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YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME III

YUPIIT PICIRYARAIT CULTURAL CENTER
Bethel, Alaska
January 22, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Jacqueline Cleveland, Chair
- Norma Evan
- John Andrew
- Walter Morgan, Sr.
- Francis Prince, Jr.
- Alissa Nadine Rogers
- Phillp Peter, Sr.
- Tiffany Agayar

Regional Council Coordinator, Brookee McDavid

Recorded and transcribed by:

Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp
787-239-0462
Info@lighthouseonline.com

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Bethel, Alaska - 1/22/2026)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Good morning to day three of the YKC RAC meeting in Bethel at the Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center. I'm Jackie Cleveland. It's 9:07 in the morning and we have some announcements after roll call with Brooke. Thanks.

MS. MCDAVID: Good morning everyone. This is Brookee McDavid, Council Coordinator. We'll start out with Council member roll call. Henry Parks

MR. PARKS: Present.

MS. MCDAVID: Norma Evan.

(No response)

Norma, are you able to hear us? I see you have called in online.

MS. EVAN: Hi Brooke. Good morning.

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, good morning. John Andrew.

MR. ANDREW: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Walter Morgan

MR. MORGAN Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Jacqueline Cleveland.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Francis Prince.

MR. PRINCE: Good morning, here.

MS. MCDAVID: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

MS. ROGERS: Present.

MS. MCDAVID: Thanks for joining us, Alissa. Phillip Peter.

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MR. PETER: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: And Tiffany Agayar is not yet here in the room with us. Hopefully she'll be joining us in just a little bit. And then we have three excused Council members. So, Madam Chair, we do have quorum, with 8 members present. And just a couple reminders and announcements this morning. Oh. One moment.

(Pause)

All right. Sorry about that pause, we were making arrangements to go pick up a Council member who's ready to join. So, the reminders and announcements are to please just remember to sign in, if you're here in the room with us, and if you're online, kindly keep your microphones muted, unless you're speaking. We will be starting our day with public comments on non-agenda items. If you'd like to comment on anything related to subsistence that's not on the agenda, that's your opportunity to do so. You can use the raise hand feature on Teams if you would like to comment or if you're on your phone, you can press star five. And we do have the green comment cards for folks here in the room. After public comments on non-agenda items, we will move into, back into our action items, starting with the Secretarial Review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program. We'll hear an overview from Sara Taylor, with the Office of the Secretary, and then we'll see if there's any public comments. And then we'll move into Council discussion. And after Sara's overview, our interpreter Pat will help give us a little summary in Yup'ik for our Yup'ik speaking Council members before we move on from there. So, I think that's all the announcements I had, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, Brooke. Are there any public comments on non-agenda items this morning in the room or online?

(No response)

Okay, then let's move on to our agenda under Action Items Continued, Secretarial Review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program. And we'll start with an overview from the Secretary's Office.

MS. TAYLOR: Good morning, this is Sara Taylor with the Office of the Secretary. Thank you, thank

1 you so much for your time and all the hard work that you
2 put into this process. It's essential for it to work and
3 I know you're all volunteers, and you all have a lot of
4 things that you'd like to be doing right now, and I
5 can't tell you how grateful I am that you chose to be
6 here with us. I -- we're here to talk about a process
7 that's going on right now. There was a Federal Register
8 Notice that came out December 15th, and it talked about
9 a 60-day scoping period. So, this is a process where we
10 learn and we listen before we act. So, this is a process
11 where information is critical towards deciding kind of
12 what we will do. So, what we're looking to understand
13 better is, how the program is meeting the purposes of
14 ANILCA. ANILCA is our guide, it provides a lot of
15 direction for the ways that the Secretaries, both the
16 Secretary of Interior that I work for, and the Secretary
17 of Agriculture, ANILCA provides us direction to
18 prioritize subsistence on federal public lands. That is
19 the priority public use among consumptive uses of fish
20 and wildlife. And so, we want to make sure now that the
21 program is meeting the intent of ANILCA, is meeting the
22 direction that we've been given in ANILCA, and that it's
23 providing a meaningful opportunity for subsistence users
24 not only to subsist, but also to participate in in the
25 management of these resources.

26
27 So, when the program began in 1992,
28 which was right after the state was not allowed to have
29 a rural preference. Right after that, the Secretaries
30 launched a very, very large process. There was an
31 environmental review and in 1992, we created this
32 program. Again. in 1999, after the Katie John case, it
33 was expanded to waters. So, ten years after that
34 expansion, the Secretaries did a review of the program.
35 So, that was a review that was done from 2009 to 2011.
36 And that review resulted in a few changes to the program,
37 one of which was -- there was two public members that
38 were added to the Board, the Federal Subsistence Board.
39 We have those same members today, we're very lucky. Chief
40 Pitka and Charlie Brower are our public members on the
41 Board. And then, we also did a process in 2022, where
42 we added three new members to the Board, and those
43 members are nominated by tribes. So, that is the Board
44 today. It's got five public members and a Chair, and
45 then it has five members that are the heads of the land
46 management agencies. So, the land managers. And that's
47 the Board today. We also have made various changes over
48 the years to the program, expanding some of the seats
49 on the Councils like this. Some went from 10 to 13 seats.
50 We've also made a lot of changes to things like special

1 actions, how we delegate authority and, also how we can
2 get feedback. And this is one of the tools we have, is
3 being able to do a review.

4
5 And so, this review is focused on a few
6 topics that have come up a lot lately. And by 'come up',
7 I mean we've received letters, we've received a lot of
8 comments. We've received requests for tribal
9 consultation. We've received -- we received a fantastic
10 letter from AVCP and the Kuskokwim Intertribal Fish
11 Commission explaining what they see in the program and
12 what they see the needs might be, so we're looking at a
13 lot of different user groups, who all have different
14 ideas, and we want to make sure that we find the ideas
15 that make the program work better. And that is our
16 objective. And so, we're focusing this review on some
17 particular topics that seem to keep coming up. They come
18 up over and over again. And so those topics we can,
19 hopefully, walk through today and get some feedback on,
20 so that we can take that back and incorporate it into
21 our review.

22
23 Those topics are: the Office of
24 Subsistence Management, where it is located. The Office
25 of Subsistence Management used to be in the Fish and
26 Wildlife Service but it was moved by Congress into the
27 Office of the Secretary. So, we didn't know really where
28 to put it. Congress told us to move it. And so, we moved
29 it into the Office of Policy, Management and Budget. And
30 so, if anyone has questions about that office, I'm happy
31 to ask -- or happy to answer. And if anybody has
32 questions about that move, I'm also happy to answer, but
33 we're curious if that was a good idea or not. We'd like
34 to take this opportunity to ask. We're also looking at
35 the criteria for membership on the Board and the criteria
36 for membership on the Councils. So, you all, not you all
37 were nominated or applied to be on the Council and we're
38 making sure that process works, that you feel that those
39 criteria are good and especially good for recruiting.
40 So, we'd love to make sure we always have members that
41 want to serve and are able to serve and provide
42 information. So, please help us figure out what's the
43 best way to do that.

44
45 We're also asking about the federal
46 regulations. I heard a lot of discussion here, at this
47 group, about how federal and state regulations work
48 together, and how confusing that can be when you're out
49 on the landscape because the wildlife don't care who
50 owns the land. So, we want to make sure that we, as

1 regulators, both the state and the federal government,
2 are doing everything we can to make it easy. We want it
3 to be easy and simple for everyone to understand what
4 the rules are, that's our job, and we want to be able
5 to do that. And you know best how we might be falling
6 down in making it easy. And the comments that I've heard
7 here and at other RACs will help. But anything specific
8 that we might be able to do to help with the federal
9 state dual management regulatory system would help us.
10 Also, we're looking at regulations that apply to special
11 actions. Those are in regulation, we want to make sure
12 that works. Everybody feels confident that when they use
13 the special action process, they get the results that
14 the program needs. We're also looking at the role of the
15 state. I know a lot is going on right now and we weren't
16 able to have state representation here, but I know they
17 do come, they participate. They participate in helping
18 with the data and helping with the analysis. So, is
19 there a is there another role that the state should
20 have, or is there a different role that the state should
21 have? We're very interested in how the state is able to
22 participate and whether that's adequate.

23
24 We're also looking at policies for rural
25 determinations. This is not something I think this
26 Council has much had to deal with in the past, but there
27 is a process for when a community becomes rural or when
28 it becomes urban. And it's not about population. It's
29 much more about criteria, certain criteria, we look at
30 everything. But we want to make sure that if people are
31 eligible to participate in the program, that they are
32 able to participate in the program. So, we have criteria
33 for rural determinations. Anyone has feedback on that,
34 that would be wonderful. And the input that we're
35 requesting is due February 13th. That is the deadline
36 for this process. And, like I said, this is a scoping
37 process. So, no actions are going to be taken after
38 this. We will decide, after getting all of this
39 information, we will give recommendations to the
40 Secretaries, based on what we learn. And then they will
41 decide whether any action is necessary. And if they do
42 think that something needs to be done, there will be
43 another process that will go along with that. And so,
44 that would be later this year at the earliest.

45
46 So, from that, we're looking for that
47 input. Any time before February 13th, folks can submit
48 comments, written comments. The RACs, obviously, because
49 you advise the Secretaries directly, you can send us
50 your comments -- you don't have to send them as part of

1 the public comment process, you can send them to the
2 Federal Subsistence Board and they will send it to us.
3 And you can do that any time you like. So, any feedback
4 that we get from you would be great. I think, definitely,
5 before the next meeting cycle, because that will be the
6 most useful for us, is getting that feedback in the next
7 month or so. So, if anyone has any questions about the
8 process, I'm here, I'm happy to answer and I'm happy to
9 take down any feedback that you have here and take that
10 back to the Secretaries for more discussion. Thank you
11 so much.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you. Do you
14 mind holding on while we while we do some interpretation?
15 Thank you. Quyana. Pat.

16
17 INTERPRETER: Good morning. (Statement
18 In Native). Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Pat. (In
21 Native). We're going to move on to -- if anybody in the
22 room has questions, we'll start with the room for Sara,
23 and online. Thanks.

24
25 MR. PETER: Madam Chairman.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah, Philip.

28
29 MR. PETER: (In Native). I've been in the
30 Council, Tribal Council in my hometown, Akiachak, as a
31 Chairman. (In Native).

32
33 INTERPRETER: I spent a lot of years as
34 a Chairman in my village, for a long time, and just this
35 last year, I retired from the Village Council as a
36 Chairman, because I wanted to take a sabbatical on the
37 issues out in our villages and we have continually
38 discussed these. They do send us briefs and memos and
39 we just -- we discuss these items out in our villages
40 and I'm not surprised at these issues coming up here,
41 what the Secretary mentioned there but when we -- during
42 our meetings, we say that, why are there two dual, the
43 state and the federal management? Why are they always
44 at odds against each other on the management of fish and
45 game. And we tell them that what we need in our area.
46 And I know, as a people, we have marching orders from
47 our ancestors as there is one regulation that we abide
48 by and that we are told to not waste any and not catch
49 more than what we need. That we are told to not catch
50 anything in excess, that we need to catch everything

1 that we will eat and not waste. And at this time -- we
2 -- also, in the Rural Advisory Committee and even under
3 the State Rural Advisory Committee, we -- when we have
4 differing viewpoints on some issues and we continually
5 work together to try to come to an understanding of what
6 the issue is. And even after we come to an understanding
7 on how to proceed, these things that we come up with,
8 are never ratified or followed by whoever, so. I know
9 the federal regulations that are sent on us. You just
10 mentioned -- the -- before these rules and regulations
11 becomes law, there are public meetings, scope to review
12 these coming issues. And we look at which site would be
13 the best avenue, and we take them and we put them as
14 what we want to see. And this, especially from our
15 Councils, that represent the 56 communities, and these
16 issues that come up. These are not surprising to us
17 because we continually look at these, the effects of
18 that and right now, the divide between the rural and
19 urban issues. When that first came up, we were leery of
20 -- because when we meet, there's a lot of -- the
21 population of Bethel is growing and that was one of the
22 issues that we looked at. Between the issues of Bethel
23 hunters, fishers versus the village hunters, fishers,
24 etcetera. And the federal regulations, to us, could they
25 become regulations? We follow these regulations and
26 rules. We do not break any of these regulations and
27 rules where -- we just follow these orders because they
28 are worthy of respect, whichever the state or the federal
29 government gives regulations, then we need to follow
30 them and we respect those. And I know that the federal
31 and the state think that we do not know any of these
32 regulations. We are not ignorant of the rules and
33 regulations. And right now, I'm speaking in Yup'ik, and
34 right now, I have a second language, I can speak in
35 English. And we know we are not ignorant about these
36 rules and regulations. And our forefathers lived on
37 subsistence, and the forefathers were giving us rules
38 and regulations, and they did not let us proceed with
39 whatever we wanted to do, because they always had rules
40 and regulations upon us. Our own ancestors, forefathers
41 were always telling us how to proceed in life and out
42 in hunting and everything, because our forefathers were
43 already making us practice following the rules and
44 regulations. And I know they take from their
45 experiences. And when they first came upon, they told
46 our, for -- our former leaders told us beforehand the
47 state that these are not nothing new given to us and we
48 keep telling our -- the generation coming up that there
49 are rules and regulations that we need to follow. And
50 right now, those former leaders are all gone and it just

1 leaves us. And those that attended the state and federal
2 and even sat on these Boards, they are all not here
3 anymore.

4
5 But the only words that they told me to
6 follow were, even though they oppose you, even though
7 the regulations oppose your way of life, do not stop.
8 Do not give up on trying to get what is needed for life
9 but they need to be fixed and looked at. And so, the --
10 when our ancestors made rules and regulations for us to
11 follow, they only stated it once, and once that was
12 stated it was not up for question, they had to be
13 followed and nobody had the power to change any of those.
14 And I know these things. Especially the subsistence is
15 a paramount issue for us. Paramount issue for us is
16 subsistence and that is why when we meet together, when
17 you guys come together on February 13, please, please
18 approach this as a unity, that you need to be united and
19 work for the best for the subsistence group, the
20 subsistence users. So, when the rules and regulations
21 are done properly, when it becomes rules or regulations
22 it is easy to follow and the people do not question it.

23
24 So, I know the leaders that were before
25 us, they used to meet in Yup'ik, and they are not with
26 us anymore, but they did not have a word of English. But
27 our forefathers from the 56 villages here, they knew
28 about their environment, their lakes, their rivers all
29 the rivers and sloughs are all named in Yup'ik, they all
30 have names. The Yukon River has names. The tributaries
31 all have names. The lake, all the lakes have names in
32 Yup'ik. Any river that flows, they all have names on
33 them. Every single slough and lakes and creeks have names
34 and we all know these. We all know which is a good area
35 for fishing in the wintertime. And we go to these areas
36 to catch whatever game or fish that we are after. And
37 all the villages have their own Yup'ik names.

38
39 (Indiscernible) Bethel. Aniak. Those
40 are the names, those are the names of the villages. Our
41 people, even though some do not understand how we are
42 during this time, we are all helping every person,
43 whether they come from different races or backgrounds
44 or anybody that eat, that anybody that hunts, we are
45 helping them. We are not against anybody. There is no
46 room for us to be against any of these. And we need --
47 we're just working together with them to come to a
48 consensus. And so, they do help us to, in turn, we're
49 not only helping them, but they do help us a lot and I'm
50 really thankful for the help that they come and they

1 bring to this area. And it's been -- for years and years
2 since the state became state or even before, when it was
3 a territory, people came from the outside to help us
4 manage these lands and rivers, and we are very thankful
5 for that.

6
7 The hardships that we face and the
8 hardships that you face, I know that you guys face
9 hardships and whatnot, but like my forefathers had said,
10 that anything that is worthy of tasks will need to be -
11 - there's anything worthy is without any problems but
12 once those problems are overcome, then it is a good, it
13 turns out good anyway. And there's a lot of things that
14 I would like to say, but these things that I'm saying
15 are not my own views or personal viewpoints, but these
16 viewpoints come from our meetings with my forefathers,
17 because our ancestors used to practice these things, and
18 these are the things that they used to tell us
19 continually. And they used to make sure we understand
20 these processes and so, that's why I do understand the
21 rules, regulations and the ways that you need to get to
22 develop the rules and regulations for us.

23
24 I am thankful for our Maker up to this
25 day that he has carried us as a people here. And he has
26 been taking care of us through all the hardships that
27 we encounter. His name is worthy to be praised. Because
28 we were not taking care of ourselves, even though we
29 think that we are taking care of ourselves. And I'm not
30 taking care of myself, and I am not looking after myself
31 only. And I am using what I learned to speak to you from
32 my experiences, from what I have learned. These are the
33 true things that I have been told. Everything according
34 to his will, makes those -- when we work together, in
35 unity, we can attain anything and so, anywhere, if we
36 do -- if we are against each other, that he will not
37 help us with that, if we are working against each other.
38 And I really do believe that before we start -- before
39 our meetings, we have invocations and we pray for
40 guidance with the agenda and the issues that are coming
41 up, that according to his will, that these things are
42 using us as instruments would come upon what we need. I
43 cannot say myself that I did this or I made this happen.
44 No, that's not the way that it goes. We, as people,
45 we're not talking about each other, we're not looking
46 after ourselves. We are looking after -- if we look
47 after everybody else, it becomes a good rule, regulation
48 or whatnot, but. And our, my ancestors, forefathers used
49 to tell me this. And I have seen with my experiences
50 that it is true, what it -- what they have said and I'm

1 so thankful that I used to learn and hear about these
2 things and I'm thankful for the Secretary using this
3 issue or the process to -- before the rules and
4 regulations are adopted. I'm thankful that the Secretary
5 asks for what the public, the scope, the public thinks
6 about these things. And this is the very process that
7 we used to follow in our in our villages, in our life.
8 Because I know the state and federal, every time that
9 there is going to be rules and regulations, they let us
10 know what they are proposing. And so, they make motions
11 and they inform us about these and sometimes we do look
12 forward to -- that after they ask for our comments and
13 we always look together with this hope. But even to this
14 day, the Council from Akiachak, sometimes they tell us
15 to the contrary what we want, and they tell us that we
16 cannot do what we are proposing. And it's not a good
17 feeling to be told, by the virtue of the state, that we
18 cannot follow what we want to do in our village.

19
20 We can't go forward. But I am very
21 thankful that the proposals that we put forth,
22 especially that Area M, that proposal yesterday, we
23 discussed that Area M about those two areas that we
24 voted on, I'm hopeful that one of those two will be come
25 to fruition and close the area I'm fishing for that
26 time, as stated in those two areas. And I know I have
27 said and talked about this, and every time that I think
28 about the Area M fisheries and I'm thinking about not
29 only myself, but my children and my grandchildren. That
30 when I'm thinking about and seeing what they go through,
31 it really hurts me in my mind because they eat, they eat
32 the salmon from the river that comes through our Area
33 M. And so, I know we heard yesterday about the issue.
34 And when my wife, when she heard about the issue, she
35 shed tears and she cried because these are real life
36 issues and real life consequences that we have about
37 these rules and regulations and my wife was crying
38 because she thought maybe they will forget the way that
39 we depend on fish so much.

40
41 The management that you do is good. And
42 I don't have anything to say against your management and
43 I'm really thankful for the management style that you
44 undertake. And, because it has real life consequences
45 for us and the motions and the issues that we bring
46 forth to you to look at, I'm thankful for giving us the
47 opportunity to be able to do that. And I really praise
48 you, every single one of you workers that -- and, go
49 forth and keep doing your work and work with us as a
50 unity, as one. And thank you so much for listening. And

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1 that's all I have.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, (In
4 Native), Phillip. So, hard to you follow up that one?
5 So, we're still on public comments, and Terese Vicente,
6 with Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission, is
7 next. Quyana. Terese, you're on.

8

9 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, I got a
10 question. Walter.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay, Walter,
13 while we wait for Terese, go ahead.

14

15 MR. MORGAN: You're talking about, you
16 know, the state and federal regulations and, you know,
17 especially with that issue of a moving boat. You know,
18 I think that's a real big issue and there's too much
19 safety concerns, as a [sic] operator I know, you know,
20 and all these people know that you can't shut off a
21 motor and shoot, and we don't like that regulations. And
22 it's, you know, we're hunting in federal land, but we're
23 in navigable waters, state waters, stateside. And it's,
24 I don't like it, it just don't [sic] work with me. It
25 don't make sense. There's a safety issue, too. Once you
26 move up, once you quit spinning on the prop, you're both
27 going to go sideways. So, then you got multiple people
28 in the boat, and you have more chance of shooting
29 somebody. And I'm hoping that we can work this one out,
30 I think it's a very important issue. And, you know,
31 we're all against it. It don't [sic] make sense. Thank
32 you.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
35 Walter. Terese, (In Native)? Hi, Terese, are you on?
36 Terese Vicente, with Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish
37 Commission. I think you're on mute, Terese.

38

39 MS. MCDAVID: She's gonna -- this is
40 Brooke. Terese's going to try to call back in one moment.

41

42 (Pause)

43

44 And while we're waiting for Terese, if
45 it's okay, Jackie, I'll just give a quick rundown of the
46 process. So, we'll take a couple public comments from
47 folks in the room and online, and then we'll move into
48 Council discussion. So, if you guys want to submit
49 comments as part of this, we'll be able to write a
50 comment letter, so we could make a motion to get that

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1 on the floor and then we'll talk about all the different
2 things that Sara mentioned, if that works for you guys.
3 Quyana.

4

5 (Pause)

6

7 MS. VICENTE: Hello, this is Terese
8 Vicente. Can you hear me now?

9

10 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Terese.

11

12 MS. VICENTE: Okay. Gee, I don't know
13 what was going on with my computer. Sorry I can't be
14 there in person this morning. Madam Chair, is now an
15 okay time for the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish
16 Commission public comment on the Subsistence Management
17 Program Review?

18

19 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes.

20

21 MS. VICENTE: Okay. Quyana. Good morning
22 everyone. For the record, this is Terese Vicente, with
23 the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. And I
24 just wanted to briefly share some notes from the public
25 comment we've just submitted this morning to the Federal
26 Register online for the scoping review of the Federal
27 Subsistence Management Program. And in brief, our
28 comments say that we don't believe there's a need to
29 review this program. We really object to the proposal
30 to expand the Federal Alaska Subsistence Program to,
31 quote "meet the needs of Alaska residents" other than
32 the rural residents, as outlined in Title VIII of ANILCA,
33 the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. And
34 we actually found it quite disingenuous that the notice
35 did not fully disclose that the review was being
36 conducted after a petition from the Safari Club
37 International, which is a nationwide and an
38 international sport hunting group. I was glad to see
39 that your Council Coordinator had printed some copies
40 of that petition from last May, from the Safari Club
41 International. They're in the back of the room. Because
42 this scoping review process really stems from the
43 interests of that group, and not from the interests of
44 rural Alaskans who depend upon subsistence fishing and
45 hunting for their ways of life. After the Safari Club
46 submitted that petition to the Secretary, there were a
47 number of responses from tribal organizations across the
48 state, all in opposition to changes to the Federal
49 Subsistence Management Program in ways that are not
50 outlined under the original intent in ANILCA Title VIII.

1 So, we joined up with the Association of Village Council
2 Presidents and submitted a response letter. The Alaska
3 Federation of Natives, AFN, also submitted a response
4 letter to this petition in opposition to it, as did
5 Ahtna Incorporated. And our comment letter that we've
6 submitted to the Federal Register, attached all three
7 of those comments as well as the original petition,
8 because they weren't included in the documents in this
9 scoping review process, and we feel that they need to
10 be as part of the public record. And I just, you know,
11 all -- I can send this comment over to Brooke so she can
12 share it with you all. I'm sorry, it may be a little
13 late for your deliberations today, but it has some useful
14 information if you individually or your tribe or
15 community might want to respond by the February 13th
16 deadline for this comment period. But some of the things
17 that we expressed alongside AVCP in our June 2025 letter,
18 in opposition to the Safari Club's petition, which led
19 to this review process or the scoping period for this
20 review process, a lot of it is about the history of how
21 and why ANILCA and the Federal Subsistence Management
22 Program came to be. As you all might know, ANILCA came
23 about because the State of Alaska, when it became a
24 state, did not step up and create protections for rural
25 Alaskans to have priority access to subsistence hunting
26 and fishing in their local waters. This is, you know,
27 those rights were abolished with the Alaska Native
28 Claims Settlement Act. And because the state did not
29 step in and create a rural subsistence program, the
30 federal government did. And that's what led to ANILCA
31 and Title VIII, in particular, bring about this Regional
32 Advisory Council and the RAC system. And there's been
33 some really good movement in the RAC process and the
34 Federal Subsistence Board membership to include public
35 members and tribal members who are really familiar with
36 the subsistence way of life in Alaska and how unique it
37 is to our state.

38
39 So, we think that public participation
40 is really important. And it carries on the intent of
41 ANILCA and the Federal Subsistence Management Program.
42 Additionally, we believe that it's good, and in fact,
43 it's backed in law, that the Secretaries have the
44 discretion, the ability to expand the Federal
45 Subsistence Board as needed to administer rural
46 subsistence, harvest, and use of wildlife on public
47 lands in Alaska. We think that the current criteria for
48 selecting Regional Advisory Council members should not
49 be revised. And, maybe most importantly, we do not see,
50 legally, that ANILCA allows for deference of rural

1 subsistence management on federal lands and waters to
2 the State of Alaska. That's really important.

3
4 We also believe that the way ANILCA is
5 written, it gives the Secretaries of Interior and
6 Agriculture the authority to adopt special emergency
7 actions. In the original petition, there was a lot about
8 special emergency hunts that happened during Covid that
9 allowed rural subsistence communities to harvest food
10 out of season when the, you know, so many shipments were
11 being shut down by the pandemic. We believe things like
12 that are within the purview of ANILCA and the Federal
13 Subsistence Board and the Secretary, and those really
14 help our rural communities in Alaska to meet our unique
15 needs. So, again, I can send our comment letter to
16 Brooke, and she can distribute it to you all. If that
17 sounds all right with Brooke, I suppose. And this should
18 be posted to the Federal Register, our public comment,
19 shortly so, you all can view it there as well but just
20 wanted to make those comments on behalf of the Kuskokwim
21 River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. Quyana.

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you so much, Terese.
24 This is Brooke. Jackie stepped out for a moment. Yes,
25 you can email those to me and, or that letter to me, and
26 I'll make sure to forward that on to our Council members.
27 Thank you so much for sharing the Fish Commission's
28 comments. Does anyone have questions for Terese before
29 we move on to the next public comment?

30
31 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Terese, it's Alissa.
32 Alissa Rogers. Are you guys going to be using Gene
33 Peltola's statement that he gave to the Senate when, in,
34 I believe it was, 1992 when he first started, in 1998.
35 It was given on September 19th, 2023, for the testimony
36 of Gean Peltola in regards to our ANILCA protections.
37 Are you guys planning on being -- on using those facts
38 and findings to strengthen your comments? Thank you.

39
40 MS. VICENTE: Through the Chair, quyana
41 Alissa, for the comment. We've already finalized our
42 written comment, so I don't believe that Mr. Peltola's
43 comments will be included in there, but there is an open
44 house coming up on February 3rd, in Anchorage and on
45 Teams, so we could include those in there. Or maybe if
46 they would help, you could submit them to the Federal
47 Register, or maybe this RAC could, as well. Thanks for
48 bringing that to my attention.

49
50

1 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Terese. Madam
2 Chair.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
5 Terese. And next will be Chris Tulik.

6
7 MR. TULIK: Hi. Thank you, Madam Chair,
8 members of the Council. My name is Christopher Tulik. I
9 was born here in Bethel. I grew up out on Nelson Island.
10 And let it be on record that I'm speaking on my behalf,
11 and I am not representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
12 Service and anything that has a comment or a say, will
13 not represent this agency. So, I'm speaking for myself
14 as a subsistence user, so. First of all, you know, I
15 became aware that a lot of people throughout the region
16 have been so mixed up between the agencies, the U.S.
17 Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of
18 Fish and Game. So, you know, today, people are still so
19 mixed up, if the regulations pertain to the state or the
20 federal government. There is no consistency between
21 that. Just recently, we had a person that was trying to
22 go to the ADF&G office, when that person should have
23 been to the Refuge office. And not only that, the
24 distinction between the agencies like, you know, the
25 Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife Service in Yup'ik.
26 Now, people think U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in
27 Yup'ik is called (In Native). No, it is not. U.S. Fish
28 and Wildlife Service in Yup'ik is called (In Native).
29 And then the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Yup'ik
30 is called (In Native). So -- and with that -- in addition
31 to that, people are mixed up with the regulations and
32 there's a lot of inconsistencies between, what the feds
33 and states regulations say. But I would say that, you
34 know, the Secretaries are focused on several topics but
35 I will say that Title VIII of ANILCA really does meet
36 the subsistence needs in times of conservation needs,
37 like the Kusko River, Kusko salmon. But there are other
38 parts, there -- in other parts of the state it may not
39 be working, but they're trying. But we're lucky here,
40 along the Kuskokwim River, that it is meeting our rural
41 preference needs that, I think that's the part that the
42 Title VIII is meeting its obligation. So, I just want
43 to make a few comments about what I had in mind. Quyana,
44 Madam Chair, members of the Council. Quyana.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana (In
47 Native) Chris Tulik. Next, we have Henry Parks.

48
49 MR. PARKS: Quyana, Madam Chair. For the
50 record, Henry. I -- on my report yesterday, I believe

1 you were here, and I was talking about the portion of
2 Unit 18 remainder, of Unit 18 is on federal lands from
3 (In Native), the mouth of (In Native), all the way up
4 to the lake. Now, people get mixed up. Now, Johnson --
5 they call this, from downstream from Napakiak, they call
6 it Johnson River. That's not Johnson River. In Yup'ik
7 it's (In Native). I don't know what the English name is,
8 but it's (In Native). And then from my village, that's
9 Johnson River, so-called Johnson River and in that area,
10 on our last fall and before that, our hunters from our
11 area were complaining about the four-wheelers that are
12 being used as transportations to hunt moose. In that
13 area, portion of the remainder of the Unit 18. So, it
14 was a big issue. And people, hunters were complaining
15 on that area and they posted on the Facebook, which is
16 not, you know, not really good for us, because this has
17 to be enforced in some way, somehow if we -- how would
18 I say it? If it is opened only for federally recognized
19 subsistence members, it would, you know, be -- it could
20 -- I don't know how to say it, but it, maybe it will get
21 better for the -- those Yup'ik tribal members who are
22 hunting in that area, so.

23

24 And the next comment that I want to
25 bring up is, over the last three years now maybe, we
26 have brought up that compensation to our Council
27 members. That hasn't been solved yet because we work as
28 volunteers and we work really hard to support our federal
29 subsistence hunters in our communities. And we do
30 represent our communities by units in my area, because
31 I do report all the information that I gather from this
32 meeting. So, hopefully down the road, if it's God's will,
33 I hope they do start doing some compensation to the
34 Council members because we -- like I said, we volunteer
35 and we leave our loved ones back home and, you know, we
36 do a lot of work here. Quyana.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Henry.
39 Is there anyone here who would like to provide a comment?

40

41 (No comment)

42

43 And then what about online?

44

45 (No comment)

46

47 Okay. Before we move into the Council
48 discussion and comments for this part of the agenda,
49 we're going to take a ten-minute break. Thank you. So
50 back at 10:25.

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(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Good morning again. This is Jackie Cleveland. We're back from recess. It's 10:30, and we're still on the action items portion of this agenda under d: Secretarial Review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program. And we've heard the overview, we've heard public comments, and now we're at the Council discussions and comments. But first, can I entertain a motion to adopt this proposal?

MS. ROGERS: So moved.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa Nadine Rogers moves to adopt the.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. PETER: (In Native).

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Oh, I've been asked to restate the motion, and Brooke wants to do it. Thanks.

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. So, this is Brooke. Just to clarify, for the record, this isn't a proposal you're supporting or anything like that will be -- you all will be submitting comments in response to this so, this will be a comment letter to the Secretaries of Interior based on the items they're going to ask us to talk about. So, there's a motion by Alissa to support submitting comments on this, and it sounds like we're ready for a second.

MR. ANDREW: Second.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: John Andrew seconds. And we're into discussion. Okay. So, we have someone lined up for discussion already. John Andrew.

MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Madam Chair. (In Native).

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: (In Native).

MR. ANDREW: (In Native).

1 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: (In Native).

2
3 MR. ANDREW: Madam Chair, earlier, in the
4 earlier discussion, Henry mentioned that all these
5 years, ever since the formation of the YK Delta
6 Subsistence RAC, they always tell us were volunteers so
7 when -- just give us a simple middle rate. I never
8 remember how much they used to give us way back in '92,
9 we used to give them, I don't know how much, but we used
10 to dig our pockets and give our Councilmen extra pocket
11 change so they can live for the week or a few days. In
12 those days, everything was cheap though. And all these
13 years, we've been on and off asking for stipends, which
14 never become reality. And for that reason, we had trouble
15 recruiting young Council members to this RAC and two
16 other RACs. But we're very, very fortunate, you can see
17 we have about four young people around ours and very
18 happy for them, because the few of us are, actually
19 about four of us are looking at the sunset right now,
20 but we're happy, we're working with bright young people.
21 Quyana (In Native). Thank you, Madam Chair.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana (In
24 Native), John. Walter.

25
26 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, can I say
27 something on this? You know, it's getting really
28 expensive to live out here anymore. A quarter oil at
29 home for my snowmachine is \$35. Okay, if I got a gallon
30 it'd be 140, somewhere around there. And, you know, gas
31 is expensive, too. And, you know, I make sacrifice coming
32 to this meeting because I could have been working in the
33 river. I make 300, a little over \$300 a day with all my
34 vehicles, sleds and chainsaws and everything. You know,
35 we make big sacrifice to come, you know. And I kind of
36 hated to come to the meeting because I needed the money.
37 But, you know, I wanted to make my presence here, and
38 it's a big issue to leave our town. And, you know,
39 especially, I'm getting to -- I retired, but I couldn't
40 live off retirement, it's too expensive. You know, you
41 can't do it. So, I have to work until I'm not able to
42 work. But, you know, that's just something for the
43 Council to know and I like working with these guys and
44 everybody, it's good, you know. But we make sacrifices
45 to come to these meetings. Some of us have jobs. It
46 don't pay, but, you know, it'll pay in the long run to
47 help the people, so. Thank you.

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49 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
50 Walter. So.....

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MR. PETER: Madame Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah, Phillip.

MR. PETER: No days everything increase. Food, gas, like Walter said, my snowmachine motor oil, it cost right now, is -- high grade motor oil for stroke snowmachine, a quart of oil, in my hometown is \$40, high grade motor oil. And the gas is 8.49, and the electricity is 72 cents a gallon -- 72 cents a kilowatt hour. Every month, right. And water and sewers, \$118 a month, in my back home. And we do our best to pay for our needs. And, right now, I'm paying over \$500, after the PCP (indiscernible). \$522, paying my electricity for one month. \$522. It's my -- with me and my wife, make a choice, we are retired. We split 250/250. And then pay for our electricity. I only pay for the water and sewer. And the food we get from here. (Indiscernible), little bit of a, little bit cheaper groceries. I don't receive any food stamps or long lived, the SSI check. Only my retirement. So, we split. Me and my wife are both retired. We split it. Working together to pay for everything. And yeah, we need to have a stipend. John mentioned about stipend. I don't mind coming for the meeting whenever Brooke called me. Good thing I hunt for subsistence using my snow machine in the wintertime using my boat and motor in summertime. That's why I always hunt and get woods for my woodstove, because the stove oil is higher than the gas. Trying to save expense for the whole month. We need to -- I hope the Secretary of Interior will accept what we're asking for. Quyana.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana (In Native). Brooke.

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to remind this Council that you've previously sent two letters through the Federal Subsistence Board that you asked to be elevated. Would you like to attach those previous letters to your comments as part of this? Okay. I'm seeing heads nodding yes. So, I'll make a note here to also attach those. And one of those letters was from the All-Council meeting so, it will show that all the other Councils also supported your proposed action here. And then in terms of the other comments that, and things we need to talk about for this, there were seven different topics. I'm just going to help run through each of them. That way we don't miss any, in case you guys want to comment on

00021

1 them. So, the first one that the Secretaries were asking
2 for comments on was about the move of the Office of
3 Subsistence Management two years ago. No, last year.
4 What year is this? I'm in 2024? Yeah? Yeah, two years
5 now. OSM was moved from Fish and Wildlife Service
6 underneath the Office of the Secretaries of Interior.
7 And that was sort of the result of a previous public
8 scoping where it was asked to help elevate the Federal
9 Subsistence Program within DOI. So, if you guys have any
10 comments, if you think that was a good move and it should
11 stay there. Or if you have, you know, concerns about it,
12 this would be the time to make those comments. Thank
13 you.

14
15 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

18
19 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Alissa Rogers, for
20 the record. Brooke, do we have an update on what our
21 current status is on this move?

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Really, there's not much
24 of an update. The update is that the move did happen.
25 It happened in summer of 2024. It was mostly an
26 administrative move, so it didn't change anything about
27 the way OSM operates. It was kind of, like, a lift and
28 a shift into a new location in the government. You know,
29 of course, with anything like that, there was a lot of
30 administrative things that had to happen. But we tried
31 to minimize the impact to, you know, our Council members
32 or the public that we serve. It hasn't been a really
33 long time since it happened, but just hearing from our
34 leadership, they do have a more direct line of
35 communication with the Office of the Secretary, whereas
36 before they would have to go through the Regional
37 Director of U.S. Fish and Wildlife so, I don't know if
38 that's helpful, but thank you.

39
40 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Brooke. Madam
41 Chair.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

44
45 MS. ROGERS: I guess the question is,
46 being under Department of Interior and Department of
47 Agriculture, in regards to ANILCA, are our protection
48 rights still in place? And I guess, because of what
49 we're discussing right now, I want to know if, what the
50 pros and cons are in regards to what we're discussing

1 right now. Do we have anyone to comment on that?

2

3 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Sara, I see you
4 nodding your head.

5

6 MS. TAYLOR: Madam Chair, this is Sara
7 Taylor with the Office of the Secretary. I think -- what
8 I've -- I've seen a lot of advantages, it was a hard
9 process to go through, but I've seen a lot of advantages,
10 even so far. One of which is really that direct line to
11 the Secretary. That's a big step. Having the Office in
12 one of the Board members so, like the Federal -- Fish
13 and Wildlife Service Director is on the Federal
14 Subsistence Board. And so, it was unique for her to
15 have, kind of control, more or less, over the -- of the
16 office. And it's where it was located, how it operated
17 and a lot of various -- how they communicated with the
18 Secretary. All of that was controlled by Fish and
19 Wildlife Service policy, and it isn't anymore. And so,
20 that's one less thing for the Office of Subsistence
21 Management to have to navigate, in terms of being able
22 to talk to the Secretaries directly, and for all of you
23 to talk to the Secretaries directly. Yeah.

24

25 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Brooke.

28

29 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah. So, just following
30 some of that information and discussion, do you guys
31 want to provide any comments on this, if you're, you
32 know, satisfied with the move or against it or just
33 neutral. You don't have to, but this is the opportunity
34 if you want to. And then we'll move on to the next topic.

35

36 MS. ROGERS: Madame Chair.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

39

40 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Alissa, for the
41 record. I guess I do want to make a comment that we get
42 a [sic] updated report to our Councils to find out if -
43 - what the concerns are in order to, for us to fix
44 concerns or clear communication lines or if there's any,
45 what the positives are, as well. But the main concerns
46 that I have are, if the process is working for us as a
47 Council. Thank you, Madam Chair.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Brooke has a
50 follow up.

1

2 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, this is just a follow
3 up, for what Alissa said. You know, you mentioned sort
4 of about lines of communication, and I think there are
5 still some small kinks that need to be worked out. And
6 you weren't here yesterday when we looked at the annual
7 report from last year. But there have been instances
8 where the Council requests to elevate issues and that
9 that hasn't happened. And so, I know there's been concern
10 expressed by you all about that. So, based on what you
11 said, perhaps you would consider tying that into this
12 topic.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
15 Brooke and Alissa. I guess it's to me, it's like, it's
16 so new that, I think for us on the ground, I guess we
17 haven't gone through it long enough to know exactly how
18 it's changed us on the ground, unless we get updates and
19 things like that and read about how it's going for you
20 guys. And yeah, of all the bullet points, this one was
21 one that I, yeah, had a hard time figuring out if we
22 felt a change here, to be honest. And I could be wrong.
23 Of course, there's so much happening that, you know, I
24 don't know about the rest of you, but I am happy that -
25 - to hear that that, you know, about the direct line of
26 communication is working better. Yeah, there's going to
27 be kinks, it's new. But overall, I'm satisfied with the
28 move. Thank you.

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
31 Thanks, everyone, for your discussion on that topic. The
32 next topic is about the RAC membership. So, your all's,
33 your membership and the criteria that we use for Council
34 members. There's five different qualifications that
35 folks are scored on when they apply to the Councils.
36 That's knowledge of fish and wildlife; of subsistence
37 uses; customs and traditions; knowledge about the
38 region's sport, commercial and other uses; and then
39 leadership experience and communication skills. And each
40 Council member is also required to have their permanent
41 residence in the region. So, for example, if you moved
42 to Anchorage permanently, you wouldn't qualify to serve
43 on the Council anymore. And each RAC has 70% of the
44 seats reserved for subsistence user representatives and
45 then 30% for commercial sport. We don't currently have
46 any commercial sport representatives on this Council,
47 simply because we haven't had any applications to fill
48 that role. So, I know you guys apply -- or reapply every
49 three years so, if there's anything that you think needs
50 to be updated or improved about that process, this would

1 be an opportunity to provide any comments. And we will
2 definitely include the compensation comment under this.
3 Thanks.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Brooke.
6 I was going to add, maybe if we did put that it's
7 voluntary, maybe that would elevate it more, just so
8 it's not on print and, if that makes sense. That it's a
9 volunteer position. Unless, you know, we get our request
10 gets honored, then, of course, we wouldn't have to say
11 that. Thanks.

12
13 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, it's Walter, I
14 got a question. For qualifications to be on this Board,
15 you know, especially Mr. Peters [sic], even though he
16 don't speak much English. You know, part of his
17 qualifications that is not listed is his an expert on
18 everything. Conservation, you know, when to get the
19 fish. I mean, those are not in his -- when he fill out
20 for this job, you know, it's not considered. But these
21 guys are all experts, you know, including me. Why isn't
22 it in our, you know, they say just a subsistence user.
23 That's a misuse of your name, period. I mean, we live
24 all our lives on the river in this land. You know, why
25 couldn't we be called experts just because we don't have
26 a degree or anything? You know, we have a degree in land
27 and in fish and hunting. These guys are the most -- I
28 learned more with these four guys than, you know, what
29 I thought I knew. And I've been taught ever since I was
30 small by my elders, you know, they know a lot. And I was
31 just talking with Tom and saying, these guys are
32 conservationists. They -- the only reason we have
33 abundant animals and fish, because they conserve it.
34 They were -- before we were ruled and by the state and
35 feds. You know, that's not in consideration. Well, you
36 know, that's a letdown to me, to -- they're experts, you
37 know, and that should be part of their, you know, you're
38 saying to fill out for this volunteer being on the Board.
39 These guys are professionals. They're experts. They're
40 scientists. They're everything. Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you for
43 that, Walter. Brooke.

44
45 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you so much for
46 saying that, Walter. I think you're absolutely correct
47 that everyone on this Council has a lot of expertise and
48 the Federal Subsistence Management Program could not
49 exist the way it does without you guys, you guys are the
50 backbone of this program, and we never want you to feel

1 taken advantage of. And I think that is excellent
2 justification that you just shared for submitting this
3 request for additional compensation. So, quyana.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Brooke.
6 Yeah, somewhere on here, after hearing Walter, maybe --
7 I know a RAC is a little more unique because it's mostly
8 all subsistence. But if you look at other RACs around
9 the state, they're a lot more mixed. Yeah so, I know for
10 our -- I mean, should it say local knowledge, local or
11 local indigenous knowledge. I would think, like, at
12 least, you know, local knowledge as adding the word
13 local. I would say experts, as well. Local knowledge
14 experts. Sorry, I'm still thinking. I had another note
15 here. Anyone else have any other thoughts on the criteria
16 here?

17

18 (No response)

19

20 Brooke.

21

22 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. Thank you, guys,
23 for those comments. Before we move on, I do -- I know,
24 I've heard some frustrations expressed about how long
25 it can take for you guys to get your appointments. Did
26 you want to say anything about that or about, you know,
27 how you reapply every three years? Is there any way that
28 process could be improved, do you think?

29

30 MS. ROGERS: Madame Chair.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

33

34 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair,
35 through the Chair. In regards to that comment. I believe
36 so, Brooke. Maybe we could have a tier system that, if
37 you have a person that's been on the Board for 1 to 3
38 years, they apply for their three years, but if it's
39 like 3 to 6 years, they apply for the six year and
40 continue with their longevity that way. Because as we
41 have, people have been here a lot, very, very long. I
42 don't feel it's fair that they have to keep reapplying
43 every three years. If we can, maybe, figure out some
44 type of tier system to help keep our knowledgeable people
45 on our Board, I believe that will be very uniquely
46 created for the system. Thank you.

47

48 MS. MCDAVID: Just a follow up, through
49 the Chair. I just want to make, clarify, Alissa's -- so,
50 it sounds like you're kind of saying, you know, maybe

1 someone that's been on the Council longer should get,
2 like, extra points when they're scoring applicants that
3 reflect their experience having already served. Okay,
4 thank you for that.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you to you
7 both. I just remembered my brain fog from earlier. It
8 was -- so, our RAC is lucky we have elders, and I
9 couldn't even imagine this RAC without the elders. But
10 there come a time where maybe, maybe not in our group,
11 but in others, where there's not enough elders in the
12 group. And, in that case, would it be worth adding elder
13 advisors? Thanks.

14
15 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

18
19 MS. ROGERS: I'll second your comment.

20
21 MS. MCDAVID: This is Brooke, I've noted
22 that down. Thank you.

23
24 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Walter.

27
28 MR. MORGAN: I think Intertribal got two,
29 right? Yeah. They have two elder advisors. So, yeah,
30 thank you. Just so, that other groups are using it.
31 Thank you.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah. And to note
34 that, maybe we could, you know, if we ever got to that
35 point, that we would have two elder advisors. Thanks.

36
37 MS. MCDAVID: This is Brooke again. And
38 so, would you see that as kind of -- we -- you all had
39 requested to have a youth advisor, and that's still in
40 the works, we're still waiting to get that person
41 appointed. So, the elder advisors, it sounds like, would
42 be in a similar position. They'd be part of the
43 discussion. They wouldn't necessarily be like a full
44 appointed member, but they would participate. Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: Are you guys ready to move
49 on to the next one? Okay, the next topic is the Federal
50 Subsistence Board membership. As you heard Sara describe

1 earlier, the original Board was mostly made up of the
2 public agency heads for all the different land managing
3 agencies in Alaska. And then later, there were two public
4 members added. And then recently, just two years ago,
5 there were three tribally nominated public members
6 added. And that includes Mr. Ray Oney, from your region.
7 And so, I think the question is, are you guys -- do you
8 think it's important to have those public members on the
9 Board that are from rural Alaska or have subsistence
10 experience in addition to the agency staff? Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Absolutely. This
13 is Jackie.

14
15 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. And I don't want
16 to put words in your mouth so, could you maybe briefly
17 describe why you think that's so important? Thank you.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Well, it took a
20 long time to, I mean, it was a long process to finally
21 get these three people on. So, you know, for many, it's
22 probably a lifelong dream for that to happen in our
23 lifetime, especially. And it finally happened. And even
24 better, there's 3 of them and not, you know, not just 1
25 or 2. It's very important for us, especially, like, we're
26 on the ground, we're the users of subsistence, you know,
27 we're living that subsistence life on the ground. Being
28 in the, you know, also frontline of climate change at
29 the same time. And it's those people on the ground who
30 really know how to represent us and that we choose
31 ourselves from tribes and -- yeah so, without them, none
32 of these other people have, you know, that experience
33 that we do. Thanks.

34
35 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

38
39 MS. ROGERS: I would like to also add
40 that our seats that we have on there, give perspective
41 to all the other Board members who don't have the
42 knowledge that we have. They have paper knowledge, but
43 it also gives them local knowledge and brings
44 equalization to give a broader perspective when making
45 decisions on our behalf. Thank you, Madam Chair.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you. And
48 yeah, I agree. It does, you know, elevate local
49 indigenous knowledge to be as relevant as the rest of
50 these professionals and experts on the Board. So -- and

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1 then for, you know, for our fellow tribal and Native
2 people to see that, it's very inspiring.

3

4 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, I got a
5 question. Walter.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Walter. Then,
8 Tiffany.

9

10 MR. MORGAN: I see it says, tribal
11 nominated. Who nominates them? How do they get the seats?
12 That's what I'm wondering. Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay. Thanks,
15 Walter.

16

17 MR. MORGAN: Not that I'm against it, I'm
18 just wondering, you know, how the process works. Thank
19 you.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah. And, Sara,
22 I see you nodding.

23

24 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you, Madam Chair. This
25 is Sara Taylor with the Office of the Secretary. So, I
26 can tell you how these first three were appointed. The
27 next time we go through an appointment process, it may
28 be different, but this time we had sent out a Dear Tribal
29 Leader letter, advising people that the that the process
30 was open. We sent it as broadly as we could, much more
31 broadly than we usually send out those letters. And we
32 received applications for a couple of months. We didn't
33 give a deadline for the applications. We just said,
34 please send us your nominations. And then the Secretary,
35 when we received -- we received about 4 or 5 nominations
36 -- actually, we were, we received 9 nominations when we
37 sent the package to the Secretary and she selected the
38 three that were appointed. So, that's how we did it. And
39 we required -- and the reason we didn't get more
40 nominations is because we couldn't get confirmation that
41 this person had been nominated by the tribe. That was
42 the one thing that held back a couple of people from
43 advancing was, we couldn't confirm with the tribe that
44 they were being nominated by the tribe. So, it really
45 helped to have the tribe send in the letter. Like, that
46 was the most useful thing for us, yeah. When the tribe
47 sent in the letter and said, we want this person, that
48 was all we needed to know. We didn't need to know
49 anything else. Yeah.

50

1 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

4

5 MS. ROGERS: I guess we could add in
6 there that our tribal seats also can be nominated by our
7 RACs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
10 Alissa. It's being noted.

11

12 MS. AGAYAR: I can comment now?

13

14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Tiffany.

15

16 MS. AGAYAR: Thank you. In the past five
17 years, it's been really good to see the shift in the
18 Board members under the Federal Subsistence Board,
19 especially since the tribal members that are on it now
20 do have the unwritten oral laws in their back, in their
21 lifestyle. And it's just there and they get to -- they've
22 experienced firsthand the lifestyle that we live day to
23 day out there, and the expenses and the dangers of every
24 living situation that we all encounter throughout the
25 year, throughout the hunting seasons. And it's nice to
26 see that our own people are helping make choices for our
27 very own people firsthand, too, instead of sitting back
28 and watching stuff go by. Thank you.

29

30 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, can I say
31 something? This is Walter. The reason I asked, and, you
32 know, that -- we'll have their support. I mean, we and
33 all other organizations too, also, you know, will be --
34 it'll, we'll have all their backing behind them. I mean,
35 they can go to the meeting and say, well, we support
36 them. And, you know, that's the reason I asked that
37 question. Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
40 Walter. And thank you, Tiffany. Brooke.

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Any
43 other comments about the Federal Subsistence Board
44 before we move on?

45

46 (No response)

47

48 Okay. I'm not seeing any. All right. The
49 next topic is about the regulations involving special
50 actions. And I know Phillip, especially, talked about

1 special actions earlier in the meeting, before we got
2 to this and maybe a little bit about why he thinks
3 they're important. But if you guys want to reiterate any
4 of those comments and just as a reminder, a special
5 action is a way for the Board to address things that
6 come up unexpected outside of the regular proposal
7 cycle, either for fish or for wildlife. So, it's a way
8 for them to be responsive as things come up.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

13

14 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Alissa, for the
15 record. I like our system that we have right now. We've
16 definitely used it with fishing, moose, caribou, muskox.
17 And I don't feel that our system needs adjusting at this
18 time. It's currently working for us unless U.S. Fish and
19 Wildlife Service has a different perspective on it. But
20 we've definitely used these actions to take immediate
21 action on resources that are diminishing or are in danger
22 of conservation issues, or in danger of overharvesting
23 and need that extra protection, or for us to be able to
24 harvest what we need. One successful program that we had
25 through ONC, through this program, is that we were able
26 to do community harvest programs, and Bethel being the
27 biggest village, it was very difficult, but it was very
28 successful in regards to getting people what they
29 needed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
32 Alissa. I will also add that the special action portion
33 is a positive for us in rural. One, I guess perfect
34 example is the co-management between Kuskokwim River
35 Intertribal Fish Commission and the feds. And I think
36 it's even -- if I can say, the more successful co-
37 management in the State of Alaska and -- but one thing,
38 I do think that, you know, all lands where indigenous
39 people reside should be in co-management and that should
40 just be regular. Like, indigenous local knowledge should
41 always be a part of management. And, hopefully, in the
42 future, we won't even have to say co-management, that,
43 you know, it just, management will be management and
44 always assumed indigenous knowledge as part of
45 management. So, hopefully that happens in my lifetime,
46 in our lifetime.

47

48 But the other thing I wanted to point
49 out is, you know, like, even in the village level, it
50 works well. I mean, in Quinhagak, we were able to close

1 our king run to sport fishing and commercial through a
2 special action and through the state as well, which
3 worked in our favor and our, you know, our kings came
4 back in bigger numbers, since then. Still not to the
5 numbers they used to be. And I guess -- but one thing
6 that I've always wished is the -- under regs and the
7 timing of the proposal process. You know, how like the
8 state is every three years and I think fed's every two
9 years. And it's just like, again, that's another
10 misalignment that confuses the user on the ground and
11 hunters and fishers and that's a big one that I wish was
12 always aligned somehow so that, you know, communities -
13 - you know, every year we wonder, oh, what cycle are we
14 in for the feds? And what about the state? And it's, it
15 just -- should just be aligned. Thank you.

16
17 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, I got a
18 question and also, something I would like to say on that
19 special action request. Is, all the entities like that,
20 all the fish and game boards we're in. If we had one
21 special action request to close the Area M, would that
22 work? Man, that'd be great. I mean, man, I'd be in heaven
23 if that would work. I mean, you know. And also with the
24 pollock fisherman, I mean, that's something to look down
25 the line, I mean, is it possible? Thank you.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
28 Walter. And Brooke wants to respond first.

29
30 MR. PETER: Madam Chairman, this is
31 Philip. (In Native). I'm good. I don't want to lose my
32 language. That's why I always speak in my language. (In
33 Native). Open up in a special election.

34
35 INTERPRETER: Regarding the special
36 elections. When we met as a unit for -- during the
37 meeting, we looked at the regulations applied towards
38 the salmon, and towards the wildlife and the birds and
39 the moose. We debated on these issues for quite a while,
40 and we came to an understanding and once that
41 understanding came to fruition, we made a motion, one
42 of our members made a motion. And when we voted for it
43 on the special election, all of us was in the positive
44 for it. And so, these -- during that time we're looking
45 at the decrease of the opportunities of fishing. And we
46 were imploring that we would extend the fishing
47 opportunities. And close the fishing periods when the
48 salmon runs get low. And we started understanding that
49 -- we understand that method and we put it, and we use
50 that method, and it's good for our conservation and use

1 efforts. In the past times, we were never consulted with
2 any of these measurements -- measures taken on our
3 subsistence way of life. And so, we were never consulted
4 with these, and they would tell us what the regulations
5 were, that they would tell us the -- way back in the
6 day, the ancestors used to tell us that you'd come to
7 this point where we would have to start planning on how
8 the effects of our way of life is going to be touched
9 by the subsistence. And so, this is real life for us.

10
11 Looking back, they used to like the
12 conservation efforts on -- if there's a low run, then
13 we would have curtailed the opportunities to get those.
14 And we were told, with the low numbers, that the
15 population or the number of fish would not rebound
16 automatically, that they would slowly increase. And I
17 have no idea how they knew these things, but they used
18 to tell us of these conservation methods that we would
19 need to employ. And I know I used to hear these
20 beforehand, and I do see what they were talking about
21 now, and those were good methods that they employed. It
22 is true that my forefathers really spoke about these
23 things. They were always right on track. And it was --
24 and they understood all of these issues coming up. And
25 it is not easy to partake in the subsistence way of
26 life, it's a pretty hard life.

27
28 Sometimes, when we are given catches,
29 sometimes we don't catch anything, and so, sometimes we
30 go home empty-handed from -- I know, sorry, my cousin,
31 when him and I were going hunting, and I told my cousin
32 that I was really it, in my mind. I was kind of pissed
33 that we didn't catch anything. And when I told my cousin
34 that I was not happy with that, my cousin looked at me
35 and said that he was thankful that we did not catch
36 anything. We did not just waste our time and effort
37 going out hunting for subsistence. We didn't come out
38 here for nothing. So, I am thankful that we went out
39 hunting out into the tundra because the tundra, the
40 wilderness is a medicine for us. He told me this, and
41 when I heard that, I believed him. And after that time,
42 I always remember what he told me. And I understand what
43 he was referring to at that time. I have never, ever
44 said that I'm pissed for not catching anything because
45 the wilderness is medicine for us, going out, trying to
46 get subsistence is not a wasted effort, even if we don't
47 get anything.

48
49 We are told, each and every one of us,
50 we are told about these things, whether we know it or

1 not, from our parents when they were all alive, they
2 taught us these things. We do not forget these things
3 that -- and make sure that you share your knowledge and
4 information that you have learned. Because we do not go
5 for nothing, we don't -- it's not wasted effort, wherever
6 we go, whether we go out hunting or fishing, even if we
7 don't catch anything, it's not a wasted effort. And do
8 not forget that it isn't a wasted effort at all. When
9 he said that, I realized that he was praising the Lord's
10 name, and at that time I did not. I was pissed at the
11 whole effort and our failure to catch. But he understood
12 the greater -- and this is a good thing. The special
13 actions happen for our needs here. And I am glad that
14 they ask us about what we think about these special
15 actions coming up. And so, we should be aware of that
16 these things help us and that we should work together
17 instead of being at odds with -- against one another
18 because once we work together and come to an
19 understanding, we'll be blessed. Thank you.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana. Henry --
22 Philip, (In Native). Quyana. Henry.

23
24 MR. PARKS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
25 Henry, for the record. Since we have a translator here,
26 I talk in Yup'ik. My (In Native) is a good interpreter.

27
28 INTERPRETER: Looking at this
29 regulation, special actions, and I was thinking about,
30 I do like this. Let's think about this, all of us. And
31 right now, we are living on the land, and we -- our
32 subsistence is partaking from the land that are grown
33 upon the land and the way of life that we hunt is good
34 for us because we do catch. But, regarding subsistence
35 from the Kuskokwim River, it's important, especially for
36 the salmon, because the dried salmon is a resource that
37 is important for us. And I'm going to say something
38 here, if I'm wrong, you guys can fix me here. But this
39 special action states that 60 days or less, that's no
40 public hearing is required. And so, I know that we go
41 out fishing in the summertime and we catch king salmon
42 and others. And when that is over and we do not catch
43 any salmon, when they are going to have a special action
44 regarding that, who gives us the opportunity to go out
45 to the, -- to go fishing? Which entity is the one that
46 decides that they're going to do, enact the special
47 action? And so, who gives us that opportunity? So, who
48 are, who is the agent, and how many people decide that
49 they're going to have a special action here? And that's
50 my question. Thanks.

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CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, (In Native), Henry. Brooke has an answer for Henry's question. Thanks.

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you for those questions, Henry. So, Henry was asking about who sort of makes the decisions about special actions and maybe it would be important to distinguish in this discussion between in-season management actions, like, what you're talking about on the Kuskokwim with the fishery versus ones that might go to the Board. So, we talked a little bit before about delegated authority. And so, for the Kuskokwim, Spencer with the Refuge has delegated authority for the federal fishery on the Kuskokwim. And you know that he works closely with the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to make those decisions about the openings and closings during the season. But this also applies -- if something came up that there wasn't delegated authority for, that the Federal Subsistence Board needed to address. This would allow anyone, it could be your tribe. It could be the Refuge. It could be a member of the public, could submit a request to the Board, like, we need to do something now. It gives them an ability to address those things that come up that aren't part of the regular proposal cycle. I don't know if that answers your question or if any other staff wants to add anything to that, but, quyana.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Henry and Brooke. I have something, even though I'm not sure if it would relate to this bullet point, but at one point we looked into -- after seeing all the federalization and co-management here on the Kusko and as I said, you know, it was inspiring for many tribes to see that and us included in Quinhagak, but I remember we did look into what it would take to federalize our waters, which are under state jurisdiction, because our navigable river and then the bay is state. So, upon, like, working with Jim Simon at the time, he found in the regs, that in order to do that, a species has to crash 70%, if I'm correct. So, I mean, to me it's just, that part is set up for failure, it's set up to be reactionary rather than proactive. So, pretty much, you know, we had to go back and tell people that we have to wait until a species crashes. Pretty much when it's too late, is when we can do this. So, I've always just, personally, just thought that wasn't fair. And yeah, I'm representing myself saying that. Thanks.

1 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, can I say
2 something on this? Walter. You know, we have that gravel
3 to gravel issue, you know, to protect the salmon where
4 it's born and all the way out in the ocean and back. And
5 I think that's a good thing, you know. And I don't know
6 how far it'll go, but to me, it'll gravel to gravel is,
7 you know, when the salmon leaves and goes to the ocean
8 and come back. If that way can be really pushed, I think
9 it does have more power. But, you know, we push it in
10 Intertribal Fish Commission, so. I really like that
11 gravel to gravel. But I don't know how far it's being
12 pushed now because, you know, it did affect the Area M
13 also, and all the migratory route of the salmon. I really
14 like that gravel to gravel issue. Thank you.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
17 Walter. And then Brookee wanted to follow up.

18
19 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Thank
20 you, Walter. For your comment earlier about Area M, and
21 then what you just said now, about the importance of
22 gravel to gravel for salmon, my suggestion is that we
23 include that under the Other Topics that we'll get to
24 at the end that you want to elevate to the Secretaries.
25 Since that Area M fishery is outside of federal
26 jurisdiction, it's under state, I know that you know
27 that well, special actions couldn't apply,
28 unfortunately. So, even if all the RACs got together and
29 wanted to, you know, close that Area M fishery, there's
30 no process to do that since it's outside the
31 jurisdiction. So, my suggestion is we'll add that to our
32 other topics that you're going to comment on as part of
33 this. And we can talk about that more, too, when we get
34 to that. So, thank you. Are there any more comments
35 about special actions? Are you guys ready to move on to
36 the next topic?

37
38 (No response)

39
40 Okay. Seeing that we're ready. So, I
41 grouped both of these topics on the same slide because
42 there's some overlap. And you all have brought up,
43 throughout this meeting, some of the frustrations with
44 dual management and state versus feds and the confusion
45 that that causes for subsistence users on the ground.
46 So, this is kind of opportunity -- the two topics, the
47 role of the state in Federal Subsistence Management and
48 then, state and federal regulatory duplications and
49 inconsistencies. So, I'm sure there's a lot of thoughts
50 about these, but I'll open the floor for any comments.

1 Thanks.

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CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Brooke. Would anyone like to go first? And is this the only slide Brooke. Okay. So maybe we could start with the state. Number five: role of State of Alaska and ADF&G in Federal Subsistence Management. It, is that working out for us okay here in the region or not?

MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

MS. ROGERS: I think that's a very complicated question to answer. Because we have both state and federal regulations, both the State Board and the Federal Subsistence Board that -- that's a very complex and in-depth discussion that would need to be made on a different level than trying to come up with something right now. I understand we might have some ideas of it, but I also don't want to go too far into discussion of the flaws of the system. And I know we understand that it's hard between state and federal government agencies regulating and then having our (In Native) on the ground and people who live here, who call it home as well. It's more of an educational process that needs to be taken place. So, this would be a very hard one to try to comment and make concise [sic] decisions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, Alissa. Brooke is next.

MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Thank you for that comment, Alissa. Just want to follow up. So, perhaps you're suggesting, it sounded like, instead of something needing to change, perhaps there needs to be more outreach efforts and education to help people learn how to navigate the dual management system.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Brooke. That is correct. We do have subsistence science camp programs, and I believe that incorporating and teaching our youth how these systems work at a young age, will not only bring them into our Federal Subsistence Programs, in our state programs, but it also educate them on how to navigate to change laws and regulations in order to fit the needs that are for the people. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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1 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
2 Alissa and Brooke. Brooke.

3
4 MS. MCDAVID: Thanks, Jackie. I don't
5 have a follow up for that, but if you all have any more
6 comments about the role of the state in Federal
7 subsistence management.

8
9 MS. EVAN: Hi, Madam Chair, can I make a
10 comment?

11
12 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Norma. You
13 have the floor.

14
15 MS. EVAN: Last August, I was helping the
16 U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Fish and Game in our
17 area. They did not know we have about nine spawning
18 areas for king, summer and fall chum in our area in a
19 20 mile radius. So, I emailed them about -- I had
20 questions about regulations, about submitting the four-
21 inch net. And we weren't able to setnet in areas that
22 had spawning tributaries. I only know them in Yup'ik
23 names, and I did contact them and told them about
24 Marshall, the Yup'ik name is (In Native). It means
25 spawning salmon, and nearby we have a slough that always
26 have spawning salmon. One time, we walked along the sides
27 and we seen king salmon. Also, we have a lot of bear
28 activity up there, but I think working with U.S. Fish
29 and Wildlife and Fish and Game -- every ten years or so,
30 they get new workers so, you have to remind them about
31 our spawning areas that they don't think fish spawn at.
32 And thank you for -- that's my comment.

33
34 (Pause)

35
36 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
37 Norma. Does anyone else have anything to add to the role
38 of the State of Alaska or Fish and Game within the
39 Federal Subsistence Management System? So, I guess I
40 just wanted to add, the state is involved in some ways,
41 through working groups and other meetings that happen
42 around Bethel when it's around fish, I know that. And I
43 know they're involved in that way through the in-season
44 -- salmon season throughout the summer, I meant. But
45 they're -- I mean, just from my experience within the
46 Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, sometimes
47 they're not there. So, for a lot of our meetings, you
48 know, we invited them, but we never saw them there but
49 it also, you know, depends on management or who's there.
50 And I'm not trying to say who is better or worse, but I

1 mean, the state does help, like, on the village level,
2 right now, they do help us with data deciphering, with
3 our ASL sampling that we do at home. So, there is some
4 collaboration with them and areas where they're
5 grateful, as well. But I just, overall, wish they were
6 more involved within, especially, the co-management
7 efforts. Like, when you know, when in-season management
8 invites them. I wish they could go to those meetings and
9 maybe they do now, but when I was there, they weren't.
10 Anyone else?

11

12 MS. ROGERS: Really quick comment on your
13 comment, Madam Chair.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah, Alissa.

16

17 MS. ROGERS: Alissa, for the record. The
18 state agency wasn't able to attend, it was above their
19 pay grade that they weren't able to attend those meetings
20 so, I just want to make that clarification. Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: I could ask in
23 Yup'ik. (In Native).

24

25 MR. ANDREW: Hi, my name is John Andrew
26 from Kwethluk. All these years in state -- when state
27 become a reality in our region, many of us at that time,
28 we didn't know it became a state because the government,
29 the state government never consulted none of our tribes,
30 all the tribes, up and down the river, the Yukon side,
31 up north, Bristol Bay. Only the hub villages, up towns
32 and villages know that. And they start traveling in the
33 villages and that -- since has become a reality, they
34 will start living under the state laws. And here we are,
35 in my region, we are roughly (indiscernible) 80% federal
36 land. And now, this time, ever since that time, under
37 the state, under Title VIII, we are supposed to be
38 guaranteed or given a substantive priority to fish and
39 game, especially in times of need.

40

41 Then, under the state, when they have
42 an opening, using our Unit 18 important example. During
43 moose season, they open the whole unit Zone 1 area,
44 including up to the (indiscernible), including the rest
45 of the Unit 18. They open it statewide, even nationwide,
46 they do get outsiders hunters coming in, guide included,
47 our local guys. The Fish and Game always tell us, you
48 got -- you're competing with over 2,000 hunters just for
49 ten-day opening on our side. And less than 10% of the
50 people that registered to hunt, less than 10% of them

1 are successful. All the rest of it, they're probably
2 better than 18, between 18, over 1800 people get skunked
3 under their permits. And yet, when it became, first
4 became a reality, they said they won't tamper with our
5 subsistence rights, but they have, over the years, they
6 have made it pretty hard on us, especially on our Title
7 VIII hunting rights. You know, you always have say about
8 this Katie John case too, ever since the state become a
9 state, our own state, Alaska State Government has been
10 opposing it for years, they have multiple litigation
11 against the federal government trying to take that away.
12 But last month, I heard on the news that the judge, the
13 federal judges, were in favor of (indiscernible) they
14 asked the state not to bring that up again. Hopefully
15 so, but I don't believe it because I know the record.
16 All these years, since 1959. And their laws, I mean,
17 their regulations are never in line with our local ones,
18 too. That's where the conflicts come in. And prior to
19 statehood or prior to contact, our hunters and trappers
20 and fishers were used to going out to trap and fish and
21 hunt as much as they can, so they can live for the whole
22 winter, all the way to spring. And if they're not
23 successful in this -- in the early years, they said,
24 especially in the coastal area, when break up used to
25 come in in June, sometime in second week of June, some
26 villages is at the -- used to go hungry by February. And
27 it's pretty hard to accept. Nowadays, it's much easier,
28 but still, in some villages there is always shortage of
29 fish and game, especially with the very, very short
30 openings in summertime for allowing us to go after
31 salmon, which is our staple food for all the Native
32 villages in the Western Alaska. And it's always been a
33 big issue for us all these years. Even we keep bringing
34 up before Board of Fish and some of them before Board
35 of Game. In early years, starting around, probably
36 around '68, we used to go attend some of their meetings
37 over in Anchorage. Better than 90% of the time, they
38 don't -- they can listen to you, but they can't hear you
39 or they can't even respond to you. A lot of times they
40 say our testimonies were anecdotal or hearsay, to them.
41 We're not -- they said you're not a biologist or a
42 scientist. That really hurts as slap in the face. And
43 all these years, it's been like that even to this day.
44 Take a look at the Area M, we've been trying to put a
45 cap or some kind of cap or restrict their fishing for
46 49 years. They never did. They never have. It's gotten
47 to the point where it's -- it is very, very, I don't
48 know what -- how to put it. It's really depressing
49 because some of these guys have been going over there
50 and coming back up and empty handed, year after year.

1 And we'd like to see some kind of action. At least put
2 a cap or restrictions down in Falls Pass, even in the
3 trawl fisheries out in the Bering Sea. It's the failure
4 of our government to their promises, giving us our
5 subsistence rights, but they never give us totally free
6 now, especially to this date. Quyana, Madam Chair.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, John,
9 (In Native). Brooke wants to say something.

10
11 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, thank you guys. I
12 just wanted to circle back a little bit. Thank you for
13 those comments, John. One of the things that Safari Club
14 is suggesting is that the federal program should defer
15 to the State of Alaska, or that perhaps there should be
16 state representative on the Federal Subsistence Board.
17 So, I don't know if you have any feelings or about that
18 or comments that you might like to add in addition to
19 what you've said. Thank you.

20
21 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

24
25 MS. ROGERS: I say, no. I dislike that
26 language. We should not be deferring to the state agency,
27 since we are a federal agency. And ANILCA is there to
28 protect our subsistence rights. The federal subsistence
29 rights were given to, not rural, but bush Alaskan
30 villages. The rural definition is a misinterpreted
31 definition used where areas outside of cities that are
32 connected to a road system or countryside connected to
33 outside of cities. We are not rural Alaska. We are bush
34 Alaska, and they need to change that definition in order
35 for us to be protected. Because we don't have a road
36 system that connects us, we have Alaska Airlines. Thank
37 you, Madam Chair.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Alissa.
40 If no one else, I guess I have a couple things I could
41 say that might be more like crossover with feds, maybe.
42 But I guess I've always wished that the state had
43 something equivalent as tribal consultation, public
44 hearings, trust responsibility with tribes and villages.
45 Especially when regs are going to affect our subsistence
46 lifestyle. So, any changes that are going to be made
47 near any C&T for us, I believe there should be some,
48 yeah, equivalent to some kind of tribal consultation or
49 community consultation, public hearing. I mean, for
50 example, there was a elder from Eek who got cited for

1 fishing because he was just confused of all the regs,
2 but he got cited anyway. And, another thing I don't see
3 that fair is, within the Board of Game and Board of Fish
4 process, how they no longer allow call-in testimonies.
5 And, as we all know, that eliminates a lot of our
6 villages from even participating, and voicing their
7 concerns or testifying and overall. So, it felt like it
8 was a way to shut us up. Because, I mean, a lot of us
9 are from poor communities, and we can't just, on the fly
10 -- you know, it costs a lot just to go to Bethel from a
11 village, more than it is to go to Anchorage sometimes.
12 So, unless you know you're lucky and part of a Council,
13 or you get chosen by somebody, then you can speak over
14 there but for the majority of -- yeah, it just shuts out
15 a lot of our people, that process. And I guess, yeah, I
16 don't agree with deferring to Alaska. For the feds to
17 defer to Alaska state rules when it comes to subsistence.
18 Quyana.

19
20 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

23
24 MS. ROGERS: I'd like to piggyback off
25 you in regards to the violation of subsistence rights,
26 because it actually violates our equal access to clause
27 of the Alaska Constitution. Thank you, Madam Chair.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Brooke.

30
31 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, thank you for all
32 those great comments, guys. Before we move on to the
33 next slide, you know, we heard some comments about the
34 inconsistencies between regulations and how that
35 confuses people. Do you have any suggestions for how
36 that could be improved? You know, now, right now, there's
37 two different regulation books, there's, you know, I
38 heard people saying there needs to be more signs out on
39 the land to show when you're moving from one area, state
40 managed to federal managed. Do you have any other
41 comments about how to make it easier for you guys and
42 people out in communities? Thank you.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: I just thought of
45 something, Brooke. I mean, we're very visual people, and
46 as Yup'ik people, I would say. And, you know, I think
47 having a visual map that indicates federal, state and
48 even tribal allotments, corporation land, village
49 corporation lands, I've always wanted to see a map with
50 all of that on there. Not just state and feds, but where

1 in the villages, where we're also within allotments and
2 corp. lands. Even Moravian lands, in our case. So, maps,
3 big maps, to start. Thanks.

4

5 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, I got a
6 question on that.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Walter.

9

10 MR. MORGAN: You know, you go up to Aniak
11 River and it's all corporation land. What authority does
12 the state and feds have on corporation land? Do they
13 have any authority there? Because it's owned by the
14 corporation. You know, that's something we never really
15 battled with. And there's a lot of corporation land out
16 there. How do they manage in a corporation land or can
17 they? I mean, that's my question. Thank you.

18

19 MS. MCDAVID: Madam Chair.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah, Brooke.

22

23 MS. MCDAVID: Just to respond to Walter,
24 please jump in if I misspeak, other staff. So,
25 corporation lands fall under State Fish and Wildlife
26 management. The federal regulations don't apply. But the
27 access is controlled by the corporation. And so, people
28 aren't allowed to trespass on public lands. But if you
29 do have permission to hunt on corporation lands, then
30 you would follow the state hunting and fishing
31 regulations.

32

33 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

34

35 MR. MORGAN: Can I finish, please?
36 Walter. Yeah, if a plane lands -- say I'm in corporation
37 land and I'm hunting moose, okay. Plane lands. And this
38 is corporation land. They have to have a permit --
39 permission to land there and to step on that land and
40 go to you. I mean, that's the way I look at it. I don't
41 know what the law is, but you know, somebody might
42 correct me if I'm wrong. Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

45

46 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Madam Chair. Alissa
47 (In Native). You are 100% correct. It's the high-water
48 mark that they're allowed to access the lands, but they
49 can't pass the high-water mark without a permit or
50 accessible to the lands. But if you're talking about

1 fisheries, it's all under the state and the state will
2 manage the fisheries from that area to the corporation
3 land. Just for clarification. Thank you.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Alissa
6 and Walter. And if I can add on to the maps, you know,
7 it would be not just for the subsistence users, but also
8 for the public recreational users such as floaters,
9 sport fishers and hunters. You know, they should also
10 know what lands they're on, or what lands not to go on.
11 So, that map would help with that as well. But the other
12 one -- oh, Justin, did you want to add to that? And then
13 I'll go back to my other point.

14
15 MR. KOLLER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I
16 just wanted to respond to something that Council Member
17 Rogers said about fishing on Native Corporation
18 waterways, I would say. Our federal regulations for
19 fishing apply within and adjacent to the exterior
20 boundaries of federal land units. And so, the exterior
21 boundary of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife River or
22 excuse me, Refuge, is very large. And our federal
23 regulations apply on the waterways, regardless of
24 whether there is corporation land or on either side of
25 it. Or regardless of land ownership, I should say. So,
26 but for hunting, it's different. And so, that's right,
27 if it's not federal land, for hunting purposes, you'd
28 follow state regulations.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Adding to the
31 confusion.

32
33 MR. KOLLER: I'm not happy to do that,
34 but, okay. Thank you.

35
36 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, this is Walter,
37 again, I don't want to confuse everybody, but, you know,
38 I had an issue of Henry saying, you know, people are
39 using four-wheelers and they might be going on their
40 corporation land, you know. And also the hunters out
41 there, that land, they have a possibility of being in a
42 corporation land, also. You know, that's something to
43 look into and, you know, it should be reinforced by the
44 corporation. If they land on their land and out there,
45 they should be cited by the corporation. But who's going
46 to reinforce it? I mean, we don't have BPOs or sometimes
47 we hire land people in our Kuskokwim Corporation to go
48 out and marshall that. But, you know, that's something
49 to look into and, you know, something to bring up.
50 Because a lot of the places that we hunt are corporation

1 lands. Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
4 Walter. If I could add again of -- I had mentioned
5 earlier a little on how the regulatory cycles are not
6 parallel with between the state and the feds, and as you
7 heard, within these three days, there's so many
8 confusing layers and overlaps within the cycles, within
9 the regs. Yeah, so, I guess I would like just more
10 parallel systems between each other that are just easier
11 for the hunter/fisher to decipher and, for example, the
12 two, every two years, every three year. And then, what
13 Justin just said, with, you know, there's just so much
14 confusion. So, anything just to be more parallel with
15 each other, work together more, so there's no overlaps
16 and so much rules within rules and regs within regs to
17 memorize.

18

19 The other one I had brought up earlier
20 was the RDIs and that's more BLM, recordable disclaimer
21 of interests, and there are about five rivers that are
22 affected in our region and the state trying to take over
23 non-navigable rivers. I'm not sure if you know what --
24 okay. So, yeah, so some of the rivers that I know of are
25 -- so Goodnews River, Arolik River, Eek River, Kwethluk
26 River, those are the ones that I can remember off the
27 top of my head, but they are starting with our region
28 first. In that way, I guess I don't like that the state
29 would try to make it navigable and free for all because
30 already our other, our main river, the Kanektok River
31 is state managed. So, when it's so full of people, we,
32 you know, we go to the other river, where it's
33 corporation lands and, you know, it's our sanctuary
34 because -- our once before sanctuary is full of
35 recreational users. So, in that way, you know, like,
36 that's what that river we go to is for subsistence. And
37 the same can be said for those other rivers, I'm sure.
38 But I just thought I'd mention the one immediately next
39 to me and how that would affect our subsistence life.
40 So, in -- I guess, I'm not in agreement with them wanting
41 to take over and make it navigable, when it's clearly
42 not navigable. Thanks.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, that was a lot of
45 discussion on these two topics. I just want to check in
46 with everybody. There's one more topic that they're
47 specifically asking about, and then there's, you know,
48 sort of this broader category of any other comments or
49 concerns you want to bring up. Do you want to push
50 through for a little bit longer and then go to lunch so

1 we can be done with this and then break for lunch?

2

3 Okay. We'll move on to the next topic
4 which is the rural/non-rural determination policies. And
5 in your region, there are no areas that have been
6 determined to be non-rural. So, your whole Unit 18 is
7 considered rural. But in other parts of the state,
8 especially along the road system, there's, you know,
9 certain areas, like Anchorage or Fairbanks, that are
10 considered non-rural. And so if you live in a non-rural
11 area, you're not considered a federally qualified
12 subsistence user. And so, it's kind of up to you guys
13 if you have any feedback about this topic, since it's
14 not quite as specific to your area, currently. But just
15 so you know, there is a proposal process that folks can
16 go to -- go through to nominate or change a community's
17 status. So, just because you don't have any non-rural
18 areas, currently, someone could potentially put in a
19 proposal, for example, to say that they would like Bethel
20 change to be non-rural. But that's kind of just the
21 overview of that. And if you guys have questions, I'm
22 sure there's other staff that would be more prepared to
23 answer about this than myself. Thank you.

24

25 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

28

29 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
30 Alissa, for the record. We've been fighting the non-
31 rural determination for the past -- geez, how old am I?
32 I want to say 20-25 years we've been fighting the non-
33 rural determination for Bethel to become non-rural. But,
34 unfortunately, due to the laws and regulations, Bethel
35 is currently protected. And that is one of the proposals
36 that need to be re looked at into protecting Bethel as
37 a rural area. And it comes up every 6 to 10 years. And
38 the last time we took this up was about, maybe 12 years
39 ago. And it continues to protect Bethel, due to the
40 justification, our population counts, the census, and
41 then, also, the clarification for determination for non-
42 rural determination. Madam Chair.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you. I'm
45 glad you brought up Bethel and that time because, I
46 wasn't really involved during that time, but I do
47 remember it was an issue, because Bethel was more than
48 7,000 people at the time, and I guess they had, there
49 was a cap maybe, and it almost became non-rural or
50 something. And then, was it because of the use of

1 subsistence wildlife that made it -- I've always
2 wondered what exactly saved Bethel.

3

4 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair. Oh, okay. You
5 can go ahead.

6

7 MS. TAYLOR: Madam Chair, this is Sara
8 Taylor with the Office of the Secretary. If I remember
9 right, there was an argument that was made that -- when
10 Ketchikan was made not rural, right. It was the smallest
11 community in ANILCA that was not rural, and it was 7,500
12 people. And so, that kind of stuck in people's head, but
13 that was not used in the deliberation.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you.
16 Alissa, did you want to add?

17

18 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. The
19 one reason that saved Bethel is that we upped the cap
20 from seven for the suggestion to 10,000. So, that's what
21 saved Bethel. Thank you, Madam Chair.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you.

24

25 MS. MCDAVID: Are there any other
26 comments from Council members about the rural/non-rural
27 process? It is a process. So, if there ever was a, you
28 know, another proposal put in such as the one just
29 described, you all would get to provide comments and
30 feedback on that. But one thing about the rural/non-
31 rural determination process is that the Board does not
32 defer to the Regional Advisory Councils in the same way
33 as for the Fish and Wildlife proposals. So, I think
34 that's something important to note. And if you have any
35 comments on that.

36

37 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

40

41 MS. ROGERS: I'm going to take a bulletin
42 number two: the rural status provides the foundation for
43 subsistence priority on federal public lands to help
44 ensure continuation of subsistence way of life in
45 Alaska. I want to take up a couple quotes that I did
46 grab from Mr. Peltola's statements, that the
47 consequences from 1992, the federal government engaged
48 to protect subsistence management and assume additional
49 subsistence responsibilities for management. The reason
50 for ANILCA is to intend conservation of natural

1 resources, for the longevity, and ensuring that the
2 federal qualified users get first priority. And that
3 this proposal removes the protection rights and turns
4 our federal priority into state style measurements. That
5 ANILCA protects us and trickles down to other important
6 programs, research, data collection for bush of Alaska
7 villages. The precedence for amounts necessary and
8 customary traditional uses. Number bulletin two:
9 collecting subsistence harvest data and conducting
10 research, including subsistence harvest surveys, under
11 the ethical standards. Third bulletin: is the government
12 agencies would not have access to the confidentiality
13 of our volunteering families. Number four: to give
14 people the power -- to give people of the proposed
15 regions a chance to comment and advocate their concerns
16 about developments that could consequently destroy their
17 livelihood. Thank you, Madam Chair.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you.
20 Anyone else?

21
22 (No response)

23
24 If we're ready for the next topic, can
25 we go there? Thank you.

26
27 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
28 Those were the seven specific topics that the
29 Secretaries requested feedback on. But they also noted
30 that you all are welcome to provide comments on anything
31 else about the Federal Subsistence Management Program
32 that you think is important. And there were some things
33 that have come up already, that I've noted down that
34 kind of fall under this. One of those is about fisheries.
35 That's a very large topic. There's many subtopics. But
36 you know, Walter brought up the importance of gravel to
37 gravel management, and you all have sent letters,
38 previously through the Board to the Secretaries about
39 the need to liaise with the Department of Commerce and
40 have more holistic management of salmon across their
41 entire ecosystems and for the subsistence priority to
42 apply across that entire range, even out in the marine
43 environment. And so, I'm looking to you guys if you
44 would like those letters that you have previously sent
45 on this very complex topic to be attached to your
46 comments on this.

47
48 Okay. I'm seeing nods, heads nodding
49 yes. So, instead of having to rehash all of that out,
50 we'll be sure to reference those previous discussions

1 and requests. I also heard, under other topics, about
2 the importance of co-management as a standard that
3 should be applied for both fish and wildlife management,
4 sort of across the Board. And for TEK to always be
5 regarded and incorporated equally along with scientific
6 data.

7
8 Council member compensation was already
9 brought up. And then, these are some examples that were
10 sort of -- other Councils had mentioned. This is a
11 holdover slide from the Eastern Interior meeting. But
12 you guys did talk a little bit about, you know, sort of
13 a need to work out some of the kinks and correspondence
14 between the Councils, the Board and the Secretaries, so
15 that those letters that you request to be elevated make
16 it through in a timely manner. And, yeah, so I guess,
17 if there's any other comments that you haven't or other
18 topics, just about the federal program in general, that
19 you would like to raise to the Secretaries, this would
20 be an opportunity to bring those up. Thank you.

21
22 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, I got a
23 question. On response to our letters, is anybody
24 listening? You know, we can write a bunch of letters,
25 but is anybody listening? I mean, I want to hear that
26 part, you know, and see what's done. I mean, we do all
27 this effort and all this work, and we write those letters
28 and we respond to what we want, and we don't get a
29 response. And, you know, we'd like to see what's going
30 on after we submit these letters. Thank you.

31
32 MS. MCDAVID: I think, there's a -- thank
33 you, Walter, for that comment. And just so that
34 everyone's clear, what we're doing right now, this is
35 still the comments on the Secretarial Review. There were
36 the seven topics that we gave comments on, and now we're
37 just sort of a -- it's an open invitation if there's
38 other topics besides those seven, any other comments
39 that you want to provide to the Secretaries that will
40 go in this comment letter on the Secretarial Review. And
41 so, I'm hearing what Walter is saying is, he believes
42 that it's important for that two-way communication. You
43 know, when letters are sent, that there be some sort of
44 response and whether that's in writing or actually in a
45 dialogue or conversation, that he would appreciate that.
46 Anything else?

47
48 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

49
50 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

1

2

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through the Chair, Alissa Rogers, for the record. I would like to, also, include that our importance of our Mulchatna Caribou Herd in the working group needs to be a little more unison with providing adequate opportunity for tribes, leaders and Board members to participate in these meetings, to give more justification, because the Mulchatna Caribou Herd is such a huge herd that, having only a limited number of people voicing their opinions on our Mulchatna Caribou Herd without getting the first hand visualization, and the actual things that are happening with our Mulchatna Caribou Herd, is very important to be addressed at these meetings. And they're not being addressed. We didn't find for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd to regrow their population for quite some time now, and we're not finding that our Mulchatna Caribou Herd is on the increase. It has steadied out and it's still sitting around the same numbers but, with local knowledge and advisement that we still need to protect our Mulchatna Caribou Herd and continuation of -- I understand we don't have predator control on our end, it's the state side, but we need to figure something out to bring our Mulchatna Caribou Herd back, because our people are suffering. They're not getting as much fish as they need. And the second resource of protein is the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. And now that the Mulchatna Caribou Herd is no longer accessible, people are having to find different ways of resources in order to gain their protein to feed their families throughout the winter. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you for that. I also see that, fitting in the identifying issues for FY 25 Annual Report to FSB, as well. So, thank you for noting that. (In Native). Oh, Pat.

MR. SAMPSON: I thank you, Madam Chairman, for giving me that opportunity to address, even though I'm not a Council member. But, I wanted to bring up other rural status. My community is one of two communities that are deemed uninhabitable at the moment. Kipnuk and Kwigillingok. So, there's close to 1,500 to 2,000 people taken from that village and brought to Anchorage or Fairbanks or other areas. Do they lose their rural status? And the reason I ask for that is, under the federal management, people from Los Angeles or somewhere cannot come here in the summertime and do subsistence fishing, put up fish and take their fish and go home. Do they lose that rural status? And so, I just

1 wanted to bring that up to on record to be addressed.
2 So, anyway, thank you for the opportunity, Madam Chair.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Pat. You
5 bring up such a good point, and I'm not sure if anyone
6 has that answer? Does anyone have an answer for that?
7 Alissa. Sorry.

8
9 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
10 Through the record, Alissa Rogers. They will not lose
11 their preference, their federal preference, because they
12 were relocated and moved out of their homes to a rural
13 area. Sorry, to an urban area. And, in my understanding
14 of the federal rural determination, when someone's been
15 displaced, they still are honoring their federal, but
16 they won't be able to do the same type of subsistence
17 harvesting in Anchorage or wherever they've been
18 displaced. But when they come back home, they will still
19 be considered rural status. Thank you.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Brooke.

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. Thank you for
24 bringing that up, Patrick. And I guess I would look to
25 the Council, is that something you would like to provide
26 a comment on, that you think that's important for when
27 there's natural disasters such as that, that folks are
28 able to maintain their rural status even if they're --
29 have to relocate?

30
31 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: That's a great
32 point. I would be in agreement with that. We have more
33 and more disasters now.

34
35 MR. PARKS: Madam Chair.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Henry

38
39 MR. PARKS: Henry, for the record. (In
40 Native).

41
42 INTERPRETER: I will speak in Yup'ik
43 here. We are under the other topics. And so, first, I
44 want to thank all the workers here that, whether you
45 working under state or the federal government and I'm
46 thankful for that. And sometimes when we are in a meeting
47 here and when we raise up questions, a lot of times we
48 don't get any answers from the state or from whoever
49 that we ask these. And there used to be representatives
50 from the state of Alaska to answer our concerns or

1 questions. And today there aren't any state
2 representatives. And so, there are a lot of other
3 agencies that are not here, present. And so, this is a
4 very important meeting that we have regarding the issues
5 at hand, and sometimes you don't have any people to
6 address or answer our concerns. And so, these issues
7 that we have here really do help us in that, I just want
8 to bring that up. Thank you, Madam Chair.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: If there's no
11 other comments or discussion, we are still in the motion
12 for providing comment letters to the Secretarial Office.

13
14 (No response)

15
16 I guess I'll entertain a question, if
17 we're done discussing.

18
19 MS. ROGERS: Question.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Question's been
22 called by Alissa Nadine Rogers. We're going to do roll
23 call with Brooke.

24
25 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. So,
26 the motion on the floor is to send comments through the
27 Federal Subsistence Board to the Secretaries regarding
28 the topics that were just discussed, that were outlined
29 in the Secretarial Review Notice, and also, the other
30 topics that the Council wishes to raise. So, I'll go
31 through the roll call, and we'll start with Member
32 Rogers.

33
34 MS. ROGERS: (In Native).

35
36 MS. MCDAVID: Walter Morgan.

37
38 MR. MORGAN: Yes.

39
40 MS. MCDAVID: Francis Prince.

41
42 MR. PRINCE: Yes.

43
44 MS. MCDAVID: Phillip Peter.

45
46 MR. PETER: Yes.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: Henry Parks.

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50 MR. PARKS: Yes.

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MS. MCDAVID: Norma Evan.

MS. EVAN: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: John Andrew.

MR. ANDREW: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Tiffany Agayar.

MS. AGAYAR: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Chair Cleveland.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Motion passes, 9-0.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, everyone. I'm so happy we're done by 12:30 for this part. I'm going to call for a recess, lunch recess and be back -- is 1:45 enough time or is, does 2 sound better? (In Native). Two? Yeah, okay. We'll be back at two from recess, and we will start with -- going back to WP2641/42 Unit 18 caribou/moose, eliminate take from boat moving under power. So, we deferred that one, but we're going to come back to it after lunch. Quyana.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Good afternoon, everyone. This is Jacqueline Cleveland. We're back from lunch and it's 2:05. So, we're going to start this afternoon by going back a little. So, we're going back to regional proposals WP26-41/42, Unit 18, caribou/moose, eliminate take from boat moving under power. And that will be on page 41 if you want to look at the proposal itself.

(Pause)

So, we might not have to go through all the steps, but maybe we could just introduce it like a summary. Thank you. Thank you, Tom.

MR. PLANK: Thank you, Madam Chair, Members of the Council. For the record, Tom Plank,

1 Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence. And the main
2 reason why we're circling back on this one, like the
3 Chair pointed out, the proposal itself starts on page
4 41 in your books, and I believe if you go to page 43,
5 you'll see the map of the unit itself. And just kind of
6 something to keep in mind, the cross-hatched area,
7 that's the area that pertains to proposal -42, because
8 that's the area where currently is allowed to shoot a
9 moose from a moving boat under power. And for proposal
10 -41, the entirety of Unit 18, it is allowed. And so,
11 what we did Tuesday is, we discussed this, we went
12 through this and we decided to defer it until March
13 pending new information. And the reason I asked to bring
14 this up again is I kind of need more direction on what
15 information you need to be able to make this decision.
16 I heard some people mention that they wanted to send a
17 proposal to the state to see if the state can match the
18 federal regulations, which is fine if that's what you
19 all want to do. But if that's the reason why we're
20 deferring it, to see if the state will take that up, I
21 just need to know that. If you're wanting me to dig up
22 more information to give to y'all so you have better
23 information to work with, I just need to know what to
24 find for you. Because I don't want to come back empty-
25 handed if you're expecting something from me. So that's
26 why we brought this up. And if at the same time, if
27 there are safety issues like -- I've talked to some
28 other members that said, the main thing they don't like
29 about this is safety-wise, you need to keep your boat
30 under power, and that's why they don't like this
31 particular proposal. And that's a perfectly valid reason
32 to make a vote on if that's how the RAC feels about
33 this. I just wanted to give you all a chance to kind of
34 re-look at this and see if you want to defer it, why you
35 want to defer it and what can I do to help you? If you
36 want to defer because you want the state to take it up,
37 what can I do to help push that along for you? Or if you
38 want to defer it because you're a little confused because
39 I explained it poorly, I'm okay with that. We can re-
40 look at it, and I can help you with any questions on
41 that as well. So that's basically why we brought it back
42 up, and I'll turn it over to you again, Chair. Thank
43 you.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks, Tom. So,
46 everything you said -- I would have said too, the reasons
47 -- the main reasons were safety. As we heard from other
48 people, it can also lead to accidentally shooting
49 someone in the boat instead, which almost happened to
50 somebody we heard from the other day. So, so many levels

1 on safety would be the main concern and reason why
2 actually, we're taking up to vote on it. So. That's kind
3 of what people wanted. So, anybody else have anything
4 to add? Brooke.

5
6 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. It
7 did sound like at least some of the Council members did
8 want to take a vote on this. So, the steps would be to
9 make a motion to get it on the table, and then you guys
10 could discuss how you feel about it. And, you know, you
11 did just add -- have some of that justification about
12 safety, which you don't have to necessarily repeat. But
13 yeah, maybe next steps would be a motion.

14
15 MS. ROGERS: So moved. Alissa Rogers.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa Rogers
18 moves to support WP26-41/42. Is there a second?

19
20 MR. PETER: Madam Chair, I second the
21 motion.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Phillip Peter,
24 Sr., seconds the motion and we did have some discussion
25 over safety. And then two days ago we also mentioned
26 that maybe why not put a proposal into the Board of Game
27 and ask the state to change their regs to match ours.
28 So, for them to change that rules so that it matches the
29 feds, if that makes sense. Any other discussion besides
30 those things I just mentioned?

31
32 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Alissa.

35
36 MS. ROGERS: I think the best way to
37 approach this is that we correct the language about
38 exactly where a person can take a moose from a moving
39 boat, and then also not. Because I know in some places
40 in the upper rivers and in the swift waters, when you're
41 in a small -- like you're up Kisaralik or going up to
42 the federal lands for moose, it's swift water up there.
43 And I think that if we have an understanding of where
44 the differences between the swift water and the non-
45 swift waters, I think that would be more palatable for
46 people to understand our reasoning for the justification
47 to vote on this proposal. Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you. It's
50 noted. But I want to say, we have increasing storms and

1 floods and things like that, that there's not even like
2 a timed, you know, time of year anymore where we know
3 for sure it's going to be high and swift water. You know
4 what I mean? So then if we were to go that route, I
5 could already see, like, it would be -- yeah. Like you
6 could mark where maybe where it gets swift and more
7 complicated. But then during high water like that could
8 change. And so that would to me be complicated to sort
9 out, just in my opinion. Thanks. Walter.

10

11 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, Walter. So,
12 what's our next move? It's either support it or don't.
13 Yeah.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah. I mean, if
16 there's no more discussion or you're welcome to keep
17 discussing it, but if there's no more, I'd entertain
18 someone to call question, then.

19

20 MR. MORGAN: Walter. Question.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Question has
23 been called by Walter, and we will do a roll call vote
24 with Brooke, who will restate the proposal. Thanks.

25

26 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. So,
27 the motion on the floor is to support wildlife proposals
28 26-41 and -42. And that would eliminate allowing the
29 take of moose or caribou from a moving boat under power,
30 as described in the proposal. So maybe I'll start with
31 Walter, since he's speaking up.

32

33 MR. MORGAN: Walter. No.

34

35 MS. MCDAVID: Tiffany.

36

37 MS. AGAYAR: Support.

38

39 MS. MCDAVID: John Andrew.

40

41 MR. ANDREW: No.

42

43 MS. MCDAVID: Henry Parks.

44

45 MR. PARKS: Support.

46

47 MS. MCDAVID: Can you -- could you please
48 speak into the mic, Henry? Thank you.

49

50

1 MR. PARKS: Sorry about that, Brooke. No,
2 I vote no.

3
4 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. Yeah, I know
5 it's confusing when we have to make the motion in the
6 in the positive. Phillip Peter.

7
8 MR. PETER: No.

9
10 MS. MCDAVID: Francis Prince.

11
12 MR. PRINCE: No.

13
14 MS. MCDAVID: Norma Evan.

15
16 MS. EVAN: No.

17
18 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa Rogers.

19
20 MS. ROGERS: Abstain.

21
22 MS. MCDAVID: Chair Cleveland.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: No.

25
26 MS. MCDAVID: Motion fails 1-7. So, the
27 Council opposes the proposal.

28
29 (Pause)

30
31 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: So, moving on to
32 action items continued. We will go to g: Future Meeting
33 Dates presented by the Coordinator, our Coordinator
34 Brooke.

35
36 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. If
37 you would turn to page 151 in your meeting books, 151,
38 you'll see the calendar for our upcoming Winter 2026
39 meeting. And you all have selected the dates of March
40 17th through the 19th. So, this is just a chance to
41 confirm that those dates are okay with you guys. And if
42 there's no changes, we don't need a motion or anything,
43 but.....

44
45 MS. AGAYAR: I'd just like to mention
46 that it's at the same time as Statewide Finfish meeting
47 with Board of Fish. That's all.

48
49 (Pause)

1 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: I'm not seeing
2 anyone else or hearing anyone else opposed to those
3 dates. Tiffany was just kind of mentioning something
4 else that was happening at the same time that she might
5 also be attending. So, do we need to move on it or
6 something?

7
8 MS. MCDAVID: No, you don't need to make
9 any actions unless you want to, but at this point, it's
10 kind of hard to move anything since all the other RAC
11 meetings are scheduled and we can only have so many at
12 a time. And, you know, as always, we apologize, it's
13 always hard to avoid overlapping meetings and we
14 understand folks have competing priorities. So, if you
15 flip to the next page for Fall 2026, you all selected
16 the dates of October 27, 28 and 29. I think the hope was
17 that that would be after AFN, because I know sometimes
18 we run into conflicts there.

19
20 (Pause)

21
22 Sounds like most people are okay with
23 those dates. Looking around, seeing nodding heads. Okay,
24 so it doesn't sound like any changes to our future
25 meeting dates. So, our next meeting will be in March and
26 as -- March 17 through 19. So as soon as this meeting
27 is over, I'll be starting to make arrangements for that
28 meeting because it'll be coming up before we know it.
29 So, if you don't think you would be able to make it,
30 please let me know. Otherwise, I'll start making your
31 travel arrangements. And we would travel on Monday and
32 then have the meeting and travel home on Friday. Okay.
33 Thank you everyone.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
36 Brooke and everybody. Moving on to 12, Fisheries
37 Resource Monitoring Program and partners for Fisheries
38 Monitoring Program. A, update presentation of regional
39 proposals and requests for Council input. And that's
40 with OSM Fisheries Anthropology.

41
42 MR. FOLEY: Good afternoon, Madam Chair.
43 Can you hear me all right?

44
45 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Kevin, we
46 can hear and see you good.

47
48 MR. FOLEY: Excellent. Well, thank you,
49 Madam Chair. Members of the Council. Good afternoon. My
50 name is Kevin Foley, and I'm a Fisheries Biologist with

1 the Office of Subsistence Management. And I'd like to
2 present to you and share information on a brief overview
3 of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program's funding
4 process. After describing this funding process, we will
5 request Council comments on the projects that were
6 submitted for the Kuskokwim region. This is not an action
7 item, but your comments are very important part of this
8 process. The monitoring program materials begin on page
9 153 of your Council books.

10
11 The goal of the monitoring program is
12 to fund research on federal public -- I'm sorry, federal
13 subsistence fisheries, to enhance management and to work
14 with rural Alaskans to sustain these fisheries. The
15 Monitoring Program funding starts with the Councils
16 identifying information gaps and developing priority
17 information needs for each of the regions that are listed
18 on page 162, which is for the Yukon. And on page 180 for
19 the Kuskokwim. So, volunteers from the Yukon and the
20 Kuskokwim Regional Councils met during the fall of 2024
21 and created a list of priority information needs for the
22 Kuskokwim region. And again, the list for the Yukon
23 region is on page 162, and the PINs that were identified
24 for the Kuskokwim are on page 180. So, then OSM took
25 this list and requested projects that address these
26 priorities. Investigators then submit project proposals
27 to OSM. And for the Yukon region five proposals were
28 submitted for funding and these are listed in the table
29 on page 163. And for the Kuskokwim region, eight
30 proposals were submitted for funding, and these
31 proposals are listed in the table on page 181. And all
32 of these proposals are currently going through the
33 review process. The first step in the review process is
34 for the Technical Review Committee to assess the
35 projects. And the Technical Review Committee is a panel
36 of scientists that review the proposals based on five
37 criteria. And these criteria are strategic priority,
38 technical/scientific merit, investigator ability and
39 resources, partnership capacity building, and cost
40 benefit. The Technical Review Committee writes
41 justifications that summarize what they thought of the
42 projects, and the justifications can be found at the end
43 of each project's executive summary in your Council
44 books. After the Technical Review Committee review, OSM
45 collects the Council's comments on the projects. And
46 that's what we're doing here today.

47
48 Your comments and the Technical Review
49 Committee's justifications are combined and then
50 presented to the Interagency Staff Committee or the ISC.

1 The ISC is a group of individuals who are the Federal
2 Subsistence Board staff and also provide comments on the
3 projects. And so, all of these comments, in addition to
4 the project summaries, will be presented to the Federal
5 Subsistence Board when they meet early next month during
6 their February 5th workshop. And then they will take
7 this information into account and will then add their
8 recommendations on what projects to fund. The final
9 selection of projects will be determined by the Director
10 of OSM, based on all of the provided input and how much
11 money is available. OSM funds as many projects as
12 possible based on our budget. The funded projects will
13 start this year in the spring sometime. Again, this is
14 not an action item, but your comments are an important
15 part of the funding process. And so, we're requesting
16 the Council's thoughts and comments about the proposed
17 projects in the Yukon region on page 163 and the proposed
18 projects in the Kuskokwim region that are listed on page
19 181.

20

21 And we would really want to know if the
22 Council has any specific concerns or comments about
23 those proposed projects. And so, if the Council wishes,
24 we can go through each project individually, or I can
25 go through each project individually and provide a brief
26 summary and then receive your feedback. Or the Council
27 can work through and read the individual projects for
28 the Kuskokwim and the Yukon areas and provide us with
29 any comments or feedback that you may have. So, with
30 that, Madam Chair, I'd like to know how the Council
31 would like to proceed.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
34 Kevin. We're figuring that out. I think we're going to
35 put them up on the screen, starting with Yukon projects.
36 So, one second.

37

38 (Pause)

39

40 MS. MCDAVID: Madam Chair.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Brooke.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. So, what I've
45 put up on the screen is the table on page 161 of your
46 meeting book. These are the projects that applied for
47 funding for the Yukon region. So, we'll talk about Yukon
48 projects. If you guys want to give Kevin any feedback
49 or ask any questions about any of these projects shown
50 and then we'll move on to Kuskokwim. Thank you.

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(Pause)

MR. FOLEY: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Kevin.

MR. FOLEY: If it pleases you and the Council, I can offer a very short statement for each of these projects, if it will help the thought process of Council members. If that's the wish of the Council for the projects that are currently being shown on the screen for the Yukon region.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, please.

MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Council members, in this list, the first one, as you can see there is Project 26-200, which is the Chena River Chinook and Summer Chum Salmon Enumeration. And this project will estimate Chinook and chum salmon escapement and escapement quality in the Chena River using counting towers. And if you want more details for that project, they can be found on page 164.

The next one we have in the list, Project 26-201, Application of Mixed Stock Analysis for Yukon River Chum Salmon. This project will estimate in-season stock composition of Yukon River summer and fall chum salmon at the Pilot Station sonar. More details may be found on page 166.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, Kevin. Alissa had a quick question.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Kevin, can you hear me okay? It's Alissa, for the record.

MR. FOLEY: Yes, I can. Thank you.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Kevin. Good to see you, even you're not here. Big hugs through the screen. I did have a question. Why is Chena River asking for \$4,607 -- sorry, \$647,664 [sic] for an urban area project? What is their basis? Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. FOLEY: Through the Chair. Council member Rogers, I'd like to draw your attention to page 164 of the book. And although I don't have an exact breakdown of costs associated with the project that was

1 submitted to us by the Alaska Department of Fish and
2 Game, we can see that there's a rough count or
3 approximate \$120,000 over the study period, or the
4 project requested amounts of roughly \$115 to \$120,000
5 per year over the course of four years to run this
6 project. It looks like it has an associated cost that -
7 - of several technicians. So, I imagine some of that
8 will go to salary and tower accounts. But I'm just
9 skimming through some of the information that we have
10 presented in the books. As far as specific operating
11 costs, I would require a little bit more time to dig
12 into the budgets on that though. Council member Rogers,
13 thank you.

14
15 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Member
16 Rogers, this is Brooke. The Chena is an important
17 spawning area for Chinook and chum that go up the Yukon
18 and into the Tanana River drainage. The Chena is a
19 tributary of the Tanana. So, it's just one of the major
20 kind of groupings of the different Yukon River stocks
21 that are important for subsistence. So those fish swim
22 all the way past your communities here in the lower
23 river and go up there to spawn.

24
25 MR. FOLEY: Madam Chair.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, Kevin.

28
29 MR. FOLEY: If there are no more
30 questions or comments from the Council on this project,
31 I'd like to continue down the list, please.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Go ahead, Kevin.

34
35 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. For
36 consideration and comment, it's project number 26-202,
37 which is a Feasibility of Sonar Estimation of Adult
38 Salmon Passage in the Middle Yukon River near Ruby. And
39 this project will develop and operate a Middle Yukon
40 River sonar focusing on Chinook and summer chum salmon,
41 and more details may be found on page 167.

42
43 Moving down the list is project 26-250,
44 Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Life Histories of
45 Salmon in Tributaries of the Yukon Coastal District.
46 This project will address critical management
47 information gaps about salmon in tributaries of the
48 coastal district through an interdisciplinary approach
49 combining traditional ecological knowledge, harvest
50 monitoring, and documentation of salmon life history

1 patterns and stock of origin. More details may be found
2 on page 169.

3
4 Next for consideration is project 26-
5 252, In-Season Yukon River Subsistence Salmon Survey
6 Program. This project will estimate harvest of Chinook
7 salmon and other fish species, record local observations
8 of ecological conditions, and document traditional
9 ecological knowledge that can inform fisheries
10 management along the Yukon River. More details may be
11 found on page 172.

12
13 And if there are no comments from the
14 Council on the projects that are being proposed for the
15 Yukon region, I'd like to recommend that we move to
16 projects that were submitted for the Kuskokwim region.
17 And these may be found in the table starting on page 181
18 of your booklets.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Kevin, can you
21 hold on a second before moving on to Kusko -- the
22 Kuskokwim list? We didn't give enough chance for maybe
23 people to respond with the Yukon list?

24
25 MR. FOLEY: Certainly, Madam Chair. Thank
26 you.

27
28 (Pause)

29
30 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

33
34 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Alissa Rogers,
35 for the record. I wanted to ask you for 26-202. How long
36 has that Ruby been in place, or is this a new
37 installation? Is it a new installation for a monitoring
38 project that's going to be coinciding with the Pilot
39 Station?

40
41 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. This is
42 Brooke. Alissa, that is a -- they're trying to determine
43 a good location for an additional sonar in the Middle
44 River. And so, it takes some studying to figure out
45 where would be the best place. So, they've been working
46 the last couple years testing out a couple different
47 sites. And I believe this would help them continue to
48 do that. One of the concerns is that there's a huge gap
49 between the Pilot Station sonar and then the Eagle sonar
50 at the Canadian border. And so, there's a lot of

1 questions about, well, what happens in between, you
2 know, that almost thousand-mile span. So, this is steps
3 forward towards trying to get that in place. And if
4 Kevin has other things to add, please do.

5

6 MR. FOLEY: Through the Chair. I think
7 Brooke nailed it. Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, to you
10 both. I guess, I mean, I really like that there's a
11 traditional ecological knowledge and life stories of
12 salmon in tributaries of the Yukon coastal district. I
13 really like that. I -- just in general I like to document
14 those things, and I think they're very important and
15 sometimes underestimated, as you heard me say before,
16 in the decision-making processes. So, glad to see that
17 on there as well, as the In-Season Yukon River
18 Subsistence Salmon Survey Program since -- well since I
19 can understand those two. The rest of them are very
20 sciency [sic], but I know they are there with a lot of
21 research behind it and much needed projects. Thanks.
22 Anyone else on the Yukon Project? Anyone else have
23 anything to say?

24

25 MS. EVAN: Madam Chairman, may I make a
26 comment?

27

28 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes.

29

30 MS. EVAN: There was a concern during the
31 summer times and spring times, after the ice leaves, we
32 had community members with high concerns of youth using
33 snowmobiles on the river during the summer times, and
34 they were thinking that it would disturb salmon during
35 migration, or that was just a concern that was brought
36 up in our community of Marshall. Thank you, Madam Chair.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
39 Norma. It's noted.

40

41 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, this is Walter.

42

43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Walter, and then
44 Tiffany.

45

46 MR. MORGAN: Okay. They put the middle
47 on 26-202. They want a better count of the Yukon salmon
48 passing the halfway point almost. I think that's an
49 important one, because in the Kuskokwim, we have only
50 one sonar that works. So -- but the Yukon's very vast.

1 It's a big river and, you know, I think that's a good
2 thing. It's in, you know, 26-202 is a good one to
3 support. And all of them are. Thanks.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
6 Walter. Tiffany.

7
8 MS. AGAYAR: I'd like to support all of
9 them because starting from the bottom, 26-252, In-season
10 Yukon River Subsistence Salmon Survey, that's been a big
11 ask from locals for quite some time. Probably since
12 before I was born. And then 26-250, Traditional
13 Ecological Knowledge and Life Histories of Salmon. Those
14 two have been heavily asked for by people throughout the
15 whole river, including into the Canadian side. And it'll
16 bring a deeper understanding when they complete their
17 project and hopefully be able to explain just our way
18 of life out there.

19
20 And then for the mixed stock analysis,
21 it's really important because we have stocks increasing
22 and decreasing and mostly decreasing. But then people
23 throughout the whole river have been asking -- all kinds
24 of asks about all the fish that are in the river,
25 migrating or not migrating, and coming and going. And
26 then I think I visited the Chena River tower before,
27 like 20 years ago. But yeah, even the sonar situation
28 that's -- there's so much questions that go on between
29 Pilot Station sonar and Eagle River sonar and so many
30 questions have been rising forward throughout the past
31 years since Pilot Station sonar has been on. And
32 everybody's always asking, where did all these fish go
33 that were counted at Pilot Station sonar? And how come
34 only so many made it so -- as far as Eagle River and --
35 there, even though it has pros and cons to the sonar
36 project, it often brings good usable data with numbers
37 that we could work with which allow us to be able to --
38 and that's how we were able to have some dipnet openers
39 for chum salmon, summer chum salmon. And hopefully
40 that'll bring more answers and less closures or
41 something, I don't know. Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Francis.

44
45 MR. PRINCE: Chair, this is Francis. I
46 totally agree with what Tiffany just said. And also
47 adding an extra sonar at Ruby, you know, since we only
48 have that one at Pilot Station, would give us an overview
49 of how much that fish is actually passing Ruby and then
50 making its way onto those other streams above us, near

1 Ruby.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana. If
4 that's all, we can move on to the Kuskokwim ones. If
5 you're all okay with that.

6

7 MS. MCDAVID: This is Brooke. Kevin, they
8 were just asking in the room if they, you know, needed
9 to make a motion to support or anything. And I believe
10 the process is that you've recorded their comments and
11 you'll be sharing those with the Technical Review
12 Committee. Is that correct?

13

14 MR. FOLEY: Through the Chair. Brooke,
15 that is correct. This is Kevin with OSM. Absolutely. As
16 we mentioned in our introduction statement, the comments
17 that we're receiving from Council members are very
18 valuable to us and they do help the process for these
19 projects. Going through that. So, you know, it's one
20 thing where we receive the priority information needs
21 that are developed by Council members, but we have no
22 control over who submits projects, right. That's just
23 the members of the public or institutions or not-for-
24 profit agencies. And then we sort of evaluate everything
25 that comes in, and then that again is put back on the
26 table for your feedback, for you to tell us what is most
27 important for you based upon what's coming in. And so,
28 the feedback that we get is invaluable. So yeah, there's
29 no motion. Again, it's no action item. We're just really
30 hoping to get good feedback and so far, you know, the
31 discussion that we've had is stellar. And this is exactly
32 the kind of stuff that I'm looking for and we're looking
33 for and we can hope to continue to receive. Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah. We're
36 ready whenever or if you feel like going through them -
37 - a summary of them, Kevin.

38

39 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.
40 Absolutely. Let's go through the Kuskokwim projects. The
41 table that we have up on the screen and located on page
42 181 of your Council books. The first item or the first
43 project is project number 26-300, Goodnews River Salmon
44 Escapement Monitoring. This project is to count Chinook,
45 chum, and sockeye salmon escapement into the Middle Fork
46 of the Goodnews River using a resistance board weir and
47 information may be found on page 181.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Hey, Kevin, I
50 think it's okay if you just go through them all. And

1 then in the end if any of us have anything to say about
2 any of them, it's okay to go back to some if that's okay
3 with you.

4
5 MR. FOLEY: Absolutely, Madam Chair. Next
6 in the list we have project 26-301, Kuskokwim River Coho
7 Salmon and Whitefish Abundance Estimation Using Sonar
8 and Apportionment Fishing. This project proposes to use
9 sonar and drift gillnets apportionment methods to
10 estimate daily abundances of coho salmon and whitefish
11 species migrating in the Kuskokwim River during August.
12 More details may be found on page 183 of your book.

13
14 The next item in the list is project 26-
15 302, Salmon River of the Pitkas Fork Chinook Salmon
16 Escapement Monitoring. This project proposes to index
17 daily and total Chinook salmon escapement to the salmon
18 Pitkas Fork River through operation of a fixed picket
19 fence weir. More details about this project begin on
20 page 186 of your booklets.

21
22 Next, we have project 26-303,
23 Implementing Artificial Intelligence For Rural Alaskan
24 Salmon Counts. This project proposes to use drone
25 technology, local knowledge, and AI software to derive
26 counts of Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon within
27 tributaries of the Kanektok Bay and Aroli Rivers. More
28 details of this project may be found on page 187 of your
29 Council books.

30
31 Next, we have project 26-304, George
32 River Salmon Weir. This project proposes to index
33 Chinook and chum and coho salmon escapement to the middle
34 portion of the Kuskokwim River drainage, through
35 operation of a weir on the George River. More details
36 may be found on page 189.

37
38 Next in the list we have project 26-350,
39 Bethel Subsistence Harvest Surveys. This project
40 proposes to provide state and federal managers and
41 stakeholders with relevant subsistence harvest effort,
42 catch, and composition information collected from a
43 representative subset of families who harvest salmon for
44 subsistence purposes in the Bethel area. More details
45 on this project may be found on page 191 of your Council
46 booklets.

47
48 Next for consideration is project 26-
49 351, Kuskokwim Management Area Postseason Subsistence
50 Salmon Harvest Survey. This project proposes to

1 administer harvest surveys and analyze salmon harvest
2 data to support management, regulation, and conservation
3 efforts in the Kuskokwim region. More details may be
4 found on page 194 of your book.

5
6 And the last project on this list for
7 the Kuskokwim region is project 26-352, Local And
8 Traditional Knowledge of Non-Salmon Fisheries, Including
9 Whitefishes, Sheefish, And Northern Pike in a Changing
10 Climate in the Kuskokwim River, Alaska. This project
11 proposes to increase understanding of the impacts of
12 changes in climate on the subsistence harvest and use
13 of non-salmon fish in selected regions of the Kuskokwim
14 management area through work in three representative
15 communities. More details may be found on page 196. And
16 that concludes my brief summary on the projects in the
17 Kuskokwim region. Madam Chair, members of the Council,
18 we're standing by to receive your comments, feedback,
19 and answer any questions that you may have. Thank you.

20
21 MS. EVAN: Madam Chair, through the
22 Council, Norma Evan.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Hi, Norma. Go
25 ahead.

26
27 MS. EVAN: I think these projects would
28 benefit the Kuskokwim, also with the years of the Yukon
29 not fishing, I know some families, not a whole lot to
30 go to the Kuskokwim and fish for subsistence. And these
31 programs would benefit the count of our salmon that are
32 at the tributaries. Thank you, Madam Chair.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
35 Norma. Since I don't see anyone else for now, I will say
36 again, I will commend that, you know, traditional --
37 local and traditional knowledge project made it for the
38 Kuskokwim as well. You don't, you know, see many of such
39 a project, I guess. So, I'm happy to see it for both
40 rivers and of course, anything to do with subsistence
41 harvest surveys always helps us, especially for those
42 of us who don't have escapement numbers other than
43 inconsistent aerial surveys at times, which also brings
44 me to the escapement monitoring project. For instance,
45 there's one for Goodnews River. And not that I'm saying
46 -- you can answer this, Kevin, but -- and not to say
47 they don't need escapement monitoring, but I know for
48 us on the Kanektok we've been without consistent
49 escapement numbers since 2015, since we lost our weir,
50 and we've been trying to get away to get escapement

1 again. We have such a high user group of all, I guess
2 not commercial anymore, but we have not just our own
3 local subsistence users, but we have other people coming
4 in when there's closures in the area. And of course, we
5 have a lot of sport fishermen as well. So, we have been
6 asking us for help from them in the past to prioritize
7 our river and to get our escapement back whether that
8 be through a weir or a counting tower and whatnot. But,
9 you know, luckily, we are part of the pilot project with
10 Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, which is
11 something. But yeah, it just makes me think that some
12 of these rivers that have more users and especially more
13 subsistence users should also be considered in these
14 escapement monitoring projects if it does not exist
15 there. Thanks.

16
17 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, this is Walter.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Walter.

20
21 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, I like 26-352 because
22 it also put pike in there, whitefish, sheefish, because
23 we want to know what the pike are doing too, you know,
24 so. I think that's a good one there. And also, on the
25 whitefish and the coho sonar. I think that's 26-301.
26 I've never seen these on -- these are the two new ones,
27 I think. I really think that's important. People looking
28 to other species, because we eat those fish, too. Thank
29 you.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
32 Walter. And just for the record, I do support all of
33 them.

34
35 (Pause)

36
37 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

40
41 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Through the
42 Chair. Alissa Rogers, for the record. I highly support
43 George River weir as it is, a ghost part of our river.
44 When we do our sonar and our test fisheries down on the
45 lower river, some reason they always disappear near
46 George River. And it's like a mystery hole of where our
47 fish are going. So, I've also worked on the George River
48 weir and I highly support the George River weir to find
49 out where our fish are going or if they're not making
50 it up that area. And then I also support 26-305, the

1 Bethel Subsistence Harvesting Program. That's a
2 longevity program that's been highly used for
3 understanding when subsistence is starting at fish camp.
4 When we start to see fish on the racks, and the
5 partnership with the community, and our technicians have
6 built a great rapport over the years, since I was 12
7 years when we first started that program. And so,
8 continuation of that data is highly important for our
9 needs to understand the Bethel subsistence area and
10 what's actually going up the river passing through
11 Bethel.

12
13 I also support 26-351 in regards to the
14 postseason. Postseason is highly important because a lot
15 of people have their fish camps at home, and we don't
16 get to all the fish camps in Bethel during the Bethel
17 Subsistence Harvesting Program in the postseason
18 collects that post-harvest season, and it gives us a
19 more broader understanding of what subsistence has been
20 taken out of the river. Thank you, Madam Chair.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you.
23 Walter.

24
25 MR. MORGAN: Yes, Walter. I support all
26 these, but I just said those are the newer ones I see,
27 and I'm glad they're on there. Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks again,
30 Walter. John. Oh.

31
32 (Pause)

33
34 And I will say something about 26-303,
35 Implementing AI for Rural Alaska Salmon Counts. I didn't
36 bring it up first just because I didn't want to sound
37 biased. It's a Quinhagak project, where I'm from. But I
38 did want to mention that, you know, their partnership's
39 through the -- our village corporation and their.....

40
41 (Simultaneous speech)

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND:their
44 sister company in (In Native). They've been -- for (In
45 Native) young life, they've really created a lot of
46 opportunity and projects for local people on collecting
47 data, on documenting climate change and erosion and
48 training mappers, training for drone flying. So, when
49 it comes to, like, I think state of the art technology
50 and yeah, I guess I'm kind of proud of our village for,

1 you know, getting their hands in there and stepping into
2 the technology world, and being really good at it in the
3 end. So, I do believe in them for their AI project. And
4 again, not to say any of them are more important than
5 the others. Like I said, I do support all of them,
6 including Goodnews River Salmon Escapement Monitoring,
7 which I had mentioned earlier. Thank you. Henry.

8
9 MR. PARKS: Madam Chair, Henry, for the
10 record. Yeah, I do support all of these project proposals
11 too, but I hope down the road, I hope the funds will be
12 granted. Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Kevin, did you
15 have any more or did you need any more from us?

16
17 MR. FOLEY: Madam Chair, I do have some
18 additional information on the Partners for Fisheries
19 Monitoring Program if the Council has concluded their
20 comments and feedback to us on the projects that were
21 submitted for the FRMP, which I might add, your feedback
22 is really awesome and it's great and I'd love to see it.
23 And I have -- well, we have a lot to work with going
24 forward. So, thank you so much. And if it pleases the
25 Council, Madam Chair, I'd like to move forward with
26 presenting the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program
27 information.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes, please.

30
31 MR. FOLEY: Thank you. Once again, my
32 name is Kevin Foley and I'm Fisheries Bio [sic] with
33 OSM, currently calling into the meeting from Anchorage.
34 And the update for the program, OSM posted a notice of
35 funding opportunity for the Partners for Fisheries
36 Monitoring Program this past spring. And this is a
37 competitive grant for Alaska Native and rural non-profit
38 organizations. The intent of the program is to
39 strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in
40 Federal Subsistence Management by providing salary funds
41 to organizations so they can hire a professional
42 biologist, social scientist, or an educator. The grant
43 also provides funds for science and culture camps and
44 paid student internships.

45
46 There were a total of eight applicants
47 for new funding beginning in 2026, and funding lasts for
48 up to four years in total. The Partners Program Review
49 Panel, made up of subject matter experts across various
50 Department of Interior agencies, have reviewed the

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1 proposals, and the Office of Subsistence Management
2 Regional Director, Crystal Ciisquq Leonetti, has
3 approved funding for three new partners, and the new
4 partners are the Bristol Bay Native Association, the
5 Native Village of Eyak, and Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource
6 Commission. So, I'd just like to say congratulations to
7 our new partners.

8
9 The next notice of funding opportunity
10 will be sometime in the spring of 2027 for funding to
11 begin in 2028. And if you would like more information
12 about this program, you may contact Jarred Stone or Liz
13 Williams by way of email or phone, and their contact
14 information may be found on the Partner's web page at
15 www.doi.gov/subsistence/partners, or if anyone there in
16 the room is interested, please come and see any OSM
17 staff that are present, and they'll make sure that you
18 have all the information needed about the program or
19 their main points of contact. Thank you, Madam Chair.
20 Members of the Council, this concludes my update on the
21 Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. And does the
22 Council have any questions that hopefully I can address?
23 Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
26 Kevin. So just to be clear, you said the next
27 announcement for FRMP is start of 2027 for 2028, and
28 three years after that, or just for 2028?

29
30 MR. FOLEY: Madam Chair, that's correct.
31 The next notice of funding opportunity will be released
32 sometime in the spring of '27, and that funding from
33 that notice will begin in 2028.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thanks again,
36 Kevin. I guess the second part of my question was, I
37 didn't make it clear, is it also a four year or just for
38 2028?

39
40 MR. FOLEY: That's a good question. I
41 believe the part -- perhaps if Liz Williams, Cultural
42 Anthropologist with OSM is listening in, she might be
43 able to provide some support information, but it's my
44 understanding that the funding could last for up to four
45 years, but that the monitoring program -- that the
46 Partners Program, the notice of funding opportunity is
47 announced every two years. But that -- if you -- oh, I
48 see Liz just popped in, but if you receive funding for
49 four years, I believe a partner -- like you can only be
50 funded for four years, then you have to reapply, right?

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1 So, if you're awarded funding for four years, you
2 couldn't apply for the very next cycle, two years into
3 your four-year funding cycle.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Oh, yeah, that's
6 understandable.

7
8 MR. FOLEY: And Liz, please let me know
9 if I got that right, wrong, or whatever. Full stop.

10
11 MS. WILLIAMS: Well. I'm the
12 Anthropologist, so being good at numbers and things is
13 not my strong suit. I think it's every three years. And
14 we are sort of changing that sometimes. The program, the
15 OSM in general has revised it several times depending
16 on types of or the amount of funding we get. So, I
17 believe it is every three years, though, that it's a
18 three-year opportunity and I could be wrong. I'll let
19 the Council know once I check with my numbers person.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay. Thank you.
22 You know how to get a hold of us.

23
24 MS. WILLIAMS: Thanks.

25
26 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

29
30 MS. ROGERS: Hi, Liz. Thank you, Madam
31 Chair.

32
33 MS. WILLIAMS: Hi. Good to hear you,
34 Alissa.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Do we have
37 anything to add from our Council here or ask? (In
38 Native).

39
40 MR. ANDREW: (In Native).

41
42 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: John.

43
44 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. John Andrew from
45 Kwethluk. I noticed that you have a study for whitefish
46 and cohos in our Kuskokwim River. On the lower tributary
47 rivers of the Eek River, Kwethluk, (In Native),
48 Kisaralik also have late coho runs. And when I talk to
49 people, they say they never see that. I was wondering
50 where they go up to. I know where the local -- the nearby

1 rivers that have late coho runs roughly about the same
2 time, you have a big runs of lesser what do you call
3 burbot going up those rivers to -- all the way to
4 properly end of December. But we get those incidental
5 cohos with whitefish nets under the ice all the way
6 through January. But the last few years that we've been
7 hearing people catching them all the way to March, even
8 on the Yukon side, nobody ever does studies on those.
9 Then we have runs of eels back starting in October,
10 November, and then again in December. Those are the
11 harvest months of species of fish and eels that nobody
12 ever (indiscernible), but the local people know the runs
13 when they come around. Very few people on the Kuskokwim
14 side harvest eels, but they are there in the
15 (indiscernible) they can go after. I know in Yukon people
16 go after eels, but at least three times there right
17 after freeze up. But lately they say with the late
18 November freeze ups, they're missing the first two runs.
19 If they're lucky, they'll get one. Some of them in
20 December. And those are some of the species we -- most
21 people in our area, they don't know them, but the ones
22 that never seen or people -- very few people get them
23 incidentally. But people in the early years used to use
24 Big River (indiscernible) traps to go after burbot. They
25 say when they empty their fish traps in the morning,
26 they'd be filled with a lot of that what we call bourbot,
27 (In Native). And up in Ankiak I know 2 -- used to be 2
28 or 3 or more. They used to have big (indiscernible)
29 traps, even up in Tuluksak, but I know that's the only
30 one that have some right now, I hope. I think they do.
31 A long time ago they used to -- they said they used to
32 have the same thing over on Kwethluk River too, but
33 right after -- in 1964, after that big earthquake, and
34 it started going up that far. He never used to use that
35 -- those (indiscernible) traps anymore for burbot. But
36 with those (indiscernible) traps, you catch anything in
37 it. Small whitefish and sheefish and pikes. If you empty
38 them out in the evening, it'll have some of those, but
39 more. The night runs, they fill it with a big, nice big
40 black (In Native), so what we call burbot. Thank you,
41 Madam Chair.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, John.
44 And Quyana, Kevin. That might be all for us, but unless
45 you have something?

46
47 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair.....

48
49 (Simultaneous speech)

50

1 MR. FOLEY: No, Madam Chair, I -- oh.
2 Forgive me. I did not.....

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 MS. MCDAVID: Go ahead, Kevin. I just
7 wanted to make sure we got Liz's comment read, so please
8 go ahead.

9
10 MR. FOLEY: I do not have any additional
11 information for the RAC. I'm looking forward to seeing
12 hopefully everyone that's in the room there now. Plus
13 more people that are winter meeting in March. And with
14 that, I'll say adieu and turn it over to my colleague
15 Liz Williams. Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
18 Kevin. See you soon.

19
20 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Madam Chair,
21 this is Liz. Kevin was correct. The Partner's grant
22 funding lasts for four years, not three.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you for the
25 clarification. It's been noted.

26
27 MS. WILLIAMS: Sorry about that. Thanks.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Liz, one second.
30 There's a question for you.

31
32 MS. ROGERS: Hi, Liz. It's Alissa, for
33 the record. The question that I had is, I know there was
34 some funding issues a few years back, and there was
35 talks about reducing the amount of times that projects
36 can apply for these federal funding fishery projects.
37 Is that still in effect or did that go away? Thank you,
38 Madam Chair.

39
40 MS. WILLIAMS: Through the Chair. Member
41 Rogers, the funding -- or the amount of time was reduced
42 for a couple of projects, just in my memory when there
43 were some new partner applicants that we wanted to give
44 a try. And so, they had two years of funding to see if
45 the whole implementing the projects, doing the
46 administration of the funding, etc., would work. But in
47 general, it's four years. But budgets always change and
48 we don't know what our budgets are. A lot of the time
49 like we won't know until January 30th, hopefully we'll
50 get a budget. And so, everything is sort of subject to

1 that situation that is in Washington, D.C. We really
2 don't have any control of it, but we are moving along
3 as if we have four years of funding for each partner. I
4 hope that answers your question.

5

6 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair. Through the
7 Chair. Thank you, Liz, I appreciate it. That's really
8 good news to hear. Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay. Thanks,
11 everyone. I think this is a good time to segue into a
12 little break, 5 or 10 minutes, and then we'll come back
13 and before you guys go, I want you to think about the
14 next topic is going to be and we're coming back to it
15 from yesterday is to identify issues for FY25 Annual
16 Report to the Federal Subsistence Board. So, since you
17 weren't here, Alissa, I just wanted to mention that when
18 we brought this up, I think it was yesterday or the day
19 before, there's been a suggestion that we maybe just
20 pick the first few priority issues to write about. And
21 not like the last time we had 16. So, this year we'll
22 just pick the first like maybe 3 to 5 most important
23 ones. Okay. We're going to take a break. So just to --
24 something to think about during break. We'll be coming
25 back to identify those issues after break. See you at
26 3:30.

27

(Off record)

28

29

(On record)

30

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And then as far as like the honorariums
membership criteria that we talked about earlier with
Sara, we don't have to repeat those as another letter,
but we're planning to also attach the letter we -- or

1 the comments we write to the Secretary's Office to this
2 letter to FSB, if that makes sense. So those will already
3 be addressed within the attachment we're including too.
4 The issues identified again honorariums membership
5 criteria and all the other subjects we decided to comment
6 on will be included in this annual report to FSB. So,
7 so far we have that attachment, the letter to the
8 Secretary's Office to re-elevate the (d)(1) lands letter
9 and open to any others. Again, we're going to have to
10 make it, you know, 3 to 5 at the most maybe if even
11 that. Thanks.

12

13 (Pause)

14

15 (In Native). Identify issues for FY 2025
16 Annual Report, FSB (In Native), prioritize (In Native)
17 Federal Subsistence Board. (In Native) (d)(1) lands, (In
18 Native) elevate (In Native) honorarium (In Native
19 4:25:13) membership criteria (In Native) Secretary's
20 Office. (In Native) honorariums membership criteria and
21 re-elevate D1 lands. (In Native). Quyana.

22

23 And on the book, it's -- there's page
24 number 141, so. Tom, I'm wondering if we should maybe
25 just go through this one more time, but maybe a synopsis
26 of it or a summary of it or Justin. It was you. Sorry,
27 Justin. Just to maybe remind us where we left off
28 yesterday on this. Thanks.

29

30 MR. KOLLER: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
31 we're still discussing the annual reports, correct?
32 Okay. Yeah. So, Justin Koller, Office of Subsistence
33 Management. Yesterday I just provided a quick overview
34 of what the Board is looking for in annual report topics.
35 And really, the idea was not to necessarily limit the
36 number of topics, to really focus the topics and rather
37 to issues that the Board has control over and power over
38 and can actually respond to. And to be specific if you're
39 asking the Board for something in return, when you
40 provide information for them in the annual report. The
41 annual report, of course, is an information sharing tool
42 that the Councils are empowered to provide the Board,
43 just to provide information on what's going on in your
44 region, specifically the federal subsistence region that
45 you represent.

46

47 So, I just highlighted a few important
48 points. You know, the annual report should highlight
49 subsistence trends and issues in your region. Annual
50 reports, along with Council recommendations on

1 regulatory proposals, are the key means by which the
2 Councils prepare the Board to make important decisions
3 on regulatory matters. So, the annual reports that are
4 used in analyses, they're used by staff to help identify
5 research needs. They're used by staff to help identify
6 regional outreach needs. And they can also provide
7 recommendations on subsistence management strategies and
8 just general program processes of the Federal
9 Subsistence Management Program. So, in a nutshell,
10 that's about all I had to say yesterday about that. Just
11 focusing your topics, so the Board can be responding
12 effectively. Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you.
15 Brooke.

16
17 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
18 Maybe to just help the Council a little bit, to stimulate
19 discussion, a lot of these topics that go into your
20 annual report are kind of ongoing things that continue
21 from year to year. And perhaps, you know, a statement
22 to that effect in your annual report would be worthwhile.
23 Just noting that you continue to be concerned about
24 salmon and Mulchatna Caribou as two really important
25 species that are in decline. And Alissa had mentioned
26 earlier about the need for more local input on the
27 Mulchatna Caribou Working Group, and I believe that's
28 Togiak Refuge that has the delegated authority from the
29 Federal Subsistence Board for that herd. So maybe
30 highlighting that and you know, perhaps requesting that
31 that Fish and Wildlife -- the Togiak manager could, you
32 know, maybe try to help make that happen. I'm not really
33 familiar with that working group, so I'm not sure who's
34 in charge of it, but I think routing that, you know,
35 through the Board is something that is an appropriate
36 thing for the annual report.

37
38 I'm just trying to think of the things
39 that you have brought up in this meeting. Like you said,
40 a lot of the issues are going into the Secretarial Review
41 comments. And perhaps just highlighting to the Board
42 that a lot of these issues are very big issues that are
43 beyond the jurisdiction of the Board. And so, asking the
44 Board to continue, you know, that communication with the
45 Secretary's Office that you identified could use a
46 little oiling of the squeaky wheel. So, thank you.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you for
49 bringing that up, Brooke. I think it's a good idea to
50 make a comment along the lines of, these are big issues

1 we keep, and then we keep having to ask for them and
2 elevate. And now we're going to have to ask for them to
3 elevate it again since it wasn't done before. And
4 apologies to Alissa for forgetting about the Mulchatna
5 Caribou Herd Working Group request. It's noted. That
6 one's good. For that working group though I was
7 wondering. I'm not sure how. I've never worked within
8 working groups so much, but does it work in the same way
9 as it is by region? Like, will that working group have
10 their own working group from the Togiak side? And then
11 we or could there be a working group that also includes
12 some of us from this region, since we're also users of
13 that same resource? If that makes sense. Like, can the
14 working group include multi-region, like -- so the
15 caribou, the Mulchatna Caribou Herd touches both of
16 these regions, Bristol Bay and Yukon Kuskokwim. So,
17 since I'm not an expert or haven't even been in working
18 groups, I'm not sure and I'm just asking. It looks like
19 Alissa has a question. And John -- Alissa. John (In
20 Native), Alissa.

21
22 MR. ANDREW: Back in -- between 1980 and
23 '87, when (indiscernible) was in existence, we started
24 our work in group about caribou, working group over here,
25 and we had it started. And I think we allowed about 7
26 villages to have a special permit hunt, only 7 or 8 per
27 village, and it worked. Very few people get a taste of
28 -- couple caribou. And at about sometime -- about ten
29 years after it started to build up, the Mulchatna started
30 coming in. We worked together at the peak, there were
31 well over 200,000 at that time. When it got up that high
32 you were allowed 5 caribou per year. Then not too long
33 ago, they brought it down to 1 or 2. Eventually they
34 closed it as a majority, in our observance, majority had
35 to do with the weather because there were -- sometimes
36 their food source were snowed over and rained over and
37 frozen over on this side, mostly on this side. They
38 couldn't -- a lot of them didn't survive the winters,
39 and the wolves were killing them off fast. Because they
40 know that. Because I've seen it. When I took a group of
41 hunters from Bethel and (In Native) in one trip, we
42 counted from -- counting from little ways some -- few
43 miles from our village we counted 18 dead caribou. We
44 could tell that their tongue were just ripped out and
45 probably their testicles were ripped out. About 18 of
46 them. First 16 were (indiscernible) the last two. It was
47 a work of 5 wolf pack, only 5. When I talked to them, I
48 signaled the hunters that they are going with them, for
49 them to go after them. They took off. And what are you
50 going to do? I'm going to look for a caribou. As I said,

1 I'll meet you later in about one hour. They took off
2 chasing the wolf and I ended up getting my caribou. I
3 was pretty happy. While I was butchering, they came
4 around. They said they got four of them, the lost one
5 to the willows. Because when they're full, they can't
6 run. Especially when it's a little snow, a little deep.
7 They can't run. You catch them pretty quick. But for me,
8 I was more interested because my relatives told me, just
9 get one caribou for that day. That was my goal. And the
10 hunting parties got lucky. They went after a wolf, and
11 they were pretty lucky with theirs.

12
13 And when we used to do that, just, I
14 think the idea of right now on the Bristol Bay side,
15 they're going to try to -- last year, they tried to open
16 up a permit to hunt down there. Said I don't know what
17 happened. I think they were tracking the caribou on the
18 south side of the peninsula. The two herds and where
19 they are -- the ones in Mulchatna and the Peninsula
20 Herd. And if we ever do, we need to start a working
21 group on our side. That's probably doable, but right now
22 there are plenty of moose. I tell the young guys up at
23 my village, we could let them, let them be for a while,
24 wait till they build up, and then they can ask for an
25 opening. Yeah. Thank you, Madam Chair.

26
27 MR. MORGAN: Madam Chair, Walter. I heard
28 there's just an estimate number. There was 1800 caribou,
29 but they say we wouldn't be able to harvest them till
30 there's, you know, like 3,000, so.

31
32 (Pause)

33
34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, John.
35 But you reminded me of -- and I could be totally wrong.
36 I don't know if anyone's on from Togiak National, online.
37 I know there is some -- a hunt like you mentioned, a
38 permit draw hunt where they allow, like, maybe eight
39 permits around Dillingham. And they include nearby
40 villages. And I've asked them before to start including
41 us too. But what if that were to include, you know, even
42 us, not just Quinhagak, but this region also used to
43 depend on Mulchatna, you know, or part of this region.
44 Anyway, we can maybe ask if we can be a part of that
45 draw, not to make the numbers more -- not to add more
46 to the drawing hunt but say if there's eight permits to
47 include our area too. Anyway, I don't know if it's
48 possible, but it might be a Board of Game thing.

49
50

1 (In Native), I just remembered that.
2 Another thing, we --- hold on. We didn't mention and I
3 was only going to mention in the end, but as part of our
4 annual report and issues, we didn't mention Typhoon
5 Halong. So, thanks for that reminder, Brooke, by the
6 way. But I think it is so big. It's like the biggest
7 thing that happened this -- in '25 to our region. So, I
8 think we should include a statement about Halong. Okay.
9 Alissa.

10
11 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
12 Through the Chair. The Mulchatna Working Group that's
13 held in Togiak is ran by Kent Moos from the Togiak
14 Refuge, and it consists of a limited number of seats in
15 that. But it's mainly scientific seats. And there's only
16 two seats that are -- were available for like the Y-K
17 Delta RAC Chair. And then they did away with that seat.
18 And then there was one from the Togiak Refuge. They did
19 away with that seat. So, we need to bring that local
20 knowledge back into that working group. And the other -
21 - the second part of it is that the one that you're
22 talking about with that permit system is actually a
23 National Park Service. That's ran under a different
24 system. So -- and they can't. Yeah. You can't take snow
25 machines, you can't take any type of vehicle
26 transportation. You have to walk into the Park Service
27 down in Bristol Bay. It's a limited contained area that
28 this group of caribou resides only in that 24/7 year-
29 round. Thank you, Madam Chair.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana for that.
32 It's helpful. I wanted to update that Kenton Moos has
33 retired. So, I'm not sure if that means he's still in
34 that working group or not. But if he retired as regional
35 manager. Is it manager? For Togiak National Wildlife
36 Refuge. Maybe he's not a part of that anymore. But who
37 is acting right now is Stan Culling? So, Stanford
38 Culling. He loves it when we call him Stanford. So, you
39 can call him that.

40
41 MR. ANDREW: Madam Chair.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: John.

44
45 (Simultaneous speech)

46
47 MR. ANDREW: Madam Chair. (In Native).

48
49 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: I'll try to
50 translate. So.....

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(Simultaneous speech)

MR. ANDREW: (In Native) special action
(In Native) working group (In Native).

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: So, he mentioned that there is a herd of caribou that sticks closer to our region in the Kilbucks, and they don't maybe pass Quinhagak River as much. They come back and then Bristol Bay kind of has their own herd, if I'm correct. So, yeah. So, we have some that stay within our side of the mountains and the Kilbucks. Yeah. And maybe John's idea is to have maybe something like the Park Service does with the draw hunt. So only allowing just a minimal number of hunts to be done by hopefully, you know, local subsistence users. So that was another idea. How's our list looking, Brooke?

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. Well. So far -- I'm going to be relying on the transcripts a lot for this. But you had raised the issue of the (d)(1) lands, and that letter not being elevated. That might be something to just administratively us as OSM staff can help push for outside of this annual report process because that is something that action really should have been taken on, and it hasn't for whatever reason. I mean, some of those reasons are just because of everything that's been going on with the government and the shutdown and being understaffed and -- but still it's something that we should prioritize. So, we'll include that in the annual report, but hopefully we can get some movement on that too, behind the scenes. You guys will also be attaching the letter with your comments to the Secretary to your annual report and noting that a lot of the issues are at a high level that need to be dealt with, like especially the salmon management and working across departments.

We have Mulchatna Caribou that was brought up about the working group and the need for more local representation and making sure, you know, that's a cross-regional group with, you know, subsistence users represented. The impacts of Typhoon Halong on the residents of this region and the losses that were experienced. You know, to actual people's lives, to infrastructure having to be relocated. The impacts, you know, to subsistence foods that were lost. And then just noting to the Board that some issues continue from, you know, last year's annual report, you continue to be

1 concerned about the declines in salmon and caribou as
2 two of the most important subsistence foods.

3

4 (Pause)

5

6 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: That sounds like
7 along the lines of my list so far, too. What do you guys
8 think? So that's 5 right there. Yeah. Alissa.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Jackie. Thank you,
11 Madam Chair. Through the Chair. Can we also add in the
12 note of the typhoon that we want our residents that were
13 displaced to continue their rural priority? Thanks.

14

15 MR. PARKS: Madam Chair.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Henry.

18

19 MR. PARKS: Henry. I'm just going to joke
20 around with you guys a little bit. I believe it's time
21 for this party to submit a letter to our President to
22 resolve our fishing subsistence rights.

23

24 MS. MCDAVID: There's a motion to go
25 straight to the top. Thank you for breaking the ice,
26 Henry. I do see a note from our staff online that they're
27 not aware of a Mulchatna Caribou Working Group. There
28 is a Nushagak Caribou Planning Committee that Togiak
29 National Wildlife Refuge is a part of. So perhaps the
30 Council would want to note in the annual report that
31 there needs to be that working group and perhaps it
32 should include state, federal, and local people all
33 working together. Okay, I'm seeing lots of nods. Yes.

34

35 (Pause)

36

37 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: We have a comment
38 online by Stanislaus Sheppard. You're on.

39

40 MR. SHEPPARD: Quyana, Madame Chair.
41 Stanislaus Sheppard, Mountain Village, Lower Yukon,
42 speaking on behalf of myself, not representing my
43 current position as a Refuge Information Technician. But
44 why ungulates in (In Native). (In Native). Younger than
45 me. They have a lot of problems with health. Some of
46 them are current diabetic. Some of them have a stroke,
47 heart attack. All because we're getting cut off with
48 that one priority of important food that our elders were
49 grown up on. When I was small, we never heard of diabetic
50 or heart problems because of the elders having that rich

1 oil consumption in the salmon. (In Native). Quyana (In
2 Native). Quyana, Madam Chair.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana (In
5 Native), Stan. Stan was appreciating the wise words of
6 Phillip Peter and his views and yeah, he was just kind
7 of reiterating. Thank you.

8

9 MR. SHEPPARD: You're welcome, Madam
10 Chair.

11

12 (Pause)

13

14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay. Brooke, do
15 you think that's -- what -- our list so far is okay? Or
16 -- if we seem like we're missing something right under
17 our nose, feel free to give us a nudge, because it's
18 been a long three days.

19

20 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. The
21 only kind of other big issues that weren't really --
22 that were maybe brought up earlier in the meeting that
23 you could maybe decide to add on to your annual report
24 or the Secretarial Review were about the need to revise
25 the Magnuson-Stevens Act and add tribal members to the
26 North Pacific Fishery Management Council. But actually,
27 I think that was included in those fishery letters from
28 the All RAC meeting that you wanted to attach to the
29 Secretarial Review letter. So that would all kind of be
30 together. So maybe I misspoke that that wouldn't be
31 included. It would be, it just wasn't maybe mentioned
32 in the in the most direct manner. So, I guess now it's
33 on the record that it will be part of that.

34

35 The only other issue you know, I have
36 this note down from Henry being concerned about ATVs on
37 federal lands and some questions about that, but it
38 sounds like you were able maybe to talk to Spencer, the
39 Refuge Manager, about that. So, I think, you know, you
40 guys have covered a lot of the big topics. And if there's
41 anything you know that you missed, we will be meeting
42 again in March. And although you won't be able to add
43 additional topics to your report at that time, you could
44 always vote to send a letter. If there was something
45 that gets brought up that you want to be sure to elevate.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
48 Brooke. We'll move on to -- oh. We'll move on to voting.
49 Actually.

50

1 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah. We had such a long
2 discussion. This is Brooke. There is a motion. Well, is
3 there a motion? I don't think there was a motion. We --
4 yeah, I think we -- the next step as far as process
5 would be for someone to make a motion to include those
6 topics in your FY2 025 to the annual -- Annual Report
7 to the Federal Subsistence Board.

8
9 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair, I so move.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
12 Alissa. So, Alissa moves to identify the issues we talked
13 about today in our annual report to the Federal
14 Subsistence Board. Is there a second?

15
16 MR. PETER: Second the motion.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Phillip Peter
19 seconds the motion. And we've discussed it a lot, and -
20 - but we will need to -- I guess we don't need to,
21 because it's on record, but obviously we went through
22 our issues, prioritized them, made sure the big things
23 were included, so. And then some repeats and asking for
24 re-elevation of certain things. So, if there's not any
25 more discussion, I'd entertain a call for question.

26
27 MS. ROGERS: Question.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Question has
30 been called by Alissa Nadine Rogers. And we'll do a roll
31 call vote with Brooke.

32
33 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. So,
34 the motion is to submit the topics discussed as part of
35 your annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board for
36 FY2025. And we'll start with Tiffany.

37
38 MS. AGAYAR: Yes.

39
40 MS. MCDAVID: John Andrew.

41
42 MR. ANDREW: Yes.

43
44 MS. MCDAVID: Norma.

45
46 MS. EVAN: Yes.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: Henry.

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50 MR. PARKS: Yes.

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MS. MCDAVID: Phillip.

MR. PETER: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Francis.

MR. PRINCE: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Alissa.

MS. ROGERS: (In Native).

MS. MCDAVID: Chair Cleveland.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yes.

MS. MCDAVID: Motion passes, 8-0.

MS. MCDAVID: And congratulations. I believe that was your last action item for the meeting.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Congratulations to us. And then we'll move on to Other Business on the agenda. It's number 13. And starting with a: Office of Subsistence Management report. And that will be with Justin Koller.

MR. KOLLER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Members of the Council, this is Justin Koller, again representing the Office of Subsistence Management. It's hard to believe that it's been almost a year since we last reported to you on the activities of the Office of Subsistence Management. Due to, of course, these Council meetings being delayed for so long. So, I have about 5 to 8 minutes of updates for you. That's -- and we'll have time for questions at the end.

So, during the past year, OSM has continued to work. You know, of course, to ensure that federally qualified subsistence users have meaningful participation in our program in the public process and also to implement federal subsistence priority that's mandated by ANILCA Title VIII. We've also been busy bringing new leadership within the Office of Policy, Management, and Budget up to speed on the program and also any issues that require immediate attention. The Board's call for proposals to change federal wildlife regulations was opened back in February and March last year. The Board received 78 wildlife proposals from

1 across the state, and OSM staff developed the in-depth
2 analyses that were presented to you of these proposed
3 changes. OSM staff also analyzed 17 closure reviews that
4 were reviewed by this Council and will be deliberated
5 by the Board in April.

6
7 A couple of regulations updates for you.
8 On July 21st, the Federal Subsistence Management Program
9 regulations were actually moved from one part of the
10 Federal Register to another part. And this is purely due
11 to our move out of Fish and Wildlife Service into the
12 Office of Policy Management, Budget, in the Assistant
13 Secretary's Office. So, the regulations didn't change,
14 only where you can find them in the code of regulations
15 has changed. On that same day, OSM published a final
16 rule codifying the federal subsistence regulation
17 amendments made by the Board in February of 2025. That
18 rule primarily amended the federal regulations for the
19 take of fish and wildlife for 2025 -- excuse me, for
20 fish and shellfish for the 2025 through 2027 regulatory
21 period. The rule also removed the Ketchikan area from
22 the list of non-rural areas. It contained updates to
23 regulations for the subsistence taking of caribou in
24 Units 11, 12 and 13, and corrected an error from a recent
25 final rule regarding the take of wolf and wolverine in
26 Unit 17. And we when we published this rule, one line
27 in the regulations regarding wolf and wolverine in Unit
28 17 were just not included in that. So, we had to go and
29 correct that, and that had to do with approaching wolves
30 and wolverine with a snow machine. So that's corrected
31 in that fish and shellfish final rule.

32
33 The Board held their annual summer work
34 session on July 23rd and 24th. They reviewed and approved
35 replies to the fiscal year 2024 annual reports from the
36 ten Councils. They also adopted Deferred Wildlife
37 Proposal WP24-010 as modified by OSM. And that was the
38 wildlife proposal allowing the sale of brown bear hides
39 harvested by federally qualified subsistence users. That
40 proposal was supported by nine Councils. So, the
41 regulation for that will be effective once that wildlife
42 fire -- excuse me, this wildlife final rule is published
43 in the Code of Federal Regulations in summer 2026. So,
44 it's going to be published along with those federal
45 wildlife regulations after the Board meeting in April.

46
47 Council appointments update. So, during
48 2025, the Council member appointment cycle, the Board
49 received 50 applications from incumbents and new
50 applicants to fill 48 available seats. The Board also

1 received eight letters of interest from young leaders
2 that are interested in non-voting positions on the
3 Councils. So, for this particular Council, there were
4 five Council membership applications and one non-voting
5 leader letter of interest. The Board held their
6 executive session on July 24th last year and developed
7 the recommendations on these Council appointments to the
8 Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture. The new
9 application period will open up soon after the
10 Secretaries announce their 2025 appointments and that
11 new application period will be open for about 60 days.
12 Now, we expect the announcement to come out pretty soon
13 in that new period to open up for the next application
14 period. So, as usual, we're requesting the help of the
15 Council members in recruiting people, finding new
16 applicants in your region to apply for these open seats
17 on the Council, and also the non-voting young leader
18 seats.

19
20 We've been working for a few years on a
21 new subsistence permit application. It's a system that
22 basically houses all our permits and harvest data to
23 make them available to issue. And so, in 2024 is when
24 OSM initiated this modernization of the federal
25 subsistence permitting application. And part of this
26 effort was to make permits more readily available to
27 users through an online portal. So, the idea was for you
28 to be able to go online, access our system, and request
29 permits yourself. And then once they're issued, you
30 could print them out. So, you would never have to go
31 into an office or anything like that, kind of like what
32 you would do with the state, for instance. So, the new
33 system was released for agency use on September 30th.
34 And I say agency use because the public permit portal
35 is not functioning at this time. There's a few kinks we
36 need to work out, some problems with it. And that's
37 going to take some time to do. So, in the meantime you
38 should continue to obtain permits by contacting your
39 local issuing office, and they'll help you get your
40 permits until this portal is ready. And when the online
41 option is available, we'll broadcast that information
42 in a news release out to all the users in the state,
43 across the state. And there will be a link to that portal
44 on our website. But again, that's going to take a little
45 bit of time. So just continue to do what you've been
46 doing to get your permits.

47
48 We've had some staffing changes here at
49 OSM. Roughly 25% of our positions are vacant and many
50 employees are doing a, you know, double duty or more to

1 cover those for these vacancies. It was announced in
2 early December that the government-wide hiring freeze
3 was going to be lifted. We're awaiting further guidance
4 on how to proceed with filling our vacancies. Several
5 OSM employees retired earlier this year through the
6 deferred retirement program. This included OSM Fisheries
7 Biologist Karen Hyer. She was a specialist in the
8 Northwest Arctic region for many years and was heavily
9 involved in the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring
10 Program. So, a lot of expertise there that is gone. But
11 -- also, OSM Council Coordinator Lisa Hutchinson. She
12 was a coordinator for Kodiak/Aleutians and Northwest
13 Arctic Councils. She also retired. OSM Cultural
14 Anthropologist Pippa Kenner, who you know well. She
15 covered Bristol Bay and the YK Delta regions. She retired
16 and OSM Permit Specialist Derek Hildreth, who was
17 responsible for the permitting database, also retired
18 back in April. So, lots of vacancies still and still the
19 same, if not more, work to do on behalf of the users in
20 the program.

21
22 We were able to pick up two people, fill
23 two of those vacancies through lateral transfers from
24 other DOI agencies. One of those was Anna Senecal. She
25 joined the OSM Fisheries Division to fill one of the
26 three vacant fisheries positions. And Caron McKee
27 actually came back to OSM as our Subsistence Outreach
28 Specialist. She worked for us for many years. And we're
29 really happy to have her back and also to have Anna join
30 us. Katya Wessels was the Official Acting Deputy
31 Director for Operations for OSM through January 5th, and
32 now our Administration Operations Specialist has stepped
33 in to fill that role for the next couple of months. So,
34 lots of musical chairs at OSM to fill vacancies and
35 cover the work that we need to do on behalf of you all
36 and the program.

37
38 We've been working to strengthen our
39 collaboration with the State of Alaska also. The OSM
40 Director and Deputy Directors have been conducting
41 monthly in-person meetings with the Alaska Department
42 of Fish and Game, their Deputy Commissioner and Federal
43 Subsistence Board Liaison. These meetings are helping
44 to ensure strong communication and collaboration with
45 the state, especially with data sharing and proposal
46 analysis reviews. We value their input greatly, and it
47 strengthens our understanding and your understanding of
48 the issues and helps you make the best decisions possible
49 when you're making recommendations to the Board. OSM and
50 the Interagency Staff Committee held a workshop earlier

1 this year to identify opportunities for strengthening
2 the agency's relationship with the state. It's produced
3 some, you know, several action-oriented results. We're
4 working on following the results of that meeting to try
5 and further strengthen our relationship and data sharing
6 with the state and so forth. So, the work is ongoing
7 there.

8
9 A couple upcoming meeting dates. There's
10 a Tribal and ANSCA consultations on wildlife regulatory
11 proposals and closure reviews that actually took place
12 on August 19th -- excuse me, 19th to 21st. Several tribal
13 and corporation representatives participated in those
14 meetings. There's also going to be another opportunity
15 for tribes and ANSCA corporations to consult with the
16 Board on the proposals and closure reviews just before
17 the April 2026 Federal Subsistence Board meeting.
18 Council Chairs are welcome and encouraged to attend
19 these consultations. We would like to remind the Tribes
20 and corporations that if the scheduled dates for these
21 consultations don't work for you, you can always request
22 a different date or time by emailing the OSM Tribal
23 Liaison, Orville Lind, and you can reach him at our
24 subsistence email address at subsistence@ios.doi.gov.
25 The Board will hold an FRMP work session on February 5th
26 to review the Draft Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan.
27 We're going to or they're going to accept additional
28 oral comments, and they're going to make a
29 recommendation to the OSM Director on the suite of
30 projects to include in that final 2026 Fisheries
31 Resource Monitoring Plan. And the Board is going to hold
32 a wildlife regulatory meeting, of course in April 20th
33 -- excuse me, on April 20th through the 24th to consider
34 the wildlife closure reviews, and proposals to change
35 federal wildlife regulations for the 2026 to 2028
36 regulation -- or regulatory years. This will be the last
37 opportunity to comment on those closure reviews and
38 proposals the Board will consider.

39
40 I have a litigation update as well. The
41 first case was the United States v. Alaska, which is the
42 Ninth Circuit Court. In 2022, the U.S. brought this
43 action against the state of Alaska to resolve a dispute
44 over the regulation of subsistence fishing on the
45 Kuskokwim River within the Y-K Delta Wildlife Refuge.
46 In March 2024, the court granted summary judgment to the
47 U.S. and issued a permanent injunction against the
48 state. The state appealed this decision. On August 20th,
49 2025, the Ninth Circuit Panel ruled in favor of the
50 United States. The court upheld its previous holdings

1 that ANILCA defines public lands to include navigable
2 waters in which the United States holds reserved water
3 rights based on three previous Ninth Circuit decisions,
4 commonly referred to as the Katie John cases. The court
5 rejected the state's argument that Katie John cases were
6 clearly irreconcilable with *Sturgeon v. Frost*. The
7 *Sturgeon II* case, and *Sackett v. the EPA and the State*
8 of Alaska petitioned the Supreme Court to take up the
9 case, and they recently declined to do so.

10
11 The second case is the State of Alaska
12 Department of Fish and Game v. Federal Subsistence
13 Board. And that was also before the Ninth Circuit. On
14 June 2nd, 2025, a Ninth Circuit Panel ruled in favor of
15 the United States in this lawsuit filed by the State of
16 Alaska after the Board authorized an emergency
17 subsistence hunt in 2020 for moose and deer on federal
18 public lands in the vicinity of Kake, Alaska. The court's
19 basis for upholding the Board's decision was twofold.
20 First, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation
21 Act, or ANILCA, provides the Board with the authority
22 to provide access to subsistence resources on federal
23 lands. And second, the Board has the authority to
24 authorize an emergency hunt to ensure that rural
25 residents of Alaska have a reasonable opportunity to
26 reach and use subsistence resources found on federal
27 lands in Alaska. The Panel also concluded that the
28 state's claims that the Board improperly delegated the
29 administration of the Kake hunt to a tribe were not
30 properly before the court, and that just legally means
31 that the court declined to consider it because it was -
32 - yeah, they just declined to consider it.

33
34 So that's pretty much all I have. And,
35 you know, on behalf of OSM we just want to thank you for
36 your service. I said this before during the meeting, but
37 you all do like a really important job in informing this
38 program, representing the people of your region, and
39 helping people throughout the Alaska continue to have
40 access to -- to their subsistence resources. So, we value
41 your expertise, your volunteer contribution. You're all
42 here voluntarily, and we appreciate and respect that.
43 And, you know, just a sincere thank you from OSM for
44 your commitment to the program.

45
46 And on a personal note, I spent most of
47 my career in Southeast Alaska working with the Southeast
48 Council and you can get kind of sheltered and stuck down
49 in Southeast. So, when I came to OSM in 2022, I was
50 assigned to the Kodiak/Aleutians RAC in the Southcentral

1 RAC. And I did that for a few years. This is my first
2 time -- I'm inching my way North and West into Alaska,
3 and I found this -- I was very excited to come to Bethel
4 for the first time, and I found this meeting very
5 enlightening. And it's very -- I really enjoyed hearing
6 your heartfelt testimony. The truth as Phillip Peter,
7 Sr., calls it. We heard the truth from you all. And you
8 sprinkled some jokes in there and made us laugh and --
9 at the same time. So anyway, once again, just a really
10 sincere thank you to this Council for all your support
11 to the program. Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
14 Justin. That was so nice. Thank you for your work, too.
15 I did have a question on the permits but then I asked
16 Brooke, and she answered it, but still wanted me to put
17 it on the record about the permits being online and I'm
18 happy for that option. But as you know, maybe not
19 everyone in our region is tech savvy or even have the
20 means. Maybe some choose not to like elders. Some elders
21 just choose not to mess with the internet or have, you
22 know, Facebook or anything like that. So, happy to know
23 that the original way will still be an option for those
24 unable to do it online for permits. Thanks.

25
26 Does anyone have anything to say on the
27 OSM report? If not, can we move on to b: 805(c) Report
28 Summary, which will be on page 221. And is that Brooke
29 or -- oh, yeah, it's Brooke. So, page 221, 805(c) Report
30 Summary.

31
32 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
33 I'll actually ask you to turn one more page to 223 where
34 there's a table. 223. And this is actually a sort of a
35 review. I presented this to you at the last meeting.
36 I'll just briefly touch on it since we're nearing the
37 end of the day. But what your 805(c) Report is, it's a
38 complicated way of saying how the Board, the Federal
39 Subsistence Board voted on proposals versus how you guys
40 voted on proposals. And if you remember, last year was
41 a fisheries year, and there was really only one Yukon-
42 Kuskokwim Delta region proposal that you all were
43 particularly concerned about. And that's the first one
44 that's here at the top of the table. That was FP25-15.
45 And if you remember that proposal was asking for setnets
46 to be closer together in the tributaries. And you guys
47 did not want that. John Andrew's giving the middle
48 finger, for the record. So, you'll be happy to know
49 then, John, that the Board -- you guys recommended
50 opposing that proposal, and the Board did reject it. And

1 so, I just wanted to repeat that update. I usually try
2 to give those updates as soon as we can after the Board
3 meeting. So, you kind of heard that at your last meeting,
4 but it's been so long since we met last time. That's the
5 main review. And all the other proposals were those
6 crossover proposals for fisheries. And then Justin had
7 mentioned that brown bear proposal already that was
8 deferred. The Board finally acted on that.

9
10 And if there's no questions about that,
11 I can move on and just -- to the correspondence update.
12 And the only letter that you guys voted to send at your
13 last meeting was that (d) (1) lands letter you requested
14 to elevate. And we already talked about that as well.
15 And I did hear back, actually, from Katya, and she let
16 me know that the Board is hopefully at their work session
17 going to be once again revisiting those letters that
18 were requested to be elevated last year. So that'll just
19 be here in a couple of weeks. So hopefully by the time
20 we meet in March, we'll have some good news for you that
21 those were passed on.

22
23 So that's the update on correspondence.
24 And the last thing for other business is just any
25 miscellaneous Council business. And the only -- what I
26 had noted was a question for you guys. Throughout the
27 meeting, I heard a couple of ideas about Board of Game
28 proposals, and I thought it could be helpful if a couple
29 people wanted to get together on teleconference before
30 our next meeting for a small working group to talk about
31 those. That way we can bring them back to the Council.
32 Any ideas, And the full Council could review or vote on
33 those if there are some that you guys might want to
34 submit. Especially that one about the boat under power.
35 There was also, Walter had an idea about extending the
36 moose season near Kalskag. And maybe Mr. Grant Copeland,
37 who called in, might have some information for us to
38 review about his proposal and then also had a note about
39 the coyote harvest limit. Maybe because we increased,
40 we're -- or you guys recommended the Board increase that
41 in federal regulations. That'll misalign it with the
42 state regulations. So, if you wanted to submit a similar
43 proposal to Board of Game so that it would be aligned
44 again you would have the opportunity to do that. And
45 there might be other ideas that you guys have too, but
46 those are the ones that kind of came up throughout the
47 meeting. So, if you like the idea of a working group we
48 just need a motion. And we could set up a time to do a
49 teleconference to talk about those before our next
50 meeting. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you, Brooke. I think that's a good idea and it's needed. If everyone agrees, I would entertain a motion to -- for a couple of people from our RAC to work with Brooke as, like a small working group to meet on proposals before our next meeting.

MS. ROGERS: Second.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Alissa. Alissa.....

MS. MCDAVID: Who made the motion?

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa moves.

MS. MCDAVID: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Is there a second?

MR. PRINCE: Second.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Francis seconds. Thank you. And any volunteers? I feel like I need to, so I'll volunteer.

MS. ROGERS: I'll be there.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Cool.

MS. AGAYAR: I'll volunteer too.

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Okay, great. So, we have us three, and Walter will ask if he wants in, and -- well, we can even open it up to, like, whoever wants to join or is that...?

MS. MCDAVID: I think there's just -- this is Brooke. The only rule is it should be like, less than quorum. Oh, so it's not considered a full.....

(Simultaneous speech)

CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Oh, yeah.

MS. MCDAVID:Council meeting, but it can also be if, you know, if certain people aren't available, if you want to have alternate someone. I don't

1 think that's really a problem as long as it's less than
2 quorum. So, the volunteers don't have to be set in stone
3 at this time, but it's just helpful for me to know who
4 to reach out to first. Thanks.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah, just give
7 us a reminder when it gets closer, if you don't mind.
8 Any other miscellaneous or -- actually, we have to --
9 we did some discussion, so I guess the part we're really
10 on is, I'll entertain a question.

11
12 MS. AGAYAR: Question.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Question has
15 been called by Tiffany. All in favor of the motion, say
16 aye.

17
18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Aye. All
21 opposed, same sign.

22
23 (No response)

24
25 Motion carries. Any other miscellaneous
26 Council business?

27
28 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
29 That was everything on my list. But this would be an
30 opportunity if Council members had anything else they
31 wanted to bring up before we move towards Closing
32 Comments.

33
34 MS. ROGERS: Madam Chair.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Alissa.

37
38 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Madam Chair. Quyana
39 (In Native) being here. I'm so sorry I wasn't here the
40 first two days, so it's so good to see you guys all the
41 time. And I always love the knowledge you bring and the
42 expertise you bring because it helps us younger
43 generation fully understand the holistic perspective and
44 making good decisions for our future generations. So,
45 thank you guys so much. I have visitation with my kids
46 at five, so if I can be excused, that -- it'll be okay.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Alissa.
49 You are excused. Thanks for coming today. Good to see
50 you. John, (In Native). Closing commentary (In Native).

1

2 MR. ANDREW: (In Native). I'd like to
3 thank everybody that attended the meeting, especially
4 our staff that make it possible. And I have one major
5 concern concerning the False Pass chum closure. I'd like
6 to -- I know I can find a way to go down there because
7 somebody offered me a free ticket if I can talk my way
8 into it, and hopefully I'll get to go, because putting
9 a chum cap is really very important, because all these
10 years they never did. Because last year we almost got
11 it. But somebody stabbed us on our back on the way out,
12 and it hurt. Might have begun (In Native), we got to try
13 to come back in numbers and try to somehow, somehow and
14 make a difference this year. Go back and show them that
15 we're still asking for help. Quyana, Madame Chair. (In
16 Native). Especially the members too. But those two are
17 those few across there, I think sometimes they tend to
18 forget us too. (In Native).

19

20 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, John.
21 (In Native). Francis.

22

23 MR. PRINCE: I just want to say thanks
24 to all the older guys for being here. You know, I learned
25 a lot from them too. When they tell their stories, even
26 Phillip, when he mentioned about his mom and his other
27 relative. You know, I believe what he says, you know, I
28 100% believe his wording. You know, we need to pass down
29 our things to us younger people, and then we need to
30 pass it down to our upcoming generation. Thank you, guys.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
33 Francis. Should we include staff or just...? Okay. We'll
34 go to Walter.

35

36 MR. MORGAN: I guess the weather turned
37 bad because I didn't do a closing comment. Yeah. It's
38 always good to be here. I learned a lot from that guy
39 walking to the coffee machine. You know it -- I really
40 cherish our elders because we're -- they're a backbone
41 of everything. I mean, if it wasn't for them, we wouldn't
42 be here. And that's the way I look at it. I -- and
43 Phillip, he knows all my family, you know, all my uncles
44 and aunts and, you know, especially, he never forget my
45 blue-eyed aunties that can speak Yup'ik, you know. So,
46 and my dad also speak Yup'ik, you know, he tell a story
47 and he tell them guys, you don't speak English, you
48 speak Yup'ik. It sounds more exciting. So, then I get
49 mad at my dad, and I say, well, I can't understand.
50 Well, we'll tell you in English after we're done. So,

1 it's really -- I wish I would have learned Yup'ik. Big
2 loss for me. You know, but I can understand broken, you
3 know, Yup'ik. But not all of the words. But it was a
4 pleasure working with everybody and hopefully see you
5 next year. Thank you. On our next meeting.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
8 Walter. Good to see you back so soon. Phillip (In Native.

9

10 MR. PETER: Yeah. Thank you very much. I
11 was worried about the quorum. I always worry about the
12 quorum whenever we have a meeting. Walter mentioned I
13 know all Walter's family. When I was young, about ages
14 of 17, me and my cousins, three of us. I told them --
15 we like -- I liked to tour Kuskokwim from my village all
16 the way up to Red Devil, when I was young. And then we
17 go up there and stop over to Tuluksak and then stop over
18 to -- we traveled to Kalskag, Lower and Upper Kalskag.
19 And his uncle, George Morgan, I went up to his store.
20 He owns the store in (In Native). A gas station up there.
21 We went in and his uncle said, (In Native). We said --
22 I said to him -- I asked, (In Native) what are you guys
23 doing? His uncle George. And ever since I know his uncle,
24 I stop over, I get groceries, and guess, stop over. I
25 always ask questions. When I was young I always asked
26 questions to my elders. He was elder. I asked him about
27 the hunting area, the sloughs, the lakes. Where the
28 (indiscernible) games are. He knew. I learned from him.
29 And then I went up to Aniak. Go to a northern commercial
30 company, AC. Now they call them AC nowadays. Go over
31 there. And Billy Morgan came over. Hey, fellas, look
32 like you guys come from Akiachak. Yeah. What are you
33 guys doing? We're touring these villages. And then, I
34 know all Morgan boys, his cousins. And I went over to
35 (In Native), I didn't know I have auntie, uncle, uncles,
36 (In Native). And then from there I went to Napaimute,
37 where Hoffman's sister. Yeah. Eddie Hoffman's sister.

38

39 MR. MORGAN: Agnes.

40

41 MR. PETER: Yeah. Agnes. Yeah. He is
42 husband, when they were alive they got -- they stayed
43 there, and Eddie Hoffman sister, really fluent in
44 Yup'ik, really fluent. He showed us -- that lady, Eddie's
45 sister showed us the tributary, the creek, (In Native).
46 They call it (In Native). We camped over that straight
47 slough right above (In Native). Yeah. We stopped
48 overnight, and then we went to Crooked Creek. Crooked.
49 I met Joe Parent, and his sister, and his father up
50 there. They got Super Cub. And then Georgetown. And then

1 Red Devil. I met Robert Vanderpool. He was young, almost
2 same age as me. He was really excited that -- his dad
3 used to lend over to Akiachak to meet Maurice
4 (indiscernible), the store owner. Visit him. I know all
5 the tributaries, their names, the creeks, the sloughs.
6 I put them in my heart. That's why I know. So, maybe
7 next time when we have a meeting, I hope we will have
8 quorum. I always worry about the quorum. Because if we
9 don't have a quorum, we will -- our work will not be
10 done. Right now, we have quorum, we've done proposals
11 and the reports. So that nowadays every meeting, the top
12 (indiscernible) I was hoping. I know he hope what we've
13 been doing in the meeting. What we've been doing, done.
14 Quyana (In Native) and Happy New Year to all of you
15 guys. I hope we'll meet again. Next meeting with quorum.
16 Quyana.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Phillip.
19 (In Native), Phillip. (In Native) Phillip. Henry.

20
21 MR. PARKS: Yeah. I want to thank the OSM
22 staff for being here and our Coordinator. I know you
23 guys do all the hard work for us, too, as Council
24 members, and I want to thank all the Council members
25 here that are with us. And some are on -- they're online,
26 and we try and do all the hard work working on proposals,
27 working together. And we do succeed and get our work
28 done. But it's hard for me, you know, it's not easy for
29 us to make decisions sometimes as are pretty hard
30 decisions to take care of. But I thank all of you guys
31 here, and I hope that the good Lord will take us home,
32 safely back home. Quyana.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Henry.
35 I'm not good at goodbyes. Actually, I hope, of course,
36 I hope to see you all again at the next meeting because
37 it's such an honor to work with you all, Council and
38 staff, too. And I appreciate everyone who comes and
39 speaks from the public as well. Yeah. It's an honor to
40 serve our region where the peoples believe that food is
41 the best and biggest gift. That's what my grandpa always
42 says. So, I value, you know, everyone's words and views
43 and learn a lot from you guys. And yeah, we're all here
44 for the same thing, for our food, which is our gift. And
45 I'm happy to know that you all know that too.

46
47 But yeah, I know, you know, Halong was
48 -- did not affect all of us, but it did most of us. And
49 I just don't want to forget, you know, forget them. And
50 I know we didn't speak as much about Halong here, but I

1 wanted to share a quote that I guess I said for our work
2 when we did an article after Halong. But it says, as
3 Typhoon Halong tests the strength of our coasts, the
4 Yup'ik people are reminding us what perseverance truly
5 means, to stand firm in the face of loss, to rebuild
6 from the heart and remember that healing Alaska is not
7 the work of one people alone, but all who call this land
8 home. So that's -- I thought of that quote because, I
9 mean, I feel that this group really does work together,
10 and we're so selfless and we're here for, you know, not
11 really for ourselves. So, I appreciate all the time you
12 put into it voluntarily. And even though it's voluntary,
13 it's so valued. Quyana. (In Native). Tiffany.

14
15 MS. AGAYAR: Sorry I scared everybody on
16 the first day. But it's been good to be around everybody
17 here the past couple days. I'm always enjoying
18 continuously learning from our elders and even the young
19 ones too, my age. And then especially learning from
20 different aspects too. You guys are good teachers and I
21 get -- I tend to get shy and forget that I'm not sitting
22 in a public seat right now, but hopefully get to see you
23 guys in eight weeks. Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Quyana, Tiffany.
26 We'll go to Norma. Norma, are you still online?

27
28 MS. EVAN: Hi, Madam Chairman. I'm on.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you. We're
31 doing our closing statements if you want to -- if you
32 have a closing statement.

33
34 MS. EVAN: I'd like to thank OSM staff,
35 Brooke, member Chair Cleveland and our Elders on the
36 Board. It was good to hear Yup'ik speaking, and I'm glad
37 I understand. And I always think about you guys during
38 the fall time. I'm hoping you guys are fulfilling your
39 moose hunt and ptarmigan hunting and wishing all of you
40 guys a safe season till we meet again. God bless all of
41 you guys. Thank you. I appreciate all of you guys.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you,
44 Norma. That concludes the Y-K Delta Council Regional
45 Advisory Council. And Brooke would like to say something
46 now.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: I just want to say quyana
49 (In Native) to all of you. I echo the words that Justin
50 shared earlier, and you guys really are so important to

1 this program. And, you know, you're a pretty special
2 Council. You guys keep it old school out here. You are
3 the only Council that uses a translator. It's pretty
4 magical to be able to be a part of this and to hear your
5 knowledge passed down in your local language. And even
6 though I can't understand directly what you're saying,
7 having it come through Patrick, it adds power to your
8 words. So, I hope you always feel empowered to continue
9 speaking Yup'ik. And I hope that we can always continue
10 to support bilingual meetings for you guys. So, thank
11 you to all your contributions for three long days. And
12 to build on what Phillip said about quorum, I wanted to
13 give a big shout out to Norma for being online with us
14 for the first day especially, we wouldn't have had quorum
15 without Norma. So, thank you, Norma, for participating
16 on the teleconference and for everyone else. And I'll
17 turn it over to the Chair to close us out. Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank you again.
20 If that's all, do we do a motion to adjourn?

21

22 MR. PARKS: Madame Chair.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Yeah. Henry.

25

26 MR. PARKS: (In Native) meeting (In
27 Native).

28

29 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Henry Parks
30 motions to adjourn at 5:05 p.m. Is there a second?

31

32 MR. PRINCE: Francis. Second.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Seconded by
35 Francis. All in favor of the motion, say aye.

36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: All opposed,
40 same sign.

41

42 (No response)

43

44 CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Motion carries,
45 and we're adjourned. Qu yana. Good timing.

46

47 (Off record)

48

49 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 99 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the YUKON KUSKOKWIN DELTA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME III recorded on the 21s day of January 2026;

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 6th day of February 2026.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager - Transcriptions