FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING

TELECONFERENCE - ALASKA
MARCH 30, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Christianson, Chairman
Rhonda Pitka, Public Member
Chris McKee, Bureau of Land Management
Greg Siekaniec, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Don Striker, National Park Service
Gene Peltola, Bureau of Indian Affairs
David Schmid, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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PROCEEDINGS

(Teleconference - 3/30/3021)

(On record)

MS. DETWILER: This is Sue Detwiler, we're a couple of minutes before 2:00 but I'll just start with a kind of preliminary check to see which Board members and supporting Staff are online right now. And just in case folks don't know me, I'm Sue Detwiler, the Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence Management. And I'm just going to quickly start with -- do a quick run through to see who we have online.

BIA, is Gene Peltola on.


MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Gene.

BLM. I understand Chad is not going to make it today, Chris McKee, are you here?

MR. MCKEE: I'm here Sue. Good afternoon, everybody.

MS. DETWILER: Thanks, Chris.

Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: I'm here.

MS. DETWILER: Great.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg, I heard you.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Yep, thank you, Sue.

MS. DETWILER: Dave Schmid, I heard you, you're on from Forest Service.

MR. SCHMID: Yeah, thanks Sue, I'm here.

MS. DETWILER: Great. I'm not sure if Rhonda Pitka was able to make it, Rhonda are you on?
0003
1  MS. PITKA: Hi, yes, I'm on.
2
3  MS. DETWILER: Excellent.
4
5  And, Charlie Brower, Public Member, are you on?
6
7  (No comments)
8
9  MS. DETWILER: Okay. I'm not sure if
10  Charlie's going to be able to attend.
11
12  Finally, Chair Anthony Christianson,
13  are you on.
14
15  CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I'm on,
16  Sue. Thank you.
17
18  (Pause)
19
20  MS. DETWILER: This is Sue Detwiler,
21  and I believe we are ready to go, we have a -- it looks
22  like we have a quorum of the Board members and we have
23  the Staff members who are supporting this call so I
24  would say we could go ahead and open up the call
25  Operator and then turn it over to the Chair to begin.
26
27  OPERATOR: Okay, and, Pippa, this is
28  the Operator again, I'm turning the call over to you,
29  correct?
30
31  MS. KENNER: Yes.
32
33  OPERATOR: Okay, all right, give me
34  just a moment and we will begin.
35
36  (Pause)
37
38  OPERATOR: Welcome and thank you for
39  standing by. All lines have been placed in a listen
40  only mode for today's presentation. The call is being
41  recorded, if you have any objections, you may
42  disconnect at this time. I will now introduce your
43  host, Ms. Pippa Kenner.
44
45  You may begin.
46
47  MS. KENNER: Thank you, Operator. This
48  is Pippa Kenner, and I would like to open the meeting
by introducing the Federal Subsistence Board Chairman,
Tony Christianson.

MS. DETWILER: This is Sue Detwiler, Chair, Tony Christianson, are you online still?

(No comments)

MS. DETWILER: Okay. So Tony may have dropped off, I'm going to run through the list of Board members again and make sure we still have a quorum in case other folks got dropped off and for the record.

MS. KENNER: Sue, can you.....

MS. DETWILER: Did you have something, Pippa.

MS. KENNER: Yes, please, Sue, it could be that he has not made it on to the speaker's list and I will check that now. Otherwise he's just on mute.

MS. DETWILER: Yeah. Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm back on Sue.

REPORTER: Tony, are you there?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I'm here, this is Tony.

REPORTER: Thank you.

MS. DETWILER: Okay. So before we were officially being recorded we did run through the -- do a quorum call for the Board and all members are present on the call except for Charlie Brower. So unless our Solicitor thinks we need to go through on the record of the roll call again I would just turn it over to Chair, Anthony Christianson to kick us off.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hey, yeah, welcome everyone, this is Anthony Christianson. Welcome to the teleconference today, thank you for taking your time. And we'll go ahead and call on Sue there so she can review and adopt the agenda and get us started for the day, and just ask, you know, before we get started God Bless the proceedings today, and, thank
you, Sue.

MS. DETWILER: Yeah. Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, this is Sue Detwiler, Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence Management with Fish and Wildlife Service. And we have one agenda item today, and let's see I'll just review the agenda.

It's fairly short. One substantive agenda item. After we review and adopt the agenda, the main agenda item is for the Board to address the Wildlife Emergency Special Action Request WSA21-02 which would increase the harvest limit from two to three moose in the Unit 18 remainder hunt area through the current season, which ends on April 30th, 2021. So once the Board addresses that special action, the final action would be to adjourn.

So I'd give it back to the Board to act on the agenda.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, go ahead, you have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, I move to adopt the agenda.

MR. STRIKER: Second, Park Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that motion to adopt the agenda and second. Any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any opposition, same sign.

(No opposing votes)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

MS. DETWILER: Okay. So I guess that brings us to the next action item which is to address the Wildlife Special Action Request 21-02, and Robbin LaVine is giving the analysis on that.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Sue. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the Board. My name is Robbin LaVine, and I'm an Anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. For those of you listening online you can find a copy of the analysis on our website.

Emergency Special Action WSA21-02 was submitted by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council and it requests the Federal Subsistence Board increase the harvest limit for moose in Unit 18 remainder from two moose to three moose through April 30th, 2021, which is the current hunt season.

The proponent states the requested action is needed to support subsistence uses and to ensure longterm sustainability to the area moose population. The proponent acknowledges the lower Yukon River moose population is currently much larger than can be supported by available habitat. They express concern that this moose population is -- if this moose population is not reduced then it is at risk of crashing. The proponent underscores the urgency of this request by pointing to the dramatically low 2020 salmon returns and the recent closure to the harvest of Mulchatna caribou that have left many families without enough food for the winter. They further state that expanding harvest opportunity of the super abundance moose population in the lower Yukon River will help support sharing with those in need of subsistence foods throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region.

In early 2021 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game along with Refuge Staff surveyed the Unit 18 remainder hunt areas of the lowest Yukon, Andreafsky, and Paimut areas. Unofficially, they said preliminary numbers show increases in moose populations in all three areas since the last time they were surveyed. Staff estimate there are between 20 and 25,000 moose in that area and last year there were
between 7 to 800 moose harvested. These preliminary population updates were presented to the YK Delta Council at their March 2021 meeting by the ADF&G area biologist. He stressed that this lower Yukon River moose population was still growing despite the very liberal moose hunt regulations currently in place.

At the Council meeting, ADF&G Staff also discussed the observed need for more subsistence harvest of moose in other areas of the YK Delta. In the Unit 18 Kuskokwim hunt area the number of harvest tickets issued for moose greatly increased with over 500 additional permits issued this year reaching a maximum harvest rate of near 10 percent. Official population estimates should be available this week.

If this Emergency Special Action Request is approved by the Board, the moose harvest limit in Unit 18 remainder will increase from two to three moose through the current hunting season ending on April 30th. No effects are expected for non-Federally-qualified users.

The requested increase harvest limit could slow the continued growth of this moose population, which would be a positive effect. In addition the expanded harvest limit might promote further sharing of moose throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim region and support subsistence families in need.

If this Emergency Special Action Request is not approved by the Board, Federally-qualified subsistence users, many of whom have limited subsistence resources will not be able to take additional moose from an area that is exceeding moose population goals and habitat capacity.

The OSM conclusion is to support Emergency Special Action WSA21-02 with the following justification.

There is currently a demonstrated need for more moose harvest opportunity to support subsistence communities throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region and ample moose population in the Unit 18 remainder hunt area to help address this continuation of subsistence use request.

Thank you all, and I'm ready for your
questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
that. Any questions from the Board.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Gene,
good to hear you, you have the floor.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good to hear from you as well. Yes, Robbin, thank you
for your presentation, I appreciate that. And I don't
recall hearing it, but could you refresh my memory on
which villages have a positive C&T with regard to moose
harvest within GMU18 remainder.

MS. LAVINE: Oh, gosh, that's a lot.
So that would be residents of Unit 18, Aniak,
Chuathbaluk, Upper Kalskag and Lower Kalskag have
customary and traditional use determination for moose
in Unit 18, that portion of the Yukon River drainage up
stream of Russian Mission, and that portion of
Kuskokwim River drainage up stream, but excluding the
Tuluksak River drainage. Residents of Unit 18, St.
Michaels, Stebbins, Upper Kals -- Kalskag and Lower
Kalskag have a customary and traditional use
determination for moose in Unit 18, that portion north
of a line from Cape Romanzof to Kusilvak Mountain to
Mountain Village and all drainages north of the Yukon
River down stream from Marshall. Residents of Unit 18,
Lower Kalskag, and Kalskag have a customary and
traditional use determination for moose in the Unit 18
remainder area of this customary and traditional use
determination. And I would say that actually -- and I
would remind you that the Unit 18 remainder hunt area
is not the same thing as the remainder of the Unit 18
area discussed for customary and traditional use
determinations. It's a complicated area.

So I would say all of those folks.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Followup, if I may. So, Robbin, the followup on that
-- I appreciate the descriptor and the reason I was
asking is in the analysis, one of the justifications
providing the additional moose bag within this area is
due to the high population. So with your recent effort
going through those communities that are eligible to
participate, if the Board chose to consider and chose to act upon it, would there be an administrative mechanism which would allow any Federally-qualified user from outside the positive C&T area to go harvest moose within GMU18 remainder, that could provide for additional harvest if population rise is a concern at this time.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any other questions.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Gene, you have the floor.

MR. PELTOLA: Yeah, thank you, Tony. Yeah, I was wondering if you could followup on that, please, Robbin. Is there administrative action with the Board's potential action on this special action request which would allow for Federally-qualified users outside the list you just referred to, to be able to harvest from this population.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you. Through the Chair, this is Robbin LaVine. This analysis does not address an expansion of the C&T. But those eligible for participation in the hunt in Unit 18 remainder are broad and inclusive of all communities in the Unit 18 area, unless somebody can -- unless somebody can correct me, I believe it's expansive of the folks within the Unit 18 remainder, and all of the villages that I mentioned, but we have not requested -- or the proponent did not request an expansion of the C&T or an inclusion of all rural residents for participation in this hunt, and that would take further analysis.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Robbin, appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
questions from the Board for Robbin.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, well, thank you, Robbin, appreciate that. We'll move on to Pippa Kenner, ISC recommendation.

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record my name is Pippa Kenner, and I'm the Acting Policy Coordinator of the Office of Subsistence Management here in Anchorage. I worked with the InterAgency Staff Committee to develop a recommendation for Wildlife Special Action WSA21-02.

They wrote: The OSM Staff analysis provided a thorough and accurate evaluation of the Emergency Wildlife Special Action Request. The InterAgency Staff Committee concurs with the analysis and recommends the Federal Subsistence Board approve this special action request.

The ISC believes that this action will not have significant effects on the status of the moose population in the hunt area, it might be beneficial to mitigating herd size amidst habitat limitations.

Additionally, this action will provide more harvest opportunity for local people at a time when other large land mammal and fish resources in the area are depleted.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Pippa, appreciate that. Any questions for the ISC.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll ask if the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council Chair, Ray.

MR. ONEY: Yes, good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. Ray Ony for the record, Chairman for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Advisory Council.

As you know Unit 18 on the lower Yukon River has seen a significant increase in the moose
population in our area thanks to the moratorium that we
instigated back in the early '90s. As a result of that
we asked for a five year moratorium because of the
people that -- the hunters that were going great
distances to harvest their moose in Unit 21, I believe,
up in Paimiut area, Russian Mission area, that was our
main moose hunting area. And a lot of people have not
catched their moose because of the great distances that
they had to travel. A lot of times they would come
back with no moose, and as a result of that the people
in the Lower Yukon asked for a five year moratorium.
When the five year moratorium came there was an
increase in the moose population in our area, and as a
result of that the people in Unit 18 asked for two more
years of the moratorium. So in the late, I believe,
'90s, is when we had our first moose hunt. And as a
result of that we have begun to see increases in the
moose population in Unit 18 and over the years the
moose population has exploded. And we're continuing to
see the moose increase in our area and that has given
us to question the browsing that the moose depend on in
our area. And we've asked for a moose survey every
year just to see what the moose population is doing in
our area. And as a result of that we're still seeing
increases in the moose in our area.

And because of the salmon crash that we
had last year, both the chinook and the chum salmon
that were destined for the Yukon River has been the
poorest that I've seen over the years and not too many
people have harvested their needs for the winter. And
also the people on the Kuskokwim side, where they
depend on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd have also
decreased over the years and we're thankful that we are
beginning to see the increasing moose population in
those areas too, and we're thankful that people will --
hopefully will have an opportunity to harvest that
third moose.

And we are asking for support from the
Federal Subsistence Board to allow us to harvest one
more moose for the remainder of the moose season and
look at the next season of moose -- moose season. So
we're thankful that the Council were able to at least
look at some avenues of trying to increase subsistence
opportunity for people in our area.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions from the Board for Mr. Oney.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, thank you for calling in today, appreciate you sharing that with us. We'll move on to the State liaison, would you guys like to comment on this proposal.

MR. BURCH: Hello, Mr. Chair. This is Mark Burch with the Department of Fish and Game. If I may provide some additional information and comments.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, you have the floor.

MR. BURCH: For the record this is Mark Burch with the Department of Fish and Game. Fish and Game supports this special action request.

The State season is segmented into three moose seasons in Unit 18 remainder, the ability to harvest multiple antlered bulls in the fall and to encourage increased cow harvest. The first segment is August 1st through September 30th for two moose, only one of which may be an antlered bull. A person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf.

The second is October 1st through November 30th, and the bag limit is two antlerless moose, no antlered bulls.

The third is December 1 to April 30th for two moose, those are any moose.

Antlerless moose hunting is allowed for non-resident hunters in Unit 18 remainder. The current season for non-residents is December 1st through March 15th and the bag limit is one antlerless moose. Regulatory year 2017 was the first year for antlerless moose hunts for non-resident, no non-residents have reported harvesting an antlerless moose yet. We anticipate that participation in this hunt will remain low.

When we look at twinning rate, browse
removal rate of the Paimiut survey area, we are starting to see indication of resource limitation. The trend along the Yukon is range expansion and growth with some growth being very rapid. All indicators such as twinning rates, calf to cow ratios and habitat surveys point to a continuation of this trend in the lowest Yukon, Andreafsky survey areas. Populations within each survey area show growth over time with little to no moose in the early 2000s to the current population. The population for 2021 is estimated to be 23,669 moose in the three survey areas in GMU 18 remainder combined. The Paimiut survey area population has increased from 3,793 moose to 4,786 between 2018 and 2021. The population in the Andreafsky has increased from 2,748 to 6,852 between 2012 and 2021. In the lowest Yukon survey area it has grown from 8,226 to 12,031 from 2017 to 2021.

The reported harvest of moose in Unit 18 remainder has increased over the last 10 years as a result -- as the season and bag limits have continually been liberalized by State and Federal regulators. As a result annual harvest has increased by 200 moose or more. The annual harvest might be stabilizing around 700 moose or more right now. There's a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 18 and an ANS of 200 to 400.

The Department has no biological concern with the additional harvest. Hunt managers have lost the ability to control the moose population in the remainder. The moose population continues to grow, even though it's the most liberal season and bag limits for moose in Alaska. The population is on a trajectory to over shoot the carrying capacity of the winter habitat along the Yukon River in the remainder.

Finding ways to increase antlerless moose harvest opportunity will benefit hunters and may also slow the growth rate of the population.

Because of the cost and logistics involved it is difficult to get non-local hunters in any meaningful numbers to harvest moose in this hunt area.

It's also likely that residents of the Yukon River communities have reached the amount desired for moose harvest and providing additional opportunity will result in little or no new harvest. Harvest
records indicate that only 10 to 30 hunters take two moose in any regulatory year.

Biologically, we could triple the current annual harvest. All options to achieve additional harvest should be on the table as we currently have a surplus of moose. This opportunity will not last so we should take advantage of it while we have it.

Again, the Department supports this proposal to allow additional harvest opportunity because there is no biological concern for the moose population in the remainder of Unit 18. Aligning State and Federal regulations could simplify the management of moose in this area and reduce confusion with stakeholders.

We suggest the following:

The first season from August 1st to September 30th for three moose, only one of which may be an antlered bull. A person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf.

The second would be October 1st through November 30th and the bag limit of three antlerless moose, no antlered bulls.

And then finally the third, December 1st through April 30th would be three moose, and that would be any moose.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mark. Any questions from the Board for Mark.

MR. PELTOLA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, BIA.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gene, you have the floor.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Mr. Burch. Appreciate the presentation you gave us. And going through the three State seasons which we have which are the general seasons, the current season now is December 1st through April 30th, the State does have a two moose bag limit, has the
Department considered utilizing EO authority to increase that to three moose for the remainder of this harvest -- until the end of the harvest in April.

MR. BURCH: Mr. Peltola, through the Chair. I'm not aware that we have considered that for this season. Yeah, I'm just not aware. As I -- I'll just leave it at that. I don't think we've addressed it at this point.

MR. PELTOLA: Okay, I was just curious. Because I noted that, you know, in the OSM presentation and throughout yours, the desire to reduce the population and addressing harvest levels or not, so I was just curious to that effect. So thank you, appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, appreciate that. Thank you, Mark. At this time I'll call on Sue to see if there was any public comments.

OPERATOR: If you have a public comment at this time please press star one on your touchtone telephone, record your first and last name. To withdraw your comment you may press star two.

One moment for the comment.

(Pause)

MR. BURCH: Mr. Chair, this is Mark Burch.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Mark, you have the floor.

MR. BURCH: Yeah, Area Biologist, Patrick Jones, was able to let me know that the Department has not received any formal request to increase that bag limit for the remainder of this current moose season.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank you, Mark.

OPERATOR: The first comment is coming from Timothy Andrew, your line is open.

MR. ANDREW: Hello.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hello, Timothy, you have the floor.

MR. ANDREW: Hi, thank you. Mr. Chairman, I hope I'm -- I hope you are able to hear me well enough otherwise I can take it off speaker and go into the regular telephone mode. Is this okay?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: This is fine, I can hear you well, you have the floor.

MR. ANDREW: Okay, great. Yeah, for the record my name is Timothy Andrew. I am representing myself at the moment but I've provided testimony before the Federal Subsistence Board for many years under the Association of Village Council Presidents, and the ONC, but at this moment I'm representing myself. I currently live in Bethel but I used to be a resident of Marshall, which is in the lower Yukon area, in fact it's in the Paimiut census area.

But I've experienced from no moose to this current moose population growth that we have today and I am very concerned about the continuous increase in the moose population and I don't think any other -- any increase in the bag limit is going to increase the hunting that is currently going on and would like to see it happen but it's likely not going to happen because it gets -- I mean it would get to a certain point where we're saturated with moose within the Lower Yukon area and also in other areas as well. But one thing I would like to throw in and probably not within the discussion today is that to ease up on proxy hunting regulations, where proxy hunting is allowed for anyone, not necessarily those that are disabled or cannot hunt for other reasons, that opens up to anyone that needs a moose, that anybody could possibly hunt on their behalf. Many of our people, some of them can't afford snowmachines. Some of them can't afford transportation mechanisms to get them to some of these
areas to hunt, therefore, you know, people that are able to can prox -- would be able to proxy hunt for other people.

The other comment I would like to make is that much of the effort, currently, I believe, is within the Ohagamiut Point area, the island out there -- I can't remember the English name for it, but we used to call it (In Native) area, and that's where most of the hunters go. Many moose have been taken out of the area but the population seems to bounce back every year and repopulates in the highly favorable area where these moose are. It's really unfortunate that the lowest Yukon and the upper reaches of the Paimiut area have little to know increase in hunting pressure like -- like it happens in the Ohagamiut Point area, and I don't know how we could possibly encourage people to go into the lowest Yukon and the part of the Andreafsky and upper of the Paimiut area.

I believe that is my testimony and would be happy to answer any questions that anybody may have.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, appreciate you taking the time to call in. Any questions from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have a good day, again, and thank you for taking the time to call in today. And just for the record, you do support the proposal for the moose.....

MR. ANDREW: Yes, I do. I do support the proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank you.

MR. ANDREW: Thank you, very much.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yep, all right.

OPERATOR: The next comment is coming from Janessa, your line is open.

MS. ESQUIBLE: Hi, can you hear me?
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Janessa, you have the floor.

MS. ESQUIBLE: Okay, thank you. Hello, my name is Janessa Esquible, and I'm the Natural Resources Director for Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council here in Bethel. And I'm calling on behalf of ONC.

ONC supports the Temporary Special Action Request WSA21-02 submitted by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council requesting to increase the harvest limit from two to three moose in the Unit 18 remainder hunt area through the current season ending April 30th, 2021.

Through recent personal communication with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Biologist Phillip Perry, on the most recent moose abundance estimate in Unit 18 remainder was well over 20,000 moose, therefore we believe the moose population can support the proposed increased harvest limit of three moose. The proposed change may also increase the number of elders, widows, and disabled in communities that are hunted for and we really appreciate your consideration and opportunity to provide public comment on this emergency wildlife special action request.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Appreciate you taking the time to call in today. All right, thank you, was there.....

OPERATOR: And the next comment.....

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

OPERATOR: And the next comment is coming from Neil DeWitt, your line is open.

MR. DEWITT: Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Neil DeWitt. I sit on the Anchorage AC but I'm here only on my own behalf today. The question that I have, during the RAC meeting as I was listening in, I thought I heard that you had a bunch of Federal land that you would have to take action on to open up so that the rest of the State of Alaska that are not Federally-qualified subsistence...
users can actually come out there and hunt. I guess
I'll start with, is that correct, do you have land that
needs to be opened up?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think that
would be a question for Staff, I don't think we're
opening up land, I think we're liberalizing a current
hunt right now.

MR. DEWITT: I understand that. But I
guess the reason I question that is if you have that
many moose and you need some of them taken, I
understand and I'm all for the Federally-qualified
subsistence users to get their fair share, but if you
need help to control it, if we opened it up to the rest
of the state, as you said there's not very many -- I
don't know if there's an actual number or not, but I
know that it's hard to get out to your area during the
winter months to hunt, even in the fall, you know, you
don't have as many transporters and stuff going that
direction and that's kind of why I was asking that
question.

Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, I think
that's a fair question. Yeah, I was going to call on
the Staff, what is the current regulation and status on
that land for the non-Federally-qualified hunter, is it
in a rural subsistence user only hunt mode or is
it.....

MR. DEWITT: No.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON:
.....liberalized to the point where the sporthunter can
-- so does somebody have that answer?

MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, this is Robbin
LaVine.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Robbin,
you have the floor.

MS. LAVINE: There is currently a State
season in Unit 18 remainder for residents to harvest
two moose from December 1st through April 30th. That
is an opportunity that Alaskan residents can avail
themselves of now. This special action is about
increasing the harvest limit from two moose to three
for the remainder of the Federal season, and this is an
opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
that clarification Robbin. I hope that helps answer
your question.

MR. DEWITT: Thank you, sir, I
appreciate your time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
taking the time to call today. Operator, next online.

OPERATOR: The next comment is coming
from Sherry Tomichook (ph), your line is open.

MR. EPCHOOK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
I'm Chariton Epchook, Chairman of Kwethluk
Incorporated. And Kwethluk Incorporated is in support
of the Special Action Request 21-02. We are already
foreseeing this summer that we're not going to be
fishing for chinook at this time, our people depend on
the salmon and then as well as moose. Our people from
here travel by snowmachine up into the Yukon area and
by boat going up the Johnson River up towards remainder
of Unit 18.

With that Kwethluk Incorporated is in
support of the special action request.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Appreciate you taking the time. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
appreciate you calling in today. Anyone else online
Operator.

OPERATOR: No further comments at this
time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
That concludes our public comment section. With that
we will open up the floor for to make a motion to
support WSA21-02.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Hey, Tony, this is Greg, could you repeat what you're -- where you're at.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We are -- for Board deliberation and the floor is open for a motion.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, this is Greg with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time I would move to approve Wildlife Emergency Special Action 21-02. If I receive a second I will further justify why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

MR. PELTOLA: Second, BIA.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Gene. The moose population in Unit 18 remainder hunt area exceeds management objectives. Increasing the harvest limit from two to three moose will provide additional opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users who have already felt the strain of a decreased salmon harvest over the past decade and the current closure to the Unit 18 subsistence caribou hunt. Support of this emergency special action is justified to allow for increased moose harvest opportunity by Federally-qualified subsistence users.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that, Greg. Open the floor for discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, I'll call for the question.

MR. PELTOLA: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called.

REPORTER: Who called the question.
MR. PELTOLA: BIA, Peltola.

REPORTER: Thank you.

MR. PELTOLA: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hi, Tina.

REPORTER: Hi.

MS. DETWILER: So, Mr. Chair, this is Sue, question's been called, do you want me to go ahead and do a roll call vote?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, please, I call for a roll call, please. Thank you, Sue.

MS. DETWILER: Yeah, thank you. And for the record I just wanted to note that Chad Padgett, the Board member from BLM is not present today, Chris McKee is acting for him.

So with the roll call vote, start with Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Sue. I support the motion as made.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

Gene Peltola, BIA.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA votes to support.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

BLM, Chris McKee.

MR. MCKEE: BLM supports.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

MR. SCHMID: Yeah, the Forest Service supports with the justification provided by Fish and Wildlife Service.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.
Don Striker, Park Service.

MR. STRIKER: We support the motion in deference to the RAC and for the reasons so well articulated by Mr. Siekaniec.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

Public Member Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Hi. I support the motion in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and as stated by Mr. Siekaniec. Thank you.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Rhonda.

Public Member Charlie Brower, have you joined us.

(No comments)

MS. DETWILER: It sounds like not. So finally, Chair Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support, thank you.

MS. DETWILER: Okay, thank you. So motion to approve WSA21-02 passes unanimously.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And thank everyone for taking their time today to get together for the meeting and good luck to all the hunters out there to fill your freezers.

Open up the floor for a motion to adjourn.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is Greg. Motion to adjourn.

MR. STRIKER: Second.

MR. PELTOLA: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Have a good day.

MR. SCHMID: Third. Thank you, Mr.
Chair.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair and all the Board members, appreciate your time.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Staff, Board and Chair.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)
CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )
) ss.
STATE OF ALASKA )

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter of Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing, contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING, taken electronically by our firm on the 30th day of March 2021 via teleconference;

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 Anchorage, Alaska, this 30th day of March 2021.

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Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/22