MS. MORAN: Yeah, we get their harvest  
5 reports. So basically, what they send to the state.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, can you  
8 request in their permitting that they actually register  
9 their hunters when they take them out? So, there you get  
10 a -- they're taking this client, this client, this  
11 client. These people are in the field. And so that you're  
12 keeping track of who's coming in and who's coming out.  
13 The air taxis have to have more responsibility because  
14 they're going to do exactly what they did to the  
15 Mulchatna Caribou Herd. The same air taxis decimated  
16 that herd. They had 5500 hunters on the ground in  
17 Mulchatna. That's how many hunters, and the majority  
18 were not residents. They had phenomenal -- there was  
19 dead -- you talk to any kind of a trooper that was down  
20 there back in the early 2000. There was dead caribou all  
21 over the place. They were shooting caribou. There were  
22 so many people going -- coming and going. There could  
23 be dead animals, they don't know who, which camp did it  
24 or who did anything. So, the air taxis have to get a  
25 little more -- on their refuge they need to have more  
26 responsibility about, we got these clients there already  
27 -- this is their -- this is these people here that we're  
28 taking them out. It's just texting you. You're just you  
29 could do that on their inReach. And then they know when  
30 they come out. Did they take? And then therefore Cody  
31 knows who's got moose and how -- where's this person at.  
32 I need to go find this guy.

33

34 MS. MORAN: Mr. Chair. So, under the  
35 standard conditions for Alaska for a special use permit,  
36 they do need to report that the date they need to report  
37 that, though, is December 31st. And that's in the policy  
38 right now. I'm not saying that can't be changed.

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's not  
41 adequate.

42

43 MS. MORAN: But that's but that's what  
44 we are collecting. But I'm just telling you what's.....

45

46 (Simultaneous speech)

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. You got their  
49 harvest ticket. You take -- they take a photocopy of  
50 that and their hunting license and send you that photo.

1 The registered going out and they're going to -- I'm not  
2 dropping this person off in the refuge. They're  
3 registered at that time. Through December 31, they're  
4 back home, the meat is rotted away. It's down at the  
5 bottom of the Innoko River or something. No, that's not  
6 adequate. So if you want to make a motion that we want  
7 an adjustment to how the permitting process for air  
8 transit -- transporters in general, if you want to make  
9 a motion to request what we're speaking of, that they  
10 actually have to register the hunter when they take the  
11 hunter afield, and they have to register the hunter  
12 remove from the field and whether they took or actually  
13 harvested. That's not that hard for the air taxis. I can  
14 do that with my inReach from -- while I'm flying back  
15 to McGrath. That's not a big deal. So, Tommy.

16  
17 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I have a couple more  
18 questions. I see in the report here from coming out of  
19 Galena. I see the Nowitna moose hunt check station, but  
20 I don't see the Koyukuk check station in here. And the  
21 numbers, the hunters and the most harvested there and I  
22 would like to see that.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's Glen Stout  
25 and he.....

26  
27 (Simultaneous speech)

28  
29 MR. KRIKSA: Yeah.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....that the  
32 Middle Yukon meeting.

33  
34 MR. KRISKA: Well, still, we should have  
35 had that report here for -- talking with him. And then  
36 as well as doing the -- you know, everything that Gervais  
37 here was about ready to do here, we need to add the  
38 Koyukuk River from that check station -- at check station  
39 at Koyukuk and wherever this moose supposed to be going.  
40 Because if you really think about it, maybe there's more  
41 moose on that end being wasted than the 33 moose. It  
42 could be up to 100 moose. So just something to think  
43 about.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's the other  
46 letter that we're addressing -- that we're going to --  
47 writing to Glenn, you know, basically, it's basically  
48 to -- if a vessel is overloaded and got so many moose  
49 on it, it's highlighted for enforcement once it gets  
50 back up to Fairbanks, which is a different thing because

1 those are personal use craft. So, if you want to make a  
2 motion to -- oh, Tina or Cody, go ahead.

3  
4 MR. SMITH: I was just going to comment.  
5 Everybody that's talking about this is hitting on some  
6 really, really big issues that I see in the field. And  
7 part of that is the lack of preparedness of these folks  
8 going out. And I don't know how best to mitigate that.  
9 And that may be something that, you know, in a proposal,  
10 there can be some ideas suggested on how to educate  
11 these folks better that are going out with commercial  
12 services like the air taxi and transporters. But as you  
13 mentioned, Mr. Chairman, they're coming out with very  
14 inadequate gear. And I'm seeing groups, you know,  
15 floating down the Colleen where they show up there with  
16 one raft for four guys, and they've each got a moose and  
17 caribou tags. And I'm sitting there looking at them  
18 going, wow, how are you guys drawing straws to see who's  
19 going to pull the trigger? Because you can't haul even  
20 close to the amount of tags you have out. And so, they're  
21 just -- they're not thinking through the hunt, and it  
22 just sets everybody up for failure because then they end  
23 up overharvesting. They can't haul everything out. And  
24 what we've seen multiple times over the last few years  
25 is folks and it's something that is almost impossible  
26 to prove in court. But you know what's going on, in  
27 folks that are -- once they get out, they're realizing  
28 they're not going to be able to remove all the meat from  
29 the field because of their lack of preparedness and  
30 purposefully storing it in a way that bears get into it.  
31 And we're seeing that more and more. And it's a really  
32 difficult one to prove, because of course, it's, you  
33 know, dog ate my homework kind of thing. Bear got into  
34 the meat. But it's this preparedness thing of or lack  
35 of preparedness on hunters coming here, especially non-  
36 resident is really terrifying and it's causing a lot of  
37 this.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I do think that the  
40 administration part of it -- that we want to make a  
41 motion to adjust how the how the permitting process for  
42 air taxi operators working on the complex. This is called  
43 the complex, the whole entire complex, the permitting  
44 process for air taxis. They have to report the hunter  
45 that's being dropped in the field so that we know who  
46 it is, where they're at, a GPS coordinate. That would  
47 be great. Where they dumped this person off so that Cody  
48 doesn't have to fly all over the place to even find this  
49 person. So, when he's over there about five days later  
50 and he goes by, oh, yeah, there's that camp and oh,

1 there's their moose and oh, well, where's all this meat?  
2 You got all these animals. So, they -- the -- then they  
3 have to report coming out. That's not a burden. Not with  
4 the technology that we have right now. They can come  
5 within cell range of McGrath and start taking to send  
6 the photo of the license and so forth, or, and the  
7 location. Then when he comes back out, the hunters has  
8 got this moose and I'm dropping him off in McGrath and  
9 reports back out again. That's not intrusive. That's not  
10 -- it's way easier. It's cost efficient for Cody to have  
11 this kind of stuff. It's cost efficient. And it's also  
12 works towards the conservation of the wildlife refuge.  
13 We're not trying to stop the hunters, but they do have  
14 to -- they should have to have better reporting because  
15 we heard a lot of bad things. And if funding gets cut  
16 and you can't come back, then McGrath is going to be  
17 loaded up and it's only going to get worse. That's the  
18 problem, that the demand for moose is -- it's all over  
19 Facebook. Everybody wants to shoot a moose. They have  
20 the slightest idea what they're going to do with it, but  
21 they want to kill one. So, you want to make that motion,  
22 Tim?

23  
24 MR. GERVAIS: Sure. But I would like Tina  
25 and Cody -- I'm going to say this motion, but if you in  
26 a minute or so could they say anything that was going  
27 to affect your ability to administer this type of  
28 reporting system that is burdensome, or you don't have  
29 the people to do it, or I'm just asking for your --  
30 before I make the motion, I want to hear a short  
31 perspective of how this looks and feels from your point  
32 of view. So, because I've never done your job, so I  
33 don't know. I don't want to be overreaching in this  
34 motion that I'm going to create here.

35  
36 MS. MORAN: I appreciate that, Tim. It -  
37 - to be honest, it is a bit burden because I'm basically  
38 the only one doing -- I'm trying to do the being the  
39 manager and doing the permits and following up on this  
40 right now, but hopefully in the future we'll have more  
41 people and maybe a permit specialist, and maybe some of  
42 this could be addressed. And I'm not saying -- I'd say  
43 do what you think should be done, and then we can try  
44 to accommodate the best way we can, because we do want  
45 to address these issues and the best way we can. Because  
46 we do -- we are concerned and I was very appreciative  
47 of Cody and Jared to be able to patrol. And when I came  
48 on as the Acting Manager, I -- these are all new issues  
49 to me, and I was very grateful that they were able to  
50 address this issue at least this year and hopefully in

1 the future. So, I would say do what you think should be  
2 done as a motion, and then we can try to accommodate the  
3 best way we can. Some of these things are a little bit  
4 limited on our part, but we can try to do our best we  
5 can to find a solution. It may not be perfect, but we  
6 will try.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, make the  
9 motion, Tim.

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Yeah. And I just --  
12 before I state the motion, I'm just going to talk about  
13 the situation I had in the early 2000 or late 90s. I was  
14 at an airport in (In Native) and a air transporter came  
15 in. He was out of Nondalton and stopped his plane, and  
16 he threw out like half a caribou on the runway. And I  
17 said, what's going on? It was raining out, and I said,  
18 what are you doing with that caribou? And he's like, I'm  
19 just leaving it here and somebody will come pick it up.  
20 And I was like, well, do you want me to give you a  
21 transfer possession form to anybody? He's like, no,  
22 nobody cares about that. Somebody will come and pick it  
23 up. It's like you want me to tell somebody in the  
24 village. And they're like, no, they just drive out  
25 randomly and pick it up. So that's -- all that is highly  
26 illegal. But that's just -- I'm just pointing out the  
27 attitude and the actions of the transporter. And this  
28 was a Mulchatna Caribou Herd that you talk about the  
29 herds in decline. So, at this point, due to my past  
30 experience as a commercial hunter and listening to past  
31 dialogue we've had here on the WIRAC with a really  
32 problematic amount of wanton waste coming into McGrath.  
33 I've seen, and heard about -- I haven't seen, but I've  
34 heard a lot about the wanton waste coming into Ruby.  
35 That's not off of the refuge system. That's state land.  
36 But it's still that same behavior of not respecting the  
37 quality of the meat by commercial services. So, my motion  
38 is going to state that well, one thing I'll ask Tommy,  
39 since you're a transporter on the Koyukuk River does --  
40 do you think the motion should accompany a boat as well  
41 as air transporters or just trans -- air transporters?

42

43 MR. KRISKA: I think both.

44

45 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, so here's my motion.  
46 In the complexes Kanuti, Nowitna, Innoko, North Innoko.  
47 Is that what your complex is?

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Kanuti, Koyukuk,  
50 Nowitna, Innoko and Innoko has the north and south unit,

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1 but it's all part of the same unit, same refuge. Those  
2 are the complex Kanuti, Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko  
3 National Wildlife Refuge. Continue.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So, for any  
6 transporter. -- I wonder it seems like the guides have  
7 enough reporting and stuff that we don't need to get  
8 into that at that point. We're just -- this motion is  
9 just going to deal with transporters hauling meat out  
10 of the refuges in the complex, Nowitna, Innoko, Kanuti  
11 Koyukuk, that they need to file a an individual report  
12 for each hunter that they transport that states time  
13 they were dropped off in the field, time they were  
14 removed from the field, where they were removed from the  
15 refuge to, how much meat they had, what the condition  
16 of the meat was, what's the final disposition of the  
17 meat going to be if it's going to be distributed in the  
18 local community or taken to Anchorage or outside and I  
19 think that's it. I just wanted one -- I'm just going to  
20 talk about one thing. Well, let's get the motion up and  
21 I want to add one thing about plausible deniability.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We need a second.  
24 We can't spend a lot of time on this. We have a lot of  
25 agenda before us still. Do we have a second?

26  
27 MR. HONEA: I second.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: After -- second by  
30 Don. Motion by Tim. Robert, discussion.

31  
32 (Talking)

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh. Oh, yeah.  
35 Discussion. Go ahead.

36  
37 MR. WALKER: Sorry. I'm trying to speed  
38 up. There's another thing. Here in Anvik airport, we  
39 have a lot of hunters that come through on Super Cubs.  
40 They're going to Andrafsky River, Shungnak River, and  
41 all they do is come back with antlers. And we're starting  
42 to have the Anvik River Lodge taking hunters out also,  
43 too. And the RIT guys bringing out. So, by September  
44 25th, there's almost maybe 70 to 80 antlers go through  
45 the Anvik airport, flying out on charter planes, on  
46 scheduled air services, and nobody says nothing. So how  
47 do we do this? I mean, I'm just like, I go up there just  
48 out of curiosity. Look and some people say, what are you  
49 doing? You're on the RAC Board, you're turning us in? I  
50 said, I'm on the RAC Board yes, but I can't represent

1 the RAC Board while I'm not in a RAC meeting. Oh, well,  
2 that's good. You know, like, hey, you know, I got a shot  
3 of booze over there if you want. I don't drink no more.  
4 I tell them, you know. So, this is the kind of thing  
5 that. How do you do that? You know, you can put a camera  
6 up there in the airports, because when you look at all  
7 these people that are taking antlers, there's no meat.  
8 So that's just -- I'm just throwing this in because I  
9 know we kind of like -- a lot of people are so  
10 disappointed, you know, like because they don't really  
11 understand the law. They don't understand how things  
12 should be done. So, I think this is how a lot of people  
13 get away with it because people don't understand.

14  
15 MR. SMITH: And if I may, just to comment  
16 on that, that kind of information is monumental for us  
17 because when I'm -- when moose season's open and I'm  
18 looking at an area the size of Texas trying to prioritize  
19 and decide where to go, that kind of information helps  
20 me know, you know what, instead of going in, patrolling  
21 over here where there's no reports of anything and, you  
22 know, it's an unknown. If I know there's an issue  
23 somewhere, it just -- it helps me prioritize during  
24 season. So, all that kind of stuff is great info for us  
25 to have.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Jenny.

28  
29 MS. PELKOLA: There are not only breaking  
30 the law. But they're also from way back from our elders,  
31 they were very respectful of the land of the animals.  
32 They took care of it. They don't -- they didn't want us  
33 to waste. We were taught that when we were little, you  
34 know, you caught a bird. You make sure you take care of  
35 it or, you know, whatever. And to see it, it's just  
36 heartbreaking and seems like nobody believes us out, you  
37 know, out from our area. They think we're just making  
38 it up, but we're not making it up. We're -- we see it  
39 and you know, we hear about it and it just -- it goes  
40 right to the heart because it's a spiritual thing that  
41 we do around home. We take care of our animals. We don't  
42 eat horns. And you know, if anybody want our horns, we  
43 give it to them. But, you know, it's sad and, you know,  
44 it just tears us apart.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

47  
48 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah, Mr. Chair. Under  
49 discussion, I'm really kind of actually shocked that  
50 area big as McGrath doesn't have a RIT there because,

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1 you know, we've -- you know, I've heard from villages -  
2 - people from villages around that area about you know,  
3 the abuse and stuff like that of meat. And, you know,  
4 we've been over there, we've been in McGrath at some of  
5 these RAC meetings when at the airport or wherever we  
6 were housed there was a number of racks there just  
7 waiting to be -- moose racks just waiting to be flown  
8 out. So, I'm, you know, I think this is good discussion  
9 and anything that we're doing here to try to curtail  
10 some of these infractions is good. Thank you.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And -o Oh.  
13 Go ahead.

14  
15 MR. WALKER: You know, the tribes never  
16 really had a win in a long time with all this moose  
17 issues. Seemed like were always being so close but never  
18 could have something to slow these guys down. I want to  
19 read you something here, what just happened today. We  
20 got a win at the Board of Fish. Some of the stuff passed  
21 enough to celebrate. Area M got about a 30% reduction  
22 in fishing time. More time to let the fish through. See,  
23 that's a -- the first one we ever had. Ever. We never  
24 had a win in fishing before because the proposals we put  
25 in, we would lose. The Board of Fish would -- it would  
26 be 4 to 3, 4 to 3. We'd lose. And again, right here we  
27 got close to passing something like similar to proposal  
28 140, Area M got a reduction of 136 hours in the drift  
29 fleet and 96 hours in the seine fleet. So, you know,  
30 these little things are -- make us feel good, because  
31 all of a sudden we're winning. So somehow, we got to  
32 find a way to get this moose issue somehow to where the  
33 transporters and the guides or -- and these outfitters  
34 let them know that, the lives here. That's what it is.  
35 Regulations are here. So how do we do that again? We're  
36 going to have to try to find a way.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And we're working  
39 on it, we got a motion on the table.

40  
41 MR. WALKER: Yes, (indiscernible).....

42  
43 (Simultaneous speech)

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....we're working  
46 on that right now. So, I want one final comment on this  
47 on this motion. I want to check in when they fly, the  
48 position of the hunter where the hunter dropped off, who  
49 that hunter is. And when they fly out the date that they  
50 brought the hunter out to and destination where they

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1 dropped off. We need to have -- help him out. He -- the  
2 drop off GPS coordinate and the -- where that who that  
3 hunter is and where that hunter was dropped off. And it  
4 also tells us if we got all the air taxis dumping off  
5 all the hunters in one location severely over hunting a  
6 section of the refuge. We need to -- and whether we need  
7 to actually split them up, like move them apart. We have  
8 to have this permit in the permitting process so that  
9 we -- this -- we could get this problem under control.  
10 This is not going to go away. Your new refuge manager  
11 is going to have a real headache when this gets out of  
12 control this next year. So, you got a comment there,  
13 Tina?

14  
15 MS. MORAN: Yeah. I just wanted to  
16 clarify. We do get that information. We just don't get  
17 it in real time. We do get the pickup and the drop off  
18 information and who the hunter is. We just don't get it  
19 in real time. Like I said, we -- at the current policy  
20 right now is, their deadline is December 31st.

21  
22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We need it in real  
24 time. We needed that from the time the hunters dropped  
25 off until the time the hunters picked up. So, we know  
26 exactly how long that hunter was in the field. And so,  
27 where that hunter is. So that when enforcement comes,  
28 they don't have to hunt all over the place. They go  
29 directly to the -- to where these hunter locations are.  
30 And it also is going to show you how much concentration  
31 we're getting, which is very important because certain  
32 sections may be right on top of the Innoko River where  
33 people are hunting. And so, it might be a high  
34 competition with close lakes that are close to the local  
35 subsistence users. But we got a motion on the table.  
36 Insertion. Tommy, go ahead.

37  
38 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, they -- we do reports  
39 to the state and everything like that. And you have,  
40 like, I think, 60 days to turn it in from the time that  
41 the hunt is over. But last fall, I had a state trooper  
42 come up, and he demanded my reports after the hunt, and  
43 I had to pull them all out. And hunters were being  
44 brought to the airport, and he went and took pictures  
45 of all my reports, which is -- I found like, oh, why are  
46 you doing that? But you know that they said their  
47 troopers are spread out, but we have one trooper that  
48 don't need to be running around harassing the locals and  
49 doing things like that when there's -- the check station  
50 need to be checked. The boats need to be checked that

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1 need to go back to the bridge or wherever. We have moose  
2 -- wanton waste over there at McGrath up to 33 moose.  
3 We have 78, 80 moose in Anvik and Grayling in that area.  
4 So, there's a lot other important things that they need  
5 to be doing. So, I just want to say that, thank you.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Appreciate that,  
8 Tommy. So, motions on the table. Do we have a question  
9 on the motion?

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Wait, Jack, I just -- so  
12 in my motion, I like language about it being in real  
13 time. Like same day.

14

15 (Simultaneous speech)

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. Incorporate  
18 the real time.

19

20 MR. GERVAIS: Condition of the meat is.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's the crux of  
23 this whole thing, is to get this in real time so that  
24 we're not waiting till the end of December. That's like  
25 not adequate. So, this -- there needs to be permitting  
26 throughout the entire complex in real time, especially  
27 the drop off point. And the extraction is going to come  
28 out later. So, do we have a question to vote? Questions  
29 called. Those in favor of the motion signify by saying  
30 aye.

31

32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed, same  
35 sign.

36

37 (No response)

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And I don't think  
40 we have Darrel on the on the thing there. We need a  
41 break. We've been going for hours. I gotta [sic] go pee.

42

43 MR. WALKER: Okay.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

46

47 MR. WALKER: Go ahead. There's this law  
48 that say that you can bring your relatives out hunting.  
49 Is that what the federal government do, with also with  
50 the state?

1

2 MR. SMITH: If -- are we talking about  
3 the second degree of kinship law? Or if you're an Alaska  
4 resident, you can take -- yes.

5

6 MR. WALKER: You know, and some of these  
7 transporters are using this as a kind of like a crutch.  
8 And they got all these people who come in, and they say  
9 they're their relatives and that's okay. Yeah. And how  
10 could you know -- like, I know I got a lot of relatives,  
11 but some of these guys don't even have relatives, and  
12 they're all white guys. I don't mean to say that, but  
13 they come from, like Minnesota and these outside state  
14 guys, you know, gee you got that many relatives, you  
15 know, how does that work? You know, it's kind of.....

16

17 MR. SMITH: Well, it's -- and with the  
18 information we've got access to, especially now with  
19 everything's online, we've got databases. As long as  
20 I've got really one member of the group a name or I  
21 mean, really just a name, I can figure out who they are,  
22 and then I can start verifying if those folks are  
23 actually relatives or not. And it's really not that  
24 difficult, as long as I've got one member of the group  
25 to go off of. So, because I do see that in the field,  
26 we'll stop and talk to somebody. You know, this is my  
27 cousin, there's uncle, you know, and this is my brother  
28 and that's not always the case.

29

30 MR. WALKER: Well, you know, a lot of  
31 people in the village wouldn't know that, you know, a  
32 lot of people who move in and don't know who's related  
33 to who so. But everybody in the village, up and down the  
34 Yukon, we know who's related to who. So anyway, thank  
35 you for.....

36

37 MR. GERVAIS: I have another comment on  
38 the issue. So, Cody, you talked about the guide saying,  
39 well, the meat spoiled because of weather or something  
40 like that. Hopefully through this permitting system  
41 you'll be able to see that, you know, say in the McGrath  
42 example, if there's five air transporters, you have  
43 whatever, 1 or 2 that consistently are coming out with  
44 bad meat and they're saying, well, we have -- we couldn't  
45 get out because of bad weather. Whether or not they may  
46 have like booked their flying schedule and amount of  
47 hunters to be -- that can operate 12 hours a day or 10  
48 hours a day, whatever they have under perfect weather  
49 conditions. But they're not accounting for bad weather  
50 days and whatnot. And if you had a transporter that has

1 kept failing on his meat quality, when he gets to his -  
2 - takes the meat out of the field, then you would be  
3 able to have discussion or take action against that air  
4 taxi operator if they have a much higher meat failure  
5 incidents than other transporters. And yeah, they do --  
6 saying it's a weather thing is, that gives them some  
7 plausible deniability with the court. But if we have the  
8 tracking on it that shows that they're amount of what  
9 we meet is much higher than the other transporters, then  
10 they'll either improve their game or they'll have to  
11 only guide on state land. We can only control what we  
12 control, and we can -- we have some say on what's going  
13 on the federal lands. And it's a big problem. We'd like  
14 to take some steps towards fixing the problem.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I had to step  
17 out for a moment. So does the Council want to go to  
18 break or do you want -- and so I think I think we've  
19 covered everything. I really appreciate your efforts. I  
20 appreciate what, what Koyukuk, Nowitna is doing. And I  
21 look forward to continue to work on these various issues.  
22 And if you have any problems, you need us to write to  
23 the regional director. We'll speak to her for you. So  
24 let me know.

25  
26 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you,  
29 appreciate it.

30  
31 (Off record)

32  
33 (On record)

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're going to  
36 come back to order. We got a bunch of business to go.  
37 And so, we're -- where are we at here, Nissa?

38  
39 MS. PILCHER: Keith's report.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're here with  
42 fishery, right?

43  
44 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yukon River  
47 Salmon Management. Keith Herron. Did I pronounce your  
48 name correctly?

49  
50

1 MS. PELKOLA: Did he ever finish, Jeremy  
2 ever finish his report?

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. We did. Oh  
5 yeah, we covered that. And then we even got the  
6 leadership up and we covered Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko  
7 so thoroughly. We're good. So go ahead Keith, introduce  
8 yourself on the record with your name.

9  
10 MR. HERRON: Good afternoon, Council. My  
11 name is Keith Herron. I'm originally from Bethel,  
12 Alaska, but grew up in a few communities around the  
13 state like Wrangell and southeast and I graduated high  
14 school in Kenai. And I just graduated this past summer  
15 from the University of Alaska Fairbanks supported by the  
16 (In Native) program with some of the ichthyophonous  
17 research that's been going on in the Yukon. But I'm here  
18 today. I am also the Assistant Fishery Manager. I work  
19 with Holly Carroll and Shane Ransbury with Yukon Salmon  
20 Management. And I'd first like to begin by thanking and  
21 acknowledging the unity that I've heard at the North  
22 Pacific Fishery Management Council from 150 tribes  
23 across the state, and leaders in this room. And all the  
24 work that's been done to look at protecting salmon  
25 throughout the entire life cycle. That's really  
26 important to me. Growing up in Alaska, I've had very  
27 similar thoughts that have been expressed by you all in  
28 these meetings. So, thank you for that and always  
29 standing up -- all the salmon people always amaze me so  
30 thank you for that in those spaces at the Board of Fish  
31 and in the North Pacific Marine Fisheries Council.

32  
33 From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife side,  
34 we did have a Representative Boyd Blihovde at the meeting  
35 the entire time. Our Northern Fisheries Office did help  
36 write the official U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
37 recommendations on the alternatives. You can find our  
38 official recommendations on the Council's website under  
39 b.7 on their agenda. If you are interested on what the  
40 U.S. Fish and Wildlife officially recommended, it is  
41 more conservative and more aligns with some of the other  
42 TCC recommendations. It's not exactly the same, but we  
43 did want to see more conservation that was -- we now  
44 know the final action, but you can see that if you're  
45 interested.

46  
47 And so, moving on into the Yukon River  
48 for the 2025 season we did have federal special actions  
49 where we implemented closures on the kings, the summer  
50 chum, the fall chum and the coho to begin the all the

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1 seasons. And you all know how devastating that has been  
2 for the past handful of years. I'm not going to say the  
3 exact numbers, but we did provide written reports in  
4 your meeting notes.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'm going to stop  
7 you for a second. It's page 117 in our packet book here.  
8 That -- what he's referring to. So, continue.

9  
10 MR. HERRON: That's exactly what I was  
11 about to say. Thank you, on that number. I'll let  
12 everyone find it really quick.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, 117 in your  
15 meeting book. So, okay. Go ahead, Keith.

16  
17 MR. HERRON: So, we did experience mostly  
18 some of record low runs all within like the top five of  
19 the worst for most of the species. We -- the only species  
20 we did have some limited opportunity for subsistence  
21 harvest by federally qualified subsistence users was the  
22 coho or silver salmon. There was some dip nets later on  
23 the run when the -- we knew in-season that there was run  
24 strength to support that. After the harvest surveys, we  
25 knew that harvest was very low, so we had very little  
26 impact overall harvest wise on that run, I think it was  
27 a little bit over 1000 estimated harvest for the Yukon  
28 with those dip nets.

29  
30 We did increase closures to the four-  
31 inch during the summer and fall seasons. In the summer  
32 season, during the king and summer chum runs, we had a  
33 about a closure from the quarter point to the three-  
34 quarter point, about two and a half weeks during the  
35 bulk of the king run to protect those migrating king  
36 salmon and also the summer chum salmon. And then in the  
37 fall season, we put the four-inch for non-salmon on that  
38 fishing schedule, where you could fish it with --  
39 weekends only for the entire season. So, there was  
40 windows where those fall chum were being protected from  
41 incidental harvest in-river.

42  
43 And so that brings me to like the 2026  
44 season. I anticipate, I don't know for sure we don't  
45 have any official outlooks, but we are anticipating a  
46 very similar run likelihood to what we experienced in  
47 2025. We'll know more at the Yukon River Panel Meeting  
48 in April. April 13th to 16th is the public session for  
49 the Yukon River Panel and then also at the YRDFEA, Yukon  
50 River Drainage Fisheries Association, preseason meeting

1 which is April 21st and 22nd. So, more opportunity will  
2 come to understand what the 2026 season will look like  
3 and weigh in on your perspectives on what management  
4 should do. What actions we should take. And as always,  
5 we want to be inclusive of those -- the fish commission  
6 of the tribal governments of our state counterparts in  
7 management. So, we'll weigh everyone's perspective on  
8 the decisions we make for federal actions. We haven't  
9 had any requests this season yet, but it's still really  
10 early for, like, special actions. So be a lookout on if  
11 one of those ever gets submitted. If those ever occur,  
12 we would hold public hearings to get feedback from  
13 everyone. Your Chairs would be notified. So hopefully  
14 you would get the information on how to weigh in if  
15 federal special action requests were submitted. Tribal  
16 consultations. We offer those to the 55 tribal  
17 governments on the Yukon River at any time. You want to  
18 speak with our management team, Anything related to  
19 Yukon River fisheries or other fisheries, we can reach  
20 out to other agencies and try to get information that  
21 is being requested. So please reach out to our team. Our  
22 contact information is provided.

23

24                   And then lastly, I'd just like to give  
25 a research update. Similar to the genomic work that the  
26 Kuskokwim was sharing -- Kuskokwim River Inter Tribal  
27 Fish Commission was sharing earlier with the chum salmon  
28 and trying to understand the coastal western Alaska chum  
29 salmon, that's our summer chum salmon how to break that  
30 out more into the Kuskokwim Yukon or Norton Sound.  
31 Another way that is being explored is through trace  
32 elements. And because there's trace elements in  
33 everything we eat and drink, another way to possibly  
34 tell these fish apart were partnering with several  
35 organizations and looking at locations, about 10 to 16  
36 different known spawning locations of summer chum  
37 throughout the Kuskokwim, Yukon and Norton Sound. But  
38 seeing if those trace elements are able to better  
39 understand and break those rivers apart. And we have  
40 pilot data that suggests this is possible but it's  
41 another way, potentially to better understand marine  
42 factors like bycatch of our Yukon stock.

43

44                   And another thing is we have, in  
45 partnership with the Yukon Delta Fisheries Development  
46 Association and NOAA, is we have buoys out on the Yukon  
47 Delta where people can actually publicly see this  
48 information with backyard buoys. It's an app that was  
49 developed by one of the Whaling Commission's. But  
50 they're able to see like the wind speeds and the

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1 conditions out in the mouth. Also, it's very known for  
2 the knowledge that's shared from the Delta about when  
3 salmon are entering the river. And hopefully those  
4 monitoring buoys also help understand juvenile and adult  
5 salmon stuff related to forecasts. So that's kind of a  
6 project that we're in partnership with.

7  
8 Another project that you have been aware  
9 of before is investigating the Koyukuk River Sonar to  
10 understand escapement into the Koyukuk River. It's kind  
11 of a data gap. So we have like the main stem sonar, we  
12 have some upriver sonars, but we don't really have any  
13 monitoring because of lapse of funding and ability to  
14 operate some of those weirs. We don't really have a  
15 gauge exactly in most recent times of what's happening  
16 in the Koyukuk, specifically. So, we're looking at  
17 feasibility in partnership with the Native Village of  
18 Koyukuk and TCC on how we could get something like that  
19 up and running. And I think feasibility last year was  
20 looking good, but I'm not the one who's running that.  
21 So, I'll just say that.

22  
23 And then in partnership with YRDFA and  
24 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, we're also  
25 looking to improve our water quality monitoring to look  
26 at groundwater and suspended sediment loads. And we're  
27 going to try get some monitoring in six more places this  
28 year. We're also going to collaborate with UAF on  
29 spawning habitat for fall chum in the (In Native) or the  
30 Chandalar River. They're going to do some thermal  
31 imagery to see -- about the spawning habitat. And then  
32 lastly, we are going to close down our Emmonak field  
33 office, where we used to help manage with the state out  
34 of in the lower river. But due to funding and office  
35 staffing capacity, we are sad that we will have to close  
36 that, but we are going to work on other initiatives to  
37 still have really good public outreach throughout the  
38 drainage, other places. And that's kind of it. And I'll  
39 pause there.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,  
42 Keith. Council Member questions?

43  
44 MR. HONEA: Questions.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

47  
48 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Keith,  
49 I just had a had a question on the 2026 salmon outlook,  
50 and I'm speaking for salmon. All species. So, what used

1 to be the guesstimate? How did they do that? They went  
2 by seven -- going back looking at seven years or how did  
3 they actually predict any kind of outcome? Was it by  
4 looking -- I thought they run like six- or seven-year  
5 cycles or something like that. So and -- well, even if  
6 we waited till April, are we going to get a more accurate  
7 number? I mean, I'm not trying to be scientific or  
8 anything about this, but I was just wondering how they  
9 make predictions. Thank you.

10

11 MR. HERRON: Yeah. It's related to  
12 juvenile work and also historical runs and the returns  
13 and that type of relationship. That's not to say it's  
14 not perfect because as you know, in like this year, we  
15 thought the summer chum wasn't going to be as bad as it  
16 was. So, there is some air in that, and we need sometimes  
17 to be cautious and really understand what happens in-  
18 river. So that's usually why we have closures and what  
19 we've been starting the season closed to understand that  
20 in season run strength, because in recent years it's  
21 been a little more challenging to rely solely on those  
22 pre-season outlooks.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert.

25

26 MR. WALKER: Mr. Chair, thanks. Keith,  
27 you know, I'm, I listen to your -- and I read this and  
28 you you're working with Holly Carroll also and Shane  
29 Ransburry. I mean, when you talk about fishing, how the  
30 escapement returns, right? Would you be able to predict  
31 if there's going to be a salmon chum or chinook chum be  
32 an extinction to the Yukon? Could you do that? Or is  
33 there any way around it that somebody would prevent you  
34 from doing that? Thank you.

35

36 MR. HERRON: Can I ask a clarifying  
37 question? Are you asking the likelihood of extinction  
38 for salmon in the Yukon, or can you clarify?

39

40 MR. WALKER: Okay. I'll understand that.  
41 Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Any other?

44

45 MR. HERRON: I don't.....

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: He didn't answer  
48 the question.

49

50

1 MR. HERRON: I'm just kind of confused  
2 on exactly what Robert's asking. Is he asking about the  
3 likelihood for an extinction event?

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Want to rephrase  
6 the question, Robert?

7  
8 MR. WALKER: Would you be able to -- your  
9 department working with other departments that you're  
10 fine working with some other departments, and you're  
11 looking at analysis where you see that the drop in  
12 decline from the fisheries to the Yukon. Is it like --  
13 the Anvik River went from 1.75 million, 25 years ago  
14 down to 30,000. How would you look at that? And the  
15 Anvik River was a fairly chinook salmon spawning ground  
16 too. They used to be 8 to 1200 used to spawn. Now there's  
17 only 8 to 10. And the Fish Commissioner, Doug Lang, I  
18 had a discussion with him. He said, well, first of all,  
19 he came to us at our TCC convention and he told us that  
20 we're cutting Yukon down to a seven-year moratorium. And  
21 it's kind of like shook all the tribes without even  
22 talking to us. And we kind of like, met him again. Tom  
23 asked him a hard question. He got up and left, and we  
24 never seen him or talked to him since. So, when I talked  
25 to him down at proposal meeting. Tom didn't make that  
26 one, but he made the one earlier. So, when we look at  
27 all this chum salmon and we did some numbers there. A  
28 guy named Francis Beans, we worked together for about  
29 30 years. We caught the state in a lie down in a meeting  
30 where they have CPUs then when they used them. You know  
31 what that is? Catch per unit. Okay. They gave us a number  
32 of a catch per unit. And I told Francis, let's go back  
33 and do a research on this. So, we did and we found that  
34 they weren't telling the truth. Catch per unit was  
35 something like under -- it was like 60,000 salmon didn't  
36 show up what it was, but they used a numbers to make it  
37 look like they were there. So, and when we confronted  
38 them in a meeting, oh, they said, we'll have to go back  
39 and do a calculation on this. So that happened then and  
40 this last year we did some more numbers with -- we put  
41 together and we went to the Board Chairman of the Board  
42 of Fish. And we showed her this, 115,000 chums  
43 disappeared. Where did they disappear to? And we sat  
44 down and talked to her, and she couldn't answer that.  
45 And we talked with Charlie Wright because I worked with  
46 Charlie Wright, too. You know, Charlie Wright? And  
47 before that, ten years ago, there was 160,000 chums  
48 missing. Disappeared again with the numbers. So how are  
49 we going to justify all these numbers that are thrown  
50 at us and are not the truth? Is there going to be an

1 extinction here pretty soon for either the chum or  
2 chinook salmon? I mean, how are we going to determine  
3 this? They threw it at us. They kind of like, wanted to  
4 scare us, but I think we're tired of games. So, I mean,  
5 how would you look at that from their point of view and  
6 our point of view? Could you give us some kind of a --  
7 not a promising analysis, but some kind of assumption  
8 saying that it is possible? And how long before it  
9 happened, could you do that?

10  
11 MR. HERRON: I can definitely ask the  
12 question and look into that. I would say that I would  
13 strongly look at those people with a wealth of that  
14 local indigenous knowledge and tell me what their  
15 perception is and what they're predicting, because as  
16 we know, we've only seen historical declines in a  
17 complete collapse of a lot of these to catastrophic  
18 levels. So, I think and I hear you and your other  
19 testimonies on the frustration of the continued, going  
20 to these Boards, saying that we have such a big problem  
21 on the Yukon, we need to do everything we can to save  
22 the last fish. And so, I can definitely take your  
23 question. I can't give an answer now, or a prediction  
24 on the number of years or the likelihood I can't do  
25 that. But I would say that your lifetime of knowledge  
26 and you're saying that tells me most of what is the  
27 biggest concern, and that is -- that it is scary to  
28 think that we just keep getting less and less fish, less  
29 and less opportunity. When is it going to be one of the  
30 last we see the last salmon on the Yukon? That's what I  
31 would say.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So yeah, that's  
34 beyond -- I mean he can't speculate what's going to  
35 happen, but I've known of three main declines. I've been  
36 on this Council -- and so the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
37 staff.....

38  
39 MR. WALKER: Give me one more time. You  
40 know, I took a look at you, and I read what you put  
41 here. I seen something that I never seen in somebody  
42 else's writing here. But I see something that what you  
43 have, you have knowledge, you have something there that  
44 not a prophecy, but you have something that you wrote  
45 there that kind of like, took me back and made me think  
46 about this. So, this next generation after us is a lot  
47 smarter than a generation after you was going to be  
48 smarter. So, it's just going to be a matter of time if  
49 we do find ourselves in that position or not. And who's  
50 going to bring it forward? That's my question that I

1 would ask you. So, you think about it. Talk to your  
2 friends, you know, hey, just sit down. Let's have a  
3 discussion here. Look at all these numbers. Look at  
4 everything you can get ahold of. Analysis, do an analysis  
5 on it. Because I think -- I am getting worried myself  
6 for our tribe. Because if they declare an extinction,  
7 that pretty much wraps up our tribes. Do you understand  
8 that? Okay. Thank you.

9  
10 MR. HERRON: Yes, I understand. I come  
11 from salmon people. I know the people on the Yukon are  
12 salmon people. They're very important to more than just  
13 food. It's a way of life. And to get to another point,  
14 you were bringing up about that shifting baseline of  
15 that the Anvik has seen. I think that's really important  
16 to give credit to, say, the Mid River Sonar, the one  
17 that's being looked at for feasibility in the Koyukuk  
18 to understand where are these -- the summer chum going  
19 that are being counted at Pilot. And where exactly in  
20 the drainage? If they're not going to the Anvik, where  
21 are they going? So, I think those are really important  
22 projects to get to some of those concerns where you've  
23 seen a shift in that productivity of that system.

24  
25 MR. WALKER: Yes. And there was another  
26 concern, too, that was brought up by one of the people  
27 from the Lower Yukon that the soner on Pilot Station  
28 there was like 12 to 16 belugas went by there, and they  
29 didn't even count them. I mean, they have an air bag to  
30 right, a beluga. So that's what they count as air bags  
31 in the fish the size of the air bag, determine if it's  
32 king salmon or chum salmon. And that didn't even show  
33 up in Pilot Station counting. So, what -- how -- You  
34 know, these things are really like, wow. You know, it  
35 just.....

36  
37 MR. HERRON: One quick mention about  
38 Pilot Station. I won't go into too much detail, but they  
39 do apportion. They do a test fishery, and the number of  
40 hits relates to the number of fish they catch. So, if  
41 they get like five chum and one king, then, like they  
42 obviously get more fish than that, but it is apportioned  
43 the number of blips to that catch. Just a clarification.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. Thank  
46 you. Any further questions, Robert?

47  
48 MR. WALKER: No, thank you Keith. Maybe  
49 we'll have a discussion again next year if I'm still on  
50 the RAC Board. Okay. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we have a lot more agenda to go. And, Darrell, did you have a question? You had your hand up online there?

MR. VENT: Yes. Yeah. I just wanted, you know, some education on this. So we know you know, fish. I guess you can consider it being a threatened species at the moment. But how do we differentiate? What would be the limits for threatened species? I don't know who has the questions for that. When it becomes endangered species, we know that everything is shut down. But what makes a definition for threatened species and how much amount? You know, we don't have any information on this, but I know that's a process that we could use if we need to try to protect these fish, but we need to -- you know, it's like, you know, they wrote a book about it and we're just trying to follow the instructions. And, you know, it's not really clear and defined, you know, print of what we need to do for processes. Because I don't only sit on, you know, Western Interior Region Advisory, I sit on, you know, some other boards, but I just want to make sure that everybody has information that is needed for this. So, when it comes to threatened, we know the salmon are threatened, but we don't know what kind of limitations could be used when it's threatened, because they always play with the numbers. And those numbers are not giving us a adequate, you know, uses. So, you know, it's -- there's definitions in there, but we just don't really understand it until they, you know, it's explained to us. So, I just, you know, that's just the start of that. And there's some other questions. But that's what I needed right there.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Darrell. I think we've covered it. Thank you so much and look forward to working with you in the future. And welcome to the program. And so, we're going to move in on our agenda. We got -- we've -- these are supplementary. This Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Aaron Moses is on the phone or online here. Aaron, you're going to give us an update.

MR. MOSES: Yes. Mr. Chair, can you hear me, okay?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can hear you. Great. Go right ahead, Aaron.

1 MR. MOSES: All right. All right. Today  
2 I come to present to you guys the 2025 Kuskokwim River  
3 Salmon Management Season and what in-season management  
4 entails and what is planned for the upcoming 2026 season.  
5 During the -- oh, for the record, my name is Aaron Moses.  
6 I'm the Subsistence Coordinator for the Yukon Delta  
7 National Wildlife Refuge. During the 2025 season, the  
8 Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge team worked closely  
9 with the Kuskokwim River Inter Tribal Fish Commission  
10 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to manage  
11 chinook, chum, and coho salmon on the Kuskokwim River.  
12 The Refuge and the Fish Commission jointly developed the  
13 2025 Kuskokwim River Scammon management strategy, which  
14 was similar to strategies used since 2021. These  
15 strategies were developed according to the following  
16 guiding principles. To use a precautionary approach by  
17 utilizing in-season information rather than just  
18 preseason forecasts to avoid overharvest. Integrate  
19 meaningful local and traditional knowledge into the  
20 fisheries management. Strive for continued customary and  
21 traditional subsistence harvest opportunities while  
22 balancing the need for adequate escapement and to -- and  
23 lastly, to uphold federal fisheries conservation and  
24 stock diversity mandates.

25  
26 We were able to provide more fishing  
27 opportunities in 2025 than in the recent years, largely  
28 due to abundant sockeye salmon and a better  
29 understanding of subsistence fishing behavior and needs  
30 from prior years. With restrictions, we were able to  
31 escape an estimated 105,000 chinook salmon. Population  
32 trends for the last five years at the Kuskokwim River  
33 run reconstruction has remained flat between 125,000 to  
34 176,000 chinook salmon compared to historical run  
35 reconstruction populations. Chum salmon numbers remained  
36 well below the historic returns. But we still met the  
37 only established escapement goal at the Kogruklu River.  
38 The 2025 season returning adults came from the 2020 and  
39 2021 parent years, which were the lowest counts on  
40 record. 2026 will see returns primarily from the 2021  
41 and '22 parent years, which were also very poor returns.

42  
43 Coho salmon numbers also met escapement  
44 at the Kogruklu River. Early in August precautionary  
45 measures were used to strict -- and restrictions were  
46 in place for coho salmon. Once the Refuge and the Fish  
47 Commission determined the 2025 coho salmon run was  
48 likely to meet conservation goals, federal management  
49 on Kuskokwim River was relinquished, which was --  
50 occurred on August 7th. Although we were successful in

1 meeting escapement goals, the amounts necessary for  
2 subsistence and as for chinook salmon, which is 67,200  
3 to 109,800, and chum salmon, which is 41,000 to 116,000,  
4 was likely not met based on in-season harvest data. This  
5 is due to low abundance and the need for restrictions.

6  
7 So, what does in-season management look  
8 like? We have continuous coordination, primarily with  
9 the Fish Commission, to help make decisions on day-to-  
10 day fishing closures and opportunities. We also  
11 coordinate with the Office of Subsistence Management,  
12 RAC Chairs, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
13 the State Kuskokwim River Working Group. We conduct  
14 continuous outreach and discussions with the public over  
15 the radio and weekly call in opportunities hosted by the  
16 Fish Commission.

17  
18 During periods of uncertainty of salmon  
19 abundance, we use the following in-season stock  
20 assessment tools. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
21 Kuskokwim River Sonar project. The community-based  
22 harvest monitoring. This data is provided by the Fish  
23 Commission in coordination with (indiscernible)  
24 Traditional Native Council and Refuge. We also use local  
25 and traditional knowledge that included run timing,  
26 abundance and health of salmon.

27  
28 For chinook salmon, we have a target of  
29 110,000 escapement number, which is the upper end of the  
30 Department of Fish and Game's escapement goal range. We  
31 believe this helps ensure equitable harvest  
32 opportunities for upriver communities when we take into  
33 account that chinook salmon are smaller and produce  
34 fewer eggs than in the past. For chum and coho salmon,  
35 we aim for minimally meeting established escapement  
36 goals at the Kogruklu River weir. Due to similar run  
37 timing of chinook -- I mean chum and sockeye salmon, we  
38 have been challenged in trying to conserve chum salmon  
39 while trying to allow for opportunities for abundant  
40 sockeye salmon. We believe that setnet opportunities  
41 rather than dipnet opportunities allows fishers to  
42 harvest sockeye while reducing catches of chum and  
43 sockeye salmon, which are bank oriented.

44  
45 And so, what is next for the river  
46 management for 2026? Village meetings and tribal  
47 consultations to provide information and obtain feedback  
48 on the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management is currently  
49 underway. For the next two weeks, we are going to be in  
50 nine villages and me and the RITs and the refuge manager,

1 who's on leave right now, are going to each village and  
2 to get their input on how the season went last year and  
3 what we could improve. Furthermore, we are going to  
4 coordinate and discuss what conservation measures may  
5 be needed for this next summer's -- measures may be  
6 needed for this next summer with the Regional Advisory  
7 Councils, the Fish Commission, the Office of Subsistence  
8 management, and Alaska Department of Fish and Game.  
9 These discussions will help determine the federal  
10 management should be considered and for which salmon  
11 species. If conditions warrant federal management of  
12 subsistence fishing on the Kuskokwim River, the in-  
13 season manager will announce intentions to issue a  
14 temporary special action by March 15th. These intentions  
15 will be shared with all entities previously mentioned.  
16 Oh, before finalizing any decision to the issue -- to  
17 issue a special act -- temporary special action to manage  
18 the Kuskokwim, we will first have a public meeting, which  
19 will probably be in April to early May. After the  
20 hearing, we will finalize the decision on issuing a  
21 special action. This is the process that has been used  
22 in previous years when considering federal management  
23 and our steps stated in the Delegation of Authority  
24 letter. We welcome any questions that you have, and we  
25 are also seeking your input to your thoughts and concerns  
26 into this upcoming 2026 season. That's all I have for  
27 now, Mr. Chair.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,  
30 Aaron. So, any Council questions? So, we did get --  
31 Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission gave a  
32 thorough overview of that -- of the salmon issues. And  
33 we discussed those fairly extensively and you were  
34 listening to us, Aaron, during our Kuskokwim River  
35 discussions?

36  
37 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair. Yes, I was.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, I think  
40 we've -- and we have this -- the season summary. We have  
41 the preseason for salmon discussion, and we have the  
42 letter of authority. The Council members can review  
43 those on their own. I feel that you're working with the  
44 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and the delegated  
45 authority. Everything has been working just great on the  
46 Kuskokwim as far as the run performance, some  
47 subsistence harvest, but of meeting the escapement  
48 needs. So, I have fairly high confidence in the way  
49 Yukon Delta managers is working with the Inter-Tribal  
50 Fish Commission and the performance future -- meeting

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1 future escapement needs and some subsistence since the  
2 Kuskokwim performs -- outperforms the Yukon.  
3 Unfortunately, the Yukon isn't -- doesn't have as good  
4 a performance. So, I appreciate your comments for us,  
5 Aaron. Any -- I want to give the Council additional --  
6 any questions?

7

8 (No response)

9

10 Seeing none. Thanks so much, Aaron.

11

12 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair. I also have a  
13 couple of things on moose and caribou.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Real quick, we got  
16 -- we're running out of time here, so go right ahead.

17

18 MR. MOSES: Okay. Just quickly for the  
19 moose. We had, like I said this -- earlier in the last  
20 meeting, we had a winter moose hunt that ended on January  
21 31st. We had 64 permits issued, and this was the highest  
22 amount of moose we harvested. We harvested 12 moose. And  
23 the weather wasn't as good, but it was a lot better than  
24 the last three years. And so, we put in those proposals  
25 to even extend the season longer. So hopefully this next  
26 fall we'll have a longer season. For caribou, minimum  
27 count for 2025 was 13,475. And the population estimate,  
28 though, grew to 16,276, which is an increase of 15%.  
29 That's all I have. Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Do you have the  
32 composition work for tha? That's Mulchatna. Do you have  
33 the composition work workout? I don't need it. If you  
34 have it, you can send it to me, email it. And I want to  
35 see the composition of that -- of those surveys that  
36 you're getting these statistics from.

37

38 MR. MOSES: I do, real quickly for the  
39 Western.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I don't need it. I  
42 don't need you to give it to me right now. I'm running  
43 out of time. But I would like you to email me that so I  
44 can look at it and sit down and look at it really  
45 closely. So, if you have the survey data, historical and  
46 current for the Mulchatna, I would like to see that if  
47 you could transmit that.

48

49 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, I think I have  
50 your email. I will send it to you right now.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Is this population number, Aaron, the 16,276. That's the resident herd on the Refuge or the entire Mulchatna Herd?

MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. It's the whole population from both the east west and the new Cape and Goodnews group.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, that's the entire Mulchatna. Is responding slightly from the bear management. They've been killing brown bears and black bears and wolves on the calving ground. And so predominantly in the West, the West is performing better because that's where they're killing more bears that direction. So, I need to move on, Aaron. And so, if you could get me that stuff, I'd appreciate it. So, we're going to go down to National Park Service -- or Arctic Refuge isn't present. So and they're not here. Say again. And then Marcy and Park Service. So, we're.....

(Talking)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Council Members.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Marcy gets up really early. She's tired. Go ahead, Marcy. I'm sorry. That's the way it's going.

MS. OKADA: But it's true. My name is Marcy Okada. I'm the Subsistence Coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. I'd like to start off with an update on our Subsistence Resource Commission for Gates of the Arctic. For folks that don't know Gates of the Arctic covers three different regions. North Slope, Northwest Arctic and the Western Interior region. If you were to look at a map of your Western Interior region, Gates of the Arctic is in the northernmost portion. We have two members from your that are on our commission. Jack Reakoff is the Vice Chair for the SRC and Pollock Simon, Sr. is appointed by Iraq to our commission. We were scheduled for a meeting in November and have rescheduled our meeting to occur in

1 April. And the dates are actually wrong. It's now April  
2 15th and 16th here in Fairbanks. We will be covering  
3 some of the same concerns that you have on your RAC.  
4 We'll be sharing information about the Ambler Access  
5 Road, the public land orders that you also discussed at  
6 your meeting, sheep management, the Western Arctic  
7 Caribou Herd, and then we'll also be hearing updates of  
8 various projects that are occurring within the park.  
9

10                   Lastly, we also will be submitting  
11 comments on the Federal Subsistence Management Program  
12 review. We met on February 17th, but we did not have  
13 quorum. So, we will be taking this topic up at our April  
14 SRC meeting. And that's just a quick update on our  
15 commission.  
16

17                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Marcy.  
18 Any questions? And Tim.  
19

20                   MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Marcy. Is the  
21 Gates of the Arctic Park done with all the Ambler Road  
22 permitting that as far as administrative stuff, it's all  
23 done, and it's approved?  
24

25                   MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Gervais. So,  
26 we have reissued a right of way permit to go through  
27 Gates of the Arctic. And then we also are reviewing  
28 winter work that's proposed to occur this season in Gates  
29 of the Arctic. And it'll be a two-year permit. So, winter  
30 work this season and winter work next season, I believe.  
31 And I have Kim Jochum next to me. She also works for  
32 Gates of the Arctic National Park as our Integrated  
33 Resources Program Manager. And I don't know if you want  
34 to add anything.  
35

36                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kim.  
37

38                   MS. JOCHUM: Yeah. So, we issued a  
39 special use permit as of last Friday to AIDEA for that  
40 winter work that Marcy was describing. It's kind of brush  
41 a clearing and some drilling that is proposed for  
42 testing. And that was sent out, but we haven't received  
43 a signed copy back, so that's where that's at.  
44

45                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I got a question  
46 on that, but I'm going to ask that at the SRC meeting  
47 about where you know -- about fill material and stuff  
48 on the, on the park lands itself, you know, gravel pits,  
49 stuff like that. But that's a little ways out anyways.  
50 Any other questions? Did you have any more information,

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1 Kim or Marcy?

2

3 MS. JOCHUM: I don't have any additional  
4 information. That's where we're our permitting is at.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And then Matt was  
7 here, but he went home. So, we're -- I'll get that  
8 information at the SRC.

9

10 MS. OKADA: Sure. Mr. Chair. I mean, we  
11 do have the rest of our written update, but if folks  
12 feel comfortable just taking a look at it, we can also  
13 end our verbal update.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, we can  
16 look at -- it's in the Gates of the Arctic is page 161.  
17 And so, you can look at it at your discretion. That's  
18 their written update. I want to point that out on the  
19 record to the to the Council. So, I think that kind of  
20 covers everything. Thank you very much.

21

22 MS. JOCHUM: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
23 Council Members.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We'll see you in  
26 April hopefully. So, BLM, we're going to have Anna and  
27 Steve come up. So, turn your mics on and state your name  
28 for the record.

29

30 MS. O'MALLEY: Mr. Chair, Members of the  
31 Council. Thank you. My name is Anna O'Malley. I'm an  
32 Ecologist with the BLM Central Yukon Field office.

33

34 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. Thank you. And my name  
35 is Steve Taylor. I'm an outdoor recreation planner with  
36 the Central Yukon Field Office.

37

38 MS. O'MALLEY: In the interest of time,  
39 I think, hopefully, maybe you've all had a chance to  
40 read through everything that our staff has been up to.  
41 I think you're probably most interested in Steve's post  
42 use reporting for hunting guides.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes.

45

46 MS. O'MALLEY: But if there's anything  
47 else you want to talk about, just let me know.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I'll point out  
50 for the Council, the BLM's Central Yukon Field Offices

1 document is on page 167 in our book, and you can review  
2 that when you get a chance. The -- I was in conversation  
3 with -- in consultation with the Bureau of Land  
4 Management on their special recreational permit and  
5 that's -- Steve's going to give us an overview of that.  
6 Go ahead, Steve.

7  
8 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. Thank you. So, we  
9 currently have eight hunting guides authorized by permit  
10 in our field office, and there are two permits that are  
11 up for renewal this year. And we are currently processing  
12 those renewals. We've sent out scoping notices to the  
13 public. And I believe we forwarded the proposed actions  
14 to the Board as well for review. That scoping period  
15 closes on the 1st of March. We've also sent out tribal  
16 consultation letters to villages in the vicinity of the  
17 actions. Both of these guides operate near the Dalton  
18 Highway Corridor. Tim -- excuse me. Yeah, Tim Nelson is  
19 a little bit further to the east. He operates a little  
20 bit on the Matthews River and then on lands to the east,  
21 Robert Creek, mostly. And then Jonah Stuart operates in  
22 mostly along the Dalton Highway Corridor, but also a  
23 little further south on the South Fork -- Upper South  
24 Fork area.

25  
26 So, yeah, those two are in process as  
27 you heard today with the 5150 update, there could be  
28 some changes to how those are issued. A lot of question  
29 marks in the air for us at this point. And we also  
30 received one additional application for renewal this  
31 week. So, we'll be sending that out for public notice  
32 as well. And that is Mr. Parkerson, who operates spring  
33 bear hunts along the Dalton Highway. And he also offers  
34 fall moose hunting on the Pugatsaq and Indian Rivers.  
35 So, you'll see notice of that probably within the next  
36 week or two.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And so, any  
39 questions from the Council on those guide permits? So,  
40 you're unclear -- when I talked to you previously, I  
41 asked about the duration with the lifting of the 5150  
42 and the permitting process. Or are you just going to  
43 hold off until the state does something, or are you  
44 going to -- what's your timeline for issuance of those?

45  
46 MR. TAYLOR: So, we're going to proceed  
47 because I don't know exactly -- I can't predict the  
48 future. So, we're going to proceed with authorizing. How  
49 I believe it will work if there is conveyance of the  
50 lands, those lands will be subject to the permits for

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1 their duration. The state would manage it until the  
2 operator chooses to close it or the duration of the  
3 permit expires. Probably looking at a five-year  
4 duration. I believe that's what we put in our scoping.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Was there any  
7 reduction in the sheep allocation in the permits?

8

9 MR. TAYLOR: So, we have the proposed  
10 action that was submitted is what was previously  
11 authorized. In talking to Jonah, there is potential to  
12 reduce the clients that are taken in on his permit. And  
13 Tim Nelson has requested the same as he previously had  
14 as well.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: How many did he  
17 have, Tim?

18

19 MR. TAYLOR: Tim, I believe, was  
20 authorized for three clients. Three sheep clients, I  
21 believe.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Okay. So,  
24 yeah, we're in a quandary, what's going to happen. So,  
25 I don't have any further questions. Any Council members  
26 have questions?

26

27 (No response)

28

29 No. And I appreciate you coming up  
30 giving us this rundown here. We'll, -- I'll review that  
31 when I get -- later. I didn't get this book till I got  
32 here, so I haven't reviewed this yet. So, we're good.  
33 And so, look forward to seeing you up north. Stop in.  
34 Have coffee if you're up in that country. So, we'll see  
35 Anna. She's up there tracking rabbits and stuff.

36

37 MS. O'MALLEY: Thank you.

38

39 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right, so we're  
42 done with the BLM. Where are we at here now? So, we're  
43 -- Office of Subsistence Management. We got Lisa.

44

45 MS. GREDIAGIN: All right. Thank you, Mr.  
46 Chair. And Lisa Grediagin, for the record. So, all ten  
47 Regional Advisory Councils were able to hold their fall  
48 2025 meetings, with eight of them being rescheduled for  
49 December and January, which is kind of a small miracle  
50 that the Council Coordinators and all the Regional

1 Advisory Council members were able to pull that off. So,  
2 yeah, thanks for your commitment to making those  
3 meetings happen. Tribal and ANCSA Corporation  
4 consultations on wildlife proposals and closure reviews  
5 were held February 17th and 18th, and contact Orville  
6 Lind with any questions about those consultations. The  
7 Federal Subsistence Board will meet April 20th to 24th  
8 in Anchorage for the wildlife Regulatory meeting. As a  
9 reminder, public testimony provided to the Council on  
10 Regulatory Proposals do not go directly to the Board.  
11 There will be additional opportunities for public  
12 testimony at the Board meeting on non-agenda items at  
13 the beginning of each day, as well as, you know, public  
14 testimony when they consider each proposal, as well as  
15 another opportunity for tribal consultations immediately  
16 preceding the Board meeting on April 20th at 1 p.m.

17  
18 The Secretarial Review of the Federal  
19 Subsistence Management Program opened for public comment  
20 on December 15th. All ten Councils took up this topic  
21 and submitted letters with comments on the review. On  
22 February 3rd, a public listening session on the  
23 Secretary Review was held in Anchorage, and over 76  
24 people provided oral comments in person or over the  
25 phone. The period for public written comments was  
26 extended by 45 days and now closes March 30th, 2026.  
27 Statewide tribal and ANCSA consultations on this review  
28 will be held on March 10th and 17th. However, any tribe  
29 can request a separate consultation on this topic at any  
30 time. Kara Moriarty, the Senior Advisor to the Secretary  
31 of the Interior for Alaska Affairs, has noted that all  
32 comments will be reviewed and that no decisions have  
33 been made on whether the review will result in any  
34 program changes.

35  
36 Third, the Federal Subsistence Board met  
37 in Anchorage on February 5th for its winter work session.  
38 During the session, the Board took care of  
39 administrative tasks, including accepting the 2026  
40 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan as it was presented,  
41 approving Regional Advisory Council transmittal letters  
42 with minor changes. The topics of these letters are  
43 Council concerns about ANCSA 17(d)(1) lands, cross  
44 jurisdictional and conservation related fisheries  
45 concerns, and Regional Advisory Council Member  
46 compensation.

47  
48 It received the update on the request  
49 for reconsideration for RFR25-01, asking the Board to  
50 reconsider its 2025 decision to designate Ketchikan as

1 rural under federal subsistence regulations, and the  
2 Board will make a decision on whether this RFR meets the  
3 threshold criteria for full consideration at its April  
4 meeting. It also received an update that the online  
5 portion of the Federal Subsistence Permit Database is  
6 still being developed and received an update on the  
7 secretarial Review. The Board will meet in Anchorage for  
8 its summer work session August 4th to 5th 2026. And this  
9 is a great opportunity for Council Chairs to meet with  
10 the Board and have a face-to-face discussion with the  
11 Board on topics of concern included in their Council's  
12 Fiscal Year 25 annual report. So, I just kind of want  
13 to emphasize that, I guess, especially to Jack. That if  
14 you're able to make that work in your schedule, August  
15 4th to 5th, to come attend the Board meeting to express  
16 your concerns in your annual report directly to the  
17 Board. That's a lot more effective than having some staff  
18 present it, or for the Board members to just read it on  
19 paper.

20  
21 The Fisheries Proposed Rule was shared  
22 earlier in this meeting. Published on February 12th.  
23 This means that anyone can now submit a proposal to  
24 change federal subsistence regulations for the harvest  
25 of fish and shellfish, as well as for rural and non-  
26 rural determinations. There is more information on  
27 submitting proposals on the OSM website, and the window  
28 for submitting proposals ends on April 3rd. And then  
29 you'll make the recommendations on these proposals at  
30 your fall meetings, and then the Federal Board will act  
31 on these proposals at the Fisheries Regulatory Meeting  
32 on February 1st through 5th, 2027.

33  
34 The 2025 applications submitted during  
35 last year's recruitment cycle are still under  
36 consideration at the Secretary of Interior's office and  
37 once the Secretary's Office completes its review and  
38 appointments are finalized, we'll share these updates.  
39 So, I think this might be the first time that appointments  
40 were this late, that they didn't make it for this winter  
41 meeting cycle. So, on February 13th, 2026, the Federal  
42 Subsistence Board opened the call for applications and  
43 nominations. The application forms are available, and you  
44 guys are well aware on the public table in the program's  
45 website. And for further details, reach out to Nissa and  
46 applications can be submitted in person or via email by  
47 April 2<sup>nd</sup>, is the deadline So that's all I have. So,  
48 thanks so much. Again, on behalf of OSM for all the  
49 commitment and volunteer you guys do on behalf of your  
50 communities and the subsistence resources.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Lisa.  
And Don, go ahead.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Was that the report for OSM? Okay, well, I just wanted to - in speaking to Orville, and I think it's really important that we get the word out that, well -- or maybe April 20th or what is the date of the to be able to call in and support OSM or support us about those seats on the Subsistence Board or something? I mean, the reason I'm bringing this up is hopefully, we as a group or something, whether it's Facebook or whether it's TCC, I think it's important that we call and support that that move. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Orville.

MR. LIND: Man, I've been waiting to get up here the last two days. Just kidding. Good evening. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. To the question. Thank you, Don. The statewide consultations for the program review for the Federal Subsistence Board, March 10th and March 17th going to begin, I believe it's 1 to 3 in the afternoon. And we are actually conducting outreach. Right now, I am, to get folks to call in on March 10th and 17th or attend in person. We're allow that, also at our regional office in Anchorage. And we also have requests for one-on-one consultations from tribes. And of course, we're going to try to make that happen. We will make it happen. We just don't know how many. I just got another request today. So, I believe it -- I believe that's 6 or 7.

MR. HONEA: Follow up, Mr. Chair. The reason, I mean, the reason I'm mentioning this is there's no TCC reps sitting here and, you know, maybe they are still in Anchorage or something like that. But I think we deemed this important enough. It's just not the RAC. It's every village and everything supporting that. And so maybe we as -- somebody in here could relay that. So, the importance of it, I mean, I could tell Diloola or somebody over there, somebody in that area, I mean, to get the word out. Thank you.

MR. LIND: I appreciate the effort, Don. Everything helps. I have talked -- I have already talked to Diloola couple times. Everything's all set up for a consultation. And several TCC members also have requested to come in on the 10th or 17th. So, yeah,

1 we've -- I've probably done some outreach. I'm going to  
2 say 50-some requests for meaningful consultation. So  
3 yeah, we're taking care of it. And again, if you all  
4 want to share that also, it's a good thing because a lot  
5 of folks have just outspoken told me that right now the  
6 Federal Subsistence Board is at its peak. And with the  
7 new members on Board, we've already conducted meetings  
8 with the members already, and they are top notch. And  
9 they certainly have gained a lot of strength, I believe.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, other  
12 questions for OSM, Orville, Lisa?

13  
14 (No response)

15  
16 Don't see any. All right. Thanks so  
17 much.

18  
19 MR. LIND: Quyana.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Quyana. So, we're  
22 into Correspondence Update. Nissa.

23  
24 MS. PILCHER: Hello everyone. I'm Nissa  
25 Pilcher again. So, the Correspondence Update. I just  
26 wanted to draw your guys' attention. There are three  
27 letters that have been written sent to your meeting in  
28 December, and I would like to thank Brooke McDavid. She  
29 did the bulk of them or -- yeah. Yeah, she did, by far  
30 the bulk of them. Since they are all joint meetings with  
31 the Eastern Interior. And I was prepping for two other  
32 Council meetings. So, you have joint comments to the  
33 Board of Fisheries on page 173. Those were submitted to  
34 the current meeting. I believe there's also some  
35 statewide proposals so they will also be submitted to  
36 that March Board of Fish as well. There was the joint  
37 comment on the North Pacific Management Council on the  
38 Chum Salmon Bycatch DES. Of course, that meeting  
39 happened in February. So those were also submitted that  
40 can be found on page 175. And then there were the joint  
41 comments on the programmatic review. That can be found  
42 on page 178. And of course, when I see you guys again  
43 in Aniak in October, there will be an additional letter  
44 on the programmatic review that you will find in your  
45 meeting materials at that time on the additional topics  
46 that you would like me to pass along to the Secretaries.  
47 And that is everything for the correspondence update.  
48 Anybody has any questions?

49  
50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any questions?

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(No response)

Yeah. Well, it's a long day, so. Okay. I think that covers it. And then the federal regulation handy dandy feedback.

MS. PILCHER: And that one was covered by Brooke this morning. So that's it.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. So, Council Members Closing Comments. Anybody have closing comments? Tommy, you want to give a closing comment? Brief if you want. You can do whatever you would like. Go ahead.

MR. KRISKA: Okay. Yeah. I'm just kind of anxious to see what comes of all our meetings and what's coming up the decisions made on Anchorage today. And just you know, as all of them, it'd be really to stay united with them and all their -- everyone in this big thing toward our fish and moose and stuff. And I just want -- to those people down in Anchorage right now, you know, the represent -- representation of every one of them. We have like we have TCC, Kawerak, Ahtna, the Tlingit-Haida, you know, I don't know about 8 or 10 lawyers and 151 tribes there. That's who they're representing down there. And that's really huge. And I'm happy for them. I'm a part of it. But we had a death in the family, so I had to stay home. Not going down there, so. But it's all fine. But I really -- if we offended you in any way, you people in the crowd that it wasn't meant to, you know, for -- by any means that, you know, we were just kind of -- we get frustrated and things that are happening at home and the way we -- the way the regulations and everything with our fish and moose and bears and roads and land and it's just like, you guys just keep on coming. There's no stopping at no one. I think once they get their minerals and everything like that and run out of money, that then will be the end of that. But we ways down the road. But you know, we live here. The Lord put us here. He put us here for a reason. Put all that game out there for us. And I always thought about where did all this Fish and Game, all these agencies, where they all came from? And I figured out that, you know, about 90% of them are from out of state. They're following the money trail. That, you know, they started down the states and went through all the minerals, went through all that. And like they say, Alaska is the last. It's just that were just the last

1 state that need to be gone through, I guess, I don't  
2 know.

3  
4 It's just sad that you know that all our  
5 people back there, they depend on this -- all this food  
6 that is being taken from us for money. Everything. The  
7 whole nine yards. The bear hunting, the moose, the  
8 fishing, everything like that. It's just sad to see that  
9 and sad to even live like that. I mean, I've been sober  
10 for 41 years now, and to put that in my mind and trying  
11 to protect my kids, my grandkids, and I hope, you know,  
12 you have grandkids and everything yourselves and maybe  
13 look at them one day and think, man, what we're doing  
14 to those people. You know, they have lives too. But, you  
15 know, I put that at ease because I believe in the Lord.  
16 And we all gotta [sic] meet him one day. Well, some of  
17 -- some people, they got to have the answer to, you  
18 know, up there too. So don't forget that.

19  
20 I'm sort of a little relieved of all the  
21 decisions down there. And I hope some of this, that --  
22 here we're talking about these last few days will maybe  
23 you know, let us live too. Work from the state, and it's  
24 kind of -- oh, shouldn't start too many things now. We  
25 got more applications here for -- yeah. So, anyway like  
26 I said, I don't really like to talk to anybody in a kind  
27 of different behavior. That's not me. I've been a  
28 straight and with everyone all my days, and I like to  
29 help my people. And they're always coming to me. My  
30 phone rings off the hook, and it's a hard job to keep  
31 being reminded every time that phone rings for this  
32 issue, that issue, this issue. But for me, I don't know,  
33 I probably this can go ahead and dedicate myself toward  
34 the people and that's probably where I'll end up at the  
35 end.

36  
37 So, thank you for everything that you  
38 do and the Board for what we do and everything else. But  
39 you know that I would be really thinking about it if,  
40 you know, we're going to legislatures, we're going up  
41 higher. You know, we been done talking to this Board of  
42 Fish, Board of Game Board, board everybody. That's not  
43 never [sic] did anything for us for the last 35 years  
44 I've been down here. But since we stepped upstairs,  
45 things are happening so, and there's a lot of smart  
46 people that -- these Natives, there are a lot of them.  
47 TCC, they got computers, they're forming committees.  
48 They're forming boards, they're uniting. And that is --  
49 as the state, as the people of the State of Alaska.  
50 They're finally getting together. So don't get on the

1 wrong side of that line because things will be done.  
2 And, you know, it's always for the people or nothing.  
3 So that's where we're going. Thank you.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Appreciate you  
6 being here, Tommy. You're a real important part of this  
7 Council, and I was glad I could get a hold of you across  
8 the whole Koyukuk flats when I hunted you down to make  
9 your application to come on back on this Board. So, fill  
10 that one out, too.

11  
12 MR. KRISKA: Oh, yeah. Thank you. It's  
13 good because you know, a lot of people are looking for  
14 reference, and you just go right ahead and sign it. And  
15 this is good things. Yep. I'm gonna [sic] talk all day  
16 because Robert wanted to go.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert. Go ahead.

19  
20 MR. WALKER: I gave it a lot of thought  
21 today. I took a long walk, but I was kind of late today.  
22 And after I got those phone calls from Jasmine Vent, you  
23 know who's working down there at fisheries, I really  
24 felt good. And I am going to run one more time just to  
25 make sure that we get -- our tribes get what we need to  
26 get. And that's all I ever did all my life. Was -- I  
27 poached moose for the elders caught fish for the elders.  
28 And I never charged them anything because, you know,  
29 they'd rather have something fresh and caught or  
30 something that -- other than store food, so. And this  
31 is something that I always did. It's not only me, that  
32 some other guys had helped me out too and you know, and  
33 it's just a good feeling. But to have a really good  
34 feeling, to have a win. I want to win with this moose  
35 deals with all these people that throw away meat,  
36 transporters, guides, outfitters that make us feel bad.  
37 Because when we're growing up, we didn't have a lot of  
38 food. And this man comes along and throw away food. So,  
39 this is something that -- well, the first time I got  
40 back on this Board, because I wanted the bison to be  
41 something as a backup plan for the moose for a customary  
42 and traditional uses. But that got shot down, so well,  
43 we can still steal bison. I mean, it's not hard to hide  
44 anymore, you know, so. But yeah, I'm going to go one  
45 more time. I'm going to see what -- how we're going to  
46 accomplish this working together. Because one person  
47 can't do it. The more the better. Because everybody will  
48 work together, I know that. I work with these guys in  
49 the Koyukuk River, and you know, they really -- I've  
50 known them for 20 years or more. And I worked with these

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1 other people too that we worked on something, you know,  
2 and we don't brag about what we do. You know, that's  
3 something that I'd seen a long time ago is that we  
4 accomplish things together and we kind of unite, but we  
5 don't talk them -- talk it up. We just go our own way  
6 after we're done.

7  
8 So anyway, you know, we need these  
9 people here too, because we can't function without them.  
10 They know that and that's why the OSM was created I  
11 think, for -- ensure our way of life. But this morning  
12 I was a little irritated because I -- we thought that  
13 maybe we were abandoned by them because of not helping  
14 us out. But I think there's something that now they're  
15 going to see a little different where we're going to go,  
16 because all we want is food. You know, I mean, that's  
17 not hard, but it's hard now and have to you know -- Tom  
18 is a real doctor if you ever seen one. Anyway, that's  
19 all I have, Mr. Chair.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
22 you. Appreciate your re-signing up, Robert.

23  
24 MR. WALKER: Huh?

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate your  
27 re-signing up to be on the Council and I -- and you take  
28 a blank, and you go back home, and you find that young  
29 person that you need to take your seat, and you bring  
30 them next fall or next, you get them on this Council.  
31 Yeah. Because we can't go find them. You know who he is  
32 or he or she. If it's a woman, the better. Because Jenny  
33 wants a woman on here. Right. So, Don, final comment

34  
35 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm  
36 really glad Robert reconsidered. I mean, I don't know,  
37 did I just hear him say he's going to re-up, but  
38 continuity is important. He's been on here, I think,  
39 since inception along with you, Jack, Ronny Sam days.  
40 So, he's been there a long time. Ray Colin. Everybody  
41 remembers, you know, the guys in the past there. And so,  
42 I'm really glad that he's thinking about that, and I'm  
43 glad to meet at Pikes. I mean, I just love this, you  
44 know, little meeting place here, good accommodations. I  
45 don't know about you guys, but we've always had been  
46 welcomed here pretty good. And I thank our Coordinator  
47 for setting all this up. I think that I could -- I thank  
48 them that I could come in a day or so earlier because,  
49 you know, if they couldn't land in Galena, they most  
50 certainly could not land in Ruby. So, I was glad to come

1 in a day early. But other than that, I was a little  
2 disappointed in TCC not being here at first when I  
3 mentioned it yesterday, but then I thought, well, you  
4 know, a lot of them are still in Anchorage for that  
5 meeting, so. So, you know, I can't blame them for being  
6 here, but I'm really looking forward to some of the  
7 things that we can do. I mean, it's always been my  
8 contention, I guess that if I can't do anything about  
9 fishing and I read I said this before, I'm going to  
10 doggone be sure to try to take care of our moose. You  
11 know, when we talk about you know, the taking care of  
12 our moose. I mean, we as villages, we live out there.  
13 We care about these moose. We, you know, that's our  
14 that's our food. And doggone it, it really kind of pisses  
15 me off when we take care of them. And we put a bounty  
16 of the village Councils and everything, put a bounty on  
17 them to try to save our population and it -- I'm not  
18 getting rowdy.

19

20 (Talking)

21

22 MR. WALKER: Incentive. Okay. I'm sorry.  
23 We have a incentive there. But, you know, we care about  
24 that population, and it just -- it bothers me that we  
25 get hundreds of hunters in there that, you know, they  
26 take it. But other than that, it's good to be here. And  
27 I like to like Jenny said, there used to be another lady  
28 on there, and it's good because they bring just a kind  
29 of a, you know, common sense kind of type, you know.  
30 Fish camp. And we used to do this kind of stuff, and I  
31 like that. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks a lot, Don.  
34 Appreciate you coming to the meeting and coming in early  
35 and sticking it out. Appreciate that. Darrell, still  
36 online, there. You're there, Darrell? You want to say a  
37 closing comment?

38

39 MR. VENT: Yep.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

42

43 MR. VENT: Okay. You know. Yeah. It's,  
44 you know, kind of difficult where I have to, you know,  
45 work and try to get attend meetings. These last two  
46 years has been kind of pretty busy for me, so. But I'm  
47 glad I'm able to sit in to zoom. I'm had a bad cold here  
48 and had to go to the clinic and everything to get  
49 checked. Not feeling any better, but I'm glad I'm able  
50 to sit and listen to the meeting. Some important issues

1 that we have that we're trying to figure out. You know,  
2 it's not about -- it's about how we fix everything. You  
3 know, it's our -- you know, we were born into this land.  
4 We lived here all our life. We -- you know, it's hard  
5 to see that, you know, we have a, you know, a failing  
6 system with our -- some are, well, traditional cultural  
7 uses on this land. It's been hard to comprehend. You  
8 know, how do we try to get back whatever we lost, whether  
9 it's moose, caribou, fish, you know, all these -- even  
10 the black bear. We know we're losing quite a bit of  
11 those in our area. Because, you know, once you start,  
12 you know, you know, the signs when you start losing  
13 these animals, there's other animals that come out that  
14 really start striving or becoming fitter. And we  
15 understand that, you know, it's a system of survival.  
16 Survival of the fittest, I guess you would say. And  
17 just, you know, distinction between, you know, fish and  
18 caribou, you can see what's the difference between when  
19 they were really thriving and when they're, you know,  
20 at their lowest. And it you know, it's something that  
21 the fish have, you know, when they're talking about  
22 counting fish, you know, it's, where did this fish go?  
23 Well, the thing with, you know, any kind of species that  
24 once you get threatened or once you get, you know, into  
25 survival mode, you tend to gather more and go in one  
26 place instead of going to, you know, your original or  
27 wherever that you went before because you're trying to  
28 survive as a group, not just, you know, out there to  
29 swim around and find places to, you know, hatch and put  
30 your fish down and your eggs down. So, you know, we --  
31 it's some things that we just, you know, kind of see  
32 when we live in these villages, we start talking amongst  
33 each others that, you know, there's, there's something  
34 going on and we try to put a, you know, a piece into it  
35 and figure out, you know, why would they do that? You  
36 know. And why would you know, certain things happen, you  
37 know, when you remember when I was talking about that  
38 Hog River, you know, and when the fish were dying, they  
39 blamed it on, you know, only one thing. But there was  
40 many factors involved that could produce that kind of a  
41 outcome. So, you know, we can't say for sure. Well, we  
42 can't say it's not because we don't really actually know  
43 the truth of what happened there. We don't have any  
44 studies on it, but we can assume that, oh yeah, it was  
45 just hot water and low, you know, the water was low and  
46 it was really superheated. But there's a reasons why it  
47 would be superheated. It's, you know, some things that,  
48 you know, thinking about it, you know. It can't only  
49 happen just, just there, you know, it didn't happen in  
50 other places, but, you know, it's just some things that

1 we got to consider. We have no studies on what mining  
2 can do to our rivers yet. We know what happened up in  
3 Canada, you know, it's taught.

4  
5 Now what I was trying to speak on  
6 earlier was touching on this threatened and endangered  
7 species. I need to know some things about that, because  
8 if we have a right to put in threatened species, then  
9 we should do it. We have a right to put in endangered  
10 species. Then we should do it. But what are the  
11 population guidelines for that? There's nothing  
12 explained unless we look into, you know, the  
13 regulations. Maybe we'd have more of an answer. But, you  
14 know, that's some of the process that we gotta follow  
15 in order for us to work with this management system.  
16 We're not seeing what we want. We're not getting what  
17 we want, but we can implicate we can put in things that  
18 we want to, you know, survive with this food resources  
19 that we have. So, you know, I'm probably rambling on,  
20 but, you know, just some of the thoughts that go through  
21 my mind while I'm, you know, thinking about it and trying  
22 to figure out, you know, how could we work with the  
23 system? It's a system willing to work with us? Who would  
24 be willing to work with us? There's a lot of outside  
25 interests that, you know, look at our way of living and  
26 say, man, how could they do that? Well, it's been done  
27 on the States. They suffered quite a bit down there  
28 compared to what we're going through. I mean, we're just,  
29 were behind what they want. Right now, we're going  
30 through some of the things they went through already.  
31 So, you know, it's just some of the things that, you  
32 know, kind of eggs me on. It's just, you know, are people  
33 always, you know, said we gotta [sic] have somebody that  
34 can represent that can kind of put, you know, a thought  
35 process into it. How do we, you know, implicate this?  
36 What do -- kind of regulations could we put in? What  
37 kind of, you know, resolutions could we put in to try  
38 to make them work with us? So, you know, there's things  
39 that we could try but haven't been done yet. But, you  
40 know, it's just, you know, some of the thoughts that  
41 come into my mind, it's just, you know, how could we,  
42 you know, win in this situation? That's the main thing.  
43 We want food on our tables, just like we had before. Not  
44 what they're putting in front of us right now. You know,  
45 all these guys, they you know, they mention all that.  
46 You know, man, we used to have the best fish. Everything  
47 in the world. Now look at us now, you know, fighting to,  
48 you know, survive. So, you know, it's something our  
49 elders would have been fighting all the way through. And  
50 that's how we got here. Because our elders want us to

1 do this. I thank you guys, you know, for letting me sit  
2 on the Board with you guys, I appreciate it. Alright.  
3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate  
6 toughing it out on the on the call there Darrell. We've  
7 been missing your presence at the meeting, and I could  
8 tell you're really sick, but I think you perked up. You  
9 gave a pretty long closing comments there. So, I think  
10 you're on the mend. So, Jenny.

11  
12 MS. PELKOLA: Oh, put my glasses on.  
13 Okay. I wrote mine down. As I stated before, this is  
14 going to be my last term. I said it last time, but this  
15 time I really mean it. And I really enjoyed being on  
16 here with all those people we named this morning and the  
17 new ones. Good to see more interest. And I'm glad to see  
18 that Percy is going to put in an application. I don't  
19 speak very much at the meetings, I used to when I first  
20 got on and over the years, I've learned a lot of things  
21 from just listening and sometimes I know I spoke too  
22 much out of turn. And I remember my first speech when I  
23 got on here, I just bawled out all the workers. Because  
24 I didn't quite understand who I was working for or  
25 working with or who was working for us, until I sat down  
26 with Mickey and Ray Collins and they guided me and told  
27 me what was going on. And Robert was there, too, I think.  
28 And they helped me along. And then since then, I've sort  
29 of kept my mouth shut because I spoke out of turn and I  
30 knew then that I better watch my words. I have a lot of  
31 ideas, but I just listened to you, and I agree with a  
32 lot of the things that the Board is saying up here. I  
33 just don't express it because they're already saying it.  
34 So, I just sort of agree, but maybe I should speak out  
35 a little bit more. But that's just me. There's things I  
36 wrote down, but I remember when we used to go to the  
37 villages. We used to get together as a group. Robert  
38 would bring moose meat. Tim would bring something else.  
39 I would bring something else. And we'd all get together  
40 in some house and have a have a meal together. We don't  
41 do that anymore. I know in Fairbanks, when we come here,  
42 some of us have some shopping to do or visit with family,  
43 but I think it would be a good idea just to have a meal  
44 together. You know, I know we go -- we have lunch and  
45 we all take off to the quickest place that will feed us.  
46 But after we're done with our meetings, I think we have  
47 time to sit a couple hours and just relax. And we don't  
48 have to talk about meeting stuff. Talk about happy  
49 things. You know, things that's going on in our lives.  
50 And because a lot of us don't like to share what's going

1 on in our lives at a meeting.

2

3 I'm always wishing that more women would  
4 sign up. It's sort of -- well, all the guys can get  
5 together and talk about men's stuff, and, you know, women  
6 like to talk about women's stuff, too. They don't like  
7 to I mean, I enjoy talking to the guys, but I can't.  
8 There's some stuff we can't talk about because it's --  
9 we're different, you know. But I've enjoyed my time on  
10 this Board. And I think it's time for me to move on to  
11 another board. I'm looking at a different Board now, but  
12 it's time for me -- I feel like I've learned a lot, and  
13 I gave -- I've given whatever I could give to just being  
14 on here, working with the guys. And I just want to thank  
15 all of you for being patient with me and helping me out.  
16 And if you don't know it, most of us are related on this  
17 Board by accident. We're all from different villages,  
18 but there's my cousin over there, and Tommy is my nephew,  
19 Robert -- and Robert is a relative from my father's side  
20 and his grandma. And who else? Tim. We might be related.  
21 And Jack, you know. But, and Darrell and you know, we're  
22 all related. So, we all understand what we're talking  
23 about and we all are -- what I like about this Board is  
24 we never argue. We get along and we just -- we're just  
25 working for our people. With all -- saying all that, I  
26 think it's very important now, I'm seeing it, our group  
27 is reaching out to different people. Other groups are  
28 reaching out to us. And I think the more groups you have  
29 working towards one issue or maybe more, you'll be  
30 stronger. You're stronger in groups. So, I just want to  
31 encourage the Board to keep on keeping on, I guess. Make  
32 sure you're with these groups. Because it's hard to do  
33 something by yourself. I remember one time I  
34 demonstrated something, I got -- I was in church, and I  
35 picked the strongest guy in there, the big husky guy.  
36 And I told him, come up front and so he didn't know what  
37 I was going to do. I said let's have a tug of war. And  
38 he we started to have tug of war, and he just pulled me  
39 in just like nothing. You know, I just went flying, and  
40 then I said, okay, I called another guy, and I mean  
41 another person in the congregation. Come on up. So, this  
42 person came up and we hung on and he started pulling us.  
43 But he was having a little harder time, but he still  
44 pulled us. So, I called another person. A person came  
45 up and we all grab on to the guy. And these were little  
46 people like me, you know, pulling this person and he was  
47 having a harder time. And then I called another person  
48 and we got to where we had so many little people up  
49 there that he couldn't pull us anymore. And that always  
50 stuck in my mind because when we worked together as a

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1 group, as a big group, you're stronger. So that's just  
2 what I want to leave you with. Thank you. And thank you,  
3 staff.

4

5 (Applause)

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
8 Tim.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,  
11 this is your last meeting, Jenny?

12

13 MS. PELKOLA: No, my last term.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Last -- you're still.....

16

17 (Talking)

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.

20

21 MS. PELKOLA: My last term.

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: All right. I would like to  
24 thank everybody that went down to Anchorage for North  
25 Pacific Management Council, Board of Fish. Obviously,  
26 we had Robert and Tommy, but beyond them the Inter-  
27 Tribal Fish Commissions, Tanana Chiefs, coastal  
28 villages, bunch of individual people. It makes a big  
29 difference. Of course, it made a big difference because  
30 this is the first time in my life, my interaction with  
31 Board of Fish that the Board of Fish ever acted against  
32 Area M, they're really politically astute and well  
33 prepared for those meetings. So, we have to remember  
34 that even though we made a lot of strides in what we  
35 believe is protecting our salmon resource, that those -  
36 - some of those fishermen and those communities, they're  
37 really similar to what we're doing. They're just trying  
38 to make a living and support their families and support  
39 their villages. So, when we put out -- it's sad to put  
40 out proposals that will adversely affect somebody. But  
41 at some point, you have to -- you have to just make a  
42 stand and protect your resources. And so that's where  
43 we're at. And I hope that those families and fishermen  
44 from Area M find a way to adjust for the losses that  
45 they'll receive from these new proposals.

46

47 During our next meeting, I hope we can  
48 get a report on what kind of risk we're at for PFAS  
49 toxicity there. I believe there's a lady with the U.S.  
50 Fish and Wildlife Service that that's her -- her

1 profession is toxicity expert. I don't know her name,  
2 but if she could give a report or information to somebody  
3 from OSM that can report to us about Galena especially.  
4 But there's a lot of -- I know there's pollution, PFAS  
5 contamination here from this airport and that flows  
6 downstream. And I'd like to know how much risk that is  
7 for our subsistence users. Anywhere where there's an  
8 airport that use firefighting foam, AFFF and -- or was  
9 a, like a White Alice or Dew Line site. We have to be  
10 careful of that. And I know there's a lot of toxicity  
11 from clean air stations, so I would just like to be made  
12 aware of what our risks are to the fish and game and to  
13 the consumers of that.

14  
15                   Regarding Ambler Road, I'm really glad  
16 PJ came up and talked about that and explained the  
17 reasons why he was supporting that project, and why he  
18 thought it was important for his people to have jobs and  
19 stuff. I still feel like, my personal opinion and the  
20 direction I like this Board to go is just to still oppose  
21 the Ambler Road. I've worked in the drilling and mining  
22 industry for almost two decades. I know quite a bit  
23 about it. There's a lot of good intentions to running  
24 operations and environmentally friendly manners, but  
25 there's always mistakes that have been made and spills  
26 and people, when it comes down to a toxic spill or source  
27 of toxicity, almost always a employee will try to hide  
28 reporting the issue. We had in Illinois Creek Mine, which  
29 many of you know, is kind of similar to the size of mine  
30 that you're talking about developing in the Ambler  
31 Mining District. And yeah, they provided jobs for a lot  
32 of people in the community that guys would fly in for  
33 two weeks from Ruby and Galena, Nulato, Kaltag. And they  
34 were doing a cyanide heap leach. They had an accident  
35 where somebody with a backhoe or track hoe ripped the  
36 liner on one of their cyanide heap leach pads and instead  
37 of fixing a hole, at the time, the guys were more  
38 concerned with protecting their jobs and not reporting  
39 it. So, they just covered up the rip in the liner with  
40 gravel. And then this fellow I know that worked there  
41 he was telling me about it and he worked in the plant  
42 where they were producing the cyanide solution. And he  
43 was telling me about how much more cyanide mix they had  
44 to put in because the cyanide solution kept leaching out  
45 through this hole. And he reported to his supervisor at  
46 the mining company, and they ignored it, told him to not  
47 report it. So that's why he came to me, because he knew  
48 I was -- been in the mining industry for quite a while.  
49 And I called the other fellow here in Fairbanks with DNR  
50 about the cyanide leak, and he tried to play it off, and

1 he said he went out and inspected that mine once a month  
2 and he was unaware of it. So, there we had a failure on  
3 three levels the employees, the supervisors at the mine  
4 and the state DNR was all denying the existence of this  
5 leak. That operation closed down. And so, it's not really  
6 an issue right now. But I'm just saying this to show  
7 that whenever you have mining, you're going to get  
8 whatever, your metals and that's a benefit to modern  
9 society. But there's always a residual source of  
10 toxicity that can last for centuries or beyond and so  
11 it's a tradeoff.  
12

13                   Where I grew up in western New York, the  
14 entire Lake Ontario is probably bigger than the area of  
15 the Western Interior region or something. It's really  
16 large. And in the 70s, nobody was allowed eating the  
17 fish there. If you could imagine eating the fish and --  
18 or catching the fish and not being able to eat it. That's  
19 a situation that shows how much industrial pollution can  
20 take over a very large area. What's going on here in our  
21 Western Interior region and this northwest section  
22 between Dalton Highway and Ambler Mining District,  
23 that's really rare thing in this world anymore. Only in  
24 Canada. Here in Alaska and Siberia, in the Northern  
25 hemisphere. Anyways, is where you have this much  
26 undeveloped land. And once it gets commercialized, it'll  
27 never come back to its natural state. So, people may not  
28 realize it now, but you know that mine life of whatever  
29 it is, 20 years for Ambler Mining District. I don't feel  
30 like it's a good enough trade off to destroy that  
31 pristine, undeveloped environment. And I would suggest  
32 to this Council Member and the people that live in this  
33 area that you may not feel like undisturbed land is  
34 really worth anything, or you can figure out how to make  
35 a living off of it. But I'm just telling you from a guy  
36 that grew up around Superfund sites. You know, we had  
37 an area where I grew up was Kodak, and at the time  
38 everybody was like -- think that was like one of the  
39 greatest companies in New York State, provided all these  
40 jobs, made great film products and stuff like that. But  
41 now their main manufacturing sites, Superfund site,  
42 because years and years of industrial pollution just  
43 destroyed that area. Now, 50 years since I lived back  
44 there. And you can't even enter that -- their main  
45 manufacturing facility without a special suit on. The  
46 water is contaminated all around. Nobody can sell that  
47 land. Nobody can do anything with it. It's just barbed  
48 wired off. And so to think that just because something  
49 can make money or that a really big company is running  
50 a project, people -- at some point the decision makers

1 are people that they're just there for a salary or a  
2 bonus, and they can damage that region or that part of  
3 the planet in a manner that that destroys it and creates  
4 a lot of adverse health effects to other people. So just  
5 try to take pride in our region and the environment of  
6 the region and really think a lot about what it means  
7 to provide habitat for ourselves, for our families, for  
8 our villages, for the fish and the animals that live  
9 there. It's -- once it's gone, it'll never come back.

10

11 Another item I would like people to  
12 think about over the summer is in addition to what we  
13 talked and made motion to on the wanton waste with the  
14 hunters is potentially maybe a check station can be put  
15 at Tanana. And that way that could capture the  
16 information and the meat checks for -- at the same time  
17 for the hunters that are either going back up Nenana  
18 River or going to the bridge. So that's an option that  
19 we can look at in the future. And I'd like to thank  
20 Jenny for being who you are and contributing to the  
21 Council. And you're spot on about what you're saying  
22 about we need to get more women on the Council. The men  
23 and women think differently, and only when there's a  
24 cooperation and contribution from both men and women can  
25 we make correct decisions that will have -- correct  
26 decisions that are going to provide the best outcomes  
27 for our region and for Alaska. And I would like the  
28 Office of Subsistence Management to put some extra  
29 effort into this next stretch between this meeting and  
30 our fall meeting. We really we've talked about it for  
31 at least 3 or 4 years, potentially more about recruitment  
32 off of the Kuskokwim River. And whatever we're doing,  
33 the way we're doing that recruitment, it's not working  
34 we need to be more proactive and maybe think outside the  
35 box and get hold of the these different organizations  
36 from the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to other sources  
37 and get those people on the WIRAC because we're not  
38 covering our bases by not having a Kuskokwim resident  
39 on our Board.

40

41 And finally, I'd like to just thank  
42 Fairbanks, all our staff members, Director Crystal  
43 Leonetti, for taking time to sit with us for two whole  
44 days, plus whatever travels involved. We have a lot of  
45 issues that are important to us in our communities. And  
46 we need all -- we need everyone's help and contribution  
47 to solving some problems. I believe there's already  
48 existing laws in place that should be protecting these  
49 fish and animal and land resources, but for whatever --  
50 for various reasons commercial interests are with their

1 money and their influence over politicians are hijacking  
2 the process and keeping the true law and rule of order  
3 from happening. So, thanks everybody for all you do. And  
4 I think that it makes Alaska a better place and makes  
5 our communities better place and hopefully give future  
6 generations that may be here and 2 or 300 years something  
7 to subsist on.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
10 much for your attendance, Tim. Yeah, you just toughed  
11 it out on the phone and we got your face to face. And I  
12 appreciate your participation and your perspective. I  
13 appreciate OSM. Our Coordinators, we got Nissa working  
14 hard to keep us on track and coming back from that  
15 closure. Brooks in the room. And Orville. I found out  
16 that Orville needs a hand of applause for coordinating  
17 those Federal Subsistence Board members also. So, we  
18 highly appreciate all of the work that OSM does. Crystal  
19 came all the way up here, sat through our meeting. She  
20 only picked one Council. That's us. We're honored by  
21 that. And so, you see where people get impassion and we  
22 go in circles and we just -- we can't get you know, some  
23 of this stuff is just -- eats us up. But this Council,  
24 you Council Members, when you make motions, you have  
25 deference. If that proposal doesn't violate healthy  
26 populations, limit subsistence or is a public safety  
27 issue, those have deference before the Federal  
28 Subsistence Board. So, this Council has deference,  
29 meaning the Council -- the Federal Board has to listen  
30 to us or has -- weighs heavily on what we say. That's a  
31 very important thing. The state process. You can submit  
32 all kinds of proposals and comments to the State Boards.  
33 They don't listen to you. This is the first time that -  
34 - then the reason the Fish Board adopted that proposal  
35 is because Olivia is on there. And, you know, Olivia's  
36 dug in, she fought hard for that and she made a big, big  
37 difference. Otherwise, that would just have been wadded  
38 up and thrown in the trash. And so, this process has  
39 deference. This has a mandate. There's no money to be  
40 made. The State Board process is revenue driven.  
41 Pittman-Robertson funds, license sales. It has to do  
42 with revenue. That's a huge weight to those boards.  
43 That's that should not be. And so, I appreciate OSM and  
44 all the people that sat through this long meeting and  
45 all the staff members and I enjoy having this meeting  
46 in this in this building here. It's right on the river.  
47 You don't have to have traffic going by in front of you.  
48 You can just watch ravens and stuff flying around out  
49 there. And so, I wish you safe travels, have a great  
50 summer and look forward to having our meeting down in

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1 Aniak in the fall. So, Chair will entertain a motion for  
2 adjournment.

3

4 MS. PELKOLA: I move.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Move to adjourn. We  
7 have a second?

8

9 MR. KRISKA: Second.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tommy seconded.  
12 Question.

13

14 MR. VENT: Question called for.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Question's called  
17 for by Darrell. Those in favor of adjournment signify  
18 by saying aye.

19

20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And time is 6:40  
23 p.m. A little bit of overrun. Thanks so much.

24

25 (Off record)

26

27 END OF PROCEEDINGS

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

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Isabela, Puerto Rico this 12th day of march 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rafael Morel  
Chief Project Manager