COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

SOUTHCENTRAL
Ralph Lohse, Chairman
Judith Caminer, Secretary
Greg Encelewski
Andrew McLaughlin
Mary Ann Mills
Michael Opheim (telephonic)
James Showalter
William Shuster
Gloria Stickwan

SOUTHEAST
Bertrand Adams, Chairman
Michael Bangs
Arthur Bloom
Michael Douville
Donald Hernandez
Aaron Isaacs
Kenneth Jackson
Harvey Kitka
Cathy Needham
Patricia Phillips
Robert Schroeder
Frank Wright
John Yeager

Regional Council Coordinator, Donald Mike
Regional Council Coordinator, Robert Larson

Recorded and transcribed by:
Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-227-5312/sahile@gci.net
CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I’d like to call this joint session of the Southcentral/Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meeting back into session this spring.

And with that, I would like to tell you that what we're going to do in the near future, because of our constraints with this room right here, tomorrow morning Southeastern is going to meet in this room and in the afternoon Southcentral will meet in this room. And then we will have our joint session on Thursday in both these rooms connected, because we've lost the other room. So if that's agreeable to everybody. Southcentral does not have to come in the morning, and Southeast does not have to come in the afternoon.

And then we'll have our joint session on Thursday.

Now, with -- oops, we still have Council members to come sit down.

And, Gloria, would you be willing to open us with prayer for this joint session after everybody get sat down.

Okay.

Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Donald Mike, Council coordinator.

Today we have a guest, Mr. Dan Dunaway, he's a member of the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council. And Ms. Molly Chythlook, she serves as the Chair for the Bristol Bay Council, she was going to be here, but I think she'll be here tomorrow or Thursday for the joint session.

We requested that a representative from Bristol Bay Council attend this joint session. They addressed the customary use process at their meeting last week, and they would like to present their
recommendations as far as how they're going to proceed
to get some public comments on the customary use
process for Southeast and the Federal Subsistence Board
to consider.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Donald. As
soon as everybody gets seated, Gloria's going to open
us up in prayer, and then we will -- this is kind of a
historic meeting in a way to have Southcentral and
Southeastern -- boy, when you look at the map, we are
awful closely related.

That's for sure.

Gloria.

MS. STICKWAN: Heavenly Father, thank
you for this day that you have given to us. I thank
you for us being able to meet together, the Southeast
RAC and the Southcentral RAC. I pray that you will
guide us, help us to make good decisions, to remember
who we are representing, rural people. I pray that you
will help us to remember to speak clearly and concisely
and to think about things before we talk about them,
and that you will keep us mindful of our time as we are
on a time limit. I thank you for everything you have
given us and provided for us. I pray that you will
give us a safe trip home and guide us and direct us in
this meeting.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

IN UNISON: Amen.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Gloria.

And I didn't mean to be disrespectful. I had my eyes
closed and I didn't know everybody else stood up.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And that was not meant
in disrespect either.

Okay. With that, Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Well, the next time
that we do that, you're going to stand up, and we'll sit down.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Sounds good to me.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Okay. I just wanted to maybe make a comment about the way we have the meeting set up for tomorrow so that you'll all understand. You know, it's been a real problem trying to schedule the meeting, because it's a large group here. And we talked a lot about it on the side, and we thought that the best way that we can accommodate, you know, our own meetings would be for Southeast to have our own meeting in the morning and then Southcentral will have theirs in the afternoon.

And, you know, the question is, will we be able to get through our agenda, you know, in that allotted time. We will do our best, and I guess maybe if we need to stay, you know, or come back a little bit later on, you know, to finish up, that might be an option. I know that was also a discussion is maybe we can go into the evening or something, you know, but we'll do our best, Patty, to try to get thing taken care of.

And another thing, too, you know, it's a historical think what we're doing here. You have two Chairmens here, so we're fighting over who should be able to conduct, you know, so I did it this morning. It's his turn today. Or this afternoon.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairmans.

(Laughter)

MS. NEEDHAM: I have a question. I was on the agenda planning committee, the joint agenda planning committee, and one of the things that we had talked about is we have this list of things, of topics that we were going to go through together jointly, and then save time aside at the end of our session in case each individual Council wanted to make or take actions on an agenda topic. And, of course, one of the ones that I can think of right off the top of my head is going to be the C&T stuff, like getting the briefing jointly as the C&T, but we might have a lot of work to do on that. And it seems like this new schedule of us
meeting concurrently tomorrow and jointly on the third
day goes against that ability to be able to make those
decisions that we need to make as a Council
independently. And I just wanted to point that out,
because I wasn't sure if that was taken into
consideration. I understand that it was a room change
thing, but I felt that needed to be said.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert, have you got any
comment on that one? No.

It was taken into consideration, and
logistics just basically -- we talked about all meeting
in -- our whole Council meeting in that other room, and
we just couldn't figure out how to do it, so this is
the best that they could come up with at this point in
time. If we have a problem with it, like Bert says, we
may have to go late into an evening.

With that, we have a bunch of time
certain things.

Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And through the Chair.

Cathy, one thing I would suggest, I
know that there are some joint reports that you're
receiving that will influence your individual action.
And one thing you could do is just make sure to get
through those items today. And if necessary, you could
adjust your scheduling or go into the evening a little
bit to make sure you got those joint reports that will
provide input to your individual Council actions
tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. With
that, if we're going to get through these individual
reports, we need to get started. And we had one that
was time certain for 1:30, but 1:30 is long past, but
we'll start anyhow.

It's a briefing and summary of
customary and traditional use determination. And I
think it said Pippa? Who is presenting that.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair, that's Ms. Pippa
Kenner.
CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. I don't see her. Pat. Are we missing our presenter.

MS. PETRIVELLI: I'm not sure where Pippa is, but if you would like, I could give the presentation.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Could you take it until she gets here.

MS. PETRIVELLI: Yes. So we start on Page -- this is Pat Petrivelli with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.


And then this briefing, I think you've seen it before, but it just described that the Federal Subsistence Board and the Southeast Regional Advisory Council is asking for inputs from all the different Councils throughout the State. And this topic came up as part of the Secretarial review process, and so this has been before the Councils a couple of times in the past couple of years. Of course, there are some new members on the council.

But the briefing does cover the background. And, let's see, it goes through the first time all the Councils were asked to review, 9 out of the 10 Councils said it's fine, but the Southeast Council had a problem with the customary and traditional use determination process, and they wanted a more thorough review of customary and traditional use determinations.

And their main concern was not necessarily how customary and traditional use determinations are made, but why customary and traditional use determinations are made. And they were concerned, because the way ANILCA is, the first step is a rural determination is made, because ANILCA provides a priority use to rural residents on Federal public lands. After that rural determination is made, then when the Board makes a customary and traditional use determination, only those residents of those communities or areas are eligible for subsistence priority on Federal public lands.
When the Board has not made a customary
and traditional use determination, and they've made
subsistence regulations, all rural residents are
eligible to harvest those resources.

So they asked -- so they prepared those
questions, and last fall the Councils looked at this
again, and a summary of their comments starts on Page
30 as they went through. And they made different
recommendations again, and some of the Councils asked
for a more thorough briefing. They wanted more
information. And the materials that were prepared
under that more information was really -- and I guess
it has to relate to what the Southeast Council's -- one
of the recommendations was to no longer do customary
and traditional use determinations, because they're not
specifically required in ANILCA, and only do .804
determinations in times of resource shortage, and those
are required in ANILCA, where Congress provided three
criteria to use to make a priority among subsistence
users.

And so many Councils were concerned
about that, and didn't quite understood. So the
information on Page 27 and 28 describes what an .804 is
and it gives the regulation for .804, the three --
well, it says ANILCA Section .804, and on Page 27 it
has the actual language. And then the Federal
regulations for the Board for implementing that part of
the legislations where it says, whenever is necessary
to restrict the subsistence taking of fish and wildlife
on Federal public lands, and then it just repeats the
same criteria. And then those three criteria are
custumary and direct dependance upon the population as
the mainstay of livelihood, local residency, and
availability of alternative resources. And then it
just has other implementing regulations.

So some of the Councils have met and
looked at this issue some more, and Dan Dunaway's on
the Bristol Bay Council, they met two weeks ago, and
they discussed this further, and I don't know if he
would want to report on that.

But as each Council meets and looks at
the .804 criteria, and the customary and traditional
use determinations -- oh, on Page 29 it just gives a
side-by-side comparison of .804 and customary and
traditional use determinations.
The Bristol Bay Council asked for another table to be developed, because they're sending out a letter to all their tribes and corporations and Fish and Game Advisory Committees and, well, whomever. They're just looking for a lot of input. But they asked for a comparison of the State customary and traditional use determination and the Federal customary and traditional use determination. So a table was prepared for them. And that's mainly because the Southeast in their summary they said that they were concerned that the Federal program adopted the State process when they really didn't need to. So they just asked for a table that compared the two systems. And so I helped the Council coordinator, and we prepared a table where we laid out the different factors and criteria.

And under the State system, eight criteria, very similar to the Federal system are used to make determinations, but their determinations are, say, Unit 7 moose. Well, that wouldn't work, because that's a non-subsistence area, so we'll Unit 17 moose is a subsistence resource. And then they proceed to make amounts necessary for subsistence. But that's how the State uses their criteria is to identify an area and a species.

Under the Federal program, the Federal Board determines the species and the area, but also the communities or areas of rural residents who are eligible to have customary and traditional determinations for that resource. So that's the main difference. And once those determinations are made, only those people have the priority under the Federal subsistence regulations.

So this process is a flowing process and it's ongoing. And as it keeps going, the Councils will be providing comments to the Federal Board, and I guess we'll be sharing it with the Southeast Council also. And then if it's necessary for -- I don't know if the Southeast Council will be preparing a proposal once they get back their information. I think they are, because I go to their subcommittee meetings, but I don't know if the Council as a whole will submit the proposal, and then the Board would consider -- would listen to the comments from all the different Councils and then -- because they were told to by the Secretary to review Subpart A and B of the regulations with the Councils. And these regulations on Page 29 are in
Subpart B of the regulations, and if any changes are made by them, the Board would have to recommend it to the Secretaries, and then there will be a proposed rule published and the Councils and other residents would have the opportunity to make more comments.

Oh, and Pippa's here, but I don't know if she'd like to come and join me, because we did this together at the Y-K meeting also.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairs.

Pat, I really sat down. I think you did a really good presentation. I didn't hear the first part of it, but I am also here to do a briefing on rural, so that's why I sat down.

Thank you, everybody. I'm Pippa Kenner, and I'm with OSM here in Anchorage. I was away from the meeting briefly, because I went and go some copies of a very important analysis that we neglected to bring to the meeting, and that was a short lunch.

I'll go ahead and just you my overview, and then you'll get some information twice, but you'll know what's going on. This is not an action item. My presentation is to tell you where we are in our review of the customary and traditional use determination process. The briefing begins on Page 21.

Just a minute, please.

I'll start with a short history of the issue. In 2009 the Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, began a review of the Federal Subsistence Program. Part of that review focused on customary and traditional use determinations. A year later, in 2010, the Secretary of the Interior asked the Board to review with Regional Advisory Council input the customary and traditional use determination process and present recommendations for regulatory changes.

They are based on eight factors, and the eight factors are presented on Page 24, or Appendix A, of your Council book.

At their 2011 winter meetings, all 10 Regional Advisory Councils were asked for their
perspectives on customary and traditional use
determinations. Nine of the 10 Councils did not
suggest changes to the process, and their comments are
once again presented for you to see beginning on Page
25, Appendix B, of your Council Book.

The Southeast Council asked the other
nine Councils to review the customary and traditional
use determination process again. The Southeast
Council did not support retaining the current customary
and traditional use determination process. Instead,
the Southeast Council suggested that when necessary,
the Board restrict who can fish, hunt or trap for
subsistence by applying ANILCA Section .804 criteria.
There are three criteria. One is who has direct
dependence on the resource; two is in proximity to the
resource; and, three, who has alternative resources
available.

The Southeast Council asked the other
Councils to consider whether to, one, eliminate
customary and traditional use determinations, and
instead, when necessary, use ANILCA Section .804
criteria; two, change the way the determinations are
made by making areawide customary and traditional use
determinations for all animals, not animal by animal;
three, make some other change; or, four, make no
change.

At your -- for the Southcentral
Council, at your fall meeting, the Council adopted a
motion to support alternative number 2, and voted to
change the way determinations are made by making
areawide customary and traditional use determinations
for all fish and wildlife. Your recommendation is
described beginning at the bottom of Page 30 in your
Council books.

The recommendations of the other
Councils are also in this section of the book.

The Board will take these
recommendations at its April 2014 meeting and have a
discussion on whether or not to forward recommendations
to the Secretaries to change customary and traditional
use determination process.

The Southeast Council at this meeting
will be continuing to work on this.
And thank you very much, Mr. Chairs, that's the end of my presentation.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. And at this point in time, do we have any questions for her.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So basically where we are right now is we are -- Southeast is going to continue the discussions on it. And we're going to have another look at it ourselves, and basically the thing is open for -- it's still open for changes, right?

MS. KENNER: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other -- does anybody have any questions. Gloria.

MS. STICKWAN: I would like to know where Southeast is in their decision-making process of what they're going to write up; how close they are to writing something up, and what those criteria area or options are for C&T.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: I'm just going to turn that question over to Cathy who has been the chairman of that group.

And let me just say that Cathy and Patty and Donald, the main committee members here, have worked real hard on this issue. And I just have to compliment them for the fine work that they have done in bringing forth this issue to us in the present form.

So, Cathy, go head and, you know, answer her question and make any other comments you might have.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gloria, to answer your question, we have been meeting. We have a work group from the Southeast Council that's been meeting since our last meeting. We were tasked with developing a proposed regulation change that came from our region that would address our concerns regarding C&T. We are prepared to present back to our Council I guess tomorrow.
MS. NEEDHAM: To present our work that we have done. We have a proposed regulation change that we have drafted out completely for -- I'm not going to get the right CFR right off of the top of my head, but it ends in .16.

MS. NEEDHAM: That's the important piece, I guess. But we also have some considerations that some Staff that have been working with the work group have also come up. So our Council will hear the proposed language that we developed. They'll also hear some feedback from Staff on some potential considerations to get our intent across, and I expect that our Council will choose or pick exactly what they want to say and forward a proposal out of the end of our meeting. I hope. Expect.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Cathy. Can I ask you a question. So what you are planning to do, if I understand right, is at your meeting tomorrow you're going to try to come up with a finished proposal so that you'll be able to bring that to the joint Council meeting on Thursday, right?

MS. NEEDHAM: If that's the will of the Councils. I think originally it wasn't necessarily in that order, but I guess there is an opportunity to be able to do that if the Council does make a decision on the proposed language. And it might be important to note that the work group is, and this is our Council's just hearing this for the first time from me, but we did propose regulation changes to that regulation rather than choosing what was originally -- that came out of our region as Alternative 1, which was just to propose getting rid of C&T regulation process altogether. That was one of our original recommendations. Our work group did not -- is not planning on forwarding that recommendation any further to our Council.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Cathy, and I didn't mean to put you on the spot, and I realize that you'll only bring it forward if your Council agrees to bring it forward, if your Council accomplishes what they want to accomplish. If there's no agreement I wouldn't expect you to bring us anything
forward. But we would appreciate it, if you do get a finished or almost finished product that you're willing to share, South Central would appreciate having a chance to look at it, because that would give us something then to go from.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. With that, we're trying to keep with a schedule today. Bert, that's pretty hard for you and me. I was informed I had five minutes three minutes ago, so.....

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Yeah, you're in charge, so it's all up the hill.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So we have two minutes out, but we're already over. So if there's no further discussion on customary and traditional. Go ahead.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll try to keep it brief.

Dan Dunaway with the Bristol Bay RAC.

Donald's encouraging me to make you aware that we wrestled with this for a while. A number of us think that what Southeast is bringing up, we can't ignore that, you know, the subsistence culture used everything that was available, no doubt about it. But we were hesitant to move too far ahead, because we didn't really have much response from any of the local tribes. tribal organizations or SRCs from the Federal areas. So we resolved to compose a letter and solicit input from -- that we were going to mail to every tribe and whoever else out here, and then try to take this back up in the fall. I suppose we could make this letter available to anybody interested.

I've been doing a lot of stuff since the meetings, I've kind of been on the run, so I'm a little foggy on -- I thought we had a motion, but I think we ended up not really taking more action. I know there was concerns expressed about how would introduced species be viewed under this, especially depending on the funding and the agency, and maybe the reason for the introduction or reintroduction.
Personally I'm concerned about unforeseen consequences. That's one thing I've voiced. And would this somehow create some conflicts with other user groups.

But at this point, we're just going to send this letter out as soon as we can get Molly's signature, and give the various tribes time to comment and get back to us.

Did I cover it all?

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And this will be sent to all the Councils then, too, right?

MR. DUNAWAY: (Nods affirmative)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Thank you.

With that, if there's no further comments on C&T, we're going to go on to coordination with North Pacific Fishery Management Council. It's going to be presented by, and correct me if I'm wrong, but Jane DiCosimo. Am I right? And Diana Evans. How bad did I massacre the name.

(Laughter)

MS. EVANS: Dicosimo, and she's (Indiscernible - away from microphones).

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Dicosimo. Okay.

MS. EVANS: Oh, sorry, there we go. So members of the Council, my name is Diana Evans. I work for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, and my colleague, Jane, and I are going to do this presentation together, but in order to advance slides, I'll do the first half, and she'll do the second half.

So we're here to give you a short presentation on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council does, its responsibilities, and then also focusing on some of the issues that we are dealing with that may be of interest to this group. So we chose to focus on some the salmon and halibut issues that the North Pacific Council is dealing with.

So who we are. North Pacific Fishery Management Council is responsible jointly in partnership with National Marine Fisheries Service for
managing offshore Federal fisheries off Alaska, so
fisheries that occur between 3 and 200 miles. The
North Pacific Fishery Management Council makes
recommendations to National Marine Fisheries Service,
who has responsibility for approving, implementing, and
enforcing those recommendations.

The fisheries that occur in the
offshore area, primarily groundfish and halibut
fisheries, those are governed under the Magnuson-
Stevens Act. That's the authorizing Federal law for
offshore fisheries.

As we get our technical difficulties --
the next slide just talks about who exactly is on the
Council, and the membership is designated specifically
in the Magnuson-Stevens Act. There are 15 members, 11
of them are voting members, and four non-voting
members. And each of these -- as I say each of the
seats are specifically designated in the Magnuson Act.
There are four seats for fisheries agencies, so
National Marine Fisheries Service, and then the
Commissioners for the Alaska Department of Fish and
Game, and the Washington and Oregon Departments of Fish
and Wildlife. Those are four of the 11 voting seats.
And then there are seven appointed seats, and these are
seats that are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce
from names that are provided by the governors of Alaska
and Washington. So there are five Alaska seats, and
two Washington seats.

And the way that works you can see up
here in terms of Council membership. The Alaskan
governor puts forward a short list of three names that
are recommended, then the Secretary of Commerce picks
one of those three names that are put forward.

So this sort of shows the map of how
our Council members are set up. And you can see on the
bottom left, moving around the table then, we have the
NMFS Alaska region representatives, the National Marine
Fisheries Service. Department of Fish and Wildlife for
Washington. Duncan Fields from Kodiak is one of the
Alaska appointees. Also Dan Hull from Anchorage. John
Henderschedt from Seattle is one of the Washington
Governor's appointees. Roy Hyder is a representative
of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Craig
Cross is a Washington appointee. Eric Olson is another
of the Alaska members appointed by the Secretary of
Commerce at the recommendation of the Governor. Dave
Hanson on the top is the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, they're one of the non-voting members on the Council. Dave Long is another of the appointed members. We have the Commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Cora Campbell. Another Alaska appointee. And then on the bottom right you can see there are three positions that are all non-voting: The Coast Guard, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Department of State. And that constitutes the Council membership for the North Pacific Council.

We have five meetings a year, three of them occur in Anchorage, one in an Alaska fishing community, and one occurs either in Seattle or Portland. And each meeting lasts about eight days. They're all open to the public and we have numerous opportunities for public comment, including written testimony for each agenda item. Probably similar to the process that you have here.

We have recently in the last years instituted an audio link so that people who are remote can listen to the Council, and in real time. They can also access now our documents and motions, because we have all of our briefing books in an electronic format online.

So this just walks you through kind of the work of the Council if you like, how we go from the process of a proposal coming forward to a change actually made in the fisheries in the water. So in general our proposals come from the public. They can either be submitted as public testimony or from individual Council members. They are reviewed by the Council. This often is an iterative process. It can take several times viewing a particular proposal at the Council, but the Council will develop what they consider to be the problem, what are some alternatives for addressing that problem, maybe some discussion papers to tease out what are the real issues. Sometimes there's committees that provide input. Then we have an analysis that we put forward that's reviewed twice before the Council selects a preferred alternative.

Above the dotted line, that's what the Council part of the decisionmaking process. Below the dotted line, that's primarily National Marine Fisheries Services' role. So they begin, once the Council has provided a recommended preferred alternative, they
begin a rule-making process with the proposed rule and
public comment, final rule that's finally referred and
approved the Secretary of Commerce, and then is
implemented in the water. So that's how the
partnership works between the Council and National
Marine Fisheries Service.

And one important thing to say here is
that because the Magnuson Act identifies how the
fishery management process will work for offshore
fisheries, that one of the big drivers of that process
is public input. So there's opportunities for public
input at every single of the steps that you see up here
as we move through the process of changing a regulation
or a management measure, both from the proposal being
able to come forward from the public and then at all
the different stages of review and analysis and rule-
making.

So as I mentioned, the Magnuson-Stevens
Act is the guiding law for fishery management. It has
-- it identifies how the Council process will work.
But also in terms of evaluation how we move forward
with these analyses on changes to fishery management,
there are 10 national standards identified in the
Magnuson Act, and the Council and NMFS must consider
all of them when they're evaluating a particular
action.

Some that are particularly relevant for
the suite of issues that we're going to talk about
today that the Council is dealing with, there's three
that we just highlighted here for you. There's a
national standard to minimize bycatch to the extent
practicable. So in the fisheries that we manage, our
groundfish fisheries, salmon and halibut are both
bycatch in those fisheries, and so that is one of the
national standards that the Council has to take into
account.

A second important one is to prevent
over-fishing while achieving optimum yields. So we're
trying to achieve optimum yield for the fisheries that
the Council manages.

And then a third national standard
that's particularly relevant is to provide for
sustained participation of communities, fishing
communities and minimize adverse impacts to those
fishing communities.
So those are some of the key tensions that the Council wrestles with when they're looking at actions, particularly the salmon and the halibut actions.

So as I say, we focused specifically on salmon and halibut for this group. The agendas and our other management actions that we deal with might be, you know, allocative actions within the ground fish fisheries or, you know, habitat, conservation actions. There are other things the Council deals with, but we focused specifically on the salmon and halibut ones here.

So with respect to salmon bycatch, I would note that for those of you that might have been in the RACs three years ago, I came and gave presentation to both of these groups three years ago with respect to the action that we're talking about here, salmon bycatch in the Gulf groundfish fisheries. We've actually taken -- the Council's taken a lot of action in the last three years, but you may have seen some of this information before. So with respect to salmon bycatch, the Council doesn't actually regulate salmon fisheries. That's a State of Alaska responsibility, but we do obviously have a responsibility for salmon bycatch that occurs in the offshore groundfish fisheries. And the fisheries that catch salmon are the trawl fisheries in the Gulf, so mostly in the pollock fishery, but also some in the fisheries for flatfish, Pacific cod, and rockfish fisheries. And by law, bycatch in those fisheries cannot be retained. It must be counted, but cannot be retained or sold.

So this just gives you a graphic of what levels of bycatch we have in the Gulf groundfish fisheries, Gulf groundfish trawl fisheries. Looking back through time, you can see that the bycatch levels are pretty variable from year to year. The lighter -- in the top left graph, the lighter line is identifying what the bycatch limit that was recently instituted in the pollock fishery is at a level of 25,000 Chinook salmon. So where does that fall compared to the interannual variability of the estimated bycatch amounts by year going back from 1991. You can see that comparison on the graph. And on the bottom right it splits out the bycatch that accrues from the pollock target fishery versus other groundfish trawl fisheries. You can see that the bycatch really does come in the
So the two actions that the Council had taken recently are just summarized in the next two slides. This first one talks about the pollock fishery. The Council put in place -- the last time I spoke with these RACs, the Council was considering a bycatch cap for the pollock fishery, and that's now been implemented, in fact both acted on and implemented. It was implemented in mid 2012. The overall cap is 25,000 fish for the Western and Central Gulf trawl fisheries, but it's actually split out between those two areas. And when each area reaches their portion of the limit, it closes the pollock fishery in that area.

The pollock fishing is an onshore fishery, so all catch is delivered onshore, so this is a limit that applies to catcher vessels.

And one of the changes as part of this program was to actually require that all the salmon that are caught are brought to shore, and that's again for the purposes of counting them, and to allow for biological sampling, because one of the things that we discovered through the process of doing this analysis that we put together to establish the bycatch cap was that we don't know a lot about where the salmon that are being caught in the gulf fisheries are originating. So their stock of origin. So the Council was very interested, and it's a very high priority for the Council to institute a sampling, a robust sampling program in the Gulf. There's been a lot more work -- had been work prior to that in the Bering Sea, but in the Gulf of Alaska, we now have systematic sampling in the pollock fisheries, and we're starting to get a little bit of information about the stock of origin, and we'll be getting more and more information about that in years to come as that sampling program -- as we get the results from the sampling that's currently now occurring.

So a similar action, a parallel action was taken a couple years later, last year, for the non-pollock fisheries, a smaller cap, 7,500 fish, and it's split a little bit differently. It's split among catcher-processors and catcher vessels, because there is a catcher/processor component of the non-pollock fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska. And there's also an incentive aspect to the bycatch cap. That means that
if you stay below a threshold in one year, you can access some additional bycatch allowances in the following year. That sort of buffers against the risk of a particularly high salmon bycatch year, but also provides incentive for the fleet to minimize their bycatch to the extent practicable.

And then this final slide on salmon just looks at the impact of bycatch on Chinook stocks. As I said before, because we don't have a lot of information about stock composition of the bycatch, we have uncertainty about the relationship between bycatch in the fisheries and status of Chinook stocks in the Gulf. But we have more information than we did last time I spoke with you, so we now have -- the most recent information we have is from the bycatch samples from 2011. And just to give you a context, there were about 240 samples that were analyzed in 2011. 2012's data would be coming out in the next couple of months, and I think we increased our sample size to about 400 samples in 2012. Hopefully that number will keep increasing as we have now instituted this better sampling protocol in terms of getting the number of samples.

But in 2011 the information generally shows that about 66, about two-thirds of the bycatch samples were fish from the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, and then about 15 percent were from coastal Southeast Alaska stocks, and 15 percent from northwest Gulf of Alaska stocks. We don't have a resolution beyond those bigger areas, but that's the information we have for 2011. It's generally consistent with even smaller samples that we had for 2010. So that seems to, so far at least, to be good information for the limited information we have.

And just the last comment there is that although we don't have -- we don't know exactly the relationship between the bycatch and the stocks on land, or stocks on the rivers, we at least have bycatch limits in place now to control bycatch, particularly in years where there's high bycatch occurring.

And I think with that we're going to switch to halibut and I'm going to switch places with Jane and do the.....

MS. DICOSIMO: So this slide is a snapshot from 2012 in the distribution of the different
types of halibut removals that occur in different types
of fisheries. You'll just about 60 percent of halibut
in 2012 came from the commercial individual fishing
quota or IFQ program. About 23 percent was bycatch in
commercial ground fish fisheries. About three percent
was wastage in the commercial IFQ fishery. Less than
two percent is removed as subsistence harvest, with
sport taking up the balance of a little bit less than
13 percent.

And as Diana mentioned, we're focusing
the presentation just because of your limited time, and
our estimation of the topics that would be of most
interest and relevance to the RACs.

So what the Council undertook in the
last several years was an examination of those bycatch
amounts that I showed you in that slide, in the
previous slide showing the amount of removals that come
from bycatch in the commercial groundfish fisheries.
The Council placed a priority beginning in around 2010
to further investigate the effects of that bycatch
removals on the declining halibut resource. And what
it ultimately decided on was a program that I'm
describing in this slid, and that is, over the next
three years, starting with 2014, the Council has
recommended and NMFS has implemented a program to
reduce commercial halibut bycatch by 15 percent over
the next three years, between 2014 and 2016. The trawl
sector limits are decreasing by 15 percent, 7 percent
this year, 5 percent -- an additional 5 percent in
2015, and the final 3 percent in 2016. The
catcher/processor longline halibut bycatch limit
decreased seven percent all in one step this year. And
the catcher vessel longline sector limits also will
decrease over a three-year timeframe of 15 percent.
Also, there's a one metric ton or about a 2200 pound
reduction in halibut bycatch allowed in the demersal
shelf rockfish fishery program.

As Diana mentioned, there are tradeoffs
in Council management. The Council was charged with
maximizing the yield of the fish in the water to bring
in to benefit the population, the people population,
the fishermen, the folks that eat the fish, et cetera.
But it also is charged with reducing bycatch to the
extent that it can. And so it does have this tradeoff,
and one of the tradeoffs is increased allocation to the
directed fisheries sector as a result of reducing
bycatch. There's a fixed amount of fish allowed to
come out of the water, and then its an allocation issue in terms of who does the Council determine will be able to take what percent.

And so by dropping the cap on bycatch fisheries, it ultimately increases the cap to a lesser degree, it's not a one-to-one relationship, but there is an increase that occurs to the directed IFQ fishery, the sport fisheries, and the subsistence fishery. The increased wholesale gross revenue, the dollars associated with that 15 percent reduction to the groundfish fleet is approximately a little over $2 million.

You see a much less effect in Southeast, because trawling is already prohibited in Southeast, and so you're not getting as much of a benefit, because it's already banned. But in Southcentral Alaska, and in the Western Gulf, you can see $1.4 million associated with increased revenue from high quotas, and $875,000 annually associated with higher quotas for the Western Gulf.

And the tradeoff is in the next bullet, and that is that the commercial groundfish fisheries do take a financial hit, and that is estimated at about $10 million annually by the time that full 15 percent reduction is in place.

And so the next thing that the Council moved towards is to develop management tools to help those sectors, the groundfish fisheries that are faced with these reduced bycatch limits with being able to take more groundfish per ton of halibut bycatch. And so what they're looking towards doing is some type of individual bycatch quota program. And they're still at the discussion paper stage, the document just came out today, in terms of reviewing a proposal that the Council has adopted for this discussion paper that is looking at individual bycatch limits for salmon and halibut, and associating them with pollock and cod quota shares, similar to the halibut IFQ program.

There are options that address catcher vessels that made for voluntary cooperatives to manage their effort and pool the risk of exceeding their individual bycatch caps.

I'm moving towards a different topic, and that is just a general summary of halibut
subsistence program, thinking this may be of particular interest to this group. We haven't had new action or any changes to the regulation of this program since I think 2008. But in summary the Council in 2000 adopted a subsistence management program that became in effect in 2003. It include 118 rural communities and 123 Federally-recognized tribes, plus residents of designated rural areas, and that was that 2008 amendment.

There are no harvest limits associated with individual subsistence permit holders, but there are some limits for ceremonial use permits, and another type of permit like that. There are no size limits on halibut, so any size halibut may be retained. The gear limits are generally 30 hooks per permit holder. Some areas have 90-hook limit per boat.

There are -- this program is allowed only in subsistence waters, and therefore the urban areas, so to speak, or the non-subsistence waters are closed.

Permit holders are required to carry to carry this permit. The acronym for it is a SHARC card. And the program does have reporting requirements associated with it, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for the last 10 years has done those surveys in the communities either using local people or sending their Staff to local areas.

There are over 4,000 fishermen hold subsistence cards. In 2012 there were over 37,000 halibut harvested with about 690,000 net pounds being taken. 58 percent of that harvest occurred in Southeast Alaska, 30 percent occurred in Southcentral with the remainder in the westward areas.

78 percent of the harvest is taken with setline gear, 22 percent with hand-operated gear. And this is just a snapshot. Since 2003, looking at similar information just in graphical form, showing Southeast, which is area 2C in the purple. Southcentral in the burgundy, and the remaining part of Alaska in the yellow.

I'm moving on now to just a summary slide for a brand new program that is implemented in February. And that is a catch-sharing plan for the charter and commercial halibut sectors. There are --
the Council is not managing at all the non-charter or
the unguided fleets, so if you're an solely angler and
you go out on your own boat, or you go out on your
friend's boat, there's -- we're not involved in the
management of that sector.

But the Council has for the last 18
years or so been struggling with an optimal program
design for managing the charter sector. And since 2004
we have been under a guideline harvest level program
with an annual review of the appropriate management
measures that would be associated with the harvest for
that upcoming year under the guideline harvest level
program. We've changed that this year to be an actual
percentage of a combined charter and commercial quota.
And the idea behind that is we're in a phase now, we
have been for a number of years, of a declining halibut
resource, get the charter guideline harvest level
remained the same. There were some stepdowns depending
on that halibut resource, but lately the halibut
resource levels have been low to the point where only
the commercial sector was paying the price for that
lower halibut biomass. Now under this catch accounting
plan, both will go up and down as the halibut stock
changes.

There is an element to the program
that's a new idea, and that is, it's called a guided
angler fish program, and GAF program, where a charter
halibut permit holder may lease commercial IFQs so that
anglers on their fishing boats can keep fish of any
size, two fish of any size, basically bringing them
equal to an unguided angler restrictions.

However, under the plan that is going
into place in 2014, with the current combined charter
and commercial quota, and then the split between the
two happens, the measures to manage to that charter
allocation in Southeast, their allocation is 3.3
million pounds, and it will remain a one-fish bag
limit. But the reverse slot limit it's called has
changed a little bit. It's now you may keep that one
fish must be less or equal to 44 inches, or greater
than or equal to 76 inches. And you have to keep the
fish so that enforcement can measure it and know that
the fish is a legal fish.

In Southcentral, the charter allocation
is 7.3 million pounds. There remains a two-fish bag
limit, but one of those two fish must be less than 29
inches. Again, you must retain the carcass of the smaller fish to make sure it's legal, and charter vessels are limited to one trip per day.

And for both areas, there's no halibut retention allowed for skippers and crew.

So kind of circling back a little bit to the bycatch issues, the next steps in 2014 for salmon and halibut bycatch management is -- I mentioned earlier there's a paper that was just released today by our Staff on a review of a proposal that the Council put on the table for a salmon and halibut trawl bycatch quota type program associated with the Pacific cod and pollock fishery in the Gulf. The Council meets in Anchorage in the second week of April, and will decide on what the next steps are for moving that proposal forward. Likely with the next action coming up in October, probably for a subsequent discussion paper.

For salmon bycatch there will be a report on 2012 stock of origin of Gulf and Bering Sea salmon bycatch. Diana mentioned this. That will happen also at our April meeting. And there will be a report on Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Chinook and chum bycatch at our June meeting. That's going to be in Nome this year.

For halibut, the next steps for Bering Sea/Aleutian Island halibut bycatch review will be a report by the International Pacific Halibut Commission Staff who are the scientists that study halibut, and manage those fisheries. They'll be reporting back to the Council on the effects of halibut bycatch on the halibut resource in general and on the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island population specifically. That report will occur in April. As well a report from the commercial sectors on their voluntary efforts to reduce halibut bycatch.

So we at the opening of this presentation talked about all the different steps for when you could provide your comments, and here's a little bit more detail on how to provide those comments, either through our email portal on our website, public testimony at the meetings, sending letters, et cetera.

We also have a number of documents that
are available. I brought about 10 of the navigating
the Council process. If anyone is interested in having
those, I can leave them here if folks are interested in
having that handout.

Otherwise, Diana and I are available to
answer questions if you have them.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Are there any Council
members who have questions.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Getting back to your
halibut bycatch numbers, before this meeting I was
reading through the International Pacific Halibut
Commission report that they send out, and, I don't
know, that seemed to cast some doubts on the numbers
that you had up there when you list halibut bycatch as
a percentage of the entire catch. They seem to have
some concerns that that number isn't very accurate just
due to the nature of the fish that are caught with, you
know, commercial fish having a size limit of 32 inches,
and the bycatch being a big range of fish, a lot of
them being smaller fish that -- you know, the numbers
of fish is significantly different if you calculate
them by weight as opposed to, you know, counting
individual fish. And, I don't know, reading their
report, it just kind of seemed that they had some
doubts about the way the numbers are arrived at, and
seemed to want to have that resolved. I don't know if
that was reflected in your report or is that something
that's coming up in that report that you mentioned the
Commission is going to be putting out, or I don't know
if you guys want to.....

MS. DICOSIMO: Right. The numbers that
I presented here are the numbers from the Halibut
Commission. So my presentation my presentation is
consistent with their estimates.

The issue that the Halibut Commission
has raised has to do with the accuracy of the
information that comes in through the observer program,
or the old observer program. So there are some issues
as you mentioned about the size of fish et cetera, but
we now -- starting in 2013, was the first year of the
restructured observer program, and Diana is our Staff
expert on that. And so I might turn to her in terms of
the halibut numbers or steps forward.
And I don't know whether that level of
detail is what you want in general right now, or just
to let you know that the Council does use the numbers
that come from the Commission, or we're using the same
set of numbers. The numbers actually come to some
degree from the National Marine Fisheries Service
through their catch accounting system, which is the
fish ticket program, as well as the observer program.
And the observer program is in the process or has
already shifted to a new way to collect data.
Primarily it will affect or improve the quality and
accuracy of the information that we're getting on
halibut, particularly in the Gulf of Alaska, on the
smaller boats.

So I'm hoping -- that's a general
response, and if you have something more specific you'd
like us to speak to, maybe either Diana or I could try
again.

MR. HERNANDEZ: That's okay. It's
fine.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mary Ann.

MS. MILLS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is, you know, I know you
have the observer program, but do you also have on the
fishing boat, is that self-regulated? They say how
much the bycatch or how is that regulated?

MS. EVANS: So it does depend on the --
the individual vessels are required to fill out -- to
report information back to the National Marine
Fisheries Service either by filling out a fish ticket
if they're a larger boat, or by reporting their amount
of -- it's a little bit different for some of the
smaller boats that are just fishing IFQ.

Beginning in 2013, the Council
instituted some changes to the observer program to
capture -- before 2013, only vessels that 60 feet or
greater were required to have observer coverage, and
now we're covering vessels all the way down to 40 feet,
so it does bring in a lot of the smaller directed
halibut fishing boats, IFQ boats, that weren't getting
coverage before. They're getting coverage -- there's a
couple of different systems in place for how you get
coverage, and it's I think on approximately -- we're
targeting about 10 to 14, 12 to 16 percent coverage rate. So certainly it's not every instance of fishing that's being observed by an observer, to verify the information that's provided by the captain to report back, but we do get a -- we feel that that coverage rate, particularly on the larger boats is getting a good basis of data from which to be able to estimate overall catch rates, especially across the fleet.

One of the issues that you run into with some species, particularly, you know, salmon is one of the cases, where instances of salmon bycatch, running into salmon can be -- there are more rare species in our groundfish fisheries. And so it's -- the data that we might get from a 12, 16 percent observer coverage rate are going to be a little less precise than you might do if you had -- than you would get for the target species particularly. So the coverage rate that we have we feel is very good for groundfish species, and therefore it is a good cross check to the information that's self-reported by captains on their fish tickets or other systems.

MS. DICOSIMO: And there also is enforcement either at the dock or Coast Guard on the water.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Patty.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm wondering about, well, your PowerPoint showed designated seats, and then you talked about the Magnuson-Stevens Act, it is to be representative of communities. And so where is subsistence representation? We should have sustained participation, because, you know, those of us of the rural areas, it seems to me that were misrepresented, or under-represented in your facts and figures. And I see a declining harvest of subsistence harvest, and yet, you know, we're always there anyway. And it's based on the overall take of everyone else is reducing the amount of fish available to those of us in the rural areas, and yet we're the ones without the multiple alternatives to feed ourselves. I mean, in my community, we don't have a store. So we go get deer, we go get fish. I mean, those are our options. We have fishermen, yeah, but it's seasonal in nature, so we rely on, you know, going to get some of these natural resources of our area. And yet we're under-
represented at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council level.

Thank you.

MS. DICOSIMO: The halibut numbers that you saw are -- in terms of the subsistence harvest have been declining over the last several years. But that's indicative of halibut abundance overall. In every sector you're seeing halibut catch go down.

In terms of representation, the nominations -- anyone is free to be nominated through the Governor's Office to be on the Council. It's the Governor's Office who selects who are his three nominations, and then it's the Secretary that picks among those three. So from the Staff perspective, we don't have any comments in terms of the political process involved with those type of nominations.

MS. PHILLIPS: Follow up, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Patty. Okay. We have just a couple minutes.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. I'll keep it very short.

And I'm not going to argue or I'm not going to, you know, debate with you I mean, because you are Staff, but, you know, if it's the Governor who makes the selection, and it's based on maximum yield, I mean, where is the subsistence, you know, the economics of the subsistence harvester in that maximum yield equation.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

We've got one more minute, Judy.

MS. CAMINER: I'll do a quick follow up if I might, because one of our members who is unfortunately not here today, the reason he wanted a presentation from you today was this concerns about having a designated subsistence seat, not a State of Alaska seat. And so I guess maybe a different question, same intent, but a different way to phrase it, what would it take from our Council or the Federal
Subsistence Board to ask that there be a change in your regulations that would, through your regulation, not through Alaska's appointments, designate a subsistence seat, or any suggestions you might provide us, to working through your system to achieve that.

MS. EVANS: So the way that that would need to occur would be through a change to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which is currently being re-authorized, so that those discussions are happening at a national level. As I said in the presentation, we have 15 seats, and they're all specifically designated, so the seven Alaska seats, one of them for the Commission, but five of them specifically are appointed by the Governor. If there were to be something that was designated specifically for subsistence interests, that would need to be a change in the Act that would direct either the Governor or whomever to appoint somebody to that seat with those particular interests in mind.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Thank you, Judy for asking that question, and thank you for your presentation. I know that we could sit here -- I could sit here for another half hour and ask you questions, but we have to go on. And I hope you're around in the audience, and on a break we can ask you some questions if you're around.

Thank you.

Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If you'll notice, you know, the seating arrangements, we talked about whether we should have, you know, the Southcentral Council on one side, and Southeast on the other, but we thought it would be better if we had you mingle. So what I'm encouraging you to do, you know, is you maybe have a few minutes, you know, get acquainted with one other, because we all have the same interests, and, you know, it would be nice for you to talk to one another and get acquainted, so I encourage that.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. With that, we're not going to take a break yet. We're going to go right on to a briefing of sea otter management from the
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. And I know that this is very interesting to both Southeastern and parts of Southcentral. If you need to take a break, take a break voluntarily by yourself. We'll go on to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, sea otter management. And nobody will hold it against you if you get up and take a break.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: If everybody wants to sit down so we can have our presentation on sea otters. As soon as Donald Mike gets the papers handed out.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I'm going to ask you to introduce yourself, and we'll get started. And I don't know what's happened. All of a sudden things have -- so with that, if you can introduce yourself and we'll -- you'll have to put up with a little bit of confusion right now.

MR. HAMMOND: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Forrest Hammond. I'm with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and I'll be giving the briefing on significantly altered.

MS. KOHOUT: Good afternoon. My name is Jennifer Kohout. I'm a program manager in our Alaska regional office of U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and I'm here to help if you have questions, and support Forrest. It looks like we're getting our PowerPoint up and going still.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Ah, I know what that creature is.

MR. HAMMOND: Perfect. So as you can see on the screen, what we're going to be talking about today is significantly altered.

Next slide. So Alaska Native people have been hunting sea otters for generations, and this activity continues today under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The Act's intent is to conserve marine mammals, but protect and allow for non-wasteful harvest of sea otters by coastal dwelling Alaska Native peoples.
The Marine Mammal Protection Act protects Native hunters' rights. Non-wasteful harvest may be done for subsistence purposes, to make sea otter handicrafts for commercial and non-commercial uses.

Next slide. When a hunter harvests a sea otter, the hunter must bring the hide and skull to a Fish and Wildlife Service representative within 30 days for tagging. There are taggers in most coastal communities who are contracted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This information gathered by taggers allows biologists to obtain biological information on each individual otter harvested, and helps us to monitor the sea otter harvest.

Next slide. After a hide has been tagged, Alaska Native peoples may give, trade, or sell the sea otter hide or hide parts to other Native peoples.

Next slide. Significantly altered. A sea otter handicraft may be sold to non-Native people once an item is handicraft and is considered significantly altered. Significantly altered has been confusing, so therefore the Fish and Wildlife Service has issued new guidance.

Next slide. In November 2013, the term significantly altered was clarified in new guidance and issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This guidance says that a sea otter hide is significantly altered when it is no longer recognizable as a whole sea otter hide, and has been made into a handicraft or article of clothing as identified in the following slides.

Next slide. To be considered significantly altered, a tanned, dried, cured or preserved sea otter hide devoid of head, feet, and tail, i.e. blocked, that is substantially changed by any of the following, but is not limited to, weaving, carving, stitching, sewing, lacing, beading, drawing, painting, other decorative fashion, or made into another material or medium, and cannot be easily converted back to an unaltered hide or piece of hide.

Next slide. An example of significantly altered would be these slippers with a
sea otter trim.

Next slide. Significantly altered, these mittens which are made from sea otter.

Next slide. This item would not be considered significantly altered due to the fact that there is no stitching or lining, so therefore it's not significantly altered.

Next slide. This cape is not blocked, stitched or lined, and would not be considered significantly altered.

Next slide. Secondly, to be considered significantly altered, a tanned, dried, cured or preserved sea otter head, tail, or feet or other part devoid of the remainder of the hide, which includes any of the following, but is not limited to, weaving, carving, stitching, sewing, lacing, beading, drawing, or painting, other decorative fashion, or made into another material or medium. An example would be a sea otter foot turned into a key chain.

Next slide. The Fish and Wildlife Service would like to thank ITCOM (ph) and hunters and artisans and many others who helped with this new guidance. And this is a photo of all those individuals who participated in the new guidance.

Next slide. And with that, I'll take any questions you may have.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Aaron.

MR. ISAACS: I'm trying to read over this real quickly, but does it mention the method of harvesting.

MR. HAMMOND: No. Mr. Chair. No, it doesn't mention a method of harvesting.

MR. ISAACS: What method then would be prohibited?

MS. KOHOUT: There are no restrictions on the method of take.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Could you maybe point out some of what's changed in this new guidance as compared to previously.

MS. KOHOUT: In terms of previous guidance or -- actually there was no previous guidances. I mean, previously what we had was the statute and then the regulatory language. So this was an attempt to elaborate on what the regulation said.

MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Patty.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. What happens -- I mean, if somebody -- like that scarf, that long scarf, and you guys said it wasn't significantly altered because it didn't have a lining. So happens if, you know, somebody makes that not knowing that it has to have a lining? Do they get thrown in jail? Do they get fined? Or what. I mean, everybody's still trying to learn the rules.

MS. KOHOUT: Yes. If Forrest will hit the next slide, and you'll see a link to our website. I mean, we're always available for questions, so if people are unsure as to whether or not what they've done is significantly altered, we and our law enforcement folks are happy to answer questions. The goal is to avoid selling something that hasn't been significantly altered, and so that would be the concern in terms of the product.

MR. HAMMOND: And to further that, any artisan that has any questions about that, they can feel free to call our office at the 1-800 number or actually law enforcement will field questions, too, if there's any concerns.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Aaron.

MR. ISAACS: Yeah, a follow up question to my earlier question. Is there a number of -- a limit, you know, today?

MR. HAMMOND: No, sir, there's no limits or restrictions on sea otter harvest.

MR. ISAACS: The reason why I'm asking these initial questions is, I spend a lot of time out
on the waters around Craig/Klawock area, and there's
been times when we've spotted -- you can at any moment
and snap a picture, you'll see 50, 75 sea otters
fishing in an area.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Forrest, is that
-- that strip of sea otter fur, could you put that into
a ruff and would that be considered significantly
altered if that got put on a ruff (indiscernible - away
from microphones).

MR. HAMMOND: Yes, if that strip of fur
was made into a ruff for a jacket, just much like the
trim on the slippers, therefore it would be considered
significantly altered.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mary Ann.

MS. MILLS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The question that was asked by the one
lady down the table was what would happen if somebody
breaks the law and didn't know. What would be the
penalty? Would they go to a Federal penitentiary
or.....

(Laughter)

MS. MILLS: And also my other question
is, I wasn't sure if a keychain out of the foot of the
animal would be considered altered or not.

MR. HAMMOND: Right. So the answer to
your first question, it's really a question for law
enforcement, but like we said, education is our main
priority, to get this information out there and to keep
people out of trouble. So we'll do that any way we
can, and that's why we've provided the 1-800 number for
folks to call, and just to educate individuals,
artisans are welcome to call us and call law
enforcement if they ever have questions.

And the answer to your second question
is, yes, a keychain would be -- a sea otter foot made
into a keychain would be considered significantly
altered.

MR. ISAACS: Would be what?
MR. HAMMOND: Would be considered significantly altered according to the new guidance.

MR. JACKSON: Yeah, just a simple question. I heard you talking about they can trade or sell to Natives. I think when you were doing the presentation, you skipped over it, it said Alaska Natives, but you said Natives, so is there any.....

MR. HAMMOND: Oh, sorry. Yeah, I might have missed that, but it's Alaska Natives, that is correct.

MR. JACKSON: All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And from that standpoint, significantly altered only applies if it's sold to non-Natives, right?

MR. HAMMOND: Yes, Mr. Chair. That's correct.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

Can American Indians harvest sea otters?

MR. HAMMOND: No, ma'am. It is for only Alaska Native people that are one-quarter in blood quantum, and that dwell on the coast of Alaska.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mary Ann.

MS. MILLS: Gee, I'm glad you said one-quarter Alaska Native, because we were told that if you were a member of a Federally-recognized tribe, that you could participate in this, in the taking of sea otter.

MR. HAMMOND: No, ma'am. Under 50 CFR 18.23 of the regulation, it specifically states Alaska Native and the blood quantum.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

MS. CAMINER: I appreciate your presentation today. And I think one of the reasons again one of our members wanted this on the agenda,
wanted to talk about sea otters was, as you've been 
mentioning, the very high populations of sea otters and 
what that's doing to the fisheries. So I don't know if 
you can comment on their impacts that they're having on 
the fisheries, that was certainly our main concern, and 
what might be able to be done about that.

MS. KOHOUT: You know, we'd be happy to 
do that. Forrest and I probably aren't the right 
people to give that presentation. We are aware that, 
right, there's been an increase in sea otter 
populations in Southeast Alaska, and can certainly come 
back to the group if that would be helpful to talk 
about that in more detail.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yes.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Maybe I'll phrase the 
question a little different. I guess what we're 
looking for is some effort that might try and, you 
know, might succeed in increasing the harvest rate of 
the sea otters in a legal way.

I guess maybe you worked with the folks 
in that picture on the guidance team. Was there any 
expectation from them or anybody else that these new 
guidance levels or anything else, any other actions 
you've taken recently will help to increase that 
harvest rate.

MS. KOHOUT: Well, certainly part of 
the goal of this undertaking was to eliminate any 
concerns that folks -- some folks were expressing 
concern that there was uncertainty about what the 
regulation was, and that that was inhibiting them from 
harvesting sea otters. So that's what we've tried to 
address here.

You know, in terms of the Marine Mammal 
Protection Act and our role, it isn't necessarily to 
facilitate harvest, it's just to ensure that Alaska 
Native harvest under the law is recognized and is 
facilitated.

But I think what you're getting at is 
more sea otter regulation and management, and I guess 
that's what I was expressing isn't necessarily our 
charge, although we, you know, have been talking to 
folks about options.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Well, I know there is no management per se other than the Native harvest, you know, for handicrafts. So like I say, I guess what we're looking for is some indication that, you know, any actions that have been taken will be effective in, you know, increasing that harvest. And I don't know if we have any way to judge that or not, but that's what we hope for.

MS. KOHOUT: I mean, we are happy to come back I think in terms of reporting on the amount of harvest that has been happening recently. And with this guidance in place, I think we have seen an increase in terms of the harvest numbers. So, I mean, there is some information that might be useful to the group that we'd be happy to share.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. I think that's what he was -- that's one of the things we were wondering was what kind of increase have we seen, and has there been an increase, and is there anything in place that -- I mean, at this point in time, if I understand correctly, there is no limit, but there is -- so there is no management either one direction or the other direction in place. I mean, there's no goal to keep the sea otter down to a certain population, but there's no goal to prevent them from over-harvesting either. And that's I think what -- we'd have to go through the National Marine -- what would we have to go through to get regulations changed.

MS. KOHOUT: So there are provisions in the Marine Mammal Protection Act that do allow for regulation of harvest, which is a little different though than regulating sea otters, which I think is what you're speaking to. So it's a little tricky to hit that balance. I appreciate what you're saying.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah. So there are no management objectives for sea otters.

MS. KOHOUT: There's a concept of optimum sustainable population, and that's a function of the carrying capacity of the area that you're looking at, so that is one of the kind of levels that we look at in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. But there's no immediate provision to say that you manage down to that level.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So there's no
management provisions for effect on ecosystem or
subsistence users or anything like that. It's -- the
management's for maximum sustained -- maximum amount,
but if it's over maximum amount, there's nothing to
take care of that.

MS. KOHOUT: There's not currently
anything in the MMPA that would do that, yeah.

MR. JACKSON: Yes, one last question.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If it's regulated the way it is now,
and the seal is also a mammal, do we have to do those
things if we want to make something out of a seal or
sea lion. Do we have to significantly alter that also.

MR. HAMMOND: That would be a question
for NMFS. Fish and Wildlife Service doesn't manage the
harvest of seals.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Frank.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

You had that one piece up there that
didn't have any altered -- wasn't altered, just had the
skin.

MR. HAMMOND: Right. Right.

MR. WRIGHT: So if you put a piece of
cloth on and stitch it on there, then that would be altered?

MR. HAMMOND: Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: And so if you had a whole
skin and you put a piece of cloth on the inside of it,
that would be altered?

MR. HAMMOND: Well, sir, it has to be
blocked, so therefore the head and the feet and the
tails would have to be cut.

MR. WRIGHT: Would have to be off.

Yeah.

MR. HAMMOND: Right, And then it could
be lined, and then it would be significantly altered.
MR. WRIGHT: You know, I'm pretty sure there are some hunters that have plenty of sea otters, but don't know what to do with them. And another thing is that, you know, I didn't know any of this, you know, and I -- but a lot of people are probably worried that they might get in trouble, because being altered, all of a sudden there was a whole definition of what being altered is, is kind of scary to some people about getting thrown in jail, because even some law enforcement probably don't even know what it is. So I think that if there's a way it can be gotten out to the tribes and stuff so that the tribal government or whoever can put up something, okay, this is altered, this is not altered. And then the tribal members that are doing the hunting and doing the processing of the hide, then there wouldn't be any doubt. And then if a law enforcement officer comes to one of the hunters and says, hey, that's against the law, then, okay, let's go to the tribal government, and they'll tell you that it's not. So I think that will be helpful, and then I think a lot more tribal members would be able to help decrease the population of these -- the sea otter, because they are not worried about being in trouble for it.

That's just a thought I've had.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Our Southeast Council has been working quite a bit on the sea otter issue over the past few years, and tomorrow we're going to have an action item on our concurrent agenda. And I'm just wondering if you guys -- you say you would be available to come back, and you might have been thinking about that in context of our meeting in six months, but I'm wondering if somebody from your office would be able to answer some of the questions that you might not be able to answer for the benefit of us for tomorrow so that we can take our action item.

MS. KOHOUT: Yeah. You know, unfortunately the best person would be Raina Gill, and she's out this week. But I would be happy to follow up
with you afterwards to find a time.....

MS. NEEDHAM: And she's who I was thinking of, and I'm wondering, is it possible if we pass you some questions, you might be able to find out from her and somebody could come and answer those for us? And I'd give you an agenda time, but I really don't quite understand what it would be right now, so I think it's going to be tomorrow morning some time that we would do it.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

Any other further questions for them.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you for the presentation, and I really appreciate the -- oops. Aaron.

MR. ISAACS: Just a real quick question. Like any other species we're hunting or harvesting, what about a small sea otter. Is there.....

MR. HAMMOND: Currently there's no restrictions on size or age.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. fall under the Secretary of Interior?

MR. HAMMOND: Yes, ma'am. That's right.

MS. PHILLIPS: So we could write a letter to the Secretary and ask for an amendment.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I don't think the Marine Mammal Act falls under the Secretary of Interior, but possibly they could correct me on that. I think he just administers it. the Marine Mammal Act was by Congress if I remember right.
MR. HAMMOND: Yes, Mr. Chair. That's correct.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So I think in order to amend the Marine Mammal Act, we have to go all the way -- I think we have to go all the way to Congress to get it amended, don't we?

MR. HAMMOND: Correct.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So any other questions. Aaron.

MR. ISAACS: Again does the Alaska state troopers or Fish and Game officers have any authority dealing with this issue.

MR. HAMMOND: That would be a question for our law enforcement. They might have some deputized officers, but I can't speak to that. That would be a question for our OLE department.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, if there's no further questions, I'd like to thank you for your presentation, and a star. Again, like I was saying before, I think you put out a very informative piece of paper right here, and I'd recommend that everybody that's at all interested in sea otters read this piece of paper, and I think it will answer a lot of questions.

And if you don't have anything else you'd like to add, I'll excuse you.

MR. HAMMOND: No, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With that, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge somebody that's here. We have a member of the Federal Subsistence Board here, Bud Cribley.

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So this is one of the guys that will end up making decisions on what we recommend, so be nice to him.

(Laughter)
MR. CRIBLEY: I was wondering, Mr. Chairman, if I could just make a few statements to the Boards while I have that opportunity.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You're more than welcome.

MR. CRIBLEY: Okay. Number 1, the first thing I should do is apologize for not being able -- or scheduling my time better to more actively participate in this joint session that you're having these two days. As a matter of fact, I didn't find out about it until this morning, and it was kind of a panic of clearing my calendar so that I could at least come over for this afternoon's joint session and listen to the dialogue on these important issues that you do have on your calendar, or on your schedule. And I guess do feel that they're very important to subsistence management, and the task that the RACs have been given as far as looking at some of the issues for Federal subsistence in Alaska.

And one of the things I want to do is particularly -- a couple of issues very important to me right now from being a part of the Federal Subsistence Board and making decisions on Federal subsistence in Alaska, the customary and traditional use determination issue that Southeast RAC is kind of I guess championing right now. I had an opportunity to go and sit in on the RAC meeting down in Juneau a while back. I can't even remember when it was. It could have been last week or it could have been a year ago. I'm not sure any more. But they made a very good -- had a very good presentation and discussion on the importance of addressing that issue and taking advantage of an opportunity right now where the Secretary has opened the door to look at that process and to make that process better and more applicable to Federal subsistence.

And I guess it has become -- I've kind of jumped on the bandwagon with them and are supportive of what they're doing, and hopefully they can make the case with the rest of the RACs in the State to look at what's being proposed and what the opportunity is. And I think the Secretary has opened the door for the RACs to make recommendations on helping to simplify the subsistence program here, the Federal subsistence program in Alaska, and this is one example of that where they can make it more simple and also make it
more useful for Federal subsistence users.

The other one, I'm looking forward to
the discussion on rural determination. That's another
big issue that we are dealing -- you folks are dealing
with and we're dealing with. And I think we have a
really big opportunity to make some changes in how that
rural determination is made, and to provide some level
of security and assurance to rural subsistence users on
what their status is going to be today and in the
future, so they're not having to worry all the time of
whether they're going to lose that, or if that status
is going to change. And I know myself and the rest of
the Board members are -- we're going to have a meeting
in April to look at the comments that have been
provided, and I feel that is very important. We have a
big responsibility here, take it seriously, and look
forward to the public comments, the comments back from
the Boards, and to maybe move that forward to make that
more fair to everybody in all the rural communities in
Alaska and stuff.

But I'm just pleased to be able to sit
in and to listen to the dialogue and the discussion
here, and I appreciate the few minutes to talk to you.

And also I want to take the opportunity
to thank all of you for the time that you put into
this. I know coming up to Alaska from working in the
Lesser 48 States, Alaska is committee intensive from
the standpoint there's more meetings and committees and
board and councils than any place I've ever worked in
my Federal career. And there's only so many people in
this state.

(Laughter)

MR. CRIBLEY: And I don't know how you
guys sustain yourselves and how you do anything else
other than go to meetings. You know, I get paid to go
to go to meetings, you folks don't, but you continue to
do that. But that's how our system works. It's an
opportunity and you commit yourselves to doing that,
and I truly appreciate the effort and the time that you
put into that. And hopefully in my role on the
Subsistence Board to make it worth your while.

Thank you

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Mr. Cribley, just to
-- you know, the C&T issues that our Council has been
working on, the working group has done some very, you
know, extensive and a lot of work on it. And I would
like for you to place names with some of the faces of
people who are working on it.

We have Mr. Don Hernandez over there.

MR. CRIBLEY: Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: And we have Cathy
Needham right there.

MR. CRIBLEY: Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: And Patty Phillips.
And, you know, the vice chairman has chimed in with a
lot of the teleconferences. And then I would once in a
while. So these -- you know, just so you, when that
issues comes to the Board, you'll be able to connect
faces with people who worked on this.

MR. CRIBLEY: Cool. Thank you very
much. And I do appreciate the work that you're putting
into that. I recognize that, and hopefully we can make
it worth your while.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With that, I'd like to
call a short recess so everybody's got a chance to get
a cup of coffee or get rid of a cup of coffee or
something on that order.

(Laughter)

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. At this point
in time we're going to have a briefing on rural
determination.

Pippa.

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Let me have exactly
how I'm supposed to pronounce your name.
MS. KENNER: My name is Pippa.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pippa. Okay.

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Pippa Kenner, and I work with the Office of Subsistence Management here in Anchorage.

And today I'm going to present for you an overview of where we are in our rural determination review. This is not an action item. My presentation is just to update you, and the briefing begins on Page 38 of your Council books.

The public comment period closed in December, and the recommendations from the 10 Councils, tribal and ANCSA corporation consultations, and comments from the public will be presented to the Federal Subsistence Board at its meeting next month in April.

For the next step, the Board may recommend to improve the process to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture.

Your Council comments are on Page 38 of your Council books, and the recommendations from other Councils are also in that section of the Council book.

So again I just want to remind people that this is a review of the rural determination process. The process is our review occurs every 10 years. There are some aspects of the process that involve the population of communities and other characteristics. So we are not reviewing the rural determinations of communities at this time.

That's the end of my presentation. I'd be happy to answer your questions.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So basically what you're saying is we are reviewing the process, not rural determinations; am I correct.

MS. KENNER: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do you kind of have a little synopsis or feeling from your review that you've gotten to this point in time how do -- what would be a
general consensus of how the feelings of the Councils are going?

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for that question. I have read the Council comments, and I did attend some of the Council meetings, and actually the comments from the Councils are wide ranging. Additionally, we do have Staff at the office now working on developing an analysis of all the comments that came in from everybody.

The Council comments have included by and large statements such there should be Advisory Council deference on this issue. That the population parameters that are used should continue not to be used. Those are the two that I remember popping up most often in the Council reviews.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

MS. CAMINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Pippa, I'm looking at Page 39. I don't think those are all of Southcentral's comments. In fact, I think at least for the population thresholds and information sources, it's Bristol Bay's.

MS. KENNER: Thank you. Through the Chair. Thank you, Mrs. Caminer. I think that is a typo. Did you say for the Southcentral Council?

MS. CAMINER: Correct. Yes.

MS. KENNER: Yeah. I think the Southcentral's comments actually begin -- okay. Yes, it does. Okay. So even though there is a typo under population thresholds or information sources, it says Bristol Bay.

I'm sorry, go ahead with your comment then.

MS. CAMINER: My comment is, I don't believe the three categories shown at the top of 39 -- or excuse me, two of them, population thresholds and information sources, I don't think we said that. I would encourage you to go back and look at our minutes and review our actual comments.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy.
Any other comments from any other Council members.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: I'd just like to make a comment.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Not on this issue, Mr. Chairman. But I'd just like to acknowledge John Yeager who just came to join our meeting. He's on our Council, and he got an excuse to come a day late because of, you know, personal issues. Thanks for coming, John. Welcome.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any questions for Pippa.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I don't know, the ones that I seem to have heard from everybody is a fear that places that are rural could lose their rural status as the populations and everything around them change and things like that. And that's -- I just was wondering how much that had shown up in the comments that you heard from other Councils.

MS. KENNER: In my cursory review of the comments that are now in front of you, I believe it comes up in almost all of the Council discussions.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

Pippa, so it went out to public comment and then that public comment period closed. So what's the best -- I mean, the next steps. What's the timeline looking like.

MS. KENNER: Ms. Phillips through the Chair. Okay. The timeline. Right now we are -- Staff are analyzing all the comments to put them in a format that we can present before the Federal Subsistence Board next month, rather than just giving them a pile of comments. So they're reviewing all the comments from the corporations, from the tribes, from the public and from the Councils to be presented.
So at its meeting the Federal Subsistence Board in the public meeting will review the comments and the Staff analysis of the comments. And they may draft recommendations to the Secretaries on the possible changes to improve the process. If they decide to do that at the April 2014 meeting, there will be a proposed rule drafted, and with the Secretaries' direction, and that might be drafted as soon as the end of April 2014, next month, or it may take a couple of months into June, and we have a published proposed rule that following this timeline would be in the Federal Register from April 2014 -- excuse me, from July 2014 to October 2014 for public comment. And, of course, there would be a round of Council review of any proposed rules that were made.

And then there would be a review of those comments and then the Federal Subsistence Board would meet again. And the whole process of that review is scheduled to end in April 2015.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So the goal is a final rule by 2015.

MS. KENNER: Correct. The steps in the rural review process review are at the website, and I have a copy of it right here. And I'd be happy to make a copy and give it to you, so you can see exactly what I'm looking at.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Any other questions for Pippa. Aaron.

MR. ISAACS: Is it a possibility that the population threshold might be eliminated.

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACS: Or definition.

MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Isaacs. Through the Chair.

Right now there is no guidance in recommendations. Yes, the population thresholds could be changed or eliminated. That is possible.

MR. ISAACS: The reason I ask the
question though, it is so arbitrary as it relates to subsistence users.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Isaac -- I mean, Aaron.

Greg.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, I'd just like to make one comment through the Chair, Pippa. And I just wanted to reiterate what Judy said there, because I know our Council, we had a pretty intense and passionate discussion on the rural determination. And we had a pretty detailed list, and actually when we went to public comment, we asked that part of that be included in part of our list, too, so if you would just double check that, I'd appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Greg.

Any other comments, questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Pippa.

Carl, are you ready to do yours?

We're going to skip the delegation of authority and we're going to put that on the agenda for Thursday, and so at this point in time we're going to go on to Council members attending other Council and Board meetings. Carl.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Council members. Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division chief at OSM.

So I was asked to talk to you all about what the policy is regarding having Council members visiting other Councils. And I'm happy to report there is absolutely no policy whatsoever. However, there is some guidance. Our assistant regional director has given us some guidance. It can be, obviously, it is possible for Council members to visit other Council meetings. Recently Chair Adams and Council Member Needham from the Southeast Council visited the Southcentral Council. We have a visiting Council member over here.
And essentially what we're looking for is, first, some kind of discussion on the record from the Council about the need and the desire to visit another Council.

Second, what really would be the justification? What objective does the Council hope to achieve by having a Council member visit. What are they going to bring back to your Council, and how is that going to help your Council conduct its business and fulfill its mission for, you know, meeting subsistence needs in your region.

And finally, as with everything, there will be a budget check. Do we have the travel budget available at the time to accommodate that particular request. And that's just up to your Council coordinator to prepare a cost estimate, what it would be for that travel to occur, and we compare that with where we're at on our travel cap for that particular part of the year. And that's submitted to the assistant regional director for his approval. And that's really what it all boils down to.

And there's obviously a lot of interest and need for this. I was talking to the Kodiak/Aleutians Council Chair about this recently, and they're definitely in there, and more interaction with the Southcentral and the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Councils. So there are a lot of things that can be done to help the Councils accomplish their missions. And this is definitely one of those potential tools.

So it's something that we are willing to accommodate when the need arises, and with those guidelines being met.

And I'm happy to answer any questions there may be, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Does that, what you just described, apply to attending the Board of Fish meetings or the Board of Game meetings by RAC.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. We have in the past -- there's always been a practice of supporting Council members attending other organizational meetings. Like
for the Yukon Councils attending YRDFA meetings. In the past there was the tri-RAC committee that met among the Eastern Interior, Western Interior, and Y-K Delta Councils to formulate fisheries customary trade proposal. And the same could also be said for attending meetings like that.

Again, we're really looking for the council expressing on the record a desire to send somebody to that. And the some kind of discussion about the justification, what the objectives would be rather than just going and attending, and coming back and giving a report, you know, what really concrete does the Council need that could be accomplished by that member attending that meeting.

MS. PHILLIPS: Follow up, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I mean like so we're supportive, the RAC, Southeast RAC is supportive of the Transboundary Treaty, or the salmon treaty. I mean, we put it in our record, you know, that that's important to us. And we have -- where's John? We have Mr. Yeager and then our coordinator, you know, who went to a previous meeting, and we want to continue to support that. So you're telling us, so what have we got to do to make sure that happens?

MR. JOHNSON: Just have a discussion on the record that the Council has that desire for that member to continue attending that meeting or attend a meeting. State the objectives, and then to have your Council coordinator after the meeting submit a request to me along with a budget estimate, and then I forward that to the assistant regional director for his approval.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: My turn? Okay. You know, several years ago, I can't remember, three, four years ago, maybe even sooner than that, Mr. Lohse came to our Council meeting in Sitka, and that kind of spearheaded, you know, the idea we should have a joint meeting together. So I just wanted to share that with you.

There's also been talk about, you know,
maybe Council members going to Board meetings. You
know, the Chairs are the ones who attend the Board
meetings. And I think I've heard some ideas that maybe
a member or the Vice Chair, you know, attend those
meetings as well. So what do you think of that idea.

(Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: Chair Adams. There are a
lot of things that I think that are a great idea. Of
course, we're always up against a budget wall, so that
in the end that would be the determination. Yeah, if
you want to have, just as a suggestion, if you want to
have more Council member exposure to the Board process
and being involved in that, you could voluntarily
rotate other people to attend in your stead. But we
definitely would keep it limited. We wouldn't want to
have five people from the Southeast Council attending a
Board meeting.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Yeah, but it wouldn't
be fun.....

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: .....with Mr. Lohse
and I up there, because we like to, you know, really
give the Board a bad time, and they know it, too.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: But, yeah, we're not
going to stay broke forever, are we?

MR. JOHNSON: I would certainly hope
not. I certainly have a lot of ideas as to how our
budget should be handled, but I'm a little bit too low
in the food chain for my ideas to really matter.

(Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: And, you know, budget is
always going to be an issue, but hopefully in the years
to come we will come up with creative new ways to
adapt, and perhaps even do better with the continued
budget situation. We just have to figure it out.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Carl.
Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to make a comment, it's not really a question. When Bert and I were invited to come up to meet with the Southcentral group, to talk about the C&T determination, you know, we were asked to come up to give them more information about what our Council has been working on. But a side benefit of that for me, for somebody who's relatively new to the Southeast Council, it was a huge educational experience, and extremely valuable in seeing how other Councils operate. And, you know, I made those comments in my Council report this morning during our Southeast meeting, but I wanted to make them again on the record with the benefit of both Councils here, because I think maybe in knowing that, that might be something we could add to our respective annual reports, making sure that the Federal Subsistence Board understands the value that we have in sort of that cross-learning and ability to go to these other meetings and work within those systems, especially like Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings if we're putting proposals forward through. You know we're going to be talking about doing that, but I have no idea how to walk a proposal through a Board of Game meeting, and it would be interesting to go and see that process before you're just handed your charge to go kind of thing.

And so -- and the reason why I said maybe in the annual report, maybe there's a better place for it in there's a better lace for it in terms of writing a letter, but making sure that we keep that awareness out there so that we can continue to make sure that that budget is there to be able to participate in those kinds of things.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl.

MR. JOHNSON: Those are some very excellent points. And I think one thing I would encourage the Councils to do is if they do have a Council member who attends another Regional Council meeting or a Board of Fish meeting, one thing that would really be helpful is have the Council write a letter expressing how useful and how beneficial that travel was to your Council, and what did the Council get out of it. Something tangible that kind of hammers again the message of the value of these other meetings
and how they contribute.

And I also think that's a very valuable point, too, about the intangible learning and networking aspects of attending these other meetings.

Many of the Councils are actively involved in commenting on and sometimes even submitting proposals to the State Board of Game and Board of Fish process. And if you can better understand how those processes work, then you can also be more effective in your advocacy on behalf of subsistence users in your region, even if it is through the State process instead of the Federal process.

So I think those are all valuable points. And I think however the Councils choose to communicate the value of that back to the Office of Subsistence Management is going to be helpful.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Carl.

MS. BERNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This may not pertain to this exact subject, but it has along the same lines. I'm wondering if this isn't the appropriate time to go on record saying that we went on record saying this before, that if we don't get our books in an appropriate manner before the meeting, then we're less effective at the meeting, and it's really frustrating as Council member to not have the materials in a timely fashion.

Anyway, I just wanted to go on record and say that I'm real disappointed in the whole process this go around.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl.

MR. JOHNSON: And I would like to say that I am as well. And I apologize to you and also to the other Council members. You know, ideally, I would like for you to get these meeting books a month in advance.

As you may know, we did lose our subsistence outreach coordinator last fall in the
middle of the meeting cycle, and that is the position that is responsible typically for assembling these books and distributing them. But I am pleased to report that we have made a recent hiring decision that's been forwarded, and we will have that position fill, and that person will be running and ready to go for the next meeting cycle.

And there are a lot of things that right now I can attribute honestly to staffing shortages. I don't want them to be seen as an excuse, but I want you all to know that if there are areas where we are not supporting you, it is not from a lack of desire. And we are taking steps to improve our staffing. You'll actually get a full report on this during the OSM report, and you'll be pleased to see that we're making a lot of positive steps in that regard.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Carl.

Any other comments, questions. Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Mr. Cribley asked me out in the hallway a little while ago why I was so quiet.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: But I need to bring up this issue of our per diems, because, you know, it was a long time since our last meeting that I know I got mine, you know, deposited into my account. It takes a long time. We need to remind you you that we are all volunteers, you know. We're not on a regular payroll schedule like you guys are or other people here. And so I think it's really important, you know, that our per diems, you know, are given to us in a timely manner. We get, you know, part of it, you know, right now, but there's another part of it that will come later, and I think it's really important that -- you know, I really didn't need it. I was surprised when Mr. Larson emailed, said that your per diem is on its way. And I had forgotten all about it, you know. so just another thing.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It was a spring bonus, Bert, just look at it that way. It was just a spring bonus.
(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do I have any other questions for Carl, any other comments for Carl.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl, I'd just like to thank OSM for all the work that they have put in. And, you know, I've been in this program for a long time, and I really do appreciate the amount of work that goes into preparing for these meetings, presenting these meetings and everything else. And all I can say is, I'm glad I'm on this side of the table instead of on that side of the table, because if I was on that side of the table, things would be a lot worse.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Not having anybody else to comment or question Carl.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you, Council members.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With that, I think we're going to go on to J7, and see what the time is, which is the status of the Secretarial review. Is David Jenkins here to give us that.

MR. LARSON: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah.

MR. LARSON: If I could, I could speak to that. The J7 agenda topic, there's nobody here to really address that, and it's an informational item. We will provide information regarding the status of the Secretarial review when there is information. It will be done through a written means. I'll just send you, Donald will send you an email and we'll talk about that, and where we are with that prior to the next Council meeting.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Mr. Larson. How about the next one, the climate change
MR. LARSON: Climate change is hopefully, my suggestion, I've been in communications at Greg Hayward, and he is available to do that 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning. 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning -- or 10:00 a.m. on Thursday rather. Excuse me, I've got my days confused here.

(Laughter)

MR. LARSON: It's 10:00 a.m. on Thursday morning, he could have that presentation.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Mr. Larson. Is there any one of these agenda items, seeing as we have a little time left, is there any one or two of these agenda items that we could handle at this point in time.

MR. LARSON: Mr. Chair. The food security agenda item is self-generated by the agenda steering committee. There is a briefing where that topic is -- there's some information that I put together, and the topic was put here to generate some discussions to see what it is, and if the Councils are interested in it. If the Council members themselves are ready to discuss that, I would suggest they could look at that briefing statement.

Those on the agenda steering committee I think may have some ideas about why they thought it was appropriate. So we could talk about that.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Does that look like about the only one that we have left here that we could handle today, if we were going to handle one today. Briefing on fisheries management I don't think that it is.....

MR. LARSON: Well, is Cal ready to talk this afternoon?

MR. CASIPIT: Yes.

MR. LARSON: Then Cal is ready to talk this afternoon.

(Laughter)
MR. LARSON: So he could actually speak to that issue right now, and we can postpone food security until later.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I think if everybody has a chance, the food security one is in our booklet, isn't it?

MR. LARSON: It is.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And so if everybody can just have a chance to look at that, and make sure they're up to date on that, we can handle that later.

If Cal's willing to present us with the Fisheries Monitoring Program at this point in time, I think that would be a good thing to take.

And you were going to ask me something.

MR. KITKA: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The climate change, what was written in our books was Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah, but it's going to be Thursday now, because we're not going to do the....

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Are you ready, Cal.

MR. CASIPIT: Yes, Mr. Chair. I can start while Mr. Larson gets my PowerPoint loaded if you would like.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. If you can start, that would be a good idea.

MR. CASIPIT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record my name is Calvin Casipit. I'm the subsistence staff biologist for the Forest Service based out of Juneau.

In your books, starting on Page 57 is a short briefing on how the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program works. I think most Council members....

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's 55.
MR. CASIPIT: 57. Oh, I'm sorry. The table of contents is wrong. The briefing actually starts on Page 57.

So what I wanted to do was just briefly go over this briefing paper. It talks about -- you know, it gives you a little overview of the program, tells you how we've managed the funding. We've broken up the State into six regions, and they're -- and that's how we do the funding. They go by those six regions.

Basically as far as the future goes, the next call for proposals will be -- the next chance for your Council to talk about call for proposals will be next fall. Well, winter 2014 and fall of 2015 Council meetings. We're on this two-year funding cycle, that's why you'll see them next year.

How the system works, and I'll get into it -- well, let's just go to my slides.

(Laughter)

MR. CASIPIT: So what I'm going to present here is just a real brief on how this program works, and kind of focusing on the work that my agency does, the Forest Service does with Alaska tribal governments.

Next slide. You can kind of see Alaska there broken up, but again I will kind of be focusing in on the Forest Service's areas, which is Southcentral and Southeast Alaska, specifically the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. Of course, these two Regional Councils have a lot to do with those Federal areas.

Next slide, please. This is where we get -- this is where our Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program comes about, it's specifically prescribed in Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Section .812 actually directs the Secretary to cooperate with State, Federal agencies, and others, local residents, tribes, in doing this work.

Next slide. Something -- a little bit about the program. I'm going to kind of quickly go over the cycle.
Hit the clicker there, Robert.

It was established in 2000 after expanded jurisdiction with the Katie John Rule.

Next. We are to supplement on-going research and monitoring efforts. It's not to replace anything or to replace agency funding for long-term projects. It's supposed to supplement on-going efforts.

Next one. We are to focus on capacity building with affected tribal governments in cooperation with the State and other Federal agencies.

Next one. And we've focused on stock statuses, trends, harvest monitoring, and traditional ecological knowledge studies, TEK.

Next one. A little bit about the program.

Go ahead, next one. We have this biannual call for proposals. Usually the first call comes out in the fall of -- it would be the odd-numbered years.

Next one. A proposal's submitted and it's analyzed by the Office of Subsistence Management, by their Fisheries Division, and then the Technical Review Committee evaluates those as well. I represent the Forest Service on the Technical Review Committee.

Next one. This Technical Review Committee recommends projects, and they're forwarded to the Regional Advisory Councils for their recommendation.

Next one. Those Regional Advisory Councils recommend projects and they are forwarded to the Federal Subsistence Board for final approval. So a recommendation goes to the RAC, the RAC looks at those recommendations, decides if that's right or not for their area, and then that's forwarded to the Board for the final approval.

Next slide. And then we at some point in the spring after that Board meeting, we will award contracts or agreements in the case of Department of Interior.
Next one. This focusing down on Forest Service, and you can kind of see the tracking in dollars going to tribal governments. Early on in the program we built up a pretty strong program, you know, pretty close to one and a half million dollars.

Next slide. And with budget cuts we see that slide down again. So we're down at the level at -- down below the level where we started back in 2000.

Next slide. This is a list of the various tribal governments that we work with in both Southcentral and Southeast Alaska.

Next one. I wanted to talk a little bit about some of this cooperative monitoring that we have been doing. It builds -- this one builds capacity in tribal governments for fisheries monitoring and management. And that's both on the State and Federal sides. We provide local jobs. It also gives tribes a seat at the table in regulatory decisionmaking, both at the State level and the Federal level. It provides real time estimates of abundance and subsistence harvests for in-season management by both the State and Federal governments.

Next slide. Again, we provide critical information to the Federal Subsistence Board and the Board of Fish in decisionmaking. And this is -- I'll talk more about this, but TEK ends up organically getting designed into executing completing these stock status and trends projects. It involves tribes, it builds trust between the agency and tribes.

Next slide. I have two case studies. The first one here is the Copper River Chinook fishwheel project. I think folks in Southcentral are pretty aware of this one. Next click. This is a mark and recapture project. Next slide. Fish are caught at the Baird Canyon, low in the river, and they're sampled and marked. Next slide. Later on up the river just below the bridge at Chitina, the fish are caught in another fish wheel and the marked fraction of those fish, marked to unmarked, is used to estimate the escapement.

Next slide. Along with that, they've been doing -- or have been doing -- next click, they've been including radio tagging to figure out distribution
and run timing. Also they did some DNA sampling for
genetic stock identification.

And then I wanted to -- wanted a
specific example of how TEK improved a stock status and
trends project.

Next slide. We had this fishwheel that
was traditionally designed. Native Village of Eyak is
the prime contractor on this. They basically carry out
the project from beginning to end. But basically they
had this fishwheel, and it's traditionally designed and
constructed and placed on the direction of an Ahtna
elder. And it outfished the other three fishwheels
four to one combined.

So, you know, here we had the
scientists come up with these big giant ones for the
lower river, they weren't working too good. In the
upper river, this Ahtna elder came in and said, hey, I
know how to make this work for you guys. And that's an
element of how TEK gets organically included in these
projects if you have this strong relationship with your
tribal government.

Okay. The next one. Oh, greatly
improved the statistically validity of the study. In
fact, that act alone of getting a better fishwheel on
the upper river to get the recaptures up saved that
project I would say.

Next one. I wanted to talk a little
bit about the Hetta Lake project. And I know Cathy
knows a lot about this, but here's -- it's down in
Hydaburg.

Next slide. You can see there -- oh.
You can see where Hydaburg is there. Oh, boy, I don't
have a slide, but Hydaburg is up towards the top of the
map there, right in the middle, and had a lake. If you
go -- there you go. There you go. And it had a lake
that's kind of straight across the peninsula over into
yeah, there you go. There's Hetta Lake right there.

So they have this -- thank you. Thank
you, Robert.

So you can see where -- just how well
it fits out on there on the south end of Prince of
Wales.
Next slide. So there were some traditional knowledge studies in Hydaburg that identified Hetta Lake as a primary subsistence sockeye system for the community. There were some past monitoring efforts in the early 80s. This project started out as a mark and recapture project and it moved to a weir in 2005 based on the community of Hydaburg saying we need to move to a weir. And then also because of the operation of the weir by Hydaburg Cooperative Association, the tribal government, they noticed right away a potential issue of over-harvest of the June component of the run, of the sockeye run at Hetta Lake.

Next one. You can kind of see that there. There we go. Is that it? Oh, okay. Blind myself why don't I.

(Laughter)

MR. CASIPIT: But you can see here we had -- you have these little bumps here at the beginning of the run of -- like most systems in Southeast, it's a bi-modal return. You have an earlier run that spawns in the cooler tributaries going into the lake, and then you get these bigger bumps of lake spawners. And Hydaburg noticed right away that this early run was not as numerous and this is actually the time when the people in Hydaburg preferred to fish, because they didn't have to sort as many kings basically.

Next slide. And so you can see from 2005 they ran this weir. You can kind of see the returns. We kind of had a bad return last year, because of several different reasons, but you can see the runs, they get a weir count, validated by mark and recapture every year. They get estimated harvest. I didn't have time to fill this all out, and then you get an actual estimated return which is just harvest plus weir counts. And this all comes from Hydaburg Cooperative Association.

Next slide. So I'll be happy to answer questions or should I talk more? I'm sure Cathy can add her own perspective about the project if she wanted to, too.

But I just wanted to finish this off by saying that I believe and I think my agency believes
that there's a real value to having these cooperative relationships with tribes to do this work. I found that, you know, as a contracting officer's representative for these projects, when the tribe really gets involved, and they're the ones that are the principal -- they hire the principal investigator, they're doing all the work, they're doing all the reporting, all the administrative work, it really builds the ability in these tribal governments, even small ones like Hydaburg, to really get involved in management in their own backyards, and it kind of honors the traditional way that tribes managed -- I don't even want to say managed. How tribes had engagement with the streams that they harvested from. It honors that traditional way of knowing and engaging with salmon.

And so I'll just kind of leave it at that. I'm happy in answering questions.

MR. BANGS: Thank you, Cal. Thanks for the presentation by the way. But my question is, is there any optimism in the future funding for this program.

(Laughter)

MR. CASIPIT: I'm eternally optimistic.

(Laughter)

MR. CASIPIT: You know, the only thing I can do is to spread this message around, how important it is to local communities and to the users to have this kind of work done, kind of spreading the gospel. I know I'm kind of preaching the choir now. But wherever I go, I always try to talk to people about the benefits of this kind of work, and how it means a lot to these small communities that -- you know, they're dealing with all kinds of things. They're dealing with competition from, you know, outside fisheries in the commercial fisheries. They're dealing with, you know, chronic unemployment in their communities. They're dealing with how to keep young people involved and want to come back and live in the communities.

Well, I think that projects like this has a way to address all those things. And getting
young people back. You can involve the young people on
the weir. You can involve the young people in the mark
and recapture study. You can get them charged up about
going to college and getting a degree and coming back
and working for their tribe or working for their
community.

You know, it gets tribes involved in
the decisionmaking processes, either the State Board of
Fish or, you know, the Federal Subsistence Board.

It helps with unemployment. It helps
with getting jobs in communities. And that's -- even
in harvesting, you know. It kind of takes money to buy
the bullets and get the nets and buy the rifle and the
gas for our boat. Well, if you've got a job like this,
that kind of supports that. So I think there's lots of
side benefits to this, and it's one of those things
that, you know, as long as I'm around, I'm going to be
pushing. So that's kind of how it is.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Cal, I was on the agenda planning
committee, and one of the reasons why we had asked for
this particular item to be on the joint session is one
of the questions we had were how funds are allocated
between regions, especially with it looks like most of
the FRMP funds come down through the Forest Service,
and so you have -- with the Tongass National Forest and
then the Chugach National Forest. And so could you
give a brief explanation of how those funds allocated
between Councils? And then also whether or not there's
a relationship between having wildlife assessments done
through funding.

MR. CASIPIT: Okay. That's a pretty --
I'll try to get to all those.

When we started the program, when we
had good budgets, the Forest Service funded virtually
all the FRMP in Southeast, and I believe probably about
half to 60 percent of the work in Southcentral. When
the big budget cuts started coming between '05 and '08,
basically what happened is that the Forest Service had
to drop out of funding projects in Southcentral.
That's why Forest Service funding dried up for that
So now today virtually the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, we fund the FRMP in Southeast, and then what happens in Southcentral is basically DOI.

The wildlife.....

(Laughter)

MR. CASIPIT: Steve said he's going to answer about wildlife.

MR. KESSLER: Thank you. Steve Kessler with the Forest Service, InterAgency Staff Committee, and the subsistence program leader for the Forest Service for the entire region.

I did want to get up and talk a little bit about wildlife, because I think that many of you who have been around since about 2005 know that back then the Forest Service developed a parallel monitoring program, which we called the Wildlife Resource Monitoring Program. And with the idea that on national forest lands we would be able to do something very similar to what we do for fisheries. And in 2005 the Forest Service had received a bump in funding to about $5.9 million. Just as reference right now we get about two and a half million dollars today.

So with that bump to $5.9 million, the Forest Service decided, and talking with the Councils, that the number 1 priority was to get some wildlife monitoring going. And so just like in the fisheries program, back then we developed a strategic plan for wildlife, and looked at the strategic priorities for wildlife monitoring for both of the forests. It involved both of the Regional Advisory Councils.

Soon, like within two years, our budgets started dropping precipitously. Before they dropped precipitously, we were able to find a number of different projects, both in Southcentral and Southeast. I think four projects -- three or four projects, I can't remember.
Now let's jump forward. Both of your Councils in your annual letters to the Federal Subsistence Board, last year I believe your annual letters requested that some sort of wildlife monitoring be started. And the response from the Federal Subsistence Board to both of your Councils was essentially the same, recognizing that the Forest Service had had a monitoring program for wildlife in the past, and that the Forest Service does have some flexibility if the Councils wish, to take some of the limited funds that we send right now on fish and move them over to wildlife.

The Department of Interior has less flexibility, because the money that they use for the monitoring program specifically comes from fisheries dollars. Ours is not specified for fisheries dollars. It's generally for subsistence purposes.

So if the Councils would like to see our limited dollars, you know, prioritized in some different way, so that a portion of those dollars went from fisheries over to wildlife, that would be possible to do. And it would be important for the Councils sort of to have that discussion, because we want to do what would be the most beneficial for the subsistence users and for the subsistence resources on the national forests.

So, Cathy, that was a long answer, but, you know, we do have some flexibility, and if the Councils together, since we have both Councils here, would like to look at some opportunities, I don't think we could make any changes probably for I would guess probably three years, because we just have gone through this fisheries monitoring cycle where we've identified projects for funding, which will fully fund using the national forest funds for the next, well, really four years, but we should have some flexibility at that point to move dollars for other purposes. But we don't really want to do that unless that's what these Councils want to do, because it's very limited money right now, and we have more projects on the fish end to fund than we have dollars.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Steve. I have one question on that. When it comes to subsistence use, I've seen some graphs on it, but I don't remember what it is, and you might, what is the percentage of subsistence food that comes from fish
versus the percentage of subsistence food that comes from game.

MR. KESSLER: Mr. Chairman. We really are not quite sure of the answer of that, but likely more comes from wildlife than from fish, because a lot of the fish on the national forests are actually harvested in State waters. So we do a lot of work in monitoring. Some of that benefits -- I mean, it all benefits subsistence users, but some that is -- the subsistence users may be harvesting more in State waters than in Federal waters.

So it's a little hard to figure out. I mean, if you want an exact answer, we'll work on that exact answer with all the caveats associated with it.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Steve.

Well, that's what I was wondering, because I was just wondering if that kind of proportion could be allocated to how the dollars were spent.

Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate you walking us through that process, because sometimes we don't always know, and I know that our Council, the Southeast Council in the past has spoken on whether or not we want to potentially allocate some of the funding that's available to go towards wildlife, and we always choose not to, because of the greater need for having fisheries wildlife funds.

What else could we be doing as Councils to continue to beat this drum that more money is needed for monitoring, and getting information that we need to be able to use in order to set regulations regarding the take of fish and wildlife.

MR. KESSLER: Ms. Needham, of course, we don't lobby, but, you know, it does take money to do that.

MS. NEEDHAM: Right.

MR. KESSLER: And the Southeast Council has in the past written a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture, you know, pointing out the importance of
the program and the importance of money for the
monitoring program, which the Secretary kindly
answered, responded to. I think that was about four
years ago if I remember correctly. And the Council can
choose to do what the Council wishes, but I'm not going
to advise the Council on how to go about doing that.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

MS. CAMINER: Mr. Chair.

Steve, so just so we all understand
this, so the Forest Service in Southeast provides some
money for fisheries monitoring studies as well as
wildlife studies, and in Southcentral provides money
for wildlife research or studies.

MR. KESSLER: Well, it's not exactly
that simple.

Under the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
Program for the last four years only funds have gone to
Southeast Alaska, Forest Service funds, you know,
allocated from Congress, and none have gone to
Southcentral.

There are other funds that both forests
got that can be used for sort of little projects that
don't come up to as high a -- to where it would be part
of a bigger strategic resource monitoring program. So,
for instance, I think, I wasn't here, but I think Milo
probably talked about how King's Bay was flown with a
small contract to the State of Alaska. So those were
dollars that are sort of equivalent to monitoring, find
out what's actually happening as far as moose there.
In Southcentral Milo has a number of different
projects, which he could talk to a little bit better,
to look at goat numbers and look at moose numbers, but
these are very small amounts of funds. And these
projects don't have the rigor of the Fisheries Resource
Monitoring Program, going through a technical review
committee and all that. So those funds are really
pretty limited, you know, on the order of maybe a
maximum in Southcentral of $20,000 a year. But they're
used for priority work where we really need to know
information.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions or
comments for our presenters.
CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Cal, I was -- I'll make a comment to something you said about some of the side benefits that come from having resource monitoring, small resource monitoring with tribes and small communities and stuff like that. The thing that I've seen more than anything else has been this feeling of ownership that develops in the people that are doing it, to the point where all of a sudden they're the best protectors of the fish around. They get pretty protective for the fish resources in a real fast hurry. And I think that's pretty neat, and I think that that ownership is something that -- and I don't mean ownership like you own it, but just the kids get interested, and they actually realize there's different fish and different parts of fish and stuff like that, and they become involved in it, and that ownership ends up they become very protective of the resource. And I think that that's something that's missing, is that protective of the resource.

Any other comments or questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

Carl, are you capable of presenting one more thing for us?

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: I asked him already.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Oh, you did. Good. Man, Bert just informed me that he out-guessed me.


MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First I'm just going to kind of go over kind of the overview of the nominations process. Obviously this is something that you're all familiar with personally, but to the benefit of anybody who may be listening on the teleconference.

Right now under both your charters and
under Secretarial regulations, the Council seats, the Council membership terms are for three years. And the way it's designed right now, we have an annual nominations process where roughly one-third of council seats are up for appointment or reappointment every year. And the additional, which was alluded to earlier during your training, is that there is a desire to have a diversity of viewpoints so there's a goal of having a certain amount of subsistence users who bring the subsistence perspective, and then also commercial/sport users to bring that perspective to your decisionmaking process.

How the process works is right now, and we've been doing it in recent years, is the nominations, the application process begins in the fall with the beginning of the fall meeting cycle, and then proceeds through -- we used to cut it off around mid February, but the last couple of years, and including this year, we've extended it through the end of the winter meeting cycle, so that allows for two different meeting cycles to have discussions and opportunities for outreach for new applications.

Part of what we do for outreach during that process is we work a lot, we use the opportunity of the public meetings, the message about the opportunity for applications, but then there's also a specific advertising push that happens. We use all the major regional papers for about a five-week period towards the end of a cycle. We do public radio announcements. We also have online ads on some of the online newspapers that are often used. And then also we even have an ad on GCI Channel 1, because we get a lot of feedback, and I listen to people who are applying, and I ask them, where did you hear about our Regional Advisory Council process, and they tell us. So we try to maximize as much as we can what is effective.

Then once the application process closes, the next step your Council coordinators in connection with Staff from the five different agencies that comprise the Federal Subsistence Management Program conduct interviews of the applicants. They interview references that are cited on the applications, and then make a recommendation to the InterAgency Staff Committee which then recommends to the Federal Subsistence Board. Then that Board meets somewhere about mid to late summer, and then the Board
makes its recommendations to the Secretaries. 

And that's where we've been running to some snags. As all of you know, this year and last year the appointment letters went out late. As a matter of fact, even today, even though terms expired on December 2nd, 2013, even today we sill have eight appointment decisions we're waiting to hear from that the final decision has not been made in D.C.

And we're trying to figure out what's going on with that process and what we can do to improve it. But one of the things that goes on, and this is when we get into where we're talking about how they make the sausage, is that once those names are forwarded to Washington, D.C., there is a vetting process that is undertaken in D.C. where they look at people's backgrounds, and they make calls to ask questions about that might show up in people's backgrounds, and then people are either cleared for appointment or not cleared, and that is one of those things that happens that we have little control over. But I'm trying to work at understanding how it works.

One other thing that you'll see, if you go to -- the materials for this start on Page 61, but in all reality, what I want to bring to your attention is Page 63. You'll see a table that shows the number of applications by region over the years. And you'll be seeing that the numbers of those applications have been dropping steadily over the years, and particularly in the last, you know, five to seven years or so.

We have a particular problem with applications in the northern regions, so North Slope, Northwest Arctic, Eastern and Western Interior, and then also Seward Peninsula. And Southeast, however, and Southcentral often have very robust numbers of applications.

One of the things we rely on a lot is kind of the unofficial outreach. What can we do to improve outreach other than through those advertising methods. And one of our greatest resources is you. You are all actively engages in your communities, and hopefully you know some people who you think would make break additions to your Councils, or the tribal governments that you affiliate with, they may know someone who they think would be a good addition to the Council. And there is the opportunity for you to
encourage people and suggest that they apply.

But also an under-utilized aspect of this process is people can be nominated to serve on a Regional Advisory Council. They themselves do not have to submit the application. It could be one of your tribal councils or organizations or any group you're affiliated with may know someone who they think would be good, and they can submit a nomination for somebody to serve. Now, last year out of 73 applications, only five of them were actually nominations. So this is an area where we could improve on getting more people actively involved. And I know from my own personal experience, and I know other people have said this to me as well, it's really nice to be asked. People appreciate it that their knowledge and their experience is respected to the point where they're being asked to come and serve.

That's kind of the highlights of kind of the overall I had for you on the nominations process, and how we're currently conducting outreach. And there are definitely ways for us to improve.

And I'm particularly concerned about this year, because as of yesterday, we've only received 20 applications total for all 10 Regional Advisory Councils. Only three for Southeast Region, and I think we're up to four for Southcentral Region. And I know that there are some sitting Council members who have not yet submitted their applications for reappointment. Now, perhaps maybe you feel like you've done your time, but if you're still interested in serving, hopefully we'll see your application soon.

But it's definitely a concern that I have that these applications are dropping. It's also a concern that I have with the process. Sometimes it is confusing. With our current annual nominations process, right now we -- even in a good year, if we do get those appointments in early December, we're still in the middle of an application period, so we have this crossover where we have a new nominations process that hasn't concluded yet, and yet the next one is already starting to open up. If we open up applications in August and it goes through March, somewhere in the middle of that, the previous appointment period has ended.

There are a variety of suggestions that
I have identified as to how we can improve our nominations and appointment process. And those are going to be presented to the Federal Subsistence Board this year, and then hopefully maybe at your fall meeting cycle you might have a discussion on how we can change our current nominations and appointment process to improve it.

But at this time I am happy to answer any questions that any of the Council members may have.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Questions. Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

During the lag time on these reappointments, the ones that are coming very late, is there any mechanism in place to have people who currently hold those seats continue to hold those seats until a reappointment is made, past the December timeframe.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Through the Chair. There is currently not a mechanism in place; however, I do know that the Western Interior Council at its recent meeting suggested an amendment to your charters to provide that if a sitting Council members is not reappointed -- or there is that lag in appointments like you've identified, that that sitting council member would stay appointed so that there was not a lag in membership. And that if necessary for the Council, it can still conduct its business until such time as the appointment letter is actually issued.

MS. NEEDHAM: Follow up.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: So Western Interior's letter that I had a chance to read and hopefully other people did, too, and it was distributed. But what would it take -- I mean, to have the charters amended? That's what -- I mean, you're saying that's essentially what it's going to take to do it, is action from other Councils to support Western Interior's asking that? Is that something that our Councils can consider doing if we support that idea.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, the Western Interior's suggestion is pretty new, and you're one of
the first Councils that's really had a chance to respond to their letter, because again it's fairly recent. There would have to be a charter amendment. Basically all of the issues regarding your membership status, how long your terms are, how often there's a review process, how long you retain your seats, it's all either in the charter or both in the charter and in Secretarial regulation, which means some aspects of that can't be changed by the Federal Subsistence Board itself. It would actually have to be done by the Secretaries.

Additionally, amendments to charters, if you were to say amend your charter now, they have to be renewed every two years. So I have determined that you can amend your charters out of cycle, but still that amendment would only be effective until the next renewal date. And you just had your charters renewed in December of 2013, so if any amendments happen within the next year, there would still have to be another part of renewing that charter by December of 2015.

And also I'll note there are FACA limitations as to what the charters -- the Councils themselves can change about their charters. You can change the name of your Council, you can change the number of members on your Council, if you wanted to go from 10 to 8 or 10 to 13. And you can also change your process for Council member removal. But any other aspects about changing the charters would have to come from OSM or the Federal Subsistence Board as a recommendation to the Secretaries.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions for Carl.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl, one of the things I've always wondered about, you know, we seek input from Council members for nominations, but at the same time we tried to keep diversity. And if you take a look at Southeastern right here, you don't see any two people from the same community. They're all from a different community. And it's pretty hard, you know, when you're trying to do that, and to think of putting in your name as another Council member, because that's two of you from the same place. And the way it is, we have a big enough area that to diversify, it's pretty hard to give every place representation.
So I know I've hesitated myself. I've had a few people that I thought would be good to get started in this, because I really think that what we really need to do, and I look at all of us around here, and there's an awful lot of us that have got hair that's just about the same color as mine. And, you know, I'm looking at the ones that I would want to be putting on here, they're 25, they're 27, they're 32, they're that age right there, because that's what's going to be needed.

But at the same time, I don't want to put them on if it means that that's two of us from the same place, and then I don't have to be there any more, you know.

Carl.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. Mr. Chair. That's an excellent point. And one of the things that the InterAgency Staff Committee does consider in its deliberative process is geographical diversity. And often we don't get geographical diversity in the applications that come in. I definitely want to recognize your comment about the Southeast Council, because the Southeast Council really is unique in that they're pretty much -- all of the Regional Councils with the exception of Southeast has at least one community with at least two members from that community. And so they're very well distributed geographically.

Your region is very centered to the eastern side, the Wrangell-St. Elias, Prince William Sound, Kenai Peninsula region, but you have absolutely no representation from the western part of your region. And what you identify is, you know, knowing people in your community and being torn between recommending them versus wanting more geographical diversity is a good point. But if you have also broader contacts within your region, perhaps maybe someone in Southcentral Council knows somebody from the Cantwell area. Maybe encourage them to apply. But, yeah, definitely there are some tensions, and there's definitely some holes that we can hopefully find a way to fill those.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Frankly, Ralph, I would like to see another person from Yakutat on this
Council. And the reason is because, you know, I don't know how long I'm going to be on here. I'll stay as long as, you know, I'm healthy and able and willing to. But if for some reason I have to leave, you know, or kick the bucket or something like that, you know, it would be nice to have somebody from my community on here.

And here's the reason why. This Council -- what are you laughing about.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: This Council appoints me to be on the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission, and I think, you know, that any member could serve in that position, but I think they do that, because I'm from Yakutat, and Wrangell-St. Elias begins on the other side of Yakutat Bay. And I think it would be, you know, a good thing if we can have, you know, somebody from Yakutat actually serving, appointed by this Council to serve on the Wrangell-St. Elias, although they can appoint somebody else whenever they want, you know, but I just feel that way, you know. It's okay I think to have more than one person from a community on the Council. Younger people for me, so that we can train them.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, see, that was the next point I was going to get at. Now, see, I don't disagree with Bert that it would not be bad to have two people from the same community on the Council, but I would like to see, and I know funding is a problem and everything else. But like I said, I see a lot of us that, well, I'll just say Bert and I anyhow, have our hair matches each other pretty good. And what we really need is we need some way to have an apprenticeship program. We need some way that, okay, Bert's from Yakutat. He should be -- there should be some way that he can have one of these young people, that means somebody under 50, you know as an apprentice or to sit in as an alternate or something like that. Because somewhere along the line we're going to need to bring some young people into this, or our numbers of people applying are going to go down, our interest is going to get down. And they're the ones, you know, I don't know about the rest of you, but most of us I think are in at least, I'll say at my age, I won't comment on Bert's age.
(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But the only reason we're even doing this is for our kids and our grandkids, you know. I mean it's -- I'm not too worried about whether I get another moose or another deer or get to go take this or go take that. But I sure want my kids to, and I want my grandkids to. And maybe their grandkids, you know. And from that standpoint, somehow or another we have to figure out a way to bring young people into this program. And whether it's as apprentices, whether it's -- I've tried to.....

Mike, I've got a couple kids out there I've tried to talk them into sitting into this meeting. I wish I would have corralled them before the last reports we had, and had them sit there, because it applied to them. The sea otters applied to them, the National Marine Fisheries applied to them. They need to know that. Somehow we've got to bring them in. And somehow we've got to make them feel welcome to be in.

Mr. Bangs.

MR. BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've been on the Council now for a little over 10 years. And my first meeting was in Sitka, and I recall at the end of the meeting asking the group, where are the children. And since then I've always thought there should be a mechanism to be able to maybe have a student seat on the Council, you know, where you have somebody in high school that's recommended by the school. I don't know, it's just a thought that what you're saying is right along those lines, because I think that's crucial to the program is to introduce younger people into it. And I don't know how the OSM would feel about a student seat on a Council, but I personally think it would be a good experience for them as well as us to get their perspective, too.

Thank you.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to go a little further with Mike's comment. And I think if we had a student seat from each community we're meeting in, maybe we wouldn't have to take them out of the community. That might work a
little better.

MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Something the Regional Councils could consider when they come up with the meeting schedule is trying to keep it more a diverse rotation throughout the communities to develop some for the Councils. Granted, funding and ability to get to some of the more remote locations might be more difficult than for others, but I just think trying to expose ourselves to more communities would be a good way to get the word out.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Ken.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think the ways a lot of the students work is that they -- like the organized village where I come from, Kake, could get some grand funding to send a student with the representative, and possibly get training, and just alternate them if they have to, but get them interested and that point. But we do need to get the information out there, because I agree with you that, you know, some of us probably won't be here, you know, within the next four or five years. But I, myself, I'll go back and I'll talk to the Organized Village of Kake about possibly getting a grant to send up students to this, and then, you know, pay for -- so OSM doesn't have to worry about it, but pay for their room and their -- I don't know about meeting fees, but their travel.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Yeah, we did try what -- or we were doing what Mr. Yeager was suggesting here, but with the Board wanting us to have our meetings in hub areas, you know, that kind of shot that down. We used to go to Hoonah, we've had a meeting in Kake, you know, and I don't remember Angoon.

MS. PHILLIPS: We met in Angoon,

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: We did? Okay. I know
we hit every one of them then.

And, you know, one of the things that we did, I know since I've been chairman, is I've always encouraged the schools to send kids to the meetings, whether it's just, you know, a period, you know, a short time, just so that they can get an idea of what this is all about.

I really admire Sitka a few years ago, they were sending students up to the Federal Subsistence Board meeting, and then they came to our meetings when we were there. And, you know, if we can get more and more of that working, then I think we might have a better chance of getting more people interested. Right now I know it's difficult to get, you know, people submitting applications, because -- I don't know why, but anyhow.....

I don't have mine in, but I'll get it. I'll probably put it in your back pocket before you leave.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl and then Pat.

MR. JOHNSON: I just want to reflect a little bit on some of the comments I've been year. What I'm hearing here I've also heard from other Councils as well. One of the northern Councils, and I think maybe even Northwest Arctic, also suggested the idea of having a student mentorship program where there could be a student seat on the Council.

And just one idea off the top of my head would be having that person could sit at a table as a non-voting member and still participate and learn from the program.

We have tried some pilot things in different communities in connections with the meetings to engage -- to do presentations at the schools in conjunction with the Council meeting. And also we've had success in taking advantage of local radio programming, and trying to get the local public radio station to take a chunk of time out of its programming during the Council meeting. We had in Kotzebue a good three or four hours of the Council meeting broadcasted simultaneously, so it went out on the radio, and it was also on the web streaming. So that gave another chance for the community to get exposed to the Council and its
I think there's a lot of opportunity to explore a lot of these different options. And definitely it will be one thing I will be encouraging our new subsistence outreach coordinator to work on with the Council coordinators in trying to enhance opportunity to get youth interested and involved in the meetings, you know, in connection with school, or having students come to the Council meeting, which we've also seen before.

So I just wanted to reflect and comment on that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pat.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would encourage you to ask those people in your community to go ahead and apply. I mean, we've had two members from Sitka on the RAC. We have two members from Juneau on the RAC. We've had two members from Ketchikan on the RAC. I mean, it's like go ahead, let them apply.

But what I want to say is that the application process has gotten really extensive. I mean, from the time that I first applied to know, I mean it's really -- it's almost a barrier I think to some people applying. You've got to some up with people who support you, you know, you've got to give names. You've got to write an essay about all your subsistence experience, you know. So, I mean, for me, I can handle that. It's not a problem to me.

But also when we brought in FRMP, people in the field come to our RAC meetings and give us, you know, their -- tell us about their Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. Those are young people. They get excited. They like -- they're watching us, and they go back to the communities. And even what Mr. Yeager was saying, is that, you know, when we go to the rural communities, people get excited about coming to our meeting and seeing what we're going.

I think it's one reason why the Federal Subsistence Board has Anthony Christianson as a Board business.
member is because of our RAC going to his community and
seeing our interaction.

And as part of, you know, building
capacity, and then maybe there should be a consultation
back to the tribe, saying, hey, we need young people.
When you're going your consultation on the phone, say,
hey, we need people to apply, you know, maybe someone
from your tribal natural resources department could
apply. I mean, just give it back to them, let them
know we're in need of applications.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: I have a question.

Our school is going to have a career day. I think it's
in April, and where they bring in, you know,
businesses, Government agencies and everything, and
they talk about jobs. And I was wondering -- I always
thought it would be a good idea if, you know, the
Regional Advisory Council had a workshop table set up
there. And maybe you can answer a question, you know,
how would we go about doing that, and who would attend.
Or who would be there, you know, to do it from our
side.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Greg.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: I just want to make a
quick comment. My bladder can't take much more.

(Laughter)

MR. ENCELEWSKI: And I've got to go.

But, you know, this is a very universal problem. And
I'll tell you, in the community, in Ninilchik, it's
extremely hard to get the youth involved. And there's
some reasons for it, and there's some good things. You
know, the tribal council there has employed just about
every youth and good person around. They've got 40 on
their tribal payroll actually.

And one of the things that I see in a
lot of these communities is disparity because of the
fishery and moose and the hunting resources. And what
I'm getting by that is, you know, we have people on
this RAC here from the Southcentral and Kenai that are
every bit as much of a subsistence user as I am that
are not qualified. We have a shortage. We have James
from another area that is not qualified. So people
lose an interest in it is where I'm going.

And we don't have the moose, we don't
have the opportunity, we don't have the kings. We lost
our clams. We lost our crab. We lost our shrimp. The
opportunities, you know. And to get them involve and
to rebuild us and make it work is tough. And working
from the AFN side and other sides, that they want
change. People want change. They want dual
management; they want to have a say so at the table.

So I'm just expressing that. It's an
issue that we all need to work on.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Greg.

And, Carl, I guess somehow or another I
missed what I was trying to get across, too.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And that was, I
listened to Bert, and I listened to everybody, and
they're all talking about these young people that are
in high school and in school. When I was talking about
young people, I meant those 30 and 40 and 50 year olds.

(Laughter)

MS. PHILLIPS: Me, too.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I wasn't talking about
17-year-olds, you know.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But we do need to get
the real young like that in, because they're the
future. But right at the moment what we need is we
need those 20 and 30 and 40-year olds. We need the
ones that are actually active out there and actually
doing things and have the energy and everything, and
can see the use of the resource. And that's where I'm
seeing we're missing it. And I don't mean that to an
insult to those of you that are 40 and 50, but I mean, it's just those are the ones that I'd like to see us somehow have an outreach to, so that, you know, that we get those 20 and 30 and 40-year-olds in here. And then we can train -- or at least the high schools can at least train for it. But what we need is we need those voting age young people that can actually make decisions on the Councils.

MR. JOHNSON: I wanted to respond to Bert's question. I think he left the room.

(Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: But I'll open this out to all of you who were thinking of the younger youth. If there are opportunities in your communities where you feel like it would be helpful to have a presentation about the Federal Subsistence Program, whether it would be a table, explaining about the Federal Subsistence Program, or a table where there might be information about careers in resource management, let your Council coordinators know, because, you know, again we do talk a lot about this tight budget environment, but there might -- you never know if there might be an opportunity for someone to come to your community to do a presentation. Donald Mike, your Council coordinator, has done -- has been requested to do presentations. He did one out in Dillingham a year before last to a school, and went and talked about the Federal subsistence process and the Regional Advisory Councils.

So there could be an opportunity. We just need to learn about it, and all of you are our greatest resources of information for what's happening in your communities.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Carl.

Any other questions. Frank.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

What is the process. You said you can nominate a person. So would the nomination be coming from the tribe, or where would it come from. And then after that, you know, because when we went through the question and all this kind of stuff, you know, so if I nominate someone, do they have to go through all that.
MR. JOHNSON: I'll answer both of your questions. First, the nomination can come from anyone. It can come from the tribe, it could come from an individual. And they would use the exact same application form that you yourself filled out to seek membership on the Council. There's a line where it can designate that you're nominating someone and who the person is making the nomination. And, of course, it's always a good idea to let that person know and to consult with them about your nomination, because we have in the past had people decline nominations, and while I didn't ask, I suspect that it was because those people weren't consulted when the nomination was made. And then to answer you other question, yes, the person who is nominated would then be called by a member of the interagency nominations panel to ask questions, which kind of ties in with what was said earlier about how complicated these applications are. Really there's a reason why we do the dual process of the applications as well as the interviews. When you hear the questions, they're essentially the same questions, but what we're trying to do is respond to people who share information differently. So they may fill out their application in a very simple and kind of cursory manner, and really the most important thing for us to know is who they are and how we can contact them, and do they have references. They can fill out very minimal information on the rest of that application, and then it's up to the interview process to then learn more about them, and understand who they are and what their knowledge is of subsistence resource information.

One of the things that we are stuck with is that the form we use for the applications has to be approved by the OMB, the Office of Management and budget, and it's a three-year process to review those forms. (Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: So we just had our new form updated in 2013. But one of the things I've had some minimal discussion with that I would like to pursue in the next -- in the interim before we have to approve our forms again, is put together a small committee of people, probably individuals who have served on the interagency nominations panels and are
experienced with interviewing people, but I would also
welcome Council members to join in, and that is to see
if I can design the questions that are better suited to
be answered from the perspective of a subsistence user,
that takes into account cultural differences and
different ways of communicating, so
that it's not as burdensome, and also not as intrusive,
because again we run into different issues and
cultures, and not only how they communicate, but
whether or not it's appropriate to ask certain
questions of you. We don't talk about that; I don't
brag about how much fish and wildlife I take, or all
that sort of thing.

So we want to have a process that's
better for everyone, and that's something I would like
to pursue in the interim before we have to have our
next form approved.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Gloria.

MS. STICKWAN: I just want to say we
have a career day in our region, too. So that would be
a good opportunity if someone could come out and give a
presentation or put posters, or you know, whatever.

The other thing I was thinking about
was Facebook. A lot of people in our region are on
Facebook. We have an Ahtna Facebook. And if you can
just -- I know how to -- I personally don't know how on
Facebook put the RAC application onto my Facebook so I
can share it. I would do that if I could. But I do
send it out to all the villages. And I've been talking
to Cantwell and they have been talking to a young man
there who's in his 20s that hopefully will apply. I
hope.

MR. JOHNSON: And actually thank you
for bringing up Facebook. The Federal Subsistence
Management Program is itself new to Facebook, but we do
have a facebook page now, and we are trying to start to
use it as an effective communication tool. And we
recently ask -- we have one admin person who updates
that and posts information to it. And one of the
things we did ask him to do is to provide updates on
how much time is left in the application process, to
have a link on our Facebook page to where on the OSM
website you can find the application.

So the easy way is if you can just post
a link to where it is on the OSM website, or if you can maybe get your organization to like the Federal Subsistence Management Program's Facebook page, then that way that can be a way of connecting the information that's on the Federal Subsistence Program Facebook page to what is going on on your Facebook page.

Now also about the career day, let Donald know.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just had one question, and that was, some of the Council had been reapplying for years and having to go through the whole process of filling everything out. Sometimes it seems kind of cumbersome. I just was wondering why we -- all our things probably haven't changed a whole lot, and to have to fill out the complete form is sometimes I think a little much.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, there's kind of two answers in that for me. One, the reason why incumbents fill out the same application as everyone else is that the individuals who serve on the interagency nominations panel are instructed to teach all -- treat all applicants equally. So we don't have a system in place where you have a different application, because the idea is to treat everybody who's applying in an equal way.

But, again, you don't have to have a full War and Peace essay on your application. Essentially, you know, fill it out to the best of your ability, but if there's a lot more information that you want to share, then you can save it for the interview and you don't have to spend as much time on the application filling out everything. Maybe even just use it as an opportunity to provide updates if anything's changed in the last three years since you were previously appointed.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

I think it's about time to start thinking of wrapping this up.

MS. CAMINER: I'll be quick. It's not
Because of OSM's limited funding, if you're having career days, or if your organization is having a meeting, you most likely have local Staff, a lot of them are in the audience here, who could speak to what the RACs do, what the Federal Subsistence Program is. Invite them to come and try to explain and help recruit new members that way, and then we have no travel costs.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Michael.

MR. BANGS: Just real quick. I think we'd have a lot more applications if we took more field trips,

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Carl, do you have anything more you'd like to share with us before we break.

(Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: No, I just wanted to thank the Council members for the opportunity to discuss this with you. I've heard a lot of great ideas today, and hopefully if we do get some specific recommendations before the Councils this fall, that could be another opportunity for us to discuss ways of improving participation in this process.

So thank you.

MR. LARSON: I've got some housekeeping stuff I want to.....

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Bert.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Okay. I think it's time for us to wind up now, but I want my Council members to know that we're going to start at 8:00 o'clock tomorrow morning here, and we're going to work diligently until 1:00, at which time, you know, Southcentral will want to come in and take over, you know, 30 seconds after we're gone. So be here at 8:00 and Robert has some housekeeping issues to talk with
you about.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Let me finish what I was going to say then. He said they're getting out at 1:00. I want my Council out in the hall here at 12:45.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And so we will be ready to come in and start when they walk out.

Okay. Robert.

MR. LARSON: Thank you.

I would like to mention that tomorrow this is not our room. We are meeting in the room next door. It's the smaller room.

Tomorrow the Southeast Council is going to hear a discussion of the extended jurisdiction petition issues. The Southcentral Council is perfectly willing, and they might find it pretty darn interesting to see where we are in that process. So we're extending -- the petition is to extend Federal jurisdiction into the waters of Chatham Straits. And so we'll have an update on that at noon tomorrow. Time certain.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Time certain at noon?

MR. LARSON: Yes. On Thursday we have left in our agenda delegation of authority, the climate change, food security, and the Board action on the FRMP projects, and a Partners briefing, and a call for proposals. We also have the agenda reports to go through on Thursday. These are all as joint meetings.

At that time we have two time certain presentations. We'll do the delegation of authority at 8:00, we'll start with that. And at 10:00 we'll do climate change.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So you're saying the meeting starts Thursday at 8:00 in the morning, right?

MR. LARSON: That's my understanding, yes.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. I just want
everybody to understand that. 8:00 o'clock Thursday morning. And it's 8:00 o'clock tomorrow morning for you guys.

MR. LARSON: Yes. And if we could have the Southeast Council members stop by and visit with me before you leave the room today, that would be great.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I guess what we will do is -- Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On our joint session on Thursday, the State Division of Subsistence would like to address both Councils in the joint session. They want to present a research project to both Councils. So we may have to add that to the agenda on Thursday.

And I'd like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Dan Dunaway from Bristol Bay Council for attending the joint meeting today.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you Donald.

Judy.

MS. CAMINER: Well, Mr. Chair, Thursday's agenda, we have a lot of agency reports scheduled. We still have quite a bit on the agenda, so we'll ask everyone to keep it as brief and thorough as possible.

CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Thank you.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And with that, we will recess for today.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

STATE OF ALASKA

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

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 2 through 92 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHCENTRAL/SOUTHEAST FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 11th day of March in Anchorage, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 15th day of April 2014.

______________________________
Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/14