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FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING

WORK SESSION - ALASKA

August 2, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Anthony Christianson, Chairman
- Rhonda Pitka, Public Member
- Charles Brower, Public Member
- Jill Klein, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management
- Eva Patton, National Park Service
- Glenn Chen, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Dave Schmid Greg Risdahl, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 8/2/2023)

(On record)

MS. DETWILER: Good morning, everybody. This is Sue Detwiler. I'm the Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence Management. We're gathering up here. We have most of the Board members present or their acting is present. We're still waiting a few more minutes. We're still waiting for the Chair Anthony Christianson. He's been delayed by a cab problem coming from his lodging downtown, but he should be here in a few minutes. So in the interim Rhonda Pitka is going to be chairing the meeting.

Before we get started I just wanted to let the folks in the room know just a couple housekeeping things. One is the restrooms are on the first floor down the hall to the north and just past the elevators. The restroom down the hall. The other way is not functional at the moment. So there's one restroom here on the first floor down the hall and then a couple of restrooms up the stairs, which are just outside of this room. You'll see them when you leave the room.

In an emergency situation, if we're asked to evacuate the building, we will go out the same way that everybody came into the building. Out the building into the big parking lot and to the far end of the parking lot. That is where we'll muster on the far west side of the parking lot.

For folks on the phone we'll be going over the agenda as soon as Rhonda opens the meeting and the agenda materials are online at www.doi.gov/subsistence/board. For people in the room the meeting materials, hard copies, are in the back of the room. Rhonda, do you want me to go through and start the roll call?

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, please.

MS. DETWILER: Okay. So we will start with BIA, Glenn Chen.

MR. CHEN: I'm here, Sue.

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1 MS. DETWILER: BLM, Steve Cohn.

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3 MR. COHN: Good morning. This is Steve
4 Cohn.

5

6 MS. DETWILER: Fish and Wildlife
7 Service. I understand Jill Klein you're acting for
8 Sara Boario.

9

10 MS. KLEIN: Yes. This is Jill Klein.
11 I'm sitting in for Sara Boario at U.S. Fish and
12 Wildlife Service.

13

14 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. National
15 Park Service. Eva Patton, I understand you're sitting
16 in. Go ahead.

17

18 MS. PATTON: Yes. Good morning. Eva
19 Patton, Subsistence Program Manager for the National
20 Park Service and sitting in today for our Director
21 Sarah Creachbaum.

22

23 MS. DETWILER: U.S. Forest Service,
24 Greg.

25

26 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, everyone.
27 Greg Risdahl, USDA Forest Service, Subsistence Program
28 Leader. I'm only sitting in for Dave for a short time.
29 He did just text his plane has touched down and he
30 should be here within an hour or so. Thank you.

31

32 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Public
33 Member, Rhonda Pitka.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Good morning. I'm
36 here.

37

38 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Charlie
39 Brower, are you calling in? Are you on the phone?

40

41 (No response)

42

43 MS. DETWILER: I understand Public
44 Member Charlie Brower is calling in from Utqiagvik this
45 morning and he's trying to call in right now. So he
46 should be joining us shortly. Chair Christianson is en
47 route and hopefully will be here soon.

48

49 Just moving on to legal counsel,

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1 Department of Interior, Regional Solicitor's Office.
2 Ken Lord, are you on?

3
4 MR. LORD: I am. Good morning,
5 everyone.

6
7 MS. DETWILER: Good morning. USDA
8 Office of General Council, Jim Ustasiewski or Boykin
9 Lucas.

10
11 (No response)

12
13 MS. DETWILER: Okay. Liaison to the
14 Board, Ben Mulligan and/or Mark Burch.

15
16 (No response)

17
18 MS. DETWILER: Okay. So it looks,
19 Madame Chair, like we have a quorum with six of eight
20 members so far with two more expected shortly.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
23 that. Charlie Brower should be calling in shortly. He
24 had some issues on the phone line. He's in Utqiagvik
25 right now with his family.

26
27 So at this time since we've establish
28 forum I'd like to welcome everybody to the meeting.
29 This is our first time being back in this particular
30 space in the Fish and Wildlife Service, so it's kind of
31 good to be back. I never thought I would say that
32 about a Federal building before.

33
34 (Laughter)

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: But it just feels
37 like normalcy has been reached in a way that hasn't for
38 a long time. So at this time I'd like to review and
39 adopt the agenda. I have a note that says agenda item
40 8 should be updated as an action item.

41
42 MS. DETWILER: Do you want me to go
43 through the agenda?

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, please.

46
47 MS. DETWILER: Sue Detwiler again.
48 We're at item 2 of the agenda, review and adopt agenda.
49 Next item will be information exchanged among Board
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1 members.

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Item 4 will be Board review and we'll take action on two individual customary and traditional use determination proposals for two Denali Park parties. Denali National Park Entities.

Agenda item 5 is Board review and take action on draft replies to the Regional Advisory Council Annual Reports.

Item number 6 is Board action on Regional Advisory Council request for changes to their Council Charters.

Item 7 is a briefing from Staff on updates to the Regional Council Correspondence Policy.

Item 8, last item, is a briefing and discussion on the Southeast Regional Advisory Council letter to the Board on transboundary river watersheds.

That's it, Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: At this time I'd like to ask for a motion to adopt the agenda. Good morning.

MR. SCHMID: I so move.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Dave Schmid moved to adopt the agenda.

MS. KLEIN: I second.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Jill Klein seconded. Thank you. Any objections?

(No response)

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Seeing none. The motion passes unanimously. Now we are on to the information exchange. Jill, would you like to start?

MS. KLEIN: Thanks, Rhonda. Again, this is Jill Klein with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the record. I'm sitting in for our Regional Director Sara Boario. She apologizes that she can't be here today for the meeting. I do have some information

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1 that we discussed that we'd like to share regarding
2 some staffing changes at the Service and also a couple
3 of trip updates that recently took place.

4

5 So first off with the staffing. Some
6 of you may know Soch Lor. She had been the Deputy
7 Assistant Regional Director of the Refuge System here
8 in Alaska and she is now the Deputy Regional Director
9 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region.
10 We also wanted to note that Brian Glaspell, who's been
11 the Regional Chief of Refuges here in Alaska is moving
12 to take a position with the Forest Service and the
13 Acting Regional Chief in the meantime will be Ronnie
14 Sanchez. He'll be starting after August 13th in that
15 acting position.

16

17 Also some of you may be familiar with
18 Boyd Blihovde who is our Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Refuge
19 Manager. He'll be taking a position here in the
20 Regional Office in Anchorage as what's known as the
21 Gravel to Gravel Coordinator. Lori Boeck will be the
22 Acting Refuge Manager. We also want to welcome Merben
23 Cebrian as the new Refuge Manager for the Alaska
24 National Wildlife Refuge.

25

26 Regarding a couple of trips we were
27 fortunate to have the Director Martha Williams of the
28 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here in Alaska this past
29 week. She traveled around seeing a lot of Alaska.
30 Especially we wanted to note that she got out to the
31 Yukon River and she was graciously hosted by Chief
32 Rhonda Pitka and her father in Beaver. She also was
33 able to go to Stevens Village. We just wanted to say
34 that Martha and Sara are thankful to Chief Pitka and
35 her father for their generosity especially during a
36 time we heard there were a few significant losses in
37 those two communities.

38

39 We also wanted to mention our National
40 Fisheries Leadership Team. That included people from
41 our headquarters office and also from around the
42 country who work in what's called Fisheries and Aquatic
43 Conservation. They were meeting in Homer this past
44 week and were able to go to Ninilchik and meet with the
45 Ninilchik Traditional Council. That was a really nice
46 visit.

47

48 Some of the leaders from Ninilchik were
49 able to share their experiences working with the

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1 Service over the years and their experience with the
2 salmon fisheries there and the gillnet they now employ.
3 The team was able to learn about the uniqueness of
4 Alaska in Federal salmon management, so we also extend
5 our thanks to Ninilchik Traditional Council for that.

6
7 That's all I have. Thank you.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
10 much. Eva, would you like to go next?

11
12 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
13 Eva Patton sitting in for our Director, National Park
14 Service Director Sarah Creachbaum. She apologizes as
15 well for not being able to attend this meeting here
16 today. She wanted to express subsistence is extremely
17 important to her and she's really dedicated to
18 addressing subsistence issues and concerns.

19
20 She is currently up at Denali today, so
21 she is attending to National Parks and the Park
22 communities as well as an upcoming visit from the
23 National Park Service Director, Chuck Sams. So we'll
24 hopefully have some more updates from his visit at our
25 next meeting. He also is very dedicated to working
26 with our Alaska Native tribal communities and rural
27 subsistence users throughout the state.

28
29 Sarah did have some time for travels to
30 communities earlier this spring. Really trying to
31 connect with communities and addressing subsistence
32 issues. She was up in Western Arctic Parklands in
33 particular communities that are affected by the decline
34 in the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

35
36 She wanted to express her appreciation
37 for all of the Regional Advisory Councils and the time
38 and care with which they submit reports to the Board
39 and also the time and care to present responses for the
40 Councils as well.

41
42 Again, she apologizes for not being
43 able to be here and appreciates the work of the
44 Councils and the Board. Thank you.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
47 much for that.

48
49 MR. C. BROWER: Good morning, Mr.
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1 Chair. I'm finally online. Charlie.

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3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, good morning,
4 Charlie Brower. It's nice to hear your voice. Right
5 now we're at informational exchange and we're waiting
6 on Tony, so I'm in charge until then. Okay. Thanks.

7

8 Go ahead, Dave.

9

10 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

11

12 MR. SCHMID: Good morning. This is
13 Dave Schmid with the Forest Service. Good morning,
14 Charlie. Good to hear your voice. Look forward to
15 seeing you again someday.

16

17 Just a couple of things here. I just
18 rolled in on the plane here this morning, so I'm a
19 little bit frazzled. I guess I would start out with
20 just a few staffing changes with the Forest Service
21 here. We have a new Forest Supervisor on the Tongass,
22 Frank Sherman. He's been serving as the Deputy there
23 for about the last four or five years as well. Then
24 also we just hired two new Deputy Forest Supervisors.
25 Clint Kolarich will be stationed in Ketchikan and then
26 -- names are slipping me here this morning. I'll come
27 back to that.

28

29 So we have Barb -- our SAS coordinator.
30 I don't know why her name is slipping me this morning.
31 Anyway, she will be stationed in Juneau. She was the
32 Coordinator Director for the Southeast Alaska
33 Sustainability Strategy with the Forest Service, which
34 has been a real successful venture here both with the
35 investment side and just how we do business in
36 Southeast.

37

38 We did invest close to \$30 million
39 within the Forest Service in the last year here. Most
40 of that money investments went to tribes and all mostly
41 in the rural communities to help develop, you know,
42 workforce capacity and a number of other areas.

43

44 Part of that, one of the other areas
45 we're really proud of this year, we used to -- we
46 called it ANILCA Hiring Blitz. ANILCA provides some
47 direct hiring authority to Interior and the Forest
48 Service, Department of Ag, where we can hire
49 individuals, permanent hires, based on their local
50

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1 knowledge. So we hired close to 100 new permanent
2 employees this year and the majority of those did come
3 from rural communities across the region. So very
4 proud of that. Barb Miranda is our other Deputy that
5 came to me.

6
7 So with that, Madame Chair, thank you.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
10 for that. Steve. Does anybody have any questions
11 about any of the informational exchange. Sorry. I
12 just kind of rolled right through it.

13
14 MR. COHN: Thank you, Madame Chair.
15 This is Steve Cohn from the Bureau of Land Management.
16 Yeah, I'll start with a few of our recent personnel,
17 new hires. So shortly after the new year we hired a
18 new field manager for our Anchorage field office, Jake
19 Vialpando, came to us from the Lower 48. A field
20 manager previously in Nevada.

21
22 And then very recently we hired a new
23 district manager for the Anchorage District, William
24 Dunk, who comes to us from the Forest Service and was
25 most recently in eastern Oregon.

26
27 We are also recruiting a Program
28 Manager. We're fairly close to making a selection for
29 our Gravel to Gravel Program Manager as well for that
30 project. Just a little background on Gravel to Gravel.
31 It's one of the departmental keystone initiatives.

32
33 It came out of the consultation
34 meetings that were held here last summer in Bethel and
35 Fairbanks. When all three Assistant Secretaries from
36 Department of Interior came out to listen and really
37 try to understand the gravity of the situation in
38 regards to the salmon crisis in the Yukon and Kuskokwim
39 and Arctic Rivers.

40
41 So the term Gravel to Gravel came out
42 of those meetings specifically and became part of the
43 proposal that was submitted to the Department for
44 consideration under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
45 ecosystem restoration bucket of funding. The purpose
46 of the funding is to really help begin to address that
47 challenge from a science perspective as well as a
48 co-stewardship perspective.

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1 It's a partnership amongst all the DOI
2 agencies. It covers those entire watersheds within the
3 state. BLM's piece of that is primarily focused on
4 stream restoration in areas that have been impacted,
5 previously impacted, largely from placer mining
6 activities as well as watershed-wide aquatic
7 assessment, inventory and monitoring projects. So
8 looking to establish baseline conditions throughout
9 those watersheds. Again, all that work is intended to
10 be done cooperatively with tribal partners, Alaska
11 Native corporations and the State of Alaska.

12
13 I'll give one other update. Our
14 Glennallen Field Office, which is our number one office
15 in the state in terms of the issuance of subsistence
16 use permits, was very heavily impacted this summer from
17 flooding as all of Glennallen was a state -- you know,
18 on the disaster list for the state. We lost use of our
19 office for a period of time, but we've managed to kind
20 of piece things together with a lot of hard work and a
21 lot of support from the community and other partners.

22
23 We've got the office back up and
24 running. Hopefully buttoned up for the winter and
25 we're currently issuing Federal subsistence use permits
26 in the middle of that. So we're hopeful that the
27 office is going to be fully functional through the
28 winter and that we'll have a long-term plan for how we
29 can address the flooding issues in the future.

30
31 Just real quick we have several
32 higher-priority projects or high-interest projects that
33 we're working on in the state that do for the most part
34 all have strong ANILCA 810 nexus. One of those is a
35 partnership with -- we're co-leads with Fish and
36 Wildlife Service on the coastal plain of the Arctic
37 National Wildlife Refuge. We're working on preparing
38 the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

39
40 The second is the Ambler Access Road
41 Project. We're also working on a Draft Supplemental
42 Environmental Impact Statement as the lead Federal
43 agency on that project. We're looking later this fall
44 to release the proposed resource management plan and
45 Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Central
46 Yukon Resource Management Plan, which will be the last
47 large land use plan for BLM in the state.

48
49 Finally, we're working on currently
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1 producing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for
2 the recommendations to the Secretary of Interior on
3 17(d)(1), withdrawal of the public land order,
4 withdrawals primarily in western and southwestern
5 Alaska.

6
7 That's my update. Happy to take any
8 questions right now.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for that
11 reminder about questions. Go ahead, Glenn.

12
13 MR. CHEN: The BIA is still trying to
14 fill the Regional Director position. It's my
15 understanding that there's been a selection made. In
16 the interim Michelle Wiechman, our Deputy Regional
17 Director for Native Services, will serve as our Acting
18 Regional Director and I'll be sitting here in the
19 Federal Board seat for some time longer.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Very short and
24 sweet. Charlie Brower, do you have any updates you'd
25 like to give us in the informational exchange?

26
27 MR. C. BROWER: No, I'm just sorry I
28 can't be there in person. I wish I could, but family
29 comes first. Otherwise I have no update right now. I
30 appreciate it, Madame Chair. Thank you. Good morning,
31 everyone.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Good morning and
34 thank you for calling in today. I really appreciate
35 that. So, let's see. Jill Klein just mentioned that
36 we just had a visit with U.S. Fish and Wildlife
37 National Director Martha Williams and the Alaska
38 Director Sara Boario. They were camping in the Arctic
39 National Wildlife Refuge and then they flew to Beaver
40 and we took them on a boat to my dad's fish camp and we
41 showed them a couple of other fish camps on the Yukon
42 River.

43
44 You know, in our area we rarely get
45 that level of I guess attention from the Fish and
46 Wildlife Service. Usually it all goes to Arctic
47 National Wildlife Refuge. ANWR is the big deal that
48 everybody likes to go and visit. So it was a really
49 good visit. It was really important to us.
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1 At that time a couple of our relatives
2 in our neighboring village, Stevens Village, passed
3 away. So it was also a very rough time for our family.
4 We've experienced a lot of loss in our villages in the
5 last year or so. It just -- you know, it seems like
6 once these things happen they just keep on happening.

7
8 I talked with my dad, who's an elder,
9 and he said it was important for our people that we
10 maintain that commitment that we'd already made to the
11 Fish and Wildlife Service. Our family understood. We
12 talked with them about it too beforehand.

13
14 I think I probably talked about it a
15 million times, but I live in a wildlife refuge and it's
16 important that agency employees and people and staff
17 and directors and all the leadership sees what it's
18 like to live on the Yukon River during a time of salmon
19 disaster.

20
21 We're pretty much -- we're heading into
22 our third year right now of no fishing in my region and
23 it's been really, really disheartening and probably
24 some of the hardest years of our lives along the river.

25
26 It was really difficult for me
27 especially because we lost my grandma this year and
28 that was one of the camps that we brought the Director
29 to, you know, to show her what a shut down fish camp
30 looks like. How it was affected by flooding, how we
31 haven't been able to get back home -- or not back home,
32 but to her camp especially to reopen it, you know.

33
34 So that was one of the things we
35 discussed with them was the lack of salmon even for our
36 ceremonial purposes. My Auntie Darlene, who is sister
37 to our Uncle Glen who passed away in Stevens Village,
38 wanted the Director especially to know that they didn't
39 have any salmon for the potlatch. That they weren't
40 able to provide that. That's one of the important
41 mainstays of our culture and our diet.

42
43 So it's been such a challenge to try
44 to, I guess, maintain professionalism in the face of
45 this particular disaster because it's so personal.
46 It's been a really, really rough year and it will
47 continue to be rough. There have been a number of
48 organizations that have donated salmon to the Yukon
49 River, but it doesn't maintain the same level of
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1 connection to our culture and our ability to teach
2 people.

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5 So this last year we opened a culture
6 camp that was sponsored in part by the Fish and
7 Wildlife Service, the Council of Athabaskan Tribal
8 Governments and the Beaver Village Council and it was
9 the first one that we'd had in our region. Normally in
10 the summer we're so busy actually fishing and living
11 our culture that we don't have time to have culture
12 camp. So it was -- you know, not that I'd been opposed
13 to culture camps in the past, but we just hadn't had
14 the time to do one in our area because we're all so
15 busy in the summers fishing.

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It was a really good experience. The Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge Manager Jimmy Fox came to our culture camp too, so we were glad of his presence. He actually had consultation that he wanted to consult with me and I was like, no, you can come to camp with us. I don't even know what you're talking about. I'm not going to sit in my office when there's all these kids down at culture camp. It was really such a good experience for those kids.

It really brought it back to me how we were raised with my grandma because our whole families all worked in the summer. They worked in the fire business all summer long, so the adults in our families would be busy working and making money in construction and fire and all of the kids would be fishing. So that's how we all grew up. So it was good to see so many kids in fish camp in a way that they hadn't been for a long time.

A lot of my cousin's children were there that had moved away from Beaver for work or school or whatever. So it was really, really good. I grew up with their parents in fish camp. It was a really good experience by all and we're going to do it again and continue on with that culture camp.

My dad, Ron Yatlin, he has a permitted cabin on the Refuge on land that my grandfather used to hunt and trap on. So years ago, many, many, many years ago, my Aunt Ada she wanted to get an allotment for my Uncle Henry, who was a Vietnam War veteran, who died from PTSD after the war. The Department at that time deemed that that was not a war-related injury, his

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1 PTSD, that caused his death so they denied his
2 allotment request.

3

4

5 After her death my grandma took it on,
6 but she was quite old at that time, so now my mom is
7 still working towards getting our Native allotment on
8 land that our family has used for generations. It's
9 always a process and it was really good to see -- I
10 guess and explain in person like what that particular
11 process was like for people on the ground because
12 sometimes when you live in Washington, D.C. you have no
13 idea the impact that your actions will have on people
14 on the ground.

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So it was a really good experience I
think for the Director and for everybody. So we talked
about the salmon disaster, of course. That's always on
everybody's mind. We also spoke about some of the land
use issues, you know, living within a Refuge and the
merger with Kanuti and Yukon National Wildlife Refuge,
which we opposed at the Beaver Village Council and
CATG. So those would not be good for our area
especially during this time of crisis. So I think that
we've already submitted enough testimony on that and
I've talked about it like a million times, so I don't
want to do it again.

You know, climate change has been
hitting our region at an unprecedented rate. We've had
major flooding this last spring. I think two of our
villages in the area, Circle, had a major disaster with
flooding and it hit them so fast. Like they had zero
time to really prepare. It was a flood like had not
happened before. They flooded like three times
disaster in the last 10 years, you know. So they know
what they're doing when it comes to flood prep. But
this flood happened in the space of an hour. They were
having a picnic and then all of a sudden they're
flooding. Like the ice jam just destroyed their
village.

We had one of our teachers -- I also
sit on the school board, so we had one of our teachers
there who -- they were at the barbecue and they were
just going to get their car and drive out. So he went
back into his house to get his dog and he came outside
and the water had risen so fast that his car got swept
away. Our teacher housing, which I thought was
constructed well, was -- he was in such a state that he

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1 was like hanging off of the roof. He'd already thrown
2 his bag and his dog on the roof so they were okay. I
3 just needed to preface that because I told that story
4 to my daughter and she wanted to know how the dog was.

5

6

(Laughter)

7

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MADAME CHAIR PITKA: So the dog was
9 safe, but he was hanging on by like a thread onto his
10 roof until somebody came along in a little boat to come
11 and save him. They got him off of the roof and the
12 porch. Probably when they were driving away they
13 looked back and the cabin had already started moving
14 off. It's just unprecedented. Even when we were on
15 the river this weekend my dad kept saying look at the
16 fish finder, it's 70 degrees. The water is 70 degrees
17 right now. It's been so -- it's been so hot the whole
18 last month on the Yukon River. It's definitely
19 unprecedented.

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I don't see how, you know, what people
on the ground are supposed to do to mitigate that level
of climate change disaster because it's going to keep
on happening. It's really frightening when you live in
rural areas. I always feel like our infrastructure
holds up a little bit better than Anchorage's did. I
was here during the earthquake disaster, so I saw the
infrastructure of the state of Alaska crumble in like
two minutes. So whenever they tell us to plan, I'm
like okay, sir, please look at yourself. Look at
yourself, okay.

So upcoming I've been invited to the
consultation in Arctic Village on sheep, so I'm pretty
excited to go there to talk to them about sheep. It's
always kind of awkward sometimes for me to be on the
other side of the table with people consulting. We've
all been there. I'm like, but no, I mean well though.
So it will be a really good meeting though. I'm
excited about it. I definitely look forward to it.

I was trying to talk so long that Tony
would show up, but I'm not a Tlingit or a Haida and I
can't take the mike for that long.

46

(Laughter)

47

48

Maybe we'll come back to his
information exchange when he does come.

0016

1 MR. SCHMID: Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

4

5 MR. SCHMID: I just wanted to thank you
6 for sharing that and truly sorry for your losses. I
7 can't even fathom living in your villages right now in
8 the kind of environment both from climate and disasters
9 with salmon. I always learn something from you,
10 Rhonda, whenever I come to this table. So thank you
11 for sharing.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. So at
14 this time I think we'll go to number 4, Denali NP
15 Individual C&T.

16

17 MS. CRAVER: Good morning, Madame
18 Chair, and members of the Federal Subsistence Board.
19 For the record my name is Amy Craver and I'm the
20 Subsistence Coordinator for Denali National Park and
21 Preserve. Today I will present to you two individual
22 Customary and Traditional Use Determination analyses
23 for Blaine and Kevin Mayo and the members of their
24 households. These proposals are located in the Board
25 supplemental work materials, which I think each of you
26 have that were sent earlier. The names of the
27 individuals do not appear in the regulation booklets.
28 Rather they are on a list maintained by Denali National
29 Park and Preserve.

30

31 The first proposal ICTP23-01 was
32 submitted by Blaine Mayo and members of his household
33 request an individual customary and traditional use
34 determination -- I will refer to this as an individual
35 C&T use determination from here on out -- for caribou,
36 grouse, and ptarmigan in Game Management Unit 13 in
37 areas managed by the National Park service where
38 subsistence uses are allowed. Blaine Mayo and members
39 of his household are currently residents of Healy and
40 already have an individual C&T use determination for
41 moose in GMU 13.

42

43 The second proposal ICTP23-02 submitted
44 by Kevin Mayo and members of his household, requests an
45 individual C&T use determination for moose, caribou,
46 grouse, and ptarmigan in GMU 13 in areas managed by the
47 National Park Service. Kevin Mayo currently is a
48 resident of Healy and already has an individual C&T use
49 determination for moose and caribou in GMU 13.

50

0017

1 In order for someone to qualify for an
2 individual C&T use determination they need to
3 demonstrate the following: Pre-ANILCA pattern of use
4 in the Park and Preserve, must remain a federally
5 qualified rural resident, and if they move out of the
6 resident zone community they must still reside in a
7 rural community to qualify. If they move to a
8 non-rural area, they do not qualify.
9 For family members of the applicant to qualify they
10 must reside in the residence of the applicant.

11
12 According to the National Park Service
13 regulations, if a person has a 13.440 subsistence
14 eligibility permit, lives in the Park or lives in a
15 resident zone community, that person must also live in
16 a community or area that has C&T use determination for
17 the desired species and harvest area and they must
18 remain a rural resident.

19
20 If a person has a 13.440 permit and
21 lives in a community without C&T use determination for
22 the species they wish to hunt, they may submit a
23 proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board for an
24 individual C&T.

25
26 Federal subsistence regulations allow
27 the Federal Subsistence Board to make individual C&T
28 use determinations in National Park and Monument areas.
29 National Park Service regulations include unique
30 subsistence eligibility requirements for National Park
31 Service lands. Requests for individual C&T
32 determinations are analyzed in the same way that a
33 community or area request for a C&T is analyzed.
34 Subsistence harvest is authorized only in ANILCA
35 additions to Denali Park.

36
37 The proponents have described a history
38 of C&T use of moose, caribou, grouse and ptarmigan in
39 Denali National Park, part of GMU Unit 13 where
40 subsistence uses are allowed. Blaine and Kevin Mayo and
41 their families are originally from Cantwell, which is a
42 resident zone of Denali National Park.

43
44 In 2022, the Federal Subsistence Board
45 determined that Blaine Mayo and his household had
46 substantial evidence to support the issuance of an
47 individual C&T use determination for moose. Currently
48 Mr. Mayo's family members are unable to harvest
49 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan because they now reside
50

0018

1 in the rural community of Healy, which does not have a
2 positive C&T use determination for caribou, grouse and
3 ptarmigan.

4
5 In 2010, the Federal Subsistence Board
6 determined that Kevin Mayo had substantial evidence to
7 support the issuance of an individual C&T use
8 determination for moose and caribou. However, the C&T
9 request for moose and caribou did not extend to his
10 family members. Currently Kevin Mayo's family members
11 are unable to harvest moose, caribou, grouse and
12 ptarmigan because they now reside in a rural community,
13 Healy, which does not have a positive C&T determination
14 for moose, caribou, grouse and ptarmigan.

15
16 The community of Cantwell is located
17 near the Alaska Range at the confluence of the Parks
18 and Denali highways, which is north of Broad Pass and
19 28 miles south of Denali National Park and Preserve.
20 Within Denali National Park, Cantwell subsistence users
21 harvest moose and caribou on the southwest boundary
22 just outside the designated Denali Wilderness. This
23 area, where subsistence hunting is permitted under the
24 federal program, is referred to by local subsistence
25 users as the Cantwell Traditional Use Area.

26
27 The Federal Subsistence Board makes
28 individual C&T use determinations based on a holistic
29 application of eight factors. In addition, the Board
30 takes into consideration the reports and
31 recommendations from appropriate Subsistence Resource
32 Commissions and Regional Advisory Councils regarding
33 individual C&T use of subsistence resources.

34
35 A community or area's customary and
36 traditional use is generally exemplified through the
37 following eight factors:

38
39 (1) a long-term, consistent pattern of
40 use, excluding interruptions beyond the control of the
41 community or area;

42
43 (2) a pattern of use recurring in
44 specific seasons for many years;

45 (3) a pattern of use consisting of
46 methods and means of harvest which are characterized by
47 efficiency and economy of effort and cost, conditioned
48 by local characteristics;

49
50

0019

1 (4) the consistent harvest and use of
2 fish or wildlife as related to past methods and means
3 of taking: near, or reasonably accessible from the
4 community or area;

5
6 (5) a means of handling, preparing,
7 preserving, and storing fish or wildlife which have
8 traditionally been used by past generations, including
9 consideration of alteration of past practices due to
10 recent technological advances, where appropriate;

11
12 (6) a pattern of use which includes the
13 handing down of knowledge of fishing and hunting
14 skills, values, and lore from generation to generation;

15
16
17 (7) a pattern of use in which the
18 harvest is shared or distributed within a definable
19 community of persons; and

20
21 (8) a pattern of use which relates to
22 reliance upon a wide diversity of fish and wildlife
23 resources of the area and which provides substantial
24 cultural, economic, social, and nutritional elements to
25 the community or area.

26
27 The discussion about the Integrated
28 Discussion of the Eight Factors. Since 1964, the Mayo
29 families have hunted, harvested, and shared moose,
30 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan. Historically, the Mayo
31 family traveled to their hunting/trapping areas by
32 foot, Coots, Weasels, off road vehicles and
33 snowmachines. Today the Mayo family continues to
34 maintain a reoccurring pattern of use within the area
35 by foot, ORVs and snowmachines. For over four
36 generations the Mayo family has hunted and harvested
37 animals by reasonable ground access in areas near their
38 residence within GMU 13. The extended family hunts
39 moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan together every
40 hunting season in the Cantwell and Foggy Pass areas.

41
42 The Mayo family's camp borders the new
43 Park and is located on State land. To access the camp
44 Mayo uses ORVs and walking. Moose and caribou are
45 gutted, skinned and quartered in the field and then
46 packed by foot to a designated ORV trail and
47 transported to the camp. The Mayo family uses all
48 edible parts of the moose and caribou. Much of the
49 moose and caribou meat is canned or stored in the
50

1 freezer to preserve it and some portions of the moose
2 and caribou are processed by drying. Usually, the
3 combination of a moose and a caribou will feed two to
4 three families.

5
6 The Mayo family uses the following
7 methods for processing meat: a vacuum sealer, smoker,
8 meat grinder, pressure cooker and sausage stuffer.
9 Processing meat is a family event. Grouse and
10 ptarmigan are brought back to camp, cleaned and
11 immediately consumed. The breast is targeted for
12 consumption, marinated, and grilled over the campfire.

13
14 The most important aspect of grouse and
15 ptarmigan hunting is that it provides an opportunity to
16 introduce hunting to the kids. This is an important
17 aspect of subsistence that is often overlooked in that
18 it introduces kids to the skills and knowledge of
19 subsistence. Kids are able to practice aiming the .22
20 rifle and become familiar with using a gun. Grouse and
21 ptarmigan hunting is one of the highlights for the
22 kids, providing them with an immense amount of pride
23 when they are able to provide meat for the family.

24
25 The Mayo family hunts are a family event, often
26 including several generations who participate together
27 in activities such as hunting, establishing camps, and
28 processing harvested meat. Extended family members
29 always share in the harvest. It is the Mayo family
30 tradition to share meat and equipment. If a family
31 member or friend does not get enough meat during the
32 season, it is expected that the Mayo family will share
33 their harvest with that person or household.

34
35 The family utilizes a variety of
36 subsistence resources such as berries, moose, caribou,
37 bear, ptarmigan, fish, and furbearers such as beaver,
38 marten, fox, wolf, and lynx. Approximately fifty
39 percent of the Mayo family's meat comes from moose
40 meat. Typically, wildlife and other subsistence foods
41 provide meals four out of seven days per week.

42
43 If adopted, these two proposals would
44 recognize Blaine and Kevin Mayo and their households
45 family's C&T use of moose, caribou, grouse and
46 ptarmigan in GMU 13 in areas managed by Denali National
47 Park. It would allow the Mayo brothers to pass their
48 traditional subsistence lifestyle onto their children.

0021

1 Because these C&T determinations are
2 only for two households, both of which have a history
3 of moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan in the area,
4 the effects on other subsistence users should be
5 minimal.

6
7 In terms of the National Park Service
8 conclusion to these two analyses was to support both of
9 them. The justification is: The proponents exhibit a
10 clear long-term and consistent use of moose, caribou,
11 grouse, and ptarmigan in GMU 13, in areas managed by
12 Denali National Park where subsistence uses are
13 allowed.

14
15 This pattern has been repeated for many
16 years and through several generations. Methods and
17 means are characterized by efficiency of economy of
18 effort and cost based on local characteristics. The
19 pattern is consistent with past methods and means of
20 harvests at or near the family's hunting camp within
21 the Unit in question.

22
23 Knowledge of handling, preparing,
24 preserving, and storing meat is shared among and
25 between generations, as is knowledge of the skills,
26 values, and lore associated with hunting moose,
27 caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan.

28
29 All eight of the factors associated
30 with the C&T determination are evident. Furthermore,
31 the family's pattern of use is also evident through the
32 Federal Subsistence Board's previous determinations for
33 Blaine Mayo for moose and Kevin Mayo for moose and
34 caribou. There is substantial evidence to support the
35 issuance of an individual C&T determination for moose,
36 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan within GMU 13.

37
38 Okay. The Denali Subsistence Resource
39 conclusion they supported both proposals. Their
40 justification was according to Denali Subsistence
41 Resource Commission due diligence has been achieved
42 documenting Blaine and Kevin Mayo's families pre-ANILCA
43 history of using Park additions for subsistence hunting
44 established by ANILCA. The SRC believes that C&T
45 requests need to be expedited so as to allow for
46 subsistence customs and traditions to continue so that
47 qualified families can carry on their participation in
48 subsistence activities to future generations.

49
50

0022

1 The Eastern Interior Regional Advisory
2 Council recommendation for both proposals was to
3 support them both. Their justification was the Eastern
4 Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
5 unanimously supports Denali National Park and Preserve
6 individual customary and traditional use determinations
7 for Blaine and Kevin Mayo's proposals at their Council
8 meeting on March 2nd, 2023 in Fairbanks.

9
10 In their justification the Council
11 referenced the comments provided by the Denali Resource
12 Commission and the NPS conclusions, both of which were
13 in support of the proposals. The Council felt that the
14 proposed analyses completed and presented by the Park
15 Service were thorough and the Council agrees that
16 long-term and consistent patterns of use have been
17 demonstrated by the Mayo brothers.

18
19 The Southcentral Regional Advisory
20 Council recommended to support both proposals. In
21 their justification they wrote: Ms. Amy Craver,
22 Subsistence Coordinator/Cultural Anthropologist,
23 presented two individual customary and traditional use
24 requests for Denali National Park and Preserve. Member
25 Opheim motioned to support both proposals, Member
26 McLaughlin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
27 The Council supported these two proposals because they
28 would benefit subsistence users and would not
29 unnecessarily restrict other users and there are no
30 conservation concerns.

31
32 Then finally the Western Interior
33 Regional Advisory Council recommendation was to defer
34 the proposals. Their justification for deferring the
35 proposals was that the Council did not believe that
36 they have C&T for the specific areas that the
37 applicants are requesting an individual C&T for and
38 defer to the Eastern Interior RAC and the Southcentral
39 RAC, which have supported both of these requests.

40
41 That concludes my presentation. Are
42 there any questions?

43
44 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Does anybody have
45 any questions?

46
47 MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead.

50

0023

1 MR. C. BROWER: On the last wording who
2 deferred? The Eastern Interior deferred it to the
3 other RACs?

4
5 MS. CRAVER: Are you asking about the
6 Western Interior, how they -- or the Eastern Interior?

7
8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I believe what he
9 was asking was which RAC.....

10
11 MR. C. BROWER: Who deferred it to
12 the.....

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Which RAC
15 supported.

16
17 MR. C. BROWER:other RAC?

18
19 MS. CRAVER: Okay. Southcentral,
20 Eastern Interior supported the proposals. When I
21 presented at the Western Interior, they didn't feel
22 like Cantwell wasn't really or Healy wasn't really in
23 their area, so they didn't feel like they really --
24 they deferred to the Southcentral and Eastern Interior
25 because they didn't have C&T for Cantwell or for the
26 Healy area. So that's why they deferred to the Eastern
27 Interior and Southcentral RACs.

28
29 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you. I was just
30 trying to get an understanding. Thank you.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you,
33 Charlie. Do you have any further questions?

34
35 (No comment)

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Does anybody else
38 have any questions of Ms. Craver at this time?

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: At this time I'd
43 like to open the floor for public testimony. Do you
44 know if the Mayo family was going to call in?

45
46 MS. CRAVER: Madame Chair. They were
47 planning on calling in, but it turns out that Blaine is
48 having knee surgery this morning and Kevin works the
49 night shift at Usibelli Coal Mine and just texted me
50

0024

1 and said he's not going to be able to call in. He had
2 to work late. So no.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. That's
5 what I wanted to make sure. Just to make sure that we
6 give them the opportunity for them to speak. Is there
7 any other public testimony on 23-01 and 23-02?

8

9 OPERATOR: For those that would like to
10 make a public testimony you may press *1 on your phone.
11 Please remember to unmute your phone and record your
12 name clearly when prompted. If you'd like to withdraw
13 yourself from the cue, you may press *2. One moment to
14 see if we have public testimony. Showing no one in
15 cue.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
18 that. So at this time can we go to the recommendation
19 or did you already cover -- no, you can go to the
20 recommendation because it says it on my notes. It says
21 the National Park Service and SRC recommendations.

22

23 MS. CRAVER: Yeah. I just read through
24 those recommendations. I think they should be in your
25 supplemental materials as well.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: And you also
28 covered the RAC recommendations also?

29

30 MS. CRAVER: Yes.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So at this
33 time I would like to open the floor for action on this
34 item. The action would be to approve both proposals or
35 not support both proposals, right, at the same time.
36 Thank you.

37

38 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead.

41

42 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and members
43 of the Board. The National Park Service moves to adopt
44 individual C&T proposals 23-01 and 02 to recognize an
45 existing pattern of use by Kevin and Blaine Mayo and
46 their family members residing in their households for
47 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan in the portions of Denali
48 National Park and Preserve that are open to subsistence
49 in Unit 13.

50

0025

1 This motion also adds Kevin Mayo's
2 family members residing in his household to his
3 existing individual C&T determination for moose in the
4 portions of Denali National Park and Preserve that are
5 open to subsistence in Unit 13 per the request outlined
6 in the Board's C&T supplemental materials.

7
8 Following a second, I will explain why
9 I intend to support my motion. Thank you.

10
11 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Charlie Brower
14 seconded the motion made by Eva Patton.

15
16 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
17 I intend to support my motion to grant Kevin and Blaine
18 Mayo and family members residing in their household an
19 individual customary and traditional use determination
20 for caribou, grouse and ptarmigan and to add Kevin
21 Mayo's family members residing in his household to his
22 existing individual C&T determinations for moose in the
23 portions of Denali National Park and Preserve that are
24 open to subsistence in Unit 13.

25
26 This is consistent with the
27 recommendations of the Eastern Interior and
28 Southcentral Regional Advisory Councils and the Denali
29 National Park Subsistence Resource Commission. The
30 analysis presented strong and sufficient evidence
31 regarding a long-standing pattern of use of moose,
32 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan in the subsistence use
33 area of Denali National Park and Preserve.

34
35 The proponents exhibit a clear
36 long-term and consistent use of moose, caribou, grouse
37 and ptarmigan in this area. This pattern has been
38 repeated for many years and through several
39 generations. This pattern is consistent with past
40 methods and means of harvest at or near the family's
41 hunting camp within Unit 13.

42
43 Knowledge of handling, preparing,
44 preserving and storing meat is shared among and between
45 generations as is knowledge of the skills, values and
46 lore associated with hunting moose, caribou, grouse and
47 ptarmigan. These species are regularly shared with
48 family and community members such as elders and the
49 opportunity to share this subsistence knowledge and
50

0026

1 experience with their children was identified by the
2 proponents as a very important aspect of this request.

3
4 All eight of the factors associated
5 with C&T determinations are evident and furthermore
6 evidence of this family's pattern of use is supported
7 by the Board's previous determination for Blaine and
8 Kevin Mayo's individual C&T for moose.

9
10 Thank you, Madame Chair.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
13 much for that justification. At this time I'll open
14 the floor to Board discussion on the individual C&T.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Are we good for
19 action? Okay. I'd like to open the floor for Board
20 action then.

21
22 MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair, I call
23 the question.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much,
26 Charlie Brower. Charlie Brower has called the
27 question. Can we get a roll call vote on this one.

28
29 MS. DETWILER: Yes, ma'am. So the
30 motion on the floor is to adopt both individual C&T's
31 01 and 02. Starting with the maker of the motion, Eva
32 Patton for National Park Service.

33
34 MS. PATTON: National Park Service
35 supports.

36
37 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Forest
38 Service, Dave Schmid.

39
40 MR. SCHMID: The Forest Service
41 supports with the justification provided by the Park
42 Service and in deference to the Eastern Interior RAC
43 and Southcentral RAC's support as well.

44
45 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. BIA, Glenn
46 Chen.

47
48 MR. CHEN: BIA supports the motion. We
49 concur with the recommendations and the justification
50

0027

1 provided by the Park Service.

2

3 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. BLM, Steve
4 Cohn.

5

6 MR. COHN: BLM supports the individual
7 customary and traditional use determinations for the
8 reasons articulated by the National Park Service and
9 consistent with the recommendations of the Regional
10 Advisory Councils and the Denali Park Subsistence
11 Resource Commission.

12

13 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Fish and
14 Wildlife Service, Jill Klein.

15

16 MS. KLEIN: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife
17 Service also supports due to the evidence presented in
18 the analysis and also the widespread support for these
19 applicants from the Park Service, the Councils and the
20 Commission as well.

21

22 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Public
23 Member Rhonda Pitka.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I support for the
26 reasons already stated and the excellent justification
27 provided. I'd also like to thank Staff for putting
28 together such a thorough package for the individual
29 C&Ts. It's very helpful when we make decisions. Thank
30 you so much for that.

31

32 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Finally,
33 Public Member Charlie Brower.

34

35 MR. C. BROWER: I support the motion to
36 accept the ICTP 23-01 and 02 as recommended by the Park
37 Service and SRC recommendations. Thank you.

38

39 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. The motion
40 passes unanimously, Madame Chair.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
43 much for that. Now it looks like our Chair Tony
44 Christianson has entered the building, so I will be
45 exiting. Thank you.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,

50

0028

1 Rhonda, for doing that. Take your hour now. I
2 apologize. Thanks to Yellow Cab. Welcome. Good
3 morning, everybody. Sorry I'm late. We're on number
4 5?

5
6 MS. DETWILER: Yes.

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
9 Advisory Council Annual Report.

10
11 MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
14 Orville. You have the floor. Charlie.

15
16 MR. C. BROWER: Since you're online did
17 you get to vote?

18
19 MS. DETWILER: He didn't hear the whole
20 discussion. He wanted to know if you wanted to vote,
21 if you were going to vote.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, I'm fine
24 with the way it went passing unanimously. Just based
25 on missing most of the information here and public,
26 I'll just abstain at this moment.

27
28 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you. I was just
29 curious. Thank you. Good morning.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: For the record,
32 I do support though. So we are on to Regional Advisory
33 Council annual replies. I'll call on Staff.

34
35 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Members of the Board. Let me just share my screen with
37 you. All right. For the record my name is Katya
38 Wessels and I'm the Council Coordination Division
39 Supervisor with OSM. Today I'm going to present to you
40 an overview of the Council's Fiscal Year 2022 Annual
41 Reports and the Board's replies to these reports.

42
43 It's probably going to be one of the
44 lengthiest presentations today, but please bear with me
45 because I think all the 10 Regional Advisory Councils
46 deserve this time at the mic and I'm representing their
47 thoughts and interests here. So at any time during my
48 presentation if you have any questions or would like to
49 make a comment, please interrupt me. I'm going to also
50

0029

1 pause at some times to allow maybe for additional
2 discussion if the Board desires.

3

4

5 So first I would like to remind the
6 Board that the authority for the Subsistence Regional
7 Advisory Councils to submit Annual Reports originates
8 in Section 805 of ANILCA that states the Regional
9 Advisory Council in each subsistence resource region
10 shall have an authority to prepare an annual report to
11 the Secretary which shall contain an identification of
12 current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and
13 wildlife populations within the region and evaluation
14 of current and anticipated subsistence means for fish
15 and wildlife populations within the region.

15

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I recommend a strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs. And a recommendation concerning policies, standard guidelines and regulations to implement the strategy.....

REPORTER: Katya, hang on one second.

(Technical difficulties)

MS. WESSELS: The Secretarial regulation subsequently modified that to be reported to the Federal Subsistence Board. In the fiscal year 2022, all 10 Councils had subsistence-related issues that they wanted to share with the Board in the Annual Reports. Eighty-three various topics of concern were communicated to this Board, which is a lot. These Annual Reports are a great avenue of sharing.....

OPERATOR: Please stand by everyone.

(Pause)

MS. WESSELS: All right. These Annual Reports are a great avenue of sharing Councils' concerns with the Board. The types of issues included in the Annual Report mostly cannot be addressed through the regulatory process.

A development of an Annual Report is a lengthy process and reports encompass a lot of subject matter. Before I describe the subject matter in more detail I would like to provide a quick overview

0030

1 particularly for benefit of our newer Board members on
2 how this process works. The Councils' Annual Reports
3 are reports on the issues encountered in the previous
4 fiscal year. Each year at the fall meetings the
5 Councils are asked to identify issues they would like
6 to include in the Annual Reports.

7

8 With that input the Staff develops
9 Draft Annual Reports that the Councils then review,
10 modify and approve at their winter meetings. Staff
11 principally from OSM but also from other offices and
12 other agencies draft the responses on behalf of this
13 Board to the issues outlined in the Annual Reports.
14 The draft responses are then collated, reviewed by OSM
15 leadership team and then by the Interagency Staff
16 Committee. Now these replies to the Council's Annual
17 Reports are before you for your review and approval.

18

19 Some of you are accustomed to see this
20 table from the previous years. This table identifies
21 the issues and concerns that were raised by more than
22 one Council and that comes up fairly often. Therefore
23 this table can serve as an indicator of a potential
24 bigger or overarching issue that can be of importance
25 to more than one region.

26

27 So as you see this table is a little
28 bit different from what you've seen in the previous
29 years. You can see that in parentheses, the little
30 number in parentheses, it identifies the number and the
31 issue on the Annual Report. This can help you. You
32 know, if you want to reference, go to that region's
33 Annual Report and find the issue.

34

35 This year there's a lot of issues that
36 are of importance to multiple regions. There's 10
37 altogether. Some of the issues, as you see the arrows
38 pointing from one issue to the other because a topic
39 would encompass -- like, for example, Bristol Bay.
40 They talk about salmon declines, but also they talk
41 about the need for research. Or Western Interior they
42 talk about again the salmon issues, but they also talk
43 about food security.

44

45 These are the 10 issues. I'm going to
46 talk about each of them in more detail and share with
47 you what the Council said and what each of the replies
48 from the Board provided back to the Councils. So the
49 first overarching topic is salmon. That includes such
50

0031

1 things as decline, bycatch, management. First I'm
2 going to speak about the bycatch actually because it's
3 of interest to more than one Council, of course.

4
5 Y-K Delta is the leader in their
6 concerns about salmon. The Y-K Delta is particularly
7 concerned about the interception of salmon in the Area
8 M commercial fishery, especially chum salmon. The Y-K
9 Delta supported Board of Fisheries proposals seeking to
10 limit commercial harvest time in this region in an
11 effort to reduce interception. Requesting that the
12 results of genetic monitoring of the commercial salmon
13 harvest in the Alaska Peninsula Region is presented to
14 the Council.

15
16 Other concerns that the Council has is
17 bycatch of salmon in the Bering Sea trawl fisheries and
18 more strict bycatch caps are warranted during time of
19 conservation. The Council stresses that. Subsistence
20 users carry the burden of conservation. Salmon
21 management needs to take place on an ecosystem scale,
22 the Council underlines. State, DOI and Department of
23 Commerce need to do cross-regional management planning.
24 The Council requests a briefing if the Secretaries of
25 the Interior or Agriculture were able to liaise with
26 the Secretary of Commerce following the joint four
27 Council letter.

28
29 The Western Interior, who was one of
30 the co-signing on the joint Council letter, they're
31 also talking about commercial interception of Kuskokwim
32 and Yukon River bound salmon. They labeled that as an
33 information item in their report, but still because of
34 the 2022 catastrophically low chinook, chum and coho
35 run there was no harvest opportunities on Yukon.
36 Early-season restrictions and a late summer subsistence
37 closure on Kusko. They highlight that in their report.

38
39 However, commercial salmon fishing
40 continued in the State managed South Alaska Peninsula
41 salmon fishery, or Area M, and it was sold for profit.
42 In the Federally managed Bering Sea Aleutian Islands
43 Trawl Fleet pollock fishery, salmon from these rivers
44 were also caught and then discarded in the high seas as
45 bycatch at a 100 percent mortality rate. These are the
46 Council's words.

47
48 The recent regulatory changes
49 implemented by the Board of Fisheries and the North
50

0032

1 Pacific Fisheries Management Council did not remedy
2 this situation.

3

4

5 Seward Peninsula joins with the same
6 topic. Impact to Norton Sound bound salmon in the
7 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands trawl fleet fishery and
8 other commercial intercept fisheries. Seward Peninsula
9 Council says that they have continuing concerns about
10 the bycatch of salmon during commercial fisheries, such
11 as the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands trawl fleet
12 fishery and other commercial intercept fisheries.

12

13

14 They are concerned about the
15 associated impacts it has on subsistence resources in
16 the Seward Peninsula area. Several species of salmon
17 populations on the Yukon and Kusko have collapsed. It
18 should be a priority for both the State and Federal
19 government to manage commercial fisheries so that
20 subsistence user needs for salmon can be met. They are
21 requesting forwarding the Council's concern to the
22 appropriate authorities.

22

23

24 The fourth Council, that is a Yukon
25 Council, is the Eastern Interior. Again, they have the
26 same concerns. They're talking about the ongoing
27 salmon fishing closures and record low returns of Yukon
28 River chinook salmon. They say for the third year in a
29 row there were dismal returns of all Yukon River salmon
30 species. Subsistence salmon fishing was closed in
31 2022. Yukon River salmon continue to be by-caught in
32 the Bering Sea and intercepted in the Alaska Peninsula
33 commercial fisheries, while our people along the river
34 are going without.

34

35

36 The subsistence priority is not being
37 upheld, the Council states. It is imperative that all
38 State and Federal agencies work together across
39 jurisdictional boundaries to conserve Yukon River
40 salmon stocks using an ecosystem-based management
41 approach. The Board needs to take action on that.

41

42

43 Besides the four Yukon River Councils
44 there is also a support for the same topic from the
45 Southeast Council. The Southeast Council shares with
46 the Board that after days of public testimony at the
47 North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting
48 ultimately there was no additional reduction to the
49 bycatch limits of the trawl fleet and no effort was
50 made to reduce interception.

50

0033

1 The Southeast Council points out that
2 although the problem may vary from region to region,
3 this is a statewide issue. For Southeast one of the
4 concerns revolves around transboundary mining and the
5 trawl interception of chinook salmon in the Gulf of
6 Alaska. Specifically for Southeast it would help
7 spotlight the issue of bycatch across all agencies
8 involved in the management of jurisdiction.

9
10 Subsistence representation on the
11 North Pacific Fishery Management Council is vital to
12 ensuring subsistence needs are explicitly considered in
13 the management of commercial fisheries. In the
14 Southeast they were not aware that the letter was
15 forwarded to the Secretary, so they say the Southeast
16 is requesting to forward the letter of support. Oh,
17 they're requesting to forward their own letter of
18 support to the letter that the full Council sent to the
19 Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture.

20
21 In their reply the Board provides that
22 they share the same concerns. Some of their replies
23 provide information on a number of Board of Fisheries
24 proposals related to the same concerns and the results
25 of the Board of Fisheries voting. Only Proposal 136
26 passed with amendments that provided some reduction in
27 commercial fishing time and established chum salmon
28 harvest shutdown triggers for the purse seine fishery
29 during June in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands
30 June Salmon Management Plan.

31
32 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game
33 is currently conducting a four-year study to estimate
34 stock, age, and length compositions, and stock-specific
35 harvests in South Alaska Peninsula fisheries. The
36 results of the first year I included with the replies.

37
38 The other replies to the Councils also
39 provide that although the North Pacific Fisheries
40 Management Council was considering a chum bycatch cap,
41 they opted to keep the industry-led incentive plan
42 agreements for chum salmon avoidance in place and
43 stated that the majority of non-chinook bycatch in the
44 pollock fishery is of Russian/Asian hatchery origin.
45 The North Pacific Fishery Management Council also
46 created a Salmon Bycatch Committee in the fall of 2022.

47
48
49 On the behest of the four Yukon River
50

0034

1 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils the Board sent a
2 letter to the Secretaries of the Interior and
3 Agriculture expressing the Council's concern for the
4 need for significant reductions in chinook and chum
5 salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
6 commercial fishery and their interest in subsistence or
7 tribal representation on the North Pacific Fisheries
8 Management Council.

9
10 A new tribal seat was added to the
11 Advisory Panel in 2023. The Board also respectfully
12 asked the Secretaries to liaise with the Department of
13 Commerce to explore engagement and relationship
14 building between the agencies with the goal of
15 addressing salmon migratory life cycles and bycatch
16 holistically.

17
18 So that kind of constitutes the replies
19 to the four Yukon River Councils' concern as well as
20 the Southeast support for their concerns, but then
21 there's other salmon issues across the state that are
22 more specific for the regions. They are concerned
23 about chinook salmon abundance across the Bristol Bay
24 region as many rivers had experienced decline.

25
26 Nushagak chinook salmon have failed to
27 achieve the in-river goal of 95,000 chinook salmon in
28 five of the last six years and commercial harvest was
29 the lowest on record since 1955 and was declared a
30 stock of management concern by the Board of Game. The
31 Nushagak River has not met the sustainable escapement
32 goal the past three years for chum salmon either and
33 commercial harvest in 2021 was the lowest on record for
34 the second year in a row.

35
36 The Bristol Bay Council is requesting
37 that tributaries of Nushagak River be added to
38 enumeration studies. Here you see the crossover from
39 one topic to the other. They're requesting the
40 studies. And that methods such as aerial surveys and
41 harvest monitoring be employed as well. The Bristol
42 Bay Council also states that the State of Alaska and
43 Federal agencies should combine their efforts and work
44 collaboratively.

45
46 So in their reply to Bristol Bay The
47 Board supports and encourages any cooperative efforts
48 between the ADF&G and Federal land managers and
49 in-season fisheries managers to determine which chinook
50

0035

1 and chum salmon stocks in Bristol Bay should be
2 prioritized for monitoring or surveying. The Board
3 suggests that the Council may want to identify priority
4 information needs for chinook and chum salmon stocks in
5 the Bristol Bay region during the next FRMP funding
6 cycle.

7
8 So Y-K Delta has probably the most
9 concerns about salmon. The Y-K Delta in their report
10 they also talk about Kuskokwim River salmon management.
11 The Council is concerned about salmon management
12 disagreements in the Kuskokwim Region between the State
13 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. It feels strongly that
14 they need to work together and strive for consensus on
15 management decisions. Then about the same time they
16 mention that the ANILCA rural subsistence priority must
17 be upheld. The Board's reply provides that the Board
18 as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife supports Council
19 desire to work with the State.

20
21 The Yukon Delta National Wildlife
22 Refuge routinely communicates with the Alaska
23 Department of Fish and Game and attends State Kusko
24 River Salmon Management Working Group to learn about
25 in-season biology and to obtain input on management
26 options.

27
28 Another salmon concern by the YKDelta
29 Council is the competition between hatchery and wild
30 salmon in the Bering Sea. The Council wants information
31 on any research and monitoring efforts. They also want
32 information on treaties on collaborative management
33 agreements between U.S., Russia and Asian countries
34 regarding salmon in the Bering Sea.

35
36 The Board provides that no current
37 research or monitoring efforts directly investigating
38 competition between wild and hatchery-origin salmon in
39 the Bering Sea exists, but there are a few
40 investigations on the topic and the Board provides
41 citations to these investigations.

42
43 The reply provides information on the
44 North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission and Convention
45 area and member countries as well as the information on
46 the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and
47 Management Act and the North Pacific Fishery and
48 Management Council.

49
50

1 There is also important information on
2 the Pacific Salmon Treaty and the International Treaty
3 between the U.S. and Canada on salmon management,
4 although it is not directly related to the Bering Sea.

5
6 There's another two concerns by the Y-K
7 Delta Council about salmon. They are concerned about
8 the effects on salmon by Fukushima radiation. They're
9 requesting on-going updates on the radiation monitoring
10 and testing. So the Board replies back to the Council
11 that the testing had been ongoing and no harmful levels
12 of radiation have been detected in any of the samples.
13 Informational links to the websites are provided.

14
15 Another Y-K Delta concern is that
16 salmon fishing should be allowed in non-salmon spawning
17 streams on the Yukon Region like it is allowed in the
18 Kuskokwim Region.

19
20 So the Council is concerned regarding
21 discrepancies of subsistence fish and regulations
22 between the Kuskokwim River and the Yukon River and a
23 need to identify non-spawning streams in the coastal
24 and Lower Yukon River region and to evaluate
25 opportunities for subsistence harvest in those systems
26 as it has been done on the Kuskokwim River.

27
28 In their reply the Board communicates
29 that they reached out to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and
30 they provide an answer by the delegated Federal
31 Fisheries Manager who states that there's a large gap
32 in data for the Lower Yukon River and coastal areas.
33 Currently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, ADF&G are
34 seeking funding to cover the data gap.

35
36 Two projects were funded by FRMP to
37 cover the gap. One will begin in 2024 and it will
38 help. Local traditional knowledge of salmon presence
39 is important, but since there hasn't been a harvestable
40 surplus of chinook, summer chum and fall chum salmon no
41 salmon can be harvested, even those that are pooling
42 into streams.

43
44 So there is one more salmon concern
45 that was exhibited by the Western Interior Council.
46 They provided more as an informational item. So
47 they're concerned that all subsistence fishing was
48 effectively closed on the Kuskokwim River from
49 mid-August to mid-September in 2022 to protect the
50

0037

1 remainder of the coho salmon run. This was in addition
2 to the earlier chinook and chum salmon closures.

3
4 The Council is saying that this is just
5 an information item to the Board. The Board provided a
6 standard response, but the Council wants the Board to
7 know. They are also introducing the new term that the
8 situation with the salmon increases food insecurity for
9 subsistence users. This is the first year then a
10 couple of Councils are using the words food insecurity.

11
12 I will pause at this time before we go
13 onto the next overarching topic and see if there is any
14 comments, questions or anything from the Board members.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Can we take a
17 five-minute break, Katya?

18
19 MS. WESSELS: All right. You're
20 already tired of me?

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think the
23 rest of them are. I'm fresh.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was late, so
28 we'll take a five minute recess.

29
30 MS. WESSELS: That was probably the
31 longest topic.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you very
34 much. That was a good one and real important.

35
36 (Off record)

37
38 (On record)

39
40 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. We're going
41 to continue with the annual reports and replies from
42 the Board. The next overarching topic is caribou.
43 There's several Councils, as you see on this diagram
44 with the stars, that have caribou concerns.

45
46 So there's two Councils, Bristol Bay
47 and Western Interior, that are concerned about
48 Mulchatna Caribou Herd. Bristol Bay says Mulchatna is
49 not recovering. Counts are lower in 2022 than 2021 and
50

0038

1 well below population objectives, although hunting
2 opportunities have been closed on State and Federal
3 side since 2019, but it's not working.

4

5 Western Interior joins along and says
6 that there is difficulties stabilizing the Mulchatna
7 Caribou Herd population despite ongoing efforts by the
8 Federal and State managers. So that was basically
9 information item from both of the Councils.

10 So the Board provided a standard reply, thank you for
11 the information.

12

13 So the other Council concerned about
14 caribou is Seward Peninsula, but their concern is kind
15 of local for their area. During the meetings they
16 discussed and brought up the topic of resident caribou
17 or reindeer herd in the northern Seward Peninsula.

18

19 ADF&G did an estimation of the
20 population and its movement, but no genetic research or
21 any information of how this herd affects the migration
22 of the WACH has been done.

23

24 Promises were made in FY 2021 annual
25 report reply that BELA staff would initiate Tribal
26 consultations, conduct a literature review, and work
27 with the University of Alaska, Fairbanks Reindeer
28 Research Program to learn about genetic work.

29

30 So basically the Board reached out to
31 BELA staff and NPS and they provided a reply. BELA
32 staff conducted consultations on the topic, but they're
33 not able to share the results of the consultation
34 publicly. Unfortunately the University of Alaska
35 Fairbanks Reindeer Research Program doesn't exist
36 anymore and Park staff were unable to locate any
37 reports associated with the topic.

38

39 Park staff did a literature review and
40 found one journal article on the topic from 2013, which
41 is referenced in the Board's reply. Currently, the
42 Board says, the focus is on WACH to better understand
43 recent declines. So no plans on collaring caribou on
44 the Seward Peninsula, which would require a
45 multi-agency Federal and State effort. So that's kind
46 of a localized concern.

47

48 Then, of course, Northwest Arctic has
49 two caribou concerns. So Northwest Arctic expressed
50

0039

1 the need for cross-regional coordination of caribou
2 management between the Federal and State agencies that
3 better engages the local tribes, regional Native
4 organizations and communities.

5

6 The Board replied that the WACH working
7 group is an important avenue for coordination amongst
8 user groups across the range of the WACH. The North
9 American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate
10 Conference was held in May 2023 in Anchorage and it
11 brought together agency staff, academic researchers,
12 and traditional knowledge holders from across the
13 Arctic to share information on caribou herds and their
14 management. Council members from all the Councils got
15 a chance to participate in this conference and
16 workshop.

17

18 The Board also suggests that the
19 Council discusses caribou management at the Council
20 meetings with Federal/State agencies, tribes and Native
21 corporations in local communities. Another avenue to
22 discuss the joint caribou management will be at the
23 upcoming March 2024 All-Council meeting. So that would
24 be a great place to discuss a cross-regional caribou
25 management.

26

27 Northwest Arctic would like to see
28 continued research and findings communicated to them on
29 causes of caribou mortality, including diseases,
30 starvation, predation, calf survival, hunting
31 pressures, and effects of climate change. The decline
32 of WACH numbers is alarming to the Northwest Arctic
33 Council. Additional research needs to be done why
34 there is a decline. The dropping numbers will decrease
35 food security. Again, there is a crossover from one
36 overarching topic to the other, food security.

37

38 The Board replies that Federal and
39 State biologists and other researchers are working
40 together on multiple research topics pertaining to the
41 WACH and other Alaskan and international caribou herds.
42 Research is expected to continue to help further
43 understand the root causes of caribou declines.

44

45 The Board also suggests that the
46 Council invites local Federal and State agency staff to
47 present on their research at the Council meetings. The
48 Board also would like the Council to provide their
49 traditional ecological knowledge to the Board. The

50

0040

1 Board also stresses the importance of providing timely
2 and accurate harvest reports.

3

4

5 Then the other two Councils with
6 caribou concerns is Eastern Interior and North Slope.
7 Eastern Interior has concerns regarding the management
8 of Forty-Mile Caribou Herd. They're specifically
9 concerned about ADF&G management action utilizing
10 liberalized bag limit to drastically reduce the herd
11 due to concerns about nutritional stress. They say
12 that this type of decision should have been vetted by
13 the Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Management
14 Coalition.

15

16 There needs to be a greater presence of
17 law enforcement and local community hunter liaisons
18 during the herd hunting season on Steese and Taylor
19 highways because there are great concerns for safety.
20 The Council is asking the Board to collaborate with the
21 State to take meaningful actions.

22

23

24 The Board replies that they forwarded
25 the Council's FY22 annual report, which included the
26 Council's concerns to ADF&G management for their
27 awareness. The Board also reached out with the
28 Council's concerns to the BLM Eastern Interior Field
29 Office that has delegated authority to set seasons and
30 harvest limits for the Fortymile Caribou Herd.

31

32

33 ADF&G determines the annual harvest
34 quotas and BLM works closely with ADF&G to manage a
35 Federal portion of that harvest in a way that is
36 supportive of federally qualified subsistence use. The
37 BLM Eastern Interior Field Office, ADF&G, State
38 Wildlife Troopers, and other Federal agencies have
39 cooperated to address many of these types of concerns
40 of safety, law enforcement, hunter ethics and meat
41 care, which are especially problematic with such high
42 volume of roadside hunt. The rest of the reply from
43 the Board describes in detail BLM's effort and working
44 with ADF&G.

45

46

47 So North Slope Council is concerned
48 about sport hunting for caribou near Anaktuvuk Pass.
49 They're asking support for research in caribou
50 migration patterns from ADF&G and North Slope Borough
Wildlife Division radio collars. The Council says that
the Dalton Highway is flooded with hunters, but
enforcement is minimal. The Council suggested closures

51

0041

1 on the lands and waters immediately outside village
2 boundaries that fall under federal jurisdiction during
3 peak subsistence activities.

4

5 The Board points out that the land
6 around Anaktuvuk Pass is either State-managed or
7 NPS-managed and sport hunting is prohibited within
8 National Parks. Proposals to the Board requesting
9 temporary spatial and temporal closures to caribou
10 hunting on Federal public lands are welcomed. The
11 Council can also submit proposals to the Alaska Board
12 of Game, proposing similar closures on State-managed
13 lands.

14

15 The Board also suggests to invite the
16 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and North Slope
17 Borough researchers to the meeting to discuss the
18 potential to investigate deflection of caribou during
19 migration.

20

21 That concludes my presentation of
22 caribou concerns by the several Councils. Are there
23 any questions or discussion among the Board members?

24

25 MR. COHN: Just a question. Can you
26 reiterate that last statement about deflection of
27 caribou during migration and where that came from.

28

29 MS. WESSELS: Okay. That came from the
30 Board reply. The Board also suggests to invite the
31 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and North Slope
32 Borough researchers to the meeting to discuss the
33 potential to investigate deflection of caribou during
34 migration. That's the North Slope report topic number
35 two, which you can see the full reply in the meeting
36 book. Let's see. 129. So you can read the full reply
37 to the Council's concern on Page 129.

38

39 Also I did not mention it earlier, but
40 I want to mention this to the Board. All these replies
41 are draft until the Board approves them. If you desire
42 to change any wording or add anything to these replies,
43 you can do it during this meeting. So if you disagree
44 with something that's being said there and you want to
45 change it, that's why we are discussing these.

46

47 MS. PITKA: Katya, it's not on this
48 particular one and I know that I wrote the note on my
49 PDF file, which is on my now dead laptop, but I did
50

0042

1 have a change. It was something about a co-stewardship
2 symposium which was listed as being in Anchorage next
3 week, but I believe the co-stewardship symposium is
4 going to be in Fairbanks on December 4th through the
5 8th. I cannot recall which part it was under, but I
6 know I specifically looked at that note because
7 somebody reached out to me about the dates.

8

9 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, the co-stewardship
10 will be one of the topics that is important to more
11 than one region, so we can probably address it then,
12 but I'll make a note. Member Cohn, did I answer your
13 question?

14

15 MR. COHN: You did. Thank you very
16 much. Also, I'm wondering, Mr. Chair, if it would be
17 possible to just ask a question. I know we're going
18 backwards a little, but in regards to the salmon
19 discussion. It's really just a question. I don't
20 expect an answer, but it's just I guess a question
21 about our role as the Federal Subsistence Board and the
22 Federal Subsistence Program. I'm just trying to
23 understand better what role we might play in helping to
24 facilitate meaningful dialogue in the state around the
25 salmon crisis.

26

27 In addition to what we're currently
28 doing are there other things that we could be doing as
29 a Board. Just an open question and, again, not
30 expecting any answers, but I'm still very new to being
31 in this role, so really trying to understand what we
32 could be doing because the issue just keeps coming up.
33 It's getting more important I think and more of a
34 crisis even in the short time I've been on this Board
35 it feels like it's just increasing.

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We have other
38 rivers that are starting to slide that direction as
39 well, so it would probably be a good idea to find that
40 process where we could get a little more stringent
41 dialogue with the higher-ups, I think. Look at our
42 counterparts for that support probably as well.

43

44 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I might also add
45 that the Board already has been helpful with forwarding
46 the Council's concerns to the Secretaries of the
47 Interior and Agriculture and asking them to liaise with
48 the other departments. So I think more of the same
49 would be great and also we're planning to have an all
50

50

0043

1 Council meeting in March of 2024.

2

3

4 The last one we had was in 2016. That
5 was when all of the Councils met together in Anchorage
6 and we had a very extensive program with a joint
7 preliminary session for a day and a half and then
8 various workshops, seminars and lectures. So we are
9 expecting that salmon is probably going to be one of
10 the biggest topics of discussion.

10

11

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Perhaps the Board can talk among
themselves to see if they can help to facilitate these
discussions, but that's how the Federal Subsistence
Management Program is going to facilitate it. We will
provide these as an opportunity. Maybe it's going to
be in the form of a workshop, but maybe it's going to
be like an open table discussion where the stakeholders
can come together and share their concerns and see what
else can be done.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
that, Katya, and I appreciate that work too as well.
Steve was kind of leaning in here as we were discussing
earlier about having a discussion with the Secretary of
Interior herself and how positive that was. We might
entertain that moving forward that this Board request
that audience. I hear she's coming.

It might be an opportunity for us to
get ahead of the ball before 2024 and take some steps
forward that are meaningful and maybe invite our
counterparts and the equals that we may have a frank
discussion about the importance of this resources to
the entirety of Alaska and that it is at a crisis mode
and that we should be taking active steps towards
figuring out where our role is and what actions each of
our agencies and roles can take in that.

I think we're at that point, you know,
and it would probably be good if we did it prior to
rolling out public things. So I really admired that
suggestion and I would really lean on this Board to
really consider that that's what we do and start to
kick this ball into the court of the people who have
that authority because we keep kicking it back and
forth, but it's not at the kicking point anymore.
There's no ball to kick.

And then I'm looking at you're hearing

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1 salmon number one, caribou number two. Three years of
2 declining caribou and no harvest of salmon. I think
3 there's an interlocking relationship there because if
4 you don't get your food somewhere, you're going to go
5 find it. That's right within our Board's purview is to
6 find those alternate resources and make sure that
7 there's enough when there isn't enough.

8

9 That's where we find ourselves really
10 leaning into the caribou issue when there's no salmon
11 and now we're finding now there's probably a
12 correlation between the two. I would almost say we
13 should have some more in-depth and invite and see what
14 that plan moving forward looks like, all that
15 information sharing. I know we do fairly well now, but
16 we also have some discretion out there.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill with U.S. Fish
21 and Wildlife Service and I also just want to echo
22 support for that, Steve Cohn's question about the role,
23 I guess, of the Board in addressing these bigger
24 statewide resource concerns and what the Board can do.
25 The resource issues are on and off Federal public lands
26 and so how do we address migratory issues that cross
27 jurisdictions.

28

29 I would be curious -- I was going to
30 raise if we could get information from our solicitor as
31 well. I think what Chair Christianson is raising about
32 meeting with the Secretary sounds like a great idea,
33 but if there's also input or guidance we can get from
34 the solicitor as well about any parameters of what the
35 Board can or can't do, that would be great. And more,
36 you know, looking towards what can we do trying to
37 answer that question.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
42 Katya, you have the floor.

43

44 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
45 just in step with what was said, the next topic -- and
46 you see the slide change. The Councils that have food
47 security issues basically related to what is happening
48 in the state. The two Councils we already talked about
49 their food security questions was the Western Interior
50

0045

1 and Northwest Arctic. That was a part of their
2 concerns related to salmon or caribou.

3

4

5 The other two Councils that brought the
6 food security issues are Eastern Interior and North
7 Slope. So Eastern Interior is talking about that the
8 residents of Rampart and Tanana have not been able to
9 harvest sufficient moose for quite a while. That
10 coupled with salmon fishing closures and the lack of
11 available moose is compounding food security issues in
12 the region. Moose surveys are needed to be completed
13 in Unit 20F. The Council is asking to pass these
14 concerns to the ADF&G and requests the information on
15 population harvest trends in Unit 20F.

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So the Board reply to that is that --
the Federal lands in Unit 20F is only 22 percent. So
the Board recommends to communicate their concerns to
ADF&G in the form of a letter and put their request for
information in the form of a letter to ADF&G.

And then the Eastern Interior also has
an issue that they even labeled food insecurity. As I
mentioned, that's the first time when we have in the
Council's annual reports them using the word
insecurity. So the Council says residents of the Yukon
River Drainage are experiencing unprecedented food
insecurity.

This is primarily due to three straight
years of subsistence salmon fishing restrictions and
closures. But the moose and caribou populations in our
region are low too, so they cannot serve as a
replacement. Distribution of salmon from other regions
was great, but it's not a long-term solution to the
food insecurity we face and it does not meet our
cultural needs. Cultural heritage is being lost.

The Board reply contains a suggestion
to use Federal Subsistence Management Program, Cultural
Education Program, Subsistence harvest permits, which
is an important tool available to support sharing of
knowledge and harvest practices with younger
generations.

The other Council that is bringing the
food security as an issue is North Slope and North
Slope is concerned about losing the ability to use
traditional practices for preserving food due to change

0046

1 in the weather conditions. Warmer conditions preclude
2 freezing fish naturally and the permafrost has been
3 thawing, spoiling whale meat in cellars.

4
5 So that's a combination of a concern,
6 food security and climate change, that issue. Because
7 of this there's less food available to community
8 members for sharing and consumption. Contributing to
9 high levels of food insecurity. The Board -- because
10 it was labeled as more of an information item, the
11 Board provided the standard response to that.

12
13 So that concludes an overview of the
14 food security concerns by the Councils. I will pause
15 to see if there is any discussion or questions on that.

16
17 If not, moving along. The next one is
18 climate change. Again, the diagram on the screen
19 indicates the regions that brought up the climate
20 change as part of their concerns.

21
22 For Southeast, it was labeled as an
23 information item to the Board, but I still -- you know,
24 like I'm going to provide an overview of what their
25 concern is. How their concern about the effects of
26 global warming, ocean acidification, extreme weather
27 events and other climate crises and the effects they
28 have on fish and wildlife resources.

29
30 The Council decided to routinely inform
31 the Board on various issues in their region related to
32 climate change. They cite in their report such things
33 as brittle cockle shells. The shells are very thin and
34 break very easily and there has been no explanation.
35 They cite water quality, increased temperatures,
36 acidification. Something is happening in the ocean.
37 They talk about spruce beetle. Warm impacts due to
38 warmer summers resulted in tree die-offs. They also
39 talk about scarring of streams due to heavy rainfall
40 and the effect it has on spawning beds and fry.

41 Southcentral also has climate change
42 concerns and they say high water level and increased
43 precipitation are affecting the use and efficacy of
44 traditional fishwheels. Other impacts of climate
45 change is change in species migration timing.

46
47 The Board, in their reply, underscores
48 that the Federal Subsistence Management Program can
49 support adaptation to changing climatic and
50

0047

1 environmental condition by ensuring a regulatory
2 process that facilitates flexibility.

3

4 The special action process and
5 delegation of authority provide an avenue for
6 responding to unexpected issues and changes.

7

8 Closures to non-federally qualified
9 users or ANILCA Section 804 prioritizations among
10 federally qualified subsistence users may become
11 necessary if shortages of traditional subsistence
12 resources continue to be prevalent. That was the part
13 of the Board's reply.

14

15 So the Southcentral also have another
16 climate change concern and the climate change impacts
17 on ocean resources such as clams and salmon and marine
18 food webs. The Council noted they would be interested
19 in learning more about the causes and impacts of
20 paralytic shellfish poisoning.

21

22 The Board, in their reply, advised the
23 Council to invite specialists to present on these
24 topics of interest as well as the Board provides links
25 to the relative online resources on the topic.

26

27 That is the important thing to note
28 here. Not on the subject, but the Board replies they
29 would try to be as factual as possible with their
30 replies and provide useful information if it's reports,
31 as an enclosure or internet links. Useful information
32 how the Councils can address the issues of concern.

33

34 The other Council with a climate change
35 concern is Kodiak/Aleutian. They say warmer summers
36 and unpredictable weather patterns are creating more
37 forceful storms and ocean conditions that have made it
38 increasingly more difficult for residents to safely
39 access the ocean. Climate change affects fishery
40 resources.

41

42 So the reply to Kodiak/Aleutians
43 concern is similar to the one provided to Southcentral
44 where various processes within Federal Subsistence
45 Management Program can facilitate the flexibility.

46

47 Y-K Delta. There is concern related to
48 Typhoon Merbok. The storm surge generated by Merbok
49 caused severe flooding and erosion damage in our region

50

0048

1 and resulted in a loss of infrastructure in many of our
2 communities and fish camps. As climate continues to
3 change, these type of storms may become more common.
4 Research is needed to monitor the impacts. Here again
5 the combination of issues. Climate change and also
6 research needed.

7

8 The Board provides in their reply the
9 information that the Alaska Division of Geological &
10 Geophysical Surveys is mapping the impacts of Typhoon
11 Merbok and the post-storm data response. The Arctic
12 Coastal Geoscience Lab, housed within the University of
13 Alaska Fairbanks, conducts research to advance
14 knowledge regarding coastal processes and hazards and
15 provides data that informs decision-making.

16

17 The Pursuing Opportunities for
18 Long-Term Arctic Resilience for Infrastructure and
19 Society project seeks to understand how communities in
20 Arctic Alaska are affected by environmental hazards and
21 risks, including coastal erosion and flooding,
22 declining sea ice cover and changes in the availability
23 and access to wild resources.

24

25 Then finally the Federal Emergency
26 Management Agency's Interagency Recovery Coordination
27 team is currently working to support the long-term
28 recovery of communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok.
29 This is very concrete information that the Board
30 provided to the Y-K Delta Council.

31

32 Northwest Arctic concerns regarding
33 climate change. They say that causing anxiety about
34 food security and food sovereignty in the region's
35 communities. Changes to the environment and
36 unpredictable weather make it more difficult and
37 dangerous for subsistence users to access traditional
38 hunting, fishing, and gathering areas. The Council has
39 also noticed the damage climate change is having on
40 caribou and local take of caribou.

41

42 So again their reply is similar. The
43 Board's reply is similar to what was given to
44 Southcentral and Kodiak/Aleutian that the Federal
45 Subsistence Management Program can facilitate
46 regulatory flexibility.

47

48 The Eastern Interior points out that
49 one impact to note is that the fall weather has tended
50

0049

1 to be warmer later into the season and has resulted in
2 delayed timing of the fall moose rut. This change in
3 moose behavior negatively impacts subsistence hunter
4 success rates. The Board may need to consider shifting
5 or extending fall moose hunts in the near future to
6 address this issue. So the reply also says that that
7 can be done through the regulatory process addressing
8 these concerns.

9

10 So that concludes an overview of the
11 climate change overarching topic. Are there any
12 questions or conversation among the Board members.

13

14 MS. PITKA: I'm glad for all of the
15 responses that I was reading, especially last night. I
16 wish that I had my not dead laptop to get some of the
17 notes that I was taking, but the responses are really
18 detailed and I think it's something good for the
19 Regional Advisory Councils to get back. Sometimes they
20 feel -- or at least when I was a Regional Advisory
21 Council member it felt like you were just sent like a
22 form letter back. So it's really good to see this
23 level of detail. Thank you.

24

25 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Member Pitka.
26 Yeah, that is really important to the Councils to
27 receive these replies because we have now as regular
28 agenda items during the full meetings, the full Council
29 meetings, the overview of the Board's Annual Report
30 replies.

31

32 So each Council is going in detail over
33 your replies and they also refer back to see what you
34 recommended, what the kind of commitments were made.
35 That actually shows because the last two times the
36 agendas of the Councils were really full because they
37 invited specialists from many different agencies and
38 organizations to provide information to them.

39

40 That's why it also is reflective how
41 many topics we have on the Annual Reports because when
42 they receive this information that's per their thinking
43 and understanding, so they want to share more concerns
44 with the Board. It's a lot of work, but it's still
45 very important to document these.

46

47 So going on to the next concern. That
48 should have been earlier, but when I was working on
49 this report I figured out only later into the process

50

0050

1 that that was an overarching concern also for two
2 Councils, Western and Eastern Interior.

3

4

5 The Western Interior says due to
6 conservation concerns the Board closed public lands in
7 Unit 24A and a portion of Unit 26B to sheep hunting for
8 regulatory year 2023-24 by approving Wildlife Special
9 Action 22-02. The Western Interior Council is
10 concerned over the re-opening and developed a sheep
11 management plan that will be reviewed during the fall
12 2023 meeting and then forwarded to the Board. So
13 they're thinking proactively. What is going to happen
14 when the closure is lifted and what management needs to
15 be in the future.

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The Board, in their reply, says that
there is a Proposal WP24-26 to continue the closure and
the Board is looking forward to reviewing the
management plan for the sheep that the Council is
developing.

The Western Interior also points out as
an information item for the Board that the Unit 19C has
sheep population declines as the result of winter
weather events. Hunting guides are moving out of the
unit. The State has eliminated non-resident and youth
hunting seasons in Unit 19C. The Council hoped that
the State would have closed the sheep hunting season in
this unit or would have begun the process to modify the
legal definition of a full curl ram. This is just an
information item to the Board, so the Board provided
the standard reply.

We've been trying to do more of that.
Councils identify which topics they really want in a
more detailed response of which ones. They just want
an acknowledgment that the Board received their concern
and heard them.

So the Eastern Interior also has sheep
concerns and they say they observed sheep population
declines throughout the Eastern Interior Region,
particularly in the Glacier Mountain Controlled Use
Area where numbers have reportedly dropped to only 12
sheep. The Council feels that there needs to be more
collaboration between State and Federal partners and
more funding available for sheep surveys not only in
our region but throughout the State.
They suggest to make coordinated effort to have sheep

0051

1 surveys as a priority for 2023.

2

3

4 The Board's reply points out that many
5 Federal agencies currently cooperate with each other
6 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to conduct
7 aerial sheep surveys across the state. The information
8 on these will be communicated to the Councils once OSM
9 Staff has it.

9

10 That concludes my presentation on the
11 overarching topic of sheep concerns. Are there any
12 comments, questions?

13

14

15 MS. PITKA: Can I, Katya, ask a
16 question on the topic that was this one that you just
17 -- so Eastern Interior's Topic 1 sheep population
18 declines. So it says the Glacier Mountain Controlled
19 Use Area. I was just trying to find what unit that was
20 in.

20

21 MS. WESSELS: I don't know off the top
22 of my head. What unit is it in?

23

24

25

26

27

28

29 MS. PATTON: 20E.
30 There's just a little bit
31 of BLM lands in that unit, so primarily State lands in
32 the Glacier Mountain Controlled Use Area.

31

32

33 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. All right.
34 Moving along then. Next topic is the need for research
35 and surveys that -- you know, some of them I already
36 talked about, so I'm not going to repeat that, but I
37 will mention the ones that were not discussed earlier.
38 So Southeast has a topic. It's commercial fisheries
39 impacts to subsistence fisheries. Topic number 4.
40 They're

40

41 concerned regarding limits placed on subsistence shrimp
42 harvesters by the State. The Council opines that there
43 seems to be reallocation of resources from subsistence
44 harvesters to the commercial industry.

44

45

46 Southeast Council would like to learn
47 if there is an opportunity through the Federal
48 Subsistence Management Program to document the
49 commercial fishery impacts on subsistence resources and
50 identify available means to gather the data and vital

50

0052

1 information necessary to effectively manage these
2 resources for all user groups.

3
4 Southeast Council is asking for
5 continuing funding support by the Federal Subsistence
6 Management Program of the Council members who are
7 attending the Alaska Board of Fisheries or Alaska Board
8 of Game meetings.

9
10 The Board, in their reply, they
11 specifically relate to the Council that the funding of
12 the Council members' travel to the Alaska Board of Fish
13 and Board of Game meetings is on approval on a
14 case-by-case basis by the OSM ARD.

15
16 The Councils would also like to know
17 what research can be done to document the facts of the
18 commercial fishing. So the Board recommends to the
19 Councils contact the organizations that do this type of
20 research because contacting a regional research is
21 usually beyond the scope of the Federal Subsistence
22 Program mission and funding.

23
24 So the other Council that has multiple
25 needs for research is Y-K Delta. We already talked
26 about one of them, but they also talk about the decline
27 on the number of tom cod in the coastal areas of their
28 region, especially near Hooper Bay and Chevak, and
29 asking agencies to make tom cod monitoring a priority.
30 They have concerns about declining numbers of halibut
31 in Western Alaska as well and is requesting a briefing
32 on halibut population trends and encouraging
33 monitoring.

34
35 In their reply the Board provides that
36 ADF&G manages groundfish species within three miles of
37 the coastline. It doesn't do target monitoring of tom
38 cod. The National Marine Service conducts annual trawl
39 surveys that monitor Pacific halibut and other
40 groundfish. Their reply provides a link to the
41 publication. The Board suggests that the Council
42 invites National Marine Fisheries Services
43 representative to the Council meeting to discuss this.

44
45
46 The other concern of the Y-K Delta
47 Council is declines in Arctic lamprey, locally referred
48 to as eel. The Council requests to be briefed on any
49 Arctic lamprey monitoring and encourage Federal
50

0053

1 agencies to fund ongoing monitoring and research. In
2 their reply the Board provides information on FRMP and
3 how the Councils are instrumental in developing
4 priority information needs. One Arctic lamprey project
5 had been funded by FRMP and the results will be
6 provided to the Councils.

7
8 Another concern by the Y-K Delta
9 Council is increased harvest pressure on whitefish and
10 other non-salmon species during salmon fishing
11 restrictions and closures and 4-inch mesh size impacts.
12 They request ongoing assessment projects.

13
14 The Board's reply points out that FRMP
15 funds assessment of non-salmon populations. One of
16 them is a four-year Fisheries Resource Monitoring
17 Program project titled Kuskokwim River Broad Whitefish
18 Subsistence Harvest and Spawning Abundance, which is in
19 its second year. The Board encourages the Council to
20 utilize the issues raised in their annual report when
21 developing their priority information needs.

22
23 So this concludes my presentation on
24 needed research and surveys. Any questions, comments.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 MS. WESSELS: Okay. Moving on to the
29 next one. The next one I combined it into like one
30 topic though they're really not one topic, but they're
31 somewhat related. The two Councils had a question
32 about Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission Memorandum
33 of Agreement. They want to know the status and two of
34 the Councils brought co-management.

35
36 So I will talk about the co-management
37 first. The two Councils that brought up that was
38 Southeast and Eastern Interior. So Southeast Councils
39 they continue to support co-management of subsistence
40 resources. The Council completed its position
41 statement that was mentioned by this Council in the
42 FY21 Annual Report.

43
44 The Council is excited to hear about
45 co-management opportunities including those of the
46 Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Network and the many
47 projects funded by USDA Forest Service under the
48 Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy.

49
50

1 The Council hopes that these types of
2 opportunities will provide long-term community
3 involvement and actual community indigenous
4 co-management of resources.

5
6 The Council will continue to support
7 efforts to protect food sovereignty, address climate
8 change and empower Native Alaskans to collaborate and
9 work with Federal and State groups for resource
10 management.

11
12 Then the Eastern Interior they bring up
13 co-management in their topic number 7 when they talk
14 about incorporating local and traditional knowledge
15 into management. They say it needs to be
16 incorporated into fish and wildlife management in more
17 meaningful ways. Federal Subsistence Management
18 Program needs to explore co-management agreements with
19 tribes in Eastern Interior region.

20
21 The Board replies -- communicates that
22 the Board relies on TEK and the TEK is included in
23 analyses and information provided by Council members
24 and during public testimonies included into analysis to
25 help to make informed decisions.

26
27 Priority Information needs for FRMP can
28 include TEK research, which would be most beneficial.
29 Information provided on the White House Office of
30 Science and Technology Policy guidance on TEK is
31 provided within the Board's reply.

32
33 There is also several ongoing efforts
34 to increase co-stewardship and co-management on Federal
35 public lands in Alaska. Their reply talks about
36 Directors Order 227 that says working with affected
37 tribes, Alaska Native corporations and Alaska Native
38 organizations to address co-stewardship of fish and
39 wildlife species and their habitat on Federal lands.
40 National Park Service and BLM have similar directives
41 their reply points out.

42
43 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife has recently
44 hired two indigenous knowledge liaisons. Information
45 about Federal Subsistence Management Program Partners
46 Program provided in the reply. That program funds
47 salaries for biologists, social scientists, educator
48 positions and Alaska Native and rural non-profit
49 organizations.

0055

1 The other information provided in their
2 reply that DOI has been recently hosting co-stewardship
3 talking circles across the state to learn from
4 indigenous leaders and help shape the future of
5 co-stewardship.

6
7 I think this next part of the reply
8 that you were referring to that reply also mentioned
9 that there will be co-stewardship symposium held in
10 Anchorage, but you say it's in Fairbanks, right?

11
12 MS. PITKA: Yes. Sorry. It is. It's
13 December 4th through 8th in Fairbanks.

14
15 MS. WESSELS: You're saying it's
16 December 4th through 8th?

17
18 MS. PITKA: Yeah.

19
20 MS. WESSELS: Of this year, of course.
21 Okay. All right. I will make that correction in the
22 reply.

23
24 MS. PITKA: I'm sorry. I didn't have
25 my mic on.

26
27 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. Okay. So
28 that's in regards to co-management. There's also two
29 Councils, Southcentral and North Slope, that would like
30 to receive an update on the status of the Ahtna
31 Intertribal Resource Commission Memorandum of Agreement
32 on cooperative management of customary and traditional
33 subsistence uses in the Ahtna region.

34
35 So the reply that was provided by this
36 Board to both Councils it says that Memorandum of
37 Agreement areas of implementation include a community
38 harvest system, the formation of a local advisory
39 committee, cooperative efforts to develop policies,
40 programs and projects for conservation and sustainable
41 subsistence harvest within the Ahtna Region, and the
42 funding and support to build capacity within Ahtna
43 Intertribal Resource Commission for the implementation
44 of the MOA.

45
46 Beginning in 2021, with assistance from
47 AITRC, the Federal Subsistence Board established a
48 community harvest system for caribou and moose in
49 Ahtna's traditional territory.

50

0056

1 In July 2022, AITRC asked OSM to
2 initiate steps for establishing the Ahtna Local
3 Advisory Committee to provide input into subsistence
4 hunting management plans and decision-making. Because
5 the MOA is between DOI and AITRC, OSM forwarded the
6 request to DOI to determine next steps. The MOA and
7 draft charter for the Ahtna Local Advisory Committee is
8 currently under review by DOI and that's where it
9 stands.

10

11 That's the Board's reply to the
12 Council's request for the update. So that concludes
13 these overarching topics presentation. Any questions,
14 comments.

15

16 MR. SCHMID: This is Dave Schmid with
17 the Forest Service. If I could add a couple things
18 here. So the Forest Service has been entering into
19 multiple co-stewardship agreements throughout the
20 Tongass and on the Chugach as well and we continue.
21 There's a Joint Secretarial Order for DOI and
22 Department of Ag to pursue those, but what we don't
23 have -- Department of Agriculture doesn't have some of
24 the same authorities that DOI currently has as far as
25 co-management.

26

27 I know the current Farm Bill right now
28 is being worked on in Congress and I know there's an
29 effort to extend some of those same authorities that
30 would allow Department of Ag to have more flexibility
31 around co-management. I saw this as co-management. I
32 just wanted to point that out that we do not have some
33 of those authorities, but we are working very close to
34 that with our co-stewardship agreements.

35

36 Thanks.

37

38 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Schmid,
39 Member Schmid. Okay. So moving on to the next topic
40 and I appreciate the Board Member patience, but the
41 Councils want to share a lot with you so the
42 presentation is quite long.

43

44 The next overarching topic is -- it's
45 kind of a combination of several, but they're kind of
46 interrelated. Vacancies on the Councils, member
47 compensation requests and then also engaging youth
48 within the work of the Federal Subsistence Advisory
49 Councils.

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0057

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So I'm going to go one by one here. You are going to be talking during the charter change request about the youth representation on the Regional Advisory Councils. So that will give you some idea what we're going to discuss later during the next agenda item.

The Southeast was the one who initiated this idea actually and they brought this topic to the Board through the Annual Report. They would like to see youth input and representation on the Regional Advisory Councils. The Council points out that this is the third time they're raising the topic of youth engagement.

Southeast Council has received public testimony from young people at its meetings for years. The Council feels it is essential for younger subsistence users to learn about the Federal regulatory process so that this new generation of emerging leaders can understand and participate in the public decision-making process effectively.

The Council would like funding to be set aside to support groups of youth, continued travel and attendance of meetings and also asking the Board to identify potential funding sources. The Southeast Council would like to advocate for a youth representative seat on the Regional Advisory Councils. The seat may be a non-voting member seat. The Southeast Council thinks that potentially the current Council member selection criteria might represent a hurdle for achieving age diversity on the Council.

The Board, in its reply, communicates to the Council that it's supportive of youth engagement. However, the funding for a youth program or committing funding to support travel of youth groups is not a part of the Federal Subsistence Management Program operations or budget.

One way to engage with the Federal Subsistence Management Program is through the Partners Program. Local tribes and non-profits can also sponsor youth as well. The Board also provides a couple of options for seeking the funding sources funding the youth groups.

0058

1 So Southcentral Council joins along
2 with the topic of youth representation on the Councils
3 and also advocates for youth representative seat. They
4 would like the youth to learn about the Federal
5 regulatory process so that this new generation of
6 leaders can understand and participate in the public
7 decision-making process effectively.

8
9 The Southcentral Council comes with an
10 innovative idea that a person who will be in this youth
11 representative seat that it may be related to applying
12 college credits towards engagement in the Council
13 process.

14
15 In their reply the Board shares with
16 Southcentral that several Councils across Alaska put
17 request in the fiscal year to establish a non-voting
18 youth representative seat or, as some Councils called
19 it, a young adult developmental seat on the Councils
20 and add the corresponding language to their charters.

21
22 The Board goes into review and evaluate
23 the Council Charters later and this request and if the
24 decision is made to provide your recommendations to the
25 Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, these requests
26 will be moved forward for their consideration and
27 decision. The Board also appreciates the Councils
28 innovative suggestion to give college credit for
29 engagement in the Council process.

30
31 So the next topic of the Council
32 Membership is Bristol Bay. Bristol Bay experienced
33 lots of vacancies over the last several years, so they
34 are rightfully concerned that there are vacancies on
35 the Councils. However, in their reply the Board points
36 out that in the 2023 appointment cycle four seats will
37 be open on the Council to which the Secretaries of the
38 Interior and Agriculture may appoint new members or
39 reappoint incumbents.

40
41 The great thing this year Bristol Bay
42 Subsistence Region received more applications than in
43 previous years, which should allow the Secretaries to
44 fill all the seats on the Council pending assessment of
45 the applicant's qualifications to serve. So that's
46 positive.

47
48 Then the Y-K Delta. They have a total
49 different topic. They're talking about the Council
50

0059

1 Member compensation. They point out that Council
2 members receive no compensation for the time they spend
3 attending Council meetings or the expertise they
4 provide to the Federal Subsistence Management Program.
5 So they request the compensation policy for Council
6 members be reviewed and revised.

7
8 The FACA states, they point out, that
9 agency heads may establish rates of compensation for
10 council members and that pay may be on an hourly or
11 daily rate basis. The Council points out that Federal
12 staff is being paid for attending Council meetings, but
13 Council members are not compensated. Attending a
14 meeting might mean loss of income to them because some
15 of them are working and they cannot take off work or
16 their job might not allow them to take time off.

17
18 Y-K Delta Council also points out that
19 many Councils are struggling to recruit applicants.
20 Asking for paying a fair daily rate of compensation may
21 help with recruiting more applicants.

22
23 The Board provides the following reply
24 that in the past, the Secretary's response to this
25 request has consistently referred to the Department of
26 the Interior's long-standing policy on compensation of
27 its committee members, which is that members of the
28 Department's more than 100 advisory committees
29 nationwide are volunteers, not Federal employees, and
30 therefore do not receive any compensation for their
31 service.

32
33 The Y-K Delta Council sent a letter on
34 this topic to the Board. In their reply the Board
35 points out that the Board received their letter and
36 will forward the letter to the current Secretary of the
37 Interior for consideration. It will be up to the
38 Secretary deciding if that will change.

39
40 So then Western Interior Council. They
41 are concerned that not all parts of their region are
42 represented. As you see on the map, the Western
43 Interior, the one in the middle, is a pretty large
44 region. So what they're pointing out is that currently
45 they have no representation on the Council from the
46 GASH subregion. As a result, the Council current
47 representative member on the Alaska Wood Bison
48 Management Planning Team is not from the GASH subregion
49 where the wood bison were released. They would like to
50

0060

1 see an increase in outreach and solicitation of
2 applications from these under-represented areas and
3 communities.

4

5 In their reply the Board points out
6 that they always consider geographical distribution of
7 the Council members. However, the Board is limited to
8 recommending appointees from the existing pool of
9 applicants. There are plans stepping up outreach
10 efforts by doing more targeted outreach and working
11 with the Board's agencies' Native Liaisons. The Board
12 also encourages Council members to reach out to
13 community contacts in under-represented areas of your
14 region and urge them to apply to serve on the Council.

15

16

17 The final Council that is talking about
18 Council membership is Northwest Arctic. Northwest
19 Arctic also is concerned that some parts of their
20 region is not represented and they're requesting
21 additional outreach to the under-represented
22 communities. They're asking that the program conducts
23 personal visits to these communities to solicit
24 applications. The Council is also asking for
25 alternates.

25

26

27 The Board, in its reply, shares their
28 concern in the decrease in the number of applications.
29 However, for the Arctic Region this year there are more
30 applications than they can seat. So all the seats will
31 be filled out hopefully on the Northwest Arctic Region
32 pending the vetting and approval by the Secretaries of
33 the Interior and Agriculture.

33

34

35 So the Board will meet this August,
36 tomorrow, to discuss that in the Executive Session.
37 The Board will request OSM to conduct additional
38 outreach.

38

39

40 That concludes my presentation on the
41 topic of Council vacancies, membership compensation and
42 engaging youth. Any comments, questions, from the
43 Board members.

43

44

45 MS. PITKA: Thank you, Katya. I just
46 have one comment I think on the youth seat. I think
47 for Eastern Interior was it the Andrew Firmin youth
48 seat? Was that correct, the name of the particular
49 seat for the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory
50 Council, or am I thinking of something entirely

50

0061

1 different?

2

3 MS. WESSELS: No, you're probably
4 thinking about something different. Currently we don't
5 have any youth designated seats. Just for the Board's
6 awareness, anyone 18 years or older can apply to serve
7 on the Council. A lot of times they're not qualified
8 because they didn't have enough experience in
9 leadership and communication even if they grew up doing
10 subsistence, even if they're knowledgeable about
11 subsistence uses, subsistence resources in their
12 region, even commercial sport uses, they often cannot
13 compete against somebody who had more experience just
14 because of the Board rating criteria.

15

16 But, that said, we have one Council
17 that had two members appointed. One was 19 and the
18 other one was 21 when they were first appointed. We
19 have currently a Chair who is 28 years old on another
20 Council. So it's not like it's unheard of. There are
21 some exceptional individuals and that's what we want to
22 have on the Councils, exceptional individuals who
23 represent their regions. So age is really not a
24 deterrent, but of course it's great to have separate
25 non-voting youth seat where others can be brought up to
26 learn about the very complicated regulatory process and
27 a dual management system.

28

29 I hope I answered your question.

30

31 MS. PITKA: Yes. Thank you for that.
32 I appreciate it.

33

34 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I think Andrew was
35 quite young too when he was first appointed, but I
36 don't know.

37

38 MS. PITKA: He's my age or he was my
39 age.

40

41 MS. WESSELS: You're young.

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're young,
44 Rhonda.

45

46 MS. PITKA: Tell my gray hair then.

47

48 MS. WESSELS: That's not an indication
49 of age. Okay. Two more overarching items and those

50

0062

1 ones again I was not going to originally include, but I
2 found out that more than one Council brought this up.
3 The predator concern was brought up by Bristol Bay, Y-K
4 Delta and Northwest Arctic.

5
6 Bristol Bay have been concerned for the
7 past three years. The bears have become a danger to
8 the subsistence users and the Council made a proposal
9 to allow the sale of brown bear hides from Unit 17 to
10 encourage their harvest.

11
12 The Board replies they received
13 Proposal WP24-01 requesting to allow the sale of brown
14 bear hides and will review and act on it in April of
15 2024. All ten Councils will provide recommendations on
16 that particular proposal.

17
18 So Y-K Delta talking also about
19 increase in number of bears that have been raiding fish
20 camps and cabins and causing destruction. An increase
21 might be attributed to two reasons. Less bear hunters
22 and declines in salmon, so less available food for the
23 bears.

24
25 In their reply the Board is citing
26 State regulations for hunting black bears in Unit 18 as
27 well as taking bears in defense of life and property
28 and providing this information to the Council.

29
30 The Northwest Arctic notices that they
31 have concerns about a notable increase in bear and wolf
32 population in the area and the impact on the declining
33 caribou populations. More and more encounters with
34 bears in the communities. The Council would like to
35 see more research on predators and their effects on
36 subsistence resources and more research on best
37 management practices.

38
39 The Board in their reply points out the
40 reasons for increased encounters can be either higher
41 population or perhaps shifting of predator populations
42 in search of food. Vast densities of population can
43 change in certain areas. The Board suggests the
44 Council coordinates with local Federal/State agency
45 staff to develop predator safety outreach programs and
46 discuss best management practices.

47
48 The Board also points out that the
49 proposals can be submitted to this Board and to the
50

0063

1 Board of Game to change bear and wolf harvest
2 regulations. Federal Subsistence Management Program
3 does not do predator management.

4

5 That concludes the presentation of the
6 predator concern. Are there any comments?

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 MS. WESSELS: All right. Moving along
11 to the last overarching topic. That's fisheries
12 enforcement concerns. That came up in the annual
13 reports by two Councils, Southeast and Kodiak
14 Aleutians. For Southeast they labeled it as an
15 information item to the Board, so it didn't request a
16 reply.

17

18 Southeast points out that there's
19 concern among the users about the need for enforcement
20 of closures in the subsistence fisheries. There have
21 been numerous observations of Alaska State Troopers,
22 Fish and Wildlife officers and Forest Service
23 enforcement personnel who are lenient or absent in
24 exercising enforcement for closures in fisheries
25 designated for Federal qualified subsistence users
26 only.

27

28 So the Council also points out that
29 when they were deliberating the closure of the Neva
30 system there was a report that non-Federally qualified
31 users are fishing in these closed areas because they
32 know there is no enforcement. So the Council also
33 noted the need for increased interaction between the
34 law enforcement officials and subsistence users to
35 establish positive connections between the officers and
36 the community members. So the Board just basically
37 acknowledged that the Council brought this item to
38 their attention.

39

40

41 For Kodiak/Aleutians they say that
42 there are no sufficient fishing regulations enforcement
43 in Unalaska, Kodiak and Cold Bay with multiple reports
44 of violations, particularly overharvesting threaten the
45 sustainability of salmon returns to streams utilized
46 for subsistence.

47

48 The Board communicates that they
49 reached out to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. There's no

50

0064

1 LEO in the Alaska Maritime Refuge or Izembek Refuge
2 currently, but Kenai Refuge provides good service and
3 intermittent assistance from Kodiak National Wildlife
4 Refuge Officer. U.S. Fish and Wildlife has officers in
5 Kodiak and King Salmon that cover huge, often
6 inaccessible areas. Sometimes weather and budget
7 precludes these patrols from happening.

8
9 There's currently no Federal
10 subsistence fisheries in Unalaska, so no field presence
11 by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service LEO. The Federal
12 in-season manager revising newly lifted closures in
13 Cold Bay area and will coordinate with ADF&G, the
14 Council stakeholders, refuges and law enforcement in
15 regards to enforcing the regulations there.

16
17 Fish and Wildlife points out that there
18 are open lines of communication with Alaska Wildlife
19 Troopers that provide logistical support when
20 requested.

21
22 So that concludes the fisheries
23 enforcement concerns overarching topic. Any comments,
24 questions.

25
26 MS. PITKA: So they were asking for
27 more enforcement?

28
29 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

30
31 MS. PITKA: Okay. Thank you for the
32 clarification.

33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's actually
35 something we have going on as well. So I mean I can
36 see where -- there's two hands to it, right? You've
37 got these systems where they're really sensitive. This
38 year we experienced with the dry weather a system we
39 had socially closed, but didn't Federally close.
40 That's Eek. For the last month 62 fish went up and
41 every fish that we droned in that river was caught in
42 the subsistence fishery.

43
44 So it's imperative sometimes that
45 enforcement -- you know, I would have liked to call the
46 cops and said, hey, these guys are overharvesting
47 because it's usually the undesirables that are
48 utilizing the resource for benefits other than personal
49 use and food. So sometimes enforcement is critical to
50

0065

1 playing out what it is that we set here in regulation.
2 Not being a cop lover myself most of my life, I see the
3 value of having them when you're starting to talk about
4 sensitive systems and people who have made social
5 change for years and then all of a sudden social issues
6 creep in and they start impacting very sensitive
7 systems. So I agree with enforcement.

8
9 There's a change in environment out
10 there, guys, when you live in a village. Things look a
11 lot different on the bottom looking up.

12
13 MS. WESSELS: So I also wanted to point
14 out that each Council had other number of individual
15 topics. I was not planning to go over other individual
16 topics, but I just want to highlight a few on various
17 Councils.

18
19 Like here you see the list of all the
20 topics for Southeast. They brought up 12 issues.
21 Number one is transboundary river mining impacts to
22 subsistence users. The Board will be discussing the
23 Council letter later today. It's on your agenda. So
24 that's why I'm highlighting these topics for your
25 attention.

26
27 Moving on to Southcentral Alaska
28 Council. There's eight issues. They were pretty
29 wordy, so they didn't fit on one slide. One of the
30 topics that I want to highlight is also topic number
31 one. The process of reporting anticipated needs of
32 subsistence as stated in the Council Charter. Yes,
33 this is stated in the Council Charter as well as in
34 ANILCA and there is some confusion about how that needs
35 to be done.

36
37 What I want to communicate to you that
38 the Board in their replies they clarify that neither
39 Title VIII nor its implementing regulations require the
40 Federal program to quantify amounts that are needed for
41 subsistence. Accordingly, there is currently no
42 quantitative formula for identifying or reporting
43 anticipated needs for subsistence uses.

44
45 These needs are identified based on
46 local and traditional knowledge and can be either
47 quantitative or qualitative. No formal analysis is
48 needed. If necessary to continue subsistence uses, the
49 Council can request the Board close Federal public
50

0066

1 lands and waters to non-subsistence uses through a
2 special action.

3

4

5 So that's kind of an important reply
6 because some other Councils might be having the same
7 question, so we can all refer to the Board's reply to
8 Southcentral. So this is the second part of the
9 Southcentral topics. A recent picture of the members
10 of the Southcentral Council.

10

11

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50

Moving on to Kodiak Aleutians. They had nine topics all together. There are a couple of topics I want to highlight. This is something that the Board might consider and the program might consider discussion. The Kodiak Aleutian is stressing that it's important to hold meetings in non-hub communities.

The OSM policy has been for quite a while because of the travel ceilings and budgets being flat to hold meetings in non-hub communities only once in two or three years. So because it's very costly and logistics can be pretty difficult. Basically the Board communicates to the Council that all these requests need to go through OSM ARD for an approval because it totally depends on the budget.

The other topic to highlight for Kodiak Aleutians is they specifically included in their annual report the proposed move of OSM from U.S. Fish and Wildlife to the Department of Interior Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs. So they were caught by surprise when this information was presented to them during the winter meeting.

They point out that no one informed the Council or user groups early about that. None of the tribes in the region were notified about consultations. They say that DOI should seek public input instead of just consulting some tribes. Then they posed the question what is this move going to fix.

They have concerns over the program ran from Washington D.C. and by an agency that doesn't have background and knowledge of resource management. They think that U.S. Fish and Wildlife is the best agency to oversee the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

The reply by the Board is factual. They communicate that the consultations were held in

0067

1 2022 by DOI and USDA with various tribes and now the
2 consultations between DOI, Department of Commerce,
3 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration were
4 held later.

5

6 One of the top priorities for
7 consultation participants was to move OSM under direct
8 supervision of the Secretary of the Interior. DOI
9 agrees that shifting OSM would better position the
10 organization to address concerns expressed during the
11 consultation sessions and to meet the Department's
12 goals more effectively.

13

14 It is important to note that these
15 proposals will not go into effect unless enacted by
16 Congress in the FY 2024 appropriations bill. Congress
17 has the ability to change, add to, or remove any part
18 of the President's proposed budget. The Board says
19 that we do not know when or if Congress will address
20 the budget in a vote.

21

22 The Board understands and supports the
23 Council's concern over not being included or informed
24 on this important issue; however, the decision and who
25 was included in the discussion are the prerogative of
26 the Secretary.

27

28 So these are the two items for Kodiak
29 Aleutians that I wanted to highlight. The next one is
30 Bristol Bay. Bristol Bay had the first item I want to
31 highlight. They were recommending that the Board
32 members and the Federal Subsistence Program staff
33 receive training in ANILCA. You guys did a preemptive
34 strike and held the training in February of '23. So
35 that's what you're communicating back to the Council.

36

37 Yukon-Kuskokwim. Pretty busy Council
38 with 13 issues on their annual report. I'm not going
39 to -- yes?

40

41 MS. PITKA: Should we take a quiz or
42 something on ANILCA? Because I feel like this comes up
43 quite a bit. Like when we hear from the public they're
44 always like you don't know this about ANILCA or you
45 don't know that about ANILCA. I don't know. Should we
46 do some Jeopardy like at break or something? Like some
47 trivia.

48

49 (Laughter)

50

0068

1 MS. WESSELS: We definitely can
2 incorporate it into the Board meeting.

3
4 MS. PITKA: Okay. Sometimes I start to
5 question myself if I hear that too much. I'm like, oh,
6 do I know ANILCA? Maybe I don't.

7
8 MS. WESSELS: So Yukon Kuskokwim I'm
9 actually not going to highlight any issues because a
10 lot of the issues were part of the overarching issues.
11 They just had two that weren't. Increasing northern
12 pike and then the muskox in Unit 18.

13
14 The next one is Western Interior. Also
15 quite a busy Council with 11 issues. One of the issues
16 to highlight that they had concerns about
17 Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act fund
18 allocations. They are suggesting to change the
19 formula, how the funds are allocated.

20
21 They claim that this a nationwide
22 concern, so they are proposing to restructure the
23 allocation formula by eliminating the match portion
24 tied to license sales and ensuring that the states
25 should receive a set allocation. This would allow
26 states to put conservation of species back in the
27 forefront of sustainable management.

28
29 In their reply, the Board provides a
30 detailed explanation of the allocation formula in the
31 Act and highlights that although many states, including
32 Alaska, use a license and tag revenue to meet some or
33 all of the 75:25 match requirement, though it is not
34 required to be used for match. Their reply suggests
35 that this issue might be better addressed with the
36 State of Alaska.

37
38 All right. Seward Peninsula. They
39 were not extremely busy. Four topics. One topic to
40 highlight, I think, is the update to Alaska Beluga
41 Management Plan. That is currently being updated by
42 the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee. The intent to
43 manage beluga whales for sustainability. It was just
44 for the Board's information.

45
46 The next one is Northwest Arctic. Most
47 of their topics are part of the overarching issues
48 between various Council. One of the topics to
49 highlight is again topic number one. They would like
50

0069

1 to have understandable information communicated to them
2 and at the village level they say that sometimes the
3 documents are too complicated for elders or only
4 Inupiat speakers to understand. They also say that
5 resource managers need to travel to communities to
6 gather information.

7

8 So the Board, in their reply, says it
9 will direct staff to brainstorm ways to clarify and
10 make more understandable program outreach material
11 documents and presentations.

12

13 Eastern Interior. Also a busy Council
14 with 11 topics. One topic to highlight is topic number
15 11. OSM's inaccurate characterization of the impacts
16 of Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals to subsistence.

17

18 That caused quite an uproar with the
19 Eastern Interior Council that the initial OSM comment
20 letter stated that OSM has reviewed the proposals and
21 believes that adoption of any of these proposals will
22 not have significant impacts on Federal subsistence
23 users or fisheries.

24

25 The Eastern Interior completely
26 disagreed with that. OSM later withdrew that comment
27 and corrected things on the record. The Board points to
28 the Council that currently OSM only comments on
29 proposals falling within the jurisdiction of the
30 Federal Subsistence Management Program.

31

32 OSM will work with the Interagency
33 Staff Committee and the Board to reevaluate OSM's
34 current Board of Fish and Alaska Board of Game comment
35 practices. Once this review is completed, OSM will
36 update your Council and other Councils to seek their
37 input on a revised process.

38

39 North Slope had four topics. Most of
40 them are part of overarching issues and no issues to
41 highlight.

42

43 In the end I just would like to provide
44 thank yous. As you see on this slide, the names of the
45 people who contributed writing these replies. They're
46 all listed there. I hope I did not forget somebody. I
47 thought I would like to acknowledge them because
48 there's an incredible amount of work that goes into
49 these replies.

50

0070

1 All divisions of OSM have contributed
2 to drafting and reviewing all these replies. Your
3 agencies, the Board agency, the U.S. Forest Service,
4 BLM, NPS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife also contributed
5 tremendously with drafting some of their replies to the
6 issues within their field of management and expertise.

7
8 The timing is challenging when we
9 prepare these responses because a lot of the staff are
10 working on the wildlife analysis of the proposals and
11 closure reviews. I would like also to acknowledge the
12 substantial involvement by the Interagency Staff
13 Committee members developing and reviewing these
14 replies.

15
16 OSM really appreciates working with the
17 Interagency Staff Committee members on developing this
18 product. Every year we do these I think we put out a
19 much better product. Of course there is always room
20 for improvement, but I just want to recognize the
21 incredible high quality work that went into finding
22 information and writing replies. I would like to thank
23 OSM staff, Agency staff, ISC members for all the work
24 they did. I know that this Board really appreciates
25 it.

26
27 At this juncture I would like to remind
28 the Board that these replies that you have in front of
29 you are draft and they are still considered to be draft
30 until you approve them. We already have one correction
31 from Rhonda to make. If there is any other language
32 you would like to correct, add, strike out, please
33 speak up. Otherwise, you will need to make a motion to
34 approve the replies with the corrections made and then
35 they will be official and will get signed by you, Tony,
36 Mr. Chairman.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
39 We'll open up the floor here for the Board if there is
40 any other discussion or clarification to any of the
41 reply language we have. I thank the staff. It was
42 very well presented this morning and I appreciate
43 making sure that we get each topic for the Regional
44 Advisory Council and replies. So I appreciate all the
45 hard work from the Staff.

46
47 I'm not seeing anyone doing jumping
48 jacks here, so the floor is open for a motion.

49
50

0071

1 MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I'd
2 like to make a motion to approve all of the Regional
3 Council Advisory Annual Report replies with the change
4 noted. Thank you.

5
6 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The motion has
9 been made and seconded. The floor is open for
10 discussion.

11
12 MS. PITKA: I'd like to take this time
13 to thank all the Staff and everyone on the list on our
14 presentation for the compilation of those replies.
15 Then I'd also like to thank you for the presentation,
16 the PowerPoint. The graphic form is also very helpful.
17 It's really helpful to get the information in both ways
18 as a long, detailed report and then also a graph. I
19 really like how you guys track the replies that we get
20 every year so that we can kind of keep track.

21
22 You know, every year we get salmon.
23 Every year we get this, you know. This is a new one,
24 so it's really interesting to me. I know that the
25 Regional Advisory Councils put a lot of work into this.
26 This is their one way to interact with the Board and I
27 really appreciate I guess all the acknowledgment of
28 their hard work because they are members of the public
29 who volunteer their time. It just shows a lot of
30 respect for that process, for the public process, and I
31 appreciate it.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Kudos. Any
36 other Board comments, discussion.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I truly
41 appreciate all the RAC work that goes into this too. I
42 know they really put a lot of hard work into their
43 thought process to get their region's issues up to us.
44 So I appreciate that really well.

45
46 Hearing none. I'll call for the
47 question.

48
49 MR. SCHMID: Question.
50

0072

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll just do
2 roll call, Sue, I guess.

3 MS. DETWILER: Okay. Public Member
4 Rhonda Pitka.

5
6 MS. PITKA: Yes, I support.

7
8 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Go back to
9 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Glenn Chen.

10
11 MR. CHEN: BIA supports the motion and
12 we concur wholeheartedly with Ms. Pitka's comments
13 about the thoroughness of the report and all the work
14 that's contributed by the authors. Thank you.

15
16 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. BLM, Steve
17 Cohn.

18
19 MR. COHN: BLM supports.

20
21 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Fish and
22 Wildlife Service, Jill Klein.

23
24 MS. KLEIN: Fish and Wildlife Service
25 supports.

26
27 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. National Park
28 Service, Eva Patton.

29
30 MS. PATTON: National Park Service
31 supports and also concurs. Really appreciate all of
32 the good work of the Councils themselves, the
33 importance of bringing that information to the Board
34 and having that dialogue and the depth of the response
35 for the Councils as well. NPS supports. Thank you.

36
37 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Forest
38 Service, Dave Schmid.

39
40 MR. SCHMID: Yes, Forest Service
41 supports and also acknowledges all the good and hard
42 work that's done out there by all of our Staff and the
43 Councils. Thank you.

44
45 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Public
46 Member Charlie Brower.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Are you still
49 online, Charlie? Your vote.

50

0073

1 (No comment)

2

3 MS. DETWILER: Chair Anthony
4 Christianson.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

7

8 MS. DETWILER: Motion passes.

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Again, thank
11 you, Staff, for that thorough presentation. All the
12 hard work that goes into it. We'll take lunch for an
13 hour.

14

15 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair, I'm back
16 online. I got cut off. I support.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. For
19 the record, Charlie supports.

20

21 MS. DETWILER: Perfect. Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate it,
24 Charlie. We're going to take a one-hour lunch.

25

26 (Off record)

27

28 (On record)

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
31 We'll go ahead and get started here in a minute. All
32 right. It looks like everybody's present. Quorum is
33 established. We hear Charlie on line, so it looks like
34 everybody's present after lunch. We'll go ahead and
35 just move forward with the Regional Advisory Council
36 charter change request. Katya.

37

38 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Members of the Board. For the record my name is Katya
40 Wessels with OSM.

41

42 And let me just share that same
43 document that is posted on our website, the InterAgency
44 Staff Committee recommendation. On the charter change
45 request first I'll share with you that -- all right.
46 So all 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils were --
47 when they were established, they were chartered under
48 the Federal Advisory Committee Act, also known as FACA.
49 The Council charters are reviewed, renewed and approved
50

0074

1 every two years on the odd-number of years, so this
2 year the charters will expire on December 2nd, 2023.
3 Usually during the winter Council meeting cycle the
4 Councils have a chance to review their charter and
5 propose changes. There's no guarantee that those
6 changes will be made, but the Councils, you know, if
7 they feel like something needs to be included, they
8 propose it. Then these requests go to the ISC. ISC
9 discusses and forms their recommendation to the Federal
10 Subsistence Board, then the Board discusses the ISC
11 recommendations and decides if what is their
12 recommendation, that the Boards recommendation is going
13 to be to be forwarded to the Secretaries.

14
15 Some real good things happened in the
16 -- during the past two charter reviews with the
17 language changes. We were able to get the language put
18 in the charters of alternates, and that specific
19 language allows the Councils to fill in a vacant seat
20 if there is an alternate available, and they can fill
21 those seats out of cycle. There were two times when we
22 utilized that option for the Southcentral Council where
23 Ms. Judy Caminer was appointed out of cycle when one of
24 the Council Members resigned, and the same thing
25 happened for the Eastern Interior Council when one of
26 the members resigned in the middle of their term in the
27 middle of the year Ms. Dorothy Shockley was appointed
28 into that seat. That only happens if there's enough
29 applications on the Council and if the Board recommends
30 any alternates. So those alternates are kind of on the
31 waiting list in the background.

32
33 So the other good thing that happened
34 the change request is we were able to put the language
35 into the charters were the carry-over terms. And the
36 reason why it came about because for several years we
37 were not able to get the appointments on time for the
38 winter meeting. The Secretaries usually try to appoint
39 the Council Members sometime in December of the year,
40 of the -- when the cycle ends, but there were some
41 delays for several years so we would have the winter
42 cycle rolling in and we would have like numerous vacant
43 seats because the Council Members terms expired in
44 December, so we got the carry-over term's language in
45 the charter and now when the appointments are not on
46 time, the same Council Members can continue serving on
47 the Councils during the winter meeting cycle.

48
49 So that are the pluses of their use.
50

1 So this year we principally have two
2 charter change requests, but the first charter change
3 request comes from multiple Councils; that is from five
4 Councils, which is half of the Councils: Southcentral,
5 Southeast, YKDelta, Western Interior and Eastern
6 Interior. They all had slightly different language for
7 their requests, but in essence they're requesting to
8 have a youth representative seat on their Councils
9 between the age of 18 to 25. That youth representative
10 seat they would like it to be a non-voting member. And
11 the purpose for the seat would be to engage and educate
12 a younger generation of users in the Federal
13 Subsistence Management Program.

14
15 And the Councils made various
16 suggestions of the qualifications for the applicants
17 for the requested seats. And what these suggestions
18 were would be knowledgeable and experienced in matters
19 related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife,
20 interested in learning about subsistence issues and the
21 Federal subsistence fish and wildlife regulatory
22 process, active in subsistence activities or involved
23 in fish and wildlife management studies.

24
25 Although the Councils proposing these
26 seats to be non-voting, they suggest that members who
27 will occupy the seats still can contribute to the
28 discussion and provide valuable feedback to the
29 Councils just like any other Council Members. Four
30 Councils, Eastern Interior, YKDelta, Southeast and
31 Western Interior agreed that the applicants for the
32 requested seats should be residing in their respective
33 subsistence region, and that would be a requirement in
34 any case.

35
36 Two Councils, Southeast and YKDelta,
37 suggested to establish an age range 18 to 25 for the
38 requested seat.

39
40 The Southcentral Council suggested that
41 a youth representative in the requested seat should be
42 eligible to earn three credits at the University of
43 Alaska system. You already heard about that. They
44 also included that in their annual report.

45
46 Southeast Council suggested that a term
47 for such non-voting youth representative should be two
48 years.

0076

1 So you can read the Council
2 justification for this request. That's included in
3 part of ISC recommendations. I'm not going to read to
4 you their justification.

5
6 Basically ISC met to discuss the
7 Councils' proposed charter change, and the ISC
8 recommends that the Board supports the Council request
9 to add a non-voting younger leader seat to the
10 requesting Councils. And the ISC proposing to add the
11 language to the charter's section 12, membership and
12 designation of five Council charters. It will say one
13 non-voting young leader member who is a resident of the
14 region over the age of 18 and who participates in
15 subsistence activities, or is knowledgeable in matters
16 related to subsistence, uses of fish and wildlife or
17 engages in a resource management related field of
18 studies.

19
20 And additionally it came through ISC
21 discussion that they were suggesting to the Board that
22 the Board considers recommending to the Secretaries of
23 the Interior and Agriculture to add the same language
24 to the other five Council charters. Basically add the
25 same language to all 10 Council charters if the
26 Secretary would consider that valuable.

27
28 So that is the proposed change and ISC
29 recommendation is to support it and even the additional
30 recommendation is to include it all of the Subsistence
31 Regional Advisory Council charters. And the ISC's
32 proposing to forward -- if the Board approves, forward
33 that to the Secretaries.

34
35 So I am going to stop talking and I
36 will suggest that the Board Members discuss these
37 requested change and then at the end I suggest that
38 there will be some type of a motion and justification
39 for voting on the motion one way or the other.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
42 Katya.

43
44 MS. WESSELS: I am open to answer any
45 questions that you may have.

46
47 Oh, one thing I forgot to mention
48 before the discussion of the Board starts, that, you
49 know, addition of this type of seats let's say passes,
50

0077

1 it will have some budgetary implications for the
2 Federal Subsistence Management Program. That is
3 something to keep in mind.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any Board
6 discussion. Dave. Dave, then you. Eva.

7

8 MR. SCHMID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 Obviously very supportive of bringing younger folks
10 into the system. I know we've supported the Pacific
11 Conservation Society for years now, and I think that's
12 been a good program. So I'm supportive.

13

14 The only question I have is around FACA
15 itself and whether there are any conflicts with the
16 FACA. I know how -- I know the process we do to put --
17 if this is a non-voting member, does it real -- I don't
18 know if there's any impacts to FACA itself, and that
19 was a question, and I don't know if it's for the
20 solicitor, our general counsel of anyone, but that was
21 my only question other than I very much support the
22 request here.

23

24 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair, this is Ken.

25

26 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Member Schmid.
27 You know, to my knowledge there shouldn't be any FACA
28 implications. That's just going to be another Council
29 member. I do not believe that their non-voting status,
30 they will have any implication. There will need to be
31 an announcement. If that passes, there will need to be
32 an announcement advertising these seats and there will
33 be some pooled applicants and the Board will need to
34 generate some kind of parameters how these members are
35 selected and that will become a part of the interagency
36 nomination panel's work, and that will go to ISC. So I
37 do not believe there's any FACA implications to that.
38 It's probably I think up to the Secretaries if they
39 decide, you know, in the end whatever recommendation
40 the Board makes, if they will decide to include that.

41

42 MR. SCHMID: Okay. I think I also heard
43 Ken maybe beep in. My curiosity's around even if
44 they're voting, if they're part of that discussion,
45 influencing the discussion and all that, if there's
46 implications around that.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
49 that was Charlie on line, but Eva first and then,

50

0078

1 Charlie, you have the floor. So, Eva. Eva, you have
2 the floor.

3

4 MS. PATTON: That was Charlie? I
5 thought it was Ken as well. Ken Lord?

6

7 MR. LORD: No, it was Ken.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, hi, Ken.
10 Boy, you sounded a little bit marginal there, partner.
11 Good to hear you.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MR. LORD: Eva, you're ready to go
16 first?

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead since
19 you're jumping on this and that discussion, we'll have
20 you speak on it.

21

22 MR. LORD: Oh, okay. Oh, no, I think
23 Katya covered it. Dave's point is an interesting one,
24 I hadn't thought of it. FACA does have requirements
25 about membership and mainly in terms of the membership
26 being fairly balanced in terms of views presented, but
27 I don't think that applies to non-voting members. It's
28 not a question that's ever come up in any of the case
29 law that I've ever seen, but I think we should just
30 proceed and not worry about it honestly.

31

32 MR. SCHMID: Thanks, Ken.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Ken.
35 Eva.

36

37 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
38 just one question regarding some of the Councils had
39 voted to take this action in their recommendation for
40 their charters and others did not, although I think
41 almost all the Councils have expressed an interest in
42 having a youth representation on the Councils. But I
43 was just wondering if those Councils that didn't vote
44 on this specifically at their meeting were consulted or
45 had input on it prior to adopting it for all 10
46 Regional Advisory Councils.

47

48 MS. WESSELS: All of the Councils had a
49 chance to review their charter and propose the changes.
50

0079

1 I think some -- like I know that for a fact that the
2 Kodiak-Aleutian Council discussed it but decided to
3 delay suggesting the charter change because they wanted
4 to get more feedback from the communities. So they did
5 not vote to add that suggested charter change.

6
7 I do not believe that -- I believe
8 Northwest Arctic, they were concerned more with other
9 charter changes. They did not even discuss, because we
10 were not proposing to them to make this charter change.

11
12 We just said there is this charter
13 review and you can make any changes or suggest to make
14 changes rather, but, you know, if it didn't come up in
15 Council discussions, we were not trying to specifically
16 suggest a certain change. So some of the Councils did
17 not discuss adding a youth seat at all.

18
19 MS. PATTON: Thank you. Yeah, and I was
20 just wondering if -- because we had discussed that, you
21 know, all the Councils had expressed an interest in
22 having youth engagement in the Councils and that we are
23 making a recommendation to make this charter change all
24 10 Councils, even those that didn't specifically
25 request it. Just to say there was consultation with
26 the RAC Chair that this was proposed.

27
28 MS. WESSELS: We did not consult with
29 the RAC Chairs after the ISC discussed this. Sorry.

30
31 MS. PATTON: Okay. Thank you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
34 further discussion on this one. I think there's like
35 four points on this, right? I think we're just on one
36 point or are there -- or two points.

37
38 MS. WESSELS: Well, there's two proposed
39 changes and I believe that the Board should vote
40 separately on each change because they're so different.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. So I was
43 making sure we had clarity here for the record that --
44 well, I'm for one in support of it, and if they don't
45 want a youth representative, then they won't have to
46 take one on. And if we say they can that they would,
47 right? I mean, it's not -- I think for the matter of
48 supporting it I see like you said mostly unanimous
49 support from other RAC members that they support you,
50

0080

1 so -- the floor's open for a motion. InterAgency Staff
2 Committee recommendation, part 1, to add a non-voting
3 youth representative seats for ages 18 to 25. The
4 floor is open.

5

6 MS. PITKA: Hi, this is Rhonda Pitka.
7 I would like to make a motion to support the ISC
8 language on Page 2 of our materials, add one non-voting
9 young leader member who's a resident of the region over
10 the age of 18 and who participates in subsistence
11 activities or is knowledgeable in matters related to
12 subsistence uses of fish and wildlife or engaged in
13 resource management related field of studies.

14

15 MS. PATTON: Yes, second for your
16 motion.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion been made
19 and second. The floor is open for discussion.

20

21 MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Dave.

24

25 MR. SCHMID: I just want to clarify the
26 cost that came up in part of the proposal. I know as
27 an agency we are always scrambling around with some
28 appropriated dollars here or there to help fund some of
29 the programs that we've had through Sitka and the
30 University there. This funding would just come from --
31 I guess what would the source be and how would we find
32 that? I know in some of the materials I was reading
33 that, you know, there are some other avenues, but my
34 understanding I think would be that this would be
35 funded similarly to any other Council Member then as
36 far as travel and per diem to meetings and to
37 participate, and where should the source of that come
38 from?

39

40 MS. DETWILER: Yeah. This is Sue. And,
41 yep, there's no funding associated with it so it would
42 just come out of OSM's budget for Councils. It would
43 be travel and per diem, and it would vary I would
44 imagine by the region because those costs are variable,
45 so we just build it into the budget.

46

47 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Charlie,

50

0081

1 you have the floor.

2

3 MR. BROWER: Oh, no, I was on mute. I
4 was trying to get organized. I didn't realize I was on
5 mute, so I'll finish whoever's talking after.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: They're
8 finished. Now we're just under discussion here. We've
9 got a motion on the floor and a second here to accept
10 the 18 to 25 youth rep, non-voting. We're just
11 discussing cost. You have the floor, Charlie.

12

13 MR. BROWER: Oh, okay. Well, and the
14 cost, I just wondering if it a budgeted item or are
15 they voluntary or is there enough funding in our RAC
16 membership to -- I don't have any problem with them.
17 It's just are they funding it? Funded, I mean.

18

19 MS. DETWILER: Charlie, this is Sue
20 Detwiler with OSM and there is no budget -- or no
21 funding request associated with it, and so it would
22 come out of OSM's budget just like all the other
23 Regional Advisory Council expenses. And it would be
24 primarily travel, lodging, that kind of thing and it
25 would vary. I don't think we have an estimate right
26 now on what it would cost, but it would be variable
27 depending on which region they were in and we would
28 just build that into OSM's budget.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MR. BROWER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
33 Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
36 Charlie. And I think any cost we pay right now to
37 invest in the next wave of intelligent people who are
38 going to be engaged is worth the money understanding
39 the recruitment issues we have, and so I don't think --
40 and the vacant seats and the people who aren't showing
41 up, and I think that it all comes out to a wash. So in
42 my mind it's an investment in the future.

43

44 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill with U.S. Fish
45 and Wildlife Service, and when I shared this with
46 Member Boario she was supportive of it and also brought
47 up the idea about trying to link it with some of our
48 other on-going programs like the Arctic Youth
49 Ambassadors and seeing -- you know, and Member Schmid
50

0082

1 just brought up the Southeast students that have come
2 to the Board meeting, and so maybe there's ways we can
3 find synergies with these other groups that could help
4 with costs, but also participation.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. Any other
7 discussion?

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Food for
12 thought?

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
17 question.

18

19 MS. PITKA: Question.

20

21 MR. BROWER: Question.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
24 called. Roll call, Sue, please.

25

26 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, can I clarify
27 the motion first before you make the roll call? In the
28 motion made by Member Pitka you are voting to add this
29 language to all the Council charters or just the
30 requesting Council charters?

31

32 MS. PITKA: I thought it was add it to
33 all the Council charters. I thought that was the ISC
34 recommendation. Sorry if I was not clear about that.

35

36 MS. WESSELS: That's additional ISC
37 recommendation; it's optional language, so it -- but if
38 you're suggesting.....

39

40 MS. PITKA: Oh, sorry. Okay. If it's
41 okay, yeah, I would like to make that addition. So to
42 the next paragraph, additionally the ISC suggests that
43 the Board consider recommending to the Secretaries of
44 Interior and Agriculture add the same language to other
45 Council charters. Yeah, that recommendation. I see
46 what you're saying. I thought it was all part of the
47 same motion and part of the same language there. My
48 apologies for not being clear.

49

50

0083

1 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. I just wanted
2 to clarify.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
5 so for the record we're voting on adding non-voting
6 youth reps for ages 18 to 25, non-voting, to all
7 charters. Roll call, please

8
9 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Public Member
10 Rhonda Pitka.

11
12 MS. PITKA: Yes, I support.

13
14 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Bureau of
15 Indian Affairs, Glenn Chen.

16
17 DR. CHEN: BIA supports. We've been
18 hearing from Councils for quite some time about the
19 need to get more youth involved in the process,
20 decision process, and this is the way to start. Thank
21 you.

22
23 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. BLM, Steve
24 Cohn.

25
26 MR. COHN: BLM supports.

27
28 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Fish and
29 Wildlife Service, Jill Klein.

30
31 MS. KLEIN: Support.

32
33 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. National Park
34 Service, Eva Patton.

35
36 MS. PATTON: National Park Service
37 supports and, yeah, we recognize that, you know, for so
38 many years that the Councils have been asking for the
39 youth engagement and opportunities for youth seats on
40 the Council, and as Tony noted, that opportunity is
41 there. If they're not able to fill the seat, it won't
42 have an impact on the Councils. And a worthwhile
43 investment for sure in our future generation. Thank
44 you.

45
46 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Forest
47 Service, Dave Schmid.

48
49 MR. SCHMID: The Forest Service
50

0084

1 supports.

2

3 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Public Member
4 Charlie Brower.

5

6 MR. BROWER: Support.

7

8 MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Charlie. And
9 finally Chair Christianson.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

12

13 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. The motion
14 passes unanimously.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The next one
17 that's on the floor for consideration is to add
18 geographical membership balance criteria under section
19 12, membership and designation. And we did speak to
20 that here.

21

22 It looks like ISC has reviewed and
23 recommends that we add some language to spread out the
24 representation.

25

26 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
29 Katya.

30

31 MS. WESSELS: Yeah. I just wanted to
32 say that we already have similar language in other
33 charters for other Councils that had requested it. Not
34 all of the Councils, but when the Councils request it,
35 it was usually added in the past like Kodiak-Aleutians
36 and Western Interior. They have the desired geographic
37 balance. Of course, it also depends on the pool of
38 applicants that that region gets, but if the Council
39 has this language in their charter, then the Board will
40 need to consider that language when making
41 appointments.

42

43 But the Northwest Arctic, that's the
44 only Council requesting it and that's specifically for
45 their region. They divided their region into like
46 subdistricts: Upper Noatak, Upper Kobuk, Selawik,
47 Seward Peninsula area, and Kotzebue, because they want
48 to have a balanced membership for their region to
49 represent various issues that come in their region,
50

0085

1 because currently I think five members on their Council
2 are from Kotzebue so they're kind of Kotzebue heavy at
3 the moment.

4

5 And the ISC, you know, are proposing to
6 add the language again to the section 12, membership
7 and designation, of the charter that says to ensure
8 that there is geographic membership balance and
9 balanced representation on the Council the Secretary
10 will strive to appoint members to equally represent the
11 following five districts, and then it enumerates those
12 districts and the communities with all those districts.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

15 Jill.

16

17 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill. Thanks,
18 Katya. I wanted to know if you had any information --
19 you mentioned even if there's the geographic
20 distribution in the charter that there may not be the
21 applicants, but do you have any history you can share
22 on the other Councils that have already put in the
23 geographical distribution to see if that is helping to
24 bring people from those communities or regions to the
25 Council itself?

26

27 MS. WESSELS: Well, Kodiak-Aleutian had
28 this language for now -- or at least I'd say the last
29 four years, maybe even more than that. It didn't help
30 them that much honestly, because they still have --
31 Kodiak-Aleutians still have most of the members
32 residing in Kodiak. They have a few members down the
33 Aleutian Chain and one on the Alaska Peninsula.

34

35 We are -- you know, with Kodiak-
36 Aleutians specifically and with Western Interior who
37 have membership balance language, we need to do more
38 outreach in those regions. Those regions are, you
39 know, hurting for applicants currently. So I would not
40 say that it's definitely helped. It maybe helped
41 slightly, but not really that much.

42

43 But their -- the concern of the
44 Councils I believe is that if they get a lot of
45 applications and they want to have representation in
46 those areas, but maybe if an applicant from let's say
47 Kodiak is more qualified they get appointed over
48 somebody from Adak or Pribilofs or the Alaska
49 Peninsula. But this language will ensure that they will
50

0086

1 have better distribution of the members. And that's an
2 important consideration always for nomination panels
3 and ISC and the Board, and tomorrow we will be
4 discussing that. We'll have the maps that shows the
5 current balance where the current members are and which
6 members are outgoing and so that just helps when
7 they're discussing various issues because these regions
8 are really huge.

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I heard you
11 mention, too, that, you know, it might be Kodiak -- I
12 mean Kotzebue heavy, but that it's a hub itself as
13 well, and I'm wondering if, you know, we have to get a
14 lot of our people from hubs because of economics, jobs,
15 you know, and stuff. You know, we see a move towards
16 applying for C&T, people from a certain area, but they
17 live somewhere else so they have vast knowledge, and
18 I'm wondering if start to look at applicants like that
19 like I heard you state that, you know, hey, yeah, they
20 live in Kotzebue, but they're from Kobuk, you know.
21 So making sure that we pay attention to possibly where
22 their customary and traditional hunting and fishing
23 areas are more than where they stay. You know, that
24 might be something that can help us spread that
25 geographic if there's just two really concerning areas
26 like Kodiak and Kotzebue area. Because there's
27 probably 30,000 Natives in Anchorage that got C&T
28 somewhere else and maybe they subsist at McDonald's
29 now, but I guarantee you they remember where they
30 fished at down in fish camp and how they did it. So
31 just remembering that that's a reality we live in this
32 day and age.

33

34 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. I do know, you
35 know, in serving on the panels for the Regional
36 Advisory Councils that that often does come in
37 discussion and it was a point for the Northwest Arctic
38 RAC that, you know, members applying from Kotzebue grew
39 up their whole life, you know, in another community in
40 the region and were very knowledgeable and able to
41 convey that information on behalf of that community
42 even though they currently reside in Kotzebue. So that
43 is a factor in consideration always. Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Can
46 I get a motion so we can actually talk about this?

47

48 MS. PITKA: Sorry, I was very into this
49 discussion. Okay. So I'd like to make a motion to add

50

0087

1 the following language to the Northwest Arctic Council
2 charter.

3

4 To ensure that there's geographic
5 membership balance and balanced representation on the
6 Council, the Secretary will strive to appoint members
7 to equally represent the following five districts:
8 Upper Noatak area, Kivalina and Noatak; Upper Kobuk
9 area, Ambler, Kobuk, Shungnak; Selawik area, Kiana,
10 Norvik, Selawik; Seward Peninsula area, Buckland,
11 Deering; and Kotzebue. And it says it will be added to
12 section 12, membership and designation of their
13 charter.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 MR. BROWER: Second.

18

19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The motion been
20 made and second. The floor is open for discussion if
21 you want.

22

23 MS. PITKA: I'd like to add something.

24

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah.

26

27 MS. PITKA: So I see some of these
28 Council charter things, and I think that it is helpful
29 in that it focuses maybe people from that -- because
30 when we have to appoint, you know, tomorrow we can look
31 through a list and we know already that the charter
32 says, you know, we need this representation here. And
33 then maybe it also focuses time for, you know, Regional
34 Council coordinators to go through and make sure that
35 their outreach is working in those communities, like
36 the youth outreach. I know youth outreach is
37 difficult, too, because we're all definitely not youth
38 in this room, and, you know, most of the employees are
39 not youth, so it's very difficult for us to do youth
40 outreach in that manner, you know. Maybe if we had
41 more partnerships with schools or things of that
42 nature, then we could make the outreach happen. And
43 some of the discussion from the Regional Advisory
44 Councils around their compositions always kind of
45 confused me because like these are people from the
46 region who are supposed to have ties back to the
47 region, so, you know, maybe one of the things that they
48 can discuss in their Counsel meetings is how they plan
49 to reach back to community, you know, make sure that
50

0088

1 community knows that, you know, this is what we're
2 doing, this is what we want, and then they can, you
3 know, ensure those connections are made especially to
4 the youth.

5
6 And one other thing, this may have been
7 more of a discussion on the last one, but it's sort of
8 Council composition, too, is a lot of times people
9 don't know when to retire. I mean, the only reason
10 that I'm sitting here is because Tim Towarak made a
11 very conscious decision to retire at a point when he
12 did. Otherwise, Tony wouldn't be sitting there and I
13 would not be sitting here. So, you know, that's also
14 probably something that probably we don't need to bring
15 up to a community, but communities definitely need to
16 bring that up with each other, you know, like it can't
17 be like the Federal Government saying, you need to
18 retire now, sir, because we don't even have that in our
19 own government. So it's just something to be I think
20 conscious of and, you know, to make room for younger
21 people coming up, you know. They actually have to make
22 that place in that room physically.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
27 discussion. God rest his sole. I'm always thankful
28 for all the input I learned from that fellow. Yeah, he
29 was cool, for the record.

30
31 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill. Yeah, I just
32 wanted to.....

33
34 MR. BROWER: Question, Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, Jill's on
37 the floor here.

38
39 MS. KLEIN: Oh, yeah, just kind of
40 building on what Rhonda was saying, just in support of
41 the geographic distribution, or having youth
42 participate on the Councils, or to get their
43 information and knowledge that, yes, it seems like the
44 ideal way would be if we had them as members at the
45 table, but knowing that, you know, at least now that's
46 not always possible, it's not always happening, you
47 know, that hopefully there are other ways to bring
48 these voices to the Federal program and process so if
49 they can't be at the table, you know, that there's
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0089

1 other ways, if just to visit at the meeting, if it's
2 through public testimony, if it's coming to a Board
3 meeting. I don't know what other outreach, you know,
4 can be done, but Rhonda brought up some good ideas with
5 schools, you know, and then that gets into the capacity
6 at OSM and probably another budget conversation, you
7 know, how much outreach is possible for the Federal
8 program to do, but just, yeah, thinking broadly how
9 else we can bring that to the program.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You know, that's
12 a good point, too, and you hear Dave there talking
13 about co-management and it becoming the thing we're
14 looking at doing, and I've always said, man, these
15 tribes got money and so do these corporations, and they
16 speak loud and proud and they need to step forward with
17 their dollars. And I'm representative of several of
18 those organizations and I see the movement in that
19 direction, and would strongly urge my other hat to
20 expend that money to get people to these. And, in
21 fact, that's the mission I work for in my other job is
22 to elevate these things to educate ourselves about the
23 importance of showing up at the meeting and driving the
24 agenda and initiatives that are going to feed our
25 future. I know this is about food security and
26 initiatives that go along with that, and so I see it
27 hopefully changing on the landscape based on there is
28 additional money to help on that side and hopefully we
29 can keep feeding that system to come in and feed our
30 system, so hope.

31

32 Charlie called for the question.

33

34 MR. BROWER: Ten-four.

35

36 MS. KLEIN: I thought he had a question.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No, he said
39 question.

40

41 MS. KLEIN: Oh, okay.

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, Sue,
44 please.

45

46 MS. DETWILER: Okay. Public member
47 Rhonda Pitka.

48

49 MS. PITKA: Yes. Yes, I support. Thank

50

0090

1 you very much.

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MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

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5

BIA, Glenn Chen.

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DR. CHEN: The BIA supports the motion.

8

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MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

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11

BLM, Steve Cohn.

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MR. COHN: BLM supports the motion.

14

15

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

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17

Fish and Wildlife Service, Jill Klein.

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19

MS. KLEIN: Support.

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21

MS. DETWILER: National Park Service,

22

Eva Patton.

23

24

MS. PATTON: NPS supports.

25

26

MS. DETWILER: Okay.

27

28

Forest Service, Dave Schmid.

29

30

MR. SCHMID: Forest Service supports.

31

32

MS. DETWILER: Okay. Public member

33

Charlie Brower.

34

35

MR. BROWER: Support.

36

37

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

38

39

Chair Anthony Christianson.

40

41

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

42

43

MS. DETWILER: Motion passes

44

unanimously.

45

46

MS. PITKA: Oh, I just wanted to say something. You know, when we call for the question, so my daughter's grown up on a lot of my teleconferences so whenever she actually has a question, she'll go

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0091

1 question and she'll raise her hand, so it is too funny.

2

3

(Laughter)

4

5

(Conversation away from microphones)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, that's funny. That's how my house is. Yeah, it's always on loud.

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(Laughter)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, actually, you know, it's funny you did that, because when I brought my daughter, I'm just Dad at home, but I brought her to the meeting, and it was an eye-opener for her to see, you know, just the difference between who you're living with at home and who you are outside the home, right, and it's like totally different. And let's just say she went home with different eyes for her dad. I wasn't just a bad guy any more.

23

(Laughter)

24

25

26

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: People do like you. Well, thank you guys for all these.....

27

28

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Most of us.

29

30

(Laughter)

31

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. I think we're on to Southeast RAC letter to the FSB Transboundary.

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MS. LAVINE: Let's see, one item before that.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, Council correspondence. Of course I missed that. Robbin, you have the floor.

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MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. Again for the record this is Robbin Lavine, subsistence policy coordinator for OSM. The meeting materials for this agenda item can be found on Pages 132 and 134 of your Board book. And I just want to affirm that this is a briefing, this is not an action item.

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0092

1 So in this update I'm going to review
2 the primary changes to the correspondence policy,
3 basically a revisit. You've seen this before, these
4 changes. I'm going to summarize the Council comments
5 on the updates, and then I'm going to outline our next
6 steps and inform you of a timeline, a RAC timeline for
7 accomplishing or finalizing this policy.

8
9 The existing policy, which has been in
10 effect since 2004, emphasizing the need for these
11 updates, that is on Page 132. The draft updated
12 version of the policy is found on one page -- on Page
13 134 and any new language is presented in bold, although
14 any proposed removed language is not represented. So
15 you can kind of flip back and forth between the pages
16 of the policies just to see what kind of changes we've
17 made.

18
19 Ideally this update, and it was
20 initiated by Council coordination and the ISC, it's
21 meant to streamline and clarify the policy. Hopefully
22 the suggested edits eliminate any unnecessary language
23 or information and clarified the guidance on the
24 official scope of Council correspondence, to whom
25 Councils may or may not correspond directly and the
26 process for correspondence.

27
28 I can briefly review the changes in the
29 draft policy. You have seen them before. I can
30 highlight those, or if you like I can proceed with
31 Council comments.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anyone missing
34 anything?

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Council
39 comments, thank you.

40
41 MS. LAVINE: Awesome. So I'll just
42 summarize most importantly one of the messages we do
43 want to convey to the Councils other than just that
44 this intended to clarify their policy, not really
45 change it significantly but also that the changes will
46 not prevent Council members from writing to whoever
47 they wish as private citizens or in other capacities as
48 we wanted to stress that.

49
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0093

1 And per direction from the Board, the
2 Office of Subsistence Management Staff presented the
3 updated Council correspondence policy to all Councils
4 during their winter meeting. Ultimately all Councils
5 expressed support for change to the policy. Most
6 agreed the changes improved the policy and provided
7 clarity.

8
9 Many Councils had substantive
10 discussions on the process of correspondence,
11 particularly the length of time required to produce
12 letters and receive replies. That was a bit humbling.

13
14 Some expressed concerns over what they
15 felt were limitations to whom they can write to and the
16 subject of their communications. Those limitations
17 especially is described in Element 9 remain consistent
18 from the existing policies through to the draft update.
19 It's not a change in other words.

20
21 Some Councils provided specific
22 recommendations. The Eastern Interior suggested under
23 Element 1 eliminating the words shall be limited to.
24 The Kodiak Aleutian RAC requested a sentence to be
25 added under Element 5, and this is -- that's the
26 process element, you know, all the hoops we jump
27 through to get our correspondences reviewed, and that
28 added additional language they suggested was Council
29 Chairs to review draft correspondence before it's sent
30 to the OSM ARD. And, finally, Western Interior
31 Regional Advisory Council requested that under Element
32 11 we add the following language, and that's
33 correspondence that is the result of an official
34 Council action may be urgent and the Assistant Regional
35 Director will aspire for a one-week review, and that
36 Council voted on that one which.....

37
38 The ISC will review the Council
39 comments during our next retreat. That's scheduled for
40 the beginning of November. We'll review the comments
41 and if necessary we will draft a recommendation to the
42 Board on the final draft policy, and we will present
43 that to you during your next work session in January of
44 2024.

45
46 That is my update, Mr. Chair.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
49 Robbin. Any questions. Jill, yep.

50

0094

1 MS. KLEIN: Thanks, Robbin. So you
2 mentioned the Councils' comments, so are some of those
3 changes going to be made and would they be specific to
4 -- and forgive me if I misspoke -- would they be
5 specific to that Council or are these suggestions that
6 you'd put in this policy and it would be for all of
7 them even if only one Council brought it up?

8
9 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Member Klein.
10 And through the Board -- through the Chair, this one is
11 a correspondence policy for the Councils. So it will
12 apply to all. And the ISC will review the comments
13 made. We've documented them and depending on the
14 discussions that we have during the retreat, you know,
15 we may or may not recommend incorporating those changes
16 into the policy. And then at that point we'll bring
17 our recommendations and the final draft policy to the
18 Board.

19
20 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair. It's a little
21 bit off topic, but I failed to recognize that the Chair
22 of the Kodiak-Aleutian Council, if she is on line
23 listening, I don't know if she can talk, but Chair
24 Della Trumble is on line and listening.

25
26 Della, if you can talk, you can just
27 acknowledge your presence to the Board.

28
29 MS. TRUMBLE: Yeah. Thank you. Good
30 afternoon. I just had to step away for a few minutes.
31 I'm not exactly sure where you are right now, Katya.

32
33 MS. WESSELS: We're discussing the
34 changes to the correspondence, to the Board
35 correspondence policy for the Regional Advisory
36 Councils.

37
38 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. Yes. I think one
39 of the issues -- oh, I think first and foremost, I
40 think our Council would like to really thank the Board
41 itself for the support that we've had when working with
42 other -- like Migratory Birds or Marine Mammals or
43 other issues and things that affect us subsistence-wise
44 or our concerns in being able to work with those
45 organizations. I think looking at migratory birds as
46 an example, I think we've been, you know, saying that
47 we have an impact, in particular I'm going to say King
48 Cove Bay on migratory birds that we don't necessarily
49 believe that we do from the farther north communities.
50

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1 However, using that as an example, it opens the door
2 for the ability to not only work with Migratory Birds
3 on these issues, but both regions to be at the table to
4 be able to talk out these issues. And there's things
5 that we find and learn through like Migratory Birds
6 that we'd like to share I think with other regions that
7 we think that may be of interest to them.

8

9 So when we're dealing I think in this
10 -- when -- and with the correspondence from other
11 agencies, and if it has affect or may be of interest to
12 other regions, we feel strongly that it would be a good
13 opportunity to share that. I think that's basically
14 what we were talking about, Katya.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
17 Della. Good to hear you. Thank you for calling in,
18 too.

19

20 I wonder if there's a way where -- you
21 know, we have correspondence outside of our -- where
22 would we put that like for people? Like she's saying,
23 how do they share that, you know, other than, you know,
24 just Board to Board? Like we share all of this and
25 they get all of this, but they don't get the Trans
26 Boundary letter or they don't get the AMBCC letter or
27 they're not getting the trawling letter across all
28 regions, right? Or does it just go back to the
29 affected? So if we get correspondence with a Regional
30 Advisory Council, do we share those correspondence
31 concerns across? And I'm wondering maybe there might
32 be a platform for that so other areas can see, hey,
33 over there this is a problem, you know, so if there is
34 a migratory bird issue and there is some discrepancy
35 about like, hey, we're interceding your fish or your
36 birds or your -- you know, there might be another forum
37 or a place for them to say, hey, outside of the Federal
38 Board's jurisdiction and stuff we work on, here's these
39 other outlying issues and again we're looking at a
40 policy and how -- and we do a really good job here in
41 directing people to the right agency. So I see that as
42 the really backbone of us being able to say, oh, we
43 don't go over to this agency or that one and get draft
44 consultation.

45

46 So I'm bringing it up to, you know, the
47 next step in some of these concerns, and like Trans
48 Boundary or these other ones about how do we affirm and
49 make sure that the affected party is in that meeting
50

1 with somebody, even though that's not our job, see, but
2 it's got -- and it ends up our job because it keeps
3 coming back recycled on this table, so in essence it's
4 our job. So I just see a platform of some other -- you
5 know, like here's the outlying issues and how do we
6 present that to the public and to these other RACs so
7 that they can say, hey, these other regions have these
8 other things even though it's in this report, but like
9 you put it on this PowerPoint up here, the public sees
10 that PowerPoint and that's powerful. That's what I'm
11 basically saying, these are the nine bullet points,
12 this is what it looks like, these are within our
13 purview, these are the ones you've got to go look at
14 other Federal agencies to develop a stronger foothold
15 in these agencies. So it can start to educate the
16 people that continue to come to us to go to the
17 appropriate said agency to get their concerns dealt
18 with. I'm just trying to formulate that in my mind.

19

20 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
23 Della. I'm glad you were listening.

24

25 MR. COHN: Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Steve.

28

29 MR. COHN: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Yeah, just following on that idea, I wonder if that
31 might be a good either a working group or a break-out
32 session or something during the All Region Council
33 meeting in March.

34

35 MS. LAVINE: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
36 This is Robbin.

37

38 The ISC is planning to have a working
39 retreat the beginning of November and a number of these
40 particular issues have kind of floated to the top and
41 have ended up on our agenda for that work sessions. It
42 has to do -- we will be revisiting the correspondence
43 policy. We're also -- because we're looking at the
44 correspondence policy for the Councils, we're very
45 interested in developing some internal guidelines for
46 how we respond then crossing forum in regards to
47 respondents -- correspondence to the Board and from the
48 Board out, and this discussion I think will be really
49 useful. I imagine we will revisit it.

50

0097

1 Some of the points that you have raised
2 bring to mind some of the positive feedback that we've
3 received from the Councils about the All Councils
4 meeting, the fact that when all of them get together
5 they become aware of statewide issues. Many of them
6 have concerns and face challenges in common and they
7 may be doing things just a little differently or they
8 may have different partners, different ideas, and when
9 they come together they can problem solve and they know
10 that there are other people that are on it as well.
11 And so that level of coordination is something that I
12 think we can start to address.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
17 questions for Staff.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I'm
22 glad we're discussing this and looking at a stronger
23 policy. I mean I think we have a good one, but I think
24 again, you know, finding ourselves in all these really
25 tough situations where, you know, it might be one other
26 agency over, it's just finding a good way to just be
27 firm in our direction and our assistance and making
28 they get their needs elevated. So thank you.

29
30 Okay. No more questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move on
36 to 8, SEARAC letter to the FSB on trans-boundary
37 rivers, and we'll call on the Forest Service. Greg's
38 got this one, he's first off.

39
40 MR. RISDAHL: Good afternoon, everyone.
41 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. For the
42 record my name is Greg Risdahl, USDA Forest Service
43 subsistence program lead and InterAgency Staff
44 Committee member.

45
46 The discussion that we've been having
47 just now is perfect for what I'm about to share with
48 the rest of you. So I'm here to specifically present a
49 letter from the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory
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1 Council, provide an overview of it's contents and a
2 little bit of history behind the issue, and to seek
3 guidance from the Board on how to follow up.

4

5 I'd first like to draw your attention
6 to the meeting book. This letter is on Page 136, and
7 it is followed up by several enclosures. I won't go
8 through those specifically at this point, but I did
9 want to note that at least in my board book, Enclosure
10 Number 5 is not there so I'm not sure if the rest of
11 you have it or not. So Page 151 was simply missing
12 from my book and I didn't know if that was a uniform
13 problem or not. All right.

14

15 So thank you, Robbin. It looks like
16 she's caught that issue as well.

17

18 So the Southeast Subsistence Regional
19 Advisory Council has voiced their concern about the
20 potential for harmful effects on downstream communities
21 in Alaska and subsistence resources from upstream
22 mining that takes place in British Columbia, Canada.
23 Most of that's gold mining, too, by the way. The
24 primary watersheds of concern are the Taku, Stikine,
25 and Unuk Rivers.

26

27 The Council first wrote to the Board
28 about their concerns on January 24th, 2017. In their
29 letter they asked the Board to transmit their concerns
30 to the then Lieutenant Governor Brian Mallott which is
31 the letter I believe that Robbin's just passing out
32 here now. And specifically they asked Brian Mallott to
33 write to the Department of State.....

34

35 MS. LAVINE: Byron Mallott. Byron
36 Mallott.

37

38 MR. RISDAHL: Byron Mallott. Pardon me.
39 Did I misspeak? Oh, Brian. Byron. Thank you.

40

41 Expressing the governor's desire to
42 work in conjunction with the Alaska Congressional
43 Delegation and advance this issue at the Federal and
44 international levels. The Board forwarded the
45 Council's letter to Lt. Governor Byron Mallott later
46 that year in 2017 as requested, but neither the Board
47 nor the Council received any kind of a response. Since
48 then there's been a change in the state of Alaska
49 administration to Governor Mike Dunleavy and Lt.
50

0099

1 Governor Nancy Dahlstrom.

2

3

4 So the Southeast RAC sent a second
5 letter out to the Board on May 12th, 2023. And I feel
6 kind of badly because we -- it's taking us a while to
7 get to it. So there's some other things that have come
8 up.

8

9

10 Specifically their letter requested
11 that the Board write a letter to Lt. Governor Dahlstrom
12 asking for her support from the state advocating for
13 the protection of the international watersheds and
14 fishery resources for subsistence users from large-
15 scale mining development occurring upstream in British
16 Columbia. The Council included a request in their
17 letter for Lt. Governor Dahlstrom to work with the
18 Department of State and the Alaska Congressional
19 Delegation to address the issue. The Council also
20 included in their letter two resolutions from the
21 Alaska Congressional Delegation to the Secretary of
22 State with a list of detailed concerns from their
23 constituents.

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The ISC typically provides the foundation for Board responses to Council letters and their requests. In this case the ISC is bringing to you the second letter from the Southeast Regional Advisory Council, specifically having to do with transboundary watershed mining activities which is a long-standing issues for the Southeastern Regional Advisory Council. The first letter sent by the Council and forwarded by the Board received no response as I said. The Board may be interested in providing more support to the Council and this is the issue rather than simply transmitting a letter.

So let me just say that again. I'm just kind of reading my notes here. Basically what OSM has been doing is has been asking the Board to simply transmit the letters that they receive from the Councils to the correct agencies like we've been talking about. In this case we feel that maybe it's important that each of the Board members actually see that letter before Tony signs it and discusses and deliberates and then decides whether or not maybe the Board should provide some additional support instead of just transmitting the letter. That's something that we might need to talk with the solicitors and OGC about, but the bottom line is the Councils are thinking that

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1 maybe, and the ISC agrees, that maybe they would get a
2 little further in their requests if the might of the
3 Board was behind these letters as well as just simply
4 transmitting them.

5

6 So as I'm -- just to reiterate what the
7 ISC is asking the Board to do today, if the Board -- is
8 to ask the Board if they feel comfortable and willing
9 to support the Southeastern RAC's concern instead of
10 simply transmitting the letter to the Lt. Governor
11 Dahlstrom. Your discussion on the issue might help
12 provide some substance and direction for a Board
13 response.

14

15 Thanks for your time and attention.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg.
18 Any Board discussion on that. Dave.

19

20 MR. SCHMID: Yeah, I'll just add a bit.
21 So having been back in Southeast Alaska the last five
22 and a half years, the first meeting I had was with Lt.
23 Governor Byron Mallott on this issue. It was a very
24 big issue with him as well, and the Forest Service's
25 participation in that and what we might be able to do
26 in Southeast. Since that time I've heard from several
27 of the communities, especially those that really rely
28 on the subsistence resources. They are very concerned
29 as I assume the Chair has also heard and knows in that
30 part of the country. And I think where the RAC is at,
31 and I may be just interpreting, is that they're not
32 getting -- that the RAC is not getting any traction on
33 some of their concerns in a way, and I think that their
34 requests or what they would like to see the Board is
35 could the Board take more of a -- instead of just
36 forwarding on the RAC's concerns that the Board itself
37 may take more of a stronger position. And I think
38 that's where Greg started, you know, with our
39 solicitor, at what point do we become more of an
40 advocate in how are we going and so I think that's part
41 of the discussion and the information here.

42

43 But I'd certainly support the RAC and
44 there are some things as an agency, you know, the
45 Forest Service could also do and to help emphasize I
46 have sat in meetings we've had with both of our
47 senators and others in Juneau here a couple years ago
48 as well, this is front and center on their concerns as
49 well, and have participated in that. But I don't know
50

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1 if that's getting back to some of the smaller
2 communities and I think they're feeling threatened.
3 There have been situations where we've had dam
4 failures, we've had issues in the past and there's
5 proposals for more of those, you know, across the
6 border, and so these all get to be very difficult
7 issues when the State Department gets involved as well,
8 and the folks there, but I think the request is, for
9 me, is the Board willing here as a board to take maybe
10 a stronger position in support of the RAC and
11 forwarding it, and I don't know what that might look
12 like.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You know I'm all
15 for it, but Ken would be.....

16

17 MS. PITKA: I think I misinterpreted
18 some of this reading before. So what it was before was
19 that we -- that Tony wrote a letter forwarding the
20 Council's recommendation. So what the Council wants us
21 to do is they want us to write the letter instead
22 forwarding our concerns as the Federal Subsistence
23 Board; is that correct? So it's not just the same
24 action that we took before which was forwarding a
25 letter, right?

26

27 MR. RISDAHL: Through the Chair. Madame
28 Pitka, yes, so the RAC's letter actually is just asking
29 the Board to transmit their letter to the appropriate
30 agencies again, but we have been in discussion with
31 them about it and we have thought this would be a good
32 time to bring up the conversation about what could the
33 Board actually because, as Dave was saying, they feel
34 like their requests, their concerns are falling on deaf
35 ears, and if there's any way that the might of the
36 Board could be put behind a letter like this, it might
37 be helpful.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, I'm
42 formulating in my mind a couple of different things
43 that we just talked about trying to get audience with
44 the Department of Interior. I mean in October. So if
45 we start to build an actual bullet point list of the
46 top umpteen things then we're engaging at the highest
47 level with the person who can exact change and can
48 point fingers and make phone calls and so if it was me,
49 I'd say we need to get that possibly on that agenda as
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1 well.

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I know we also this year had issues with starting a new subsistence fishery and it prompted the National Pacific Marine Fisheries to get -- or Salmon Council to start jumping around and wondering what the heck we're doing so I think there's some notice there about the authority that we have in our waters, so I think that would be a nice place to start and maybe get them in the room, too.

And maybe the conversation about all this interception that's perceived out there can number 3 on this list or number 1 or 2 or 3.

So for me I would building onto this work session a very strong here's these top three or four concerns we have as a Board. We've requested an audience, we're taking this to the next level and we'll voice those concerns either in person or probably a delegation of people here and we can rally the troops, show up and show them our cards. And I think that's a little more than writing a letter and forwarding it. And then from there hopefully we can open a dialogue and start some meaningful -- you know, start making some change that has to happen I guess is what the public is looking for as far as making sure they're aware of how important is that those rivers don't get damaged any further, you know, the sensitivity of it. And if you look it costs the state as a whole, you know, that we don't want to become Yukon and Kuskokwim in Southeast, you know. And it isn't mining that may or may not have done it, but the lack of salmon and sick rivers isn't something we want to be living with being a Southeast resident myself.

But for me, if it was me, I'd put these on that and look at how we strongly have that meeting.

Robbin.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to summarize, because I'm hearing everything that you are sharing on the record here and I know I'm going to be crawling all over the transcripts when they come out.

I think that -- so we're -- we will want to respond in writing to the Southeast Regional

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1 Advisory Council. The Board will want to respond in
2 writing to the Council, but it sounds like one of the
3 things that we might be able to say is in addition to
4 meeting their request and forwarding this letter on
5 again to the lieutenant governor and others, the Board
6 is interested in inviting a meeting with the
7 Secretaries, perhaps both, to discuss not only this
8 issue, but a number of other issues that have been
9 elevated to your notice during this meeting today.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yep.

12

13 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jill.

16

17 MS. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah,
18 I just wanted to relay that Member Boario was also
19 supportive of finding some more information out about
20 if the Board could do as is being presented here today,
21 and she also wanted to know if we could hear from the
22 solicitor and I don't know if Ken has any initial
23 thoughts that he might want to share with us if he's
24 still listening in. And just before we might turn it
25 over to him, just on Robbin's point that in addition to
26 just what we've heard today -- I mean we could say it's
27 today because we've heard the annual reports, and the
28 topics that have been raised to the Board, you know,
29 are a wide-ranging list of issues. All those topics
30 that Katya organized, the report topics into, I would
31 say are topics that, you know, rise to the same issue,
32 like with salmon and caribou perhaps, maybe others like
33 the Southeast transboundary mining issue raises to as
34 well, but, you know, the Board -- it could be
35 beneficial for the Board to learn about how we address
36 all of those topics in addition to this one.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I see
39 about five, you know, that we've heard here today that
40 are pretty much solid -- I mean they're reoccurring,
41 they're multi-agency, it's state, federal, it's all of
42 our job, it's international, so -- and so those things,
43 you know, we should be very proactive in finding a
44 solution for our constituents. I mean, that's our job
45 so I would say, yeah, let's -- whoever could write that
46 letter and see if we can seek that audience and do it
47 in that timeline. If they are here in October, it
48 wouldn't be a bad time to sit down and facilitate that,
49 because then, you know, we're beating ourself to our
50

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1 next cycle meetings and we're beating ourself to the
2 all-Council meeting and we're looking proactive for who
3 we represent here.

4

5 Eva.

6

7 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair. This is Ken.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, go ahead,
10 Ken.

11

12 MR. LORD: Yeah, my two cents. What
13 I've been listening for is whether anyone is suggesting
14 that the Board communicate directly with, you know, the
15 government of Canada or anything like that. That would
16 be a problem. We have to go through the Department of
17 State as I think you're all aware. But I haven't heard
18 anything in what's been discussed so far in terms of
19 future actions that could cause me any concerns.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Ken.
22 Eva.

23

24 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr, Chair.
25 And, Ken, this also a question for you. In discussing
26 this issue with Park Service director Sarah Creachbaum
27 she did want to double check and make sure, you know,
28 that the Council is requesting that the Board itself to
29 write that letter to the lieutenant governor and
30 advocate on behalf of the Council and to encourage that
31 the state contact the Department of State, and she had,
32 you know, similar concerns, just wanted to confirm that
33 that was within the authority of the Board to advocate
34 to the state directly and the Department of State as
35 well. Thank you.

36

37 MR. LORD: So I don't know that I would
38 use the word advocate in this case. It's raising an
39 issue of concern on the part of the state's
40 constituency and I don't see a problem with it.

41

42 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Yeah, the
43 letter -- or the terminology that the Council used was
44 to advocate and so that's why it's said there, but to
45 raise the issue of concern on their behalf. Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That one made me
48 roll up my sleeves. Thank you, guys. Any other
49 discussion. Food for thought.

50

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1 (No comments)

2

3

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So I guess our
4 direction would be that we do a short bullet of these
5 top five, Katya, or four or five that look like, you
6 know, our boards really need to get some answer so that
7 we're, you know, being proactive, so we can get -- you
8 guys have an ISC workshop coming up and I'm pretty good
9 time to formulate whatever that list looks like and
10 then we can figure out who the constituency is that
11 would meet with -- if we could get that audience in
12 October, which would be awesome. Just speculating
13 here.

14

15

MS. DETWILER: Yeah. Mr. Chair, you
16 know, just so I understand the direction here. My
17 understanding is we're going to go back and we're going
18 to draft a transmittal letter for the Council's letter,
19 but also add the Board's statement of it's own concerns
20 of the transboundary issue. And then we're also going
21 to go back within the ISC and OSM and sort of identify
22 the highest priority concerns that the Board wants to
23 elevate and look upwards in the departments on how the
24 Board can take a little bit more strong action moving
25 here forward working with partners and also identifying
26 what authorities the Board has, you know, with itself
27 to do more to address these increasing issues that keep
28 coming up and are coming up more insistently with
29 climate change and fisheries and all that. So is that?

30

31

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, it sounds
32 like a two-part so we would -- so, yes, we'd do the
33 transmittal and get that elevated up. And I think the
34 second letter would be here's these top five concerns
35 and we'd like to talk to you about them, you know
36 basically, like we need to sit down and really give you
37 the heart-to-heart and, you know, face-to-face is way
38 better than this. I mean, we get this every day. I
39 can cry in their face and hopefully it will help out.

40

41

MR. COHN: Through the Chair.

42

43

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, Steve.

44

45

MR. COHN: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46 You know, I think what we're seeing is, you know, we're
47 very focused on the issue of subsistence, food
48 security, cultural continuity, and heritage that are
49 all dependent upon how those resources are being
50

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1 managed within the state. But what we're finding is
2 that there are influences on the viability of those
3 resources, those fish and wildlife populations that are
4 influenced, in some cases very strongly influenced, by
5 things outside of the control of any of the land
6 managers or any of the entities within the state to
7 mediate, and so we need help to reach out. Whether
8 it's downstream in the oceans or upstream into Canada,
9 we're going to need some help because we can only go so
10 far trying to, you know, find the best balancing act
11 that we can within the jurisdictions that we are
12 involved in and here within the state. But if we can't
13 begin to address those issues that affect the whole
14 viability of the system, the natural systems upon which
15 subsistence is based on, then we're going to be in real
16 trouble.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I agree, we get
19 coming from both sides. We've got the Bering Sea and
20 we've got the Canadian development and a lot of Chinese
21 money over there in Canada and going crazy and they
22 elect to mine.

23

24 Rhonda.

25

26 MS. PITKA: Yeah, I'd just like to voice
27 my support for elevating this issue also. And also
28 thank you for bringing up, you know, the salmon don't
29 have a border, the caribou don't have a border. Like
30 none of these fish know the border or the regulatory
31 regime that they're under, so they don't know that
32 they're Canadian fish, they don't know that they're
33 Alaskan fish. You know, maybe we should send them a
34 letter, too.

35

36 But I really feel like -- you know,
37 I've been on Yukon River Panel for the same length of
38 time that I've been on the Federal Subsistence Board
39 and every single time I've gone to Yukon River Panel we
40 have the Canadian delegation, you know, shaking their
41 fists at us and telling us that we need to stop salmon
42 fishing on the Yukon River because every salmon
43 matters. But then we have these particular rivers that
44 are being polluted by their own mining and their own
45 actions. And if you bring that up, then, oh, my God.
46 Everybody gets the vapors and it's just a whole big
47 international incident if you bring up the dam or the
48 mines or whatever they're doing, you know, in their
49 environment over there. Everybody all of sudden has an
50

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1 issue with you and you're causing an international
2 incident and the State Department has to talk to you.

3

4

5 So I really, really think that, you
6 know, this is a really good use of our time and I
7 support somebody going to an October meeting. It may
8 not be me, but I really appreciate all of this effort
9 going into that.

9

10 I think when I first got into
11 subsistence management, one of the first meetings that
12 I went to, Lt. Governor Mallott was there. He was
13 actually at the all-Council meeting and this was his
14 particular issue, you know. His issue was the
15 transboundary mining issues and that's really why I
16 decided to apply for the Federal Subsistence Board,
17 because, you know, he was saying one of the things that
18 you have to do when you're doing this work is you have
19 to decide like whether you're going to fight for
20 something, like is it really important to you or do you
21 just want to talk about it for the next 20 years. So,
22 I mean it was really -- he said it way better than I
23 ever could, but, you know, I really kind of took that
24 message to heart and I really think, you know, this is
25 an issue that definitely deserves more attention
26 transboundary-wise also.

27

28

Thank you.

29

30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And I like to
32 always speak then, we have the treaty in our hands. My
33 boys could fish five days a week real easy. Oh, the
34 State's not in here. Yeah. I've got a lot of home
35 boys back home that would be happy to sit out in
36 District 4 and plug away all day, man. You know, you
37 go into July down there, you're talking 48 hours they
38 get the fish in the entire month to honor a treaty.
39 You know, 50 hours maybe in an entire month fish swim
40 by. So I think they owe us a little bit of love on
41 this end. That's Southeast boy talking.

41

42

43 So I think there's room here for a
44 motion. It's a two-part probably if -- or we could do
45 it in one. I see we've got one as a transmittal
46 letter, the other one is a direction for Staff maybe.
47 How about we do it like that, then we can come back to
48 that second part when we figure out what that looks
49 like. Sound fair?

49

50

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1 MR. SCHMID: Sounds very good, Mr.
2 Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. So we'll
5 go ahead and open up the floor for a Board motion to
6 advance the transmittal letter from the Southeast RAC.

7
8 MR. SCHMID: The Forest Service moves to
9 move forward with the transmittal letter from the
10 Southeast RAC on the transboundary issues that they've
11 raised to us.

12
13 MR. BROWER: Second.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion been made
16 and second. Any further discussion. Questions.
17 Comments.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And again for
22 clarification this is just to pass on the Southeast RAC
23 letter transmittal, and we'll be working on our own
24 position statement and request per direction.

25
26 Okay. A call for the question.

27
28 MS. PITKA: Question.

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, Sue,
31 please.

32
33 MS. DETWILER: Okay. Forest Service,
34 Dave Schmid.

35
36 MR. SCHMID: I support the motion.

37
38 MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

39
40 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Glenn Chen.

41
42 DR. CHEN: The BIA wholeheartedly
43 supports the motion.

44
45 MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

46
47 BLM, Steve Cohn.

48
49 MR. COHN: BLM supports the motion.
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MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Jill Klein.

MS. KLEIN: Support.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

National Park Service, Eva Patton.

MS. PATTON: National Park Service supports.

MS. DETWILER: Public Member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Yes, I support. Thank you.

MS. DETWILER: Public Member, Charlie Brower.

MR. BROWER: Support.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

Finally, Chair, Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

MS. DETWILER: Motion passes unanimously.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Good job, group. Thank you, Staff. Good job, everybody today. Motion to adjourn.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No?

MS. KLEIN: So moved.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We've got something here? Jill, hold on. Take five. Wait. Do you want to say hi to (indiscernible - mic off).

MS. DETWILER: Yeah. Well, actually before folks leave for today I just did want to let everyone here know just for the record that the Board

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1 will be meeting in executive session tomorrow starting
2 at nine. And that part of the meeting will not be open
3 to the public. At that meeting the Board is going to
4 develop recommendations to the Secretaries of Interior
5 and Agriculture on the Regional Advisory Council
6 nominations and also have an update from the Department
7 of Interior and discussions with the Regional
8 Solicitor's Office on potential departmental actions.
9 So I just wanted to let folks know that.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
14 information sharing before we go.

15

16 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Charlie.

19

20 MR. BROWER: Will the call-in number be
21 the same as today?

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No, we'll have
24 the Staff forward that appropriate call number to you.
25 It's on your second agenda.

26

27 MR. BROWER: Thank you.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead.

30

31 MS. DETWILER: Robbin's coming to the
32 phone here to get you that information, Charlie.

33

34 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. Through the
35 Chair. Member Brower. If you check your email from
36 Sunday evening, you have the meeting information sheet,
37 and the information is also in the body of the email.
38 And at the bottom of that list is the information on
39 how to call in and participate in the executive
40 session.

41

42 Thank you, Mr. Brower.

43

44 MR. BROWER: When was Sunday? (Laughs)

45

46 MS. LAVINE: And I'll send it again.

47

48 MR. BROWER: Okay.

49

50

0111

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Alrighty.
2 Before we close here Rhonda wants me to share some
3 information with you guys.

4
5 MR. BROWER: Oh, I got it. I got it.
6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, he got it.
8 There you go. See, he found it. We're going to be
9 good now. Charlie can sleep easy tonight.

10
11 Yeah. But it's been a good year,
12 information sharing before we adjourn. It's been a
13 good year at Southeast. I'm one year into being a
14 grandpa so that's why I said I look like a young
15 (indiscernible) up here, but feeling older, you know,
16 when you become a grandpa. So it's been a good year
17 seeing things rebound and seeing a little bit of light.
18 There's struggles in the world, but, you know,
19 everybody has them. So it's been a good year.

20
21 Motion to adjourn.

22
23 MS. PITKA: I move to adjourn.

24
25 MR. SCHMID: Well, if Charlie won't,
26 I'll second it.

27
28 (Laughter)

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Any
31 opposition to the motion.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no
36 opposition, the motion accepted.

37
38 (Off record)

39
40 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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