

1 SOUTHCENTRAL FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME II

8
9 Anchorage, Alaska
10 March 17, 2011
11 8:30 a.m.

12
13
14 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

15
16 Ralph Lohse, Chairman
17 Lee Adler
18 Doug Blossom
19 Judy Caminer
20 Tom Carpenter
21 Greg Encelewski
22 Robert Henrichs
23 Chuck Lamb
24 Gloria Stickwan

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28 Regional Council Coordinator, K.J. Mushovic

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 3/17/2011)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We'll call this March meeting of the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council back into session. We'll try to take off where we left off except we are also waiting to make contact with the person that's got the report on the Chisana Caribou Herd and if that comes through.....

MS. CELLARIUS: I haven't been able to get a hold of her, but I can do it or wait and do one other thing.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We'll do another thing and if you get a hold of her, if that comes through, let us know and we'll probably be at some place we can break.

MS. CELLARIUS: But I'm prepared to do the report.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. If we don't get a hold of her, we'll just do the report in order then.

MS. CELLARIUS: But I need to leave by 10:45.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Oh, that's right. Okay. Let's do it now then and that would take care of it. Because if you have to leave at 10:45, that's not very much time. Was there somebody else that had to leave other than Mr. Henrichs? No, there's nobody making a report or anything that has to go any place.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay.

MS. CELLARIUS: And I could be back after lunch, but we don't know how long.....

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, let's take it now and then we won't have to worry about whether you make it back or not.

MS. CELLARIUS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, my name is Barbara Cellarius.

1 I'm the subsistence coordinator for Wrangell/St. Elias
2 National Park and Preserve. You should have a number of
3 documents from the Park. They're all paperclipped
4 together. There's a report that's got -- it says March
5 2011 wildlife report. There's a Copper Basin subsistence
6 update that has a photograph of the Copper River on it.
7 Then there's another black and white printed document
8 that says Nabesna ORV draft EIS.

9

10 My intention is to talk primarily about
11 the Chisana Caribou Herd and there was a question at the
12 last meeting about the sheep survey, but if there's
13 anything else in those reports that you want me to talk
14 about, I will do my best to do so.

15

16 The other thing that I would mention is
17 that you have a report from Denali National Park and it
18 has names and contact information in case you have
19 questions about that report.

20

21 So do you want me to start with a little
22 background on the Chisana Caribou Herd Management Plan or
23 do you just want me to launch into where we are?

24

25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, Lee doesn't
26 probably have any background on it, but I think the rest
27 of us pretty much have background on it. Maybe just a
28 real short summary.

29

30 MS. CELLARIUS: Okay. The Chisana
31 Caribou Herd is a small caribou herd that ranges between
32 Alaska and the Yukon. A decline in the 1990s led to a
33 captive rearing program in early years of the last
34 decade. As part of that captive rearing program there
35 was a discussion of the need for development of a
36 management plan for the herd. There have also been a
37 couple rounds of proposals that have been put in to open
38 up harvest on the herd. In 2008, the Board of Game did
39 not pass a proposal pending the development of the
40 management plan in 2010.

41

42 There were proposals from the Upper
43 Tanana Forty Mile AC both to the Board of Game and the
44 Federal Subsistence Board. The Board of Game proposal
45 was approved. The proposals to the Federal Subsistence
46 Board was deferred pending the 2010 census and the
47 completion of the plan. So that's what I'm going to sort
48 of bring you up to date on is those two things.

49

50 Just a couple words about the plan. It's

1 largely about monitoring and research, but there's also
2 a discussion that the conditions under which we could
3 have a harvest of the herd, how large that harvest could
4 be and how the animals are allocated between Alaska and
5 the Yukon in terms of harvest.

6
7 We did some public outreach on the plan
8 in the U.S. the last spring and fall. That was a
9 cooperative effort between Park Service, Fish and Game
10 and Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge.

11
12 So the planning group has recently had
13 two conference calls. This is an international planning
14 group involving members. The U.S. folks are in P.S.,
15 Fish and Game, Tetlin Refuge and then Yukon Environment
16 and some First Nation groups in Canada. These conference
17 calls have been to work towards finalizing the plan and
18 I'll note that we invited Gloria Stickwan to participate
19 in those two calls and on one of the calls we also had
20 the Cheesh'Na environmental coordinator.

21
22 One of the things we did at these
23 meetings was we reviewed the results of the 2010 census
24 and they are presented on this table. They're the bottom
25 line. The population estimate is just below 700 animals.
26 When you look at the confidence intervals from the last
27 several population estimates, the conclusion is that the
28 population is stable and the cow/calf -- well, the calf,
29 cow and bull ratios are good and above the recommended
30 minimums for a harvest. So the conclusion was that the
31 herd does meet the conditions where a limited harvest
32 could occur.

33
34 We also talked about modifications to the
35 plan based on public review and I'll just give you a few
36 of the highlights. We had several comments about needing
37 to have a minimum herd size before harvest could occur in
38 the plan and in response to that we're going to add some
39 discussion about why the managers feel that sex ratios
40 and calf recruitment are better indicators of the herd
41 status than simply a single number.

42
43 There were also several comments about
44 traditional ecological knowledge. So we're adding as a
45 future research goal on traditional ecological knowledge,
46 so that's going to be both collecting new information and
47 compiling some already collected information. There were
48 some interviews that were done in the Northway and Yukon
49 areas earlier, so we're going to try to track down that
50 information as well. The Park Service and Tetlin Refuge

1 are talking about trying to get to Northway sometime this
2 year to do some additional interviews.

3

4 There was interest in having some
5 additional historic population information in the plan,
6 so that's being added and then First Nation and tribal
7 councils are going to be added as stakeholders who are
8 involved in review and revision of the plan as we move
9 forward. The fact that there wasn't much in the way of
10 tribal council involvement up to this point was one of
11 the concerns. We're going to clarify that in the updated
12 plan.

13

14 At the Eastern Interior RAC meeting we
15 heard that the Upper Tanana Forty Mile AC -- actually, I
16 should back up. Basically we've talked about
17 modifications to the plan based on the public review. We
18 expect in the next couple of weeks to receive a copy of
19 the revised plan so that everybody can take a look at it
20 before it gets signed off on. So we're very very close
21 to the completion of the plan. The lead on that is being
22 taken by the Canadians, so we're basically at this point
23 waiting to receive something back from them.

24

25 At the Eastern Interior RAC meeting, we
26 heard that the Upper Tanana Forty Mile AC is working on
27 a new proposal. They were the proponent of the proposal
28 that was deferred by the Federal Board this last wildlife
29 meeting. Also note that I've been providing technical
30 assistance to Cheesh'Na on a couple of proposals on this
31 herd as well. One is a C&T proposal and one is a harvest
32 proposal. Our fall SRC meeting is going to be in
33 Northway, so folks from Northway will have an opportunity
34 to comment on these proposals and that's October 6th and
35 7th.

36

37 So that's what I have to say about
38 Chisana Caribou.

39

40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Barbara, on the plan
41 that they're working on, this is a plan for future growth
42 and possible take and what level they want the herd to be
43 sustained at?

44

45 MS. CELLARIUS: Hopefully you received
46 a copy of this document about a year ago and it largely
47 talks about research and monitoring and how frequently
48 we're going to do what kinds of monitoring activities.
49 It says that, you know, we need -- now it will say that
50 we need to collect additional traditional ecological

1 knowledge, talks about understanding genetics and health
2 and things like that. It also has some discussion of
3 when a harvest might occur, what kind of conditions we
4 would look for in terms of population status,
5 particularly calf/cow ratio and bull/cow ratio and how
6 large the harvest could be. It would be 2 percent of the
7 total population bulls only equally divided between U.S.
8 and Canada in terms of the quota.

9

10 So those are the kinds of things that are
11 discussed in the plan.

12

13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So in the current
14 plan being taken there is a provision in there for what
15 they would consider an acceptable harvest, what threshold
16 for that harvest would be and how the harvest would be
17 split.

18

19 MS. CELLARIUS: Yes.

20

21 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. You said that was
22 2 percent of the total population or 2 percent of the
23 total bull population?

24

25 MS. CELLARIUS: Two percent of the total
26 population, but the harvest would be bulls only.

27

28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay.

29

30 MS. CELLARIUS: And everybody agrees that
31 that's fairly conservative and that it could happen
32 without a negative impact on the herd. There would also
33 be a plan for continued monitoring. If the conditions
34 fell below the parameters discussed in the plan, then you
35 would close the harvest.

36

37 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So there is a
38 threshold.

39

40 MS. CELLARIUS: But it's not simply a
41 population number. We're looking for sort of some trends
42 and different parameters. So that's where we are with
43 that.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any questions on that
46 from Barbara on the Chisana Caribou Herd because that's
47 something that will be on our table again. I'm sure of
48 that.

49

50 MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah, I know of a couple

1 of proposals.

2

3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

4

5 MS. CAMINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Last
6 year when this was presented to the Regional Council
7 there was a very lively discussion and I'm glad to see
8 that there were some accommodations based on the comments
9 of this Council and glad to hear that Gloria and others
10 were involved. So thank you for doing that.

11

12 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy.
13 Barbara, do you want to finish what you've got then.

14

15 MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah. So at the last
16 meeting on the back page of the handout, the wildlife
17 handout, there's a map of the park and it shows where we
18 did the sheep survey and there was a question about the
19 survey transects that are shown in red. I have found the
20 answer to that question and it is that the transects are
21 computer generated and some of them were too high in
22 elevation. Basically it was places -- they were high
23 glaciers where you weren't going to find sheep, so they
24 did not survey those transects because it wasn't sheep
25 habitat.

26

27 The blue transects were not done last
28 year. They had really bad weather. There was about a
29 10-day period when we didn't know if Judy was going to be
30 flying or not because the weather was so bad, but they
31 hoped to get those transects done this summer.

32

33 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Out of the transects
34 that they did do, do they have any indication of what the
35 trend in the sheep population is?

36

37 MS. CELLARIUS: I would have to get back
38 to you on that. I have not heard. I think if we had
39 results she would have put them in the report, so I think
40 she doesn't have any results yet, but I expect that we'll
41 have that for you -- have something for you at your next
42 meeting.

43

44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Because, you know, the
45 consensus from local people and I think the biologists in
46 Glennallen is that the Western Park sheep population is
47 pretty well crashed for lack of a better way of putting
48 it. I'm just wondering if they had any indication at all
49 on that.

50

1 MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah, I just don't know
2 that we have any results yet. When we have them I'm sure
3 that we'll share them with you. There's also information
4 in Judy's report about the moose survey that we work on
5 and then the other two handouts. I'm doing some
6 community harvest assessments in the Copper Basin in
7 cooperation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
8 so there's a handout talking about that. We're going to
9 be in Mentasta next week.

10
11 A summary of the comments we have on our
12 Nabesna off-road vehicle environmental impact statement.
13 We've gone through all the comments. The best I
14 understand it, what we're doing at this point is putting
15 together a six alternative that is comprised of pieces of
16 alternative four and pieces of alternative five. So
17 there's nothing new. There's nothing that hasn't already
18 been analyzed. There's nothing that the public hasn't
19 had an opportunity to comment on or just picking based on
20 the comments that we've received, a slightly different
21 version of the alternatives based on elements of
22 previously analyzed alternatives.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So basically
25 combinations of four and five depending on the trail
26 involved.

27
28 MS. CELLARIUS: I think that's
29 basically.....

30
31 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Because all the trails
32 don't fit the same criteria.

33
34 MS. CELLARIUS: And I think they're
35 hoping to have -- be pretty close to a final this summer.

36
37 And that's what I have. I'll be happy to
38 answer any questions.

39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any questions.

41
42 MR. ADLER: I have a question. Back to
43 the Chisana Caribou, who initiated the request for the
44 hunting season to be re-established?

45
46 MS. CELLARIUS: So all of the proposals
47 thus far have come from the Upper Tanana Forty Mile Fish
48 and Game Advisory Committee, which is sort of in the Tok
49 area. The original proposal in 2008 was not approved
50 pending development of the management plan. The Board of

1 Game has approved a hunt. However, Federal public lands
2 are closed to the harvest of caribou in that area under
3 the Federal regulations, so the Federal Board has to take
4 action before any harvest can occur.

5
6 MR. ADLER: Okay. I noticed it says here
7 closed Tanada, Copper Lake, Boomerang Trails to all ORV
8 users. That's an area I'm quite familiar with because I
9 use that Tanada Lake Trail for at least 30 years. I
10 don't anymore. I used to hunt sheep back there. I just
11 wondered if you could kind of go into -- is that actually
12 a proposal or just an option there?

13
14 MS. CELLARIUS: Are you looking at the
15 Nabesna ORV EIS handout?

16
17 MR. ADLER: Yes, I'm looking at this
18 handout here. It was all put together.

19
20 MS. CELLARIUS: Which page are you
21 looking at?

22
23 MR. ADLER: It's not numbered, but
24 it's.....

25
26 MS. CELLARIUS: I think there's four or
27 five.....

28
29 MR. ADLER: About the third from the back
30 there.

31
32 MS. CELLARIUS: Those are comments that
33 were received. That's not necessarily what will be in
34 the final draft particularly with regard to subsistence.
35 So that was a comment that was received from the public.
36 That's what this document is, is a summary of public
37 comments.

38
39 MR. ADLER: The trail was nothing but a
40 quagmire. I noticed the last time I went out there they
41 did have some plastic matting over the worst spots. Of
42 course that was a long time ago, so they may have -- do
43 you know if they've improved it since then?

44
45 MS. CELLARIUS: I don't know that we've
46 done anything beyond sort of basic maintenance, but part
47 of the purpose of this ORV EIS is to come up with
48 thoughts about what we would do with the trails. So we
49 needed to do this analysis before we did major
50 improvements or changes to the trails.

1 But this document is comments from the
2 public. It's not a description of the final decision by
3 the Park Service.

4
5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: If you look in the
6 alternatives there, one of the alternatives is to improve
7 the trails. Other alternatives are to close the trails.
8 Some of them are to improve some, close others.
9 Basically I think what they're -- they've had scoping and
10 the comment period and now they're trying to come up with
11 which alternative will be applied. That's why you were
12 saying they kind of are looking at a combination of
13 alternative four and five based on the comments and based
14 on the trails.

15
16 MS. CELLARIUS: Like I said, there
17 wouldn't be anything new that wasn't analyzed. It's
18 simply picking and choosing from what's already been
19 analyzed in terms of what seems to be a good fit to meet
20 the objectives.

21
22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Any other
23 questions.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. We have the
28 Denali report in front of us. If anybody has any
29 questions on that, you said there's phone numbers here to
30 contact.

31
32 MS. CELLARIUS: Names and phone numbers
33 if you have questions about things that are in there.

34
35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay, Barbara. Thank
36 you.

37
38 MS. CELLARIUS: Thank you very much.

39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tell Judy we hope she
41 gets well.

42
43 MS. CELLARIUS: I will do that.

44
45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Relay that to her.
46 Okay. With that we're going to go back to where we were,
47 which is the memorandum of understanding or do we have
48 something else on line that I'm missing.

49
50 MS. MUSHOVIC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1 Your climate change presentation is here and we could do
2 that if you'd like.

3
4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Let's do that because
5 Tom just pointed out we have climate change and community
6 hunt briefing that we circled and said tomorrow
7 yesterday, so let's do that right now and then we'll go
8 on to memorandum of understanding.

9
10 *(This portion not recorded in our sound
11 system - there may be indiscernibles)**

12
13 MS. MUSHOVIC: Mr. Chair and Council. I
14 give you Phillip Johnson from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
15 Service. He's going to be providing this presentation
16 for you today.

17
18 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning. Can you hear
19 me better now?

20
21 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Much better.

22
23 MR. JOHNSON: I'm Phil Johnson. I'm with
24 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm the
25 environmental contaminants coordinator for the Alaska
26 region and I have been serving that role for the last 14
27 years here in Anchorage at the regional office, so I was
28 asked to present a talk on climate change and
29 environmental contaminants. I've got a lot of
30 information to present. I'll move through this as
31 quickly as I can. If it's okay with the Board, I'd like
32 to just hold questions until the end.

33
34 To give you a little more background
35 while we're waiting for the technology here. There's
36 been a lot of new information, new scientific papers
37 published over the last few years. Most of the
38 information I'm going to be presenting is kind of a
39 synthesis of some of the published scientific information
40 from say 2006, 2007 to present and a lot of this
41 information is from studies that have been conducted in
42 2009, 2010 and some 2011 information.

43
44 So climate change and contaminants, new
45 challenges for Alaska. To provide an overview of my
46 talk, I'm going to talk about Alaska and the arctic, talk
47 briefly about climate chemistry, physical changes that
48 we're seeing with climate change and how that relates to
49 environmental contaminants, some ecological changes,
50 briefly touch on multiple stressors and then try to bring

1 it back to talking about subsistence resources and the
2 need to monitor change.

3
4 So first, Alaska and the arctic. As most
5 of you already probably know, the darker colors
6 represent, as you can probably see from the scale on the
7 bottom, represent greater change. These are winter
8 temperatures, changes from 1949 to 2010. So I guess the
9 take-home message on this slide is that the greatest
10 amount of change has been seen in the arctic and
11 certainly including Alaska and northern Canada.

12
13 So this warming has resulted in a lot of
14 physical changes and biological changes in the sense of
15 melting of glaciers and some of these things have
16 occurred already and some are also predicted to occur or
17 to accelerate in their pace. Melting of glaciers,
18 thawing of permafrost, reduction in the Arctic Ocean sea
19 ice extent, increased precipitation kind of overall for
20 northern regions, but again that's going to be real
21 variable depending on where you are is my understanding.
22 Decreasing in duration of snow cover, longer ice freeze
23 season on lakes and altered food web.

24
25 So, from a contaminant standpoint, which
26 you may not be as familiar with, related contaminants
27 research to date has focused on the arctic and northern
28 regions because of these changes. So most of the changes
29 occurred in the north and so a lot of the contaminants
30 research has also followed and focused on those areas.

31
32 So just to summarize real quickly, in one
33 sense any anthropogenic changes, climate changes are
34 really about climate chemistry and they're kind of
35 environmental contaminant. So the IPCC has included that
36 global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide,
37 methane and nitrogen dioxide have increased markedly as
38 a result of human activity since 1750 and they have
39 linked increased global (indiscernible) human sources of
40 these greenhouse gases.

41
42 One issue you may be less familiar with
43 is arctic haze and kind of black -- it's called black
44 carbon or soot particles that are also kind of more of a
45 regional and local pollution issue, so we can get these
46 from diesel emissions, from ship traffic, which are a
47 good source -- a large source of black carbon emissions
48 and there's other sources, but what happens is these dark
49 particles of fallen snow, ice fields, and so they absorb
50 radiant energy, so you can also get some local heating as

1 well. It's thought that that may be one of the reasons
2 why there's more change in relation to some of the other
3 areas as far as the degree of snow melt and the pace of
4 that.

5
6 I'm going to talk about a number of
7 different types of physical changes and I'm going to try
8 to step through these pretty quickly just so we don't
9 take too much time, but just to give you an overview and
10 a flavor of some of the things that people are doing.

11
12 First of all I'll talk about temperature
13 itself and how that relates to environmental
14 contaminants, sea ice glacier melt, erosion, storms, sea
15 level rise, permafrost melt, precipitation and modifiers
16 (ph).

17
18 So first of all, with temperature, one
19 thing to know about chemicals, about a lot of different
20 types of environmental contaminants is that they are
21 sensitive to temperature. So one thing that's been found
22 is that -- but it's all chemical specific, so some
23 chemicals are more prone to (indiscernible), to go in the
24 air when they're (indiscernible) and other ones are less
25 so. But, in general, as you heat things up, there is
26 more of a propensity for chemicals to move from soil into
27 the air.

28
29 So there's been some papers written
30 focusing on the arctic, projecting that there will be
31 more contaminants released from lower latitude source
32 areas, things like industrial areas and even agricultural
33 areas, some pesticides, and that those would be kind of
34 -- with heating there would be more inputs into the air.
35 Then there's also -- it's been known for quite a while
36 that there's kind of a full condensation effect where in
37 the north some of these chemicals will settle out due to
38 the cold.

39
40 So kind of the net prediction is that
41 there be an increased amount of atmospheric transport of
42 contaminants to cold regions like the arctic, but again
43 it's going to be chemical specific.

44
45 Their thinking from a biological
46 standpoint with temperature is that it also affects some
47 of the factors that would affect fish and wildlife. So,
48 for example, fish increase their metabolism as cold-
49 blooded creatures. They increase their (indiscernible)
50 rates with temperature and so that has been found to

1 increase the uptake of pollutants just because they're
2 processing more water to a greater degree.

3
4 Also you should be aware that pollutants
5 are more toxic in higher temperature. This has been
6 studied since 1920s. So that's been well known and,
7 again, it depends on the chemicals. Some are more
8 temperature sensitive than others and some temperature
9 doesn't seem to make as much of a difference.

10
11 And then there's been some recent studies
12 looking at contaminants and suggesting that lower
13 temperature -- if you carry a contaminants burden, you
14 may be less able to deal with temperature stress, so your
15 temperature tolerance might be affected.

16
17 This is something I have kind of in my
18 general talk. It's maybe -- well, we do have some sea
19 ice that forms in Southcentral and it's probably more of
20 an issue for the arctic, but just in general the
21 principal is that sea ice has been found to act like a
22 cap particularly for the arctic ice cap, so you've got
23 some contaminants that have been trapped under that ice
24 so they really can't move into the air. You have some
25 that are kind of in higher concentrations in the air that
26 haven't been able to move into the water to reach an
27 equilibrium. So, again, the prediction is that those
28 relationships will change through time as we lose ice
29 cover.

30
31 One of the things that's been studied
32 while in Europe and less so in the United States and also
33 a little bit in Canada is glacier melt and what has
34 happened with contaminants. Glaciers have accumulated
35 contaminants during peak pollution emission periods, say
36 from the '50s to the 1970s, particularly in the Western
37 Europe and North America. That was kind of a peak
38 release of some of these chemicals.

39
40 So some Italian researchers had studied
41 some -- they had observed some very high concentrations
42 of DDT in some fish in lakes below some glaciers, so they
43 investigated that and they attributed these increases to
44 glacier melt and that actually the DDT concentrations in
45 those particular fish were high enough to be exceeding
46 the Italian human consumption criteria.

47
48 So then there has been some other study,
49 follow-up studies or associated studies in Europe and
50 mostly in the Alps. One other study looked at transport

1 of dioxin, PCBs and DDT, looking at sediments of glacier-
2 fed lakes and they did some sediment coring, so they
3 compared like current rate, current concentrations in the
4 sediments versus -- then they could go down and date
5 those spores and look at what was happenings back in the
6 '60s and '70s and they found that some of the current
7 transport to lakes in that region is equal to or even
8 exceeding what was happening in the '60s and '70s.

9
10 A different study looked at
11 macroinvertebrates in glacier streams, glacier streams
12 below glaciers that generally had those
13 macroinvertebrates. Those bugs had higher concentrations
14 of contaminants in the glacial streams versus the non-
15 glacier-fed streams and watersheds. So, again, trying to
16 tie it back into the biology.

17
18 The one thing that's unknown is what are
19 the implications for this type of thing in Alaska.
20 Presumably the same processes should occur in Alaska, but
21 it could be that our glaciers are less polluted than a
22 really heavily industrialized area. I don't want to
23 oversell the generalization, but certainly it seems that
24 these are the types of issues that need more study.

25
26 Some of the other changes that are
27 occurring are erosion. It's well known certainly in
28 North Slope Alaska, Western Alaska. There has been
29 increased erosion rates. My understanding is that those
30 increased erosion rates have been attributed to a number
31 of different factors, but including increased storm
32 energy, seasonal loss of protective shore fast ice
33 particularly in the fall and then also as you have
34 melting permafrost you lose some of your soil stability.
35 The ice helps hold it together.

36
37 So, from a contaminants standpoint, this
38 has affected some contaminated sites, things like
39 formerly used defense sites. There's been some sites up
40 on the North Slope in particular that have been eroding.
41 Here you see a picture of a military landfill up on the
42 North Slope that is being sandbagged and protected so it
43 doesn't wash into the ocean.

44
45 The Bureau of Land Management has also
46 been spending a lot of money up on the North Slope
47 removing drilling mud pits that are being threatened by
48 these high erosion rates. Also the erosion -- the State
49 of Alaska has completed a report that was published a few
50 years ago that these erosion rates are presenting an

1 increased threat to shoreline fuel delivery, storage and
2 pipeline systems in Alaska.

3
4 Just to give you one example of that, in
5 September 2007 there was a storm that threatened the bulk
6 fuel storage tanks at Kivalina. They evacuated the
7 village during that fall storm and
8 actually the Fish and Wildlife Service, among other
9 Federal agencies, ramped up our kind of response efforts.
10 Our response rating in case those tanks did release their
11 fuel because we would get involved if birds and sea
12 otters, things like that were oiled, or walrus.

13
14 One of the other physical changes that's
15 occurring is sea level rise. Sea level rise is predicted
16 to occur in the coastal regions throughout the U.S.
17 That's certainly an issue for Alaska given our extensive
18 coastlines. About half the U.S. total. My understanding
19 of the reasons for this is both ice melt from glaciers,
20 like polar ice caps and ice fields, but then also through
21 thermal expansion to a certain degree of the water. It
22 just takes a little more volume as it gets warmer. So,
23 again, tying this back to contaminants, in coastal
24 regions you could have a threat to low-lying contaminated
25 sites, things like that.

26
27 Certainly one of the things that's also
28 been documented in Alaska is melting of permafrost and
29 this is expected to continue.
30 One of the concerns from a contaminants standpoint is
31 that the ice has kind of formed a barrier that's been
32 pulling some of this contamination in place. So you
33 could have things like sewage lagoons, dump sites,
34 tailing ponds, contaminated sites with military sites,
35 things like that that -- you know, if there are already
36 contaminants associated with those areas, then you lose
37 the permafrost, you're going to spread that
38 contamination.

39
40 My understanding, talking to DEC, is that
41 there's at least one site that they're aware of where
42 through the loss of permafrost they suspected that was
43 the reason for spraying of a plume that formerly had been
44 contained at one of the Alaska sites.

45
46 Another issue with melting of permafrost
47 is that you can get more slumping and flooding of some of
48 these areas that are more kind of peat, wetland type
49 areas. So there has been a small study in Sweden looking
50 at the flying of a pulcimyra (ph), I believe it was

1 called. Basically a Swedish pea pod. They saw pretty
2 extensive vocalization of mercury during subsidence of
3 these little hillocks and flooding of those areas. And
4 then they observed that the transported mercury was much
5 greater, 10 to 60 times greater than atmospheric
6 deposition rates of areas in the local area that hadn't
7 been affected by the effects of physical factors.

8
9 So again it was a small study, but the
10 authors did predict that this is again something that
11 needs to be studied more in the arctic and it could be a
12 widespread phenomenon.

13
14 Looking at precipitation, some modeling
15 predicts that precipitation will increase at least in
16 parts of the arctic, making it a much wetter environment,
17 but if weather conditions are going to be more localized,
18 you're probably going to have more dry areas than wet
19 areas, but just that overall looking at the global map
20 it's predicted to be wetter.

21
22 So the implications for contaminants is
23 that contaminants are to be kind of scrubbed out of the
24 atmosphere by wet deposition, things like rainfall,
25 snowfall. it's a more effective mechanism for removing
26 some of the contaminants that are up in the air and
27 transporting those to the earth.

28
29 One of the potential -- one of the kind
30 of case examples of this, there was a recent paper
31 published a couple years ago where in the Mackenzie River
32 delta area the Canadians observed some pretty high
33 concentrations of mercury in marine mammals and some
34 other birds in the area, so they were trying to figure
35 out why is this occurring. So they looked at river
36 flows, they looked at mercury concentrations in the
37 Mackenzie River and they established some positive
38 correlations between river flow and the amount of mercury
39 that was flowing down into the delta area. They
40 attributed the increased flows to greater precipitation
41 and climate change and the prediction at least for that
42 part of the arctic was that the precipitation increases
43 were going to continue in the future.

44
45 Wildfires is another area that's received
46 some study both in Canada and the U.S. The arctic
47 climate impact assessment report modeling associated with
48 that suggests that a warming climate will lead to more
49 and larger fires and that warmer and wetter scenarios
50 produce more very large fires compared to warmer and

1 dryer scenarios. I believe, from what I recall, the
2 rationale is that if you get more vegetative growth, you
3 get stronger fires.

4
5 The implications from Canada's standpoint
6 is some areas that haven't burned before, they've been
7 accumulating, just like with the wetland areas. They've
8 been kind of accumulations areas for mercury. So if
9 you've been storing mercury for eons and then these areas
10 burn, in particular those areas are thought to be
11 releasing quite a bit of that mercury, especially if you
12 have an intense fire. So the Canadians have studied
13 this. They saw that in cold, wet peat soils there was a
14 release of mercury from Canadian boreal forest fires and
15 they viewed that as a growing threat to aquatic habitats
16 in the northern food chains.

17
18 Some studies from the U.S. There was a
19 site I looked at mercury emissions from wildfires in
20 Alaska and 48 states from 2002 to 2006. They saw that
21 the overall across both those areas there was an average
22 of 44 metric tons per year of mercury emitted from these
23 wildfires. I don't know a metric ton of mercury, you
24 know, to put that in context, it's hard for me to grasp
25 what that is, but the authors helped out and they said
26 that amount represents about 30 percent of the smoke
27 stack emissions that the EPA had permitted in 2002. So
28 it's not a significant amount at least.

29
30 The thing that was interesting about the
31 Alaska results from that study is that they were more
32 variable. We had a high fire year. We were at the top
33 of the list as far as mercury emissions go, but on the
34 years that we had low fire years we were at the bottom of
35 the list. The west seemed to burn more regularly and
36 consistently. Alaska was more of a rollercoaster.

37
38 And then in another study that was done,
39 I believe in Alberta, some scientists looked at mercury
40 and kind of burned watersheds versus not and did see some
41 increase of uptake of mercury in those watersheds. So,
42 again, trying to relate this back to fish and wildlife
43 resources, there may be some implications for iota.

44
45 Ecological changes. I've just got a
46 couple examples here to go through. The Canadians are in
47 the enviable position of having some really long-term
48 datasets or fairly long-term datasets on contamination
49 and what's been occurring in their biode (ph) for years,
50 so they studied mercury and PCBs in burbot over a 21-year

1 period. During that period the atmospheric levels for
2 those two types of contaminants, mercury and PCBs, were
3 level or declining, but when they looked in burbot liver,
4 mercury increased twofold and DDT increased threefold and
5 one type of PCB congener increased sixfold.

6
7 Those authors concluded that the higher
8 productivity during that period, there was a kind of
9 warming, there was more kinds of nutrients to the lakes,
10 there was just in general more productivity in those
11 lakes, so you had a food chain, a food web change, and
12 that was leading to these changes in the concentrations
13 in the fish and it wasn't necessarily -- they couldn't
14 attribute it to what was happening in the atmosphere.

15
16 Another study done by the Canadians again
17 in some very high arctic lakes, so very oligotrophic, low
18 nutrient type lakes. They had seen some shifts from
19 copepod dominated communities, the daphnia dominated
20 communities. Daphnia is like a water flea. You can see
21 a picture here. So again we're talking about the base of
22 the water column food chain. In the daphnia dominated
23 systems they were able to accumulate more mercury.
24 They're pretty efficient filter feeders.

25
26 Again, the authors were relating the
27 changes in the community competition to alga productivity
28 in growth and they were, again, attributing this to
29 climate change related changes and so they were
30 predicting that as we see an expansion of these daphnia
31 dominated systems there would be more mercury
32 accumulation. Certainly mercury is a concern because it
33 does -- it's one of those contaminants that does move up
34 food chains.

35
36 Again, this was from just a handful of
37 lakes. This is all new information. This is maybe a
38 2010 paper. So it will be interesting to see if other
39 studies are able to validate these results. I think the
40 main principal is that as food chains change,
41 contaminants are going to be affected too, either up or
42 down.

43
44 This isn't really in Southcentral, but it
45 does again -- this is my last example of food webs and
46 what can happen when you change the food web you're
47 changing what happens with the contaminants.

48
49 In Hudson Bay, the polar bears, their
50 feeding ecology was studied from 1991 to 2007. Again,

1 it's hard to track polar bears and see what they're
2 eating, every kill that they're making. What scientists
3 have been able to do is use some techniques called stable
4 isotopes and fatty acid signatures and that gives them an
5 idea what they're feeding on. So they looked at what was
6 happening with those as well as some of the contaminants
7 in the bears and they saw that timing of sea ice breakup
8 explained 84 percent of the variation in stable isotope
9 changes and they inferred a shift from a largely bearded
10 seal diet that live on pack ice to harbor seals and
11 harbor seals which are living in an open water habitat,
12 which was increasing during that time period. Most of the
13 contaminants increased, but the bearded seals barely had
14 -- they're benthic feeders and they had a lot of DDT in
15 them and so the DDT decreased. So, again, the concept is
16 some contaminations will go up or down depending on what
17 the ecological changes are.

18

19 Nearing the end of the talk here.

20 Talking about multiple stressors, so again temperature is
21 one issue. Well, let me just go through this slide.
22 Many persistent organic pollutants are stored in fat, so
23 as an animal experiences food stress, temperature stress,
24 as their habitats change and if the food they're
25 accustomed to eating is not available, they may undergo
26 food stress, temperature stress, so they would likely be
27 drawing on fat reserves.

28

29 Again, the concern is that if they're
30 locked up -- some of these contaminants are locked up in
31 fat, they're not as biologically available. They're kind
32 of locked away for that animal, but once they start
33 drawing on those fat reserves, this stuff starts
34 circulating in the blood and so it is more biologically
35 available.

36

37 So, kind of the purpose of my talk here
38 today is to talk about subsistence resources. I guess
39 given the host of issues and the physical changes and
40 some of the potential ecological changes that could be
41 occurring, it seems like that at least some subsistence
42 resources would be affected. Again, the science isn't
43 there to tell us which contaminants are going to go up or
44 down. Certainly mercury seems to be in the north in
45 general. I think a lot of scientists agree that mercury
46 is likely to be one of our issues going forward into the
47 future.

48

49 My last slide is on micro change here in
50 Alaska. You can see that a lot of studies were done in

1 other parts of the world. You know, Canada, over in
2 Europe. In Alaska, there has been less work to date,
3 particularly for long-term monitoring. You know, those
4 long-term datasets, 21-year datasets, things like that.
5 But here in Alaska we won't really know how climate
6 effects on contaminants exposure to fish and wildlife is
7 changing without some long-term monitoring.

8
9 So my conclusions are climate change may
10 influence virtually all aspects of contaminant release.
11 Some change is already being observed in the north and
12 others are predicted. It seems likely to me that
13 subsistence resources may be affected as other things
14 change, but we really won't know the type of change
15 without monitoring. I guess the other take-home message
16 is, you know, as smart as scientists think they are in
17 predicting what things are going to change, there's going
18 to be surprises. These are really complex systems.

19
20 So, with that, I would welcome any
21 questions.

22
23 MR. ADLER: I have a question. What is
24 the source of all this mercury? Is it natural or
25 something man has done?

26
27 MR. JOHNSON: Well, it's complex,
28 particularly for mercury. For some things like PCBs, you
29 know it's an industrial chemical and it's been produced
30 by man and then transported elsewhere. For mercury,
31 there are some natural sources. Volcanos are actually
32 one of the sources of mercury. The thing that makes
33 mercury complex is that you have large storage pools,
34 things like mercury that's been stored in, say, tundra
35 and in the forest and in the ocean, in the atmosphere.
36 Those are all kind of reservoirs for small amounts of
37 mercury. They're only now kind of developing some of
38 these isotope type -- kind of look at the mercury
39 signature and try to get a better handle on which might
40 be anthropogenic and which might be coming from natural
41 sources.

42
43 What happens is the mercury kind of gets
44 recycled too, so some mercury that may have been caused
45 by human emissions, you know, 100 years ago, you know,
46 mercury is an element that doesn't really break down, it
47 stays in the environment. So you can get some of that
48 recycling within some of these pools too. It's a real
49 tough question.

50

1 In Greenland they looked at some polar
2 bear hair samples and they saw a very large percentage of
3 -- they saw a large change looking at like the 1800s,
4 some pelts that they had from the 1800s compared to now.
5 In that particular study, they attributed quite a lot of
6 the mercury change to human influence over time.

7
8 MR. ADLER: Does the forest fire itself
9 generate the mercury though? You kind of made it look
10 like it did.

11
12 MR. JOHNSON: Pardon me?

13
14 MR. ADLER: Does the forest fire itself
15 generate mercury, the burning and stuff?

16
17 MR. JOHNSON: Well, it's more that some
18 of the vegetation that burns has been storing it up.
19 Again, any tree, any bit of organic matter, tundra areas
20 like that, it's probably been accumulating small amounts
21 over time and so collectively you have a large area burn
22 you're going to get some observable mercury that is
23 coming out of that smoke.

24
25 MR. ADLER: I have one more short
26 question. I noticed that there's been a lot of contrail
27 haze in the last -- the contrail haze has been increasing
28 the last 20, 30 years. Have you investigated that effect
29 on the temperature?

30
31 MR. JOHNSON: That's out of my realm.
32 I'm not a biologist, I'm more of a -- I was trained in
33 ecotoxicology, more the effects of contaminants on fish
34 and wildlife. I'm not really an atmosphere guy. What
35 I've tried to do -- you know, I've really kind of
36 stretched myself a little bit reading some of these
37 papers, but just trying to -- I thought in my position it
38 would be important to get a handle on what's known about
39 what's changing with contaminants in the north.

40
41 Yes?

42
43 MS. CAMINER: Thanks. That was a really
44 good presentation. I know you said it's hard to project
45 what the situation will be in Alaska without having more
46 long-term monitoring, but there have been some studies
47 done on levels of contaminants in fish and other animals
48 in Alaska and I think there have been some studies done
49 on people. Can you give us a quick summary of what has
50 been found to date in Alaska?

1 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. I'm most familiar --
2 less with people and more familiar with some of the
3 biotic sampling. Probably one species that's been
4 studied the most is polar bears, so maybe I'll just kind
5 of tell you what I know about them. That's a circumpolar
6 species that occurs all across the north and all the
7 arctic nations participate in a -- well, there's several
8 groups under the arctic council. One is CAFF, which is
9 Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna. The other one is
10 AMAP, Arctic Monitoring Assessment Program. That's the
11 one group that deals with pollution issues.

12
13 So under the AMAP auspices the different
14 countries have been monitoring what's been going on with
15 polar bears. You can see some gradients from east to
16 west within the arctic. For Alaska, actually our
17 contaminants levels in those polar bears, to use it as
18 kind of a general reference or yardstick, have been lower
19 than in some of the areas like Greenland and particularly
20 in Russia had that really much higher concentrations and
21 most of the persistent contaminants like PCBs and DDT.

22
23 There's one kind of exception to that.
24 There's a chemical called -- an insecticide called HCH,
25 hexachlorocyclohexane, that's been used a lot in Asia,
26 the bears in the Bering and Chuckchi area are actually
27 higher than the ones say in Europe and Eastern Russia.
28 Again, it's hard to have universal statements, but that's
29 one species where you can kind of look at patterns
30 circumpolarly and kind of say, well, for a lot of things
31 we're not as bad off as some of the other arctic nations,
32 but it's certainly something that still deserves tracking
33 over time I believe.

34
35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you for that on
36 the climate change. It's kind of interesting because
37 there's so many aspects to it. Everything from the
38 acidification of the ocean and the effect on fish in that
39 standpoint.....

40
41 MR. JOHNSON: Right.

42
43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:and the
44 contaminants. It's kind of interesting the part on the
45 mercury because you never think of the fact that it's
46 tied up in the firewood you burn and the ground around
47 you and everything else.

48
49 If there are no further questions, we'll
50 go on.

1 (No comments)
2
3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Appreciate your report.
4 Appreciate your presentation. Comments.
5
6 (No comments)
7
8 MR. JOHNSON: Appreciate the feedback.
9
10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Let's take a break for
11 a few minutes.
12
13 (Off record)
14
15 (On record)
16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. We are now going
18 to take community hunt briefing that we talked about
19 putting off until today.
20
21 Go ahead.
22
23 **(This portion not recorded in our sound
24 system - there may be indiscernibles)**
25
26 MR. SIMON: I've been asked to give a
27 briefing about the current status of the community
28 subsistence caribou and moose hunts. First I wanted to
29 start off with the statutory basis of these hunts.
30 Alaska law through Alaska Statute 16.05.330(c) states
31 that the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game may
32 adopt regulations providing for the issuance and
33 expiration of subsistence permits for areas, villages,
34 communities, groups or individuals as needed for
35 authorizing, regulating and monitoring the subsistence
36 harvest of fish and game.
37
38 Through that, as most of you know, the
39 Board of Game has established a community subsistence
40 hunt for caribou in the Nelchina area, which has ended up
41 in litigation. So that has resulted in another Board
42 meeting last October where the hunt was also reconsidered
43 by the Board of Game.
44
45 In establishing the current hunt
46 structure in October of 2010, the Department posted a
47 two-page summary document on the website in November as
48 well as draft community caribou subsistence hunt
49 condition on the website. Those are somewhat difficult
50 to locate right now because of Fish and Game's new

1 website rollout that's just occurred, but I have
2 information that can help you access those and that
3 information.

4
5 Presently the community subsistence hunt
6 is for caribou and moose in the Copper Basin community
7 subsistence harvest area, which are GMUs 11, 13 and a
8 portion of 12. However, for caribou, it is only open in
9 Game Management Unit 13 due to concerns about the other
10 herds that could potentially be affected. For example,
11 the Mentasta Herd.

12
13 There's work that remains to be done on
14 this program. We're in the process of going through
15 internal review for a second time of the hunt conditions
16 based on public testimony received at the recent Board of
17 Game meeting in Wasilla as well as further review by the
18 Department of Law.

19
20 The community subsistence hunt, as I
21 mentioned, has been litigated and the case is currently
22 under appeal. A second draft hunt conditions were
23 presented to the Board of Game in March earlier this
24 month. However, the Board did not have the opportunity
25 to specifically review that second version. So the Board
26 meeting has been extended for other reasons as well into
27 March 25th. That's the day before the beginning of the
28 Region 2 Board of Game meeting.

29
30 Hunt conditions are the Department's
31 discretion; however, given the litigation and the
32 controversy, the Department is working closely with the
33 Board and the Department of Law to insure compliance with
34 the court order and the regulations.

35
36 Application procedures are still being
37 developed, but I anticipate that those will be made
38 available very soon since we are already past our goal of
39 having that information available earlier in the week.

40
41 I just emailed to Polly a link to where
42 the November posted documents for public review can be
43 found. This will be the same location where the revised
44 information can be found. It's under the Department of
45 Fish and Game's web page under Home. It's then clicking
46 on news and events and then hot topics and issues and
47 then clicking on ongoing issues and that's where you'll
48 see the summary of the Board's regulatory actions in
49 October 2010 and the initial draft of the community
50 subsistence hunt conditions.

1 Let me check my notes here. There was
2 also public testimony received last week in Wasilla
3 regarding the draft hunt conditions that has been out for
4 public review. Some of those concerns are being
5 addressed in the second draft of the intercommunity
6 subsistence caribou hunt condition.

7
8 We are also in the process of developing
9 the first draft of the community subsistence moose hunt
10 conditions and we hope to have these finalized and
11 available for the Board and the public on March 25th.

12
13 That goes through my brief talking
14 points. I will do my best to answer any questions that
15 the group may have.

16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I have a question if you
18 can hear me.

19
20 MR. SIMON: Yes, barely.

21
22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. I'll talk a
23 little clearer. I don't know if we need both mikes if
24 anybody needs to ask it or not. If you could go through
25 that website for everybody and take it through slow so we
26 can get the whole thing down and what to click on in
27 sequence of what to click on.

28
29 MR. SIMON: Someone dialed in or
30 something, so I had a bleep during -- what was it that
31 you wanted me to go through?

32
33 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I was asking you to run
34 us through the website to get the information, but MS.
35 MUSHOVIC just told me that she has it all, so we can save
36 you the effort.

37
38 MR. SIMON: I do have it written out with
39 click on this and click on that if you would want.

40
41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah, that's what I was
42 after, but I've been informed that they've already got
43 that.

44
45 MR. SIMON: Okay, great.

46
47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So then from what I
48 understand is after this draft is completed then the
49 Board still has to act on it, am I correct?

50

1 MR. SIMON: The hunt conditions are
2 within the Department's discretion, but because of the
3 controversy and the ongoing litigation we are putting
4 this before the Board to get their review comments and
5 approval for the hunt conditions. There are not
6 dramatically significant changes from my understanding at
7 this point. From the hunt conditions provided on the
8 website back in November there are some additional
9 clarifications of the reporting requirements.

10

11 Again, that is premature to determine
12 exactly what those hunt conditions are going to be until
13 we have them before the Board again.

14

15 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Does anybody
16 else have any questions.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you for that
21 report. Sorry to have had you on hold. Looking forward
22 to seeing how that comes out because that does definitely
23 affect people up in the Copper Basin.

24

25 MR. SIMON: It's my pleasure to try to
26 give you this brief report. I wish we had more concrete
27 results and documents available in time for your meeting.
28 The timing has not been ideal.

29

30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, the complications
31 that come in on something like this, things don't happen
32 as fast as we would like it sometimes. So thanks again
33 and thanks for the report.

34

35 MR. SIMON: Hello. I think I may have
36 lost you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We're going to go onto
39 something else. Have we lost him or not?

40

41 DR. WHEELER: He'll figure it out.

42

43 (Laughter)

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: At this point in time
46 we're going to go on to the Memorandum of Understanding.
47 Polly. It's on Page 45 and 47.

48

49 DR. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
50 morning, Council members. As the Chair just indicated,

1 there's a briefing document regarding the Memorandum of
2 Understanding on Page 45 in your book and then the
3 Memorandum itself begins on Page 47 in your books. This
4 is a continuation of the discussion from yesterday where
5 we were on Secretarial review items. The Memorandum of
6 Understanding did pop up during the course of the
7 subsistence programmatic review as an issue that some
8 felt needed addressing.

9

10 As covered in the briefing document, this
11 MOU follows on an MOA and the MOU itself was signed by
12 the Federal Subsistence Board members and the chair of
13 the Alaska Board of Game, the Alaska Board of Fisheries
14 and the commissioner of Fish and Game in December of
15 2008.

16

17 The purpose of the MOU is to provide a
18 foundation and direction for coordinated interagency fish
19 and wildlife management for subsistence uses on Federal
20 public lands while allowing the Federal and State
21 agencies to continue to act in accordance with their
22 respective statutory authorities.

23

24 There was some concern when the MOU was
25 signed that the Federal program was giving away some of
26 its authorities or kind of acquiescing to the State
27 mandates because the MOU contains several references to
28 State law. So there was some concern over that that the
29 Board was kind of giving away or undermining its
30 obligation under Title VIII to provide for a subsistence
31 priority for rural Alaskans. The Board's authority,
32 charge and obligation to rural residents come only from
33 Title VIII and any other applicable Federal statutes and
34 the MOU will not and cannot change that. That said,
35 there's still some concern over it.

36

37 So the Board felt this was a good
38 opportunity to hear from the Regional Advisory Councils
39 as to what their specific concerns may be or are and the
40 Board is going to take this up at its May meeting. It's
41 going to listen to what some of the concerns are. It's
42 going to review the comments probably this summer. At
43 the May meeting, but subsequently it will be talking
44 about this through the summer and determine what the next
45 step should be. Again, because the MOU involves other
46 parties, namely the State, the Board does need to work
47 with the State on this MOU or on whatever changes are
48 proposed.

49

50 I will say that the MOU really came into

1 play or the need for coordinated management really came
2 into play when the Federal government assumed management
3 authority for fisheries. Not that there wasn't a need
4 for coordination for wildlife, but there was wide
5 recognition that it really made a difference with
6 fisheries management. So that's why there was a lot of
7 energy directed at it beginning in 2000.

8
9 As you probably all will remember,
10 initially the MOA was initialed by the various
11 signatories in 2000 with the understanding that protocols
12 would be developed. Protocols on information sharing,
13 coordinated management for the Yukon River. There was a
14 number of protocols that were actually identified in the
15 MOA that needed to be developed.

16
17 Many of them have been developed, but not
18 all of them have been developed. As an example, there
19 was one protocol that was going to look at having the
20 Federal program develop something similar to the State's
21 amounts necessary for subsistence. Under the Federal
22 thing it was called subsistence use amounts. After a
23 couple years of work on that it sort of fell flat.

24
25 So there are some protocols that are in
26 place, in my opinion, which is not necessarily the
27 opinion of the Federal program. A lot of these protocols
28 probably need to be dusted off and re-evaluated and
29 updated. I know the information sharing protocol does
30 need to be updated because it doesn't take into account
31 the new Federal permitting system, so that may happen
32 down the road.

33
34 In any event, Mr. Chair and Council
35 members, this is your opportunity to weigh in on the MOU
36 and I guess I would say that specific comments are most
37 helpful. General comments like get rid of it will be
38 heard, but that's probably not as helpful as specific
39 comments about kind of what should be changed or what the
40 signatories might want to think about with regard to
41 changing the document.

42
43 Mr. Chair, I'm all ears now.

44
45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Polly. I
46 think if I got you correctly is what you would like is if
47 anybody on this Council has any comments on the MOU or if
48 this Council has any concerns as a Council. I'm going to
49 state a personal opinion on it and that is that I think
50 an MOU is totally necessary where we're dealing with two

1 different entities that deal with the same resources that
2 apply to the same people. I really do like the guiding
3 principals that are listed on Page 48.

4
5 The question always in everybody's mind
6 is that how are these applied. Sometimes, like you said,
7 I think it's the wording that causes the problem more
8 than what's actually done. I know we've changed seasons
9 to line up with State seasons and we've changed seasons
10 to not line up with State seasons, but we recognize the
11 fact that if it's at all possible if we can line them up
12 it does take confusion out. It takes out the possibility
13 of violations or confusions in enforcement. To me,
14 that's important simply because most of us aren't lawyers
15 and it's hard to keep track of too many sets of
16 regulations over the same resource.

17
18 With that, I'm going to shut up and I'm
19 going to turn it over to anybody else on this Council
20 that's got something that they would like to say about
21 the Memorandum of Understanding and any concerns they
22 have with it. Doug.

23
24 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair. Polly, I guess
25 every place in this understanding agreement it talks
26 about the State and local advisory committees I think
27 that needs to be strengthened. For instance right now
28 the State Game Board will listen to Advisory Committees
29 very well. The State Fish Board pays no attention to a
30 local advisory committee. They treat them really worse
31 than dirt. So, if we're going to get along as a Federal
32 group, they need to listen and pay attention to that.

33
34 My second thing is that I have went all
35 the way to the Commissioner Cora Campbell stating that
36 our RAC has time after time explained and showed why, for
37 instance, Ninilchik should get fishing rights and so far
38 they're persistent in this false information that they
39 have in here saying why they shouldn't agree to it. So
40 I think somehow that needs to be strengthened so the
41 Federal Board is not giving away everything to the State.

42
43
44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

45
46 MS. CAMINER: Thanks, Polly. I do have
47 a couple comments, but I think also what would be helpful
48 to this Council is to know what some of the other
49 Councils said.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy. It
2 would be nice to know what some of the concerns that
3 apply to other places and see whether they apply to us.

4
5 DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. I happen to
6 have that information before me. I can tell you -- and
7 I'll just go Council by Council if that's okay with you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Sounds good.

10
11 DR. WHEELER: The Seward Peninsula
12 Regional Advisory Council supported the current wording
13 of the MOU. The Eastern Interior Council supported the
14 MOU in concept. Several members expressed frustration
15 regarding the lack of sharing data between agencies. That
16 was actually a lengthy discussion at the Eastern Interior
17 Council. The Council asked that this concern be
18 expressed to the Federal Board.

19
20 As I mentioned earlier, I had mentioned
21 the need to probably update the information sharing
22 protocol, but there was some concern on the part of the
23 Eastern Interior Council that -- their concern went
24 beyond that. They were really concerned about lack of
25 sharing of raw data between programs and it took so long
26 for data to be finalized that by the time it was
27 finalized maybe it wasn't even useful for a particular
28 program.

29
30 The Western Interior Council supported
31 the MOU in concept, but recommended that the following
32 language be incorporated into the preamble of the MOU.
33 I'll read that, Mr. Chair. They recommended that the
34 preamble be amended to include a paragraph stating that
35 ANILCA Title VIII requires that Federal land managers to
36 adhere to fish and wildlife management consistent with
37 sound management principals and the conservation of
38 healthy populations of fish and wildlife in accordance
39 with recognized scientific principals and the purposes
40 for each unit established. The Federal manager shall
41 scientifically delineate and maintain healthy
42 populations.

43
44 If State management board actions
45 jeopardize fish and wildlife population health, Federal
46 managers shall preempt State regulations to assure
47 population health in accordance with ANILCA to protect
48 subsistence uses. So they were getting at the need to --
49 if the State regulations aren't working, then the Federal
50 program needs to step in and preempt those.

1 The Bristol Bay Council met last week in
2 Naknek and their concerns -- the Council is pleased with
3 the MOU and asked that the State and Federal governments
4 work together whenever there are subsistence concerns.
5 The Council supported the MOU with the following edits
6 and additions and this is kind of getting down into the
7 ground here. Under number 3, guiding principals, number
8 1, the paragraph ends with other entities, they wanted to
9 add a sentence there saying this includes keeping an open
10 mind to the possibility of an implementation of predator
11 control when the conservation of a particular species is
12 in peril. So they wanted to add that sentence about
13 predator control.

14
15 Under number 2, which currently reads,
16 use the best available scientific and cultural
17 information and local traditional knowledge for decisions
18 regarding fish and wildlife management for subsistence
19 uses on Federal public lands. They wanted to add and
20 local traditional knowledge and also get rid of
21 subsistence uses on Federal public lands and substitute
22 subsistence harvest on Federal public lands.

23
24 Let's see. Number 4, under the Federal
25 Subsistence Board and the State of Alaska mutually agree,
26 the Bristol Bay Council wanted to edit or revise
27 paragraph number 2 to -- they wanted it to read to
28 recognize that State and Federal data and TEK information
29 are important. So they wanted to make that small edit.

30
31 On number 9, under that same section, the
32 Federal Subsistence Board and the State of Alaska
33 mutually agree, they wanted to change that to read, to
34 designate liaisons for policy communications and, as
35 appropriate, to identify tribal and/or local agency
36 representatives for efficient blah, blah, blah.

37
38 The Y-K Council had some substantial
39 edits and they are along the lines of the Bristol Bay
40 Council. They wanted to add some concern for the guiding
41 principals under number 5, they wanted to add a qualifier
42 through active management where conservation of the
43 resource or continuation of subsistence uses is of
44 immediate concern. Reviews shall not delay timely
45 management action. I think we all know where that's
46 coming from.

47 They wanted to add same thing as Bristol
48 Bay Council, tribal and/or local agency representatives.
49 The point they wanted to make was that tribes should be
50 communicated with and not just city offices. They were

1 concerned about adding a provision to provide advance
2 notice to Council and/or State Advisory Committee
3 representatives before issuing special actions or
4 emergency orders along the lines what we talked about
5 yesterday.

6
7 And they had a concern about reporting
8 systems. They noted that there's a problem with relying
9 on locals reporting harvest using the harvest ticket
10 system, so they thought that should be addressed in the
11 body of the MOU.

12
13 The North Slope Council met last week in
14 Barrow and the Council was generally supportive of the
15 MOU and felt that it was a valuable document. They
16 wanted to change Section 1, paragraph 2. About midway
17 through that second paragraph on the first page under the
18 preamble where it reads, whereas the State of Alaska
19 under its laws and regulations is responsible for the
20 management, protection, maintenance, enhancement,
21 rehabilitation and extension of the fish and wildlife
22 resources of the State of Alaska on the sustained yield
23 principle, subject to preferences among beneficial uses
24 such as providing a priority for subsistence harvest and
25 use of fish and wildlife. They wanted to change such as
26 to especially. So kind of driving home the subsistence
27 priority.

28
29 They also wanted wording to be added
30 throughout the MOU. Wherever it says who was involved in
31 the MOU they wanted to add the wording to include
32 knowledgeable subsistence uses and/or tribal
33 representatives so that they're getting that piece in
34 there.

35
36 So, Mr. Chair, that's a quick summary of
37 what each of the different Councils that have met thus
38 far have done with the MOU. Again, I would say that as a
39 general rule all of them recognize the value of the
40 document, but all the Councils recognize that there may
41 be a need to tweak some of the language to include more
42 of an emphasis on subsistence uses, more of an emphasis
43 on involving local and/or tribal representatives as key
44 players in all of this.

45
46 Again, just as a matter of process, this
47 will go to the Board and the Board and the State as
48 signatories will be working through the MOU. Mr. Chair.

49
50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Polly.

1 Gloria.

2

3 MS. STICKWAN: I had a question about
4 number 4 -- paragraph number 3. The very last wording is
5 Alaska Statute 16.05.258. I was reading AFNs comments
6 and they were concerned about that being in there. I
7 don't know what that statute is or what it says. I don't
8 understand what.....

9

10 DR. WHEELER: So just to clarify, Mr.
11 Chair, Member Stickwan, number 4, it's section 4,
12 paragraph 3.....

13

14 MS. STICKWAN: Yeah.

15

16 DR. WHEELER:that reads to provide
17 a priority for subsistence uses of fish and wildlife
18 resources and to allow for other uses of fish and
19 wildlife resources when harvestable surpluses are
20 sufficient consistent with ANILCA and Alaska Statute
21 16.05.258. That's the subsistence statute under State
22 law. Again, if you go up to the header for this section,
23 the Federal Subsistence Board and the State of Alaska
24 mutually agree and the State of Alaska is just outlining
25 its statutory responsibilities. So that's why that
26 paragraph is included. Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.

29

30 MS. STICKWAN: I guess there was a
31 misunderstanding about that because it sounds like you're
32 agreeing to -- I mean subsistence -- both subsistence,
33 you're going to protect both and AFN objected to that.
34 I think that's what their comment was about.

35

36 DR. WHEELER: I think you're correct.
37 When people read it, they thought, whoa, the Federal
38 Board is agreeing to manage subsistence under the
39 provisions of Alaska Statute 16.05.258, what's going on.
40 So I think that section could be worded more clearly to
41 say that's the State responsibility. The Federal
42 responsibility is outlined in ANILCA and nothing -- the
43 State can't manage under ANILCA as we well know and the
44 Feds can't manage under the Alaska subsistence statute.
45 So that could be clarified.

46

47 MS. STICKWAN: That should be clarified.

48

49 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Polly, I was just
50 listening to all the things you -- and some of them are

1 just word changes, like use or harvest or TEK instead of
2 cultural information. Basically I came up with three
3 thoughts that have come through here and then I've got
4 one of my own and I don't really know how to express
5 that. The one thing that seems to be stressed by all of
6 them that have anything to say is they would like more
7 tribal involvement and I think that's one of the things
8 that came out of the review. I don't think with out --
9 we're going into the tribal consultation thing and
10 everything. I think that's a no-brainer. That's going
11 to end of being in here.

12
13 The next thing was to make use of TEK,
14 local information, knowledgeable local rural residents,
15 and that seems to be another one. To give that kind of
16 data some of the same credence as official biological.
17 I've got a few stories on that myself. I mean I can
18 remember telling the Fish and Game that there were red
19 salmon in a certain stream and basically them telling me
20 that they couldn't put that down until they, themselves,
21 saw it. So sometimes I think we need to recognize the
22 fact that local people, tribal and rural residents,
23 actually have some knowledge about fish and game in their
24 back yard and that should be in here.

25
26 The other thing -- and I think this is
27 applying more to the Feds than it is to the State, and
28 that's that we would like active management of our fish
29 and game resources for the benefit of producing fish and
30 game for subsistence purposes. That active management
31 may have to include predator control, stocking or
32 anything like that, which currently is not acceptable
33 under current Federal attitudes, although most of us that
34 have been around awhile know you don't have to go very
35 far back to find that the Fish and Wildlife Service was
36 very active in those departments and a lot of the
37 successes that we enjoy came from the fact that Fish and
38 Wildlife Service took an active part in the management of
39 producing populations of fish and game in the state of
40 Alaska for the use of its residents.

41
42 So those are three things that I come
43 across. Does anybody else come across anything else.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I have one that I'd like
48 to throw out and that's something that we've ran into as
49 we've dealt with making suggestions as a Council. We
50 recognize the fact that data is important. We've asked

1 for harvest reports and good reporting and things like
2 that. It's always been interesting to me that in a lot
3 of cases the Alaska Department of Fish and Game wants to
4 hold the Federal subsistence to a higher standard of
5 reporting than it holds itself.

6
7 In other words, we put a 72-hour
8 reporting period. They want a 24, but at the same time
9 theirs is a two week or a two month or something like
10 that. I would like to see both parties agree to have
11 timely reporting and accurate recordkeeping of the
12 amounts taken so we actually have knowledge of what's
13 happening in the state of Alaska. Everywhere I go I hear
14 that, you know, what's being reported isn't actually
15 what's being taken and a lot of the reporting is done at
16 such a time -- you know, the reporting is done so late it
17 has no effect on what's going on for the year. I know as
18 a Council we pushed to have active reporting and timely
19 reporting and I think the State should be held to the
20 same standard.

21
22 Judy.

23
24 MS. CAMINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Kind
25 of a mix of comments from specifics to some of the
26 process, so I'll try to sort them out a little bit here
27 too. Again, we made comments in the October meeting, so
28 I'd hope some of those would be incorporated by
29 reference. One of those, and this is more of a process,
30 what dialogue has been taking place on this MOU. Just
31 like the Board is willing to be much more open and
32 transparent about executive sessions, I think it would be
33 helpful to keep the RACs and tribes and others informed
34 on what discussions take place on this MOU. It's
35 mentioned that liaisons would be appointed. It would
36 just be very useful for people to know who those folks
37 are or will be and that might be another point of contact
38 as well. I think feedback from those meetings would be
39 very useful.

40
41 You mentioned specifically section 4,
42 number 3, when responding to Gloria's point and AFN's
43 point, which is a really good one. I guess harvestable
44 surplus is usually thought of as a State term, so maybe
45 there's a similar Federal term that can be included in
46 this. As you aptly suggested, it would probably be good
47 to divide out that whole point and have one point for the
48 Feds and one for the State and use the proper terms for
49 each.

50

1 I think the Western Interior wording is
2 really good and I would support that. AFN mentions the
3 use of State management plans as a basis and I think that
4 could be reevaluated also.

5
6 If fish and wildlife populations are
7 overharvested, the Board needs to act very quickly with
8 closures. Also the Park Service has a particular role in
9 preserving natural and healthy populations and healthy
10 populations on Park Service lands. One example would be
11 if male to female ratios decline, take action and can
12 certainly use input from the Southcentral RAC.

13
14 I think considering tribes would be very
15 important and I guess you did get several suggestions on
16 how to incorporate that into the MOU. Then, as you said,
17 working to figure out consultation with respect to this
18 MOU will also be a challenge.

19
20 I think that's what I had. I really
21 appreciate hearing the comments from the other Councils
22 who have met before us. I know some of it's on a short
23 timeframe, but any information that can be sent to us
24 ahead of time so we can think about those comments before
25 our meeting or the day of our meeting that would be great
26 to have in the future too. It's very helpful to know
27 what they're doing in deciding. Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Gloria.

30
31 MS. STICKWAN: I just want to say that
32 this MOU is needed to work -- for the Federal Board to
33 work with the State of Alaska, but I disagree with you
34 about aligning the season and dates. I think the Federal
35 management should be more liberal in their season and bag
36 limits if there's no conservation concern.

37
38 About the advisory committees, I don't
39 know. I think it would be better to give more deference
40 to the RACs than the advisory committees. Listen to
41 them, but not take their word over the RACs because that
42 will be perceived as the Federal Board working with State
43 of Alaska and that's what started all this, was how it
44 was perceived by the Native people.

45
46 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Gloria.
47 Anybody else.

48
49 (No comments)
50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I agree with Gloria that
2 when possible the Federal seasons should be more liberal.
3 At the same time, we have made seasons that are more
4 liberal and we have made seasons that align with the
5 State when it's in the best interest of everybody
6 involved. Personally I know that sometimes we're turned
7 down, sometimes we're not on that.

8
9 So should we as a Council support the MOU
10 in principal and then ask that these different comments
11 be taken into consideration. I think a motion to that
12 effect would be in order if somebody wishes to make it.

13
14 MS. STICKWAN: If you could include that
15 we can get feedback with that too.

16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And that we'll get
18 feedback on what changes are made. Would you like to
19 make the motion.

20
21 MS. STICKWAN: I guess so. Just what you
22 said.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved. Do I
25 have a second.

26
27 MR. BLOSSOM: Second.

28
29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved and
30 seconded that we will support the MOU in principal. We'd
31 like all these suggestions taken into consideration and
32 we'd like feedback on what happens.

33
34 Any discussion. Doug.

35
36 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair. Polly, I guess
37 to make mine more clear, what I was discussing is that I
38 think the RACs and the local advisory committees need to
39 be listened to. You know, you see them in this thing
40 several places. They need to be made sure that they're
41 important.

42
43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Doug.

44
45 DR. WHEELER: I believe that I've
46 captured that, but I guess what I think I'll do is
47 summarize your comments and send them out to those -- I
48 know we had a discussion earlier. You don't have email,
49 but maybe I could fax them to you or something like that,
50 just make sure they're captured correctly.

1 (Council nods affirmatively)
2
3 MS. STICKWAN: I have a question.
4
5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Gloria.
6
7 MS. STICKWAN: When is this MOU reviewed?
8 Is there a time when you guys review it?
9
10 DR. WHEELER: Keep in mind it's not OSM,
11 it's the Federal Subsistence Board and the State. They
12 did have a signatories meeting in November and the MOU
13 does call for an annual review of the MOU. I think the
14 Board is interested in kind of hearing -- getting the
15 comments back from the Councils and probably addressing
16 it this summer, but again recognizing that the Board
17 needs to work with the State because it's a mutual --
18 it's a document that's signed by both entities. A date
19 has not been set, but there's recognition because they
20 have direction from the Secretary that this needs to be
21 done, that they'll be doing it sooner rather than later.
22
23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Polly. I
24 think you brought out one thing. It is a joint document,
25 so just like any other thing where you're working with
26 two entities. You can have things that you would like to
27 do as one entity and the other one may have something
28 that's contradictory and you may end up having to come up
29 with a compromise. We don't necessarily get everything
30 we would like when we have two entities dealing with each
31 other.
32
33 In fact, the way I used to put it when I
34 dealt on the PWSAC Board, if anybody goes away happy,
35 somebody got cheated. Both sides have to feel like they
36 lost something. If one side feels like it got everything
37 it wanted, then the other side somehow or another didn't
38 get listened to.
39
40 So, with that, the motion is on the
41 table.
42
43 MR. BLOSSOM: Question.
44
45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The question has been
46 called. All in favor signify by saying aye.
47 .
48 IN UNISON: Aye.
49
50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: All opposed signify by

1 saying nay.

2

3

(No opposing votes)

4

5

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Motion carries. Judy.

6

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MS. CAMINER: Mr. Chair. I thought of one more thing since we're discussing the program review that I neglected to bring up yesterday, or maybe two.

One is that we've had some discussions in the past about the ability or authority of RACs to put forward an RFR and I wondered whether we wanted to spend a few minutes on that this morning.

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy, and thank you for reminding me we talked about that earlier. I couldn't read my writing. I guess if I put my glasses on maybe it would help. Anyhow, this I don't think would come under the Memorandum of Understanding, but this would be something for the Board. It's something that's come up -- we've dealt with RFRs that have been instigated by the State and one of the questions that's come up repeatedly in our meetings is why can't we as Council put in an RFR.

Polly, do you have an answer for us or a way that we could go? What would we have to pursue to get the ability to do that or is it a non-pursuable goal?

DR. WHEELER: Well, I have been accused of being overly optimistic at times, but not recently.

(Laughter)

DR. WHEELER: I think the current position of the Federal program is that the RACs cannot submit RFRs because the RACs can't be an aggrieved party. I think that it's always a good idea to question positions, so I don't think it's unreasonable and I will tell you you have good company. The Southeast RAC has been on this issue for a number of years.

I don't know where it's going to go, but I don't think it's ever a bad idea to raise a concern. I've got it written down here and this can be -- I mean it's certainly within the Council's purview. What you may want to do is raise it in your annual report because then it has to get a response. So that may be a way to get an answer. It may be the same answer I just gave

1 you, but at least you put it up there as an issue that
2 this Council wants some resolution on. Mr. Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Polly. That's
5 what I was just going to ask you, if that would be a
6 proper thing to put in an annual report. If it is, then
7 that's where it's going. Tom.

8
9 MR. CARPENTER: Is it even -- you said
10 that the RAC cannot be considered an aggrieved party.
11 What if the RAC feels that the Federal Board acted in a
12 manner where they didn't show deference to our decision?

13
14 DR. WHEELER: I would raise that in the
15 annual report as a justification for why you're
16 questioning the position. Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Tom. Judy.

19
20 MS. CAMINER: One other thought, just
21 slightly changing topics. Yesterday when we were talking
22 about tribal consultation I think we had a request or it
23 was mentioned that there will be a tribal roundtable
24 going on in June and I think there was maybe looking for
25 interest in participation or support for that. Just
26 something for some of the RAC members to consider as it
27 gets closer to June. Maybe Polly has more information on
28 it. Thanks.

29
30 DR. WHEELER: I don't have a lot of
31 information, but I have heard about it because I've been
32 at Council meetings in the past month or so and it's a
33 roundtable -- it's organized by Sky Starkey. It's a
34 roundtable of folks that are going to be up at the NPFMC
35 meeting in Nome where they're dealing with chum bycatch
36 in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands pollock fishery.

37
38 So I will tell you that the ability to
39 get rooms in Nome right now four months out is a
40 challenge. I have some rooms reserved under my own
41 credit card, which I'm not supposed to do, for RAC
42 members because we did promise the four affected RACs,
43 YK, Western Interior, Eastern Interior and Bristol Bay,
44 that we would bring a representative from those Councils
45 up to that meeting to provide testimony to the NPFMC
46 regarding chum bycatch.

47 I mention that because rooms are a hot
48 commodity right now. The Councils that are going there
49 are Councils that are directly affected by the chum
50 bycatch decision. So it may be an opportunity to -- I

1 think it might be difficult to find a place to stay. I'm
2 not discouraging it, but if you know people in Nome, you
3 may want to -- if this Council wants to send somebody up
4 to that, we could probably figure out a way to do that.
5 The Park Service bunkhouse has been locked up for months
6 and Aurora Suites has been locked up and the Polaris does
7 have some rooms, probably not surprisingly.

8

9 (Laughter)

10

11 DR. WHEELER: But it may be a challenge
12 is all I'm saying.

13

14 Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: At this point, is the
17 roundtable discussion kind of an ad hoc discussion or is
18 it something that's going to be promoted by the Office of
19 Subsistence Management?

20

21 DR. WHEELER: My understanding is there's
22 going to be a lot of tribal folks up at that meeting and
23 non-tribal folks. Sky Starkey, like I said, was
24 organizing it. We have had no involvement. I'm not
25 really sure what the driving force is behind it. I don't
26 know if it's tribal involvement in the North Pacific
27 Fishery Management Council process or what. I can't
28 speak to it. Mr. Chair. We support people in doing what
29 they want to do within the confines of what we can do.
30 Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

33

34 MS. CAMINER: I think there was a handout
35 that Sky gave to us. I guess my understanding was maybe
36 trying to develop some suggestions or some sort of maybe
37 a clearinghouse or whatever the right word would be for
38 the Federal Subsistence Management Program to have for
39 consultation.

40

41 DR. WHEELER: The only thing I would say
42 to that is there's not going to be a lot -- I mean it's
43 western Alaska and there's a whole other part of Alaska
44 that isn't necessarily going to be represented at that
45 meeting, so I would just caution that's some viewpoints,
46 but it's not the only viewpoints.

47

48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The other thing is, this
49 is not an Office of Subsistence Management meeting. This
50 would be, like I said, an ad hoc group. But it would be

1 a way for people to get together and make some headway
2 maybe. Maybe could come up with a consensus that they
3 could bring forward.

4

5 If there is anybody interested in going
6 in June, Gloria or somebody like that, I'm sure the rest
7 of the Council would support them going. I don't know
8 whether that can be done under OSM or they have to go as
9 an individual or what at this point in time. Maybe they
10 could go if there's some tribal funding or something like
11 that. Can you give us any kind of idea on that? Would
12 there be provisions to go as a member of the RAC?

13

14 DR. WHEELER: Well, again, we're sending
15 representatives of the Councils that are directly
16 affected by the chum bycatch issue in western Alaska.
17 I'm not going to say it's not possible because I don't
18 really know. Like I mentioned yesterday, we're having to
19 cut our travel budget by 10 percent. I don't know if Sky
20 or whoever else is organizing that discussion if they
21 have travel funds. I honestly don't know. I think
22 Kawarek has probably been involved with that. We're
23 sending people up because of the chum bycatch issue. We
24 potentially could send people up for the tribal group,
25 but we haven't made that offer to any of the other
26 Councils. I don't know how that's going to work. Mr.
27 Chair.

28

29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Then maybe what I should
30 do as a Chair is suggest that if there's any member of
31 our Council that would be interested in doing that, to
32 get in contact with you and that as a Council we could
33 support them, but I don't think at this point there's a
34 need to appoint somebody to go when you don't even know
35 whether they can go. If somebody wants to take a trip by
36 themselves up there, I'm sure they would be welcome in
37 the discussion as a Council member.

38

39 Any other thoughts on that by anybody
40 else, by Polly.

41

42 DR. WHEELER: The only cautionary note
43 that I would say, Mr. Chair, is just remember, and you
44 know this, since the Council hasn't taken specific
45 action, if a person does go representing the Council they
46 need to be careful about what they say the Council's
47 perspective is.

48

49 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Right. They can't say
50 the Council perspective, but they can definitely listen

1 and participate as an individual.

2

3 DR. WHEELER: Absolutely.

4

5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

6

7 MS. CAMINER: So we'll rely on MS.
8 MUSHOVIC to get in touch with those tribal members who
9 aren't here right now to let them know about this option.

10

11 Thanks.

12

13 MS. MUSHOVIC: (Nods affirmatively)

14

15 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy. With
16 that, what time have we got?

17

18 DR. WHEELER: 10:50.

19

20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Oh, we have lots of
21 time.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. We're going to go
26 onto a summary of the January 5th Federal Subsistence
27 Board executive session.

28

29 DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. That's actually
30 just for your information. It's on Page 56 in your
31 books. As I mentioned yesterday, there's the written
32 summary which shows you who was there, both Federal Board
33 and Staff, what the general discussion was and what their
34 movement is or what their direction is. Again, on the
35 three pages following that written review there's a
36 matrix that kind of expands upon. Gives you the action
37 items and then what the -- the status, the next steps and
38 RAC involvement will be. So that's just for your
39 information, Mr. Chair. Again, keep in mind that the
40 Federal Board will be doing these report out type -- or
41 these out reports from when it goes into executive
42 session.

43

44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I was just going to ask
45 if anybody has any questions on that. Tom.

46

47 MR. CARPENTER: I just had one thing.
48 You stated yesterday that the two reasons the Federal
49 Board could go in executive session were for legal
50 matters and for personnel matters, and when I read

1 through the -- I understand that no formal action was
2 taken at the meeting, but when I look at the summary of
3 comments that came out, I'm not really sure that the
4 things that are listed here are either one of those, so
5 why were they in executive session?
6

7 DR. WHEELER: They're required to go into
8 executive session if it's a personnel matter or a legal
9 matter, but they can go into executive session for other
10 matters. I think the Board felt with the new Chair and
11 with all these action items coming from the Secretary it
12 wanted the ability to kind of have an open discussion.
13 I think people -- sometimes when you have a microphone in
14 front of you you don't want to display your ignorance and
15 I think there was some thought that people wanted to be
16 able to have an open discussion to kind of get to a
17 common understanding of what the issues are and what
18 direction they were being given by the Secretary.
19

20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So what you're saying,
21 Polly, is they're not limited to those but they are
22 required to go into executive session for those two
23 reasons.
24

25 DR. WHEELER: That's my understanding,
26 Mr. Chair.
27

28 MR. CARPENTER: Well, I guess the only
29 thing I'd say to that is I guess I understand the
30 clarification that really they're not restrained in any
31 regard to what they can go into executive session for.
32 I guess my only thing would be, in reading the major
33 topics that they were discussing there, it's apparent to
34 me at least that those kind of -- you know, when you're
35 talking about increasing the membership on the Federal
36 Board, the deference to the RAC and things like that,
37 those are things that the general public in general
38 discussions just like this format here are very
39 interested in. I would hope in the future understanding
40 that a lot of the Federal Board members are new, the
41 chairman is new, I understand that, but it would be my
42 hope that in the future especially random discussions
43 like this, ignorance or not, that the more of those that
44 could be held in open meeting versus executive session is
45 better for the process.
46

47 DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. If I could
48 respond. I think that the Board agrees with that. I
49 just want to read you the purpose of executive session
50 just so that it's clear on the record what the Board

1 guidelines are. Again, we will include a copy of these
2 guidelines in subsequent RAC books so that you'll be able
3 to know what they are, but they read and I'm quoting from
4 the document: Executive sessions are held at the
5 discretion of the Chair for the purpose of reviewing
6 proprietary data or private information, engaging in
7 attorney/client communications, making decisions on
8 personnel matters, including Regional Advisory Council
9 nominations, and addressing other issues determined by
10 the Chair to be appropriate for a closed session and for
11 which a public meeting is not required by law. The Board
12 will not engage in regulatory rulemaking or act on
13 regulatory proposals during an executive session.

14
15 The concerns that were raised in the
16 subsistence program review were that decisions were being
17 made in executive session and the Board heard that loud
18 and clear and the Board is quite clear that it's not
19 allowed by law and it will not engage in regulatory
20 rulemaking or act on regulatory proposals. But I think,
21 again, because it was a relatively new Board, because
22 there were a lot of items that came out of the
23 Secretarial review, they opted to do this in executive
24 session with the provision that they would have a
25 complete report-out.

26
27 Again, Mr. Towarak is well aware of the
28 sensitivity of this and was a little bit reluctant to go
29 into it, but recognized that this was valuable and people
30 felt like it was valuable, but they wanted to report-out
31 fully.

32
33 I hear your concerns and I will certainly
34 let them know what they are.

35
36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Polly.
37 Personally, I think I remember a couple executive
38 sessions that I know did cause some heartburn. Basically
39 they were executive sessions during the Board meeting
40 when they were discussing regulations and then they came
41 out with kind of a consensus after their executive
42 session. Decisions weren't made and it wasn't passed, but
43 it was pretty obvious that points were made in there and
44 people settled some differences and came out with a
45 consistent vote on their regulations and that I objected
46 to at the time and I'm glad to see that that kind of
47 stuff won't be done in the future. When we're dealing
48 with regulations that affect other people it needs to be
49 done.

50

1 Any other questions, comments.
2
3 MS. STICKWAN: Excuse me.
4
5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Gloria.
6
7 MS. STICKWAN: Tom, I was in the
8 executive session. The Chair did invite me to sit in
9 there.
10
11 MR. CARPENTER: Oh, good.
12
13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Polly, I
14 think we're onto the chinook salmon bycatch in the Gulf
15 of Alaska.
16
17 DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. All that I have
18 is a written briefing. It was my understanding that the
19 North Pacific Fishery Management Council staff were going
20 to be here to speak to that because that is quickly
21 outside of my area of expertise fortunately. The OSM
22 written briefing begins on Page 61 in your books and
23 there's somebody here that can speak to the North Pacific
24 Fishery Management Council process.
25
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you.
29
30 *(This portion not recorded in our sound
31 system - there may be indiscernibles)**
32
33 MS. EVANS: I'd like to introduce myself
34 to the members of the Regional Advisory Council. My name
35 is Diana Evans. I work for the North Pacific Fishery
36 Management Council. I'm here to give you a brief update
37 about our current work on gulf chinook bycatch.
38
39 Just to give you a little background
40 about the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, the
41 council works with the National Marine Fisheries Service
42 cooperatively. Together they manage the offshore Federal
43 fisheries of Alaska, so we're talking three to 200
44 nautical miles. The fisheries we're talking about are
45 largely the groundfish fisheries, pollock, Pacific cod,
46 halibut, flatfish, rockfish fisheries. The Council makes
47 recommendations to the National Marine Fisheries Service
48 and then National Marine Fisheries Service approves
49 recommendations, implements them and enforces them. So
50 we work very closely together.

1 Management of the groundfish fisheries is
2 governed under the
3
4 Magnuson-Stevens Act. The Council is made up of 15
5 members. There are 11 voting members and four non-
6 voting. Of the voting members, four of those seats are
7 designated for fishery managers. At the Federal level,
8 the National Marine Fisheries Service regional
9 administrator and then the fishery managers from the
10 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Washington and Oregon
11 Departments of Fish and Wildlife.

12
13 There are also seven appointed seats for
14 the other voting seats and those are designated five for
15 the State of Alaska and two for the State of Washington.
16 The seats are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce
17 based on a short list of names that come from the
18 governor of each state, so it's appointed through the
19 governor and the Secretary of Commerce. Then the four
20 non-voting seats are for the Coast Guard, the Marine
21 Fisheries Commission, the Department of State and the
22 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

23
24 So that's the makeup of our Council. We
25 have five meetings a year. Three of them are in
26 Anchorage. One is an Alaska fishing community and one is
27 in Seattle or Portland. Each meeting lasts about eight
28 days. The purpose of setting up the council process
29 through the Magnuson-Stevens Act was to provide a good
30 opportunity for local public participation in the areas
31 where the fisheries are managed, probably somewhat
32 similar to your Regional Advisory Council system with the
33 Federal Subsistence Board. So there's a lot of
34 opportunities for public comment on each agenda item as
35 it goes through the council issue.
36 One of our recent developments is that we have made
37 available the ability to listen to the council meetings
38 online in real time.

39
40 So the council decision process is
41 basically an issue comes before the council. It can be
42 raised by the public or any agency or the council itself
43 that the council that develops an analysis to look at
44 specifically at that issue with alternatives for
45 different management measures that might address that
46 issue, there's a series of reviews, comes to a final
47 council decision and at that point the decision is then
48 submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service
49 process for approval by the Secretary of Commerce and
50 then a regulation writing period and there are

1 opportunities for public input throughout this process
2 both through the council meetings at which these issues
3 come up and then also while NMFS is writing the
4 regulation there's normal comment period on the
5 regulation issues.

6
7 So moving then into the issue
8 specifically of salmon bycatch, this is an issue council
9 has been dealing with for a number of years both in the
10 Bering Sea and in the Gulf. Most recently the Council
11 has been focused on issues in the Bering Sea and
12 developing management measures to control and reduce
13 salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries both
14 for chinook and chum salmon. While this has been on the
15 radar screen for the council in the Gulf of Alaska, we
16 have only just initiated a specific analysis to look at
17 salmon bycatch in the Gulf of groundfish fisheries.

18
19 Just a reminder, the council does not
20 have any ability to regulate the salmon fisheries.
21 That's the Commercial Fisheries and Sport Fisheries,
22 obviously, regulated by the State of Alaska, but we are
23 looking specifically at what salmon bycatch occurs in our
24 groundfish fishery, so that's where the council's ability
25 to take action is.

26
27 It is the Gulf trawl fisheries that catch
28 salmon as bycatch mostly in the pollock fishery, but also
29 some of the other target fisheries as well. Salmon is
30 considered a prohibited species in the groundfish
31 fisheries, which means it cannot be retained or sold, but
32 we do keep track of the numbers of bycatch that are
33 occurring. There are currently no specific management
34 measures in the Gulf groundfish fisheries for salmon
35 bycatch, so other than keeping track of how many salmon
36 are caught as bycatch there are no other specific
37 management measures other than they are not allowed to be
38 retained.

39
40 These are the bycatch numbers for chinook
41 and chum salmon in all Gulf groundfish fisheries, but, as
42 I say, it's primarily caught in the Gulf trawl fisheries.
43 You can see on the top graph it looks at the chinook
44 bycatch numbers. It's not really a trend because there's
45 a great deal of variability. You can see some of the
46 source of concern for the council taking action
47 immediately is that there have been higher numbers, some
48 higher years in recent years and then particularly in
49 2010 there was particularly high bycatch levels in the
50 western Gulf towards the end of the year. While this

1 issue was already on the council's radar screen, they've
2 added some increased priority to taking action with
3 respect to some kind of bycatch control measures.

4
5 If you look at the bottom graph, that
6 shows the bycatch of -- it's actually the entire other
7 salmon category, but it's primarily chum salmon. You can
8 see the bycatch levels are low. Well, they were high in
9 the '90s. Since then they've been very low levels and so
10 the council is not looking at chum action or measures to
11 control chum bycatch in the groundfish fisheries at the
12 moment.

13
14 So then moving on to looking how we can
15 address chinook salmon, the one other important
16 consideration for the council is that under the Magnuson-
17 Stevens Act the council has to do a balancing act, which
18 while at the same time it is a goal or a national
19 standard that the council should minimize bycatch, in
20 this case salmon bycatch, to the extent practical, they
21 have to balance that against the need to prevent
22 overfishing but also maintaining optimum yield from each
23 fishery, which would include the Gulf groundfish
24 fisheries.

25
26 One of the other national standards also
27 identifies that it's important to provide sustained
28 participation and minimize impacts on fishing
29 communities. So that's one of the other considerations
30 the council has to take into account.

31
32 So given that background and context, in
33 December the council initiated two specific amendment
34 packages to look at chinook bycatch in the Gulf. The
35 reason they did this was -- a copy of the alternatives
36 for these two amendment packages is in the written report
37 that Polly noted on Page 61 of your package.

38
39 The first package was an expedited
40 package to be completed on a short timeframe focusing on
41 the Gulf pollock fishery. The idea is let's try to get
42 something in place, some management measures in place as
43 soon as possible, that we can make sure that we prevent
44 excessively high bycatch years such as the bycatch that
45 occurred in 2010. The reason they focused on the pollock
46 fishery is that the pollock fishery catches about 75
47 percent on average of chinook salmon bycatch in the Gulf.

48
49 They also focused what types of measures
50 they would consider to look at something that could be

1 put in place on an expedited timeframe, so they focused
2 on two specific management measures. One is a hard cap,
3 so put in place a threshold beyond which the chinook
4 salmon bycatch exceeds that threshold you would close the
5 pollock fishery.

6
7 Then the second one, management measures,
8 was a mandatory salmon bycatch control cooperative. So
9 each member of each vessel participating in the pollock
10 fishery would have to be part of this cooperative and
11 would have to have a contract that was an agreement with
12 all the other vessels that would look at -- would allow
13 the fleet as a whole to come up with some measures to try
14 to reduce salmon bycatch to basically avoid closing the
15 fishery by staying underneath that cap.

16
17 Some of the measures that have been
18 talked about is the importance of information sharing
19 that there might be ways to identify amongst the
20 different vessels with their areas where fishing is
21 resulting in a high bycatch rate if you could find a
22 better or more efficient way to share that information
23 with other vessels and not fish in that area where the
24 high bycatch rates are occurring, that would be a way of
25 reducing the overall fleet salmon bycatch.

26
27 So there were other suggestions that were
28 talked about, but those would be best worked out through
29 some kind of cooperative agreement where you had a way
30 for vessels to talk to each other. So that's the idea
31 behind the other alternative.

32
33 Because that's a limited, short-term
34 measure to try to at least control bycatch on a short-
35 term basis, the second amendment package the council
36 initiated is a more comprehensive look, both looking at
37 the other trawl fisheries and then also potentially some
38 other broader suite of management measures that might
39 address the issue of producing salmon bycatch.

40
41 One of those would be a requirement for
42 making sure that all salmon are retained so that they can
43 be sampled and we could have better accounting of the
44 bycatch numbers. The council also identified that that
45 suite of alternatives might reconsider and put more input
46 into what kind of management measures would really solve
47 the problem and allow the fleet to actively reduce
48 bycatch, but developing that might take more time and
49 thought.

50

1 So what we've been working on at the
2 moment is just specifically the pollock analysis. We
3 have an initial review draft that was just released this
4 past week. It's available on our website and has the
5 three alternatives that I talked about; no action, some
6 kind of hard cap. The various options range from 15,000,
7 22,500 or 30,000 fish overall for the Gulf. Once the cap
8 is reached the pollock fishing would close, so it's a
9 hard cap. In order to have better monitoring and better
10 accounting or estimation of the overall fleet bycatch
11 rates, it would increase observer coverage on some small
12 vessels that don't currently have observer coverage just
13 to make sure that we have the best estimation possible
14 for meeting that cap threshold. Then the third
15 alternative is the mandatory cooperative membership.

16
17 Just recently there have been some
18 problems identified with exactly how that cooperative
19 would work, but I'm sure we'll talk about it at our next
20 meeting. But some way for the fleet to improve
21 communication amongst the fleet to get them to be able to
22 talk to each other and hopefully come up with measures
23 that would allow the fleet as a whole to reduce bycatch.

24
25 Alternatives two and three could be
26 adopted at the same time and that was councils sort of
27 vision with the packages, that we would both have the
28 hard cap and have cooperative membership that would allow
29 the fleet to come up with hopefully more creative ways
30 for reducing bycatch.

31
32 So just a quick discussion of what we
33 have in the pollock analysis. The Gulf pollock fishery
34 primarily takes place in the western and central
35 regulatory areas. It's the area that's circled here, so
36 around Kodiak and then out in the western Gulf around the
37 Shumagin Islands is a large part where the fishery
38 occurs. There are four seasons and that's dictated
39 because of stellar sea lion protection measures.

40
41 The fishery is split up into four
42 seasons. However, even though those seasons are a month
43 plus in length, the openings of the fisheries tend to be
44 very short, so the TAC is apportioned -- the fishery
45 quota is apportioned amongst those four seasons, but
46 usually the fishery opening is about two to three days in
47 many cases because the number of vessels participating
48 and the time it takes to catch the fish. All catch is
49 delivered on shore, so there aren't any catcher
50 processors operating in the Gulf pollock fishery.

1 To look at bycatch trends, bycatch levels
2 vary year to year. 2007 was the highest year in the
3 central Gulf and you can see on the graph here central
4 Gulf is the blue line. There's no real pattern. For the
5 western Gulf, 2010 was the highest year. Before that
6 there was fairly low levels of bycatch. 2003 and 2009
7 were both really little years throughout both western and
8 central Gulf. I should note here that bycatch to date in
9 2011, we're almost finished with the B season, it's been
10 under 2,000 chinook for the whole Gulf, both western and
11 central. That number is still an estimation, but that's
12 about where we are today.

13
14 There's a lot of uncertainty associated
15 with our bycatch estimates. That's one of the things
16 that makes taking action in the Gulf a lot more difficult
17 than in the Bering Sea. Our numbers in the Bering Sea
18 are much more reliable because we have higher levels of
19 observer coverage, whereas in the Gulf the fleet is only
20 about 30 percent observed or less in some areas. So we
21 use bycatch rates that are determined on observed vessels
22 and extrapolate that to the unobserved fleet based upon
23 the amount of pollock that they land. One of the reasons
24 under the alternative to look at a hard cap, we're trying
25 to look at an option to increase observer coverage.

26
27 On a related note, the council has been
28 taking action recently to improve their observer program
29 and their distribution of observer coverage in the Gulf.
30 That won't come into effect for a couple of years, but
31 that is a problem that the council has been trying to
32 address on a different track.

33
34 The size of chinook salmon caught as
35 bycatch tend to be smaller fish. The average weight is
36 about 7.5 pounds based on the observer data that we have.
37 Looking back about 10 years, it seems that the bycatch in
38 the first half of the year is smaller fish than bycatch
39 in the second half of the year. Most of our data is from
40 the central Gulf, but that pattern does seem to be
41 somewhat consistent.

42
43 One of the additional problems with
44 looking at Gulf chinook is we don't have a good sense of
45 the hot spots areas or areas where repeatedly we see that
46 chinook salmon are caught, which is why we're trying to
47 look at an overall threshold, but it makes it very
48 difficult to look at, for example, area closures, which
49 has been another tool we've used in the past for bycatch.
50 It doesn't seem to work as well for salmon.

1 I'm going to go really quick through the
2 last five years starting in 2006 where based on our
3 observer data we've seen chinook salmon bycatch occur.
4 There's a copy of my handout available. If you follow
5 the purple, the darkest block on there, that would be
6 where during the course of the year over 500 salmon have
7 been observed as bycatch. In 2010 you can see where in
8 the western Gulf in the Shumagin Islands there was an
9 area where we caught a lot of bycatch and then also
10 distributed around Kodiak as well. Overall, even when
11 you break it out by seasons, there's just no clear
12 pattern of an area that consistently gets high bycatch
13 rates for chinook salmon.

14
15 This is the million dollar question that
16 we would love to know the answer to. What are we looking
17 at in terms of stocks of origin for Gulf bycatch for the
18 groundfish fisheries and we really have very limited
19 information. We don't have any genetic sampling that
20 allows us to say what stocks are appearing in our Gulf
21 bycatch, so which chinook stocks we're affecting.

22
23 The best information that we can use is
24 coded wire tags. Recoveries from coded wire tags will
25 help us certainly document what stocks are present in the
26 bycatch, but doesn't tell you anything about the relative
27 abundance or the stock composition. Obviously coded wire
28 tags is limited by the fact that we don't tag all the
29 different chinook salmon runs. In Alaska, we only tag
30 the runs coming out of Cook Inlet or southeast Alaska.
31 Most of the tagging occurs in the Pacific northwest and
32 Canada.

33
34 Given those limitations, we do have
35 recoveries in the Gulf fisheries about a third of the
36 recoveries come from British Columbia and about a third
37 of them from Alaska and this is averaging from '95 to
38 2010. The two stocks here that are shown show you where
39 we've had coded wire tag recoveries and the top will be
40 southeast Alaska and then the bottom in Cook Inlet.
41 About three-quarters of the tags were recovered from
42 southeast Alaska stocks and one-quarter from Cook Inlet
43 stocks.

44
45 Just to show some of the complexity,
46 southeast Alaska chinook salmon stocks are generally
47 doing pretty well. Cook Inlet stocks are doing pretty
48 badly and so one of the problems that we get into is
49 figuring out what is the impact of Gulf groundfish
50 bycatch on the chinook stocks. There just doesn't seem

1 to be any clear pattern that we can use to understand
2 what that relationship is.

3
4 Regardless of what an impact might be,
5 specifically the proposed measures that we're looking at
6 in the pollock analysis should help either maintain
7 current levels or hopefully reduce current levels
8 depending on what cap we chose, but you certainly
9 wouldn't see increased levels of bycatch under an action
10 that would look at some kind of curtailment or threshold
11 at which the fishery would be cut off.

12
13 Some of the options that are included in
14 the alternatives that are under consideration would
15 increase sampling, would increase retention of salmon for
16 sampling so that we can find out more and use that
17 information to do genetic analysis to understand which
18 stocks are being caught in the bycatch and then we can
19 have a better sense of what our impact of the bycatch
20 might be directly on some of the chinook stocks that are
21 particularly of concern for folks up in Alaska.

22
23 Then finally this just provides you a
24 quick schedule of where we are. Again, this is also in
25 your briefing book, but we have the initial review
26 document out. We have our draft analysis ready. We're
27 going to be talking about that with the council in two
28 weeks time.

29
30 For the first look, the council is
31 planning to pick a preliminary preferred alternative to
32 give some indication of where they're intending to go
33 with their final decision and then we can make sure we
34 have the analysis done for that so that we can put that
35 out for public comment. Right now the council's final
36 recommendation is scheduled to happen at that June
37 council meeting that you were talking about earlier in
38 Nome June 6th to 14th. Again, this is the action that's
39 on the quick timeline.

40
41 The earliest possible implementation puts
42 implementation at 2012. After the council takes its final
43 decision it takes about a year before we actually see
44 that or a little bit less than a year, but sometime in
45 April to June of next year would we actually see the
46 management measures put in place for the fleet. But
47 that's at least the current plan for the pollock action
48 is that we would be on that timeframe. Once we're done
49 as a staff working on the pollock analysis we'll work on
50 more comprehensive analysis and start looking at maybe

1 some bigger pictures, using other ways to hopefully
2 introduce salmon bycatch in the fishery and then look at
3 the non-pollock fisheries as well.

4
5 This final slide just provides how you --
6 if the RAC wants to provide or members of the public want
7 to provide input to the council. General ways to do
8 that, we receive written testimony. Certainly if anyone
9 wants to come to council meeting and testify orally on a
10 particular action, our council website has information
11 about the agenda.

12
13 If there are any questions you have, I'll
14 be happy to answer them.

15
16 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Diane. I've
17 got a couple questions and a couple comments. From what
18 I understand, I know most people have a picture of the
19 pollock fishery in the Gulf as being like in the Bering
20 Sea with large catcher processors. From what I
21 understand from you is that's not what we have in the
22 Gulf. We have basically small boats operating out of
23 Alaska ports, right?

24
25 MS. EVANS: That is correct. All the
26 pollock fishery is required to deliver their catch
27 inshore.

28
29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So that
30 eliminates one of the perceptions that a lot of people
31 have. Could you explain the TAC to everybody so that
32 they understand what TAC stands for.

33
34 MS. EVANS: Sure. I apologize for all
35 the acronyms that I try not to let come out, but we have
36 a lot of acronyms in our processes. TAC stands for total
37 allowable catch and the way our fisheries are managed
38 it's under a quota system. That means every year through
39 the biologist and then the council approves a particular
40 amount of catch for each target species that can be
41 caught every year. In the case of pollock, the annual
42 amount that is allowed to be caught, which would be the
43 total allowable catch, the TAC, is then also split out by
44 season, so there are four seasons and 25 percent of that
45 annual TAC can be caught in each season. So that's why
46 you see this pulse fishery where there's a short opener
47 for that 25 percent of the catch.

48
49 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: A lot of that is to
50 promote retention of our communities in Alaska, isn't it?

1 I mean the onshore delivery and the pulse, the fact that
2 it doesn't all come in at one time.

3

4 MS. EVANS: Certainly the onshore
5 element, yes. The other thing that is driving the
6 delivery by season is also protection for stellar sea
7 lions. Pollock is a prey for stellar sea lions and in
8 order to make sure that we're allowing for sufficient
9 prey available for the stellar sea lions, that's another
10 reason why the deliveries are required, but it's a
11 combination.

12

13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: What's the average
14 weight of a pollock that's being caught?

15

16 MS. EVANS: That's a very good question.
17 I don't know. I could look it up for you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We don't need it right
20 now, but they're basically not a very big fish.....

21

22 MS. EVANS: No, they're not.

23

24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:that they're
25 catching. They're catching the small -- they're not
26 catching the big ones, they're catching a couple pounders
27 basically if I remember right. So are the pollock that
28 are being caught food for the chinook salmon? I mean are
29 the chinook salmon in there feeding on the pollock or are
30 they just feeding on the same bait fish that the pollock
31 are feeding on?

32

33 MS. EVANS: My understanding it's the
34 latter, that they're feeding on the same prey fish.

35

36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Now in the Bering Sea
37 aren't they currently required to retain chinook salmon
38 and they give them to a food bank or something like that?

39

40 MS. EVANS: Yes. Under the recent
41 council action on Bering Sea beginning in 2011 a new
42 management regime came in place for Bering Sea pollock
43 and that does require 100 percent census of salmon and
44 then much of the salmon that is retained then does go to
45 food banks donation program. Because of the recent
46 interest of chinook salmon in the Gulf, a lot of the Gulf
47 processors have looked into the opportunities for
48 instituting that kind of donation program in the Gulf as
49 well. I think the size of salmon caught in the Gulf is
50 a little bit smaller than you sometimes find in the

1 Bering Sea and there's some logistical issues with
2 getting the catch to the places. I think you have to
3 have large enough quantities that you can then freeze
4 them in blocks and transport them to where they're needed
5 to go.

6
7 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Currently they're not
8 allowed to keep them, are they? I mean it says there's
9 no retention.

10
11 MS. EVANS: Correct. The regulation
12 currently says that you're not allowed to keep them. The
13 exception is that you can deliver them to a food bank.
14 If they are delivered on shore, they can be delivered to
15 a food bank, so that is under the current regulations.

16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So they can keep them on
18 their vessel. That's where I was under the impression
19 that if you had salmon on your vessel you were
20 automatically illegal.

21
22 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. The situation is
23 a little bit complex with respect to that regulation in
24 the Gulf and the reason is although on the books you are
25 supposed to immediately discard your catch at sea if you
26 catch a salmon, there are some longstanding issues
27 relating to that regulation and its enforcement by the
28 Coast Guard and by NMFS enforcement. The pollock
29 fishery, 95 percent of the catch or so is pollock and it
30 tends to be not sorted on board.

31
32 To slow down the delivery enough that you
33 could sort at sea and discard the salmon at sea would
34 create safety and stability issues for the boat. Because
35 of that fact the Coast Guard and NMFS enforcement has had
36 a practice of allowing those vessels to just offload all
37 of the catch -- bring it on board, put it in the hold,
38 and then deliver it directly to the plant. As soon as it
39 arrives at the plant, the salmon are sorted.

40
41 So that's one of the issues that we're
42 actually looking at in this package would be to address
43 that issue because there has been this long-standing
44 practice of not enforcing that retention requirement on
45 board, particularly the small vessels.

46
47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So the law is there, but
48 out of safety practices it's not enforced, so the law
49 needs changed.

50

1 MS. EVANS: Correct.

2

3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The other question, you
4 said that the average weight is seven and a half pounds
5 for chinook in the Gulf fishery, larger in the spring.
6 When you look at the trawl fishery in southeast, the
7 winter kind trawl fishery, the average catch is nine
8 pounds, 9.8, so these are definitely edible food fish.
9 I mean at seven and a half pounds they're bigger than a
10 red salmon. So it's a shame to have them wasted.

11

12 When they dump these into their holds,
13 are they dumping them to RSW just like seiners or they
14 just deliver often enough and it's cold enough weather
15 that they don't worry about refrigerating them?

16

17 MS. EVANS: I believe they dump them into
18 refrigerated seawater.

19

20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So the chinook should be
21 in halfway decent shape. Okay. And you said there's not
22 much of a chum bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska.

23

24 MS. EVANS: Correct.

25

26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do you have any idea
27 what the size of the chum would be?

28

29 MS. EVANS: I don't, no. I'll look that
30 up though. I don't think I have that in the analysis.

31

32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I'll make one other
33 comment on the cooperative. Having been a fisherman, I
34 think Doug can speak to this too, it's awful hard to get
35 fishermen to talk to each other about where they're
36 catching fish even if they want to tell them that they
37 shouldn't fish there, let alone getting -- I was thinking
38 that this was a fishery like in the Bering Sea where
39 these were large catcher processors that were owned by
40 big companies and they would have incentive to work
41 together, but basically what it looks like to me if
42 you're talking about a lot of the fleet is under 60 feet,
43 you're talking about individual fishermen from local
44 communities that basically are used to competing with
45 each other, not cooperating with each other.

46

47 I could see where that could -- you'd
48 have difficulty implementing that where the hard cap --
49 the hard cap, what's going to happen there is social
50 pressure will take over pretty quickly in a small vessel

1 fleet. If this person keeps shutting the fishery down,
2 he probably won't be fishing long. I think that your
3 hard cap idea in that kind of a fleet will work pretty
4 good because social pressure is going to be pretty
5 strong. Don't catch any king salmon.

6

7 Other than that I don't have anything.

8

9 Does anybody else have anything.

10

11 Doug.

12

13 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair, you knew that I
14 would. I have several questions. The first one would be
15 if you retain these king salmon and bring them in,
16 genetically can't you tell then their place of origin?

17

18 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Blossom.
19 Yes. One of the goals -- and beginning in 2011 there
20 have been some efforts by the agency to increase the
21 number of samples that are retained so that they can do
22 that genetic analysis. Because the focus has been on the
23 Bering Sea and that's been a really important focus of
24 the agency to try to get this new sampling and monitoring
25 program up and going, we don't have a lot of samples we
26 find in the Gulf that are good samples for genetic
27 analysis. While we do have scales going back a large
28 number of years, I guess getting good genetic analysis
29 from scales is difficult because the scales degrade over
30 time or the DNA degrades over time. So samples that we
31 have that are good enough for genetic analysis, we have
32 something like 18 in 2007, 38 in 2008, 20 in 2009. We
33 have a small number of samples and that's certainly not
34 going to be able to give us any kind of understanding of
35 stock composition.

36

37 There are other issues with just pulling
38 our sample source from the observed vessels and that's
39 where we get those samples from because only 30 percent
40 of the fleet is observed, but certainly if we had a more
41 systematic approach for getting those samples and
42 particularly if we were able to get more samples from the
43 unobserved vessels, if there was a more systematic
44 sampling program put in place either through the
45 cooperative or potentially through some kind of agency
46 action, then we would have a much better basis, but that
47 is certainly an issue of importance and something that
48 people are working on.

49

50 MR. BLOSSOM: My second question would be

1 is there a time of year that seems to catch less king
2 salmon?

3

4 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Blossom.
5 Looking at the data that we have, there doesn't seem to
6 be any pattern to the seasonal catch of chinook. If you
7 look back the last six or seven years, some years there
8 was more of the catch that took place in the A, B seasons
9 and sometimes more in the fall and then other years it
10 was the reverse.

11

12 MR. BLOSSOM: My third question would be
13 have you considered closing some areas because of other
14 bycatch? For instance I take, as you showed trawling off
15 the Portlock banks, which is some of the richest halibut
16 fishing in the whole country, and I've gone out there and
17 fished 100 miles offshore and it's very hard to take to
18 see trawlers out there dragging nets full of halibut up.
19 If there's king salmon out there too, maybe if they
20 avoided some of these areas it would be a big help.

21

22 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. We have looked at
23 the issue of area closures. Our problem is that we just
24 don't seem to have any reliable evidence that areas where
25 salmon are caught in one year or even one season are
26 caught there on a reliable basis. Closing the fishery
27 out of an area where they're getting a high catch per
28 unit effort and hopefully a low halibut bycatch rate,
29 which is also another one of the issues to do with the
30 trawl fisheries because they're also governed on halibut
31 bycatch and that often closes the fisheries down.

32

33 For an unknown benefit and we don't
34 necessarily know that they would even catch high chinook
35 in that area is problematic. It's something we're looking
36 into and I think with the changes to the observer
37 coverage, when the program is put in place in a couple of
38 years time where we can get a better randomization of our
39 observer coverage, that's one of the goals of our
40 revisions to the system, I think maybe we'll be able to
41 hopefully look at that question in terms of area a little
42 bit more closely.

43

44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. I've just
45 got a couple of observations and comments on what you
46 said. I think the State of Alaska and Canada are working
47 on getting a larger genetic catalog, if I understand
48 right. That's one of the priorities is to try to get a
49 genetic catalog of where salmon come from. I'm not sure
50 how far they're getting on that, but I know samples are

1 being taken in a lot of places.

2

3 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. The catalog is
4 available and it was actually used in the Bering Sea
5 chinook analysis. So in terms of being able to identify
6 from the DNA which stocks those chinook come from that
7 process is fairly well developed. What is missing in our
8 ability to use that in the Gulf is we don't know -- we
9 don't have the samples from our bycatch to say which of
10 those stocks are being caught in the bycatch, so that's
11 the missing step and that was available in the Bering Sea
12 although not necessarily as good as you might want it.
13 Now a really comprehensive sampling effort is underway
14 beginning in 2011 in the Bering Sea.

15

16 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The catalog is pretty
17 completed then.

18

19 MS. EVANS: Yeah.

20

21 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It was interesting to me
22 to see the coded wire tags. That was some of the same
23 sampling we got from tag returns back when we used to
24 fish winter king salmon. They basically came as far down
25 from all over the place.

26

27 The other thing I was wondering is if you
28 have -- if the small boats are loading their fish
29 straight into the brine and delivering at the dock, why
30 do you need observer coverage on them? You should be
31 able to have almost 100 percent sampling if all these
32 fish are being delivered at the dock.

33

34 MS. EVANS: Mr. Chair. I think there are
35 two issues. The characteristics of the western and
36 central Gulf fishery are very different. The western
37 Gulf is the one that has really small vessels, many under
38 60-foot vessels. The central Gulf maybe the fishing
39 characteristics are a little more different. Also why a
40 cooperative program might work better in the central Gulf
41 than the western Gulf.

42

43 That argument has certainly been made in
44 terms of particularly the western Gulf in that most of
45 the vessels do seem to deliver on shore. There are some
46 issues with the agency being comfortable using the
47 numbers that come -- there's issues with having a plant
48 -- there still needs to be an observer at the plants.....

49

50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Right.

1 MS. EVANS:available all of the
2 time if you're using that system so you observe the
3 offload. I think the agency has some discomfort also
4 with the ability -- I know it might not happen, but if
5 they need to be responsible for a regulation, then they
6 need to perhaps have some more controls in place. One of
7 the systems that apparently works really well in the
8 Pacific northwest is electronic monitoring. Not
9 necessarily for counting salmon as they come on board,
10 but just for making sure that discards don't occur, so
11 you have some kind of video monitoring on deck that just
12 shows that the catch is really being put straight into
13 the tanks and then you can have an observer at the
14 offload.

15
16 As a longer term management measure,
17 that's something certainly that I think is being
18 considered for these fisheries, but it's not something
19 that we could have put in place very quickly. So for
20 this first action the council really wanted to try to put
21 something in place as soon as possible and then maybe
22 those other issues that maybe take a little bit more to
23 develop regulatorily or with discussions with the fleet,
24 that's for that comprehensive management measure package.

25
26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I would think coverage
27 at the plants has to be 100 percent, but I really like
28 the idea, especially on a small boat, the video thing
29 makes a lot of difference than having to haul somebody
30 else along. Having had a daughter who's worked as both
31 an observer and as a checker for NMFS for fish coming in,
32 I think the dock offloading works pretty good. The
33 observer thing, it's sometimes -- knowing what I know
34 about Western Alaska, I'm not sure I'd want to send her
35 out on a small boat. So, from that standpoint, I hope
36 they do develop the other one. The other thing it would
37 be a lot cheaper for the boat owner.

38
39 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

40
41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With our current GPS
42 systems and.....

43
44 AUTOMATED VOICE: Three.

45
46 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:tying the numbers
47 should be no problem at all. Any other questions for
48 Diane. Doug.

49
50 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair. I'd just like

1 to make an observation. As a subsistence board, the king
2 salmon are very important to the Copper River and also
3 Cook Inlet for the subsistence fishermen. They're
4 getting more scarce all the time, so we're taking more
5 and more interest in trying to get more back. So thank
6 you very much.

7

8

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tom.

9

10

MR. CARPENTER: I would just make one
11 comment. I would assume that the fleet itself and would
12 be kind of opposed to alternative two, which sets a hard
13 cap for salmon in the fishery. It would mandate
14 closures. My personal opinion is it's vital that the
15 council set a hard cap and I would hope that they would
16 seriously consider some sort of a hard cap. If it's the
17 way alternative 2 is written or if it's incorporated into
18 a series of alternatives, that's one thing, but it needs
19 to be done.

20

21

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Any other
22 comments.

23

24

(No comments)

25

26

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Diane, thank you for a
27 very good and very interesting report. Maybe some other
28 people aren't quite as interested in it, but I found it
29 very good.

30

31

Okay. With that we're going to go onto
32 an update on travel procedures. Do we have our update on
33 travel procedure person here.

34

35

MS. MUSHOVIC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 That would be me. There's a short amount of information
37 on Page 66 of your books. As you know, government
38 spending is under scrutiny. As Dr. Wheeler mentioned,
39 OSM travel has been cut this year by 10 percent. There's
40 also scrutiny of Advisory Councils in general right now.
41 Agencies are being audited more closely for things like
42 patterns of insufficient justification for certain
43 expenditures. I guess where I'm trying to go with this
44 is if you make changes to your travel arrangements,
45 sometimes that can result in additional charges that we'd
46 like to avoid.

47

48

To try and avoid that, most of you have
49 received your laminated cards from me already. It has
50 contact information for me that I encourage you to use if

1 you experience any kind of changes so I can work with the
2 travel arrangers to make sure that we reduce or eliminate
3 any additional fees or charges relating to those.
4 Especially until the current continuing resolution, which
5 is due to expire today, if they haven't done something
6 about it by this point in time in Washington, I don't
7 know if we're going to be on a continuing resolution or
8 get a budget for the rest of the year, but if any of you
9 are traveling while we're under a continuing resolution
10 and it expires, it would be especially important to get
11 in touch with me as soon as possible about your travel
12 status.

13

14 I bring your attention to the second
15 paragraph of this briefing. It speaks to a conversion
16 that OSM is going to undergo this year to a new financial
17 management system. If you make any changes close to the
18 time of the meeting, you might not get a travel advance
19 for it and the balance of your travel money from the fall
20 meeting is likely to be delayed because of this
21 conversion. The cut-off date for us to do any financial
22 business prior to the conversion at the end of the fiscal
23 year is July 29th. So I'm probably going to have to get
24 all your arrangements for Cantwell completely nailed down
25 in stone probably by the middle of July. That's probably
26 the high points what you need to know about travel
27 procedures. Any questions?

28

29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Can I ask you a
30 question, K.J. If the continuing resolution runs out and
31 they told make a new budget, will the checks bounce?

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 MS. MUSHOVIC: I hope not.

36

37 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Polly, don't take it
38 serious.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 DR. WHEELER: And we'll even get you
43 home.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With the current state
46 of the government I wasn't sure. Okay. But take it
47 serious is what K.J. is saying. Make sure and keep her
48 informed. If you've got a change, the earlier you can
49 tell her about the change the better. If you make your
50 arrangements yourself, you'll pay for them yourself.

1 That's basically what I read right here.

2

3 Anybody have any questions on this.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. We have a report
8 from the Eyak Tribal Organization. This is always a good
9 one too.

10

11 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: It will be a brief
12 one too. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Keith van den Broek,
13 Native Village of Eyak. I believe you all got a handout
14 that provides the summary of our chinook escapement data.
15 The numbers haven't changed a whole lot from what was
16 reported to you at your last fall meeting, so I'm not
17 going to spend a whole lot of time on this one to provide
18 you with a brief update on some other projects that we've
19 got initiated outside of fisheries, but still within
20 subsistence.

21

22 We submitted two proposals to the secure
23 rural school program through the Forest Service. One of
24 them was for the Orphan Moose Guardian Program that Mr.
25 Henrichs talked about yesterday. We're trying to get
26 some moose calves over to Cordova to increase genetic
27 diversity in our population and increase the numbers a
28 little bit. Unfortunately we didn't really qualify for
29 that program, so we weren't funded, but we did resubmit
30 that and we'll be going through a review I guess in
31 another month or two.

32

33 We were approved for funding on a moose
34 browse program, so we got about \$250,000. We're going to
35 go out and hydro-ax 300 acres of what's been identified
36 by the Forest Service in Cordova as prime winter moose
37 browse habitat. By hydro-axing what's out there it will
38 encourage willow growth and hopefully support some better
39 moose habitat for the winter population. We're pretty
40 excited about that. We've been trying for a couple years
41 to get that going. It's a program the Forest Service
42 started and has proven very successful. We'll be
43 starting that next winter.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I was going to ask you
46 what has been the results of that hydro-axing they did up
47 there on the west side of Sheridan up there. Has it
48 proved to be effective?

49

50 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: It has proven to be

1 very effective and I guess Milo will be giving a
2 presentation here in a few minutes.

3
4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I thank you for the
5 report on the king salmon. It confirmed what we all
6 knew, that there was less king salmon this year.

7
8 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: Plans are well under
9 way for another season out there, so hopefully we'll see
10 some improved numbers.

11
12 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You'll be doing the same
13 monitoring this summer?

14
15 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: Yes. We're funded
16 through 2013 at this point. We've responded to the last
17 RFP for the FRP and the Partners Program, so that's
18 undergoing review, but hopefully we'll extend funding for
19 my position for an additional four years and start up
20 another program that's sort of incremental to the chinook
21 study to look at some distribution throughout the
22 watershed for chinook.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: A lot of things from
25 your studies have been pretty eye-opening and I think
26 pretty worthwhile. I'm glad you guys did it.

27
28 MS. CAMINER: Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.

31
32 MS. CAMINER: Thank you. Seeing the
33 decline in those numbers, are we at a point where we need
34 to worry or what's the general feeling about these
35 numbers?

36
37 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: There's a lot of
38 unknowns right now. Nobody can give a straight answer on
39 why the decline. There's potentially the bycatch issue
40 is affecting the Copper River. We also had a major
41 flooding event in 2006 that flushed spawning grounds and
42 I think that's contributing to our current major decline.
43 I'm real hopeful to see the numbers inch back up, but
44 there's a lot of unknowns. It's something we need to be
45 watching very closely for sure.

46
47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's kind of interesting
48 from what's being observed with king salmon bycatch in
49 the trawl fishery in southeastern right now. Like last
50 year was poor and this year we're having a big increase

1 in inventory kings, so it's possible like you said,
2 between the 2006 floods and just the low part of the
3 cycle, we were at a low part of the cycle. Basically a
4 lot was done last year on that. We had major closures
5 and curtailment of the State subsistence fishery and
6 things like that.

7

8 MR. VAN DEN BROEK: Not the State
9 subsistence. The personal use.....

10

11 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Personal use fishery,
12 yeah.

13

14 MR. VAN DEN BROEK:and the sport
15 fisher was cut back.

16

17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Personal use and sport
18 fishery, commercial fishery, they were all curtailed.
19 That's what's nice about what we're getting. We're
20 getting fairly close to real time reports on what's going
21 on as far as king salmon going up the Copper River. And
22 much more accurate because it delineates between king
23 salmon and other fish.

24

25 I really appreciate the work you guys
26 have done myself. I think you've done good work. We've
27 got data that we wouldn't have had otherwise.

28

29 Any questions.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Okay. U.S.
34 Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds.

35

36 Molly.

37

38 DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. This is just a
39 written briefing for your information. It may help to
40 address some of the questions that you'd raised towards
41 the end of the day yesterday, Member Adler. Some
42 questions had come up, there was some interest in getting
43 some broad-based information on the Migratory Bird Co-
44 management Council, who the points of contact were and
45 how to submit a proposal if you wanted to.

46

47 So this is just included for your
48 information, Mr. Chair, and we don't intend to speak to
49 it.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Lee, have
2 you had a chance to look at this? It kind of explains
3 why this is not in our purview. That there's actually a
4 management council that deals with the migratory birds
5 and it's not in our -- we have no say in this at all as
6 a subsistence council.

7
8 MR. ADLER: Yes. Barb Cellarius kind of
9 gave me a rundown on it this morning at the breakfast
10 table, so I appreciated that. I've already stated my
11 feelings about it. I just don't like to see the ducks --
12 we're supposed to conserve them and I don't want to see
13 the population over-utilized, especially in the summer
14 months when they're nesting and rearing their ducklings.
15 Shooting waterfowl June through August to me is a very
16 wrong thing to do, especially when it doesn't add
17 anything to the subsistence of the people of Copper
18 River. I would have no objection to continuing it as
19 long as they closed the season on May 30th. That way they
20 would have about six weeks while the birds are moving
21 through, but they would be left alone during the nesting
22 time.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Thanks for
25 the information on it, Polly. Does this have -- yes,
26 there's an address here. There's an email address right
27 here and they are always open to any comments and
28 suggestions. Whether or not they take them is another
29 question, but it's worthwhile making those kind of
30 comments.

31
32 Judy.

33
34 MS. CAMINER: Polly, I know you're not in
35 the program, so if you don't know this, we can find it
36 out later, but I was just wondering who the
37 representatives are from Chugach or Copper River Native
38 association or State of Alaska so people from this
39 Council wanted to get a hold of them they could.

40
41 DR. WHEELER: If you look on Page 68 in
42 your books, it's got who the co-management council is and
43 the points of contact and their phone numbers and email
44 addresses. Just to give you the information, Doug Alcorn
45 is the head of the migratory birds program for the Fish
46 and Wildlife Service and his contact information is
47 there. Fred Armstrong is the executive director of the
48 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council. Fred is a
49 Fish and Wildlife Service employee. He can be reached at
50 fred_armstrong@fws.gov. I can pass your concerns on,

1 maybe ask Fred to contact you, Mr. Adler, and that might
2 -- I will pass that information on and prompt him and
3 send it through an email, so hopefully your concerns will
4 be raised with those guys. But I encourage you to get
5 involved in the process if you feel the need to do so.
6 Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I'd like to bring Page
9 69 to the attention of the Council members that there is
10 a proposal form to be submitted, that you can submit to
11 the management council. Anybody can do that and then
12 they have to be considered, just like they have to be
13 considered at our RAC meeting, right?

14

15 DR. WHEELER: That's my understanding,
16 Mr. Chair. The proposal cycle for the Migratory Bird Co-
17 management Council though is there's an open period from
18 November 1 to December 15 and then in April of the
19 following year they decide on the regulation, so next
20 month they'll be looking at the proposals from the
21 previous year. But, yeah, I mean November isn't that far
22 away. It's right around the corner in fact, so there's
23 an opportunity to submit a proposal during that window.
24 Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Judy.

27

28 MS. CAMINER: Just a curiosity question.
29 Do you know about how many proposals they would usually
30 get?

31

32 DR. WHEELER: I have no idea. Do you
33 know, Gloria? I don't know if you've been involved in
34 this, but do you know how many proposals they typically
35 get?

36

37 MS. STICKWAN: I don't get involved in
38 that.

39

40 DR. WHEELER: I can find out and get back
41 to you if there was an average.

42

43 MS. CAMINER: Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. That was
46 worthwhile information I feel. Okay. At this point in
47 time we're going to go to Milo. Oh, K.J.

48

49 MS. MUSHOVIC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
50 There actually is someone from the Fish and Wildlife

1 Service, Kenai Refuge, that would like to be recognized
2 under this.

3

4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay.

5

6 MR. LORRINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Council members. My name is Andy Lorringer and I'm the
8 new Refuge Manager at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
9 and I really appreciate this opportunity to introduce
10 myself as well as tell you that I consider this
11 opportunity to attend the Council meeting as a very
12 important part of my orientation as a new manager there
13 on the Kenai. I look forward to future coordination with
14 the Council and interaction with Council members from the
15 Kenai. Again, I think that's going to be a very
16 important part of my carrying out my responsibilities
17 there at the Refuge.

18

19 So thank you.

20

21 I have a couple quick updates and of the
22 things I want to say is that I promise to do a better job
23 in the future of written materials and getting them in a
24 timely fashion for the Council. There are two things
25 going on. In the past, the last Council meeting's notes,
26 there was a note about a collaborative public process
27 that involves a multi-partner coordination group on the
28 Russian River. We have been charged as part of that
29 group or that group has been charged to develop an action
30 plan for minimizing human/bear conflicts at the Russian
31 River/Kenai River confluence.

32

33 As part of that, we're moving forward
34 with a collaborative public process that is going to
35 include a series of public meetings in the month of
36 April, the week of April 18th. We will be holding public
37 meetings in Cooper Landing on Monday, the 18th; Soldotna
38 on Tuesday, the 19th; Wasilla on Wednesday and Anchorage
39 on Thursday.

40

41 I just wanted to update the Council, Mr.
42 Chair, on those activities.

43

44 I believe you have been interviewed as
45 part of the early stakeholder process. Again, I think
46 it's very important for the Council to continue to stay
47 involved and look forward to your participation in that
48 effort.

49

50 The second thing I want to bring up is we

1 had a very thorough presentation yesterday by Thomas
2 McDonough of the Department of Fish and Game about
3 conservation concern relative to bull/cow ratios
4 specifically on the Kenai Peninsula. I wanted to say
5 that from the Refuge perspective one of the things that
6 I've done or been able to do early in my tenure is spend
7 considerable time with my Fish and Game colleagues
8 locally in reviewing information and reviewing data.

9
10 Without question, I wanted to tell you
11 that we share the Department's conservation concerns
12 relative to low bull/cow ratios on the Kenai. Given
13 timing, scheduling, etc, etc, the Board of Game will be
14 considering recommendations for several proposals dealing
15 with moose harvest regulations in their upcoming meeting
16 in late March. There is the potential for action to be
17 taken.

18
19 If that action is taken and if it
20 involves becoming more restrictive than the current
21 general season regulations, that will result in a
22 misalignment from the standpoint of antler configuration
23 regulations and season timing with the current Federal
24 subsistence regulations. I think that's a situation that
25 will require out attention.

26
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Out of curiosity, on the
30 Refuge there, how many moose were taken under subsistence
31 regulations in this last year?

32
33 MR. LORRINGER: I have a summary of the
34 data here. We had 59 permits issued and I believe we
35 have complete reporting. I believe we have 59 reports in
36 now. There were two taken in the early season and two in
37 the late season.

38
39 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So a total of four
40 moose.

41
42 MR. LORRINGER: Yes, sir.

43
44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Doug.

45
46 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Andy,
47 good to see you here. What can you do? We heard from
48 Tom yesterday and you really have to wait until we have
49 our fall meeting to change things, don't you, or how does
50 that work?

1 MR. LORRINGER: Mr. Chair. Thank you,
2 Council Member Blossom. From a procedural standpoint,
3 I'm going to ask Jerry here to answer what the procedural
4 options are.

5
6 MR. BERG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Jerry
7 Berg with Fish and Wildlife Service. I think many of you
8 are aware that in order to make a change on the Federal
9 side we'd have to have a proposal and the deadline is
10 next Friday for a change on the Federal side. Of course,
11 the Board of Game meeting doesn't occur until after that
12 deadline, so we won't really know going in what the Board
13 of Game is going to do, but it's possible they might
14 change it pretty significantly from what our regulations
15 are now and if that shift is made -- the Chair pointed
16 out the subsistence harvest has been very low, but that
17 shift -- there could be a shift towards Federal
18 regulations if the Board of Game were to put restrictions
19 on the State side. That could increase tensions on the
20 Kenai, as you guys well know. You know, what went into
21 putting some of those regulations in place in the first
22 place, so it's just a concern. This could end up back in
23 your guys's lap next fall if a proposal is submitted and
24 we just wanted you to be aware of that and some of the
25 repercussions that might come out of the Board of Game
26 meeting. It sounds like there's possibly some pretty big
27 changes that might occur on the Kenai and what that might
28 entail.

29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Doug.

31
32 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, follow up. The
33 reason I'm asking is I believe changes are needed. I've
34 told them for a long time that had to happen and they
35 finally decided it. We have this problem on the Federal
36 end, which is 60 percent of the Kenai and we want to get
37 along. There's nothing that can really happen until we
38 have our fall meeting and look at proposals if they come
39 forward for something to do, is that correct?

40
41 MR. BERG: Yeah, I think in general that
42 is true, so it kind of depends on whether a proposal is
43 submitted on the Federal side by next Friday, which is
44 the deadline, or not. If it's not, the other avenue is
45 a special action request that you guys have been talking
46 about earlier today and anybody can submit a special
47 action request to align with Board of Game actions or
48 make an adjustment along the lines of what the Board of
49 Game did. So that's another avenue that can be taken.
50 It's either a proposal and/or special action request that

1 could address.

2

3 MR. BLOSSOM: But this can't happen until
4 fall. That's when we will look at it and do whatever we
5 do.

6

7 MR. BERG: I'm sure whatever the Board of
8 Game does you guys will get a report on it next fall and
9 any proposals that are submitted by next Friday will come
10 before you next fall, but we don't know whether there
11 will be any proposals at this point. If a special action
12 were to be submitted, then that would most likely come
13 before you next fall. I don't know if a special action
14 request might occur before your next fall meeting, but
15 certainly if a proposal is submitted that would be before
16 you next fall. Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Jerry. I
19 have a question. Like you said, probably the average is
20 pretty close to the four that was taken this year over
21 the years. It's never been very big. We have the
22 ability to close it if we see a conservation concern as
23 a special action. At the same time, we don't have the
24 necessity to align with the State season other than for
25 reasons that have been brought out.

26

27 At this point in time I personally
28 wouldn't see -- I can't see four moose impacting the
29 moose population on the Kenai Peninsula. If that's what
30 the current average is that the subsistence hunt takes,
31 I don't see any reason to change it to align with State
32 seasons as long as we have the ability to -- like you
33 said, if all of a sudden there's a big jump to Federal
34 permits and the take starts going up to where it's
35 impacting the population, then we need the ability to
36 shut it down. I personally don't see any reason to
37 quickly jump ahead and try to align it with what we think
38 the State might do when there's not a conservation
39 problem.

40

41 Doug.

42

43 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. That's
44 why I'm asking all these questions. There is a
45 conservation problem. I took one of those four
46 subsistence moose just because it was on Federal land.
47 Nothing to do with anything else. It was general season.
48 So it was listed as a subsistence moose.

49

50 Anyway, what worries me -- this worries

1 me because I'm sure the State is going to do these things
2 because it's needed. We're going to have a much larger
3 take of subsistence moose this year and I don't want a
4 black eye for it. That's why I'm asking if there's
5 anything can be done because you're going to have a lot
6 more pressure on Federal land by a lot of individuals
7 because of this other. I don't know what to do about it
8 except we have to go through our channels, I guess.

9

10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tom.

11

12 MR. CARPENTER: Thank you. I would
13 assume the in-season manager on the Federal level, if
14 they see a huge impact in the number of applicants and
15 they're very concerned with the bull to cow ratio or the
16 potential harvest that you're going to be monitoring
17 pretty significantly in season. If you felt, you do have
18 the ability to take action in season to control that at
19 least for one year. Am I correct?

20

21 MR. LORRINGER: Yeah. Jerry, I may need
22 some help with this one as well. As I read our
23 regulations, certainly the authority is granted through
24 our regulations during the late season for closing that
25 hunt if conservation concern arises then. I'm not 100
26 percent sure relative to the early season. It's not
27 referred to in our regulations.

28

29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Jerry.

30

31 MR. BERG: Certainly if there's a
32 conservation concern. It's all kind of devils in the
33 details. It really would come down to what's the
34 reporting requirement on the permits that are issued for
35 the early fall season. If it's five days, you know, you
36 just have to monitor the hunt. I think if there was a
37 conservation concern we could step in and close the hunt
38 at that point. So that could be done -- you know, if
39 there was a real spike in the harvest and we would know
40 going in by how many permits were issued. If there's a
41 spike in the number issued, then we're going to have to
42 keep a lot closer eye on it. We certainly could close it
43 in season if need be.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Doug.

46

47 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair. I don't try to
48 ever steer you wrong and I have a concern. I'm worried
49 because we do have -- our bulls are gone and I don't want
50 us to be looking like the bad guys because of this.

1 Anyway, I do have a concern and I want you all to know
2 that.

3

4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I think as a Council
5 we've expressed the idea that we take for granted that
6 they have the ability to close it if there's a
7 conservation concern and we expect them, if there's a
8 problem, to monitor it very very closely. We would
9 expect if there was a problem for the sake of the future
10 subsistence take that it would be addressed expediently
11 just so we wouldn't have the kind of issues that we've
12 had.

13

14 I know just the perception is going to be
15 there that if they're allowed to take spike fork and
16 nobody else is. But that is true in subsistence hunts in
17 a lot of other places that they have additional
18 opportunity and as long as that additional opportunity
19 doesn't result and impact conservation concern, the
20 additional opportunity is what subsistence should have.

21

22 Judy.

23

24 MS. CAMINER: I agree with you, Mr.
25 Chair. This is the exact area where the words meaningful
26 preference became pretty well known based on the
27 lawsuits.

28

29 Jerry, you mentioned one thing I didn't
30 quite follow. I think you said if the State moves more
31 towards the Federal reg, then changes might need to be
32 made and I wasn't quite sure what you meant by that.

33

34 MR. BERG: I don't know if I misspoke. I
35 didn't intend to say that the State would move closer to
36 the Federal regs. It would be the opposite. Whether we
37 needed to move closer to what the State Board of Game
38 action may be in the next couple of weeks. Currently the
39 preference is that there's a 10-day earlier season on the
40 Federal side and that's really the only preference on the
41 moose season. The potential, it sounds like, coming out
42 of the Board of Game is that they might get rid of the
43 spike fork and make the season 10 days shorter, so it
44 would be 20 days difference plus the removal of spike
45 fork would be a pretty big difference between the two
46 regulations.

47

48 And we're concerned as well and that's
49 why we're here to talk to you guys and just let you guys
50 know this is kind of -- you know, what's going on right

1 now and that we're concerned about it and want to make
2 sure you guys are fully aware of it as well.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I have a question about
7 the bear thing. Like I said, I was interviewed. I
8 suggested that they at least try to interview Council
9 members that were from the Kenai. Like I pointed out, I
10 have secondhand information on that. It's not anything
11 I've taken part in or anything I've seen. I was just
12 wondering, Doug, did they ever get a hold of you on
13 interviewing about the bear conflict at the mouth of the
14 Russian Kenai?

15

16 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair. No.

17

18 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And I would suggest that
19 that would be, you know, as part of their process, to
20 make sure that Greg and Doug and other members that are
21 on the Kenai that are knowledgeable RAC members that they
22 interview them too. They'd have a lot more local
23 information to give on it than I would.

24

25 MR. LORRINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
26 advised. I will make sure that that gets passed on so
27 that contact can be made. That initial stakeholder
28 contact was a relatively small group just to get the
29 process started, but there's going to be a website that's
30 set up and there's going to be direct outreach with other
31 stakeholders as well as these public meetings, so I will
32 pass that along.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Doug.

37

38 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Andy, I
39 don't believe there was any problem with the subsistence
40 area on the Russian, was there? Those people were able
41 to harvest and didn't have bear problems.

42

43 MR. LORRINGER: Thank you, Member
44 Blossom. Yes, I believe there weren't any problems at
45 the Russian River falls related to the subsistence
46 fishery. This was a low return year overall for sockeyes
47 in the Russian River and there were minimal bear/human
48 conflicts there this year.

49

50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you for the
4 introduction and thank you for the work you're doing.
5 Like I said, we would expect that if actions are
6 necessary to be taken to protect the resource or protect
7 the subsistence rights, we would expect you to take them
8 even if we don't have a chance to put anything into
9 regulation.

10

11 MR. LORRINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
12 appreciate that. One of the things Tom had mentioned
13 yesterday was modeling exercise that is being done and
14 that is something that's been recently undertaken by the
15 local biologist, ADF&G biologist there, and that's not
16 something we've been able to sit down with them on yet.
17 I think the results of that modeling and taking a look at
18 that and helping us understand in terms of how certain
19 harvest could change would affect the bull/cow ratio will
20 be a very important part of our decisions and a good tool
21 for us to have.

22

23 So thank you again.

24

25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. At this
26 point -- what time is it?

27

28 MR. CARPENTER: Charge forward.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Charge forward? No
33 lunch?

34

35 MR. CARPENTER: Look at all the thumbs up
36 out there. Charge forward.

37

38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But -- but -- but.....

39

40 MR. CARPENTER: You can get a glass of
41 water if you want.

42

43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Let's have a five-minute
44 break before we listen to Milo.

45

46 (Off record)

47

48 (On record)

49

50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Alaska Department

1 of Fish and Game.

2

3 MS. YUHAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
4 is my first Southcentral RAC meeting. My name is
5 Jennifer Yuhas. I'm the new Federal subsistence liaison
6 team leader. You've previously seen Tina Cunning at some
7 of the meetings. She was down-filling into the vacant
8 position, but I'm here now and I intend to stay. You're
9 familiar with George Pappas. He is our fisheries
10 liaison. I'd like to report to the committee that we
11 have just recently hired a wildlife liaison. That
12 position has been vacant for the last three years. It's
13 really going to help facilitate our upcoming wildlife
14 cycle.

15

16 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. George.

17

18 MR. PAPPAS: Yes, our wildlife liaison's
19 name is Glen Stout. He was a Galena area manager for 10
20 years. A very competent wildlife biologist.

21

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24 That concludes our presentation.

25

26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You're not done, are
27 you?

28

29 MR. CARPENTER: That's it.

30

31 MS. YUHAS: You heard from Dr. Simon this
32 morning and you heard from our moose biologist yesterday
33 morning and we don't have anything to add unless the
34 Council has questions.

35

36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Does the Council have
37 questions.

38

39 (Laughter)

40

41 MS. YUHAS: I told you we could be short
42 and sweet.

43

44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay, we'll excuse you.
45 Thank you muchly for the update.

46

47 Okay. National Park Service. We've
48 already heard from Wrangell-St. Elias and we've had the
49 letter from the Denali. What are you pointing at?
50 You're pointing at the Forest Service. We'll get to you,

1 Milo. Now we go back to the U.S. Forest Service.

2

3 MR. KESSLER: Good morning or it may be
4 good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Council.
5 Steve Kessler with the Forest Service. With me is Wayne
6 Owen. Wayne is new to the region and he replaced Dr.
7 Wini Kessler as the director in our regional office for
8 wildlife ecology, watershed, fisheries, subsistence, et
9 cetera, and he is the alternate for the Regional
10 Forester, Beth Pendleton, on the Federal Subsistence
11 Board, so I wanted to introduce you to him. He's been
12 here for your entire meeting and I know that he's met a
13 number of you. Perhaps he might have something to say to
14 you or you might have some questions.

15

16 MR. OWEN: Mr. Chairman. Thank you for
17 entertaining me for a moment. I've very much enjoyed
18 sitting and listening and observing your operations the
19 last couple days. I have a lot of respect for the work
20 that you do and the time that you spend to take care of
21 this important resource. I am new to the Alaska region
22 having come from a very different sort of place and I
23 feel like I have a lot to learn. I'm blessed by having
24 a lot of people willing to instruct me. I just wanted to
25 say hello and invite any and all of you to ask me
26 questions or contact me at any time if you have any
27 questions about what the Forest Service is doing.

28

29 Of course, Steve here is my right-hand
30 man for subsistence sort of issues and much more
31 knowledgeable than I am, but I am at any time at your
32 service with any questions or any issues you want to
33 raise. If you have questions, fire away.

34

35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Judy.

36

37 MS. CAMINER: Are you based in Juneau as
38 Wini was or are you here?

39

40 MR. OWEN: I am in Juneau in the regional
41 office there.

42

43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So you are both Chugach
48 and Tongass, right?

49

50 MR. OWEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Do we have
2 anything else for the Forest Service.

3
4 MR. KESSLER: We actually have a plan for
5 this presentation for you. I was going to give just a
6 little bit of an overview of where we are budget-wise for
7 this year, next year. Just to let you know because I've
8 done that at least once a year for you. Then the
9 Chugach, Milo and Robert, they'll come up and give you a
10 little bit about what's going on. Then Jeff Bryden will
11 come up here and talk a little bit about the law
12 enforcement programs.

13
14 So just very briefly, budget-wise, I know
15 Polly has talked about this a little bit. For this
16 fiscal year 2011, of course we still don't have a budget.
17 Our expectations for 2011 is that we'll have something on
18 the order of what we had in 2010, but really what
19 Congress decides to do is a big unknown.

20
21 In 2010 you might remember the
22 appropriated line item for the Forest Service that was
23 cut in half from approximately \$5 million to \$2.5
24 million. At the same time, the budgetary language said
25 that there will be additional funds that come from other
26 sources and that did happen for 2010, approximately
27 \$1 million came from our normal wildlife and fisheries
28 program dollars and half a million dollars from our
29 normal law enforcement dollars.

30
31 Something similar to that is expected for
32 2011 for this fiscal year. For 2012, all we have to work
33 on right now is the president's budget request to
34 Congress and in that president's budget request for
35 subsistence for the Forest Service the request was for no
36 dollars. The same time the language in the budget
37 justification was that even though we want to zero out
38 the budget appropriation line item, we will fund the
39 program at a comparable level from other sources,
40 including similar funds to what we were funded in 2010
41 and expected to be funded in 2011.

42
43 That's all we know. All of that is quite
44 a bit down from where we have been in past years. It's
45 about \$4 million a year. We've been funded as high as
46 \$5.9 million. I think that was in fiscal year 2005 or
47 2006. The amount of money that has been put into the
48 Fisheries Monitoring Program from the Forest Service has
49 backed off a lot. You may know that all the fisheries
50 monitoring funds from the Forest Service are now used in

1 Southeast and Department of Interior has picked up the
2 Copper River projects. We had a fairly vibrant wildlife
3 monitoring program that we had started and parallel to
4 the fisheries program and that's currently unfunded.

5

6 Any questions on any of that.

7

8 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tom.

9

10 MR. CARPENTER: Thanks, Steve. I think
11 I've been asking you about this for a couple years and I
12 know last year we talked about it. One of the important
13 things for Cordova is that a carrying capacity study be
14 done to see what the true population of moose could be
15 sustainable on the west delta. Listening to what you
16 have to say about the dollars, is there still no hope for
17 that in the future or is that something that's going to
18 be able to be accommodated somehow.

19

20 MR. KESSLER: Thank you, Mr. Carpenter.
21 I don't know. Funding is short. I think we need to work
22 with Chugach National Forest and with Department of Fish
23 and Game and see if there's some way to eke out some
24 funding to do that. I don't know where it comes in the
25 priorities of everything else that needs to be done.

26

27 MR. CARPENTER: Thanks for that. It's a
28 concern of mine. I know on the State level too, the area
29 biologist in Cordova and also Milo, it's a concern to
30 them as well that a new study be conducted. Hopefully --
31 you know, there's money that's shared between the Federal
32 and State programs in regards to management. I believe
33 it's the State last year or maybe it's going to be in
34 this fiscal year received a pretty decent sum of money
35 from the Pittman-Roberts Act and I don't know if that
36 money is going to be spread between Fish and Game or how
37 that's going to be done, but I'm trying to push it on the
38 other end too to see if maybe some of that money could be
39 used for a study like that. Thanks.

40

41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Judy.

42

43 MS. CAMINER: I know declining budgets
44 are really difficult, but the thought of having a program
45 zeroed out is pretty worrisome. I don't know if it would
46 help if this Council wrote some sort of letter in support
47 of funding. I don't think it would necessarily hurt. I
48 would guess maybe Southeast would be interested in doing
49 something pretty active as well. Certainly we would
50 support the work that Forest Service has done.

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Judy. If I
2 remember, that was an item in our annual report, the fact
3 that we consider some of the wildlife monitoring programs
4 on the level of the fisheries monitor programs as vital
5 in the future. Again, just like what you've been
6 pointing out, they can be vital, but you have to have
7 funding in order to put them in place. We don't see any
8 short term increase in funding that I can see from the
9 political climate we have today. I think we still need
10 to stress that we support that and let the Forest Service
11 know that we consider some wildlife monitoring programs
12 just as vital as some of the fisheries monitoring
13 programs.

14

15 Steve.

16

17 MR. KESSLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
18 Judy. Two things. First of all, zeroed out doesn't mean
19 zero. It means as far as in the appropriations language
20 and the Appropriations Act, and we're part of the
21 Interior and Associated Agency Appropriations Bill, it
22 would be removed, but there would still be funding.
23 There's an absolute intent at the Secretaries level and
24 at the Forest Service Chief's level to keep this program
25 going. I just want to be absolutely clear there.

26

27 Second of all, just for your information,
28 the Southeast Council actually wrote a letter to the
29 Secretary of Agriculture about a year ago on this exact
30 same subject because the proposal then also was to zero
31 out the line item and they expressed their concern and
32 the Secretary wrote back a letter to them expressing his
33 support for the program and how he feels that this
34 program actually is really right in line with the mission
35 of the Department of Agriculture, and very important to
36 the Department.

37

38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Steve. So,
39 from what I understand from that, it sure wouldn't hurt
40 us to write a letter and it sure wouldn't hurt the Forest
41 Service for us to write a letter, the same as
42 Southeastern did.

43

44 The other thing I get from that is
45 government talk of zero doesn't mean zero.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 DR. WHEELER: Why do you think we have a
50 budget?

1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Anyway. But I think
4 that Judy's idea of writing a letter in support of that
5 is worthwhile for us to consider as a Council. Maybe
6 when we get to our annual report we'll not only put it in
7 the annual report but we'll talk about at that point in
8 time including a direct letter to the Secretary of the
9 Interior on that.

10

11 Anything else you want to bring to our
12 attention.

13

14 MR. KESSLER: Not from me, but I think
15 we're ready for Milo and Robert if you're ready for them.

16

17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Are you going to be in
18 Southeastern?

19

20 MR. KESSLER: I will be next week.

21

22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Then I will see you next
23 week.

24

25 MR. KESSLER: You bet. Thanks.

26

27 MR. BURCHAM: Mr. Chair. Members of the
28 Council. Thank you. My name is Milo Burcham. I'm the
29 subsistence biologist on the Cordova district, but also,
30 as I'll explain here in a second, for the Chugach
31 National Forest now. Next to me is Robert Stovall, who
32 I will explain and introduce here in a second.

33

34 Probably the first thing I'll talk about
35 is the Chugach Forest has undergone a reorganization and
36 as part of that the subsistence program has been
37 reorganized. The first part of that that affects
38 subsistence is we've lost Steve Zemke. He's alive and
39 well, but he's taken a fisheries -- he's the fisheries
40 biologist for the Forest now in Anchorage and completely
41 out of subsistence. His position is not being filled
42 right now and program management is being split among two
43 different people, Robert Stovall here, who is based in
44 Seward, and Tim Joyce. So they're managing the budget
45 for the subsistence program.

46

47 And now I am more of a forest resource,
48 not just the Cordova district, but a forest subsistence
49 resource who will be working on issues on the Kenai as
50 well as Cordova district. Anyway, I'll be having my

1 hands in a little bit more and learning more about the
2 Kenai, working with Robert here. Also a GS-9 not year
3 round employee, a permanent employee but not year round,
4 who will be based on the Kenai and be more hands-on, kind
5 of like I have been in Cordova and working with the Kenai
6 fishery and the hunts that are developing there for moose
7 and caribou.

8
9 So that's the status of the organization
10 right now. I'll just introduce Robert and let him say a
11 little bit about himself and then I'll give you some
12 reports on the harvest activities that have taken place.
13 So, Robert.

14
15 MR. STOVALL: Hello, Chair and members of
16 the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council. My name is
17 Robert Stovall. I'm the deputy district ranger on the
18 Forest working out of the Seward area. I'm very happy to
19 be a part of the subsistence process again here. I used
20 to work for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Kodiak and
21 worked with their Council quite frequently.

22
23 My input to the Council will be more of
24 a programmatic support. I'll be the liaison with the
25 Chugach Forest leadership team and the council.
26 Assisting with Tim Joyce the budgetary items for
27 subsistence on the Forest. I'll be making sure that the
28 positions that Milo mentioned will be hired. I'm sort of
29 the other side of the program support for subsistence.

30
31 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Robert.
32 Anybody have any questions.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So you will be based out
37 of Seward then.

38
39 MR. STOVALL: Yes. I'm a forest-wide
40 resource though however. Similar to Milo.

41
42 MR. BURCHAM: With that I'll try to speed
43 things along. It seems like I have a lot of papers in
44 front of me right now. I'm taking over some of what
45 Steve used to do at these meetings. One of them is to
46 give you guys a heads-up on projects that the Chugach
47 National Forest will be taking on in the next few years
48 that may influence subsistence. It's called a SOPA.
49 It's a schedule of proposed actions. I have it in my
50 hand right now. I don't want to go through everything

1 that's on here, but I've highlighted just a few projects
2 that could have impacts to subsistence and are things
3 that you may want to comment on. To get the full thing,
4 you'd want to go to the Forest Service website. I don't
5 have the link right now, but I could provide it for you
6 if you contacted me and I could steer you in the
7 direction of looking at everything that's going to happen
8 on the ground.

9
10 The first one that I marked here was the
11 proposed planning rule. That's the sort of national
12 direction that the Forest Service is guided by and that's
13 up for review. A new planning rule is coming out.
14 Anyway, that's the first one on here. A lot of these are
15 just continuing operations. Many of them are mining
16 plans, outfitters or lodges, so a lot of these are merely
17 formalities.

18
19 This one right here is Round Island area
20 use and development plan. This is insignificant. This
21 was taking sand from the sand dunes on the Copper River
22 at Long island.

23
24 There's two projects on here that are
25 trails. One is the Sheridan Lake Trail and the other one
26 was the Explorer Ridge Trail, which I'm not as familiar
27 with, but a hiking trail in the Portage Valley, so these
28 are two trail construction projects, one on each side of
29 the Sound.

30
31 One of them is a new telephone cell tower
32 site on Naked Island. That's going to be placed on the
33 eastern knob on Naked Island right with existing cell
34 facilities and radio towers. It's not any new
35 development, it's just adding to an existing facility.

36
37 There's one request for a private road
38 special use permit in the Twentymile area near Girdwood.
39 Somebody is looking for access across Forest Service land
40 to access private lands in the Twentymile area, just at
41 the entrance to the valley there.

42
43 This one right here is the Bean North
44 Fuel Reduction Project. This area has been identified in
45 the Cooper Landing community wildfire protection plan and
46 it removes dead and dying spruce trees on 750 acres near
47 the Bean Creek Trail.

48
49 Cooper Creek gravel embankment and willow
50 planting. The YCC would remove -- no, it's just moving

1 equipment across lands to facilitate the development of
2 a gravel embankment and sediment retention. Willow
3 planting will promote the stabilization of the banks
4 there.

5
6 That's the sort of thing. Nothing huge.
7 For anybody that's interested you can go to the website
8 and if any of these items spark your interest, feel free
9 to comment, get in on the process and comment on them.

10
11 Next I'd like to just give a quick report
12 on subsistence hunting and fishing activity that took
13 place on the Forest this last year and I think first I'll
14 talk about the fisheries. I had this handed to me, which
15 is the summary of the subsistence fisheries on the Kenai
16 this past year. I'm not personally familiar with it, so
17 this is where Robert and the new employee will have more
18 say in the future.

19
20 Anyway, a total of 169 subsistence
21 fishing permits were issued this year. The majority of
22 the permits issued, 69 percent were for the Kenai River.
23 Cooper Landing, 65 were issued and 22 were issued in
24 Hope. Ninilchik issued 30. Most of the fishing took
25 place on the Russian River at the falls and the harvest
26 from this was -- well, a total of 943 salmon were
27 harvested in the Federal subsistence fisheries on the
28 Kenai.

29
30 The 2010 harvest was less than 2008 but
31 greater than the harvest reported for 2007. Cooper Bay
32 [sic] and Hope residents harvested all but 10 sockeye
33 salmon in this fishery, so that's where most of the
34 activity took place and it was also just sockeye
35 harvested by this fishery. The breakdown of the harvest
36 was 622 sockeye at Russian River for Cooper Landing
37 residents and 172 sockeye for Hope residents from the
38 Russian River.

39
40 The Copper River subsistence fishery is
41 a much smaller fishery. I issued 52 permits this year
42 and had 48 of them returned and the harvest was 231 coho
43 salmon. We don't have very good access in fresh waters
44 to sockeye salmon on the Copper River Delta where this
45 fishery takes place.

46
47 Next I'd like to talk to the hunts that
48 we manage and the first one and the one that gets the
49 most discussion or at least in the past has been the
50 Copper River moose hunt, the Unit 6C moose hunt. That's

1 a draw hunt. First I guess I'll report that Fish and
2 Game just flew a survey here recently in the last couple
3 of weeks and their population estimate is 398 moose.
4 That's right at our objective. Granted there's a
5 confidence level in there, but that's right at our
6 objective of 400 moose.

7
8 So total numbers look okay. They were
9 down. I think they've improved slightly. We do have a
10 conservation concern, just like we've heard for the Kenai
11 of bulls. With our high moose population that we had in
12 recent years, we just issued too many permits and
13 overharvested the bull component of the herd. Last
14 year's survey showed us as having something like 14 bulls
15 per 100 cows, which is below the 15, which is the lowest
16 the State likes to manage any of their herds.

17
18 This year a fall survey indicated
19 something that I did and something that Fish and Game did
20 pointed to around 22 bulls per 100 cows, which is still
21 far from where it was and not great, but maybe showing
22 some improvement. As a result, we backed off on the
23 harvest even more. For this coming year we're taking 10
24 cows and 20 bulls total between the State harvest and the
25 Federal harvest.

26
27 Given that we've also changed the
28 application period. This is a draw hunt, one of the few
29 Federal subsistence draw hunts, and rather than having
30 the application period during the month of May, where we
31 have had our application period for the 10 years that
32 I've been here, we've moved it to winter, which is where
33 the State has moved their application period too.

34
35 It seemed to be a win/win. When I talked
36 to residents of Cordova, they were all for moving it to
37 that period because you're more likely to get -- more
38 likely your applicants will be the year-round residents
39 of Cordova, not the people who come and go, who are
40 sometimes questionably qualified for this hunt.

41
42 It didn't turn out to be the case. This
43 year I had more applications than I've ever had before,
44 but I'm hopeful that it's a result of all the advertising
45 I did. When we made such a drastic change to the
46 application period, I thought it was really important to
47 advertise it well, so I was on the scanner, on the radio,
48 had bulletins up, got word of mouth out and I think that
49 just jogged a lot of people into turning in their
50 applications. We ended up with 928 applications this

1 year, which is the most that I've ever had. I'd like to
2 think it would turn into more of a normal number in the
3 future.

4
5 Just a summary of the harvest for the
6 past year. Last year we had 846 applications by the way.
7 There were 18 bull permits available and 15 cow permits
8 available and one permit for the potlatch moose for the
9 Native Village of Eyak. The success was low. For the
10 bulls it was. We were accustomed to close to 100 percent
11 success of this hunt because of the great population
12 that we've had here just recently. Anyway, 13 bulls of
13 the 18 were taken and 13 of the 15 cows were taken and
14 the potlatch bull was taken.

15
16 Like I said, I received 928 applications
17 this year, the most ever. I have them entered and I'm
18 trying to find the time to get the draw done. That will
19 happen here in the next couple of weeks for the 15 bull
20 permits and the 10 cow permits.

21
22 That's mostly what I have to say about
23 these hunts. I can talk about proposals in just a
24 second. I think since Robert's here, I'll let him report
25 on the new Kenai hunts for moose and caribou.

26
27 MR. STOVALL: Yeah, this is the first
28 year for moose and caribou permits in the Hope area.
29 Cooper Landing has had permits for a while now. For
30 moose, not caribou. Last year the total amount of Cooper
31 Landing moose permits was 21 and we had a harvest of 3
32 animals. And in Hope a total of 14 permits were given
33 out and we had a harvest of 1 in the Hope area.

34
35 For caribou permits in the Hope area, a
36 total of 15 permits were issued and a total of 2 animals
37 harvested for that new hunt.

38
39 I just want to make a quick mention we
40 are trying to work with the Kenai Refuge in making sure
41 that hunters that have permits return them at the end of
42 the season, so we can have a good reporting data for you
43 folks. We're working on that still. That's all I have.

44
45 MR. BURCHAM: Any questions on the
46 fishing or hunting reported on. Yeah.

47
48 MR. ADLER: Black-tailed deer, you
49 haven't mentioned them. How about the status and the
50 harvest?

1 MR. BURCHAM: Okay. Most of that harvest
2 takes place under State regulations. Right now the C&T
3 for deer is four. The State bag limit is five. I don't
4 issue any special subsistence. There is no special
5 subsistence season. We did have one one year when we had
6 a conservation concern because of some early heavy
7 snowfall. We do assist Fish and Game with deer pellet
8 transects and most recently we had a little bit of a
9 downturn with some heavier winters just a few years ago,
10 but I think this year the results showed a slight
11 increase. I think in general in Prince William Sound we
12 have stable to increasing, slightly increasing deer
13 populations right now and I think this winter will be a
14 very mild one for deer in the Sound as well.

15
16 Harvest, I don't have numbers. The State
17 has those. I don't think there's generally been problems
18 for people getting deer.

19
20 MR. BLOSSOM: Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Doug.

23
24 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I take it
25 that your cow permits are to keep the herd down to a size
26 because one cow is worth 14 moose, so that's your desire
27 to keep the herd at a certain level?

28
29 MR. BURCHAM: It's to keep it at
30 objective. I think there's a population that can support
31 a cow harvest and even allow for some growth and that's
32 what we're trying to do right now. For the last couple
33 years or the last year or so we've been trying to build
34 it from slightly under back to right around 400 animals
35 and maybe trying to build it higher than that in the
36 future and even with a cow harvest, as recently as two
37 years ago, we took 50 cows. We're down to 15 this year
38 and 10 this coming year. Even with that modest number of
39 cows, I'm sure we'll still grow the population.

40
41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mr. Henrichs.

42
43 MR. HENRICHS: Yeah, so when you
44 mentioned the moose count was around 370 or 380,
45 something like that.....

46
47 MR. BURCHAM: Right around 400, 398 was
48 the estimate.

49
50 MR. HENRICHS: Okay. So did that include

1 Controller Bay?

2

3

MR. BURCHAM: No.

4

5

MR. HENRICHS: That's counted as
6 separate. What do you think the count is down there or
7 do you do a count down there?

8

9

MR. BURCHAM: That's in Unit 6B. That's
10 separate. This was just a count for Unit 6C and I don't
11 believe -- the snow conditions for counts were very poor
12 this year. Dave Crowley with the State just had a little
13 weather window with all the ice and snow we had on the
14 delta here just a couple weeks ago and was able to pull
15 off a survey for Unit 6C, but not 6A or B, which would be
16 east of the Copper River, so we don't have any
17 information for that or I don't have that information
18 right now and nothing new from this winter.

19

20

MR. HENRICHS: Okay.

21

22

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And those aren't
23 operated as a subsistence season anyhow.

24

25

MR. BURCHAM: No.

26

27

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And there's no change in
28 the regulations for those areas, is there?

29

30

MR. BURCHAM: Correct. There's no
31 Federal subsistence hunt over there. It's all managed by
32 the State with quotas.

33

34

CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tom.

35

36

MR. CARPENTER: Yeah, Milo, thanks. I
37 appreciate all the work you do, all the local meetings
38 that you show up to. You're a good source of
39 information. I would caution you on one thing. Seeing
40 how the budget -- there's budget restraints now. I would
41 like you to back off your advertising next year because
42 if you don't I'm never going to draw a tag.

43

44

(Laughter)

45

46

MR. BURCHAM: I apologize, but I would
47 have been in a ringer big time when people came back in
48 May and found out the drawing had already taken place and
49 they never heard about it. So I had to weigh that.

50

1 MR. CARPENTER: Just one other thing and
2 I don't know if you can answer this or not, but within
3 the last year or so there was a carrying capacity study
4 that was being done for guides or guiding operations in
5 Prince William Sound. I'm not sure what the status of
6 that is right now. If it's possible, if you could find
7 out and let us know that would be great because the
8 potential of increasing the guided operations or number
9 of guides in Prince William Sound would and could have an
10 impact on subsistence, so I think it's something that
11 this RAC would like to possibly look at at our next
12 meeting, if you could see that we get that information.

13
14 MR. STOVALL: I think I can speak to
15 that. The Prince William Sound framework was a review of
16 recreational use of the Prince William Sound area and it
17 included a portion where they looked at the amount of
18 guides and guide usage within the Prince William Sound
19 area. I think that's what you might be referring to.
20 That's still continuing to be worked on. It should be
21 finalized before the end of this year. A final document
22 should be prepared by the end of this year.

23
24 MR. CARPENTER: Well, the reason I ask is
25 I participated in kind of a working group that they had.
26 I believe they had one in Cordova, one on the Kenai
27 Peninsula somewhere. It was a working group that was
28 conducted by an outside group not with the Forest
29 Service. They were basically collecting information from
30 local users to find out what they thought. But that was
31 quite a while ago that this process took place and I have
32 seen nothing in the public since that point to either
33 allow additional public comment before it's formalized.
34 I would hope that before this is formalized or signed
35 into regulation that different organizations including
36 this one here would have the opportunity to look at the
37 final product and make a comment on it.

38
39 MR. BURCHAM: I have one response to
40 that. Special use permits control, another branch of the
41 Forest Service outside of wildlife or even subsistence,
42 issues permits to outfitters and guides. It's a big can
43 of worms. The number of permits that are allowed for
44 special uses is governed by different things like persons
45 at one time and these use capacities and guide capacities
46 and that is being reviewed right now, but right now there
47 haven't been any changes and the Forest Service often
48 takes a hand's off approach to issuing permits to
49 outfitters and guides, recognizing that as a legitimate
50 use and recognizing Fish and Game as the ones responsible

1 for managing populations and setting seasons.

2

3 I think there needs to be more
4 cooperation than that and I think that's where the
5 framework will take the process and the Prince William
6 Sound framework and I think there will be more discussed
7 in the future to look at the number of outfitters and
8 guides that we permit.

9

10 MR. CARPENTER: The main reason I brought
11 it up was a lot of it has to do with typically goat
12 populations in Prince William Sound. Not that the
13 subsistence user doesn't have adequate access to goat
14 populations because most of the time most of those
15 permits go unfilled, but it does have an impact on the
16 overall population and the healthy population of goats in
17 Prince William Sound. I think that by increasing the
18 amount of guides, especially with the ever increasing
19 amount of pressure that's being put on, especially
20 western part of the Sound, that we need to really look at
21 the idea that it could potentially be increased. Thanks.

22

23 MR. STOVALL: Tom, may I ask a question.
24 When is the last time you had an opportunity to engage
25 with the group that was doing that?

26

27 MR. CARPENTER: I've spoken with Bruce
28 Campbell and a couple other people in the office just
29 here and there about it. I think it's been over a year
30 ago, if not longer than that. I just really haven't
31 heard much about it lately.

32

33 I know sometimes these processes take
34 seven years.

35

36 Right, Polly?

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Tom. Is that
41 also considering the bear guides too?

42

43 MR. BURCHAM: Uh-huh.

44

45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Because to me the impact
46 on the black bear has increased. I won't even say how
47 many times in the last 10 years. It's more than doubled.
48 That would have to be considered in there too, I hope,
49 because that's also -- whether people believe it or not,
50 that's also subsistence resource.

1 MR. BURCHAM: I agree. That's part of
2 what will be looked at when the Prince William Sound
3 framework is implemented.
4
5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.
6
7 MS. CAMINER: I really appreciate the
8 feedback on Cooper Landing and Hope because it was just
9 a year ago that this Council gave C&T, set up the limits,
10 so it's really nice to know that people did go out and
11 use the regulations. Did I miss or maybe there weren't
12 anybody from Hope applying for caribou permits or hunting
13 caribou.
14
15 MR. STOVALL: Yes, you might have missed
16 it. Hope had 15 folks apply for or had gotten permits
17 and two animals were harvested.
18
19 MS. CAMINER: How about Cooper Landing
20 then?
21
22 MR. STOVALL: For caribou, there's not a
23 season that I'm aware of.
24
25 MS. CAMINER: Okay, that's what I wanted
26 to check. Thank you.
27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I have just a couple
29 questions, Milo. I was interested you had that timber
30 removal project. When the Forest Service does that, do
31 they try to give access to that timber to the local
32 subsistence users in the area so they can use it for
33 firewood or does that end up going -- how does that
34 timber removal end up going. Is it just a clear -- are
35 they making it accessible?
36
37 MR. BURCHAM: This project that I
38 mentioned in the SOPA is on the Kenai and I don't have an
39 answer for that.
40
41 MR. STOVALL: Right now the Bean North
42 project is in the planning stage and we are still
43 gathering public input for that particular project. Part
44 of what we've heard from our first public meeting was
45 that there is an extremely large need and desire to have
46 firewood available. In our process of continuing the
47 planning of that, that is being analyzed as to how that
48 could happen or how it couldn't happen and why or why it
49 could happen. So that is being analyzed right now.
50

1 In general, on the Kenai Peninsula,
2 there's two methods of firewood that's made available.
3 There's decks that are put together and then folks are
4 told about where the decks are located at and they can go
5 ahead and access it that way with a free firewood permit.
6 There's commercial operators that will have the ability
7 to collect that firewood too or bid on certain deck area.
8

9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. I know
10 that's a concern all over rural Alaska right now. If you
11 don't have access to firewood on your own private land --
12 just like we were running into with the Parks Service.
13 There's more permits and it's harder to find firewood and
14 there are a lot of people purchasing firewood. I know
15 firewood in the Glennallen area right now is going for
16 \$195 a cord and that's in eight-foot lengths. As the
17 price of oil goes up, it will probably go up.
18

19 MR. STOVALL: There is free fire use for
20 all Alaska residents on Forest Service lands. It's a
21 matter of being able to access it, like you said. Most
22 of the time you can't access it via motorized vehicles
23 because it's further off the land mat. The reduction
24 projects where there's piles along the road, those are
25 accessible to people to use if they can get to it.
26 There's different areas being planned as we speak.
27 Another area is opening up on the Kenai Peninsula in the
28 Tern Lake area. So it's an ongoing process of fuel
29 reduction, wildlife projects that are integrated together
30 and the byproduct is firewood accessibility.
31

32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Another
33 question I had, you said that you issued 42 permits on
34 the Copper River. You really issued subsistence permits
35 on the Copper River delta, didn't you?
36

37 MR. BURCHAM: Right. That's for the
38 Copper River delta subsistence salmon fishery and it does
39 not take place in the Copper River.
40

41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It does not include the
42 Copper River, right?
43

44 MR. BURCHAM: And it was 52 permits,
45 yeah.
46

47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. I wanted to make
48 sure that was clear.
49

50 MR. BURCHAM: I'm sorry.

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That is not a fishery
2 that takes place on the Copper River. That basically
3 takes place on the delta on some of the delta streams.
4
5 MR. BURCHAM: Right. In fact, nothing
6 that flows into the Copper.
7
8 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Nothing that floats into
9 the Copper.
10
11 MR. BURCHAM: Right.
12
13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Any other
14 questions. Mr. Henrichs.
15
16 MR. HENRICHS: Yeah, I'm just curious,
17 wasn't there some dipnetting going on in McKinley Lake
18 last year?
19
20 MR. BURCHAM: Yeah, that's part of this
21 fishery. That's the Alaganek system, so Wrongway Slough
22 and Upper Alaganek that leads to McKinley is one of the
23 systems that you can do this dipnetting in with one of
24 these permits. Some people in the past have taken some
25 sockeye that way. I didn't get any reports of sockeye
26 taken that way this year. All the harvest I had was with
27 coho mostly on Ibeck or Lower Alaganek by the boat ramp
28 on the Alaganek Road. In fact almost all of it was rod
29 and reel.
30
31 With this permit -- and I think word is
32 getting out about how this permit can be used effectively
33 on the delta. It's not the best area or it doesn't have
34 the best places for dipnetting, but what it does allow is
35 rural residents, Cordova residents, to go on the delta
36 and keep larger than their three fish State bag limit.
37 They can go out and catch 10 coho at once. That's how
38 most people are taking advantage of this permit.
39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So what did you say the
41 total catch that was taken?
42
43 MR. BURCHAM: 231 coho.
44
45 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: 231 coho. Kind of a
46 drop in the bucket compared to the subsistence fishery at
47 the Ibeck Ridge -- I mean the sport fishery. Okay.
48
49 Any other questions.
50

1 (No comments)
2
3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Enforcement.
4
5 MR. BURCHAM: With that we'll put Jeff
6 Bryden up here and give a little report on Chugach
7 enforcement.
8
9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. If there's no
10 further questions, we're ready for Jeff. Jeff put on his
11 law enforcement face. He's serious.
12
13 (Laughter)
14
15 MR. BRYDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
16 name is Jeffrey Bryden. I'm the lead law enforcement
17 officer for subsistence enforcement in Southeast and
18 Southcentral Alaska for the U.S. Forest Service. What I
19 wanted to do was ask if any of you all had any concerns
20 or any questions on any of the enforcement actions that
21 you've seen this year, any areas that you'd like to see
22 more emphasis put on by enforcement. I can give you a
23 little background on some of the activities we did
24 related to subsistence enforcement this year in
25 Southcentral also.
26
27 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I have one question,
28 Jeff, before you get started. When you say subsistence
29 enforcement, do you only enforce subsistence regulations
30 or if you see violations of State regulations on Forest
31 Service land do you enforce that also?
32
33 MR. BRYDEN: Yes.
34
35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So you have an agreement
36 with the State.
37
38 MR. BRYDEN: All Forest Service officers
39 have Alaska State Trooper commissions that are valid on
40 Federal lands per se. So if I'm driving down the highway
41 inside the National Forest Service boundary but not
42 necessarily on National Forest and I have somebody who I
43 suspect is a DWI, I can pull him over and take him for
44 that, domestic assault, anything like that, we can also
45 get involved in pretty easily.
46
47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Or fish and wildlife
48 violations.
49
50 MR. BRYDEN: Yes. So we just have to

1 take a look at where the activity took place at and then
2 decide whether to write them under the State or Federal,
3 depending on which is more appropriate.

4

5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Mr. Henrichs, you have
6 a question before he starts?

7

8 MR. HENRICHS: Yeah. What bothers me
9 down there is a lot of that coho fishing a lot of those
10 guys are doing a lot of catch and release. I think
11 they're going to kill that whole run off before it's
12 over.

13

14 MR. BRYDEN: It's legal currently under
15 the regulations.

16

17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Until the regulations
18 would change, that would be out of your purview, but I
19 would definitely suggest that you check the green hat,
20 the red hat and black hat thing that takes place at the
21 Ibeck Ridge because I have accosted people on that and
22 basically been told to go mind my own business. So it
23 would be something that would be worthwhile.

24

25 MR. BRYDEN: I did come in this year with
26 my supervisor and we did do some plain clothes operations
27 up there and we did write some violation notices for
28 people taking over the limits. Some Cordova residents
29 and some non-residents were both cited in that fishery.

30

31 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you. Any other
32 thing before he starts. Polly, you have your hand up?

33

34 DR. WHEELER: (Shakes head negatively)

35

36 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: No. Tom?

37

38 MR. CARPENTER: (Shakes head negatively)

39

40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Do you have a
41 report for us then?

42

43 MR. BRYDEN: I have just a few things for
44 you. The first one is that we had a vacancy in Cordova
45 on one of our officers that left the area and we just
46 recently, as of last week, filled that position, so we'll
47 have a second officer now stationed in Cordova. That
48 individual is actually a current officer in the Federal
49 agency, which basically means we can get him up here and
50 get him working instead of having to spend nine months

1 more of training him. Upon that officer's arrival, we'll
2 end up doing some very specific training as the
3 subsistence lead.

4
5 I take all the new officers in the state
6 and work with them directly in the subsistence training
7 because our Federal training doesn't actually include the
8 subsistence regulations as such. So we take it real
9 personal with each individual officer to make sure they
10 have an understanding of what they're getting into and
11 how the regulations vary and the different rules and
12 regulations that are allowed and not allowed.

13
14 So I'll be working with that person when
15 they get up here. They should be up next month for
16 in-service training and then they'll be moving up and
17 we'll have him on by mid summer working away, which is
18 excellent for us because trying to keep people around is
19 pretty tough, just as you'd expect. We had six officers
20 turn over in Southeast. When you've only got 13, that's
21 a pretty big number of constant flux in and out over the
22 years or over the last year.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Out of curiosity, what
25 is the cause for the turnover? Just the isolation
26 or.....

27
28 MR. BRYDEN: Isolation, yeah. A lot of
29 the officers we're hiring are new officers. They're
30 looking for more challenging environments. When you put
31 them in remote communities that don't have a lot of
32 activity taking up, they'll usually stay for the two year
33 wonders and then they leave. They didn't realize what
34 they were getting into when they moved into some of these
35 communities. Some of them, like me, got here and won't
36 leave. You never know what you've got coming in.
37 Basically when the officers get up here, depending on how
38 they're coming, they have one possible promotion and
39 that's it. So if you're a field officer within your
40 first two years, you're tapped out at the top of your
41 rank and there's nowhere else to go until you become a
42 supervisor. With such a small group of officers in the
43 state, we only have two supervisor and if you take
44 supervisor's position, you basically become the desk
45 person in one of the major cities, so a lot of the
46 officers try and get two or three field locations
47 throughout the country or within the state and then look
48 at going into the supervisor roles.

49
50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Jeff. Okay.

1 MR. BRYDEN: So we'll start with the
2 Russian River fishery as reported this year. We had a
3 fair amount of people that attempted to take part in the
4 fishery. It wasn't a very high number of fish return
5 this year, so with being mostly a Cooper Landing group
6 that's coming in, one person will go up and they get on
7 the phone and it works just like a dozen other
8 communities. Yeah, the fish are here or they're not.
9 Well, there wasn't a lot of numbers of fish in at the
10 times that one of them wanted to go, so there wasn't a
11 lot of attempts being made based on prior years of going
12 in. This was the third season that they did it.

13
14 We did not have the bear conflicts as it
15 was reported in the past because there wasn't a lot of
16 fish in the river. That really cut down the numbers.
17 What we did see, because it's the third year, we're doing
18 the same thing. We're showing up in the communities,
19 we're issuing the permits. I personally carry a number
20 of permits with me. We get a lot of residents. I'll go
21 around and show up at their place and give them a permit,
22 talk through the regulations, explain to them very
23 clearly this is what we've got to do, this is how I've
24 got to get the permits back to make sure that we don't
25 have the violations.

26
27 Violation-wise we didn't have any this
28 year that got reported to us. We do have some issues
29 returning, which is we're getting them all the time as
30 trying to remind people, so we're making the calls back
31 to them. Give me your permit or you're not going to get
32 one the next year. I know it's important to you, I know
33 you didn't fish, doesn't matter. Give me back the
34 information. With fish permits, just like the State,
35 they get destroyed very easily because people have them
36 in their waders, they get wet, they get destroyed, they
37 get lost. We are looking for the data, so that is the
38 thing that we're really stressing with them.

39
40 Overall it was a very good fishery for
41 us. We had no major issues. Parking is still a
42 consideration. You have to pay to come into the
43 campground. Nobody likes to pay to come into the
44 campground to do a subsistence fishery. Yeah, you can
45 park outside, but you have to fight the traffic. As
46 such, that's a continuation. I don't have an answer for
47 that. It's not really enforcement other than I get to
48 hear about it all the time.

49
50 One of the things that was brought up

1 yesterday was the closed area in Kings Bay for the moose
2 hunt. Just as a side note, we do have minerals issues
3 starting to be developed. I know we have a miner that's
4 planning on going in and doing some work in Kings Bay
5 this year, so we could have some activities associated
6 with that. The individual that's putting the plan in is
7 actually a Cordova resident, so I could see them coming
8 in there and looking around and seeing what's there. So
9 that could be an interesting deal.

10

11 Associated with the mining issue we have
12 a lot of minerals issues and ATV issues starting to raise
13 their heads. A lot of people now with the price of gold
14 going pretty high, I've started to want to explore old
15 mining areas that were not productive enough at the cost
16 of the time when they shut down the mines, but they may
17 be possibly productive enough now with the current high
18 cost. So that could effect some of our subsistence users
19 that are looking at particularly the caribou area out of
20 Hope because that area is surrounded by a lot of old
21 mines that have been pretty much put to bed that could be
22 reenacted and people starting to go into those areas. So
23 we'll just have to see how it kind of continues along
24 this year.

25

26 As far as the Unit 7 moose hunt this
27 year, we had some different numbers coming in what the
28 actual number of how many subsistence moose were
29 harvested. It's kind of an interesting thing because the
30 individuals that have a subsistence permit they get that
31 first 10 days of the season, but their subsistence permit
32 doesn't actually expire as the general State season takes
33 place, so we can actually have subsistence residence
34 shooting moose and actually getting a harvest and
35 reporting it under a State system or Federal system.

36

37 So it's really hard to figure out if
38 there was two or three or one moose shot in that area
39 because it just depends how that individual decided to
40 actually record the information in that middle season
41 when you had both a Federal and a State season taking
42 place at the same time. I don't know how to record that
43 back in, but that may be something we could try and
44 figure out a way of relocking back in to get you a true
45 number of what the actual subsistence harvest numbers are
46 on that.

47

48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Basically what the
49 numbers are of moose that were taken under subsistence
50 opportunity that wasn't available under the State would

1 be interesting.

2

3 MR. BRYDEN: Yeah.

4

5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: If the opportunity is
6 available under the State, you could still class it as a
7 subsistence moose because that's what you figure you're
8 hunting, but you could have taken it anyway.

9

10 MR. BRYDEN: Correct.

11

12 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So what we really need
13 is the numbers of moose that were taken with opportunity
14 that was given by the subsistence hunt that wasn't
15 available with the State.

16

17 MR. BRYDEN: In Unit 7 would be what
18 moose were taken between August 10th and August 19th,
19 before the general season opened up. That's the true
20 number if you're only looking at that, but it doesn't
21 mean the subsistence user wasn't actually getting a moose
22 to eat, he just may have taken it or she taken it before
23 or after on that. So it's just something that maybe
24 break the numbers back down a little bit going in.

25

26 As far as the Hope caribou, it was a
27 pretty tough hunt this year. You heard that only 15
28 people got in. I've been up here for 18 years on the
29 peninsula working. This is the first year I actually
30 drew that tag and I purposely stayed out of that area,
31 but I went in working it and the two guys that harvested
32 caribou this year both made comments that they wouldn't
33 ever do that hunt again. It was logistically that far
34 challenging. It was a sheep hunt to hunt caribou
35 basically. You think of the steepness, the terrain and
36 everything they went through to try and get them. The
37 caribou weren't in accessible areas. The caribou I was
38 locating were 17 to 18 miles in. That's walking each
39 way. Not really feasible for most older people to try
40 and walk in to carry something out like that. It was
41 young -- it was raft guides that actually got in there
42 and were in pretty good shape.

43

44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: They still had a lot of
45 work if they carried a caribou out for 17 miles.

46

47 MR. BRYDEN: I wouldn't do it and I
48 didn't do it. That's all I have. Do you have any
49 questions or any areas you'd like us to concentrate on,
50 I'd be more than happy to take a look at.

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I had a question, Jeff.
2 You brought up something to me yesterday on that Kings
3 Bay hunt and the land status around there. Could you
4 present that to the rest of the Council.

5
6 MR. BRYDEN: Sure. The Kings Bay area,
7 if you look at the maps that are back here, part of it
8 talks about Day Harbor in there. If you look on the
9 status maps, there is no Federal lands there in Day
10 Harbor at all, so there can't be a subsistence hunt take
11 place in that area. If you look up from Day Harbor, what
12 leads -- the lake that leads down into it is the Nellie
13 Juan system. Native corporation selected all the land
14 around that many years ago for a hydropower plant. So
15 all the best moose habitat, where the moose are at, is
16 actually around that lake and that corridor leading from
17 there out. Well, it's all Native corporation land, so no
18 moose hunt could take place there under Federal
19 subsistence. So what's left is some pretty sketchy areas
20 that would actually have any numbers of moose.

21
22 The moose that actually are in there are
23 all coming out of the Snow River drainage. The easiest
24 way to get there is off the road system from the Seward
25 side walking up into that way. On snowmachine it takes
26 me about 45 minutes. Walking would probably take you a
27 day to get in there because you're going through some
28 pretty rough, braided country to go up and over into this
29 area. So, as a result, most people that was hunting it
30 in the past had an airplane and they came from Seward, so
31 they'd come up on a float plane, land on the lake, stay
32 on the lake. Well, the areas where the moose are at all
33 around the lake aren't eligible to be taken for a
34 subsistence hunt.

35
36 The other option, of course, is coming by
37 way of Kings Bay and if you take a look at it,
38 logistically Kings Bay is closer to Moose Pass than it is
39 to anything. As you come out of Whittier, you'd have to
40 go out and go through Culross Canal and then come all the
41 way back around -- go off your nautical charts because
42 there is no charting for the head of the bay because it's
43 actually off the system and then basically anchor in a
44 pretty open area and then work your way up into some
45 pretty good brown bear habitat to get into there. As a
46 result, I worked on some bear cases, but I've never seen
47 anybody moose hunting in that area even when it was open
48 just because the logistics challenging to get in there
49 for the folks from Chenega to come in it would be a
50 pretty good ways.

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But is there moose
2 hunting available on Federal land if you went into Kings
3 Bay?
4
5 MR. BRYDEN: Yes.
6
7 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So if the people from
8 Chenega say that that's where they go, that they went up
9 into Kings Bay, they would actually have access to moose
10 on Federal land.
11
12 MR. BRYDEN: Yes, on the bottom end of it
13 they can go through there.
14
15 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The only thing I've ever
16 heard is that they've shot a moose that was down on the
17 beach right there. So that would be Federal land and
18 that would be accessible.
19
20 MR. BRYDEN: That's where this mining
21 activity is going to take place at.
22
23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Is it placer mining?
24
25 MR. BRYDEN: Depends on what they decide.
26 Obviously that's what you'd probably look at, but
27 everybody is looking for the motherlode if they can find
28 it.
29
30 (Laughter)
31
32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah, but I mean the
33 permit that they're looking for is for the lower end of
34 the river.....
35
36 MR. BRYDEN: Yes.
37
38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:right there on the
39 river itself.
40
41 MR. BRYDEN: Yeah.
42
43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any other questions.
44
45 (No comments)
46
47 MR. BRYDEN: Okay, thank you.
48
49 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So, with that, we
50 are done with the Forest Service. We're now on other.

1 We have a presentation from EVOS on the Naked Island
2 moose thing and then we have our annual report and the
3 JPARC thing to take care of.

4
5 Then we'll go on to our final stuff.

6
7 MR. CARPENTER: Mink, not moose.

8
9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Did I say moose? Sorry.

10
11 MR. IRONS: Mr. Chair. Council members.
12 Thank you for taking time to listen to me today. My name
13 is David Irons. I work for the Fish and Wildlife
14 Service, Migratory Bird Management. I've been working
15 out in Prince William Sound since 1984 on bird issues.
16 I work with sea birds mostly. Since the oil spill in
17 1989, they created the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee
18 Council. Of course the council got a lot of money in a
19 settlement from Exxon and have been out in Prince William
20 Sound trying to evaluate the effects of the spill and
21 trying to restore since 1989.

22
23 There's been many many studies in Prince
24 William Sound. Many many studies on Naked Island since
25 1989. What I was going to do today is we have proposed
26 to restore pigeon guillemots on Naked Island Group. When
27 I say Naked Island Group, that's Naked, Story and Peak
28 Island out in the middle of the Sound. The Trustee
29 Council has approved a study to restore the guillemot out
30 there basically by eradicating mink and they've done it
31 in two parts.

32
33 The first part is to do the NEPA process
34 or the environmental assessment and then once that's
35 completed then they will go back and decide whether to
36 approve the study to eradicate mink or not. So they just
37 recently approved the first process to conduct an
38 environmental assessment. And I'm here because the Fish
39 and Wildlife Service submitted the proposal to the
40 Trustee Council to do this. The land out there is owned
41 by the Forest Service, but sea birds are the trustee
42 resource of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, so they
43 have been interested in this.

44
45 The Trustee Council I'm not sure if
46 you're familiar with. There's six trustees, three State
47 and three Federal trustees and everything they do has to
48 be a unanimous vote, so everything they approve is
49 unanimous. When they decided to do this project, they
50 unanimously decided to try to restore pigeon guillemots

1 to the Naked Island Group.

2

3 So we're going to go through the NEPA
4 process. We just got funded. We haven't started
5 anything yet. We're just getting our ducks in a row. We
6 heard this meeting was going on, so I thought I'd just
7 come and address you and give you a heads up on what the
8 proposal was about and where we're going to be going in
9 the NEPA process on this. Today I just wanted to give
10 you a little bit of background about the study, why we're
11 doing it and why we think it will be beneficial to the
12 sea birds out there and then see if you have any
13 comments. How it might affect any subsistence use that
14 you might know about on the Naked Island Group that could
15 be helpful for the planning of the NEPA process.

16

17 Let me give you a little background.
18 Your handout here is kind of a combination of things. On
19 the first page that's just a quick little summary of the
20 proposal that we submitted to the Trustee Council.
21 Basically when the Trustee Council set up, they created
22 a list of injured species and they had about a dozen bird
23 species that they considered injured. In fact, there are
24 probably 40 or 50 bird species that were injured. To be
25 on the injured species list you had to have good data to
26 demonstrate that there was injury by the oil spill.

27

28 Pigeon guillemots is one of the species
29 that was on the injured species list. There were other
30 species out there I'll talk about today. Parakeet
31 auklets, tufted puffins, horned puffins that were injured
32 by the spill, but they weren't on the official injured
33 species list of the Trustee Council, so therefore they
34 did not do studies on these other species.

35

36 Basically what we're proposing to the
37 Trustee Council is to restore pigeon guillemots because
38 pigeon guillemots bar in fact one of their injured
39 species. The Trustee Council has been trying to restore
40 birds and mammals and fish out there and other resources,
41 subsistence resources, clams and invertebrates for 22
42 years now and they've spent a lot of money trying to do
43 this. They found it's very difficult to restore some of
44 these species and sea birds was one of the ones that's
45 very difficult to make more birds.

46

47 Since mink have gotten on Naked Island,
48 now there is an opportunity to restore the guillemots and
49 other birds on Naked Island. The Naked Island Group on
50 that map you have in front of you, there's a name, Naked

1 Island, I'm pointing to it and that's the whole group
2 there. You can't really see the islands because there's
3 so many blue dots, which used to be the pigeon guillemot
4 colonies that occurred on Naked Island and that was
5 before the introduction of mink out there. There's Naked
6 Island, Story Island and Peak Island. Naked is the
7 largest one.

8

9 In the '70s, there were studies done out
10 there on guillemots and the reason people went out there
11 to do it because there were so many guillemots out there.
12 There were about 50 times more guillemots out there per
13 kilometer shoreline than there were in the rest of the
14 Sound and other areas that did not have mink.

15

16 Parakeet auklets occurred not very many
17 places in the Sound, but the Naked Island Group was where
18 about 95 percent of the parakeet auklets in the Sound
19 occurred and there were about 800 parakeet auklets out
20 there. So Naked Island was well known for the bird fauna
21 out there. If people from Whittier wanted to go see
22 birds, parakeet auklets, they'd take them out to Naked
23 Island because that's where they were. They were out
24 there because there weren't any mink there.

25

26 Mink somehow got there in the mid '80s or
27 so. Unfortunately we don't know how they got there and
28 that's one of the weaknesses. All the evidence that we
29 have to date so far indicates that there weren't mink
30 there previously, at least in any numbers that would have
31 any effect on any bird populations. It's well known mink
32 have been introduced to many many islands around the
33 world and it's well known that when you introduce mink
34 any birds that they can reach their populations plummet.

35

36

37 That's what happened here since 1990.
38 1990 we had about 1,000 guillemots nesting on Naked
39 Island. Now we have 100. In the back, last couple pages
40 of this, there's some charts there that show surveys that
41 were another -- we have a couple different lines of
42 information. One is studies that were done just on Naked
43 Island and then the trustees funded these studies that we
44 looked at the total number of birds in Prince William
45 Sound and at sea surveys were done and these charts in
46 the back just show some of that data for the at sea
47 surveys for Naked Island and it's Naked Island Group, not
48 just Naked Island versus Prince William Sound.

49

50 Basically if you look at the last four

1 charts you can look at guillemots and horned puffins,
2 tufted puffins, parakeet auklets and you can see on the
3 Naked Island Group there used to be extremely high
4 densities of all these four bird species in 1990. Low
5 densities everywhere else in the Sound and today there's
6 low densities in the Sound and now on Naked Island the
7 densities have come down to the rest of the Sound level.

8
9 A lot of these species have declined
10 throughout the Sound, but not nearly as much as on Naked
11 Island. So, again, it's suggestive there when you
12 introduce mink to an island the bird fauna there crash
13 and that's what happened to these four species that we
14 have data on there for.

15
16 As far as mink in Prince William Sound,
17 they're natural mink in Prince William Sound. They've
18 occurred there forever. They weren't on -- mink swim and
19 they'll swim between islands. The furthest documented
20 extent that we found has been about four kilometers that
21 mink will swim to an island. Montague, Naked, Story and
22 Peak are some of the most remote islands in Prince
23 William Sound and Montague did not have mink. In the
24 '50s, Fish and Game introduced mink to Montague to have
25 more mink there for trappers.

26
27 There were many fox farms out in the
28 Sound and those were well documented. They were like up
29 to 27 or something or 36. You had to have licenses. As
30 the fox prices went down and so on, the fox farms
31 switched over to mink, but you didn't have to have a mink
32 license, so we don't know where all the mink farms were.
33 I've talked to people out in the Sound and I know of some
34 locations where mink farms were, so mink were definitely
35 introduced to many islands out in the Sound also.

36
37 So we got funded three years ago when we
38 saw these bird populations were declining so much on
39 Naked, Story and Peak Island and not anywhere else, the
40 Trustee Council funded us to go out and evaluate if
41 something could be done to restore these birds. Oregon
42 State University Dan Roby and I, we got a graduate
43 student out there and we evaluated what was going on with
44 these mink and that's the first time we had a really good
45 look. Is there enough food out there, is there enough
46 habitat and is there predation. So we completed that
47 study just recently and that's why we came back to the
48 Trustee Council and said our recommendation is that there
49 is enough food out there, there is enough habitat and
50 there's too much predation and the predation is by mink.

1 The preferred alternative that we
2 suggested to the Trustee Council was to remove the mink
3 and we came up with several other alternatives, but we
4 felt like removing the mink from the island would be the
5 best one to restore the sea birds and the Trustee Council
6 agreed with that. So they funded the study to remove the
7 mink, but they funded in phases. Phase one to do an
8 environmental assessment and then go back and then we'll
9 ask them if they want to do it and then they'll fund the
10 rest of the study if they saw it fit.

11
12 The Forest Service -- this says Naked
13 Island is treated as wilderness study area, so the Forest
14 Service doesn't want anyone messing around with their
15 wilderness area. So if these mink occurred there
16 naturally, they don't want them removed, but if they're
17 introduced, then they want them removed. So one of the
18 questions was are these mink introduced. It's not 100
19 percent black and white. We don't know how they got
20 there.

21
22 On Appendix A we reviewed the evidence of
23 whether they were introduced or not and all lines of
24 evidence pointed towards an introduction. Again, one was
25 that we had high diverse bird populations there that
26 plummeted after the mink got there. Historically, all
27 our evidence suggests there were not mink on these remote
28 islands in Prince William Sound. Then we did a genetic
29 study that suggested that the mink were -- somehow about
30 10 mink got there about 20, 25 years ago. The mink that
31 are there are not just farm-raised mink. Their ancestors
32 were a combination of farm-raised and natural mink. So
33 you can't say they were park of a farm. Because of the
34 diversity of the genes, they can suggest that about 10
35 pair -- or five pair got there about 20, 25 years ago and
36 that's not consistent with a mink getting there on it's
37 own. You wouldn't expect 10 mink to swim to Naked
38 Island. All the evidence points to an introduction in
39 the '80s that someone released a dozen or so mink out
40 there on Naked Island and since then the bird populations
41 have plummeted.

42
43 So what we're proposing to the Trustee
44 Council is to remove the mink and allow the bird
45 populations to come back. As far as subsistence use,
46 when we did this genetic study, we needed samples of mink
47 from several places in Prince William Sound. I didn't
48 want to go out and collect the mink if there are trappers
49 out there because all we needed was a genetic sample.
50 All we needed was a skull or something. So I searched in

1 Prince William Sound, Cordova, talked to the Alaska
2 Trappers Association.

3
4 I went to Tatitlek and Chenega, Cordova,
5 Valdez, looking for trappers who could give me some
6 samples and I found trappers in Chenega that trapped on
7 Evidence Island where Chenega is and I got some samples
8 from the trappers on Chenega. I found samples in
9 Cordova. People trap on the Copper River. But I
10 couldn't find anyone who trapped on Naked Island,
11 Montague, Knight, Western Prince William Sound. I found
12 one guy who trapped in northwestern Prince William Sound
13 from Eagle River, but as it turned out he wasn't trapping
14 that year, so we didn't get any samples from him.

15
16 So then we had to hire some trappers to
17 go out and trap mink at Naked Island, Knight Island,
18 Montague Island, Western Prince William Sound and
19 Northern Western Prince William Sound and more down at
20 Evans Island because we didn't get enough down there.

21
22 So what I found out there is that there
23 are not a lot of people driving 40 miles out of their way
24 to go to Naked Island and trap mink. I think that's
25 simply the price of mink isn't very high any more and not
26 very valuable, so I haven't found much subsistence use or
27 recreational use of people using Naked, Story and Peak
28 for mink.

29
30 What I'd like to know from you or any
31 sources that you could tell me if you know of anyone or
32 yourself of any subsistence use going on out there or
33 anywhere in the Sound for mink it would be useful to me
34 in this NEPA process. We're going to have a scoping
35 process that we'll go out to different villages and so on
36 and towns and ask people what they think and come to
37 councils like yourself.

38
39 Anyhow, that's pretty much what I had to
40 say and so I'd be happy to listen to any comments or
41 questions that you had.

42
43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Tom.

44
45 MR. CARPENTER: Thank you, David. I
46 would say that I agree with your assessment. I mean
47 Naked Island is very remote. With the price of mink what
48 it is today and what is has been for a long time there
49 are people that -- nobody is going to travel that far to
50 trap mink, not when they have so many -- there's a lot

1 better places to go trap mink than Naked Island. So in
2 regards to affecting subsistence I think it would be
3 minimal to none.

4
5 The other thing is, I think most likely
6 if you suspect that those mink were introduced, I'm not
7 sure how you came up with the number 10, but I'm not sure
8 of anybody -- I know that there's people that live on
9 Peak Island. They don't currently, but they did at the
10 time. That homestead has been there a long time, so it's
11 very possible that one of those residents might be able
12 to give you some information. Maybe they know somebody
13 that introduced them. I would say it's possible if they
14 were put on Peak Island that they could have eventually
15 got to Naked as such. That's all I got.

16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: There's still people
18 from that family that lived on Peak that are in Cordova.
19 The only trappers that I know that worked the Sound in
20 the last five years would have been Jimmy Webber and.....

21
22 MR. CARPENTER: I told him about them
23 too.

24
25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You told him about them
26 too? Okay. I mean at least from the Cordova end. Did
27 Robert Masolini do some trapping in the Sound or not?

28
29 MR. CARPENTER: I don't think so.

30
31 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah, there hasn't been
32 much effort for mink. There was some effort for otter
33 and then the price of otter crashed and China's market
34 drying up for that. The otter were a good price for a
35 couple years and then they went down. So I don't think
36 there's much effort going on out there. There's some
37 individuals I know talking about it, but most of them are
38 interested in going after marten and wolverine but not
39 mink at this point in time. I wish my father-in-law were
40 still alive because he talked about them releasing -- not
41 them, but ADF&G or Fish and Wildlife Service releasing
42 farmed mink on places like Montague and the rest of these
43 to improve the genetic fur value because the Prince
44 William Sound mink are in general small and not very good
45 quality. So they actually introduced I know on Montague
46 Island and I was under the impression they put them there
47 to breed with the mink that were already there just to
48 improve the genetic quality of the mink, but I may be
49 totally wrong. And he's not alive, so I can't ask him.
50 He really followed the fur. You know, he was a fur buyer

1 and everything and he had a pretty good knowledge of what
2 was going on out there.

3
4 It's interesting to me though that they
5 would have been introduced in the 1990s because by that
6 time Dolly and all them were gone. It's almost like they
7 went across there during the oil spill. That's about
8 what it looks like.

9
10 MR. CARPENTER: That's very possible.

11
12 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I, myself, spent two
13 weeks circling the Exxon Valdez on Naked Island when it
14 was anchored up in Cabin Bay there. That was my job to
15 make sure they weren't dumping oil at night.

16
17 MR. IRONS: So that's what I was
18 wondering. I mean in the wintertime the mink feed almost
19 entirely in the intertidal and the oil spill was in
20 March, so all the mink were out there feeding in the
21 intertidal and we know that northern Knight Island was
22 the hardest hit of anywhere in the Sound, so any mink
23 that were on northern Knight Island, their food source
24 evaporated, so I thought perhaps that would cause some
25 extreme event that they'd leave, but then my co-worker
26 pointed out, well, if they don't want to swim that far,
27 why wouldn't they just go south, down to Naked Island or
28 Knight Island, he's probably right. There were 600 ships
29 out there trying to clean up and I don't have any idea
30 what happened in '89 as far as mink goes, but it's right
31 about the time that they got there, so it's interesting.

32
33 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, I've had them come
34 right up my anchor line and come on the boat.

35
36 MR. IRONS: Really? Wow.

37
38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And that's right over
39 here at.....

40
41 MR. CARPENTER: It happened in the
42 harbor.

43
44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah, but I've had that
45 happen right over here in the Gulf.

46
47 MR. IRONS: Looking for food, you think?

48
49 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Oh, yeah. They'll come
50 up on your boat and if you've got a fish laying on the

1 deck, they'll eat the fish that's laying on your deck.
2 So if you had that many boats out there and some of them
3 were pretty big barges, you know, it would be totally
4 possible that you could have -- and, you know, the north
5 end of Knight Island was really hit hard with oil.

6
7 MR. IRONS: Right.

8
9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But the south end of --
10 you know, where Cabin Bay was where they put the Exxon
11 Valdez, that was clean. So you had boats going back and
12 forth. It's totally possible that they could have come
13 at that time. I would never have thought there was no
14 mink there before then. That sure seems to correspond.

15
16 MR. IRONS: Right.

17
18 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I mean if you've got 10
19 pair or 10 mink and they've got a mixed genetic
20 diversity, which I would expect from the mink out there
21 anyhow because they were a combination of wild mink and
22 domesticated mink.

23
24 MR. IRONS: Uh-huh.

25
26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Like on Montague Island.
27 There was a lot of guys on Montague Island. You could
28 have accidentally -- I guess they could have accidentally
29 been transported. I was trying to remember. Did they do
30 boat cleanup on Peak -- in the bay there?

31
32 MR. CARPENTER: I don't remember.

33
34 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I don't remember either.
35 That was not quite what I expected, but it was
36 interesting and maybe changed some of my ideas. I'm
37 going to go talk to Dolly though too. You know, Ed
38 Builderback just died.

39
40 MR. IRONS: Yeah.

41
42 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And he was the major
43 trapper. Doug.

44
45 MR. BLOSSOM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I've got
46 friends here in Anchorage that trap in the Sound and they
47 have for a long time, so how do they get a hold of you?

48
49 MR. IRONS: I can tell you right now if
50 you want. David Irons. My phone number is 786-3376. My

1 email is david_iron@fws.gov.
2
3 MR. BLOSSOM: I'll just give him your
4 phone number and let them get a hold of you.
5
6 MR. IRONS: That would be wonderful.
7 Thanks, Doug.
8
9 MR. BLOSSOM: But I know they've trapped
10 there for a long time. Whether they trapped Naked
11 Island, I don't know.
12
13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: David, if you need
14 samples, my son-in-law traps in Unakwik. They live at
15 Cannery Creek hatchery there.
16
17 MR. IRONS: I might have gotten some from
18 them. I forgot about Unakwik. We talked to the people
19 up there. We're done with the genetic study now.
20
21 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You're done with the
22 genetic study. Okay.
23
24 Anymore questions.
25
26 (No comments)
27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you for the heads
29 up.
30
31 MR. IRONS: Sure. Glad to be here.
32 Thanks for taking your time to listen to me.
33
34 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Doug.
35
36 MR. BLOSSOM: One more, Mr. Chair. How
37 do you intend to eradicate?
38
39 MR. IRONS: Well, it's never been done in
40 North America, but in the British Isles mink were
41 introduced again on purpose to many places and then they
42 decided to get rid of them and what they've done and
43 what's been successful is basically you trap them and
44 then the last few that you missed with traps or become
45 trap shy you get dogs and find them and end up shooting
46 them. Were not planning on using any poison.
47
48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That's interesting
49 because the Natives in Prince William Sound used to have
50 what they call otter dogs.

1 MR. IRONS: Oh, really.
2
3 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah. My father-in-law
4 talked about them all the time. Basically they'd take
5 the dog in the skiff and circle the island and the dog
6 would go crazy and jump overboard and they'd go kick the
7 otters out and get the otters, these little dogs. When
8 they did the eradication of the foxes out at Attu and
9 places like that they just basically used traps. There
10 was no poison involved in that either if I remember
11 right.
12
13 MR. IRONS: Well, over the years it's
14 been poison and traps.
15
16 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: When I went out to Attu
17 the traps were still set. That's one of the things that
18 bothered me. But they had gotten rid of the foxes.
19
20 MR. IRONS: Yeah, they've been very
21 successful.
22
23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah. Okay. Any other
24 questions.
25
26 (No comments)
27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With that we have our
29 annual report to go back to. We had a couple other
30 things that we thought of putting in on the annual report
31 and then we had a possible letter to add to it in support
32 of funding for wildlife monitoring to the Forest Service.
33 Shall we just take the annual report up real quick? I
34 have to take a break. Let's take a -- because of the
35 driving force here that wanted us to just keep right on
36 going.....
37
38 MR. CARPENTER: We're saving money.
39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I've got to take a
41 break. You can all take a break or somebody else can run
42 the meeting.
43
44 (Off record)
45
46 (On record)
47
48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We are going on to our
49 annual report. Has everybody got their annual report in
50 front of them? I don't.

1 (Laughter)
2
3 MR. CARPENTER: Pink dot.
4
5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Pink dot. All you got
6 to do is find a pink dot in all this paper.
7
8 (Laughter)
9
10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: There. Okay. Thank
11 you. The annual report. We're going to go over the
12 things and there were a couple things we thought of
13 adding to it. Let's go over it one by one. Secretarial
14 review. This is a draft.
15
16 Does that meet everybody on the Council's
17 okay?
18
19 MS. CAMINER: Mr. Chair. We did talk
20 about expanding and hopefully K.J. captured that, talking
21 about our comments on the MOU, on the rural determination
22 process and on deference particularly. Perhaps under
23 that would also be RACs wanting to be able to request
24 RFRs.
25
26 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: You think we should
27 include that in our annual review and that way we don't
28 have to put it someplace else.
29
30 MS. CAMINER: Yes.
31
32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Does that meet everybody
33 on the Council's approval.
34
35 (Council nods affirmatively)
36
37 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Regular change to blood
38 quantum definition. We talked about that before. Does
39 anybody see any change that needs to be done on that.
40
41 (No comments)
42
43 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Wildlife Resource
44 Monitoring Program. We suggest in this case and I think
45 we could even go a little stronger that we consider it
46 necessary. And then at this point I also think we should
47 write that letter in support of the Forest Service's
48 Wildlife Monitoring Program, equivalent to what
49 Southeastern did.
50

1 Judy.

2

3 MS. CAMINER: Mr. Chair. I guess just
4 thinking about it a little more, it sounds like Forest
5 Service funding and maybe all the agencies funding it's
6 being looked at as a whole in terms of being reduced. So
7 maybe rather than focus on the Forest Service, just the
8 Wildlife Program, but just to say we would support
9 continued funding for Forest Service programs relating to
10 subsistence or even all the agencies, but I guess just
11 not to focus on the wildlife aspect of it. It sounds
12 like all their funding is coming under a lot of scrutiny.

13

14 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: What does anybody else
15 think on that one? We hadn't talked about that before.
16 I'm just trying to think how to do that. Do we want to
17 do that underneath this annual one or do we want to do
18 that in a separate letter. I think we could include that
19 right here in the annual one.

20

21 MS. CAMINER: Yes, I think so.

22

23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And I think we could
24 still have a separate letter like Southeastern did in
25 support of wildlife monitoring.

26

27 MS. CAMINER: That would be good.

28

29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So what we would want to
30 say that the Council suggests that a wildlife monitoring
31 program similar to the format for Existing Fisheries
32 Resource Monitoring Program is necessary, as is funding
33 for all agency programs that deal with subsistence. We'd
34 have to add that. I'm sure K.J. can come up with a
35 proper way of adding that in there. We could say and we
36 support sufficient funding of all agencies for the
37 subsistence program or something like that to the end of
38 it.

39

40 Predator control I. I really like what
41 Bristol Bay said in their MOU on that. It says basically
42 we want active management of the game resources that
43 provide food for subsistence opportunities. I think all
44 we'd have to do is add active. Active management of
45 wolves and bears must be considered to promote healthy
46 populations of moose and sheep. I think we need to add
47 caribou. Moose, sheep and caribou. In other words, if
48 it's an active management, that means you don't just sit
49 back and let things happen. What does the rest of the
50 Council think on that?

1 MR. CARPENTER: I think that's a great
2 idea.
3
4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. The Chisana
5 Caribou Herd. I think it was covered pretty good in
6 what's written here, but does anybody have anything that
7 they would like to add to that.
8
9 (No comments)
10
11 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And then we were talking
12 about including in this annual report a comment on the
13 JPARC thing and writing an individual letter on the JPARC
14 thing similar to what Eastern Interior wrote. I think we
15 had something we wanted to add to that too, so we'll look
16 at that when the time comes. So how would we add that
17 we're extremely concerned about the impact that the JPARC
18 potential poses for subsistence use in the most utilized
19 area of Alaska or something to that effect.
20
21 Does that sound good?
22
23 (Council nods affirmatively)
24
25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Because we are seriously
26 concerned about that and the impact on it to subsistence
27 resources and subsistence users. I think that's the way
28 to put it.
29
30 MS. STICKWAN: And the migratory birds,
31 too. Even people that fly and use airplanes.
32
33 REPORTER: Gloria, none of that went on
34 the record.
35
36 MS. STICKWAN: I just said that we should
37 add migratory birds in there.
38
39 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The impact to migratory
40 birds and safety.
41
42 MS. STICKWAN: And safety of people that
43 use airplanes.
44
45 REPORTER: Thank you.
46
47 MR. ADLER: We should make a statement in
48 there to the effect that lower level should be far above
49 500 feet AGL. it should be about 2,500. That would
50 mitigate the effects on wildlife and human activities and

1 this and that and probably should make the areas much
2 smaller too. They're too invasive. It takes in a large
3 part of the Copper River Basin there. I've already sent
4 in my comments to JPARC and Senator Begich. Senator
5 Begich responded the next day. JPARC has still not
6 responded. But Senator Begich was pretty cautious in his
7 comments. He said he still support JPARC. He's just
8 glad to get my comments. He wasn't committing himself.

9
10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Well, the higher levels
11 have to do with safety and effect on the game resources
12 and the subsistence activities. I would have thought
13 that it was the higher levels, the levels of flight that
14 was one of the biggest concerns that we have. Then
15 increasing the areas that they use for range and bombing
16 runs and things like that.

17
18 What have we said so far?

19
20 MS. MUSHOVIC: Mr. Chair. I have that
21 basically we are extremely concerned about the potential
22 impact to subsistence resources and users and migratory
23 birds in the most utilized area of Alaska and then a
24 sentence that will speak to safety that I had started to
25 craft, but perhaps just safety in general and it might
26 link to that altitude.

27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That would be a good
29 place to link the altitude into it.

30
31 MS. MUSHOVIC: We also have concerns,
32 safety concerns.....

33
34 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We're extremely
35 concerned about the safety aspects and the impact of low
36 level flight.

37
38 MR. ADLER: Even with the 5,000 foot
39 lower level that we've had in the past. Seven or eight
40 years ago I was out flying near Klutina Lake and an F-16
41 about took me out. He came by so close that it shook me.
42 It looked like he was out spotting for a sheep hunt.

43
44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That's true because
45 5,000 feet he'd still be lower than the mountains you're
46 flying around.

47
48 MR. ADLER: 5,000 AGL, above the ground
49 level.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Oh. But he must have
2 been lower than that then.

3
4 MR. ADLER: Oh, he was like 500 feet
5 above the ground level.

6
7 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Yeah. Anybody got
8 anything more that they thought we should add to that?
9 Judy.

10
11 MS. STICKWAN: Migratory birds.

12
13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We got migratory birds
14 and the effect on migratory birds subsistence resources.
15 We can delineate the subsistence resources to the game,
16 the migratory birds and the effect on subsistence users.
17 While we're on the game we might as well include the fact
18 that it's not just the game that we're hunting, but it's
19 also the survival of the calving and the winter
20 disturbances, which burns up energy, the harassment. We
21 don't need to include too much in our annual report on
22 that, but we need to include much more detail in the
23 letter that we send to JPARC. I think we can take a lot
24 of it out of that Eastern Interior letter and then add
25 our extra concerns to it.

26
27 MS. STICKWAN: We also have the SRCs
28 letter too.

29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The SRCs letter, right.
31 Kind of make a combination of them all. Get that off to
32 JPARC. But I think including it in here is worthwhile in
33 a condensed form.

34
35 Does anybody else have anything else that
36 we were thinking of putting in here. Judy.

37
38 MS. CAMINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
39 guess one more thing under Secretarial Review we did have
40 quite a bit of discussion on new membership and criteria,
41 so that would be the place to put that. You probably
42 have that from your notes.

43
44 Just a couple thing I wrote down, Mr.
45 Chair, and I'm not sure if we did want to include this.
46 We had the firewood discussion and also maybe what Tom
47 was asking about on Unit 6, either the carrying capacity
48 or the guiding or even a moose survey, I think. I don't
49 know if we want to have that or not.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I think the fact that
2 you brought up firewood is a good one. I think we need
3 to stress to the Subsistence Council because it deals
4 with all the different agencies that it's not just fish
5 and game that's important to subsistence users. And it's
6 not just firewood, it's the basic plan resources,
7 everything from berries to firewood to handicraft
8 materials. So what would we class -- the management of
9 that should be in a way that makes them -- we should be
10 working to make them accessible and useable to
11 subsistence users, not restrict them.

12
13 I was glad to see what Barbara was saying
14 the Park Service was trying to do on the firewood. With
15 the least interference to subsistence users that's
16 necessary and make it as simple a process as possible for
17 the obtaining of firewood, berries and woody handicraft
18 material and things like that, house logs, whatever you
19 want to call them.

20
21 How about the rest of the Council, got
22 any ideas on that?

23
24 MS. STICKWAN: Why can't we just
25 incorporate SRCs comments, just copy it from that? I
26 think Barbara has a copy.

27
28 MS. CELLARIUS: Mr. Chair. For the
29 record, Barbara Cellarius from Wrangell-St. Elias
30 National Park. What I gave K.J. and I think maybe
31 there's some copies floating around, there was a formal
32 motion from the SRC that's at the bottom of that page and
33 then I sort of provided some background on the context
34 for that in the text that's above. But the formal motion
35 from the SRC at the bottom of the page.

36
37 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Could you read it to us,
38 Barbara.

39
40 MS. CELLARIUS: Sure.

41
42 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Because we can just say
43 that we support the formal motion of the SRC in our
44 annual report.

45
46 MS. CELLARIUS: So the motion was to
47 support the proposal or plan to include in the Parks
48 Front Country Management Plan authorization for the
49 superintendent to designate areas that would be open to
50 portable motor use without a permit and really we've been

1 talking about portable motor use in support of
2 subsistence activities. Also to clarify that gathering
3 includes cutting. I added the context up above because
4 there's a specific place in the regulation where there's
5 a concern that the word gathering includes cutting. But
6 that was the motion.

7

8 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So what we could
9 say is that since firewood, plant materials, handicraft
10 materials are important to subsistence users we support
11 the motion of the SRC to allow -- and just repeat hers,
12 and that would pretty well cover it right there because
13 I think that that's something -- like I said before,
14 firewood, to me, when I look at what's going on in the
15 rural communities and the price of oil is extremely
16 important.

17

18 MS. CELLARIUS: If I could just add that
19 the Park Service, we're not wanting to restrict
20 subsistence users use of firewood. There's a regulation.
21 With a permit requirement, so we're trying to figure out
22 how to be in compliance with the regulations, but at the
23 same time make things workable for subsistence users.

24

25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That's what I was adding
26 before when I said it should be the duty of the agencies
27 to instead of trying to restrict the use of these things
28 to make their access as easy and as least cumbersome as
29 possible. I appreciate the work Park Service is doing on
30 it because it could go just the opposite direction. It's
31 a real concern. I heard all about it when I went out
32 there this last time.

33

34 Okay. That takes care of one more
35 addition. Do we have any more additions. Do we want to
36 say anything about the fact that we are as a Council also
37 concerned about the bycatch issue and we appreciate the
38 work that's being done and we hope that the various
39 agencies monitor it and take an active part in working on
40 it for the sake of subsistence.

41

42 MR. HENRICHS: Yeah, I think that's
43 pretty important. It wouldn't surprise me if they
44 haven't knocked those king runs down on the Copper River
45 either with that bycatch out there, especially out of
46 Kodiak.

47

48 The Yukon River one, I don't see any way
49 they're ever going to get those back in our lifetime
50 without enhancing them with hatcheries because that's a

1 nightmare up there. But I'd sure say something about
2 that bycatch.

3

4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Did that sound
5 applicable the way I said it?

6

7 MR. HENRICHS: Sure.

8

9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, K.J. You've
10 pretty much gathered the gist of what I said then. We
11 can work together on that then. So that added a couple
12 more items to our annual report. Do we have any more
13 that anybody would like to add?

14

15 The minimum length of time that a C&T
16 stays in place, the Council's ability to do an RFR. Do
17 we want to add those to our -- I think the RFR one we
18 were going to put in the Secretarial Review.

19

20 DR. WHEELER: Yes.

21

22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I'm not sure that we
23 want to at this point in time say anything about the
24 length of time -- because we haven't had any time to look
25 at that really. So far C&T's haven't -- I mean there's
26 nothing we can do about somebody having the ability to
27 put an RFR in and that doesn't discontinue it until it's
28 been taken up. I mean I think the C&T is still in place,
29 isn't it? Yeah. So that doesn't eliminate the C&T, it's
30 just that if the RFR results in a new decision, then it
31 would take it away. But in the meantime the C&T is still
32 in place.

33

34 Okay. Then we had that charter item No.
35 10. I'm trying to remember what that was. Did we want
36 to put that in our RFR or just leave that on the review?

37

38 DR. WHEELER: Actually, I think it's just
39 a request of the Federal Subsistence Board that the
40 Federal Board make the recommendation to the Secretary of
41 the Interior with the concurrence of Secretary of Ag that
42 that section be removed and then you had also asked if
43 the other Regional Advisory Councils be told about that
44 or did they do that in the other Regional Advisory
45 Council charters. It was the item about the local
46 advisory committees.

47

48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Right.

49

50 DR. WHEELER: I've got that. That's

1 addressed. That doesn't need to be in your annual
2 report.

3
4 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. So did anybody
5 else think of anything else they'd like to put in the
6 annual report.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The only other thing
11 that I would like to put in there is I would like to put
12 in a thanks to the people who did the Secretarial Review
13 and we can put that under Secretarial Review.

14
15 Thanks for the time and effort that they
16 put in.

17
18 MR. CARPENTER: Do we need a motion?

19
20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do we need a motion now
21 to change this from a draft to put these items in and
22 submit this as our annual report? I think so.

23
24 MR. CARPENTER: Mr. Chair. I move we
25 submit our finalized annual report for 2010 as drafted.

26
27 MR. HENRICHS: I'll second.

28
29 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved and
30 seconded that we submit our revised draft annual report
31 as we've revised it or added additions to it.

32
33 MR. BLOSSOM: Question.

34
35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: If there's no
36 discussion, the question is called. All in favor signify
37 by saying aye.

38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40
41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: All opposed signify by
42 saying nay.

43
44 (No opposing votes)

45
46 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Motion carries. That
47 brings us to the JPARC thing. I think we've pretty well
48 covered that.

49
50 Judy.

1 MS. CAMINER: Just to confirm, the
2 suggestion was that those requirements that FERC is
3 asking in terms of subsistence information and data might
4 be applied to the JPARC letter as well.

5
6 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: That's a good one.
7 Judy, do you think -- you're the secretary?

8
9 MS. CAMINER: Yes.

10
11 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do you think that you
12 could help with that letter if K.J. needs any help on
13 it.....

14
15 MS. CAMINER: Absolutely.

16
17 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:because you've had
18 experience in that department more than the rest of us.

19
20 MS. CAMINER: Be glad to help, sure.

21
22 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: As secretary, you may
23 get stuck with a few things like that. Okay. We had one
24 more other business and that was Mr. Henrichs would like
25 to present us a little thing on moose.

26
27 MR. HENRICHS: Yes, thank you. I
28 discussed it briefly. We've got the Alaska Moose
29 Federation up and running and I'm currently chairman of
30 it. Gary Olson is the executive director. Our goal is
31 to restore the moose population to rural Alaska and we
32 plan on doing it with orphaned moose calves from the
33 urban population centers. When their mothers get killed,
34 we're going to gather them up and take them to different
35 facilities. One is at Port MacKenzie by the prison and
36 raise them there for awhile and ship to different areas
37 of the state that want moose calves to help their
38 population get going again.

39
40 The reason I got involved with it, they
41 kind of hooked me into it because in the '50s I actually
42 helped raise orphan moose calves in Cordova. And in the
43 Copper River Delta where there were no moose, we have
44 taken over 4,600 moose. The value of a moose in rural
45 Alaska with the cost of fuel and electricity and stuff is
46 over \$8,000. So it's the difference between a family
47 eating some decent food or not.

48
49 And like I said, in Sweden they manage
50 moose as a sustainable resource and it's about the size

1 of California and they take more moose in Sweden than
2 there are in Alaska right now. We should be managing
3 these for a sustainable resource.

4
5 One of the reasons is health. It helps
6 the health of the people in rural Alaska plus if you get
7 them off the highways and the school grounds, it helps
8 the health of the people around there.

9
10 Safety. There have been a lot of people
11 that have been seriously injured and even killed by
12 running into moose on the highways. Then we find out the
13 State was planting vegetation that moose likes to eat on
14 the highways. I mean that's just like making a grocery
15 store out of them. A lot of the schools plant vegetation
16 that moose like and that's why they attract them.
17 They've got to stop doing that.

18
19 Some sharp lawyer is going to connect
20 those dots and he's going to sue the State over some of
21 those people that got hurt with moose collisions for
22 planting vegetation that attracts the moose to the right-
23 of-ways.

24
25 We've already made some corners off the
26 highways -- GCI loaned us their Snocat and got some
27 grants and did some hydro-axing and there's moose feed
28 off the highways. A lot of times there's heavy snow and
29 the only place a moose can go is on the road because it's
30 plowed. They'll go off the highway and if there's food
31 for them to eat, they'll stay there.

32
33 It helps in suicide prevention in rural
34 Alaska also. But we're committed to doing it and I spent
35 time in Juneau and met with several legislatures.
36 Parnell is behind it, Lt. Governor Treadwell is behind
37 it, Leslie [sic] McGuire is behind it, Alan Dick, Lyman
38 Hoffman. Quite a few of them want to see this thing get
39 going.

40
41 We're going to make the big push and get
42 it going again. What we'd like to do is get a letter of
43 support supporting it. I've got one that Alaska Native
44 Tribal Health Consortium gave us. I didn't bring it with
45 me, but I can give it to you so you can see what we're
46 looking for.

47
48 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So what we're looking
49 for is a letter of support for replanting moose and
50 taking care of the orphan moose and putting them in other

1 places or just for the whole program?

2

3 MR. HENRICHS: Alaska Moose Federation,
4 orphan moose calf program.

5

6 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: For the Alaska Moose
7 Federation, orphan moose calf program. Okay. Would we
8 as a Council think that this affects subsistence users
9 enough that we would write a letter of support?

10

11 MR. CARPENTER: Absolutely.

12

13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I think after what we've
14 seen in Cordova I personally don't see where we can say
15 no to it myself, I mean as Cordovans. Who would this
16 letter of support go to?

17

18 MR. HENRICHS: It would just be to whom
19 it may concern.

20

21 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I don't like letters
22 that go to whom it may concern. It would go to the
23 Federation that we support you.....

24

25 MR. HENRICHS: Sure.

26

27 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:and then you can
28 use it the way you want to use it. I think that's a
29 better idea. Do I have a motion to that effect.

30

31 MR. CARPENTER: So moved.

32

33 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved. Do I
34 get a second.

35

36 MR. BLOSSOM: Second.

37

38 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved and
39 seconded that we write a letter of support to the Alaska
40 Moose Federation for support of their orphan calf -- you
41 don't call it relocation. What do you call it, the
42 orphan calf what?

43

44 MR. HENRICHS: Program. That will work.

45

46

47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Program. Okay.

48

49 MR. CARPENTER: Question.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The question has been
2 called. All in favor signify by saying aye.
3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.
5
6 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: All opposed signify by
7 saying aye.
8
9 (No opposing votes)
10
11 MR. HENRICHS: I abstain.
12
13 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: One abstain. Okay.
14 With that, unless somebody else has something other at
15 this point in time that I missed.
16
17 Robert.
18
19 MR. STOVALL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
20 UAA in coordination with the Forest Service is going to
21 have a symposium on climate change, children into the
22 future, and I wanted to let you know that there's going
23 to be a portion that's going to talk about subsistence
24 and climate change and welcome you folks to attend those
25 sessions. They are being planned for May 4th through the
26 7th of this year.
27
28 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It will take place
29 where?
30
31 MR. STOVALL: At the UAA campus for
32 primary.
33
34 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: In Fairbanks?
35 Anchorage?
36
37 MR. STOVALL: UAA, Anchorage.
38
39 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. Got it. That's
40 the 4th through the 7th of May and we're invited. Thank
41 you. Any other business, comments, anything else any
42 Council member wants to bring up at this point in time.
43
44 (No comments)
45
46 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Hearing none, we're
47 going to go on to confirm the date and location of our
48 fall 2011 meeting. I think K.J. has some information for
49 us on that.
50

1 MS. MUSHOVIC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
2 Native Village of Cantwell has agreed to let you meet in
3 their hall. I have had discussion with the Cantwell
4 Lodge and they're willing to let you have the whole place
5 for food and lodging those dates.

6
7 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: And the dates?

8
9 MS. MUSHOVIC: You had initially
10 identified October 3rd and 4th, sir.

11
12 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: So it's confirmed for
13 October 3rd and 4th and we'll be staying at the Cantwell
14 Lodge and we'll have our meeting in the Cantwell Native
15 Association's building, right?

16
17 MS. MUSHOVIC: That is correct.

18
19 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any questions by anybody.

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. With that we go
24 on to select the date and location for the winter 2012
25 meeting. If you look in your book you'll see some
26 windows.

27
28 MR. CARPENTER: What's the date today?

29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Today is March 17th.
31 Tom.

32
33 MR. CARPENTER: Mr. Chairman. It's been
34 kind of a custom to have our winter/spring meeting in
35 Anchorage. We're having our fall meeting in Cantwell,
36 which we try to have in a rural community if possible, so
37 I would move we have our spring meeting for 2012 in
38 Anchorage on March 14th and 15th.

39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Do I hear a second.

41
42 MR. HENRICHS: Second.

43
44 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Is that a conflict with
45 anybody.

46
47 MR. HENRICHS: It's a year away, Ralph.
48 How do you know if it's a conflict?

49
50 (Laughter)

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I don't even know what's
2 a conflict tomorrow let alone a year from now, but that's
3 okay.
4
5 Any discussion.
6
7 (No comments)
8
9 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I hear no discussion.
10 Did we get a second?
11
12 MR. HENRICHS: I seconded.
13
14 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: It's been moved and
15 seconded March 14th and 15th in Anchorage. No discussion
16 coming up, let's have the question then.
17
18 MR. CARPENTER: Question.
19
20 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The question has been
21 called. All in favor signify by saying aye.
22
23 IN UNISON: Aye.
24
25 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: All opposed signify by
26 saying nay.
27
28 (No opposing votes)
29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Motion carries
31 unanimously. With that we have.....
32
33 MR. CARPENTER: Can I say one thing?
34
35 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We're not done yet.
36
37 MR. CARPENTER: I just want to make a
38 comment.
39
40 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay.
41
42 MR. CARPENTER: I just wanted to make a
43 comment in regards to -- you asked earlier if we thought
44 this facility -- I think this is a great place for a
45 meeting myself. In my opinion, this is the best place
46 we've ever had it in Anchorage. I don't know how you
47 have to go about if you have some responsibility to put
48 out proposals or whatever, that's my opinion.
49
50 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Any comments by anybody

1 else?

2

3

(No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Thank you, Tom. We have
6 here Council appointments and I'm not sure what this item
7 on our agenda is. For some reason I'm blank. What are
8 we talking about, K.J.?

9

10 MS. MUSHOVIC: If I may, Mr. Chair. I
11 believe that was a placeholder on all the agenda's this
12 year and I did think about your Council when I saw it and
13 thought of that Russian River Inter-agency Working Group
14 because Mr. Gease had been the one that you identified in
15 the fall to be the RACs representative on that group, but
16 you addressed that when Mr. Lorringer was talking to you.
17 The only other thing I kind of had hanging out there was
18 if you wanted to confirm Gloria Stickwan. You had
19 identified her for the Chisana subcommittee if that was
20 to be approved by the Federal Subsistence Board and
21 formed and start to work.

22

23 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: I think a motion in
24 support of her for that would be in order.

25

26

MR. CARPENTER: So moved.

27

28

MR. BLOSSOM: Second.

29

30

MR. HENRICHS: Second.

31

32 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Are there any
33 objections, Gloria?

34

35

36 MS. STICKWAN: My seat is up this year,

37 right?

38

39

MS. MUSHOVIC: That's correct.

40

41 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: But we'll appoint you
42 anyhow because we're expecting you to be back unless
43 you're going to say that you won't be back.

43

44

MS. STICKWAN: I guess.

45

46

47 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: With that we have a
48 motion on the floor.

48

49

MR. CARPENTER: Question.

50

1 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: The question has been
2 called. All in favor signify by saying aye.
3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.
5
6 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: All opposed signify by
7 saying nay.
8
9 (No opposing votes)
10
11 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Judy.
12
13 MS. CAMINER: I guess, K.J., another
14 possibility, I really don't know the status is whether
15 this Council needs to make any nominations or
16 appointments to the SRCs. That might be another reason
17 it's there.
18
19 MS. MUSHOVIC: Through the Chair. Yes,
20 some Councils did have that as an item on their agenda in
21 that location, but they usually took care of it during
22 the Park portion of their agency reports.
23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: We don't have anybody at
25 this time that we have to appoint to that, do we?
26
27 MS. MUSHOVIC: No. I was in contact with
28 both parks and no. I confirmed that, that you do not.
29
30 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Okay. With that, my
31 closing comments. I think we had a good meeting. I've
32 appreciated everybody that's here. Just for the
33 information of the rest of the Council I've been invited
34 to attend the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council's
35 meeting in Sitka next week.....
36
37 MR. HENRICHS: Southeast, isn't it?
38
39 CHAIRMAN LOHSE:so my wife and I
40 are just going to take the ferry. We're taking our own
41 trip, so we're going to be there half a day late, but
42 we'll be there after the introductions and before the
43 main part of the meeting starts. We're going to attend
44 the Sitka meetings and then after that we're going to go
45 see some of the Southeastern that I've heard so much
46 about and take a little ferry trip down to Wrangell and
47 Petersburg and then back to Haines. So I won't be coming
48 back till the 4th. We have a meeting on the 6th and I've
49 talked to Judy about that. If it turns out that I'm too
50 tired to drive from Haines to Anchorage between the 4th

1 and the 6th, she's willing to step in as my substitute to
2 attend that meeting. If that's okay with the rest of the
3 Council. I'd like to thank you all for being here and
4 for I think a very productive meeting.

5
6 Now we need a motion to adjourn.

7
8 MS. CAMINER: One more comment.

9
10 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: One more comment. Okay.

11
12 MS. CAMINER: Thank you, K.J., for your
13 first full meeting with us. Appreciate all the materials
14 and certainly to all the Staff and presenters. It was
15 very informative and great discussions. Thanks a lot.

16
17 MR. CARPENTER: Move to adjourn.

18
19 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: Move to adjourn. Do I
20 hear a second.

21
22 MS. STICKWAN: I second.

23
24 CHAIRMAN LOHSE: A second. Okay. And we
25 don't need to vote on this one. The meeting is
26 adjourned.

27
28 (Off record)

29
30 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 27th day of March 2011.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 9/16/14