

1 KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6 VOLUME II

7  
8 Best Western Kodiak Inn  
9 Kodiak, Alaska  
10 February 11, 2015  
11 9:00 a.m.

12  
13  
14  
15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- 16  
17 Speridon Simeonoff (Telephonic)  
18 Melissa Berns  
19 Coral Chernoff  
20 Patrick Holmes  
21 Richard Koso  
22 Sam Rohrer  
23 Thomas Schwantes  
24 Antone Shelikoff (Telephonic)  
25 Rebecca Skinner  
26 Della Trumble  
27  
28 Regional Council Coordinator, Carl Johnson  
29 Karen Deatherage

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Kodiak, Alaska - 2/11/2015)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay, everybody. I'll call the meeting back to order. It's 9:03. I'd like to welcome everybody. Hopefully we'll finish this up today. I think we're going to start off this morning with introductions again so everybody knows who is here. We're also trying to determine whether Steve Delaney is here. Does anybody know Steven, whether he made it?

(No response)

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. We will then follow with rural determination. We'll go back to that. We have a bit more information on customary and traditional use and we'll move on to -- we were going to move on to National Maritime, but we may have to hold off, and from there we'll go to the migratory birds.

So, given that, I'd like to tell everybody good morning. My name is Della Trumble. I'm the co-Chair of the Kodiak/Aleutian Federal Subsistence Advisory Council and I am from King Cove. This morning, I guess, Rebecca we'll start with you and we'll go around the table to the audience.

MS. SKINNER: Rebecca Skinner from Kodiak.

MS. BERNS: Melissa Berns from Old Harbor.

MR. KOSO: Rick Koso from Adak.

MR. HOLMES: Pat Holmes, Kodiak.

MR. ROHRER: Sam Rohrer, Kodiak.

MR. SCHWANTES: Tom Schwantes, Kodiak.

MS. CHERNOFF: Coral Chernoff, Kodiak.

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Do we have people online, Council members?

1 MR. SHELIKOFF: Antone, Akutan.  
2  
3 MR. SIMEONOFF: Good morning. Speridon  
4 Simeonoff from Akhiok.  
5  
6 MR. JOHNSON: This is Carl Johnson,  
7 Office of Subsistence Management.  
8  
9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Karen Deatherage,  
10 Office of Subsistence Management.  
11  
12 MR. CRAWFORD: Drew Crawford, Fish and  
13 Game, Anchorage.  
14  
15 MR. SHARP: This is Dan Sharp with  
16 Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage.  
17  
18 MR. COOPER: Neal Cooper, Kodiak.  
19  
20 MS. HAYDEN: Natasha Hayden, Kodiak.  
21 Native Village of Afognak Tribal Council.  
22  
23 MR. KRON: Tom Kron, OSM.  
24  
25 DR. ROSENBERG: Hi, I'm Dan Rosenberg.  
26 I'm the waterfowl coordinator for the Alaska Department  
27 of Fish and Game.  
28  
29 MS. LEE: Tonya Lee, Kodiak National  
30 Wildlife Refuge. Refuge information technician.  
31  
32 MR. SVOBODA: I'm Nate Svoboda. I'm an  
33 area wildlife biologist for Alaska Fish and Game.  
34  
35 MR. D. ROHRER: Dick Rohrer, Kodiak.  
36  
37 MR. CHERVENAK: Paul Chervenak,  
38 chairman of the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory  
39 Committee.  
40  
41 MS. INGLES: Palma Ingles, OSM,  
42 Anchorage.  
43  
44 MR. TAYLOR: Good morning. I'm Eric  
45 Taylor. I'm with the Fish and Wildlife Service,  
46 Migratory Bird Division.  
47  
48 MR. EVANS: Good morning. My name is  
49 Tom Evans. I work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
50 Office of Subsistence Management.

1 MR. FISCHER: Good morning. Julian  
2 Fischer, Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of  
3 Migratory Bird Management.  
4  
5 MR. LANCE: Tom Lance, Sun'aq Tribe of  
6 Kodiak, natural resources coordinator.  
7  
8 MR. R. JOHNSON: Reid Johnson, Alaska  
9 Department of Fish and Game.  
10  
11 MR. MURPHY: Bob Murphy, Alaska  
12 Department of Fish and Game in Port Moller.  
13  
14 MR. JACOBSON: Jake Jacobson, resident  
15 of Kodiak Island Borough.  
16  
17 MR. JACKSON: James Jackson, Kodiak  
18 Fish and Game.  
19  
20 MR. KEYSE: Matt Keyse, Fish and Game,  
21 Sand Point.  
22  
23 MR. WADLE: Jeff Wadle, Fish and Game,  
24 Westward Region.  
25  
26 MS. PETRIVELLI: Pat Petrivelli, BIA  
27 subsistence anthropologist out of Anchorage.  
28  
29 MR. DAMBERG: Doug Damberg, Refuge  
30 Manager, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.  
31  
32 MS. LAROSA: Anne Marie LaRosa, Refuge  
33 Manager, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.  
34  
35 MR. PYLE: Bill Pyle, supervisor  
36 wildlife biologist, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.  
37  
38 MR. CRYE: John Crye, Fish and Game,  
39 Wildlife.  
40  
41 MR. COBB: McCrea Cobb, wildlife  
42 biologist, Kodiak Refuge.  
43  
44 MS. LOWE: Stacey Lowe, wildlife  
45 biologist, Izembek Refuge.  
46  
47 MR. CHRISTIANSEN: Rolf Christiansen,  
48 Old Harbor.  
49  
50 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: And the young

1 lady here who just walked in. I'm putting you on the  
2 spot to introduce yourself.

3  
4 MS. HERMAN: Oh, I'm Julie Herman with  
5 the Kodiak Daily Mirror.

6  
7 MS. MARSH: J.J. Marsh from Sun'aq  
8 Tribe of Kodiak.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Good  
11 morning, everybody. Just a point. As we have in the  
12 past, if you're from any of the tribes or tribal  
13 councils or organizations, if you do want to speak to  
14 anything, do let us know. We had them on the agenda  
15 yesterday, but no one did come forward on the agency  
16 reports.

17  
18 With that, we will move on to rural  
19 determination process review. Palma, I guess, has a  
20 little bit more information.

21  
22 MS. INGLES: Yes, I'm setting up. Good  
23 morning. For the record, I'm Palma Ingles. I'm an  
24 anthropologist with the.....

25 (Telephone interruption)

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, can you  
28 hear us now?

29  
30 MR. SIMEONOFF: I can hear you.

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay.  
33 Apparently there's eight people online. Can we go back  
34 and, besides Mitch and Antone, let us know who else is  
35 online.

36  
37 MR. CROWLEY: Dave Crowley in King  
38 Salmon.

39  
40 MS. PETERSON: Chris Peterson in King  
41 Salmon.

42  
43 MR. SHARP: Dan Sharp with BLM from  
44 Anchorage.

45  
46 MR. CRAWFORD: Drew Crawford, Fish and  
47 Game, in Anchorage.

48  
49 MS. BURKE: Melinda Burke, OSM, in  
50 Anchorage.

1 MS. LAVINE: Robbin LaVine, OSM, in  
2 Anchorage.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Thank  
5 you. At this time, for those of you that just got  
6 online, we're going to do rural determination process  
7 review with Palma Ingles.

8  
9 MS. INGLES: Okay. Good morning. Once  
10 again I'm Palma Ingles with OSM. In 2010, the  
11 Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture directed the  
12 Federal Subsistence Board to conduct a review of the  
13 rural determination process. So in spring of 2014 we  
14 solicited comments and we received 475 comments. Today  
15 what I'm going to cover real briefly is to give you the  
16 background information of what we're doing so it can  
17 give you the who, what, where and when of what we're  
18 doing now.

19  
20 The who is you. The Federal  
21 Subsistence Board, as I mentioned, they received 475  
22 substantial comments from various sources, including  
23 individual citizens, members of the Regional Advisory  
24 Councils, tribes, Alaska Native corporations and other  
25 entities or organizations such as borough and city  
26 governments.

27  
28 So what we want to know today is do you  
29 agree or disagree with changing the current regulations  
30 on rural determinations as proposed by the Secretaries.  
31 This rule would be effective statewide. After the  
32 Board meets in June or July of 2015, it makes its  
33 recommendations to the Secretaries. A final rule will  
34 be published, which may or may not differ from the  
35 proposed rule.

36  
37 So the reason we're doing this is the  
38 proposed rule was initiated based on the findings of  
39 the Secretarial review of the Federal Subsistence  
40 Management Program. Rural determinations are important  
41 because only residents of the areas identified as rural  
42 are eligible to harvest under subsistence regulations  
43 on Federal public lands.

44  
45 So under the current regulations we  
46 have a set of criteria, which is fairly long. In that  
47 they do things like aggregate the communities or areas  
48 that are economically, socially and communally  
49 integrated. They also evaluate a community's rural or  
50 nonrural status using guidelines defined by the

1 Secretaries, such as population thresholds and economic  
2 development.

3

4 I did a lot of the analysis of the 475  
5 comments and the population threshold seemed to be a  
6 major concern for many places, including places like  
7 Kodiak. So under the proposed regulations the Board  
8 would evaluate a community's nonrural status using a  
9 broad array of relevant information and rely heavily on  
10 the recommendation of Regional Advisory Councils.

11

12 One of the things we're trying to do  
13 with this process is recognize that throughout the  
14 state of Alaska there's regional differences and we  
15 want to take that into account so that we don't  
16 necessarily have the same criteria say for Fairbanks as  
17 we do Kodiak because we want to recognize there are  
18 differences. What they're trying to do is give more  
19 control to the Regional Advisory Councils. It would be  
20 up to each Council to look at it and say, you know, do  
21 we think this is rural or nonrural and here's why.  
22 They can work with their constituents, they can work  
23 with their communities and make these decisions.

24

25 This is just to give you an example.  
26 On the left is our old criteria or rather our current  
27 criteria. It's what we're using right now that list  
28 things like aggregating communities, population. We  
29 look at things -- are there road systems, are there  
30 stores or post offices, things like that.

31

32 So under the new rules, instead of  
33 using things like these population thresholds and rural  
34 characteristics or aggregation of communities, the  
35 various information sources make an attempt to apply --  
36 that we try to do statewide. We can do individual  
37 areas. So the Board would rely on the Councils and the  
38 public to provide information to the Federal  
39 Subsistence Board and make rural determinations on a  
40 regional level.

41

42 The proposed rule they've come up with  
43 would eliminate the mandatory 10-year renewal cycle  
44 that we're under right now or the 10-year review cycle.  
45 Instead, any changes that we made would come forth as a  
46 proposal and we would only change rural or nonrural  
47 status as needed.

48

49 So what we're asking people today -- so  
50 far this is the new regulation proposed by the

1 Secretaries. If you haven't had a chance to read it,  
2 we do have a handout on the back table that shows what  
3 we put in the Federal Register. Under the rural  
4 determination process, A, the Board determines which  
5 areas or communities in Alaska are nonrural and then  
6 the current determinations would be listed. Then every  
7 other community would be considered rural. So we're  
8 asking people do you agree or do you disagree with  
9 these changes.

10

11 That's the end of my presentation and I  
12 can answer questions if needed.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

17

18 MS. SKINNER: Do you know, has there  
19 been any thought or discussion about how frequently  
20 requests for a review of the community could happen?  
21 So, for example, if Kodiak were initially determined  
22 nonrural, could we potentially be subject to annual  
23 requests that are put forward to review our status?

24

25 MS. INGLES: At this time we don't know  
26 exactly what it's going to look like, so I really can't  
27 give you an answer on that.

28

29 MS. SKINNER: Can I ask two more? So  
30 if we -- say we're determined rural and somebody puts  
31 forward a proposal to request that we be made nonrural,  
32 who goes through that analysis and how would that  
33 analysis be done? I'm assuming Staff would be doing  
34 some sort of analysis in addition to the RAC  
35 recommendation.

36

37 MS. INGLES: Correct. OSM and the  
38 other Federal groups that we work with are the Staff to  
39 the Regional Advisory Councils, so we would be working  
40 on the analysis for that.

41

42 MS. SKINNER: How would you do that  
43 analysis? What would you be analyzing?

44

45 MS. INGLES: At this point I am not  
46 quite sure.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Are there any  
49 other questions at this time?

50

1 MR. SCHWANTES: I do.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

4

5 MR. SCHWANTES: Palma, through the  
6 Chair. Just one question. That review, could that be  
7 brought up by anybody in the state or could it be that  
8 it would have to be somebody within the  
9 Kodiak/Aleutians area?

10

11 MS. INGLES: Tom -- this is Palma  
12 Ingles for the record. Tom, that question has  
13 continued to come up and, as I say, this is what  
14 they're proposing now and we do not have the full  
15 guidelines. I think what they're trying to do is get a  
16 feel from everybody is this the direction we want to go  
17 in.

18

19 One of the things, from my  
20 understanding, is that we will work -- it will have to  
21 be cleared through the Regional Advisory Councils that  
22 are dealing with the communities within that area. So  
23 we wouldn't look at, say, Fairbanks making a decision  
24 for Kodiak. That is my understanding. Does that  
25 answer your question?

26

27 MR. SCHWANTES: Yes, but what I'm  
28 getting at is Fairbanks could challenge it any time  
29 they want to, right? I guess can we try to put it in  
30 here so that it would have to be somebody within our  
31 region to make that objection?

32

33 MS. INGLES: My recommendation would be  
34 that you put that in writing and put that within the  
35 comments so that when we do collect all the comments,  
36 that we have that portrayed within the comments. I  
37 think that's a really important issue and I have heard  
38 that come up a few times. So I would recommend that  
39 you put that in a written comment.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Carl.

42

43 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
44 Carl Johnson, Office of Subsistence Management. I  
45 think as much as we, as far as a matter of feeling  
46 comfortable about where this is going, we want to know  
47 how things will be processed after this rule change.

48

49 At this point in time what the Board is  
50 seeking is whether or not you like the idea in general

1 of removing all these rigid, statewide-applied criteria  
2 from Secretarial regulation and providing flexibility  
3 of coming up with rural characteristics that aren't  
4 part of regulation, that are instead done by a  
5 region-by-region basis.

6  
7 As much as I agree with the idea that  
8 we might know down the road how this will be applied,  
9 at this point in time the Board just wants to know  
10 whether or not you're comfortable with, you agree with  
11 the idea of removing these rigid criteria from the  
12 Secretarial regulation and then allowing this  
13 flexibility and then the next step will be to figure  
14 out how we do that part.

15  
16 As a reminder of the timeline, the  
17 ultimate end -- the final rule on the actual rural  
18 determinations that will be made based on this new  
19 process is not required to be completed until May of  
20 2017, so there's still some time to figure out that  
21 next step and there's going to be everything -- every  
22 time there's any kind of proposed change there's going  
23 to be a public process, so we're just trying to do this  
24 baby steps through and we're dealing with just this  
25 part right now.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Carl.  
28 One of the things when you read that -- because we  
29 reference the Board will make a determination based on  
30 information or something from that Regional Council,  
31 but if you read that, it says the Board determines  
32 which areas or communities in Alaska are nonrural and  
33 there should be something in there based on whether  
34 it's from that specific region or RAC and to define  
35 that it has to be, you know, specifically from that RAC  
36 for that region, because the way it's written right now  
37 it's kind of an open door so to speak.

38  
39 MS. INGLES: Madame Chair. I'm Palma  
40 Ingles, for the record. I agree with you and I believe  
41 at this point since we're throwing it out there for  
42 comments, that's a really important comment, to make  
43 sure that gets captured in the record in the written  
44 comments so that we do have that.

45  
46 They're trying to proceed with this  
47 process and there may be RACs -- what we've decided  
48 there may be RACs that are perfectly happy with the  
49 eight criteria and they don't want to change it, so  
50 that's what we're soliciting as well. Do we need to

1 change this process. If we do want to change the  
2 process, what is it going to look like.

3  
4 So this round of RAC meetings is really  
5 important for this process for us and for giving  
6 information back to the Subsistence Board of saying  
7 here's the concerns and how do we write this correctly  
8 that reflects the will of the different RACs and that  
9 will meet the needs across the state.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

12  
13 MR. HOLMES: I thought the testimony we  
14 had last night was really swell and it certainly did  
15 reflect a lot of the comments in the community and  
16 combining that with the hearing we had a year or so  
17 prior. I think Natasha Hayden hit it right on the head  
18 on addressing Rebecca's comments and Tom. You know,  
19 the proposals need to originate within an individual  
20 RAC, within an individual area because in this whole  
21 process, over 15 or 20 years, you know, we're  
22 constantly having to fight folks from an entirely  
23 different part of the state that have no comprehension.  
24 So I think that that's probably crystal clear on  
25 maintaining that as one of the really important  
26 evaluative restrictions.

27  
28 I know in our previous hearings and  
29 thoughts the areas where Kodiak folks had heartburn was  
30 on having the aggregation and particularly having the  
31 Coast Guard base, but also having the number threshold.  
32 One of the comments from the roundtable at that time is  
33 that it should be -- ought to be -- the number, if  
34 you're using a number, should be much higher for places  
35 like Kodiak and Sitka and to take a look at some of the  
36 other Federal agencies where the rural number, if  
37 you're using a number, is like 20,000. Because if the  
38 community of Kodiak were ever to reach that point, then  
39 I'm moving to Atka or Akhiok, but I seriously doubt  
40 that that would happen.

41  
42 I think the other comment last night of  
43 the flipping it over and just saying who's urban and  
44 leaving everybody else rural, I think that carried  
45 through loud and clear. So I think probably part of  
46 the duty of our Council is going to be trying to  
47 summarize up last night's comments and then maybe  
48 putting that forward as our recommendations to the  
49 Board.

50

1                   But I really appreciate your effort and  
2 the new Board is so entirely different from the old  
3 Federal Board in wanting to listen to people that live  
4 in the Bush and remote areas, that this is just a  
5 golden opportunity for our community and other rural  
6 places to get the burden off our back and put it on  
7 somebody else and just, I think, as probably Iver would  
8 have said, just leave us alone.

9

10                   Thank you.

11

12                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

13

14                   MS. SKINNER: Having been involved in  
15 the Kodiak review process back in 2005-2006, one of my  
16 biggest concerns with being asked to weigh in on  
17 whether we like this approach or not is the lack of  
18 clarity as to how it's going to work because if Staff  
19 are going to have to do an analysis, they clearly need  
20 to know how to do that analysis. So whether there's  
21 criteria in regulation or not, they're going to need  
22 some direction to walk through the analysis.

23

24                   So without knowing what those factors  
25 are or having lack of consistency, I'm thinking  
26 forward. Okay, if we have to argue this again, do we  
27 have any idea or guidance about what factors are being  
28 considered or given weight. And while I don't agree  
29 with the current criteria, at least it's a starting  
30 point if you're trying to -- you know, if you are  
31 forced to kind of  
32 argue and defend your community's right to access  
33 subsistence. So I'm very uncomfortable with that.

34

35                   Also I understand the stated purpose  
36 that this is intended to put more control with the  
37 RACs, however I do have to note the Board makes the  
38 final determination and even yesterday when we talked  
39 about the geographic composition of this RAC, decisions  
40 were made back in DC without our input, without our  
41 approval and that can still happen under this. So the  
42 RAC is one piece of the recommendation and I understand  
43 the intent is to give a lot of weight to what the RAC  
44 wants, but it's just one piece. Really, the  
45 determination is with the Board.

46

47                   To Pat's point, it is a new Board and  
48 it may be much more -- we may perceive it as better  
49 than the old Board, but that Board can change. So one  
50 of the things with having regulations, having things

1 documented, is that everybody knows what to expect and  
2 you can plan your course of action or, again, if you  
3 need to argue this, you know what you need to argue.

4  
5 My concern is this is so ambiguous and  
6 so gray and there's so much unknown, I don't even know  
7 how we could possibly say we like it or we don't like  
8 it because it may be good for Kodiak, it may not be  
9 good for Kodiak and I'm concerned that there's very few  
10 tools that I can see and what's in front of me if we  
11 have to argue this. You know, I have no idea how to do  
12 that or if we're going to be successful. So I do have  
13 a high level of discomfort with this, but again I don't  
14 agree with the current criteria as written either.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
17 Rebecca. Mitch or Antone, do you have any comments at  
18 this point online?

19  
20 MR. SIMEONOFF: This is Mitch. Not at  
21 this time, thank you.

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Any  
24 other Council comments. Rick, go ahead.

25  
26 MR. KOSO: Yeah, I was just curious on  
27 what our play in this is going to be here during this  
28 RAC meeting. It's obvious that at least everybody I  
29 listen to from Kodiak are pretty much 100 percent for  
30 the change. I don't know if the RAC board would be in  
31 a position today to do some sort of a resolution to  
32 accept that as a starting point for you, if that would  
33 be of help.

34  
35 I don't know what the process would be  
36 as far as doing something like that, but it's pretty  
37 obvious to me, talking to all the board members and  
38 stuff, that we're pretty much in 100 percent with the  
39 Kodiak folks here. So what we can do today, if  
40 anything at all, either a letter of support or a  
41 resolution or however we want to put this into play,  
42 but I think we should possibly do something today.

43  
44 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Rick.  
45 Carl.

46  
47 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
48 Carl Johnson. Through the Chair, Rick. So what the  
49 Council did last time was, after hearing the public  
50 comments, you resolved to draft a letter that

1 incorporated the Council's comments and adopted the  
2 public comments as your own. So we prepared a fairly  
3 lengthy, about a three or four-page, letter to the  
4 Board that was this Council's comment on the proposed  
5 -- on what should be changed by the regulation.  
6

7                   So we can do the same thing this time.  
8 We can -- I've already kind of typed up a summary of  
9 the substantive comments that were provided last night  
10 and a lot of those are being echoed today. You know,  
11 specifically the future guidance or lack thereof and  
12 the discomfort they may cause but also the liking to  
13 get rid of the rigid criteria. So we can put together  
14 a letter for you. You can just have a motion to submit  
15 such a letter and then we can draft it for you and then  
16 review it with the Council before the -- you know, just  
17 through email to make sure it covers what you want and  
18 then get it in for the April 1st deadline on comments.  
19

20                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Carl.  
21 That was going to be basically what my suggestion was.  
22 This process is starting and I know it will take up to  
23 two years to get the language not only in this  
24 accepted, but I think at some point if the criteria is  
25 given to -- hold on a second. Just to get the process  
26 starting, it's clear, as Rick and everybody here said,  
27 that there is a need to change the regulation and how  
28 it's written and to get rid of the 10 factors because  
29 it doesn't work and hasn't worked for Kodiak. Those  
30 issues of boundary and use and different things, I  
31 think that's clear that needs to be a part of however  
32 Kodiak/Aleutians sets up their criteria for that  
33 determination and that can be worked on over the next  
34 year or two as we go through this and the language and  
35 developing what that is with the public.  
36

37                   I guess if we entertain a motion to  
38 approve to move forward.  
39

40                   MR. SCHWANTES: I'd just like to make a  
41 comment before we do that. The one thing I would  
42 really like to make sure that we get in that letter is  
43 that, you know, it's our desire to make sure that the  
44 Council or that the Board and the Secretary of Interior  
45 understand that we want to be able to make those  
46 decisions for our area.  
47

48                   We don't want -- we want to have this  
49 regulation so that Soldotna can't be petitioning every  
50 other year to eliminate Kodiak as a rural area. I can

1 see that as a real problem because there's other areas  
2 that don't want us to be rural. They don't want us to  
3 have those subsistence rights. I agree we need to do  
4 this, but I want to make sure we have that in there as  
5 one of our desires going forward.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: The other thing,  
8 Carl -- this is Della. I don't recall seeing the letter  
9 that was sent and with the comments attached to it. As  
10 Council RAC members, it would be nice to not only have  
11 what you sent before and what you will be sending this  
12 time. You did say you'd get that to us.

13

14 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I can send you  
15 again a copy of the letter that this Council provided  
16 as comments to the Board last time around and then I  
17 will definitely circulate to the Council the draft  
18 letter that Karen and I will put together on the  
19 comments regarding this particular proposed rule. And  
20 then, of course, once it's finalized and stamped and  
21 signed, then you would all get a copy of that.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

24

25 MS. SKINNER: I would also like to see  
26 included in the letter some kind of limit on how often  
27 these requests for review can come up. I don't think  
28 it's unreasonable to think that if there are areas that  
29 don't want Kodiak to be rural, they're going to find a  
30 resident in Kodiak who will put forward the proposal.  
31 I think part of the concern and frustration with Kodiak  
32 is that we have to keep having this fight. At least  
33 under the 10-year review it was every 10 years.

34

35 What I don't want to see is that this  
36 comes up every year or every two years. I think that  
37 would be contrary to what the community is trying to  
38 achieve. I mean obviously this is very high level  
39 right now, but that's not contemplated here at all. It  
40 seems as though the assumption is, oh, of course nobody  
41 from the community would request to change the status  
42 when I do not think that is the case.

43

44 So in the letter I think that's a very  
45 important point to put in there, that these requests to  
46 change the status of a community need to come from  
47 within the community, but I would really like to see  
48 some -- and I don't even know how to word it, but some  
49 sort of limitation so that we're not doing this every  
50 one year or every two years.

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Palma.

2

3 MS. INGLES: Palma Ingles for the  
4 record. I believe the purpose of the letter would  
5 state your wishes. Carl, I assume those letters go on  
6 to the Board, right? So that as they put these things  
7 together, then they're looking at all 10 regions and  
8 looking at what people want. And I believe there will  
9 be another comment period where you'll get to see and  
10 make sure that we are covered and we're putting in  
11 there what the desires of your Regional Advisory  
12 Council.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you.

15

16 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair. I would  
17 make a motion then that we draft that letter to the  
18 Board and that we include in that the comments that the  
19 board members have made and that we've heard from the  
20 public in last evening's meeting and also in the  
21 meetings we held a year ago.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MR. SIMEONOFF: I'll second that  
26 motion. This is Mitch. I'd also like to make a  
27 comment on discussion.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
30 have a motion made. Do we have a second -- we have a  
31 second by Mitch.

32

33 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Do we have any  
36 comments or discussion.

37

38 MR. SIMEONOFF: Under discussion,  
39 Madame Chair. This is Mitch in Akhiok. I'd just like  
40 to point out that this proposed rule seems so simple  
41 that it leaves a lot up in the air for final  
42 determination for someone back in the East Coast who  
43 has no idea of our situations up here. There was a  
44 comment made yesterday that we don't want the  
45 Secretaries to have the final say on the criteria that  
46 we put forth or whether we agree or disagree with the  
47 proposed rule.

48

49 If there are changes that are going to  
50 be made by people on the East Coast, they should send

1 it back to us and we can work on making those changes.  
2 I just really don't want to have someone back there  
3 making changes and putting it in the rule.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

8

9 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Madame Chair. I'd  
10 like to echo the skepticism that has been expressed. I  
11 would really like to see us get our position and I'd  
12 really like to, in that letter, encourage the Board to  
13 be expeditious in accomplishing this change because my  
14 paranoid side can see -- we've only got two years until  
15 the Federal elections and we can have a total slip  
16 again before we even get some kind of a ruling on this  
17 and then we're right back with the same folks that  
18 we've had battles with before doing it all over again.

19

20 So I would really like to encourage in  
21 our letter a desire to have an initial determination  
22 from the Board before the Federal election so that we  
23 have a strong position from our community and from the  
24 State as to how we want to see things go. Because it's  
25 so easy for, as Mitch pointed out, somebody from the  
26 East Coast to manipulate the process and turn things  
27 180 degrees around. Have some Department of Interior  
28 or Agriculture person that has a big influence with the  
29 Secretary just start poking and prodding and we don't  
30 have a clue where it's coming from.

31

32 Anyway, I would like to have that  
33 concept, if it's agreeable to my colleagues here, in  
34 the letter in hopes that that would help give us more  
35 protection. Thank you, Madame Chair.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat.

38 Carl.

39

40 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
41 Carl Johnson. Just so that we're separating out the  
42 issues, this proposed rule is a Secretarial rule change  
43 and the Board plans on meeting this summer to hear the  
44 comments on this proposed rule, but the rural  
45 determination itself will be made by the Federal  
46 Subsistence Board, not somebody in Washington, D.C. I  
47 just want to make sure we're separating out who makes  
48 what decisions regarding the process.

49

50 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Carl. This

1 is Mitch in Akhiok.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Sorry. I  
4 apologize. I've got some things going on. People are  
5 trying to leave King Cove and they need a place to live  
6 when they get back. You're lucky to get out of King  
7 Cove and you're lucky to get back. They do need a  
8 place to live.

9

10 (Laughter)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Anyway, I  
13 apologize. With that, is there anymore discussion on  
14 the motion made by Tom and seconded by Mitch.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MR. SIMEONOFF: Call for question.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: The question has  
21 been called. Did you have something? Okay.

22

23 MR. KOSO: I just have maybe a comment.  
24 You know, it's kind of curious the Kenaitze Indians in  
25 the Kenai Peninsula seemed like they were battling the  
26 same situation of becoming rural and nonrural. It  
27 seemed like it was about seven, eight, ten years ago.

28

29 I guess maybe if we could look back and  
30 see how they managed to -- I don't even know if they  
31 were able to successfully maintain their rural status,  
32 but maybe that would be something we could look at as a  
33 guideline for Kodiak, to see how they were able to  
34 pursue, if they were able to successfully pursue  
35 maintaining a rural status. I was just kind of curious  
36 if that ever came to play with you.

37

38 MS. INGLES: Palma Ingles for the  
39 record. Madame Chair and Council members. I do not  
40 know the status of that. Maybe Carl does.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: What I recall,  
43 Rick, I was at that meeting when they had the hearings  
44 in Anchorage, is actually at one point the Board  
45 approved it, but I think it got contested and I'm not  
46 exactly sure -- Pat might remember -- what transpired  
47 after that, but I know it did get contested.

48

49 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Tom Kron from  
50 OSM. Again my memory on it is not crystal clear

1 either, but there are parts of the Kenai Peninsula now  
2 that are rural. For example, Ninilchik, Seldovia, Port  
3 Graham. There are other parts that are nonrural;  
4 Kenai, Soldotna, Seward, for example, parts of Homer.  
5 But, again, I think this will be an issue that the  
6 Southcentral Council will deal with for their area. I  
7 suspect that they will have more issues to deal with  
8 than a Council here for Kodiak/Aleutians, for example,  
9 as was discussed last night.

10

11 Thank you, Madame Chair.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

14

15 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. Spinning  
16 off of Rick's comments about the Kenaitze and Tom's on  
17 Ninilchik and other places, I recall some discussions  
18 with Bertrand Adams and the folks in Sitka and  
19 Southeast and there's a commonality through the state  
20 of the cultural ties going back of communities that  
21 have existed more than 200 years and most of those  
22 places are still rural as can be, still heavily  
23 indulged in subsistence. I think Ninilchik, Kodiak,  
24 Sitka, all these places that date back to the Russian  
25 era, all dated back thousands of years before places  
26 like -- oh, all the communities up in the bay, all  
27 those places existed beforehand.

28

29 So perhaps one concept or criteria or  
30 something we might want to chew on or suggest to the  
31 Board or the Secretary to look at is how long a  
32 community has been in existence and that, in itself, if  
33 they're still there and their populations haven't  
34 exploded, then there's obviously some reason they've  
35 been able to maintain that. In most cases it's a  
36 cultural connection with subsistence.

37

38 So perhaps a timeline of existence of  
39 the community in terms of the demographics. I don't  
40 know how you'd put that together, but I think that  
41 might be a concept to have in the discussions because  
42 all of the places that have come back when the nonrural  
43 thing came up on who's rural and who's not, all those  
44 places have been there for hundreds, if not thousands  
45 of years. That's entirely different than Anchorage,  
46 Fairbanks, Juneau, that all were development of  
47 commercial commerce or some other factors. Anyway,  
48 just a thought to chew on.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: All right. At

1 this time we have a motion on the floor. It was  
2 seconded. We did have a call for question by Mitch.  
3 Do we want to do a roll call vote at this time or just  
4 all in favor?

5  
6 IN UNISON: All in favor.

7  
8 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: All in favor say  
9 aye.

10  
11 IN UNISON: Aye.

12  
13 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Opposed, same  
14 sign.

15  
16 (No opposing votes)

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Motion carried.  
19 And I guess we let the process begin. Thank you,  
20 Palma.

21  
22 MS. INGLES: Thank you, Madame Chair  
23 and Council members.

24  
25 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I believe this  
26 is going to be an ongoing issue for a while. The other  
27 item we had next on the agenda was customary and  
28 traditional use because we have a bit more information  
29 for this. We did have this yesterday. So if we can go  
30 ahead and move to that, that should just take a few  
31 minutes to get those updates. Palma, did you say you  
32 and Pat had more information?

33  
34 MS. INGLES: Once again for the record,  
35 Madame Chair and Council members, I'm Palma Ingles from  
36 OSM. I'm also relying on some help from Pat Petrivelli  
37 from BIA. Just to give you a clarification from  
38 yesterday's discussion about C&T. The way the process  
39 is running with the Southeast is they're not  
40 comfortable with the criteria that we currently use for  
41 declaring C&T because it is not part of ANILCA and it's  
42 the criteria that was set up by the State of Alaska  
43 originally and it was adopted in whole when the Federal  
44 government took over the State process and we just  
45 adopted it.

46  
47 So the Southeast decided they wanted to  
48 get rid of that and they want to go to the process  
49 that's laid out within ANILCA and ANILCA has three  
50 criteria. I'm just going to read those three criteria

1 that we can use for determining C&T under ANILCA. That  
2 would be customary and direct dependence upon the  
3 populations as the mainstay of livelihood. Number two  
4 would be local residency. Number three would be the  
5 availability of alternative subsistence resources.

6  
7 So at this time it's not an action  
8 item. There is nothing that your Council has to do,  
9 but what the Southeast is asking is for everybody to  
10 reconsider it and get comments to them if you would  
11 like to see this process change. At this time, the  
12 Southeast does not have a proposal before the Board,  
13 but they are considering a proposal to the Board to  
14 change the process. In order to change the process,  
15 they would like it to be something that all the RACs  
16 think would meet their needs so that we come forth with  
17 one proposal with the Southeast being the spearhead  
18 right now.

19  
20 At this time, the original vote last  
21 year was nine of the Councils were comfortable with the  
22 process the way it was and only the Southeast was  
23 uncomfortable with it and wanted it changed. But as  
24 they're reconsidering it -- I don't have the list in  
25 front of me, but right a few of the RACs have had a  
26 chance to vote for it, a few said, yes, we're good with  
27 the process, a few said they would like to see changes  
28 and we have four of our Councils who are still in  
29 deliberation about whether or not they would like to  
30 make any changes.

31  
32 Thank you, Madame Chair.

33  
34 MS. PETRIVELLI: This is Pat Petrivelli  
35 with BIA. I did get to work with the Southeast group.  
36 When the initial review happened, they set up a  
37 subcommittee. The initial review you were just asked  
38 what do you think of the C&T process, is it working for  
39 you or is it not and if it's not, tell us why. But the  
40 Southeast group had a binder full of materials that  
41 someone had brought that showed the past history of the  
42 program and how they looked at C&T. In Southeast they  
43 have a lot of complicated C&T determinations. So that  
44 for like sockeye salmon just one community has C&T for  
45 sockeye around their area and the rest of the  
46 neighboring communities don't. They perceived it as  
47 unnecessary restrictions.

48  
49 I want to correct Palma that those  
50 three criteria weren't for making C&T determinations.

1 They're made for determining priorities among  
2 subsistence users when there's a shortage. That's what  
3 ANILCA says, that you can make restrictions among --  
4 when you have to make restrictions among subsistence  
5 users, you use those three criteria.

6  
7 In Southeast, their Council felt that  
8 C&T determinations were making those restrictions  
9 unnecessarily because at that time there was enough  
10 sockeye for people, you know, and why were just these  
11 people with a C&T determination. That would be like  
12 saying just people in Akhiok had C&T for deer in their  
13 area and people in Port Lions had C&T for deer in their  
14 area and they wanted to have -- because in your region  
15 residents of Unit 8 have C&T for deer and that's that.

16  
17  
18 In the Southeast Region that have five  
19 Game Management Units, they have two fisheries  
20 management areas, so they have a lot more complicated  
21 process and a lot more restrictions and a lot more non-  
22 subsistence areas and a lot more urban competition.  
23 But they wanted to just change the process and just get  
24 rid of unnecessarily restricted C&T determinations and  
25 they thought just getting rid of that -- but then, when  
26 they floated the idea, they realized other regions  
27 don't like it.

28  
29 What they are trying to do is figure  
30 out what proposal to submit to the Secretaries and  
31 that's who they'll be submitting it to. Not the Board,  
32 but the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture. I  
33 don't know if they'll get the benefit of this analysis  
34 when they meet later in March and then they'll look at  
35 what this analysis says and I don't know if they'll  
36 wait to hear back to what other regions say and then  
37 they'll figure out a proposal maybe in the fall and  
38 then submit it to the Secretaries and then OSM would do  
39 another analysis depending upon if the Secretaries want  
40 to pursue a change in the regulations and then you  
41 would have another chance to more formally put input  
42 into it.

43  
44 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

45  
46 MR. HOLMES: Pat, I can understand  
47 their frustrations and everything. This process would  
48 -- you know, my blessings if it will accomplish what  
49 they need to do. Are there more Federal lands in  
50 Southeast? I have no idea. The Tongass and the other

1 Parks and Refuges and stuff. Because you've got on  
2 State lands and you've still got the eight criteria.  
3 So will it accomplish what they want to do?

4  
5 MS. PETRIVELLI: There is a Tongass  
6 National Forest and then I think -- there's Glacier Bay  
7 National Park, which has no subsistence and then  
8 there's Wrangell-St. Elias by Yakutat. I guess for  
9 Tongass Forest lands and the Wrangell-St. Elias  
10 National Park, if it got rid of all C&T --  
11 theoretically, if you got rid of all C&T  
12 determinations, then all rural residents of Alaska  
13 would be eligible to practice subsistence uses there.

14  
15 Then just really necessary then the  
16 Board would use those three criteria if there was a  
17 need. Like the few areas where they have quotas is  
18 Yakutat. I think there's like 10 moose that have to be  
19 -- they have a quota there. So it would be Unit 6 or 5  
20 that would have to have an .804 determination.

21  
22 As far as the State regulations go, the  
23 State provides harvest opportunities for fish and  
24 wildlife. It's true that the Federal regulations only  
25 work on Federal public lands.

26  
27 MS. KENNER: Thank you. This is Pippa  
28 Kenner with OSM, Madame Chair.

29  
30 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead, Pippa.

31  
32 MS. KENNER: Thank you. The letter  
33 that the Southeast Council wrote to the Federal  
34 Subsistence Board is Appendix B in the briefing and in  
35 the briefing the Southeast Council is clearly not sure  
36 that this is the regulation that they might want to  
37 submit to the Secretary. The customary and traditional  
38 use determination process is complicated and they were  
39 told several times that if they wanted more information  
40 about how changes might affect them, they needed to  
41 present it as a question in their proposal.

42  
43 Then what Staff did is they took that  
44 proposal -- which the proposal asked us to analyze the  
45 effects of the changes statewide, not just in Southeast  
46 -- took the proposal and used it as a vehicle to give  
47 examples for every part of the state. What this new  
48 process might look like if the eight factors were  
49 actually removed from regulation.

50

1                   The Southeast Council didn't  
2 necessarily ask the other Councils for comments, but in  
3 the spirit of transparency and because there's a lot of  
4 explanation in the analysis, we wanted to provide it to  
5 all the Councils. We have a number of Councils who  
6 have not found themselves in a situation where they are  
7 in conflict with the C&T regulations and they're not  
8 very aware of what the eight factors are and what the  
9 C&T process is. So this document will be particularly  
10 helpful to them in understanding what the Southeast  
11 Council is asking for.

12  
13                   So I just wanted to remind you the  
14 Southeast Council didn't necessarily ask for comments,  
15 they didn't necessarily ask for this analysis to be  
16 shared with you, but we decided it would be beneficial  
17 to the Councils to see the analysis.

18  
19                   Thank you, Madame Chair.

20  
21                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you.

22  
23                   Rebecca.

24  
25                   MS. SKINNER: So when I was looking  
26 over this material last night trying to understand what  
27 it all meant, I did look through the ANILCA section in  
28 the packet. Thank you for including that as well as  
29 the regulations. So in looking at ANILCA, it provided  
30 for access to all rural residents, to all Federal  
31 public lands basically, and then if there's a resource  
32 shortage, then we can use the three criteria to create  
33 priorities to make sure that people who traditionally  
34 rely on the resource and live in close proximity to it  
35 can have a priority. So there's these built-in  
36 protections that you can access.

37  
38                   Then in looking at the C&T regulations,  
39 they have nothing to do with abundance of a resource.  
40 They're simply creating limitations on who can access a  
41 resource in certain areas, so they basically serve to  
42 keep out other people from coming into an area and  
43 accessing the resource.

44  
45                   And I guess it wasn't clear to me why  
46 did those end up in regulation or how did those end up  
47 in regulation since they're not in ANILCA at all. So  
48 I'm trying to understand they don't have to do with  
49 abundance.

50

1 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair, this is  
2 Pippa Kenner.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead, Pippa.

5  
6 MS. KENNER: Well, in ANILCA, the  
7 Secretary of Interior is delegated to administer the  
8 subsistence program in Alaska. As part of that  
9 administration, they had to determine how these  
10 customary and traditional uses would be identified in  
11 Alaska. Part of the reason why these criteria got into  
12 our regulations, part of it is because the Secretaries  
13 thought that the Federal program would be temporary and  
14 that it would only be a matter of time before the State  
15 passed the constitutional amendment or did whatever it  
16 needed to do to retain authority to manage subsistence  
17 on Federal public lands. So they allowed these  
18 regulations, many State regulations to float into the  
19 Federal regulations.

20  
21 There have been some tweaks and  
22 modifications. We do have proposals to change C&T  
23 determinations. We do have proposals to conduct .804  
24 analyses, but those eight factors have remained in  
25 regulation. Then, when we had the Secretarial Review  
26 over the last five years, the Secretary reminded us  
27 that this process is no longer temporary; that the  
28 Federal program is here to stay. The State has not  
29 regained authority and isn't likely to in the near  
30 future. And that we should review all our regulations  
31 to make sure that the spirit of ANILCA is reflected in  
32 them.

33  
34 MS. SKINNER: Well, I guess I'm not  
35 clear on how the C&T regulations came to be in the  
36 first place because I guess I don't see where ANILCA  
37 says make C&T determinations. I think Pat Petrivelli  
38 wants to jump in.

39  
40 MS. KENNER: Well.....

41  
42 MS. PETRIVELLI: Wait a minute, Pippa.  
43 I'd like to take a shot at this. Okay. ANILCA says  
44 the Federal government will provide a priority for  
45 rural residents on Federal public lands. In order to  
46 provide that priority, there's a responsibility to  
47 identify subsistence uses. Customary and traditional  
48 use determinations are used as a tool to identify  
49 subsistence uses. They're not needed at all times, but  
50 they are used as a tool.

1                   So like in say certain instances to  
2 provide community harvest. So like there's a community  
3 harvest for sheep in Anaktuvuk Pass. They have a  
4 special community harvest so they're given a C&T  
5 determination and only those people have the  
6 determination for that use. So it's a tool.

7  
8                   There's a chart that went with the  
9 record of decision and it goes rural residents, are  
10 there enough -- all rural residents are eligible on  
11 Federal public lands and then it goes has the C&T  
12 determination been made for this resource.

13  
14                   Now the State used C&T determinations  
15 when they administered the program because they have a  
16 responsibility to administer for sport and commercial  
17 and subsistence uses. They use C&T determinations to  
18 identify the resources that they had to provide a  
19 priority for. So once that identification was made,  
20 then they could provide the priority under State  
21 regulations.

22  
23                   Now does the Federal government have to  
24 make that same determination? Yes and no. I mean it's  
25 been used as a tool in certain areas to implement and  
26 make that priority use. Like in Unit 8, just the  
27 villages of Kodiak have a C&T for brown bear and not  
28 the residents of the city. So that enables the Refuge  
29 to administer the brown bear harvest just for those  
30 community members without having to close all brown  
31 bear to other residents. So it's used as a tool to  
32 manage the resource and provide for subsistence use.

33  
34                   I think in Southeast what they found  
35 out was that people don't see that as a need in that  
36 area because they don't have certain species because  
37 deer is relatively abundant and salmon. They saw the  
38 use of quotas in the .804 situation would take care of  
39 whatever resources they need, but in other areas of the  
40 state some people want to use this customary and  
41 traditional use as a tool for identifying certain  
42 subsistence uses that have to be protected and that's  
43 what the Federal program has used it for, is to  
44 identify those uses in order to provide that priority  
45 and preference.

46  
47                   If it's done away with, then the only  
48 other tool left is those .804 criteria. We've been  
49 told that to use those .804 criteria we would have to  
50 close Federal public lands first and then make the

1 restrictions among subsistence users, which would  
2 become a very bulky, long process, then when you reopen  
3 Federal public lands and how do you reopen it. With  
4 the 9D caribou, that gets closed and then reopened and  
5 closed and reopened. If it was open to all rural  
6 residents, well maybe then it would just stay closed.  
7 The population levels are so low. But do all rural  
8 residents in Alaska go and hunt in 9D for caribou? No,  
9 because there's no caribou there for them to get. But  
10 it was used as a management tool to provide that  
11 continued use.

12

13                   So once it's made -- and the Federal  
14 Board is very conscious of when they make it. When  
15 people put in a proposal -- I used to work there for  
16 five years and we were told to look at all potential  
17 other users if we were going to be making a restriction  
18 so that we didn't leave out other people. It's just  
19 they haven't done it throughout the state yet.

20

21                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat.  
22 That was a good explanation. When we have used the  
23 C&T, we have done it -- I've been part of it with the  
24 bear in Kodiak, with the caribou, and on a number of  
25 occasions in 9D and 10 we've used the C&T  
26 determination. Pat actually had worked with us on a  
27 number of them. There was one other one for Old Harbor  
28 at one time that we were working on, but I don't off  
29 the top of my head recall what it is.

30

31                   From a personal standpoint, at this  
32 point, we've used it and it's worked for us and I'd be  
33 afraid of taking it away to some degree. Maybe it  
34 needs to be tweaked for some regions. The other thing  
35 -- and if you look at what we had yesterday and the  
36 changes possibly to the Refuges as closures for five  
37 years, that's scary. And then no C&T, what are you  
38 going to do? You have nothing the way I see this and  
39 maybe I'm analyzing this wrong.

40

41                   MS. PETRIVELLI: I did want to mention  
42 I've listened to other -- at other Councils I heard  
43 Refuge people talk about those potential applications  
44 and they did recommend to them that if there were  
45 possible changes that might affect their subsistence  
46 uses that they should submit proposals because if there  
47 are regulations in the Federal program, those would  
48 still be allowed. So like that case of Akutan,  
49 currently the season closes April 30th. If they wanted  
50 to have the season for May, then they could submit a

1 proposal to the Federal Board and have a May season.  
2 But the Federal Board would go through the regulatory  
3 process and analyze it just like a regular proposal.  
4 So it is important.

5  
6 It's true. If there's no C&T, then you  
7 have to get a C&T. I think most people have C&T, but  
8 you would just submit a proposal and allow Federal --  
9 as long as they're in Federal subsistence regulations,  
10 they would still -- could occur on the Refuges.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

13  
14 MR. SCHWANTES: Just a comment. I'll  
15 make it quick. I like this C&T. I think it's been  
16 working well and I am reluctant to make any changes to  
17 it.

18  
19 Thank you.

20  
21 MR. ROHRER: Through the Chair.

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Name.

24  
25 MR. ROHRER: Sam Rohrer for the record.  
26 The eight factors aren't perfect, but it has been  
27 working fairly well. I guess my response to the  
28 Southeast issue is if you have a sockeye salmon  
29 population and you have one area that has a C&T  
30 determination on it and you have another area that  
31 doesn't have a C&T determination on it, there's  
32 probably a reason why they don't have a C&T  
33 determination on it. If they want it reevaluated, the  
34 answer isn't to change the whole process, the answer is  
35 you put in a proposal for a season and bag limit for  
36 that population. If they can't get a C&T determination  
37 passed, well maybe they don't have a history or pattern  
38 of use there.

39  
40 It seems like there's more to the story  
41 and I know the Southeast deal is confusing with the  
42 different land management and whatnot, but there is a  
43 process to work through to get a C&T determination.  
44 There's probably a reason why those areas aren't  
45 getting that determination or they're not asking for  
46 it. I think the system is working and we should keep  
47 it the same. Thanks.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, do you  
50 have any comments?

1 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes. Thank you, Madame  
2 Chair. I believe that customary and traditional use  
3 determination is not something that is determined or  
4 issued by any agency. That is something that is  
5 determined between tribes. A tribe wants to have  
6 customary and traditional use of a resource that  
7 another tribe claims, they should communicate with that  
8 tribe and establish that customary and traditional use.  
9 The tribes have been here for thousands of years and  
10 they've always communicated with each other when we  
11 come into another area that another tribe lives in.  
12

13 When we visited Yakutat thousands of  
14 years ago, we waited out in the bay until someone from  
15 Yakutat came out and greeted us and we asked if we  
16 could come in and potlatch with them. That's  
17 communication. Communication between tribes needs to  
18 happen before customary and traditional is shared  
19 between tribes. Again, it's not something that is  
20 issued or determined by Federal or State agencies.  
21

22 Thank you, Madame Chair.  
23

24 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
25 Mitch. Antone, do you have any comments?  
26

27 MR. SHELIKOFF: Antone, no.  
28

29 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.  
30

31 MS. SKINNER: I just have a question --  
32 well, two questions. One is, is there any more  
33 information about the C&T determinations in Southeast  
34 as to why the neighboring community would not have  
35 gotten a C&T determination. So that's one, information  
36 on the Southeast C&T determinations.  
37

38 The second question is perhaps  
39 clarification on Mitch's comment because I think he  
40 made a similar comment yesterday and I just want to  
41 make sure we all have a common understanding of what  
42 we're talking about because it sounded like there's a  
43 C&T and then there's something else that has the word  
44 customary in it that does have that tribe-to-tribe  
45 relationship. So if we could just get clarification on  
46 those two things.  
47

48 MS. PETRIVELLI: This is Pat  
49 Petrivelli. First of all, the Federal government with  
50 this Federal program -- and I'm going to address the

1 tribal thing. We don't regulate what the tribes do  
2 with each other. The tribes have their own customary  
3 and traditional relationships and our regulations have  
4 nothing to do with that. There are traditional  
5 territories. The tribes have relationships with each  
6 other. What the Federal government has authority to do  
7 is regulate fishing and hunting on Federal public lands  
8 and that's what all regulations are for and they're for  
9 rural residents.

10

11 Now it just so happens that subsistence  
12 use is identified as customary and traditional uses of  
13 the resources. In certain areas customary and  
14 traditional use -- and particularly this could lead  
15 into the Southeast discussion. In Southeast, the  
16 customary and traditional use has a number of  
17 definitions because there's a Tlingit, Haida and  
18 Tsimshian traditional use that goes back thousands of  
19 years. The Bureau of Indian Affairs helped document  
20 traditional territories, you know, back in the 1940s.  
21 Now those are traditional territories and those are  
22 traditional uses, but then there are other traditional  
23 uses, customary and traditional uses by rural people.

24

25 When the State was managing these  
26 resources in 1993 -- well, when they gave up  
27 management. When they had made their determinations,  
28 there were logging camps and communities that had only  
29 been in existence for 20 years. When they had set  
30 their 20-year limit in the generational use, those uses  
31 were not recognized by the State of Alaska. Twenty  
32 years has passed. Those communities are still there.  
33 They're living as rural residents, highly dependant  
34 upon the resources on Prince of Wales Island. I got to  
35 help the tribes do a study on the subsistence uses and  
36 use of deer and there's 12 communities there, four are  
37 tribal and eight are not, and they all use deer the  
38 same way. It's a staple in their daily life.

39

40 Now the State of Alaska, when they were  
41 making customary and traditional use determinations,  
42 only recognized the tribal communities in that area  
43 because the other communities were much younger and  
44 hadn't had that pattern of use. So that's how the  
45 Southeast area got more fragmented. The Federal  
46 government has redone some of those determinations, but  
47 there's like 14 fishing districts. It's hasn't made  
48 its way through all the regulations yet. So I think  
49 that's how Southeast got so fragmented.

50

1                   But their Council has the discussion  
2 regularly about the different kinds of customary and  
3 traditional use of tribal and then of rural because  
4 there is a recognition that when you live in a rural  
5 area, you're dependent upon the resources. It's just  
6 in a different way than the tribal one. Even in ANILCA  
7 they say rural residents is the Native cultural,  
8 physical and economic use and for nonrural residents  
9 it's just social, physical and economic uses. So there  
10 is a distinction between the Native and non-Native, but  
11 it's still a realization that there is a use of the  
12 resource, but it's just for different purposes.

13

14                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat.  
15 Is there any other discussion at this time in regard to  
16 this.

17

18                   (No comments)

19

20                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Is there any  
21 action that the Council would like to take at this  
22 time.

23

24                   MS. YUHAS: Madame Chair.

25

26                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead.

27

28                   MS. YUHAS: This is Jennifer Yuhas with  
29 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I just had a  
30 point of clarification for the Council. The BIA  
31 representative gave a very detailed and very good  
32 report. I'd just like to clarify that one of the  
33 statements there was that when the State gave up its  
34 management and under the co-management system there is  
35 dual management and the State did not actually give up  
36 management.

37

38                   Thank you.

39

40                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
41 caught that too. But very good information all the way  
42 around.

43

44                   (Laughter)

45

46                   MS. PETRIVELLI: I should have said we  
47 took it away.

48

49                   (Laughter)

50

1 MS. YUHAS: Not away. It's a dual  
2 system. Thanks.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Council,  
5 leave it as is? Is it consensus at this time to leave  
6 as is? I'm seeing heads being nodded here. Rebecca.

7  
8 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, I guess I would  
9 just like to be -- or my request would be that we be  
10 kept apprised, and I'm sure we will be, of what happens  
11 in Southeast as they move forward. If they tweak the  
12 eight factors, I'd be very interested in kind of being  
13 informed on what they come up with because based on the  
14 description it sounds like there's a very real issue  
15 there that may not be as much of an issue here in  
16 Kodiak right now. But whatever their proposal is,  
17 particularly since it's going to the Secretaries, we  
18 need to be aware of that.

19  
20 Thank you.

21  
22 MS. INGLES: One last comment. This is  
23 Palma Ingles at OSM. Right now my understanding is  
24 Southeast is not even sure if they will put in a  
25 proposal, but that's why they're soliciting comments.  
26 As Pippa mentioned, we're just trying to give  
27 transparency and make sure that all the RACs have been  
28 presented the information that the Southeast is looking  
29 at.

30  
31 Thank you.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
34 think at this time the Council will -- the consensus is  
35 to leave as is, but keep apprised of the process. I'd  
36 like to thank Pippa, Palma and Pat for this  
37 information.

38  
39 MS. INGLES: Thank you, Madame Chair  
40 and Council members.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I do have one  
43 question. Jake Jacobson, are you available until noon  
44 or do we need to move that up? You were going to talk  
45 with -- after we had the discussion on the -- Steve  
46 Delahanty with the.....

47  
48 MR. HOLMES: Jake, wake up.

49  
50 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: So I guess my

1 question is are you going to be here all morning?

2

3 MR. JACOBSON: Yes.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. So that's  
6 all I need to know. What we'll do at this point is  
7 take a 10-minute break and start -- I believe Steve  
8 Delahanty is in the room. There.

9

10 MR. DELAHANTY: I finally made it.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Maybe start with  
13 that after the break. And then from there we'll do the  
14 Alaska Maritime National Refuge, then migratory birds  
15 from that.

16

17 (Off record)

18

19 (On record)

20

21 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: If we can take  
22 our seats, I'd like to get started. Just for an  
23 update, what we'll do is Alaska Maritime National  
24 Wildlife Refuge and then move on to migratory birds.  
25 At 1:00 o'clock I'm going to allow for the tribal  
26 governments and Native organizations because the two  
27 times we've called for that no one has come forward,  
28 but they would like some time. At 2:00 o'clock, as we  
29 move on with our schedule, Heather with Izembek has a  
30 few more points that she would like to add in regard to  
31 the discussion to the changes presented yesterday. So  
32 she'll bring those points up at 2:00.

33

34 Steve, glad you made it and welcome.

35

36 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. I'm Steve  
37 Delahanty, the Refuge Manager at Alaska Maritime  
38 National Wildlife Refuge and I want to apologize one  
39 more time for not being here yesterday. Cancelled  
40 flights, but I'm glad to be here today and to not only  
41 share just updates on a couple of issues with you, but  
42 just to learn all the challenging issues that the  
43 Council deals with. It's a lot on your plates, so  
44 thank you for the work you do.

45

46 I just am going to remind you that  
47 although we're talking about the Kodiak/Aleutian region  
48 here today, the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife  
49 Refuge stems throughout coastal Alaska into the Bering  
50 and Chukchi Seas and southeast down to the Canadian

1 border, so it's very widespread. A key part of the  
2 Refuge ranges from Kodiak and out through the  
3 Aleutians.

4  
5 I just wanted to give you an update on  
6 two issues that the Refuge is dealing with. One is  
7 trying to -- kind of going through a planning process  
8 to determine what to do regarding cattle on these two  
9 islands, Wosnesenski Island and Chirikof Island and  
10 also then, second, an update on an issue regarding  
11 caribou on Kagalaska Island.

12  
13 So these two islands for those who  
14 aren't in the room here, Chirikof is southwest of  
15 Kodiak and Wosnesenski is just off the Alaska  
16 Peninsula, not terribly far from Sand Point. We know  
17 we have an issue. The slide here is part of about a  
18 500-acre, particularly heavily disturbed part of  
19 Chirikof Island. We feel like the status quo is  
20 uncomfortable and we're just trying to figure out what  
21 to do about the issue on the islands. So we're going  
22 through a very methodical process of writing an  
23 environmental impact statement for each of these two  
24 islands.

25  
26 The first thing we did was just to go  
27 out and talk to people. So we talked to individuals,  
28 we had community meetings in Kodiak, Homer and Sand  
29 Point and talked to Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
30 and political officials and all the rest just trying to  
31 learn and understand the issues. We offered  
32 government-to-government consultation through the  
33 tribal consultation and with ANCSA corporations and  
34 those things we've done.

35  
36 So we took that information that we  
37 learned and we are in the process now of writing these  
38 what will be draft environmental impact statements and  
39 once we have something on paper to go out, we'll go  
40 back out and kind of redo that. We want to do more  
41 consultation, we want to do community meetings and  
42 things again to get the sense from people if we are  
43 getting the issue right or if we've made some mistake  
44 somewhere in the process.

45  
46 So that's where we are. We're partway  
47 through the process, but a long ways from being done  
48 with the process. I wanted to share with the Council  
49 some of the themes that we heard over and over again.  
50 We've talked to hundreds of people and heard lots of

1 different issues, but they sort of fall into these  
2 broad themes, that the cattle are valuable as genetic  
3 material, that they're used as a meat resource for  
4 people. That if cattle are removed, some opportunity  
5 for use of the cattle or meat or something should be  
6 provided, if possible. We heard from somebody on each  
7 of the two islands that they own the cattle, that  
8 they're privately owned.

9  
10 Lots of people suggested that there be  
11 some sort of managed grazing program on the islands  
12 rather than the current kind of unmanaged, unpermitted  
13 process. And then we heard from people saying that the  
14 cattle are causing damage to wildlife habitat, to  
15 archaeological resources, things like that, and that we  
16 ought to fix it. And we heard from people that  
17 basically said cattle don't belong on a National  
18 Wildlife Refuge and also that if there's something of  
19 value there that people want, that the government --  
20 that we should try and minimize the government expense  
21 in this whole process. So I'm lumping a lot of  
22 comments into these broad themes that we heard over and  
23 over again.

24  
25 I would suggest, both as individuals  
26 and if the Council is interested in weighing in on it,  
27 there certainly would be opportunities to comment on  
28 the draft environmental impact statement when it comes  
29 up and for people and organizations that are eligible  
30 to participate in the tribal and ANCSA corporation  
31 consultation.

32  
33 That's just a quick summary of where we  
34 are on the cattle issue. We're kind of methodically  
35 going through the process of trying to get the input,  
36 write the plans, put the plans out to people to comment  
37 on and improve them and finally get to the finish line  
38 at some point, but I don't know exactly when that will  
39 be. I'd be happy to either -- if you have anything you  
40 want to say about that or I can move on to the other  
41 caribou issue that I wanted to talk about.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'd recommend we  
44 discuss this non-resident cattle issue first. So if  
45 the Council has any questions or discussion or need  
46 more information at this time. Rebecca.

47  
48 MS. SKINNER: On your timeline, you had  
49 a checklist of things you were walking through and  
50 doing them in order. I'm just curious why determine

1 ownership of cattle was at the very bottom.

2

3 MR. DELAHANTY: It was there because  
4 I'm not sure exactly how it's going to fall in the  
5 process. It was something that was talked at one time  
6 about being done before we even started or being done  
7 during the process or being done as a concluding part  
8 of the process and it's something that the Department  
9 of Interior attorney that handles the case is really  
10 going to make the decision, so I'm not sure where --  
11 that isn't necessarily in the correct spot in the  
12 order, but it could be. I just don't know yet.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Comments.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Can you go back  
19 one slide. I know I've been part of the Wosnesenski  
20 cattle discussion and have talked to many people in the  
21 region, including David Osterback who owns the cattle.  
22 I look at this and going down the line and you get --  
23 you know, one of the things I personally had talked  
24 about and suggested and a lot of people agreed is  
25 trying to get authorized a managed grazing program on  
26 each island because the issue here,  
27 and I know you're well aware of it, is because of the  
28 decline of the caribou. Many people do subsist off of  
29 this cattle.

30

31 And then I look at your line coming  
32 down and that the cattle are damaging the habitat and  
33 the last, what is it, archaeological sites and don't  
34 belong on these islands and then you discuss the issue  
35 of an EIS and I see the same thing happening. Because  
36 those bottom ones aren't people from the region.  
37 They're not residents of the region. They're people  
38 from outside and most likely my guess is outside the  
39 state of Alaska.

40

41 It will go through this EIS process.  
42 We're going to lose again, just like we did on the  
43 predation of wolf on Unimak on 10. It's really  
44 frustrating for us to sit here and watch this because  
45 we're the ones that are going to lose. I don't know if  
46 there's a methodology or what can be done to change  
47 this process. When you're fighting against the  
48 environmental community nationwide, you don't have a  
49 chance.

50

1 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. And we did  
2 hear in Sand Point pretty clearly the value of the  
3 cattle as a protein resource for people, both from  
4 David and from other community members. So we have  
5 heard the message about their value.

6  
7 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

8  
9 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I'd have to concur  
10 with that and I would suggest that probably in both  
11 cases managed grazing is a rational solution simply  
12 because the critters have been there for a long time.  
13 You know, on Chirikof, I think the folks that own those  
14 critters probably should be doing some active  
15 management and reducing the population.

16  
17 I do know out west, because I spent a  
18 good part of my professional life out there and my  
19 personal life. First trip was 63. And, you know,  
20 having watched the caribou decline drastically from a  
21 point where you needed a truck to get them off the  
22 airport at Cold Bay to where there's -- you know, it's  
23 hardly even -- all the work that has been done to  
24 improve the survival of calves is minuscule at this  
25 point.

26  
27 So I would suggest, at least on  
28 Wosnesenski, that any strict grazing or removal of  
29 animals not take place until the caribou population is  
30 up to -- I don't know what Lem Butler feels is  
31 sustainable, 2,000 or 2,500 animals.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: It's in the  
34 management plan.

35  
36 MR. HOLMES: It's in the management  
37 plan? Okay. I haven't read that. But, anyway, I  
38 think that that for that area certainly is a point of  
39 consideration because, you know, folks out there, as  
40 you heard 100 times, just don't have the alternate  
41 resources for protein.

42  
43 I think in Chirikof I think it's  
44 important for the genetics on that, but I do believe  
45 that, you know, it's probably time for them to start  
46 doing some active herdsmanship. But I think just going  
47 down and just shooting the critters and letting them  
48 lay, the type of thing that's been done in other areas,  
49 like Della echos, is a response of environmentalists  
50 that have never been hungry. I consider myself an

1 environmentalist, but -- as I'm a trained biologist,  
2 but you do need to provide for folks to have continued  
3 food sources.

4  
5 I'll read your documents as you prepare  
6 them for those islands because I've been to both of  
7 them before and.....

8  
9 (Fire alarm)

10  
11 MR. HOLMES: I don't think that's my  
12 hearing aide.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: We better  
15 determine whether we need to step out of the building.  
16 We have a fire alarm going off.

17  
18 (Fire alarm stopped)

19  
20 MR. HOLMES: Okay. Anyway, good job.  
21 Oh, I thought I had my hearing aide in there and that  
22 it was giving me some static, but it's always a good  
23 thing. Either that or the fellow back there by the  
24 coffee machine is just trying to get me to stop  
25 talking.

26  
27 (Laughter)

28  
29 MR. HOLMES: So I think I pretty well  
30 hit everything I had to say on cattle a couple of  
31 times. I think that it's quite refreshing to have a  
32 Federal agency and the Refuges going out and talking to  
33 people before they go out and just blow all the  
34 critters away. Because 25 years ago or so some of your  
35 predecessors made some big public relations mistake  
36 with reindeer and a whole lot of critters became  
37 fertilizer that could have become food, so I really  
38 appreciate you coming to talk to us.

39  
40 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, do you  
43 have any comments at this time?

44  
45 MR. SIMEONOFF: No, I don't. Thank  
46 you, Madame Chair.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Antone?

49  
50 MR. SHELIKOFF: No. Antone.

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Can you refresh  
2 me, what is the next process in all this for the  
3 cattle.

4  
5 MR. DELAHANTY: We are currently  
6 writing these draft environmental impact statements.  
7 We have to figure out alternatives to consider and I'm  
8 trying to use those comment themes that came up, you  
9 know, so how can we express as many of those comments  
10 as possible in these alternatives. So a draft -- the  
11 next thing you will see from us would be a draft  
12 environmental impact statement that would have  
13 alternatives and that would go back out to the public  
14 and the communities and things like that. So then you  
15 would actually have something to chew on.

16  
17 At the first step, it was just like we  
18 think we should do something about the cattle. What  
19 should we do. We were really in an information-  
20 gathering phase. Now you would have something where  
21 we're saying we think we should do A or B or C.

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: All right. Any  
24 other comments. Rebecca.

25  
26 MS. SKINNER: I guess my comment or  
27 observation is that I think it's again odd that you're  
28 determining ownership of the cattle is so far down the  
29 list. If the situation is a problem, if the cattle are  
30 a problem, I always -- I mean I think it makes the most  
31 sense to try to resolve problems at the lowest level.  
32 It just seems like instead of figuring out does  
33 somebody own the cattle and who is that and let's go  
34 talk to them and figure out what to do, this has  
35 snowballed into something where you're inviting comment  
36 from all kinds of people.

37  
38 So to me it would make sense if,  
39 indeed, you don't know who own the cattle, maybe that's  
40 a question. I don't know. To figure that out and make  
41 sure that you're working with them before this  
42 continues to spiral into a bigger and bigger process.  
43 I haven't been involved in this, so you may have done  
44 that, but just from looking at the slides and the  
45 question of the cattle ownership, that's what strikes  
46 me.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
49 do know who owns the cattle. He's been working through  
50 that process. David Osterback is the one on

1 Wosnesenski from Sand Point. I hope we keep apprised  
2 of this. I'm hoping that there's more than one public  
3 meeting within the region and around Sand Point because  
4 you've got people in King Cove and people that fish out  
5 that way and they go off in these islands and remove  
6 the cattle.

7

8 I think, you know, as we get through  
9 the EIS we want to make sure we address everything. I  
10 have to be honest with you I don't have any faith in  
11 that process. I'll even take it a step further and put  
12 my foot in my mouth, it's a waste of government money.  
13 It's not going to do us one bit of good and that's sad.

14

15 Anyway, thank you, Steve, and I'm glad  
16 you did make it. Oh, Tom.

17

18 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair. Yeah, I  
19 understand where you're at here and getting ready to do  
20 this environmental impact study. I guess one of the  
21 questions I have to ask, because I don't assume  
22 anything when it comes to the Federal government  
23 anymore, have you actually been to the island? Have  
24 you actually done studies out there?

25

26 MR. DELAHANTY: Yes, I have been to  
27 each island, but I don't pretend to know them well.  
28 They were short visits. We have had other members of  
29 the staff who have spent more extensive amounts of time  
30 and other third parties that share information. So,  
31 yes, but I don't want to come off as an expert on  
32 either island because I am not, but I think if you take  
33 the accumulated wisdom of the communities and the staff  
34 and third-party researchers and such, I think we -- you  
35 know, we wish we knew more, but we do know some things  
36 about the islands.

37

38 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. I guess I just  
39 made that comment. I've been there. I've seen those  
40 cattle on the island. I don't know what you're looking  
41 for for damage, but I certainly haven't seen any. So  
42 thanks.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
45 Steve.

46

47 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. Do you want  
48 me to address the caribou issue? I'm sorry, Madame  
49 Chair.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Oh, yeah, let's  
2 not forget that. I got upset about that cattle.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. The other  
7 issue that I wanted to bring up regards caribou on  
8 Kagalaska Island, which is the island immediately to  
9 the east of Adak. We have an issue that I want you to  
10 be aware of. First of all, I want you to know we're  
11 not talking about the Adak Caribou Herd. Because when  
12 this first came up there was a lot of concern like, oh,  
13 the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to go and try  
14 and thin the Adak Caribou Herd or something like that.  
15 We're not talking about Adak at all.

16  
17 Periodically a handful of animals  
18 manage to find their way over across the strait onto  
19 Kagalaska Island and what we are really interested in  
20 is preventing a breeding population of caribou from  
21 becoming established on Kagalaska Island. So it really  
22 doesn't have anything to do with Adak other than Adak  
23 is the source of the animals and we don't know for sure  
24 how many animals might be on Kagalaska. It might be  
25 zero, it might be three, it might be six, but there's  
26 some small number, but we do regularly see sign of  
27 animals on the island and occasionally have seen live  
28 animals on the island.

29  
30 So what we did was write an  
31 environmental assessment looking at the problem. Said,  
32 yes, we want to prevent a new breeding population from  
33 becoming established on another island where they  
34 weren't historically present, so we want to implement  
35 this control effort beginning this year in 2015.

36  
37 It would be short visits by Refuge  
38 staff or people associated with the Refuge and  
39 basically just walking across the island. It's a  
40 little bit like looking for a needle in a haystack  
41 because it's about a 30,000 acre island and there might  
42 be none or there might be two or there might be five.  
43 If we find any, we want to dispatch them, to kill them.

44  
45  
46 There are issues of access. The  
47 logistical challenges are very tough. Getting from  
48 Adak town to Kagalaska in a small craft is not an easy  
49 task, but we can take our research vessel  
50 opportunistically when we're in the area and have some

1 time and pay a visit to Kagalaska Island. Again, we  
2 don't know if we'll even encounter any caribou.

3

4                   The big issue that came up whenever we  
5 talk about it is what do we do with that animal if we  
6 do find one and we do kill one. What are you going to  
7 do with the carcass. The way the environmental  
8 assessment is written is that salvage of the meat of  
9 the -- is allowed, but not required. We can't, for  
10 ethical reasons, employment ethics, take the animals  
11 for our personal use.

12

13                   You know, I can't take it home and put  
14 it in my freezer, but we have talked to the clinic on  
15 Adak and they have said if any meat can be brought to  
16 Adak town, they would distribute it to needy people. I  
17 would love ideas, welcome ideas for how that might be  
18 possible in a practical fashion.

19

20                   The first time that we're going to go  
21 this spring we're actually going to bring extra people  
22 on the trip for the sole purpose of trying to pack meat  
23 back to the beach to get it onto the ship to bring it  
24 back to Adak town if we do, in fact, encounter any  
25 caribou.

26

27                   We're just going to have to learn as we  
28 go along whether that's practical, whether that's  
29 feasible or if you have a better idea for somehow  
30 putting people who want the meat in contact with the  
31 meat, I would welcome ideas, but we are going to give a  
32 good hard effort at it this spring and see if we, in  
33 fact, encounter any caribou if we can put them to use  
34 in Adak town.

35

36                   So that's the plan for right now, but  
37 in the long term, boy, I'm sure open to ideas because I  
38 haven't got a great one. It's expensive is the bottom  
39 line. It's very expensive, but we're going to give it  
40 a shot.

41

42                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

43

44                   MR. KOSO: Hi, Steve. I'm from Adak  
45 and been there since 2001. You know, the community  
46 utilizes that caribou out in Adak and you were just  
47 mentioning that it has nothing to do with it, you're  
48 not going to do that. Well, that's not what I read in  
49 the book. I've seen suggestions in the book that you  
50 think, well, if we go slaughter all the Adak caribou,

1 we won't have to worry about them coming across to  
2 Kagalaska.

3

4 In my mind, I see Kagalaska as not a  
5 problem. I don't think the caribou is a problem even  
6 if they were to become a fair-size herd or something.  
7 Kagalaska is a very easy island to get there from Adak.  
8 It's just like Adak itself actually because most of the  
9 caribou we have to get now we've got to go with a skiff  
10 around through the straits or whatever anyway.

11

12 So, you know, those caribou going onto  
13 the other island, you know, it just blows me away that  
14 all of a sudden they're a detriment to that island.  
15 You know, they've got caribou on Atka there for 100  
16 years. They've got caribou on Unimak and they've got  
17 caribou on Nikolski. You know, they've got caribou all  
18 over them islands that have been there for hundreds of  
19 years. It just blows me away that all of a sudden  
20 you've got a couple caribou on Kagalaska and it's going  
21 to destroy that island.

22

23 You know, if you look at Kagalaska and  
24 to get to the other islands to the east of that, you're  
25 looking at probably two to three miles swimming in a  
26 real heavy current. Those caribou are not going to  
27 leave that other island. They're going to be stopped  
28 there. You know, going through the Kagalaska Straits  
29 you've got a quarter mile to half a mile maybe at the  
30 shortest points there, so they're able to get there,  
31 but that long swim I don't think is going to happen  
32 trying to get off Kagalaska Island.

33

34 So I just don't see that as being a big  
35 problem. You're talking big expense and all this and  
36 that. If you just looked at it in a -- you know, for  
37 the people in Adak, it would be another easy access for  
38 meat if that's the case. Because we go to Quail Bay,  
39 which is on the south side of the island midway down  
40 for our red salmon harvest. We go to, I guess, in the  
41 straits for red salmon. That's on Kagalaska. And we  
42 do do hunting around the island. So it's not like we  
43 can't get access to that island. It's right there just  
44 next to Adak. It's a short jaunt. It's about a half  
45 hour to skiff, about 10 miles, so it's not a long ways  
46 to get to it.

47

48 But, you know, I see you guys bringing  
49 up all these problems and I just don't see those  
50 problems. Then you're talking about big expenses. I

1 don't see those expenses. Just leave them alone. I  
2 don't think they're bothering anybody, you know. I  
3 think those caribou got just as much rights on that  
4 island as you do, you know, in my mind. So I just  
5 think, you know, you guys are looking for a problem  
6 that isn't existing.

7

8 Thanks.

9

10 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you, Rick. I  
11 just want to add one comment to that. The part of the  
12 document that says reduce the caribou number on Adak to  
13 prevent them from going to Kagalaska, that's in the  
14 section that says alternatives that were brought up but  
15 that we're not going to pursue. So it's not part of  
16 the plan. It was something that was brought up by  
17 people saying, well, if you want to prevent them from  
18 going on Kagalaska, you've got to get rid of the ones  
19 on Adak and we just said, well, we're not going there,  
20 we're not doing that. This is about this other island.

21

22 Anyway, thank you for your comments.

23

24 MR. KOSO: Yeah. You know, on that  
25 deal there, you know, maybe you weren't there when Adak  
26 was transferred to the Aleut Corporation back in 2004.  
27 When we battled with the Aleut Corporation and Adak,  
28 the local folks there, we battled with Fish and  
29 Wildlife. They wanted to kill all the caribou. That  
30 was their goal, was to eradicate the caribou off Adak.  
31 It was a battle. We fought for a few years on that to  
32 save them caribou and keep it on the island.

33

34 I know it's a real economic development  
35 for Adak. I mean there's a lot of hunters coming out  
36 there now. Every airplane we've got anywhere from  
37 three to 20 hunters that will come on that plane for a  
38 caribou hunt. It's been a very great economic  
39 development for Adak. A lot of the folks renting cars,  
40 their homes. You know, they've got little businesses  
41 started up. It's a real boost for Adak, especially  
42 with the fish plant that's been down on and off. So  
43 every little bit helps there. It scares a lot of  
44 people in Adak when you talk about killing off those  
45 caribou.

46

47 You know, it's like I said, I don't  
48 think the people in Adak, talking with them, think it's  
49 -- you know, they think it's kind of stupid on your  
50 guys' part to try to go kill those caribou off because

1 they don't see where they hurt anything. Adak's  
2 caribou have been there since '58, you know. There's  
3 been up to 3,000 head there. I guess there's about  
4 2,600, 2,700 now. You know, it doesn't seem like, you  
5 know, they're hurting Adak by any means. I don't see  
6 that. There's been so much hunting going on.

7  
8                   You know, we used to get caribou on the  
9 north side all the time. You don't see that anymore.  
10 So they are being eradicated to a certain degree with  
11 the sport hunters and the meat hunters. I think  
12 there's a balance there I think that's maintaining  
13 right now. For me to read what you guys are saying and  
14 doing, it just kind of scares me and it scares a lot of  
15 people in Adak. That would be a huge loss for us out  
16 there.

17  
18                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

19  
20                   MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. It's very  
21 interesting to have this discussion. My first trip to  
22 Adak was '63 and I spent a fair amount of time back and  
23 forth there. In '82, I was the first person, the only  
24 person, to survey the entire Aleutian Chain for salmon  
25 and have a pretty darn good feeling for all of this  
26 area.

27  
28                   Rick did mention the efforts to want to  
29 eliminate caribou. One of the big arguments was the  
30 Aleutian shield fern, which is a little variant of  
31 Polystichum, I think, that lives on rock faces. So I  
32 think folks felt that that was a bit of a faulty  
33 argument because the caribou really aren't up on the  
34 rock faces where the Aleutian shield fern lives. So it  
35 does provoke a lot of angst.

36  
37                   I think whatever is done -- oh, let me  
38 try to get a few key points. It's mentioned in here  
39 that you don't want to use helicopters because it's not  
40 a minimal tool. '82 I did get a determination from the  
41 Fish and Wildlife Service that helicopters were  
42 acceptable. I also got a variance to use four-  
43 wheelers. So just go back and look at Zilamaker's (ph)  
44 records from '81 or spring of '82 and the whole process  
45 has been through that.

46  
47                   I would suggest, as I mentioned to some  
48 of your other colleagues for Izembek, and I know the  
49 Coast Guard has got some real budgetary restrictions  
50 like everybody, but I found from talking to Jimmy Ang

1 and other bay skippers that they are very pleased if  
2 they can arrange some of the things they're already  
3 doing to work with other agencies, particularly if it's  
4 in the public good.

5  
6                   So you might wish to, while you're  
7 here, call out to the air station and just have a chat  
8 with them. You know, because, shucks, they flew me all  
9 the way to Attu and my crew. I tell you, doing a  
10 stream survey in a C-130 is a frightening thing when  
11 you're trying to.....

12  
13                   (Laughter)

14  
15                   MR. HOLMES: But they like to help. So  
16 you might be able to find a machine of availability so  
17 that if you do decide to go ahead and salvage the meat  
18 -- I'm not contradicting my friend Rick, but if you do  
19 decide to do that, it's a lot better to go in and do a  
20 surgical removal or just take them out because, as I  
21 mentioned before, there's a lot of passion in Alaska  
22 for just going and whacking a critter and leaving it to  
23 rot.

24  
25                   That would bring the question to me in  
26 2012, did the staff  
27 salvage the caribou that were taken or they were just  
28 shot and left?

29  
30                   MR. DELAHANTY: Only a small amount of  
31 the meat was salvaged. Some was, but not all of it.  
32 It was -- well, there's a long story associated with  
33 it. I'll tell you if you want, but that's the bottom  
34 line. It's only a little bit.

35  
36                   MR. HOLMES: We can do that later. And  
37 I was wondering now did they have tags and all the  
38 hunting or did you just go whack them and leave them?  
39 Because there's a sort of small detail of coordinating  
40 with State agencies that have harvest limits and the  
41 same, you know, for Adak. Just because a caribou is  
42 someplace else, you know, you need to have the little  
43 tag in hand and all that or a permit from the agency  
44 for removal. So I was just wondering if the folks did  
45 that.

46  
47                   MR. DELAHANTY: Yes, it was through  
48 coordination and permit with Fish and Game at the time.  
49 Not as a hunting effort, but the State then got  
50 uncomfortable with the approach we were taking and

1 suggested that we should do an environmental  
2 assessment. Think the process through a little more  
3 clearly, so we just sort of called a time-out and  
4 that's what brings us to where we are today.

5  
6 MR. HOLMES: Okay. I'll make some  
7 Xeroxes of all my little notes about Adak and caribou  
8 and whatnot, but you probably want to look back and  
9 expand your tables on the surveys. In '82, I got out  
10 there and the executive officer had quite a difference  
11 with Fred Zilamaker on the population of caribou at the  
12 time and I talked to my boss in Kodiak and said that it  
13 would be best for us to help the Refuge out and the  
14 Navy, so I gave them four hours worth of helicopter  
15 time and they went out and bent my helicopter. So it  
16 was kind of frightening doing the rest of my survey  
17 coming back with it going (rotor sound). But they did  
18 get the numbers and it turned out that the Navy had a  
19 better idea of population than Fred and his gang did.  
20 I don't know whether the Navy had a U2 fly over and  
21 took pictures and, you know, had a couple scotches, but  
22 they had a really good idea of what was going on.

23  
24 So I guess you've got to loop me back.  
25 You've got folks back again to -- machines of  
26 opportunity and getting all the information available.

27  
28  
29 I just had a bit of an epiphany and  
30 I'll try and wind up on this and not have all my little  
31 normal petty comments. You might wish to get together  
32 -- if it's Aleut Corporation or APICDA or whomever.  
33 Aleut Corporation owns the north end, right?

34  
35 MR. KOSO: Yeah.

36  
37 MR. HOLMES: And, you know, obviously  
38 through time there's been an angst about the potential  
39 for overpopulation. I think our Council would really  
40 like to assert -- probably in our letter for this year  
41 to the Board we'll probably have a comment requesting  
42 to have some regular population assessments there  
43 because that would assuage the anxiety of the Maritimes  
44 as well as the people that live there because they want  
45 to make sure things are in balance so that they do not  
46 have a crash.

47  
48 What you might consider doing is -- and  
49 this is totally Pat Holmes -- would be to chat with the  
50 Aleut Corporation about rehabbing the old rec cabins

1 and allowing them to do some sort of guided effort  
2 there and then that way you could have a much better  
3 idea of the population and also perhaps have a little  
4 more control of the population numbers. It just would  
5 seem that that might be a win all the way around even  
6 though supposedly the south end is a wilderness. You  
7 know, there's ways in which that sort of cooperative  
8 effort with the Unangan folks might be a win for  
9 everybody.

10

11 And I have a whole bunch of other  
12 little trivia, but I'll just mention that to you later.  
13 But that's something to think about. I do commend you  
14 for working out there because it's just one of the most  
15 amazing places and one of my old -- he used to call  
16 himself an Aleut. He wasn't around for the renaissance  
17 to know that he was Unangan or Unangus, but his comment  
18 was at Unimak the rest of the real world starts.  
19 You've got to go out there and live there, get cold and  
20 soaking wet and spend a day or two just sitting there  
21 watching the rain -- well, weeks and months watching  
22 the rain blow by to really get a feel for the area.

23

24 Anyway, hats off to you. Thank you,  
25 Madame Chair.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you.  
28 Rick.

29

30 MR. KOSO: Yeah, Steve. On another  
31 issue there, you know, during the spring when you come  
32 out there, we'd sure like to maybe be involved with  
33 that. As far as that meat goes, there's so many people  
34 in that town that would take it all if they could get  
35 it. There's a few people there that do have skiffs and  
36 little boats there that actually get out to Kagalaska.  
37 I'll certainly spread the word around that if you see  
38 any caribou on Kagalaska, shoot them, you know, and try  
39 to keep it clear. I don't really care that much about  
40 Kagalaska as I do Adak. I was just a little concerned  
41 that because of Kagalaska you'll kill everything off in  
42 Adak, so that was a big concern for me and a lot of  
43 other people.

44

45 But I would like to be, if possible --  
46 and springtime I should be out to Adak there, so I  
47 would like to maybe -- if you wouldn't mind contacting  
48 me and letting me know when you get there. I'd love  
49 to, if I'm available, to tag along. I could just go  
50 out in my own boat for that matter. But I'd love to go

1 out and see if we can't track some down. But I'll  
2 certainly keep my eye open this summer and this spring  
3 when I'm out there and I'll have the other folks in the  
4 community do the same.

5  
6 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. Great ideas  
7 from both of you gentlemen, so thank you very much.  
8 I'll give you a call, you know, some later day and talk  
9 scheduling with you. Thank you.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. My turn.  
12 This is Della.

13  
14 (Laughter)

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: A couple things.  
17 I recall probably about 15, 20 years ago when the issue  
18 was Adak and the caribou. At that time I recall being  
19 with the Aleutians East Borough and we were in D.C. and  
20 we met with the head of Fish and Wildlife at the time.  
21 There were two things that went on.

22  
23 The very first thing was screaming and  
24 hollering about going out there and killing off all  
25 them cattle on these islands and I don't recall off the  
26 top of my head, Rick, which ones. They had Dolgai  
27 maybe and there was another couple other islands.

28  
29 MR. KOSO: Caton.

30  
31 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Caton. The  
32 government went in there and just didn't talk to  
33 anybody. Went in there and slaughtered all these  
34 animals. People were wild in our region about what  
35 happened. That got passed on at that meeting in D.C.

36  
37 The other issue was the Adak caribou.  
38 At that time the plan actually was to remove some of  
39 those caribou and transport them -- I mean we told them  
40 -- King Cove Corporation said Deer Island. We've got  
41 an island. Take some of those. Our caribou has been  
42 -- the population has fluctuated so much. Nothing done  
43 there.

44  
45 Taking this money and spending it on  
46 EISs, take some of that money and transport some of  
47 those wolves off of Unimak and put them on this island  
48 if you want a natural way.....

49  
50 MR. KOSO: No, thank you, Della. Don't

1 get carried away here.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'm serious.  
6 When you look at the alternatives -- I mean I really am  
7 against what's going on here. Going to Kagalaska and  
8 killing off these caribou. This is a small population,  
9 a handful, that are not going to do any damage. Maybe  
10 over 20 years. But you could take a small amount of  
11 money to monitor that. I just don't understand. All  
12 of a sudden there's this need to look at, you know, to  
13 be the natural wilderness.

14

15 I'm really frustrated with this  
16 process. You know, I think -- I just don't support any  
17 of this. I really don't. I think you're not taking  
18 the people in that region in full consideration about  
19 what your plans are and what you are doing and it's  
20 really frustrating.

21

22 I will make an effort to not only talk  
23 to the Aleut Corporation but APIA, AFN and anybody that  
24 I can get to get some help on what's going on here  
25 because it is truly frustrating and it's frightening.  
26 That's, like I say, my opinion.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 MR. ROHRER: Through the Chair. This  
31 is Sam Rohrer. As I looked through this, I guess my  
32 first comment as I look under your other alternatives  
33 that are not going to be further considered, one of  
34 your alternates was to introduce biological controls,  
35 such as chronic wasting disease, brucellosis,  
36 tuberculosis and rabies. So I guess I have to say  
37 thanks for not considering that one anymore.

38

39 (Laughter)

40

41 MR. ROHRER: I mean, you know, this is  
42 incredibly frustrating. I understand where this comes  
43 from. It's from ANILCA managing for natural diversity.  
44 You talk about it in here in the ES. We tolerate non-  
45 indigenous species on other Refuges. We tolerate it on  
46 Kodiak; elk caribou, deer, goats. We tolerate it on  
47 Adak. Why can't we tolerate it on Kagalaska? Why this  
48 -- it just seems like it's a random -- oops, this  
49 island we can't have it. Let's go spend a bunch of  
50 money, let's do a bunch of surveys, let's do some

1 studies on it and then we're going to go kill them all.

2

3                   The people in the areas are all opposed  
4 to it. What's the point? What really frustrates me is  
5 so we roll over, you guys go do that. And, sure, you  
6 say, well, we're not looking at Adak. You're not  
7 looking at Adak now, but what stops you from looking at  
8 Adak down the road? What stops you from doing the  
9 exact same thing on Kodiak? Well, goats are non-  
10 indigenous, let's get rid of them. Deer are non-  
11 indigenous, let's get rid of them.

12

13                   It's a waste of money, it's a waste of  
14 time, it's a waste of effort and it's a waste of a good  
15 resource for the people in the areas. It's just -- to  
16 say you don't have a choice based off of ANILCA and the  
17 other laws, that's just hard to buy. It's clearly not  
18 implemented across the board the same. You pick and  
19 choose where you're going to implement those things and  
20 it's just really frustrating and it's such a waste.

21

22                   Thank you.

23

24                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: If you look at  
25 this -- this is Della -- it says requires managers to  
26 consider and maintain. It doesn't say you need to do  
27 it. It says consider. You know, if there was 5,000  
28 caribou on there and I could see it's going to do a lot  
29 of damage, I could see trying to maintain or do  
30 something to control it, but to just totally wipe  
31 something out, you know -- and I agree. I look at this  
32 as a way of just starting at Adak and out here, we're  
33 moving our way. You already got on the Shumagins with  
34 the cattle. Where is this going to end?

35

36                   Anyway, Steve. Does anybody else have  
37 any questions? Rebecca.

38

39                   MS. SKINNER: I guess I have two  
40 comments if I can remember them. One is from reading  
41 the materials in the book it wasn't clear to me what  
42 the negative impacts of the caribou on Kagalaska are.  
43 There was a lot of semi-vague references to reindeer  
44 studies that have depleted certain kinds of vegetation  
45 and it may have an impact or this may happen, that may  
46 happen.

47

48                   So, from reading it, and I realize this  
49 is not the full -- we have kind of a summary, but it  
50 really wasn't clear to me what -- you know, were there

1 actual impacts documented on Adak, what were actual and  
2 I think truly anticipated impacts on Kagalaska. So as  
3 I'm reading through this and then also hearing comments  
4 from Richard and from Della, you know, I guess I'm not  
5 really seeing why -- you know, what's the problem with  
6 having caribou on Kagalaska.

7  
8 The other part of my comment is as I'm  
9 imagining, okay, how is this going to work when you've  
10 got animals that are migrating between the islands or  
11 from one island to another and you're going to be stuck  
12 in the cycle of continually having to go out and look  
13 for the animals and eradicate them. It just seems like  
14 you're committing yourself to utilizing resources that  
15 are becoming more and more limited to do something that  
16 you haven't really documented a true impact or a true  
17 harm other than the fact that they're not Native. I  
18 think Sam raised a really good point that in other  
19 Refuge lands there's non-indigenous species that are  
20 tolerated and managed.

21  
22 So just from what I read and from  
23 hearing the comments what I was able to review didn't  
24 seem very compelling. There were definitely some gaps  
25 and more information that I would like to have.

26  
27 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. Just a  
28 quick follow up to that. It really relates to both of  
29 your points. The recommended process, I guess standard  
30 procedure for dealing with a non-Native species is to  
31 try and control it or eradicate it before it becomes a  
32 problem. So the point here is that we're trying to  
33 prevent a bad thing from happening in the future by  
34 controlling it. There isn't documented damage that has  
35 occurred on Kagalaska. We're trying to prevent that  
36 from occurring.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Any  
39 other questions or comments for Steve.

40  
41 MS. YUHAS: Madame Chair.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead.

44  
45 MS. YUHAS: This is Jennifer Yuhas with  
46 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I have a  
47 comment.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead.

50

1 MS. YUHAS: Thank you. First of all  
2 the Department really hopes that the Service is  
3 listening closely to the local residents and we'd like  
4 to not see this plan move forward. If it does, the  
5 speaker was indicating he's open to options for salvage  
6 of meat, which we think would be very important.

7  
8 I'd like to direct him to Tony Kavalock  
9 and he's in our Palmer office. He's the assistant  
10 director with the Division of Wildlife Conservation.  
11 He can better explain to you the very successful  
12 program the Department used for distribution of bear  
13 meat following our most recent bear management program.  
14 It was highly successful. The local people in the  
15 Interior were very supportive of that program and a lot  
16 of meat got distributed.

17  
18 He can also put you in touch with the  
19 folks from Hunters for the Hungry. They also have a  
20 very successful program and we just really hope that  
21 that meat will not go to waste if that program goes  
22 forward.

23  
24 Thank you, Madame Chair.

25  
26 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Tom.

27  
28 MR. SCHWANTES: Through the Chair. I  
29 guess at this point we haven't determined that there  
30 has been any damage on Kagalaska or we don't even know  
31 that there will be. Have you done any studies on Adak?  
32 Has there been damage done on Adak?

33  
34 MR. DELAHANTY: Thank you. There's a  
35 researcher named Mark Ricca who has done studies of the  
36 impacts to the vegetative community on Adak. Part of  
37 what got our attention actually about Kagalaska is he  
38 was using that as his control island as a place without  
39 Adak that had these healthy lichen beds and kind of  
40 natural vegetative conditions that he was not finding  
41 on Adak and he reported back and said I'm seeing  
42 caribou on Kagalaska. So actually his study helped  
43 trigger this. It's cited in the document that you  
44 have, but a study by Mark Ricca talks about the impacts  
45 to vegetation on Adak Island.

46  
47 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. So there's been  
48 an impact to the vegetation, but what damage has that  
49 done to the island?

50

1 MR. DELAHANTY: Well, it depends, I  
2 guess, on what you're valuing it. It causes damage to  
3 the plant communities on the island and whatever is  
4 dependent on those communities. I've been to Adak many  
5 times and it's a beautiful, wonderful place. I don't  
6 want people to think that it's trash because it's a  
7 treasure, but it is different than it would be in the  
8 absence of caribou and Kagalaska is different now than  
9 it will be in the future if a resident herd becomes  
10 established.

11  
12 My understanding is that those effects  
13 to natural diversity, like the other Council member was  
14 referring to, although with some frustration, but  
15 that's part of what we're supposed to be managing for  
16 the Refuge for its native complements of plants and  
17 animals and all its richness, from the little obscure  
18 things to the big charismatic species.

19  
20 MR. SCHWANTES: That gives me some real  
21 concerns and kind of goes along with what Della and Sam  
22 here have said. There's obviously damage on other  
23 Refuges that have been done by animals that were  
24 introduced that obviously doesn't seem to be a big  
25 concern to Fish and Wildlife.

26  
27 The thing that concerns me now is  
28 you're starting here and saying we don't want the  
29 caribou to eat this lichen. Well, then what about the  
30 goats that are eating certain species on Kodiak or the  
31 caribou on different areas that are eating certain  
32 species. Are we all of a sudden going to say now we  
33 need to eliminate all of those? I've got a concern  
34 about that. You're trying to get a foot in the door  
35 here saying we need to kill all these caribou on this  
36 island because they might eat this lichen and then we  
37 won't have lichen on the island.

38  
39 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'm just  
40 mumbling to myself. You're looking at these numbers  
41 and there were five, I think you said, that were killed  
42 off, that they killed, and you don't necessarily have  
43 total numbers of population numbers, but there may be  
44 some there. May.

45  
46 I just see this as a waste of money. I  
47 have to be honest with you. There's other ways out  
48 there that this funding can be used. Trying to  
49 maintain a population on Wosnesenski or a plan with the  
50 cattle there. Gosh, I wish people would talk to the

1 people in that region, any region, when you're looking  
2 at spending money and how you're managing these things  
3 because we're not going away. We are going to be out  
4 there. As long as I'm alive that's where I live. The  
5 people are going to be there regardless.

6  
7 And it's really sad when you look at  
8 this and those animals were transplanted out there  
9 because of World War II. We've maintained the ability  
10 to live out there with them. We adapted. I sure wish  
11 Fish and Wildlife would learn to adapt with us and our  
12 lifestyle. There's got to be a way to do it. This  
13 just doesn't feel good to me.

14  
15 Steve, I know this is a tough job that  
16 you have, but all I can say, and you've heard it many  
17 times from this Council, and I'm glad you made it here  
18 in person because we have been on the phone with you in  
19 the past, to really pass this message on. There's  
20 something wrong here and it's not right. There's got  
21 to be a way to step back and a lot of these things  
22 we've heard yesterday and today on so many things to  
23 reevaluate this process and try to work with these  
24 communities and people because I think that's what's  
25 important.

26  
27 Thank you.

28  
29 With that, Pat, I guess, has one more  
30 comment.

31  
32 MR. HOLMES: Oh, I just wanted to  
33 comment I ran into a really interesting skinny fellow  
34 many years ago in a funky old dory and I nicknamed him  
35 after a marine mammal. He was involved in this. Then  
36 chatting with old geezers in Kodiak and out on the  
37 Peninsula, one thing that got left out in your EA is  
38 the critters were put there for recreation for the  
39 Navy, but part of it also you have to bear in mind the  
40 Cold War and all the other nasty things. One of the  
41 big parts of it was as an emergency food. I'm sure you  
42 probably realize that, but you might want to plug that  
43 in there.

44  
45 I know you can recognize the  
46 frustration of folks on the Council. We might appear  
47 to be rednecks. That's why I put on my old bandana.

48  
49 (Laughter)  
50

1                   MR. HOLMES: You know, but really the  
2 whole redneck thing started out with the union guys  
3 fighting with the coal miner's bosses so that they'd  
4 know who they were beating with clubs. But I do  
5 appreciate you coming. I recognize that you are trying  
6 to communicate with this document and I know that the  
7 Department has asked you folks to do an outreach and  
8 that you're kind of committed to do that and I  
9 understand Della's frustrations and folks out west.

10  
11                   I do hope that what you can accomplish  
12 is coming up with a management plan if the decision is  
13 made to remove the critters so that the meat gets  
14 salvaged and to be, you know, expanding your operations  
15 because there are some places where, if there are extra  
16 critters, they could be used. If you've only got four  
17 caribou, how do you get four caribou on a boat and get  
18 them out to Sand Point.

19  
20                   Anyway, I would like to express my  
21 appreciation for you bringing this to open discussion  
22 because, as I mentioned before, not too many years ago  
23 the thought of some Refuge managers, you'd hear it  
24 whenever they'd speak, is this is at my Refuge and that  
25 gets the rednecks' little handkerchiefs out. But at  
26 least you're here talking to folks because those folks  
27 just went and blew the critters away.

28  
29                   I just want to leave my hat off and  
30 thank you for trying to put this together for us and  
31 hopefully we can come up with some rational way to not  
32 have overpopulations of critters and not damage the  
33 habitat, but be able to keep the caribou for folks to  
34 use.

35  
36                   One thing that wasn't mentioned in here  
37 is Atka has reindeer, domesticated caribou, and they've  
38 been there since the 1800s, I believe.

39  
40                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pribilofs do  
41 too.

42  
43                   MR. HOLMES: And the Pribis. I know the  
44 Pribis have gone up and down, but talking to some of the  
45 Lesnikoffs and folks up there, at times they were told  
46 in the Pribis that they couldn't hunt them, so here they  
47 watched the caribou populations go (explosion noise),  
48 scarf everything up and then crash and then they said,  
49 oh, well, maybe you should have shot some.

50

1                   So, anyway, I appreciate your attempts  
2 at communication and I think that's sorely needed in  
3 this day and age.

4  
5                   Thank you.

6  
7                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Anybody else.

8  
9                   (No comments)

10  
11                  MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
12 will be in touch.

13  
14                  (Laughter)

15  
16                  MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Just a matter of  
17 timing here. I think we've got to 12:30 and I  
18 originally thought we'd have time to do the migratory  
19 birds, but I'm wondering, because I kind of missed  
20 this, if we could go with the GMU 8 wildlife update.  
21 Jake, are you available this afternoon or just this  
22 morning? Because you wanted to do the report. You'll  
23 be here? Okay. Is it okay with migratory birds if we  
24 move -- well, we could do migratory birds and then move  
25 to the State. That should work good. It will be all  
26 the Federal reports out of the way. Is that good with  
27 everybody?

28  
29                  Also the tribal governments, I think,  
30 they wanted to talk at 1:00 too. What should we do?

31  
32                  MR. ROHRER: Begin with State.

33  
34                  MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Let's go  
35 ahead and go with State then, the Council's  
36 recommendation. Let's do that. GMU 8 wildlife update.  
37 You have a handout Carl is showing you here.

38  
39                  (Pause)

40  
41                  MR. HOLMES: I'd go ahead and start,  
42 John. Della could probably hear you over there and  
43 that will get us moving along.

44  
45                  MR. SVOBODA: Okay, sure. Thank you.  
46 I appreciate you guys having us here today. My name is  
47 Nate Svoboda. I'm the area wildlife biologist for GMU  
48 8. This is my colleague, other wildlife biologist,  
49 John Crye. We've provided you guys some information.  
50 Sorry we didn't get it to you a little bit sooner.

1 Just to let you know, I won't go through everything on  
2 here in the sake of time. I'll just kind of hit the  
3 high points and then be available to answer any  
4 questions if you have any.

5  
6 I'll start here with the Sitka Black-  
7 tailed deer and just give you a little -- I'll just go  
8 through some of our harvest information and touch very  
9 briefly on some of the research that we have ongoing  
10 right now.

11  
12 As you guys know and has been alluded  
13 to a couple times in the last couple days is in 2011  
14 and 2012 we had a pretty severe winter where we lost  
15 anywhere between 40 to 60 percent of the herd. That  
16 has been recovering fairly quickly with the mild winter  
17 that we had last year and then this year as well. The  
18 population seems to be increasing since that harsh  
19 winter. Particularly in the southern portion of the  
20 island and on Afognak they seem to be recovering quite  
21 a bit quicker than along the road system.

22  
23 We obtain a variety of observations,  
24 both through our work that we do out in the field as  
25 well as information that we collect from hunters and  
26 guides and transporters and that seems to be the  
27 general consensus as far as recovery. We don't have  
28 really good population estimates. That's one thing  
29 that we're considering some different ideas and you  
30 guys heard McCrea Cobb speak yesterday about some of  
31 the efforts that the Refuge is undertaking with regards  
32 to developing a population estimate. We are kind of  
33 sitting back and considering some other options with  
34 regard to that and I can keep you updated on that as we  
35 go.

36  
37 Referring to these graphs here, you can  
38 see on a five-year average we harvest about 4,000 deer  
39 a year, about a 74% male harvest. One thing that  
40 you're probably pretty aware of is weather seems to be  
41 the limiting factor for deer. That seems to be the  
42 main thing that controls our deer population, much more  
43 so than hunters.

44  
45 We are considering some other efforts  
46 in addition to what the Refuge is doing to get a  
47 population estimate. One of those is considering some  
48 genetic-based methods to develop a population estimate.  
49 Like I said, we're still kind of in the investigation  
50 standpoint if you will, seeing if any of those methods

1 will apply to Kodiak. There's some stuff going on in  
2 the Southeast right now that we're kind of waiting to  
3 see how their results come out and see if that can be  
4 applicable to Kodiak.

5  
6                   You can see from this graph here that  
7 in 2013 and '14 we harvested 3,251 deer. About 2,500  
8 of those were males and close to 800 of those were  
9 females.

10  
11                   I'll move on here with the next graph  
12 there regarding hunter effort. Looking at the five-  
13 year average, we get about 3,000 hunters a year that  
14 result in about a 67% overall success rate. About half  
15 of those hunters are transported by boat and about a  
16 quarter of those are by plane.

17  
18                   I'll move on to Roosevelt elk. Just so  
19 you know how I'm going to structure this, I'll talk a  
20 little bit about the harvest and kind of where the  
21 population stands and then I'll move into very briefly  
22 some of the research that we have. We don't currently  
23 have any deer research going on, so I'm not going to  
24 address that.

25  
26                   So moving on to Roosevelt elk. We have  
27 a stable to perhaps slightly increasing population of  
28 about 885 elk in eight herds over on Afognak and  
29 Raspberry Island. Our goal is to maintain a population  
30 of around 1,000. We haven't been able to get that up  
31 to that level for quite some time, but we believe  
32 there's greater potential for the population.

33  
34                   Currently we're going to investigate  
35 some of the potential limiting factors that might be  
36 preventing that population from reaching 1,000. As  
37 many of you know, there's been pretty significant  
38 logging that's occurred on the island since about the  
39 '70s. We are interested in determining what, if any,  
40 that effect may be having as a potential limiting  
41 factor for the elk population.

42  
43                   Last year we began a collaborative  
44 project working with Koniag, Ouzinkie, Kodiak and  
45 Afognak Native Corporations as well as a major  
46 university to evaluate how elk use these different  
47 forest stage stands throughout the year and basically  
48 what we can do from a forest management perspective to  
49 try to increase the population that exists on Afognak.

50

1                   Last year we captured and GPS radio-  
2 collared nine female elk in June. We are obtaining  
3 locations about every 100 minutes. To date we've  
4 collected about close to 20,000 locations so far and  
5 the analysis -- we don't quite have a full year of data  
6 yet, so we haven't really began into the analysis, but  
7 we will shortly here this summer.

8  
9                   Our plan is to try to obtain funding to  
10 increase that sample size. Right now, as I mentioned,  
11 we have nine elk radio-collared. We're hoping to get  
12 that up to about 40 animals with GPS collars and  
13 basically see what resources and what habitats they use  
14 at different times a year. So how their resource use  
15 or what they eat essentially and where they live, how  
16 that changes temporally over time as the seasons change  
17 and then what impact this logging might be having on  
18 their resource use and on their food source.

19  
20                   As you can see here, going on to the  
21 harvest information for elk, the five-year average, we  
22 average about 43 elk a year are harvested and that's  
23 about a 40-50% male harvest. We get about 200 hunters  
24 a year roughly. Again, this is a five-year average.  
25 About 200 hunters a year with about a 20% success rate.  
26 Most of those are transported to Afognak by boat or  
27 plane, but, interestingly, we found that there's about  
28 30% of those elk that are harvested from vehicle use.  
29 So a large portion -- I mean not a large portion, but a  
30 pretty good size of the elk are harvested by local  
31 loggers and that kind of explains that method there.

32  
33                   So moving on to goat. Goats are stable  
34 in most areas, particularly in the northern areas, but  
35 they're increasing in others. Our 2014 estimate, we  
36 estimate somewhere around a little more than 2,700  
37 goats. We collaborated with the Kodiak National  
38 Wildlife Refuge to do aerial surveys in the summertime.  
39 There has been some evidence of expansion, particularly  
40 in like the Spiridon Peninsula over the last few years.  
41 They currently occur in nearly all suitable habits  
42 throughout the island.

43  
44                   In 2014 and '15, we had our highest  
45 goat harvest on record with 307 goats harvested, 189 of  
46 those male, 118 of those female. We did increase the  
47 bag limit, as you will see on the -- sorry, these  
48 aren't numbered, but on the harvest graph there in 2012  
49 and '13, following that season, we did expand it to a  
50 two-goat bag limit and the registration RG480 area.

1 For those of you who are not familiar, that's  
2 essentially the southern portion of the island.

3  
4 Since that change, in 2014-15 we did  
5 have 38 hunters harvest two goats in RG480. We're  
6 unsure at this time the impact of that two-goat bag  
7 limit, what that is having on the population, but after  
8 a few years we'll be able to get a better handle on  
9 that, what, if any, the impact might be.

10  
11 We are working again with our partners  
12 at the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge to look at some  
13 of these habitat and movement analysis and see -- one  
14 of the objectives of the project is try to determine  
15 basically where they go and what habitats they use at  
16 different times of year as well as what are they eating  
17 in these habitats and what impact could that  
18 potentially be having on the environment.

19  
20 Prior to my arrival in June of 2013,  
21 Fish and Wildlife Service and Alaska Fish and Game  
22 worked together and captured and GPS'd 15 goats, 8  
23 males and 7 females, throughout the island. They're  
24 collecting locations every 180 minutes. To date, we've  
25 collected close to 40,000 locations on 14 animals. Two  
26 of them have recently been harvested and two we believe  
27 slipped their collars. So, at the moment we're  
28 currently monitoring 11 goats.

29  
30 The analysis and modeling is currently  
31 underway. That's something that we are working with  
32 our partners at the Refuge to assess and see kind of  
33 how we're going to do that. But now we have sufficient  
34 and we can really start getting into it and seeing what  
35 we're finding.

36  
37 Moving on to brown bear. Brown Bear  
38 Island are stable to perhaps slightly increasing. We  
39 estimate about 3,500 bears. Again, with brown bears on  
40 Kodiak, we don't really have a solid estimate on  
41 population numbers, but that's something that again  
42 we're hoping to work out. We have a couple kind of  
43 pilot studies that are underway. We undertook a  
44 genetic-based kind of pilot study recently after last  
45 year's season and recently, about two weeks ago, got  
46 the results back from that, so that was promising and  
47 will give us some idea on potential methods that we can  
48 employ to get a reliable population estimate on the  
49 island.

50

1                               Going to the harvest, again looking at  
2 the five-year average, we harvest about 242 bear a year  
3 with about a 65% male harvest. You can see by looking  
4 at the trophy bears -- as you guys know, Kodiak brown  
5 bears are kind of a trophy hunt. They're very highly  
6 desired. Hunters from around the world come here twice  
7 a year to make an attempt at shooting a large bear.  
8 For those of you who don't know, trophy bears are any  
9 bear with the total length and width added together is  
10 20 inches or greater. Those are considered trophy  
11 bears and that's kind of the target, what a lot of  
12 people who come here to hunt want, particularly  
13 out-of-staters.

14  
15                               Last year we had a record number of  
16 trophy bears shot on the island. I think it was 27  
17 bears. Was it 27 bears over 28 inches? Is that right,  
18 John?

19  
20                               MR. CRYE: Just this spring or the  
21 year?

22  
23                               MR. SVOBODA: Yeah, the spring.

24  
25                               MR. CRYE: I think it was 18.

26  
27                               MR. SVOBODA: Or 18 and I think 7 of  
28 those were bigger than 29 inches. So if you classify a  
29 successful hunting season by size of the bears, it was  
30 the best hunting season on record for Kodiak, so that  
31 was kind of interesting.

32  
33                               We do have some research going on right  
34 now. On Sitkalidak we're working with colleagues at  
35 Old Harbor. This project started again before my  
36 arrival, but we collared a number of bears on  
37 Sitkalidak to try to get an idea on animal litter  
38 production and cub survival. That is an ongoing study  
39 that we are working again with Old Harbor this summer  
40 to expand. We're hoping to collar another 10-15 bears  
41 this summer to continue that.

42  
43                               We received some money from the Kodiak  
44 Brown Bear Trust, so there's a variety of different  
45 players involved, so it's pretty exciting and a great  
46 opportunity for us to work with the Native corporation.

47  
48                               We also have some work going on on  
49 Afognak. We currently have six GPS-collared bears on  
50 Afognak collecting one hour locations. We had 10, but

1 these were collared in 2012 and '13 and a few bears  
2 have slipped their collars and so we're down to six.

3  
4           Similar to the elk, we're interested in  
5 evaluating habitat use patterns and resource use. When  
6 I say resource use, I'm largely meaning what habitats  
7 they use and what foods they eat and, again, interested  
8 in seeing how that change with different successional  
9 stages of forest. So, as the forest is harvested, what  
10 impact is this having on the wildlife.

11  
12           And then we're working with our Native  
13 partners to try to design some forest management  
14 strategies that will meet their needs as far as  
15 logging, but also meet the needs of the wildlife. So  
16 that's something that we're hoping to work with them on  
17 in the future.

18  
19           In regards to bears, another bear-  
20 related issue that we're working again with our Native  
21 partners as well as our colleagues at the National  
22 Wildlife Refuge, this is just very in the initial  
23 stages of developing an Archipelago-wide berry  
24 production study to try to investigate berry production  
25 on the island and looking at trying to get a handle on  
26 abundance and distribution of berries across the  
27 island. As you know, that's really important for bears  
28 at various times of the year. So we're trying to get a  
29 good idea on what that means.

30  
31           As the Refuge alluded to yesterday, you  
32 know, with the abundant berry crop that we had last  
33 year, a lot of these bears weren't coming down to the  
34 streams and eating salmon to the magnitude that they  
35 normally have. If you look at the telemetry data, you  
36 can clearly see that a lot of it is because they're up  
37 in the berry patches enjoying salmonberries.

38  
39           So that's one thing that we have coming  
40 up here in the next year or two that we're really  
41 trying to get a handle on. Again, it's a collaborative  
42 effort, as most things are on here on Kodiak. So we're  
43 looking forward to continuing that and expanding that.

44  
45           Moving on to furbearers. You can see  
46 here at the five-year average we average -- this  
47 changes pretty dramatically with fur prices, as you can  
48 imagine, and weather and fur quality, but looking at  
49 the five-year averages we harvest about 53 beaver a  
50 year and 178 otter a year. Interesting is last year we

1 had the highest number of otters harvested on Kodiak  
2 compared to about the last decade. So we're not really  
3 sure why that might be. Otter prices aren't extremely  
4 high right now and they've actually been decreasing, so  
5 that's kind of interesting.

6

7 With regard to furbearers, another  
8 interesting kind of note, is mink recently started  
9 showing up on the north road system on Long Island.  
10 We're not really sure. We have a couple hypotheses on  
11 why this may be, but we're not really sure. As many of  
12 you know, they were transplanted to Karluk Lake, but  
13 that was a few decades ago, so I'm not really sure if  
14 that would be -- so I'm open to ideas if anyone's got  
15 any ideas.

16

17 MR. ROHRER: Don't tell the Feds,  
18 they'll come kill them all.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 MR. ROHRER: I couldn't help it.

23

24 MR. SVOBODA: Last year we harvested  
25 356 otters on Kodiak and 78 beaver. Moving on to  
26 caribou, and you've got a little map there that  
27 illustrates their historical range. We don't do a  
28 whole lot. We go down there and work with our  
29 colleagues with Alaska wildlife troopers. Particularly  
30 Trooper Jones goes down there and surveys the  
31 population when he's available and they've been pretty  
32 stable at about 250 -- somewhere between 250 and 350  
33 individuals. They primarily, as you can see from the  
34 map, occupy southwest Kodiak Island. The Ayakulik and  
35 Sturgeon River drainages primarily. In 2014 and '15,  
36 we harvested 10 caribou -- excuse me, 10 caribou were  
37 harvested, 7 males and 3 females.

38

39 That is largely all I have with regard  
40 to -- I mean there's a couple things I can touch on if  
41 you're interested. There's been some recent actions  
42 with the bison herd that occasionally people are  
43 interested in or anything else really that you want to  
44 talk about. Feel free to ask us any questions. Thank  
45 you once again for your time.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

48

49 MR. HOLMES: That's a really  
50 comprehensive report, Nate. It's kind of nice to know

1 what's going on with the critters around the island  
2 even though I doubt that I'm going to be climbing  
3 mountains to do any goats.

4  
5 I think it's important for the record  
6 that the folks know that many years ago we had quite  
7 discussions on mountain goats and working through the  
8 Kodiak model, Council members and Fish and Game AC  
9 folks, the tribes and everybody kind of got together to  
10 figure a way to make this work. The increased harvest  
11 limits for this year was once again an offshoot of that  
12 development and which the Refuge folks took the lead  
13 and then the Department saying, gee, we're getting lots  
14 of goats, we need to figure out a way to reduce the  
15 populations.

16  
17 Basically the island-wide community had  
18 numerous chats over coffee and came up with a  
19 suggestion of bumping up the harvest limits and looks  
20 like it's succeeding to some extent. So could you  
21 maybe touch on the success of this year's harvest on  
22 the goats and were you getting towards the goals that  
23 the Refuge and you, as the wildlife biologist, wanted  
24 to see.

25  
26 MR. SVOBODA: Sure. You know, as far  
27 as numbers and goals on what we want, we don't really  
28 have that set in stone yet. What we've noticed in the  
29 goal populations, as they've been dispersed throughout  
30 the island, is they typically peak and then they drop a  
31 little bit and then they plateau out. Certain areas in  
32 southern portion of the island are still kind of on  
33 that upswing. You know, they're still coming up. So  
34 we anticipate them perhaps dropping a little bit and  
35 leveling off.

36  
37 But with regard to harvest, you know, I  
38 think at least it looks like we're meeting our  
39 objective of increasing harvest. You know, with the  
40 320 goats, I think we're up to -- this year, John, is  
41 that right, about 300?

42  
43 MR. CRYE: 320.

44  
45 MR. SVOBODA: 320 goats this year.  
46 Actually we've already exceeded the highest number of  
47 goats that have been shot on Kodiak historically, so it  
48 seems to be -- and we also have the highest number of  
49 hunters that harvested two goats on Kodiak.

50

1 Kind of the word on the street and what  
2 we've been noticing is Kodiak more and more is becoming  
3 kind of a goat hunting destination and people are  
4 coming here specifically to hunt goats, so we  
5 anticipate, you know, that continuing to increase. But  
6 as far as solid numbers and do we have a goal of what  
7 we want for a number of goats in any particular hunt  
8 area, we don't really have that fleshed out yet.

9  
10 MR. HOLMES: Well, it looks like you  
11 increased the harvest there by 25-30 percent over some  
12 previous years, so I think that's good. I wonder if  
13 you could touch on the success because part of the goat  
14 study groups's compromises was trying to provide for  
15 subsistence use in the villages and hunting and things  
16 like that because a lot of places down there, some of  
17 my old buddy geezers was getting as wheezy as me, take  
18 the young folks out to learn how to hunt goats, but  
19 they wait until the snow and the goats come down. A  
20 while back we kind of came up with a pretty creative  
21 way to give an advantage to villagers and I was  
22 wondering if you could maybe touch on that a tad. On  
23 the registration, village registration.

24  
25 MR. SVOBODA: Sure. Maybe I'll let  
26 John address that one because I think he might have a  
27 better handle on that than I.

28  
29 MR. CRYE: Mrs. Chair. John Crye, Fish  
30 and Game. We still have permits. What we do in the  
31 village of Old Harbor and Port Lions is we issue  
32 permits down there. It's kind of dropped off a little  
33 bit. Old Harbor is probably the main place that people  
34 are picking up permits for RG476, which is Kiliuda, but  
35 it seems Port Lions they're not issuing -- I mean there  
36 isn't very many permits being issued there. It's  
37 possible because there isn't very many goats available  
38 on that side in those hunt areas.

39  
40 The road system archery hunt is very  
41 popular. I think we're taking anywhere from 8 to 15  
42 goats during the registration hunt and people really  
43 look forward to that and that's a good way to -- if we  
44 have a little more, we take 80% of our quota with rifle  
45 hunts during the drawing and then we have a little bit  
46 left over for the archery hunts, so it works out pretty  
47 well.

48  
49 As far as RG480, it's available on the  
50 internet, so a lot of people in the villages are

1 getting their RG480s on the internet. I think we  
2 issued probably 1,100 permits this year, which the  
3 permits, of course, with the two-goat bag limit. You  
4 know, one person is getting two permits, so I would  
5 guess at least, you know, 500 -- well over 500 hunters  
6 are getting two permits.

7

8 MR. HOLMES: That's good because that  
9 was part of our compromise is to provide a little edge  
10 for folks. We had particularly a lot of requests from  
11 Old Harbor with their mentoring program. I know some  
12 of my acquaintances from the north end that are Natives  
13 have toodled down to the south end because there's been  
14 more goats there. So I'm glad to hear that  
15 that project there to kind of give really local  
16 residents, people living right next to the goats, a  
17 little bit of an edge. So I think that's really swell.  
18 Appreciate you folks doing that.

19

20 MR. SVOBODA: I think another really  
21 interesting observation that we've heard -- sorry, this  
22 is Nate with Fish and Game for the record. I've been  
23 getting some reports from individuals in Old Harbor  
24 that particularly since the deer numbers have been  
25 quite a bit down after the harsh winter that we had  
26 that the goat harvest has really ben a keen interest  
27 there since then and there's been a big increase in  
28 goat harvest, particularly from Old Harbor, in response  
29 to the low deer numbers that followed the 2011-12  
30 winter. I'd really be interested to hear if that's  
31 similar in other villages if that's been going on, so  
32 it would be great to hear from folks if that is indeed  
33 the case in other villages.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any other  
38 questions at this time. Rebecca.

39

40 MS. SKINNER: Can you talk a little bit  
41 more about the deer population. I noticed your slides  
42 didn't have a population slide for deer, so then I went  
43 back and looked at my notes from McCrea's presentation  
44 and I looked at the refuge presentation and I didn't  
45 see a chart in there with deer population numbers  
46 either. Then based on -- I think there was a comment  
47 yesterday about a \$400 budget for tracking deer. Can  
48 you just talk a little bit more about how deer  
49 populations are assessed and is there more data  
50 somewhere that I just overlooked.

1 MR. SVOBODA: Probably not. That's a  
2 big struggle and I have to give kudos to our colleagues  
3 at the Refuge for undertaking such a big task. When I  
4 came to Kodiak, that was one of the things that John  
5 and Larry and I sat down and kind of put on our list of  
6 kind of important things that we'd like to address here  
7 in the coming years. Obtaining a reliable deer  
8 population is one of those.

9  
10 With the diverse habitats that exist on  
11 Kodiak, that's really something that's very challenging  
12 for us to do. The Refuge has made really great strides  
13 and put a lot of work into trying to tackle that.  
14 First starting on the southern end of the island. As  
15 McCrea alluded to yesterday, that's something that is  
16 being considered to expand in some of the more forested  
17 areas.

18  
19 So the answer to that, as far as  
20 population numbers and estimates, that's the best  
21 handle on it that we have right now. The information  
22 that we do get, which is extremely valuable, because  
23 that's, to be honest with you, that's how we base a lot  
24 of our decisions, is the information that we get from  
25 the hunters and the transporters and the guides and the  
26 people who live in the villages.

27  
28 That knowledge that they have is  
29 incredibly valuable to us and we really take that to  
30 heart when we hear these things from Kodiak residents.  
31 I really appreciate that for those people who do  
32 provide that information because we put a lot of weight  
33 on that. Maybe more so than we prefer. You know, we'd  
34 like to have solid, scientific information to make some  
35 of these decisions, but, quite frankly, we just don't  
36 have that, nor do we have the budget to undertake that.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any other  
39 questions. Pat.

40  
41 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.....

42  
43 MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is  
44 Mitch.

45  
46 MR. HOLMES: Go for it, Mitch.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead, Mitch.

49  
50 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you. I just

1 wanted to say there has been a real interest from the  
2 people in Akhiok to go after goats, especially with the  
3 two-goat bag limit. Unfortunately, the goats out here  
4 have been hit so hard by sport hunters that when people  
5 from the village try to go after them they're so  
6 spooked. You know, by the time we get to the beach in  
7 skiffs the goats have migrated over to the next  
8 mountain range.

9  
10 All of them do not have the opportunity  
11 to go out and camp out there for weeks and climb the  
12 mountain every day. It's kind of an opportunistic hunt  
13 because they go out in their skiff and if they're close  
14 by, they'll go after them, but unfortunately they don't  
15 stay. As soon as they hear a boat, they're up and  
16 running. It's been a real struggle for people to try  
17 and go after the goat because they can't camp out like  
18 the hunters from outside the village, outside of  
19 Kodiak.

20  
21 I, for one, have had the privilege of  
22 camping out for more than a couple weeks, but  
23 unfortunately I forgot to turn in my tags last year and  
24 I didn't get a tag this year. But when you're out  
25 there and you camp out, you can actually go up and get  
26 a goat. They come down pretty close after awhile, you  
27 know. I don't know what it is about the sound of  
28 engines. When they hear your motor, they just take  
29 off.

30  
31 And then the deer population out here  
32 has been low. Once again, like last year, there were  
33 some hunters that were taking a lot of does. I have an  
34 opportunity to work with one of the outfitters out here  
35 and he said there were boats coming by his place with  
36 nothing but does hanging on the rigging. I don't know  
37 if Jonesy checks those people out. He certainly  
38 should. But the deer population seems to be really  
39 low, but due to the mild winters we've been having we  
40 do see a lot of deer up high on the mountain. Quite a  
41 bit of them.

42  
43 Another thing is some of the deer out  
44 in the Aliulik Peninsula, they were finding a lot of  
45 deer out there that had no testicles. They're now  
46 finding those deer up in an area called Alpine Cove,  
47 the head of Dead Man Bay. So whatever is happening to  
48 those deer they're spreading out. Whatever causes that  
49 -- either the deer are migrating or whatever is causing  
50 it is moving through the population.

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
4 Mitch. Do you have any comments in regard to what he  
5 said?

6

7 MR. SVOBODA: First of all, I really  
8 appreciate the comments, particularly with his  
9 assessment on what he believes is going on with the  
10 population. That's again very valuable information.  
11 With regard to the elk -- or, excuse me, the goats, I  
12 appreciate that comment. I'm not exactly sure. I'll  
13 have to think about that a little bit as far as access  
14 and availability for individuals in Akhiok, but that's  
15 something I'll think about and see if there's something  
16 that we could do that might alleviate some of that. I  
17 mean goats, as anyone who's hunted them knows, they're  
18 very difficult to hunt and they don't necessarily  
19 always do what you want them to do.

20

21 But I really appreciate the comments.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

26

27 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I think  
28 coming off of Rebecca's comments earlier and then the  
29 earlier report from the Refuge with McCrea boogieing up  
30 to Anchorage, I would like to suggest to our Council on  
31 our things we have in our letter to the Board from this  
32 year and the concerns about deer, with the budget cuts  
33 to all agencies, and our concern about seeing the Fish  
34 and Wildlife continue their research on deer population  
35 estimates because of its critical importance to folks  
36 on the island for subsistence. So I really think we  
37 need to plug that into our letter.

38

39 I tad bit of bathroom talk as comic  
40 relief. I suggested that one of the other folks in the  
41 bathroom could spend less time in the office and more  
42 time in a plane. But really do need to have a  
43 dedicated effort on deer research.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat.  
48 We had a request, I think, by Pat and Jake. Jake  
49 Jacobson had asked to publicly speak, I think, in  
50 regard to the issue around deer. I thought if we can

1 just take a few minutes for him to talk about that.  
2 Maybe just kind of make some room for him or have him  
3 take a seat. We'll do that and then we'll break for  
4 lunch at 12:30.

5  
6 MR. SVOBODA: Yeah, that's great.  
7 Madame Chair, just so you know as well, if you're  
8 interested, we can do it whenever. I'll be here all  
9 day. Pat also asked me to provide just a brief update  
10 on the airport mitigation funds for the Kodiak Airport  
11 expansion. So whenever you guys are comfortable,  
12 whenever you feel it's appropriate, I'll be here.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Well, we'll give  
15 Jake a few minutes.....

16  
17 MR. SVOBODA: Sure.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: .....and then  
20 maybe we can go ahead and go through that.

21  
22 MR. SVOBODA: Thank you.

23  
24 MR. JACOBSON: Good morning -- well,  
25 afternoon, Madame Chairman, members of the RAC. I've  
26 hunted deer in the Kodiak Archipelago since 1967. I  
27 soon discovered venison here to be the finest I'd ever  
28 eaten. For 47 years that's been a major part of my  
29 family's nutrition.

30  
31 In 1994, I sighted and later shot an  
32 abnormal buck. This animal had antlers still in the  
33 velvet in late November and had grown several non-  
34 typical points near the bases. This buck had the body  
35 confirmation of a doe and no testicles in the scrotum.  
36 In 1995, the next year, I harvested three similar  
37 abnormal bucks. In 1996, I found six such bucks.

38  
39 For 17 years I conducted transport  
40 counts on the south end of Kodiak, mostly in the Alitak  
41 Bay area. Akhiok is the closest village. I recorded a  
42 steady increase in the number of sterile bucks taken.  
43 I recorded reports of such deer throughout the Kodiak  
44 Archipelago. It is widespread.

45  
46 Finding that local game management  
47 showed little interest in this condition, early on I  
48 contacted several well-known deer researchers and  
49 andrologists, scientists who study male reproduction.  
50 I began collecting samples of blood, serum, flesh, fat,

1 hair, testicles. I soon learned how to locate the  
2 undescended testes, which were found inside the gut  
3 cavity midway between the kidneys and the inguinal  
4 ring. They're about the size of a peanut, whereas  
5 normal testicles in the scrotum are about the size of a  
6 pecan.

7  
8 I collected other body parts as  
9 requested by the researchers who analyzed the material  
10 I sent them. I collected beach kelp, fresh water,  
11 other pertinent samples for the researchers. Samples  
12 of terrestrial browse and seaweed were gathered, but  
13 costly analysis for FIDA estrogens, which might cause  
14 this disruption in the descent of the testes, was not  
15 done due to lack of funding. The samples remain in  
16 storage. In all, I collected samples from 355 deer  
17 from the Kodiak area. These samples are all now in  
18 storage at Colorado State University at Fort Collins,  
19 Colorado.

20  
21 We studied ocean currents and wind  
22 patterns. The Alaska coastal current in the Alaska  
23 stream flow southwest around the Archipelago and a  
24 combination of shallow water and slowing plus  
25 converging currents favor deposition of ocean-born  
26 matter on the beaches of the Alitak Bay, especially on  
27 the eastern shore of Aliulik Peninsula. This could  
28 include oil or other ocean-born pollutants, which might  
29 have a bearing in this cryptorchidism, the non-descent  
30 of the tests. Most Kodiak weather comes from the  
31 southwest and industrial pollutants from Asia could be  
32 reached in the Archipelago through the atmosphere.

33  
34 Several peer review scientific papers  
35 have been published by the University of Guelph  
36 Ontario, Colorado State University and Purdue  
37 University based on the samples I collected.

38  
39 Several conclusions have been reached.  
40 The non-descent of the testes is a developmental  
41 problem, not a disease. Inbreeding is not the cause of  
42 cryptorchidism. For Sitka Black-tailed deer on the  
43 Aliulik Peninsula, there are no genetic differences  
44 between non-cryptorchid deer and cryptorchid males  
45 detected by micro-satellite DNA analysis.

46  
47 The incidence of DDT and lindane, which  
48 is an antiquated toxic pesticide that was once used  
49 extensively worldwide is higher in Kodiak deer than in  
50 deer in Southeast Alaska. On the Aliulik Peninsula, a

1 whopping 76% of all bucks were cryptorchid and,  
2 therefore, sterile the period of 2004 through 2008.  
3 Other similar areas, hot zones like that exist in the  
4 Archipelago.

5  
6 Tumors. Carcinoma in situ was found in  
7 90% of the undescended testes and 50% of the normal  
8 testes of bucks taken on Aliulik Peninsula. These  
9 cancers are increasing in the human population as well.  
10 Colorado State University scientists consider ongoing  
11 exposure to an estrogenic endocrine disruptor as a most  
12 likely cause of the multiple problems seen in the Sitka  
13 Black-tailed deer on the Aliulik Peninsula. Are these  
14 endocrine disruptors manmade or natural? We don't  
15 know.

16  
17 Does are apparently exposed to the  
18 agent while they're carrying their fawns. In 2008, we  
19 found three out of five road-killed does between Kodiak  
20 and the airport had cryptorchid bucks in utero. From  
21 2003 to 2008 we saw many cases of small fawns nursing  
22 their mothers after Thanksgiving. They were late born,  
23 likely due to lack of fertile bucks in the first or  
24 second estrus. Those late born fawns are less apt to  
25 survive a tough winter.

26  
27 In October 2014, I spent four days  
28 walking and two days boating in the Alitak Bay area  
29 accompanied by a retired Fish and Game biologist. We  
30 saw an average of eight deer per day in areas that had  
31 held 80 to 100 deer from 1998 through 2008. We saw no  
32 branch-antlered bucks. We shot two spike bucks, all  
33 four of which showed cryptorchidism. They did not have  
34 two testes in the scrotum.

35  
36 I believe the deer population in the  
37 Alitak Bay area is not recovering from the harsh winter  
38 of 2011-12 due to lack of fertile bucks. A huge sample  
39 collection is in appropriate storage at Colorado State.  
40 A more complete analysis will be done if funding is  
41 secured.

42  
43 Further research into this alarming  
44 situation seems warranted. In 2010, the ADF&G  
45 questionnaire included a question about the antlers,  
46 whether they were in velvet or not and a question about  
47 the scrotal testes, whether there was one, two or none  
48 in the scrotum. The data from the questionnaire  
49 mirrored what we had reported from deer taken on the  
50 south end. I hope these questions will become a part

1 of all deer harvest reports in the future.

2

3 Reindeer. Several decades ago when I  
4 first came in the area several thousand feral reindeer  
5 grazed the south end of Kodiak. Unrestricted hunting  
6 and no closed season and no bag limit until about five  
7 years ago saw that herd reduced to about 300 animals.  
8 I've never harvested a Kodiak reindeer, but some  
9 hunters have told me that they killed stag bulls that  
10 had no testicles in the scrotum from that group.  
11 Perhaps cryptorchidism was affecting the reindeer as  
12 well.

13

14 A special bureaucratic problem exists  
15 with reindeer and Sitka Black-tailed deer, goats, elk  
16 and other introduced species. The Fish and Wildlife  
17 Service has a decades-old Federal mandate to remove  
18 non-indigenous species from lands they manage.  
19 Remember the Hagemeister Island reindeer slaughter of  
20 about 20 years ago.

21

22 We need to work to see that this  
23 mandate is studied on a case-by-case basis, which will  
24 hopefully result in an appropriate management for deer  
25 and reindeer in the Kodiak Archipelago as well as out  
26 by Adak. It is my hope that funding will be found to  
27 thoroughly investigate this problem, which is a threat  
28 to subsistence as well as the cottage industry of  
29 hunting in the Kodiak Archipelago. This may also be a  
30 threat to human health.

31

32 I have a 30-page document which details  
33 this problem more thoroughly. I'd be happy to send it  
34 to you by email if you're interested. Thank you very  
35 much for your time and interest.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Do  
38 you have any comments in regard maybe to his testimony?

39

40 MR. SVOBODA: No, not really. Just so  
41 you know I met with Mr. Jacobson last week and we're  
42 kind of kicking around ideas on how we can further  
43 investigate this. One of the ideas that we have that's  
44 really low hanging fruit, that's not really cost  
45 prohibitive, is re-instituting that questionnaire into  
46 the deer harvest reporting, particularly the online  
47 version. We're going to hopefully get it on the  
48 printed version, but due to space and financial  
49 restrictions, I'm not yet positive. A pay grade above  
50 me will have to make those decisions.

1 I really appreciate all the work he and  
2 his colleagues that he's worked with on this. It's  
3 really interesting, particularly from a research  
4 standpoint. Depending what we find, you know, from a  
5 management standpoint, there's certain things we can  
6 and can't do depending on what the cause is, but from a  
7 research standpoint I think it's pretty interesting.  
8 This is kind of what we get -- the same message we hear  
9 from hunters and guides and transporters that hunt in  
10 that area. That's kind of the common theme that we  
11 get, is cryptorchid deer are more abundant in those  
12 areas.

13

14 So I'm actually looking forward to  
15 further investigating this. As Mr. Jacobson alluded  
16 to, funding is kind of the crux of this project. You  
17 know, if we had unlimited amounts of funding, it would  
18 be fantastic to get those samples further evaluated and  
19 kind of see what we're dealing with here. But I do  
20 appreciate his efforts as well as the folks at Colorado  
21 State for helping us to narrow down some of the  
22 potential causes such as genetic reasoning. You know,  
23 we know that the population is not inbred down there.

24

25 So it's a slow-moving wheel, but it's  
26 moving -- at least I think it's moving forward.

27

28 MR. JACOBSON: Yes.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any comments  
31 from the Council. Pat.

32

33 MR. HOLMES: Through the Chair. Yeah,  
34 it's unfortunate that there is no funds and that this  
35 seems to be an increasing problem and I guess that  
36 would be another footnote on our deer discussion note  
37 to the Federal Subsistence Board as another potential  
38 thing that needs to be looked at as far as its effect  
39 on the deer populations and subsistence harvest.

40

41 I guess as an old geezer that's beyond  
42 reproductive potential myself, I'll volunteer to take  
43 care of any cryptogenic deer that you happen to have  
44 extra and scarf them up with great relish.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 MR. HOLMES: Anyway, thanks a lot for  
49 all your work, Jake.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I think with  
2 that it's time to break for lunch.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
7 want to come back at 1:30 and we'll get going right  
8 away because some people are leaving this afternoon on  
9 the 5:00 flight and the 6:30 flight and a couple at  
10 3:00. So we're going to have to go really fast this  
11 afternoon.

12  
13 (Off record)

14  
15 (On record)

16  
17 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. At this  
18 time we'll call the meeting back to order. What we'll  
19 do is move to the migratory birds and because some  
20 people are traveling we are going to move to the  
21 confirmed date and location for the fall 2015 meeting.  
22 I believe we have someone that's calling in at 2:00 for  
23 some information and then we'll just continue on down  
24 the agenda. If somebody else needs to leave early or  
25 needs to be on the agenda earlier, please let us know  
26 right away.

27  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 With that, let's go ahead and move to  
31 migratory birds.

32  
33 MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
34 Members of the Council. My name is Julian Fischer.  
35 I'm a waterfowl biologist with the Division of  
36 Migratory Bird Management based in Anchorage. I'm a  
37 supervisory wildlife biologist that oversees the aerial  
38 waterfowl survey program specifically. I'm happy to be  
39 here. I appreciate your invitation to talk about  
40 Emperor Geese, both their status and the management of  
41 the species.

42  
43 So I have the pleasure of working with  
44 a team of excellent biologists. Our role in Alaska is  
45 to contribute scientific data that can be used to  
46 contribute to management decisions that maximize public  
47 uses of wildlife, such as subsistence harvest, and  
48 ensure the long-term sustainability of waterfowl so  
49 these traditional practices can continue in the future.  
50

1                   Our waterfowl aerial survey program is  
2 comprised of three biologist pilots and five waterfowl  
3 observers, all of whom are committed to fine scientific  
4 skills. They possess survey design experience,  
5 statistics, geographic information experience and  
6 database management. Of course, all of them undergo a  
7 lot of training for identifying species from the air,  
8 including estimation of flock sizes.

9  
10                   So these tools that these people have  
11 contribute to the designing of these surveys that I'm  
12 going to be talking about today. So within our program  
13 primarily we survey waterfowl by air. We have two  
14 amphibious 206 aircraft and we use these throughout the  
15 state. We're responsible for monitoring waterfowl  
16 populations around the state as identified in  
17 management plans.  
18 Of course, one of those management plans is the Emperor  
19 Goose Management Plan, so we do a lot of work with  
20 Emperor Geese.

21  
22                   I know the RAC has a lot of questions  
23 and interest in Emperor Geese and I'm going to try to  
24 address all of your concerns today. This is the  
25 outline that I'm going to be talking about, but of  
26 course I'm available for questions, comments and your  
27 ideas if I don't cover your specific interest in this  
28 presentation.

29  
30                   So I'm going to start off first by  
31 describing briefly some Emperor Goose distribution  
32 information and the history of goose population  
33 declines on the Yukon Delta where Emperor Geese breed  
34 and explain how those trends led to the development of  
35 management plans that you're familiar with now. I'm  
36 going to then describe our current surveys that we use  
37 for monitoring the population of Emperor Geese. I'll  
38 touch lightly on the limiting factors that we believe  
39 are at work that are causing the slow growth in the  
40 population and then I'll touch on the plans for  
41 revising the management plan and how you can be  
42 involved.

43  
44                   Okay. So starting with distribution.  
45 I apologize if this slide is a little bit dark, but  
46 what you're looking at is the state of Alaska --  
47 actually, I'll pause here. Carl Johnson sent out this  
48 presentation to the members that are not here in person  
49 today and I hope they have that available so they can  
50 follow along with this presentation. If not, then I'll

1 be sure they get this, including the notes associated  
2 with this PowerPoint immediately hereafter.

3

4 MR. SIMEONOFF: This is Mitch. I have  
5 that. Thank you.

6

7 MR. FISCHER: Oh, good. Glad to hear  
8 it. Thanks. Okay. So we're looking at a map of  
9 Alaska. I'm going to describe kind of the progress  
10 that the birds take around the state. Yukon Delta is  
11 the primary breeding ground for Emperor Geese. Over  
12 90% of the population occurs in the Yukon Delta Region  
13 to breed. There's records of small numbers breeding on  
14 the Chukotka Peninsula in Russia and small numbers are  
15 also seen annually on the northern side of the Seward  
16 Peninsula, but very few. So really the Yukon Delta is  
17 the core of the breeding area for Emperor Geese.

18

19 So birds arrive there in June. They  
20 start breeding in early June depending on the timing of  
21 breakup and nesting occurs throughout that month and  
22 finally around the end of June eggs hatch and the  
23 adults stay with their broods and molt their feathers  
24 at that point staying on the Yukon Delta until they are  
25 flight capable.

26

27 Some portion of the Emperor Goose  
28 population that either fails to breed or too young to  
29 breed take off and head towards the northern side of  
30 Chukotka Peninsula and they undergo molt up there  
31 during the month of July and then by early August the  
32 birds start moving back down south along with the birds  
33 from the Yukon Delta and start congregating on the  
34 northern side of the Alaska Peninsula where they stage  
35 for a month or so.

36

37 By late October the birds are  
38 distributing throughout the winter range, which extends  
39 all the way out to the west side of the Aleutians. A  
40 few are probably occurring out in the Commander Islands  
41 as well in winter and then, of course, as far east as  
42 Kodiak Island, where we are right now.

43

44 By spring, in March and April, birds  
45 are migrating back up to the Alaska Peninsula again,  
46 getting ready to make their jump up to the Yukon Delta  
47 where they'll breed and that's a period mostly in the  
48 month of April, but up until the end of April, early  
49 May the birds are concentrating primarily on the  
50 northern side of the Alaska Peninsula, but we know that

1 there's small pockets of birds that are on the south  
2 side in Kodiak still and some likely still in the  
3 Aleutians that are dawdling along, making their way to  
4 the Alaska Peninsula.

5  
6                   So back up on the Yukon Delta when they  
7 get up there ready to breed, they're met with high  
8 densities of other waterfowl. The Yukon Delta is a  
9 magnificent wetland complex that has among the highest  
10 densities of waterfowl in the world. It's no surprise  
11 that there's more than 40 Native Alaskan villages that  
12 have been sustained for centuries on the bird  
13 populations, the fish, other wildlife, marine mammals  
14 for a long time.

15  
16                   Starting in the 1960s subsistence  
17 hunters there, particularly on the coast, started  
18 noticing major changes in the goose populations. They  
19 were dropping. This figure shows data that's available  
20 from the 1965 to 1985 time period. Cackling Canada  
21 Geese in the upper left there, their numbers were  
22 dramatically dropping. This is a species that nests  
23 also right along with Emperor Geese on the coastal zone  
24 of the Yukon Delta. In that 20-year period, numbers  
25 were estimated to drop about 90%.  
26 Pacific White-Fronted Geese, also nesting there on the  
27 western end of Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, dropped  
28 approximately 85% during that time period.

29  
30                   Now for Emperor Geese, we didn't have  
31 the liberty of doing aerial surveys, and we still  
32 don't, out in the Aleutian Islands in winter. Those  
33 environs just do not permit easy access to these birds.  
34 Unlike Cacklers and White-Fronts, Emperors are  
35 distributed in relatively low densities in winter, but  
36 over a 1,000-mile stretch.

37  
38                   The first population estimate that we  
39 have is from the spring time period, just before  
40 nesting when the birds are concentrated on the Alaska  
41 Peninsula and it occurred in 1964. This aerial survey  
42 was a partial count of what we currently do in spring  
43 today. So the survey in 1964 was conducted between  
44 Port Moller and Quinhagak on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.  
45 It was conducted in late May, mid to late May, which is  
46 a bit later, several weeks later than what we currently  
47 do today. So that was what we had available at the  
48 time.

49  
50                   So that survey wasn't repeated again

1 until 1981. You'll see that long time span when  
2 there's no spring data. At that point in 1981 the  
3 aerial survey was flown. It was flown in the same area  
4 that had been done in 1964, but it also extended around  
5 the south side of the Alaska Peninsula. At that point,  
6 the aerial crew documented about 91,000 Emperors in  
7 that survey area, which was a drop of about 34% from  
8 1964.

9  
10 So this change couple with concerns  
11 that subsistence hunters had been expressing to  
12 biologists on the Yukon Delta and elsewhere prompted  
13 the Fish and Wildlife Service to implement an annual  
14 survey during spring using the same methods in the same  
15 area that they did in 1981. So as you can see from  
16 this graph from 1981 forward the population continued  
17 to go down at about -- resulting in another 50% drop  
18 from 1981 to 1986.

19  
20 So this was kind of in line with what  
21 we were seeing for Cacklers, White-Fronts. The other  
22 data that we have from that time period for Emperor  
23 Geese is from what's called the Waterfowl Breeding  
24 Population and Habitat Survey, which is an aerial  
25 survey that's conducted across all of North America.  
26 Within Alaska, each major waterfowl production area is  
27 sampled by an aircraft. The Yukon Delta being one of  
28 them.

29  
30 Part of that survey intersects with the  
31 breeding distribution of Emperor Geese. So it's not  
32 designed for Emperor Geese, but it provides some index  
33 to what was going on with Emperor Geese at the time.  
34 You can see, this is the bottom right graph, numbers of  
35 Emperor Geese declined from that period from 1960s to  
36 mid-'80s and that was about a 50% drop there as well.

37  
38 So just to summarize what I described  
39 so far. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s Arctic  
40 nesting geese, Cackling Canada Geese, White-Fronted  
41 Geese and Emperor Geese all underwent a decline, 90%  
42 for Cacklers, 85% for White-Fronts and somewhere  
43 between 50 and 70% for Emperors.

44  
45 I also want to emphasize these were  
46 patterns that were seen by the local hunters and were  
47 expressed to the biologists and that's what prompted a  
48 lot of these surveys to take place.

49  
50 So when this occurred, obviously

1 there's a lot of concern from everyone, so there was an  
2 agreement that was developed. There was a lot of  
3 talking, a lot of meetings. Subsistence hunters, sport  
4 hunters, the Department of Fish and Game and the Fish  
5 and Wildlife Service got together and said what are we  
6 going to do about this. We need to turn these things  
7 around. These are important resources, let's make this  
8 better. So it developed into something called the  
9 Hooper Bay Agreement that was in 1984, which then was  
10 formalized into the Yukon Delta Goose Management Plan,  
11 then ultimately decisions from those plans were adopted  
12 into what's called a Pacific Flyway Management Plan.

13

14                   Basically in that process population  
15 objectives were agreed upon and closure numbers --  
16 population levels where closure would occur of harvest  
17 and then agreements about when it would be appropriate  
18 to open up harvest again. In addition, all agreed on  
19 what tools should be used to monitor the progress  
20 towards those objectives. So, in the case of Emperor  
21 Geese, that spring survey was selected as the  
22 appropriate tool. It was selected for two major  
23 reasons. One, the spring survey had historical data  
24 from 1964, but then annually from 1981 forward.  
25 Secondly, the spring survey sampled birds during the  
26 period when they're concentrated and highly visible  
27 just prior to moving up to the breeding grounds.

28

29                   Okay. So this is the survey area for  
30 the spring survey. The survey is conducted currently  
31 and has been since 1981 in late April starting up in  
32 Jack Smith Bay near the mouth of the Kuskokwim River,  
33 down along the coast, all along Bristol Bay, the  
34 northern side of Bristol Bay, and then continuing south  
35 along the north side of the Alaska Peninsula, all the  
36 way to Bechevin Bay near the Izembek complex. The  
37 survey crew then covers the south side of the Alaska  
38 Peninsula counting birds all the way up to Wide Bay.

39

40                   It's a long survey. There's a lot of  
41 shoreline to cover, but really the bulk of the birds,  
42 the vast majority of the birds, in fact 95% of the  
43 birds occur from Egegik down to Izembek. So it's those  
44 north Alaska Peninsula estuaries and embayments that  
45 are really important to spring staging Emperor Geese.

46

47                   Now the crews also do find pockets of  
48 birds north of there and on the south side of the  
49 Alaska Peninsula as well. Sometimes up to a couple  
50 thousand. Sometimes a little bit more. In most years,

1 they're really concentrated on the north side of the  
2 Alaska Peninsula.

3  
4                   Again, use a Cessna 206 amphib. We've  
5 used the same aerial observer from 1981 forward, which  
6 is miraculous. We're lucky to have someone so  
7 dedicated and talented. His name is Chris Dau. He  
8 worked out at Izembek Refuge for a long period of time,  
9 Yukon-Delta Refuge and now currently with us in  
10 Anchorage. We fly at about 150 feet. We have strict  
11 adherence to certain weather conditions and visibility,  
12 wind conditions to make sure that the air crew is safe  
13 and that the birds are visible.

14  
15                   There are times when some of the areas,  
16 particularly on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula  
17 cannot be visited simply because of weather, wind  
18 shear, what have you. When that occurs, what we do is  
19 we substitute that shoreline segment. Since it's  
20 missing data we use the previous three years average  
21 and substitute into that transect area. This does not  
22 normally happen, but when it does we want to make sure  
23 we're accounting for those birds that may have been  
24 there that we just simply didn't sample.

25  
26                   Again I want to emphasize that the  
27 relative contribution of those areas to the total count  
28 is pretty low, so 95 percent of the birds are counted  
29 again from Egegik down to Izembek on average.

30  
31                   Okay. These are the results long term.  
32 There's a lot going on in this graph, so we might need  
33 to come back to it and I can try to explain more. You  
34 see that lonely data point down in the left. That's  
35 the 1964 count, 139,000 birds counted. Then the next  
36 data point was in 1981. We were around 91,000. There  
37 was a little blip up the following year and then a  
38 steady step-wise decline to a low point in 1986.

39  
40                   That yellow line, the horizontal line  
41 up top is the population objective that was agreed upon  
42 by the subsistence hunters, Fish and Game and Fish and  
43 Wildlife Service in the mid-'80s, then there's that  
44 closure line, the red line at the bottom. That's the  
45 60,000 mark and then the orange line in the middle is  
46 80,000.

47  
48                   Currently the population estimate is  
49 just below that mark, which is good news. We're  
50 getting there. In fact, what we're seeing over the

1 last decade is a slow but steady increase in numbers.  
2 The population is growing at about 1.6 percent per  
3 year. So we're heading in the right direction. We're  
4 not there yet, but there's been slow and steady  
5 progress forward and this is good news.

6  
7 As I mentioned before, we do other  
8 surveys around the state. One of the surveys that was  
9 set up in the mid-'80s in response to the population  
10 declines on the Yukon Delta is what's called the Yukon-  
11 Kuskokwim Delta Coastal Zone Breeding Pair Survey.  
12 This is along the coastline of the Yukon Delta from the  
13 mouth of the Yukon to the mouth of the Kuskokwim. The  
14 aerial crew is basically documenting numbers of  
15 breeding pairs of each species. It's not designed  
16 specifically for Emperor Geese, but what we found from  
17 this is that over the last 10 years we're also seeing  
18 an increase of about 2.3 percent per year of Emperor  
19 Geese.

20  
21 While that crew is out, we also have  
22 ground crews on the ground visiting randomly selected  
23 plots to determine nest densities. Also over the last  
24 decade we're seeing a growth rate in Emperors at about  
25 1.4 percent per year. So all three of these data sets  
26 are giving us information about what's happening with  
27 the population. It's increasing, it's slow, but it's  
28 happening.

29  
30 So just to summarize that portion over  
31 the most recent 10 year spring survey we're seeing an  
32 increase, slow but steady. Breeding pair survey is  
33 increasing. Nest survey population is increasing.  
34 Notice those annual percentage changes are pretty low.

35  
36 I'm going to touch briefly on what is  
37 limiting this growth of Emperors. For other species on  
38 the coast we've seen rapid growth in some cases. Like  
39 Pacific White-Fronted Geese have grown substantially.  
40 But what's happening with Emperors. There's two main  
41 things that limit growth of goose populations; how many  
42 goslings are produced each year and how many adults  
43 will survive the winter. Those are two big limiting  
44 factors.

45  
46 Now what controls those. Well,  
47 predation is an important part of gosling production.  
48 A study in the late '90s found that Glaucous gulls were  
49 a main predator of Emperor goslings. They estimated  
50 between 20 and 50,000 Emperor goslings were eaten each

1 year on the Yukon Delta. The health of adults is an  
2 important thing that controls Emperors as well.

3  
4                   Recent studies by the Alaska Science  
5 Center discovered that over 30% of Emperor Geese  
6 breeding on the Yukon Delta are carrying blood  
7 parasites. Blood parasites that are linked to lower  
8 numbers of eggs being laid that could be controlling  
9 the population somewhat too. We don't know whether  
10 parasites have increased over time or not, but we know  
11 they're there now. The presence of available food,  
12 both before breeding and then for goslings on the  
13 breeding ground affects how well goslings can grow and,  
14 of course, survive.

15  
16                   And then finally harvest. All of these  
17 have been studied to some degree. We know a fair bit  
18 about harvest. This figure shows the harvest estimates  
19 way back from the '60s up through present day. The  
20 first estimate of subsistence harvest was back in the  
21 '60s where it was estimated about 8,000 Emperors were  
22 being taken annually. The next set of surveys was done  
23 throughout the '70s and we're looking at about 5,000  
24 Emperors annually. That stayed fairly constant through  
25 the '80s. By the '90s, numbers were coming down a  
26 little bit. In the current decade, we're still seeing  
27 about 3,000 Emperors harvested despite the closure.

28  
29                   Something I want to say about harvest.  
30 Emperor Geese are a long-lived species relative to  
31 other geese. They live a long time. They produce not  
32 so well, but their strategy for reproduction allows  
33 them to -- by the time they die, they will hopefully  
34 have produced two goslings that have survived and that  
35 will return as breeders themselves. What this does is  
36 it makes those adults very valuable. So if harvest is  
37 focused on adults, then it has a pretty big impact on  
38 the population growth rate.

39  
40                   A study that was done in the late '90s  
41 and into the early 2000s using VHF transmitters and  
42 satellite telemetry found that mortality of adults was  
43 occurring primarily on the Yukon Delta in May and in  
44 August. That would normally be a time when survival  
45 rates are really high for geese. There's lots of food  
46 and the stressors are not there. So they've pointed  
47 towards harvest as the main source of mortality during  
48 that time period in May and August.

49  
50                   So those adults that are being taken

1 right when they're getting ready to breed would likely  
2 have a pretty high impact on the population growth  
3 rate. This study was published in the Journal of  
4 Wildlife Management in 2008 and the authors concluded  
5 that a reduction in subsistence harvest could result in  
6 an improved rate of population growth and an increase  
7 in population size.

8  
9                   It actually went so far as to model out  
10 what would have happened -- where we would be right now  
11 if there had been no subsistence harvest at all and  
12 it's above the 80,000 mark for sure.

13  
14                   So I just want to touch on briefly  
15 what's currently happening. So migratory bird  
16 management conducts a number of surveys. I touched on  
17 several of them. The spring survey, a breeding ground  
18 aerial survey, a nesting survey and we also calculate  
19 age ratios following the season each year, which tells  
20 us how many birds actually survive to make it down onto  
21 the Alaska Peninsula.

22  
23                   We've contracted an independent  
24 statistician to review all of these datasets and try to  
25 put them together and provide us with recommendations  
26 on how to update our survey methodologies if needed and  
27 to improve our analysis techniques for determining how  
28 many birds there actually are out there.

29  
30                   Also going on right now is the very  
31 beginnings of revising the Emperor Goose Management  
32 Plan. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game waterfowl  
33 coordinator, Dan Rosenberg, who is here, is  
34 leading the Emperor Goose Subcommittee for the Alaska  
35 Migratory Bird Co-management Council, which is  
36 responsible for updating this plan. That subcommittee  
37 is chaired by Dan and also has regional subsistence  
38 representatives from Kodiak, the Aleutians, Alaska  
39 Peninsula and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Together  
40 we're going to review and revise that management plan  
41 with input from all of you. We welcome that and we're  
42 open to your input for that.

43  
44                   The results of that work will likely  
45 get built into -- well, let me just back up a second.  
46 Regarding that plan, the last time that plan was  
47 revised was 2006 and at that time it had input from  
48 that same Emperor Goose Subcommittee and those  
49 population thresholds were endorsed and signed off by  
50 the committee members, which included Peter Devine from

1 the Aleutian/Pribilofs, Ralph Anderson, Bristol Bay  
2 Native Association, Tim Andrew from Yukon Delta  
3 Association of Village Council Presidents and Austin  
4 Ahmasuk from Kawerak, Incorporated. There was no one  
5 from Kodiak on the subcommittee at that time. There is  
6 now, so I just wanted to point that out.

7

8 So research will continue in the  
9 limiting factors for Emperor Geese.....

10

11 (Tsunami warning bell)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: It's just a  
14 test.

15

16 MR. FISCHER: That would have been  
17 convenient before the questions come in.

18

19 (Laughter)

20

21 MR. HOLMES: If you hear that at any  
22 other time, straight up the mountain.

23

24 MR. FISCHER: Okay, gotcha. Our  
25 population monitoring is going to continue in spring  
26 and summer and fall. In fact, winter as well. I have  
27 a survey crew that's waiting for this weather to break  
28 so they can come out and do some surveys out here  
29 starting as early as next week. We can talk about that  
30 a little bit later if you'd like.

31

32 Of course, the harvest survey is an  
33 important part of the whole picture. The harvest  
34 survey also is under review as well to make sure that  
35 we're getting the best numbers in a most efficient  
36 manner possible. That's out for an independent review  
37 by Colorado State University.

38

39 So, just to summarize all this stuff.  
40 Emperor Geese declined along with other Yukon Delta  
41 breeding geese from the mid-'60s to the mid-'80s and  
42 resulting from those declines management plans were  
43 developed collaboratively with subsistence hunters,  
44 Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife Service. In that  
45 process, that spring survey was selected as the  
46 population index. The objective of 150,000 was  
47 established. That 150,000 was seen at the time by many  
48 as perhaps too low.

49

50 Many felt that the 1964 count was an

1 underestimate because it did not sample the entire  
2 Alaska Peninsula north and south. But, nonetheless, it  
3 was adopted. They said, okay, we'll compromise on  
4 this. We'll go with 150,000 for our ultimate  
5 objective, but, at the same time, let's ensure that  
6 there's an opening for harvest to occur well before  
7 that, so that's where that 80,000 number came from.  
8 80,000 at the time that these were set up was actually  
9 very attainable because only five years prior the  
10 spring index was showing over 100,000 birds. You might  
11 remember that early graph where from '81, '82, 3, 4, 5,  
12 6, we were just seeing a pretty rapid decline.

13  
14                   So the spring survey index continues to  
15 grow. We're inching towards 80,000. The index is  
16 currently just under 74,000. Additional survey data  
17 from other surveys show positive with slow growth  
18 forward. A legal harvest is continuing at  
19 approximately 3,000 per year and that's likely limiting  
20 the population growth. And the Management Plan will be  
21 revised starting this year with input from subsistence  
22 hunters.

23  
24                   So we're committed to improving the  
25 status of Emperor Geese. Our goal is to open a legal  
26 and sustainable harvest. We're keenly aware of the  
27 interest of subsistence hunters to get this back on the  
28 table. We've heard that loud and clear. We share that  
29 interest. We also share your frustration that the bird  
30 is not growing as fast as we'd like it to.

31  
32                   When we get to that point where harvest  
33 can occur again, we need to do it very carefully. We  
34 need to think about it very hard because we've seen  
35 with Emperor Geese when you knock them down it's a  
36 long, slow haul back up. So we're going to get there  
37 and when we do we're going to have to work together and  
38 make sure it's done right and equitably.

39  
40                   I think that's all I've got in the  
41 presentation, but I'd be happy to take any of your  
42 questions or comments at this point.

43  
44                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

45  
46                   MR. KOSO: Yeah, thank you for that  
47 report. That was very fulfilling. On those Emperor  
48 Geese, I know we've been looking at 80,000 thresholds  
49 here for quite some time as to creating a subsistence  
50 hunt. We were really concerned that it seems like it

1 never goes any higher than about 74 over the past 10  
2 years. I've been looking at some of your graphs here.  
3 It seems like it's been really aggressive on losses and  
4 gains over short periods of time. You know, looking on  
5 your graph here in '05 you're down to 40,000 and then  
6 in 2010 you're up to 90-some thousand. I guess it's  
7 just a large fluctuation that I see in the graphs. How  
8 do you maintain a constant count when you get such  
9 fluctuations in your count in such short periods of  
10 time? What creates that?

11  
12 MR. FISCHER: There's many things that  
13 can create that type of fluctuation in the population.  
14 The previous year's production. Remember I mentioned  
15 Emperor Geese are a long-lived species, so they will go  
16 many years without producing young if the conditions  
17 are not right. Many of them fail to pull off a nest in  
18 a given year. But over the course of their life  
19 they'll eventually, if they can, replace themselves and  
20 the population will grow or at least remain stable.

21  
22 If you have one year of really poor  
23 production, the succeeding spring count is going to be  
24 a lot lower. You might also have some weather systems  
25 that really affect the survival of goslings out on the  
26 wintering grounds that would then lower the count in  
27 the next spring simply because the young didn't  
28 survive.

29  
30 So to counter those strong fluctuations  
31 we use a three-year running average as the index. So  
32 it's the average of the current year plus the two prior  
33 years and that helps smooth out that count between  
34 years. If that helps at all.

35  
36 MR. KOSO: Yeah, thanks. That helps a  
37 lot. It sounds like in order for us to get a  
38 subsistence hunt you're going to have to do something  
39 about the illegal killing of these birds or taking of  
40 the eggs. It sounded like the problem you said was  
41 from May to August. Is that mainly up in the Yukon  
42 Delta area that you're having the biggest problems of  
43 illegal taking or is that down on the north side  
44 peninsula?

45  
46 MR. FISCHER: This is a hard thing to  
47 get at. We do have harvest estimates statewide by  
48 region. The harvest survey is administered by the  
49 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and they do a very  
50 good job. It's hard to get an estimate of illegal

1 harvest. Some people are happy to report, but we don't  
2 know how many people are not reporting their illegal  
3 harvest. That's where we're sometimes just left with  
4 scratching our heads a bit about where exactly is the  
5 harvest taking place, but we do have estimates for all  
6 the areas. Yukon Delta is a major area, Bristol Bay  
7 and the Kawerak region on St. Lawrence Island are  
8 probably the large ones. Kodiak doesn't have much of a  
9 reported harvest at all that I'm aware of right now.  
10 For the Aleutian Islands too.

11  
12 MR. KOSO: One more quick question. On  
13 your new plan that you're putting into play now, if I'm  
14 understanding you right, are you looking to jump that  
15 index up to 150,000 versus the 80 we've been working on  
16 or did I misread something?

17  
18 MR. FISCHER: No, sir. The population  
19 objective is 150,000 currently. The population  
20 objective is what -- as it's written now, the existing  
21 plan, that's where all the partners who participated  
22 want the population to ultimately be at. There's no  
23 talk about changing the threshold for a subsistence  
24 harvest to 150,000 at this point.

25  
26 In fact, in the revision of this  
27 management plan, it's all on the table. If we want to  
28 change the objectives, that's on the table. Perhaps  
29 150,000 is just too high. Maybe there's no way that  
30 the population could ever return to that level. Maybe  
31 80,000 is not obtainable. Maybe that could be lowered.  
32 Maybe it should be raised. But it's open. It's open.  
33 I don't think anyone has suggested there will an  
34 increase of the threshold before subsistence harvest  
35 could take place to go up to 150,000.

36  
37 MR. KOSO: Yeah, I think this board  
38 recommended I think at the last two meetings that we  
39 had to drop that threshold to 70,000 and to create a  
40 small hunt in the villages subsistence-wise. So, you  
41 know, I think that's probably still our recommendation  
42 here unless the board changed its train of thought, but  
43 that's what we came up with in the last two meetings,  
44 was possibly dropping that threshold to 70,000 and  
45 creating a small subsistence hunt in the local  
46 villages.

47  
48 Thank you. That's all for me.

49  
50 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I have a

1 question along with the discussion in regard to the  
2 taking of the eggs and technically subsistence at this  
3 point. Has any of these studies correlated with the  
4 population increase in that area at all when you've  
5 done this?

6

7 MR. FISCHER: Are you talking about  
8 population increases of other goose species?

9

10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: People through  
11 that area in correlation to the decline.

12

13 MR. FISCHER: That's a great question.  
14 Not to my knowledge.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I say this  
17 because I know this is one of the things we've all felt  
18 strongly from in my area because the taking of the  
19 eggs, of course, has an impact on the reproduction and  
20 the survival and the increase of the population. I  
21 guess what is being done? Is there anything being done  
22 to try to limit that at this point?

23

24 MR. FISCHER: Regarding egg harvest,  
25 egg harvest of Emperor Geese is closed as is hunting  
26 adults and young. The Yukon Delta had a large staff of  
27 refuge information technicians. These are individuals  
28 from the local villages that are a fantastic liaison  
29 between the Refuge and the people that live in the  
30 villages. They know the people, they speak the  
31 language and practice subsistence themselves. The RIT  
32 program has undergone a lot of change at the Yukon  
33 Delta Refuge recently. I know the Refuge is very  
34 interested in rebuilding what they had. But through  
35 the RITs the information about egging closures and  
36 harvest is communicated out into the villages within  
37 the breeding range.

38

39 The Yukon Delta communities are  
40 actively involved in the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-  
41 management Council process and their representative is  
42 charged with going out and communicating with the  
43 villages, meeting with them and both explaining what  
44 the current situation is with populations but also  
45 receiving input from them about what they're seeing and  
46 what their desires are for a change.

47

48 Maybe there should be more outreach to  
49 reduce harvest and reduce egging further. I think that  
50 would probably go a long ways, perhaps a lot longer

1 than law enforcement, you know, heavy-handed actions  
2 which don't necessarily have a positive effect. But I  
3 think outreach is a really good option.

4  
5 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I bring these up  
6 not in a negative manner but more a point of view, I  
7 think, or as a point. We're all aware of the issues of  
8 what they refer to as Area M, that whole issue, and  
9 then the regional issue. One of the things that had  
10 been brought up by Myron Naneng is the fact that --  
11 just as an example, if we had this road all the way  
12 through the wilderness, from King Cove to Cold Bay,  
13 that subsistence users are going to kill off all the  
14 Black Brant and people up there aren't going to get  
15 anything. We're like, well, if you quit taking the  
16 eggs, you know, we all will be fine I'm pretty sure.  
17 So that is a point and it is a point of contention, I  
18 think.

19  
20 The other thing, I think, is I would  
21 like to get a copy. Is there a copy online somewhere  
22 for the management plan that you said for all areas?

23  
24 MR. FISCHER: The existing plan is in  
25 your book.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. I kind of  
28 glanced through this. Just to reinforce a little bit  
29 what Rick is saying, this Council, over the past I want  
30 to say at least 10 to 12 years, this issue with the  
31 subsistence for the Emperor Geese has been a priority  
32 and we want to thank you a lot for being here and this  
33 opportunity because it's something that we've been  
34 asking for for a long time and something that we hope  
35 we can resolve because the interest is very high and  
36 how to work together with the regions to be able to  
37 achieve that. Pat and I think we'll be working with  
38 other groups to try to talk to other regions in regard  
39 to that.

40  
41 DR. ROSENBERG: Good afternoon, Madame  
42 Chair and members of the RAC. My name is Dan Rosenberg  
43 and I am the migratory game bird coordinator for the  
44 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. As Julian kindly  
45 said, I am the chair of the Emperor Goose Subcommittee  
46 for the Pacific Flyway Council and the Alaska Migratory  
47 Bird Co-management Council.

48  
49 As I think you're all aware, we're  
50 talking about two different processes here. We're

1 talking about the ANILCA process, which is what created  
2 this RAC, and we're also talking about the Alaska  
3 Migratory Bird Co-management Council, which was  
4 formulated under amendments to the Migratory Bird  
5 Treaty Act back in 1997 and first met in 2003.

6

7 The reason that this issue is in the  
8 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council is because  
9 the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council brings  
10 together the 12 Native regions in the state, there's  
11 actually 11 that are participating right now, and the  
12 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish  
13 and Wildlife Service so we can try to resolve these  
14 issues in a consensus-type fashion and bring all the  
15 players to the table at once.

16

17 So we are trying to do exactly as  
18 you're suggesting. We're trying to make this work with  
19 all the participants, which includes the Bering Strait  
20 and Norton Sound Region, which is harvesting birds  
21 right now illegally, but harvesting birds, the Y-K  
22 Delta, the people of Bristol Bay, Kodiak and the  
23 Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association. So that's what  
24 we are working towards in trying to come up to revise  
25 this plan.

26

27 As you should know, you have a  
28 representative from the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak that is  
29 on the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council.  
30 And you also have Pete Devine from APIA. So we're  
31 working with them to address these issues and we hope  
32 to be able to do that through the revision of the  
33 management plan. If you'd like, I could tell you a  
34 little bit more about that process.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

37

38 MS. SKINNER: Who is it from Sun'aq  
39 Tribe?

40

41 DR. ROSENBERG: It's currently Sonny  
42 Squartsoff of Port Lions. Sonny replaced Rick Rowland.  
43 Before that it was Herman Squartsoff, Sonny's brother.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Questions. Go  
46 ahead, Tom.

47

48 MR. SCHWANTES: Through the Chair, I  
49 have a question. You said you're part of this Bird Co-  
50 management or Council of the Pacific Flyway Plan. What

1 I'm seeing there in the goals and objectives section,  
2 you say the goal of this management plan is to restore  
3 the Emperor Goose population to historical levels and  
4 then under objectives the very first thing you say is  
5 to maintain a minimum population of 150,000 birds. I  
6 don't see that as even being realistic. You haven't  
7 been there for 50 years. How do you expect to get back  
8 to a place you haven't been in 50 years?

9  
10 DR. ROSENBERG: If I may, let me read  
11 to you from an email that I sent out in August of 2013  
12 before the first meeting to look at revising this plan,  
13 okay. In that email to all the participants of the  
14 AMBCC I said, from past proposals and discussions of  
15 the AMBCC and the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional  
16 Advisory Council there are several prevailing issues  
17 that I believe we should address.

18  
19 The first one was is the Emperor Goose  
20 population objective of 150,000 and the closure of  
21 60,000 and the reopening of 80,000 thresholds relevant  
22 based on our current knowledge.

23  
24 The second one was, is the U.S. Fish  
25 and Wildlife Service spring aerial surveys accounting  
26 for the majority of Emperor Geese and is it the best  
27 index for assessing population status and trends.

28  
29 The third one, is the current  
30 subsistence harvest estimate of approximately 3,500  
31 birds per year accurate and what effect is it having on  
32 population growth. Can it be addressed through  
33 outreach and education.

34  
35 Fourth, without the ability to  
36 implement a fall -- well, that was a fall winter  
37 harvest. We've kind of dropped that for now. Five,  
38 are there realistic management actions we can implement  
39 to increase the population, for example expand outreach  
40 and education programs, implement predator control,  
41 address Russian sport hunting, et cetera.

42  
43 So those were the things that we went  
44 into this revision recognizing that we needed to  
45 discuss and we needed to address. From that first  
46 meeting it became very evidence that we weren't even  
47 sure that our three-year average estimate of the  
48 population, the current estimate that Julian just put  
49 up there, 73,000, however many birds, really is  
50 accurately representing the population of Emperor Geese

1 and we also are not sure that the decline from 1963 to  
2 1981 is really an accurate reflection of the decline.

3  
4 Yes, you're absolutely right that it  
5 may be that we've never had 150,000. We haven't  
6 certainly since 1960 when we first had that count, so  
7 we are reviewing all of these things and they should be  
8 reviewed. It may be that what we're basing this on is  
9 true for the most part and maybe the 73,000 counts are  
10 accurate, but it deserves to be reviewed and try to  
11 become more confident in what we're basing our  
12 decisions on and see if we can change things, if that  
13 warrants change.

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Maybe a question  
16 while you're talking about doing these surveys. Chris  
17 Dau you mentioned has been pretty instrumental over  
18 time in doing these surveys. The transect lines that  
19 he's following, is it pretty much the same all the time  
20 or is there any new areas or, you know, in looking at  
21 this whole scope of thing, what is the process there?

22  
23 MR. FISCHER: The goal of that survey  
24 is to replicate what's been done in the same way and  
25 same manner as has been done since it was initiated as  
26 an annual survey, which was in 1981. So the same type  
27 of aircraft, with the exception of one year, was used,  
28 the same altitude, the same speed, the same level of  
29 training and the same survey extent.

30  
31 There was one change. About 10 years  
32 ago we dropped the very northern portion of the survey  
33 area, so prior to 2006 the survey area included all the  
34 way up from Hooper Bay down to the mouth of the  
35 Kuskokwim, but in the first 20 years we only had an  
36 average of 300 birds in that whole area. It adds up to  
37 a week or more for the survey time. It was deemed  
38 inappropriate to continue doing such an area that could  
39 delay the survey from actually getting to where all the  
40 birds actually are on the Alaska Peninsula, so a  
41 decision was made to drop that portion of it.

42  
43 Currently we continue to do the mouth  
44 of the Kuskokwim through the entire Alaska Peninsula  
45 and the south side out to Wide Bay. As I mentioned  
46 before, if any of the south side segments can't be done  
47 due to weather, we substitute the most recent three  
48 years data for that one segment into that area. Now  
49 the north side, where 95% of the birds are, we get that  
50 done. We wait it out. The weather is usually easier

1 for flying in that area. If there's any segments that  
2 are not completed, the crew will get it done by just  
3 waiting out the weather. But subjecting themselves to  
4 the south side during that time period in every bay we  
5 just can't do that. It's just not safe in bad weather  
6 conditions.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Probably kind of  
9 answers this other question is these surveys are being  
10 conducted in the spring and as they're returning back I  
11 know they stop in Izembek and feed before the long  
12 flight. Is Izembek or anybody else looking at some  
13 numbers on the return as they come back through?

14

15 MR. FISCHER: So you're talking about  
16 the spring period?

17

18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Is anything in  
19 the fall being done?

20

21 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, actually -- well,  
22 what we do in the fall is we have a survey to measure  
23 productivity. By productivity I mean how many goslings  
24 that were produced in that summer, how many of them  
25 survived and made it to the Alaska Peninsula. They  
26 were heading out to their wintering grounds. The way  
27 we do that is we have an aerial crew photograph flocks  
28 all along the north Alaska peninsula and at the same  
29 time we have another plane come through and count all  
30 the birds in that same area. By using those two  
31 together we develop an estimate of the total number of  
32 goslings within that area.

33

34 So the fall counts are yet another  
35 index to the population. I have some problems using  
36 that particular dataset to index the population because  
37 fall is a time when birds are coming through at  
38 different rates. They're much more spread out. You  
39 would normally have the breeding pairs come through  
40 first followed by -- I'm sorry, the non-breeding birds  
41 come through first followed by breeders and it can be  
42 much more strung out in time, whereas in spring it's a  
43 much more concentrated time period where the birds are  
44 in very distinct locations for a good month.

45

46 Despite the fact that they're there for  
47 a month or more we focus our surveys right smack in the  
48 middle of that, which is the last week of April, first  
49 week of May.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'm sorry. Go  
2 ahead, Dan.

3  
4 DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, Madame  
5 Chair. There's actually, as Julian, I think, showed in  
6 his talk, there are four surveys that are all assessing  
7 the population of Emperor Geese. One of the problems  
8 -- you know, and the spring survey was chosen, as  
9 Julian mentioned, to be the one that is based -- the  
10 index that we use for management purposes is based on  
11 that spring survey. But when you start to look at all  
12 the surveys, you start to see some discrepancies within  
13 those surveys. If you look at some things like just  
14 the nesting ground, the number of nests in the nest  
15 plot estimates that estimate the population of nesting  
16 birds and you look at how many that is and that number  
17 sometimes comes out quite a bit higher than the spring  
18 survey. But in all years they don't always all track.

19  
20 So one of the things that -- as I said,  
21 when we got into this management plan, we realized that  
22 there's a lot of things here we needed to sort out.  
23 We've actually got two processes going on now. I  
24 started one and then the Fish and Wildlife Service  
25 started another to try to sort all this out and see if  
26 we can use -- if we start to look at all this data  
27 collectively, will it tell us something that a single  
28 survey is not telling us. We're going through that  
29 process. It's a rather elaborate statistical modeling  
30 process that I couldn't explain if I wanted to.

31  
32 I mean I think it's a very legitimate  
33 way of doing business, but we're hoping that it will  
34 shed some light on this. I mean we have people  
35 biometricians I think there could be as many as 139,000  
36 right now in this ring. So we're trying to sort this  
37 out and that sort of led to this delay in this planning  
38 process because what it initially did was it pointed  
39 out we've got a lot of things to go figure out here.  
40 So we're trying to still figure out which might be the  
41 best way to survey this population, whether it's one  
42 survey, which it could end up being or is it a  
43 combination of surveys or how are we going to go about  
44 doing this in the best possible way to get the most  
45 accurate estimate of the population size.

46  
47 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom and then  
48 Pat.

49  
50 MR. SCHWANTES: One of you made a

1 statement that you're basically saying 95 percent of  
2 the birds counted are on the north side of the  
3 peninsula and I noticed in your report you agree that  
4 not 100 percent of the birds are being counted and  
5 we've heard different testimony there are a number of  
6 birds being observed in different areas at the time  
7 when you're doing your count. So what -- I guess my  
8 question is what are you doing to make sure that all  
9 those birds are counted?

10

11 MR. FISCHER: That's an excellent  
12 question. So no survey can document every single bird  
13 that's out there. So what we've done is we've selected  
14 a survey -- actually this was selected 30 years ago  
15 now. A survey that best indexes the population. It's  
16 a time period and a location when most of the birds are  
17 present, acknowledging that not all of them are going  
18 to be there at that time. We don't have any reason to  
19 believe now that there's been any change in the  
20 proportion of birds that are outside of the survey area  
21 now compared to when the survey was first started. By  
22 that I mean if 80 percent of them were within this  
23 Alaska Peninsula, north and south side, in late April  
24 in 1981, we think the same proportion is within that  
25 pretty broad survey area now.

26

27 Now if there was a change in  
28 distribution through time where the birds were delaying  
29 their migration, let's say there was more birds  
30 wintering in Kodiak, like a lot more, and they were  
31 migrating not until May and we were still surveying out  
32 there in April, then our numbers would be going down,  
33 but the population would actually be potentially going  
34 up and we'd be missing it. But there's no data we have  
35 to suggest that that's occurring at this point.

36

37 So to try to cover that, what we do is  
38 -- Chris Dau and Heather Wilson, who's the pilot flying  
39 with him right now, they contact people out here in  
40 Kodiak, they contact people out in the Aleutians and  
41 they ask them what they're seeing and ask has the  
42 departure occurred, are there still a lot of birds  
43 hanging out west, are we going to be starting our  
44 survey too early or is it just about right.

45

46 They also pay a lot of attention to  
47 what's going on with the weather. Is break-up  
48 occurring on the Yukon Delta yet? There's field crews  
49 that get out to the Yukon Delta in early April and  
50 start recording all observations of incoming birds on

1 the coast and our crews are in communication with them  
2 to find out has migration started yet.

3

4                   So that type of communication occurs to  
5 try to make sure that there's not going to be any  
6 surprises. Are we missing some birds? Yeah. Are we  
7 getting most of the birds? Yeah. But I'm sure there's  
8 some birds out here in Kodiak that are still lingering  
9 out here when the survey crew is doing their survey in  
10 late April. Maybe a few have popped up to the Yukon  
11 Delta and skittered by without anybody seeing them and  
12 we miss them. That's just the facts we have to work  
13 with.

14

15                   So I wish we could say we could be 100  
16 percent sure we were getting every bird every year, but  
17 I can't.

18

19                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

20

21                   MR. SCHWANTES: Have you considered  
22 doing something similar to what the Audubon Society  
23 does on their bird counts? At the same time that  
24 you're doing your surveys, have the villages and the  
25 different communities in the area do a bird count at  
26 the same time.

27

28                   MR. FISCHER: I like that idea. That  
29 sounds like it could be really productive. As you  
30 know, the distribution of Emperor Geese is wide and in  
31 small pockets and occurs in many locations that people  
32 aren't around, especially out in the Aleutians. Now  
33 around here perhaps it would be far more easily  
34 accomplished and around certain locations on the south  
35 side of the Alaska Peninsula. That could be really  
36 helpful. It would be really good information to have.  
37 So, yeah, I welcome ideas like that. Thank you for  
38 that suggestion.

39

40                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Pat.

41

42                   MR. HOLMES: Permission to remove my  
43 duct tape.

44

45                   (Laughter)

46

47                   MR. HOLMES: I'll try and be as quick  
48 as I can.

49

50                   MR. KOSO: Take your time, Pat.

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MR. HOLMES: I came back and had this  
4 whole roll here. I had a whole page of questions. I  
5 think a lot of them have been answered. A lot of my  
6 questions revolved around sampling strategy and whether  
7 the initial surveys how those related to the current  
8 ones. I think that a lot of my questions have been  
9 answered.

10

11 I think our Council may have been less  
12 frustrated in this effort if our local rep in recent  
13 years had kept us informed of the process of what was  
14 going on and exploration of re-examining management  
15 plans. We had not a clue that that was happening.  
16 Some of the questions we raised a couple years about  
17 maybe having a very small token ceremonial harvest of  
18 like five birds per village. When we teleconferenced,  
19 we just got a lot of static, almost implying that we,  
20 as a Council, couldn't do that by this person and so  
21 I'm glad they moved on and I really look forward to  
22 making some progress on this.

23

24 I really wish we had time for Dan to  
25 elaborate on this new process. If you could email us  
26 that, I would really greatly appreciate that. Because  
27 I think that you folks are on the right track to look  
28 at that. The fact that you've got 12 different units  
29 around the state of Native folks to communicate -- and  
30 I can't help but think that a lot of our -- some of the  
31 elders on the south side, as far as the Emperor Goose  
32 goes, you know, they've just been telling the young  
33 bucks just back off because we want to try to get the  
34 numbers up.

35

36 Della's comments joking about Brant  
37 versus north and south, you know, it's very valid and I  
38 think expanding that communication and expanding  
39 education, all the gossip I hear is probably the  
40 estimates of harvest up north is way short, but knowing  
41 that gulls are part of the problem too.

42

43 So I think this is going to be a much  
44 longer process than we hoped and I am just really  
45 tickled to get this information from you folks. Some  
46 of my normal barking I'm just not going to do, so I'll  
47 put my duct tape back on and thank you for coming.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat.  
50 Rebecca.

1 MS. SKINNER: I'm sorry if I missed  
2 this. Can you run through the timeline again of your  
3 next maybe five steps and when you think they're going  
4 to occur.

5  
6 DR. ROSENBERG: I don't know if I can  
7 go five, but if I do they'll be real small. The week  
8 of April 6th is the next AMBCC meeting and the spring  
9 meeting is the regulatory meeting when we vote on  
10 proposals. Usually that week we have committee  
11 meetings. I'm almost certain that we will have a  
12 meeting that week on the Emperor Goose Subcommittee to  
13 discuss the planning process.

14  
15 I have asked the two people that are  
16 working on this model that I just mentioned to have  
17 something ready to report at that meeting. I don't  
18 know when it's going to be yet and I don't know if they  
19 do either. I'm doing this very hook and by crook. I  
20 have no money for it. I've gotten people to work on it  
21 and one is retired and one is a biometrician in another  
22 division of Fish and Game, but they're working on it  
23 and I think they will have some progress.

24  
25 At the same time Eric has sort of a  
26 parallel process going. Eric and Julian have a  
27 parallel process going. I don't know what their  
28 timeframe is, but we hope.....

29  
30 MR. FISCHER: They'll report that work.

31  
32 DR. ROSENBERG: They'll report that  
33 week too. So, you know, I can't promise at all that  
34 we're going to -- this is going to be a giant step  
35 forward, but hopefully at least a baby step in the  
36 right direction. When we get that information and we  
37 work on these two processes that we've got going,  
38 hopefully within the following year we'll be able to  
39 make some more progress.

40  
41 As I said, I think once we sort of come  
42 to terms with what we really do believe the current  
43 population is and what we really think is a realistic  
44 population objective. There's biological population  
45 objectives and there's aspirational population  
46 objectives. Hopefully we'll come up with something  
47 that we hope is biological or maybe a hybrid. I don't  
48 really know, but you can always wish for more.

49  
50 So we're going to try and do that and

1 then also there's -- like right now we have an index  
2 and we have a population objective, but the index is  
3 not necessarily very scalable to the population  
4 objective and we're trying to improve that. Then we  
5 can establish these thresholds for closures or for re-  
6 openings and those sorts of things. So that's all open  
7 to another discussion.

8

9                   So I apologize I can't give you the  
10 next five, but the goal is to get -- and I recognize  
11 while we -- you know, I think we all do that. We  
12 recognize while we're fiddling around trying to get  
13 this plan going there are people out there that want to  
14 eat. I mean it's not like -- you know, we're not  
15 insensitive to that, but at the same time we really do  
16 need to try to bring all these parties together.

17

18                   I mean right now you've got -- like I  
19 said, there's a subsistence harvest of 3,100. I think  
20 if we could just legally allocate that around the  
21 state, a lot of people would be very happy with at  
22 least having something, but it's not so easy to just  
23 mandate that we're going to take some from you and give  
24 them to you. I mean that's something I would like to  
25 see the Native groups work out amongst themselves. If  
26 we could resolve that -- and with that current harvest  
27 with the best information that we have available, the  
28 population seems to be growing.

29

30                   Now is that harvest accurate or not? I  
31 just don't know. I can't tell you, but it is something  
32 that we have to go on. Whatever the harvest is right  
33 now, whatever it is, the population is growing a little  
34 bit. So if we could just take that and reallocate it  
35 to make people happy, but I realize that's easier said  
36 than done.

37

38                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'm going to say  
39 I agree it's easier said than done, but I think it can  
40 be done and that's by agreement of all the regions. I  
41 think passing on what you've heard I think from this  
42 Council today and especially when we heard it it helped  
43 us all from both of you a lot, understanding what the  
44 process is. And it definitely makes us need to step  
45 back and work with a representative that we have. If  
46 they're not going to be able to communicate to us, then  
47 we need to look at that too from a regional standpoint.

48

49                   But the other thing is looking to the  
50 other regions and letting them know we're willing to

1 work on this because this is one of those things that  
2 we've got the co-management, we've got to co-exist,  
3 we've got to figure out how we're going to do this  
4 together and that's where I go with this step here too.  
5 It doesn't solve anything pointing fingers.

6

7 I think with that.....

8

9 MR. KOSO: One more question here.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: One more? I'm  
12 sorry.

13

14 MR. KOSO: Just another question.  
15 We're really right close to -- you know, in our minds  
16 on this RAC board we've discussed many times this  
17 80,000 threshold that you're stuck on and we've been  
18 trying now for quite a few years to get that threshold  
19 dropped down to 70,000. Looking at the increase in the  
20 birds, if you were to drop that threshold down to  
21 70,000 over the course of a three-year average, then we  
22 would be looking at a small subsistence hunt that would  
23 be for everybody.

24

25 That, in my mind, would be a lot easier  
26 to direct a subsistence hunt if it's 10 birds per  
27 community, so be it, but at least that will expose  
28 people to doing a subsistence hunt and I think that  
29 would also curtail the illegal taking of birds because  
30 other people are going to be there doing it and they're  
31 going to be watching to make sure that other people  
32 don't actually go and kill them illegal.

33

34 So I think it would be an educational  
35 deal for all the communities to be able to do a small  
36 subsistence hunt, knowing that it's coming back,  
37 knowing that they've got to really be careful, things  
38 are starting to happen. But as long as they know  
39 they're never going to get a hunt there's always going  
40 to be this illegal hunting. I think that would just be  
41 one step forward closer to curtailing this illegal  
42 taking. So that would be my suggestion is to get this  
43 threshold down to 70,000.

44

45 DR. ROSENBERG: Madame Chair, may I  
46 address that. I certainly understand what you're  
47 saying. Again, I'm probably getting a little bit into  
48 the legal arena here that maybe I shouldn't be getting  
49 into, but again subsistence migratory bird hunting and  
50 subsistence migratory bird sport hunting both come

1 under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

2

3                   When the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was  
4 amended back in 1997, and I believe it was in the  
5 letter of transmittal from the Secretary of State at  
6 the time, Warren Christopher to President Bill Clinton,  
7 that outlined a lot of the caveats of those treaty  
8 amendments. One of the statements in there was that  
9 the treaty amendments are not intended to create a  
10 preference in favor of any group of users in the United  
11 States or to modify any preference that may exist.

12

13                   So what I'm not sure about is that we  
14 could have -- and I don't think we've done this before.  
15 I've been trying to think if there's ever a case where  
16 we've done this, but I'm not sure we can have one  
17 threshold for subsistence and then a different  
18 threshold to open it up in the fall for the sport  
19 hunting season. I think we might be able to have a  
20 subsistence hunt, but I'm not sure we can really get  
21 away with these two thresholds. This is just something  
22 that really hasn't come up much before and I just think  
23 it's something we need to look into before I can say,  
24 yeah, that's a great idea and see what we can do.

25

26                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

27

28                   MR. SCHWANTES: I just want to express  
29 my appreciation for you coming to this meeting. You  
30 know, you've given us a lot of information that we  
31 haven't had before, so I appreciate that. Thank you.

32

33                   DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you very much for  
34 having me. I appreciate it.

35

36                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Go  
37 ahead.

38

39                   DR. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. I'm Eric  
40 Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service. Again, thank  
41 you for the opportunity and the invitation.

42

43                   The only clarification I want to bring  
44 forward to the Council is that the process of looking  
45 at population objectives and harvest strategies should  
46 be looked at very carefully and in a very justified  
47 manner. The reason I bring that up is that right now  
48 the Fish and Wildlife Service as well as the Alaska  
49 Department of Fish and Game is getting lobbied very  
50 heavily by the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon

1 Department of Fish and Wildlife to lower the population  
2 objective and liberalize harvest for Cackling Canada  
3 Geese. This is the second most important species  
4 that's taken by subsistence hunters on the Y-K Delta.

5  
6 They have proposed on record to cut it  
7 by half. So a 250,000 population objection down to  
8 150. The reason being that Cackling Canada Geese now  
9 winter in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. They used  
10 to winter in California. They've shifted north, much  
11 like some other species have, like Brant, and they're  
12 now on turf farms, the farms that are used for golf  
13 courses and large houses. In the past, they were not  
14 on those fields.

15  
16 There's obviously lots of public  
17 refuges, but the refuges that we have in Oregon and  
18 Washington are insufficient. So there is substantive  
19 pressure, pressure at the highest levels of Fish and  
20 Wildlife Service for the Migratory Bird Division to  
21 come forward to say, yes, let's cut the population by  
22 half. Okay. If we did that, you could imagine the  
23 possible repercussions to subsistence hunters on the Y-  
24 K Delta. So the second most important species that  
25 they rely on, the population objective has been cut in  
26 half.

27  
28 The point I want to make is these plans  
29 were put into place and, as Julian mentioned, the plans  
30 were a cooperative effort of at least four subsistence  
31 hunters from different regions, the Department of Fish  
32 and Game and Fish and Wildlife Service, to try to come  
33 to an agreement of saying what's reasonable. What's  
34 biologically reasonable in terms of a population  
35 objective or harvest strategy so that subsistence  
36 hunters all the way through the flyway as well as sport  
37 hunters in Alaska down through the flyway can have the  
38 resources they need as well as the people that just  
39 want to go to a refuge and see what an Emperor Goose  
40 looks like or a Cackling Canada Goose looks like.

41  
42 So, as Julian and Dan said, everything  
43 is on the table. So Dan is a chairperson for two  
44 subcommittees, both the Pacific Flyway Management Plan  
45 and for the AMBCC process, the Emperor Goose  
46 Subcommittee. Both of those processes clearly have  
47 membership of subsistence hunters, but I just caution  
48 the Council that by simply saying we want to lower this  
49 so that we could start shooting them can be seen as a  
50 president by others by saying if it's been done for

1 this group, then why isn't it okay for this group.

2

3                   Again, it's a process and that's why  
4 there are many partners involved and there have been  
5 multiple meetings on Cackling Canada Geese. It's  
6 probably the most sensitive management problem in the  
7 entire Pacific Flyway, that is from Alaska all the way  
8 down to Mexico, because of some very strong, very  
9 powerful farmers that feel like -- they've been termed  
10 as flying rats actually, Cackling Canada Geese. So  
11 they view them very differently than perhaps what you  
12 view the resources as. So, again, as Julian and Dan  
13 mentioned, we want a process where all parties are at  
14 the table and that we can consider all views.

15

16                   The point that Della made in terms of  
17 -- it's an excellent question, in terms of has anyone  
18 looked at the numbers of hunters versus take over time.  
19 For example, have the villages on the Y-K Delta  
20 increased or have methods changed over time such that  
21 there's greater access to communities or breeding  
22 colonies and, therefore, harvest is more easy.

23

24                   That's a question that the contract  
25 that we have with Colorado State is actually looking  
26 at. There are three researchers there that are working  
27 with the AMBCC. In fact, they're coming up Friday to  
28 meet with representatives of the AMBCC, Fish and Game  
29 and Fish and Wildlife Service to give a progress report  
30 on where they're at.

31

32                   They're looking at all aspects of this  
33 harvest survey. As Julian mentioned and as Patrick  
34 mentioned, this 3,000 estimate of Emperor Geese, we  
35 have no idea if that's reasonably accurate, high or  
36 low. I mean it's kind of like telling a trooper if you  
37 were stopped, yeah, I was doing 90. I mean it's more  
38 than likely it's under-represented of what's actually  
39 being harvested if it was my guess.

40

41                   But, nonetheless, in fact, when we're  
42 looking at this harvest survey, we don't really know  
43 whether we could actually implement a survey for either  
44 threatened species or closed species because what  
45 you're doing is you're admitting, yes, despite knowing  
46 Emperors were closed since 1987 I'm still taking them,  
47 so sorry. More than likely you're probably not going  
48 to get a very truthful or accurate estimate of harvest.  
49 So we're looking at all of those things.

50

1                   Then the other issue is if you have  
2 that on the harvest survey, how is it affecting other  
3 species. So by having a species that's on there  
4 closes, does the blood pressure of someone that's  
5 filling out this survey go, oh, my gosh, I've got to be  
6 really careful here and, therefore, it affects your  
7 results on everything else.

8  
9                   So those are the things that we're  
10 looking at on this harvest survey so we can get better  
11 estimates because, indeed, one of the goals is we want  
12 to demonstrate the importance that migratory birds have  
13 for subsistence hunters because that must be done.  
14 When Dan goes to the flyway meetings and I go to the  
15 flyway meetings, they go, wait a minute, you're  
16 shooting birds during the summer and spring, what's  
17 that about. So it's really important that this survey  
18 goes forward and gets designed properly.

19  
20                   Anyway, so thank you.

21  
22                   DR. ROSENBERG: May I briefly, one more  
23 thing.

24  
25                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Yes.

26  
27                   DR. ROSENBERG: Thanks, Eric, for  
28 bringing that up. I mean I think it's a very valid and  
29 very good point. I just wanted to make sure one thing  
30 I think -- I don't know if we've really explained very  
31 adequately, but it's this whole management plan and why  
32 we have these management plans and how they're  
33 generated and what they're used for.

34  
35                   So this is the Pacific Flyway  
36 Management Plan for Emperor Geese. As we all know,  
37 Emperor Geese only occur in Alaska and the Pacific  
38 Flyway, so it's really the Alaska Management Plan for  
39 Emperor Geese within the Pacific Flyway. The Alaska  
40 Migratory Bird Co-Management Council essentially acts  
41 as its own flyway. The United States is divided up  
42 into four major flyways; Atlantic, Mississippi, Central  
43 and Pacific. Alaska sits in the Pacific Flyway, but we  
44 actually have birds that go to all of them.

45  
46                   These are just administrative  
47 jurisdictions, okay, but in the flyway we make up  
48 plans. We have something like, I think, 32 plans for  
49 different populations of birds and this is one of those  
50 plans. But what the plans do, and the plans are

1 created among the states and the Fish and Wildlife  
2 Service, and these plans then become quasi-guidelines  
3 for harvest, for management.

4  
5 So when a proposal is submitted to the  
6 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council, such as  
7 your proposal to hunt Emperor Geese, first it has to  
8 get passed by the Council and the Council has three  
9 voting members. It's got a member from the State,  
10 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, a member from the  
11 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and one representative  
12 of the 11 regional management bodies, which currently  
13 is Myron Naneng.

14  
15 So if it gets passed, it then has to go  
16 through the next step. It just goes through the  
17 Pacific Flyway for viewing comments, but then it goes  
18 back to the Fish and Wildlife Service, what they call  
19 the Service Regulations Committee in Washington, D.C.  
20 and they are the ultimate arbiter, the decision-maker  
21 on whether a proposal will become law, become  
22 regulation or not. One of the things they use, their  
23 main guideline, is the management plan and that's why  
24 it's crucial that we get this in the management plan  
25 and we get it in there right so it will guide them in  
26 making those decisions.

27  
28 As obtuse to a lot of us as it seems,  
29 it has to go all the way back to Washington, D.C. to  
30 tell us what we can do here in Kodiak. I understand  
31 that. I get that part. But that is how it is set up.  
32 So these management plans really are our best avenue  
33 for getting what we want here in Alaska.

34  
35 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
36 are going to be running out of time today for the  
37 projects, but I really want to express our appreciation  
38 because we've waited a long time. We learned a lot and  
39 I think there's so much more to learn. Also, I think,  
40 keep in mind that -- like I say, this Council has been  
41 asking for decades for just exactly this and to be  
42 involved because there is an interest.

43  
44 You also mentioned, you know, my  
45 concern to some degree is we focus more on one specific  
46 area or region as part of this when it affects Kodiak  
47 all the way out and up north. The players and the  
48 powers to be, I think, need to be at that table,  
49 whether some kind of hearing or something can be done.  
50 Some people maybe can call in. So the Myrons of the

1 world are aware that, hey, you know, don't forget us  
2 out here because we're here too and we want to be a  
3 part of this process. We all have the same goal, I  
4 think, in mind. Hopefully, I'm sure the Council would  
5 agree to that.

6

7 If that's okay with you, I think we'll  
8 move on, but thank you so very much.

9

10 MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is  
11 Mitch.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Oh, I'm sorry,  
14 Mitch. I forgot you. Go ahead.

15

16 MR. SIMEONOFF: That's okay. I heard  
17 you mention our proposal. Just out of curiosity, what  
18 stage of review is that proposal?

19

20 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Hold on.

21

22 DR. TAYLOR: Eric Taylor with the U.S.  
23 Fish and Wildlife Service. I believe the gentleman on  
24 the phone was referencing a proposal that was submitted  
25 by the Kodiak Regional Advisory Council in 2013, if I  
26 remember correctly. In April 2013 the Alaska Migratory  
27 Bird Co-management Council considered that proposal and  
28 there were two individuals the two individuals -- after  
29 the discussion in terms of the Flyway Management Plan  
30 and that the Emperor Goose Management Plan was being  
31 revised, the two individuals, Mr. Rick Rowland and  
32 Frank Woods from BBNA, Bristol Bay Native Association,  
33 recommended the proposal be tabled until that  
34 management plan be revised and that's where the  
35 proposal still stands at the present time.

36

37 I just looked at the three proposals  
38 that are being tabled that will be brought up again at  
39 the meeting the first week in April and your proposal  
40 on Emperor Geese is one of those.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Pat, do  
43 you have a fast comment? We're going to try to get  
44 moving on here in about two minutes.

45

46 MR. HOLMES: That's exactly where I  
47 thought we should be going because I never -- even  
48 though we teleconferenced on that, I never really did  
49 hear for certain from Rick why it was tabled. After  
50 having this extensive presentation on all that's going

1 on would seem to me that it would be apropos for us to  
2 just sit a little bit, learn a little more about the  
3 process and the revision of the plan and participate in  
4 the revision of the plan rather than to try and press  
5 anybody forward even though we're very impatient  
6 because we feel that we've been lost in the shuffle.  
7 But I have a feeling we need to be realistic and follow  
8 this revision.

9

10 DR. TAYLOR: Eric Taylor, Fish and  
11 Wildlife Service. The one suggestion I failed to make  
12 -- and I know we're short on time but I think it's  
13 really important. I brought down the AMBCC regulations  
14 handbook and I brought 20 copies and I noticed they've  
15 all disappeared. Just in talking to several of you --  
16 for other reasons, while the Fish and Wildlife Service  
17 provides funding to your regional representatives to  
18 hold meetings and I'm sure not everyone can attend  
19 meetings for whatever reason, but just in talking to  
20 you I kind of get the sense that perhaps we need to  
21 improve that communication line.

22

23 I can't overly stress the importance  
24 that that regional representative and the presentation  
25 that Julian gave I give, believe it or not, a more  
26 extensive presentation twice a year at the AMBCC  
27 meeting that covers all the important species,  
28 subsistence species that are harvested by rural  
29 residents in Alaska. I provide hard copies of the  
30 presentation and I provide a CD of the presentation to  
31 your regional reps with the idea that they're bringing  
32 forward that information and sharing it with you so  
33 that you can understand what's the population status,  
34 is it above objective, is it below objective, what do  
35 we think the possible situations are, like the recent  
36 cholera outbreak at St. Lawrence Island, the first ever  
37 in the history of the state of Alaska. Information  
38 like that needs to be brought forward to all of you in  
39 terms of your regional reps. So when I go back, I'm  
40 going to talk to my Assistant Regional Director and try  
41 to get a handle on why that isn't occurring.

42

43 For example, one simple step that we  
44 might do is -- these are prepared already for the 2015  
45 season. It would be very easy for us to send a case  
46 down here and have them sitting here on the table so  
47 that you can see in your region what species are open,  
48 what species are closed and that you can carry them  
49 forward to your villages. It's steps like that -- we  
50 always think we're doing lots of communication, but I

1 think in this case we need to improve.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
4 appreciate that. Get in touch with Karen or something,  
5 our coordinator. You know, if it gets information out  
6 to us, they're more than happy to get it to us.  
7 They'll get the CDs to us. The more we know the better  
8 we are able to not have you fly over here after we  
9 waited three years and keep you here all afternoon.

10

11 DR. TAYLOR: No, this is fine. This  
12 has been very productive for all of us, particularly  
13 for the Fish and Wildlife Service. Again, I want to  
14 stress we've got a process in place with these regional  
15 reps and we pay them to have two meetings a year and  
16 that's part of their contracts. Just in talking to  
17 several of you, I don't know how effective that's been.  
18 So we need to talk to them at least for some of the  
19 folks that are around the table that are representing  
20 you, you know, is there something else that we need to  
21 do.

22

23 Anyway, thank you.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
26 know I'd be happy to help any way I can.

27

28 Carl.

29

30 MR. JOHNSON: So I have a question for  
31 the Council. At its fall meeting in King Cove, the  
32 Council approved of a resolution that made several  
33 recommendations to be considered regarding survey  
34 methodology and also the management plan. The Council  
35 expressed a desire to have that resolution presented to  
36 the Bristol Bay and Y-K Delta RACs for their  
37 endorsement. In light of what you have seen today and  
38 heard today regarding what is going on with revising  
39 the management plan, do you wish to continue with that  
40 or would you rather wait and see what's going on with  
41 the ongoing revision process and engage that process?

42

43 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Maybe a  
44 recommendation would be to hold off until the meetings  
45 that are coming up in April. Not only that, the other  
46 regions -- and for us to get time to get back to the  
47 powers that be in our regions to figure out what we  
48 need to do and look maybe possibly at our fall meeting.

49

50 MR. JOHNSON: Okay, Madame Chair, I

1 will do that then. We had put the issue on the agenda  
2 for those other Councils for their winter meeting, so  
3 I'll let the coordinators know to just hold off until  
4 possibly the fall meeting cycle.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: But maybe as a  
7 recommendation, if people can let them kind of get an  
8 idea of where we were headed with this and why so  
9 everybody can start looking at this as a whole instead  
10 of individually as regions.

11  
12 Go ahead.

13  
14 MR. HOLMES: I think that that's really  
15 important and it would be perhaps good to have a little  
16 note in our summary so for the other Councils that are  
17 interested in what we're doing that they know that  
18 we're interested in that passionately, but we're going  
19 to hold and why. I think that would help a lot to  
20 improve communications, particularly with Bristol Bay,  
21 Y-K Councils. You know, we're all in the same pot.

22  
23 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Then we'll present  
24 it to them as an informational piece, but not  
25 requesting any action at this time.

26  
27 MR. HOLMES: Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

28  
29 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Very  
30 good. I guess we'll just -- we had somebody that was  
31 supposed to call in at 2:00 and we're well past that.  
32 I think we'll just be fine and keep moving on. Let's  
33 go ahead and move to update on Southern Alaska  
34 Peninsula and Unimak Caribou Herds. Is it Dave  
35 Crowley?

36  
37 MR. CROWLEY: Yes. Thank you, Madame  
38 Chair. My name is Dave Crowley. I'm with the Alaska  
39 Department of Fish and Game. I'm the aerial wildlife  
40 biologist in King Salmon and the Alaska Peninsula and  
41 the Aleutian Islands are my area. I'll be brief here.  
42 I'll give a quick update on the SAP Herd.

43  
44 Just one second. I had a whining dog  
45 under my desk I had to get rid of there.

46  
47 (Laughter)

48  
49 MR. CROWLEY: Okay. For the SAP we do  
50 two annual surveys, one in the spring where we're

1 looking at pregnancy rate and one in the fall in  
2 October and that is when we get our composition count.  
3 Depending on weather conditions and whatnot, we often  
4 will try to get a minimum count in October. It doesn't  
5 happen every year. Lots of times we get chased off by  
6 weather.

7

8                   The current status of the SAP  
9 population size is approximately 1,700. The population  
10 is increasing. Last fall our calf/cow ratio was 45 and  
11 our bull/cow ratio was also 45. These numbers are  
12 really good. We're quite optimistic with continued  
13 growth in the herd. We started a hunt in 2013, a Tier  
14 II drawing hunt for residents only with 50 permits. We  
15 continued that this year. Next year we are going to go  
16 to 150 permits and we're going to do a Tier I  
17 registration permit, so there will be no restrictions  
18 on the number of residents that can apply for that.  
19 The harvest quota will be 150.

20

21                   Pregnancy rate was 84% last summer, so  
22 that was really good too. So all in all it evened out.  
23 The day we did the survey was the day that Pavlof  
24 really erupted and we were concerned about calf  
25 survival after that, but went and looked at it later on  
26 and there was very large post-calving congregations  
27 around that area between Black Hill and Trader  
28 Mountain. So things are looking really good there.

29

30                   Any questions on the SAP?

31

32                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I do. This is  
33 Della. You mentioned increasing it to 150 permits and  
34 then the deadline I think on the Tier was Dec 15th. Is  
35 that how that 150 is going to come out now because it  
36 was 50 before or is there going to be an extended  
37 deadline for people to sign up?

38

39                   MR. CROWLEY: Yeah, that's a good  
40 question. With the registration hunt, it will be the  
41 same as other registration hunts. You'll be able to  
42 sign up online or probably in person at one of the  
43 offices, but right now we intend to make that just  
44 available online.

45

46                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Pat.

47

48                   MR. HOLMES: A quick question there.  
49 It seems to me that's tremendous improvements there in  
50 that herd coming up from, gosh where were we, 2-4

1 percent survival between spring and fall of fawns. Do  
2 you attribute that to the little experiment there, the  
3 removal of 26 adult wolves on the calving grounds?  
4 That's a tremendous change with just a small selective  
5 adjustment there on the wolves.

6

7 MR. CROWLEY: Yeah, it is, and I think  
8 the ultimate number -- we ultimately ended up with  
9 about 38 taken over the course of three years and, like  
10 you say, focused on the calving grounds. So the packs  
11 were identified that were actually preying on the  
12 calving grounds and they were removed. That kind of  
13 jump-started the whole thing. We have not done any  
14 predator control since 2010 and yet the parameters just  
15 keep increasing. They're looking better. So that  
16 basically gave the herd a chance to kind of escape that  
17 predator pit we believe they were in.

18

19 MR. HOLMES: Maybe you should change  
20 the whole approach from predator control to selective  
21 adjustments or more acceptable phrase.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 MR. CROWLEY: Yes, you could be right.  
26 I agree. We call it selective wolf removal sometimes.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any other  
29 questions. Rick.

30

31 MR. KOSO: Yeah, Dave, on this going  
32 from a Tier II to Tier I, that just gives everybody a  
33 chance to apply for a permit there and it's still going  
34 to be one animal per person?

35

36 MR. CROWLEY: Yes, that is correct. We  
37 will obviously be monitoring the population and  
38 increasing our quota as needed. You know, I imagine  
39 eventually we'll get up to a multiple caribou bag  
40 limit, but for now it will be one caribou.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Is there any  
43 other questions? Mitch, do you have any questions or  
44 comments?

45

46 MR. SIMEONOFF: I don't think so.  
47 Thank you, Madame Chair.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Antone?

50

1 MR. SHELIKOFF: No, not at this time,  
2 no. Antone.  
3  
4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Thank  
5 you, Dave. We sure appreciate the information and  
6 we'll keep in touch and I'll let people know....  
7  
8 MR. KOSO: One more.  
9  
10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Oh, I'm sorry.  
11 We've got one more question.  
12  
13 MR. KOSO: Yeah, just a quick question,  
14 Dave. On this caribou Tier I hunt, this is just on  
15 State property. It's not on Federal property, right?  
16 And do you coordinate with the Feds as far as numbers  
17 go if they were to, let's say, have a hunt?  
18  
19 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: They already  
20 have a hunt.  
21  
22 MR. KOSO: I know they have one, but  
23 would this year be part of that group or is it  
24 separate?  
25  
26 MR. CROWLEY: Yeah, we do coordinate  
27 with Izembek Refuge. We basically split the quota up  
28 between us. The State hunt will be on either State or  
29 Federal lands and generally the subsistence hunt from  
30 the Refuge is for Federal lands only, but I believe the  
31 season is somewhat longer on the Federal hunt.  
32  
33 Would you like me to continue with  
34 Unimak Island now?  
35  
36 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.  
37  
38 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Oh, go ahead  
39 with Unimak. Yes, please.  
40  
41 MR. CROWLEY: Okay. On the other hand,  
42 we have Unimak Island. We believe that the population  
43 size is now below 200 and possibly still declining.  
44 Our calf/cow ratio has come up just a little bit. We  
45 were a bit over 20 last fall. We were down in the  
46 single digits for some years there. Bull/cow ratio is  
47 still poor. It's at 15 bulls per 100 cows. Last year  
48 on our parturition survey in the spring pregnancy rate  
49 was only 66%. You know, that's versus 84% on the SAP,  
50 so quite a difference there.

1 Calf survival was pretty decent. Below  
2 sample size, but the 16 we did manage to catch.  
3 Survival for the first couple of weeks, which is the  
4 neonatal period, was about 75%, which is pretty good,  
5 but as of October it had dropped to about 49% survival,  
6 so the wolves kept picking off our collared calves as  
7 the months went by. Even with the slightly improved  
8 calf ratio we don't expect to see an increase in the  
9 population because it's just not enough calves,  
10 especially given the relatively poor survival. There's  
11 just not enough calves to be recruited into the  
12 population and make any kind of a difference there. We  
13 suspect that's the case.

14  
15 And we do have a predator control  
16 program on the books. It's inactive and that's, of  
17 course, because most of the island is Federal  
18 wilderness and we're not authorized to conduct predator  
19 control on Federal lands. With the population being  
20 where it is, it's so low right now that a stochastic  
21 event like say a severe and extensive icing event on  
22 the island could essentially take out the whole herd or  
23 most of the herd when it's this size. For that reason,  
24 when we go to the Board of Game here in a few days  
25 we're going to recommend that that program stays  
26 inactive. It's just not worth us putting in a lot of  
27 money and a lot of effort for something that could go  
28 away very easily.

29  
30 So that's the bad news. Any questions  
31 on Unimak?

32  
33 MR. HOLMES: Any questions, folks.

34  
35 (No comments)

36  
37 MR. HOLMES: Mitch, you got any  
38 questions or Antone?

39  
40 MR. SIMEONOFF: No. This is Mitch, no.

41  
42 MR. SHELIKOFF: Antone. I say no.

43  
44 MR. HOLMES: Okey dokey. Thanks a  
45 bunch there, Dave. You got anything else?

46  
47 MR. CROWLEY: No, that's it. Thanks  
48 for the opportunity.

49  
50 MR. HOLMES: Thank you very much. I'm

1 glad you clarified that and the predator control is on  
2 the books. It's pretty empirical there, the difference  
3 between the two herds and the way they're managed.  
4 Thanks a bunch and keep on trucking.

5  
6 MR. CROWLEY: All right. Will do.  
7 Thank you.

8  
9 MR. HOLMES: Okay. We'll take a short  
10 potty break here, 10 minutes.

11  
12 (Off record)

13  
14 (On record)

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. We'll be  
17 back in session. The next item on the agenda is the  
18 Kodiak 2014 salmon season summary and 2015 subsistence  
19 concerns. We've got three gentlemen up here, so we'll  
20 go ahead and have them give their names and we'll move  
21 forward.

22  
23 MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
24 My name is James Jackson. I'm the Kodiak salmon and  
25 herring commercial and subsistence area management  
26 biologist. Just for the sake of expediency I'm joined  
27 by Matt Keyse, who is the South Peninsula area  
28 management biologist and Bob Murphy. We figure we  
29 could just kind of bang this out one after the other if  
30 it's all right with you.

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Good job.

33  
34 MR. KOSO: You're in the wrong area.

35  
36 MR. MURPHY: Nelson Lagoon, just in  
37 case you have any questions.

38  
39 MR. JACKSON: So I put together a  
40 really small presentation. I have the season summary  
41 as well for the commercial fishery, but I figured I  
42 would just kind of concentrate on the local subsistence  
43 stuff that we deal with around here. Just so you guys  
44 know, since the Department is still receiving its 2014  
45 permits, all the harvest data I'm going to have is  
46 going to be from 2013 and back.

47  
48 On average, this bar graph right here  
49 shows basically that the average number of Kodiak  
50 subsistence permits issued is about 2,100 and it's been

1 pretty consistent for the last decade or more. What's  
2 really interesting about that, the average number of  
3 permits that are returned is about 90%, which is pretty  
4 amazing, so we have some pretty good data for  
5 subsistence around here.

6  
7                   Annually, on average, the Kodiak area  
8 harvests around 32,000 subsistence salmon. Of that,  
9 about 90% of those salmon are sockeye and of those 90%  
10 that are sockeye, around 75% of those are harvested  
11 near the city of Kodiak. They are harvested in several  
12 locations. The first would be Litnik up in Afognak  
13 Bay. Settlers Cove is a small put and take fishery  
14 created by the Regional Aquaculture Association,  
15 Buskin, which you've already heard of. Saltry and  
16 Pasagshak at the end of the road.

17  
18                   This bar graph represents the 2013  
19 Kodiak subsistence sockeye salmon harvest and you can  
20 see that the main areas for subsistence sockeye harvest  
21 are Pasagshak, Buskin, Settlers Cove and Litnik. Of  
22 course, you have a smattering of fish from a lot of  
23 other areas, Pauls Bay, a little Afognak, Alitak,  
24 Ouzinkie Narrows, Saltry, Old Harbor, Larson Bay,  
25 Uganik, Karluk and Kizhuyak, Barabara.

26  
27                   That is pretty similar to the 10 year  
28 average. So essentially the four big sockeye fisheries  
29 around here for subsistence are Pasagshak, Buskin,  
30 Settlers Cove and Litnik. The two areas that have  
31 overlapping jurisdiction are Litnik and Buskin, which  
32 is why we have OSM or had OSM projects at those areas.

33  
34                   Like Tyler pointed out for the Buskin,  
35 this is kind of a complicated graph, but it's a stack  
36 bar graph. The red bars are the sockeye salmon  
37 escapement for the Buskin, the yellow bars are harvest  
38 and the white lines are the corresponding escapement  
39 goals of -- I believe it's between 5 and 8,000. As you  
40 can see, the last few years we've more than met our  
41 escapement goal. On the Buskin, the subsistence  
42 fishery has been liberalized. What I mean by  
43 liberalized, I mean we roll back those closed waters to  
44 the mouth to ensure that subsistence users could catch  
45 as much fish as they possibly could.

46  
47                   This is the same kind of stack bar  
48 graph for Litnik, another area where we have  
49 overlapping jurisdiction. The only difference is,  
50 obviously, the escapement goal is much larger. It's

1 between 20 and 50,000. As you can see, the last few  
2 years we've met or exceeded our escapement goal. For  
3 Litnik, the same situation, we have liberalized the  
4 subsistence fishery for the past several seasons.

5  
6 Really, that's kind of it. I have a  
7 few other things I can point out. On the south end of  
8 the island, places like Karluk and Ayakulik we have  
9 some overlapping jurisdiction down there due to the  
10 Refuge. For the past several seasons, places like  
11 Karluk the king salmon escapement has been low, so we  
12 have closed the subsistence king salmon fishery down  
13 there and this year was no exception. We had about  
14 1,100 king salmon, which was really poor. Also this  
15 year we had the same problem at Ayakulik where we had  
16 probably the lowest king salmon escapement since 1980,  
17 only about 917. That subsistence fishery was also  
18 closed.

19  
20 The largest subsistence fishery on the  
21 island is at Pasagshak. Pasagshak had a weir this year  
22 and unfortunately we did not meet our escapement goal  
23 and for the first time ever we closed the subsistence  
24 fishery at Pasagshak. We've never done that before,  
25 but then again we've only had a weir for four years.  
26 Usually we kind of got an aerial survey after the fact  
27 and it was more of a post-season report card to see how  
28 well we did because it's sockeye salmon and they're  
29 hard to see in a lake.

30  
31 That's really about it. I can take any  
32 questions if you guys have any.

33  
34 MR. HOLMES: A brief question. Our  
35 Chairman Mitch Simeonoff in Akhiok has expressed some  
36 concerns about the declining sockeye at Upper Station.  
37 What's going on there? Mitch, maybe you'd want to  
38 direct that to James.

39  
40 (Pause)

41  
42 MR. HOLMES: We lost him. He was just  
43 wondering if there's any research projects being  
44 developed there and some concern about, I think, the  
45 early run because of the competition with dog salmon is  
46 my guess.

47  
48 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair, Mr.  
49 Holmes. We had a change in management plan down there  
50 last year that has enabled us to achieve a larger

1 amount of the escapement to early run Upper Station.  
2 Actually a larger amount of escapement for sockeye  
3 everywhere down there. It's kind of a work in  
4 progress, that management plan, but there has been a  
5 lot of concern for the Upper Station early run for the  
6 past several years.

7  
8                   Basically the system is healthy. It's  
9 got good zooplankton, it's got good nutrients. What  
10 the lake needs is escapement. Hopefully, with the  
11 implementation of this new management plan, we will be  
12 able to get more escapement there. You typically don't  
13 hear too much about people not getting their  
14 subsistence down there, but then again I would love to  
15 hear from Mitch and see what he has to say about that.

16  
17  
18                   I'm the commercial fisheries manager,  
19 so the last few years have been pretty lean. We've had  
20 a lot of closures. It's a large gillnet area, so what  
21 I hear most of the time is, hey, James, you've been  
22 closed for two weeks. I put out my subsistence net and  
23 it just sunk with fish. So that's the typical  
24 subsistence scenario that I hear. So it would be good  
25 to hear from Mitch and find out what the different  
26 scenario he has.  
27 but then again I would love to hear from Mitch  
28 we've had a lot of closures and so what I hear is  
29 so it would be good to hear from Mitch and find out

30  
31                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, are you  
32 online or did you leave?

33  
34                   MR. SIMEONOFF: Mitch here.

35  
36                   MR. HOLMES: There we go.

37  
38                   MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, for the past  
39 several years the Upper Station salmon stream has been  
40 declining and also the subsistence fishers have tried  
41 to go up there. There's several times that they come  
42 back and say there's no fish and sometimes they'll get  
43 lucky and they'll get a few fish up there. But the big  
44 concern from subsistence users and the commercial that  
45 in order to have the Upper Station get their escapement  
46 goal, they've been keeping the commercial salmon  
47 fishing closed. These past several years we've hardly  
48 had any fishing time at all.

49  
50                   The subsistence fishers are just

1 putting their nets out out here in the bay and just  
2 hoping to catch fish. For the most part, when we go to  
3 Upper Station, we usually catch our fish right away,  
4 but that hasn't been the case for the past several  
5 years.

6  
7 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair, Mr.  
8 Simeonoff. Like I said, what we're basically trying to  
9 do with Upper Station is get some more fish into the  
10 lake. That's what we really need to do. For one  
11 reason or another, Upper Station early run and late run  
12 has entered into a timeframe of lower productivity.  
13 That happens with all sockeye runs. The decade before  
14 last Ayakulik, as seiners love to say, was in the  
15 toilet. We're just finally seeing that come out of --  
16 start to achieve some more productivity.

17  
18 We have begun a few new projects at  
19 Upper Station. The Regional Aquaculture Association is  
20 looking into fertilizing the lake, although I have no  
21 idea where they're at in that process. There's also --  
22 Fish and Game has put in for some OSM funding to do  
23 some more ongoing smolt projects down there so we can  
24 get a little more science to figure out exactly what's  
25 going on there.

26  
27 But the most important thing for all  
28 these systems is that we, the Fish and Game, keep doing  
29 what we're doing, which is count the fish and manage  
30 the commercial fishery based on abundance and put as  
31 many fish or put the appropriate number of fish as we  
32 can into those systems. That's a painful thing to do,  
33 to keep the commercial fishery closed, but sometimes  
34 that's what you have to do.

35  
36 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, do you  
37 have any more comments?

38  
39 MR. SIMEONOFF: Not at this time,  
40 Madame Chair.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

43  
44 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, you mentioned  
45 having to shut down Pasagshak last year. Do you have  
46 any projections for that system for this year?

47  
48 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair, Mr.  
49 Schwantes. No, we don't come up with any new  
50 projections. Other than the last four years we really

1 have a limited handle on the escapement. It was a bit  
2 of a surprise that the escapement was as low as it was  
3 last year. On the other hand, it was coming off of a  
4 pretty low escapement year that even we saw during  
5 aerial surveys. We should be getting into a timeframe  
6 where there's more escapement for the parent year, so  
7 we're not anticipating large closures like we did last  
8 year.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any other  
11 questions.

12  
13 (No comments)

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Matt.

16  
17 MR. KEYSE: Madame Chair. My name is  
18 Matt Keyse. Like James said, I am the area management  
19 biologist for South Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian  
20 Islands and beside me I have Bob Murphy for the North  
21 Alaska Peninsula.

22  
23 I guess just brief reports on  
24 subsistence. I'm going to start out on the Aleutian  
25 Islands, specifically Unalaska. We've had a weir  
26 project for the last three years at McLees Lake, which  
27 flows into Reese Bay on Unalaska. AKSSF funded a  
28 project and we just completed the third year this past  
29 summer. We met our escapement goals there for the last  
30 three years. It ranges from 10-60,000 and our  
31 escapements have ranged from 15,000 to 12,000 sockeye,  
32 so we've been in the range every year we've had the  
33 project in place.

34  
35 We have submitted a proposal for  
36 additional funding and we have been granted that  
37 funding and should receive that here in the next couple  
38 months to continue the project for another three years.

39  
40 For subsistence, Unalaska, we receive  
41 requests for permits. We have approximately 242  
42 permits issues. Like Kodiak, we're going to go back to  
43 2013 just because of the timeframe it takes to receive  
44 permits back in the mail and stuff like that from the  
45 communities, so there's a year lag on our reporting for  
46 subsistence. So in 2013 we issued 242 permits and 182  
47 were returned back to us, so about 75% of the permits  
48 were returned from Unalaska. Sockeye is the primary  
49 targeted species and they harvested approximately 3,900  
50 fish.

1 To go back to McLees and the importance  
2 of McLees, 74% of the subsistence harvest in Unalaska  
3 is harvested at Reese Bay, so it's pretty important for  
4 us to continue on with that project so that we can  
5 continue on having escapement. If we don't have a weir  
6 in place, we don't have any means of monitoring the  
7 escapement. Aerial surveys are pretty difficult out  
8 there. The funds of getting out to Unalaska is pretty  
9 limited and it's a difficult system to survey from the  
10 air anyway. So in those scenarios there is no  
11 escapement goal, so we can't really practice our  
12 subsistence management strategy. So another additional  
13 point as to why we need to have that weir in place for  
14 out there.

15  
16 Going back to the Peninsula, we issued  
17 approximately 168 permits in 2013 and received 155  
18 back, so a return rate of 92% back, which is pretty  
19 outstanding all the communities returned their permits  
20 to us. Sockeye is also one of the primary targeted  
21 species out there and they harvested in 2013  
22 approximately 6,600 sockeye. Coho is also another  
23 important species out there and about 2,200 fish were  
24 harvested in 2013.

25  
26 That's about all I had. Not a whole  
27 lot of information for subsistence. There's no ongoing  
28 concerns that we're aware of and we should have  
29 hopefully most of our information here for last year in  
30 the next couple months.

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I am  
33 actually one of those that needs to get my report in.  
34 Just to comment, people definitely utilize that. I  
35 know in King Cove highly. I've done this permit for  
36 the last five years and last year was the first time I  
37 actually got to get out and use it. So I do send my  
38 report in.

39  
40 Pat, did you have a comment?

41  
42 MR. HOLMES: Yes, I did. I'm really  
43 tickled that you're there doing that work and that  
44 you're able to get the funding for the McLees Lake  
45 weir. I know our Council lobbied a lot when the Feds  
46 were doing it to keep it in. I know I did quite a bit  
47 of prodding in Juneau even though one is not supposed  
48 to do that on an individual area, but that's, as you  
49 know, the most important system for the folks at  
50 Unalaska. I'm just really pleased that you're able to

1 maintain that and help folks be able to get their  
2 salmon because the other small sockeye systems there,  
3 Unalaska Lake and then that little one to the northeast  
4 of town really don't contribute diddly. It's just so  
5 very important to the community. So if it looks like  
6 you're getting short and Murphy is going to get too  
7 much of your money, let us know.

8

9

(Laughter)

10

11 MR. HOLMES: We'll do some lobbying.  
12 Rick will contact the folks in Nelson Lagoon to help  
13 out. Anyway, moving on.

14

15

16 MR. MURPHY: Madame Chair. My name is  
17 Bob Murphy. I'm with the Alaska Department of Fish and  
18 Game and the area management biologist for Commercial  
19 Fisheries Division. I'll be very short. As Pat  
20 mentioned, I'm here mainly if you have any questions in  
21 regards to Nelson Lagoon. That's the community that  
22 concerns you folks. We issue, in the Port Moller,  
23 Nelson Lagoon area, about  
24 10 to 20 subsistence permits per season. Harvest  
25 anywhere from 500 to 1,000, mostly sockeye salmon. A  
26 few other species mixed in.

26

27

28 We don't have any projects with regard  
29 to subsistence directly related to subsistence. We  
30 have salmon counting weirs on four of our major North  
31 Peninsula systems. One of them is the Nelson River,  
32 also known as the Sapsuck River. No issues with regard  
33 to subsistence needs that we're aware of. If you have  
34 any questions I'll try to answer them.

34

35

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

36

37

38 MR. KOSO: Thanks, Bob and Matt. I was  
39 down there in August and hung out for about a month  
40 there at Cold Bay in August and you were not there.  
41 Are you stationed in Sand Point, Nelson Lagoon, Port  
42 Moller?

42

43

44 MR. MURPHY: Madame Chair, Mr. Koso,  
45 I'm stationed in Port Moller for about four and a half  
46 months.

46

47

MR. KOSO: Then, Matt, you're.....

48

49

50 MR. KEYSE: Mr. Koso, I'm in Sand Point  
now. We had some issues this summer and we kind of

1 left Cold Bay a little early.

2

3 MR. KOSO: I couldn't get a hold of  
4 anybody in Cold Bay. That's why I was asking. I  
5 finally got a hold of somebody in Sand Point, some  
6 lady, and she was able to email me my permit for  
7 fishing subsistence and it turned out very well because  
8 I pack my phone with me all the time and I got it on my  
9 phone so I didn't have to carry the paperwork around.

10

11 Anyway, I just want to thank you and  
12 was kind of curious whether you guys left Cold Bay for  
13 good or what because usually that's your main stay,  
14 isn't it?

15

16 MR. KEYSE: Well, I moved to Sand Point  
17 because I'm now the area management biologist. I was  
18 the assistant out there for several years. Now that  
19 I'm the area management biologist I'm stationed out at  
20 Cold Bay. My assistant is Lisa Fox. She left a little  
21 bit early last year. She'll be out there until  
22 mid-September this year.

23

24 We were remodeling the office so that  
25 might have been a little confusing for some folks too.  
26 The actual office was shut down last year and we are  
27 making plans to finish that remodel this spring, so it  
28 should be back up and running hopefully by mid-March is  
29 the tentative plan. So well be stationed in Cold Bay  
30 beginning of May and through mid-September is the  
31 tentative plan.

32

33 MR. KOSO: Yeah, because it took me a  
34 couple days to track you guys down so I could get my  
35 permit. I was just thinking my case and you've got 60,  
36 80 locals there and most of them go out and get their  
37 subsistence permits too. I was wondering how many of  
38 them were detoured by you guys not being there, if they  
39 knew to call Sand Point or whatever to be able to  
40 receive their permits, you know. I guess that was just  
41 kind of a little concern to me. I talked to a few  
42 other people and they said, no, we got ours through  
43 email too, which was great, but there were some folks  
44 that probably don't have that type of opportunity there  
45 to do that. I just thought I'd throw that at you.

46

47 MR. MURPHY: Madame Chair and Mr. Koso.  
48 I'm in Port Moller until about September 15. By then  
49 pretty much the salmon are done running and everybody's  
50 gotten their permit by then. We're trying to get them

1 back from September on. I haven't heard on the north  
2 side people having much issue with regard to trying to  
3 get their permits.

4  
5 MR. KOSO: So who's going to be in Cold  
6 Bay then? Matt, you said you're stationed in Sand  
7 Point, you're stationed in Port Moller/Nelson Lagoon,  
8 so who do you got stationed at Cold Bay then?

9  
10 MR. KEYSE: Through the Chair, Mr.  
11 Koso. Her name is Elizabeth Fox. She was out there  
12 last year. She is the assistant area management  
13 biologist. She basically took over my position last  
14 April and she will continue to be out there. She goes  
15 by Lisa also. It will be myself and another assistant  
16 in Sand Point and then the way it's been for I think  
17 since 2006 just one individual in Cold Bay.

18  
19 MR. KOSO: Thanks.

20  
21 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I think, Matt,  
22 can you answer a question for me because this is  
23 something that gets brought to my attention in King  
24 Cove a lot in regard to subsistence and salmon. The  
25 permits we get have a total of, what is it, 250 fish.  
26 That's what I get. What is the process in Cold Bay?  
27 Does each individual or resident get one for 250 and if  
28 they need another one they can get it? Because I hear  
29 a lot from King Cove that the residents in Cold Bay  
30 seem to take more fish than the people in King Cove  
31 utilize.

32  
33 MR. KEYSE: Madame Chairman. Yes. So  
34 the permit is 250 fish per household. In the case of  
35 Cold Bay, there is an exception for Mortensen Lagoon  
36 and there is a 50 fish limit for Mortensen Lagoon for  
37 the year. If you do need additional fish, you can  
38 return your permit and request for another permit to  
39 get another 250 fish from another area. Like I said,  
40 one exception we do have is Mortensen Lagoon and it's  
41 limited to 50 fish total per year.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: That was  
44 actually one of the ones that was brought to my  
45 attention. Do you have the breakdown in numbers?  
46 Well, you don't have the numbers for 2014 yet. When  
47 you do, can we get them possibly for both '13 and '14  
48 showing maybe the numbers based on community?

49  
50 MR. KEYSE: Madame Chairman. Yes, when

1 we complete the subsistence report, I guess 2014 won't  
2 be completed until next year. We do break down the  
3 communities in our appendix C and I can certainly get  
4 -- when we complete that report, I can issue that out.  
5 And you can contact us this summer too and we can get  
6 those reports to you pretty easily as well. But we do  
7 break out by community. Like what I have right now, I  
8 do have 2013, so King Cove we issued 46 permits and  
9 received 93 percent of them. They harvested 2,200  
10 sockeye. Versus Cold Bay, we issued 27 permits and  
11 received 96% and they only harvested approximately 600  
12 sockeye in 2013.

13

14 But that was just the local residents  
15 that issued permits. We don't really break out non-  
16 local residents. We do see a couple -- you know, Cold  
17 Bay does see probably a larger portion of people  
18 traveling into Cold Bay from around the state.

19

20 I don't have the numbers with me right  
21 now, but another thing we do put in this report is we  
22 break out places like Mortensen Lagoon and Leonard's  
23 Harbor and places like that and show what the harvest  
24 is there and from what communities that harvest is  
25 coming from.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
28 appreciate that.

29

30 Rick.

31

32 MR. KOSO: I just got one question on  
33 the commercial fisheries. I noticed since Arnie Shaw  
34 has passed on that place has never been open since  
35 then. He used to always have an opening there at Thin  
36 Point Cove. So I was just curious if you changed your  
37 policy or what's the scoop on that. In my mind, it  
38 never reopened since Arnie Shaw left.

39

40 MR. KEYSE: Through the Chair, Mr.  
41 Koso. I do believe it hasn't opened in the last couple  
42 years I don't think, but I know it did open in 2009,  
43 2010. I don't have those numbers in front of me. Thin  
44 Point can be a difficult place to survey and I'm not  
45 sure -- I know in the past there was a weir there at  
46 some point, well before my time, and obviously that  
47 would help with obtaining numbers. The lake gets a lot  
48 of algae in it and would be fairly difficult to survey.

49

50

1 I know this year we had trouble getting  
2 some descent escapement there. Escapement was pretty  
3 tough through a lot of the areas this year. I'm not  
4 exactly sure what the issue was. We all know even your  
5 pinks are obviously pretty weak right now. We are  
6 seeing an upwards trend though, increasing the pinks.  
7 I know you're talking about Thin Point, but -- yeah, I  
8 know this year the escapement wasn't all that  
9 spectacular there, so we did try to limit commercial  
10 harvest there.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Did you think  
13 possibly the water in the creeks and the lack of it had  
14 any implications on what was going on?

15  
16 MR. KEYSE: Madame Chairman. In some  
17 places, yes. Thin Point, it didn't really seem to be  
18 as much of an issue. It did cause the lake system to  
19 produce more algae early on, which I think caused a lot  
20 of our problems with aerial surveys. The first part of  
21 Thin Point is very influenced, so fish were definitely  
22 getting in, so fish were definitely getting into the  
23 lagoon area too, but as far as the lake goes I think it  
24 had plenty of water. I didn't notice Thin Point  
25 specifically not having water going out the outlet like  
26 some other systems on the Peninsula that I noticed that  
27 the mouths were actually dry, but Thin Point not  
28 specifically.

29  
30 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Any other  
31 questions. Mitch or Antone, do you have any questions?

32  
33 MR. SIMEONOFF: Not at this time.  
34 Thank you, Madame Chair. This is Mitch.

35  
36 MR. SHELIKOFF: Antone, no. At this  
37 time, no.

38  
39 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Thank you  
40 very much. The next item will be tanner crab and  
41 miscellaneous shellfish customary use on Kodiak Island.  
42 We're also going to allow after this presentation or  
43 during the course of this presentation John Reft and a  
44 representation from Sun'aq.

45  
46 MS. MARSH: We're still here

47  
48 MR. HOLMES: As you're going out the  
49 door, I'd like to thank local Fish and Game comm fish  
50 folks here for your input because it really helps our

1 Council to know what's going on with salmon and you're  
2 the folks that do it, so thank you very much.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Carl.

5

6 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
7 Meredith is not available right now to do the tanner  
8 crab and miscellaneous shellfish presentation. There  
9 is somebody else available to answer questions if  
10 necessary, but I'll also note that we have Chris Long  
11 from the National Marine Fisheries Service. You  
12 received a paper of his regarding Womens Bay tanner  
13 crab in your supplemental materials and he is here to  
14 do a presentation on that issue that was specifically  
15 requested. So we can proceed with that unless you want  
16 to ask the person on the phone any general questions  
17 they may have about the issue that was originally on  
18 the agenda for Meredith.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I'm going to  
21 defer that to the representative from Kodiak.

22

23 MR. SCHWANTES: Let's go with the  
24 tanner crab then.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead and go  
27 with the tanner crab.

28

29 MR. HOLEN: Okay, great. Can you hear  
30 me okay? My name is David Holen. I'm with the Alaska  
31 Department of Fish and Game. I wanted to give you an  
32 update on our report that we're preparing for the  
33 Alaska Board of Fisheries meetings in March. The  
34 reportable data for tanner crab and miscellaneous  
35 shellfish in the Kodiak management area. The report  
36 will identify miscellaneous shellfish stocks that have  
37 customary and traditional use. We're also looking at  
38 those that we can identify having customary and  
39 traditional use and then provide information on the  
40 amounts for subsistence that maybe the Board might wish  
41 to take up. The report should be hope hopefully by the  
42 end of February. It will be posted on the Alaska Board  
43 of Fisheries website. That meeting is sometime the end  
44 of March.

45

46 One thing I just wanted to note is  
47 originally we had prepared to address tanner crab in  
48 the Kodiak area; however, going through the different  
49 findings that have been made over the last few years we  
50 identified that except for king crab there really

1 aren't customary and traditional use findings that  
2 apply in the Kodiak Archipelago. Some of the findings  
3 do apply to the Alaska Peninsula area that are being  
4 used by residents of Kodiak, but for the most part  
5 there's no C&T findings for the Kodiak Archipelago  
6 except for king crab.

7  
8                   There are subsistence fisheries open  
9 for those species in the Kodiak Archipelago, so our  
10 hope is to bring that to the Board's attention and see  
11 if they'd like to do something about that, whether  
12 they'd like to address those customary and traditional  
13 use findings or not.

14  
15                   If you have any questions, just let me  
16 know and I can hopefully answer those.

17  
18                   Thank you.

19  
20                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I hate to do  
21 this, but are you on a speaker phone? We're having a  
22 hard time hearing what you're saying.

23  
24                   MR. HOLEN: Is this a little bit  
25 better?

26  
27                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Much better,  
28 thank you. If you can go ahead and try that one more  
29 time.

30  
31                   MR. HOLEN: Okay. I apologize. Again,  
32 my name is David Holen, the subsistence program manager  
33 for the Department for southern Alaska. We prepared a  
34 worksheet for the Alaska Board of Fisheries for their  
35 March meeting to look at the customary and traditional  
36 use findings for shellfish stocks on the Kodiak  
37 Archipelago.

38  
39                   Originally we were going to just do  
40 this for shellfish and just in tanner crab, but as we  
41 started to go through the process of identifying which  
42 stocks had customary and traditional use findings in  
43 the Kodiak area, we identified it wasn't just tanner  
44 crab that didn't have a finding. We also identified  
45 that there were no findings for Dungeness,  
46 miscellaneous shellfish or shrimp in the Kodiak area.  
47 The only finding there was for king crab actually  
48 around Kodiak Island.

49  
50                   So we prepared a worksheet for the

1 Alaska Board of Fisheries. It should be out by the end  
2 of the month hopefully and that will be posted on the  
3 Board of Fisheries website for you to review. If you  
4 have any comments, then you might want to make those  
5 for the Board meeting that is going to take place  
6 sometime around the end of March.

7  
8 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Is there any  
9 comments in regard to that report? Pat.

10  
11 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. David, I  
12 think we don't quite have the time to accomplish this  
13 in an hour and a half, but I think maybe I can just  
14 summarize it and say that tanner crab, Dungeness, all  
15 miscellaneous shellfish, shrimp are customary and  
16 traditional use on our island for thousands of years.  
17 If that is enough sound bites to be of help, that's  
18 probably what we can accomplish at this point.

19  
20 MR. HOLEN: Thank you.

21  
22 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. We  
23 will go ahead and move on.

24  
25 MR. HOLEN: Thanks for having me.

26  
27 MR. LONG: Thank you, Madame Chair. My  
28 name is Chris Long. I work for National Marine  
29 Fisheries Service. I'm a crab biologist here on Kodiak  
30 and I'm going to be talking about some data that we  
31 have on ghost fishing in Womens Bay. Two co-authors on  
32 this project, Pete and Eric. They're both crab  
33 biologists too. Most of the data comes from them. I  
34 was the analyst on this particular project, but I am  
35 familiar with all the methods used. I go out with them  
36 quite often.

37  
38 Ghost fishing is simply the ability of  
39 lost fishing gear to continue fishing after you lose  
40 it. This is a picture of a pot here that has been lost  
41 and you can see that there are crab inside of it.  
42 There's no way for these crab to get out. They're way  
43 too big to fit out through the escapement rings and  
44 they will likely die in there. Ghost fishing is really  
45 such a completely wasteful take of fisheries stocks and  
46 wildlife, so that's why it ought to be of concern.

47  
48 We are here in Kodiak. This is a  
49 picture of the island just to give you an idea of where  
50 we are. Kodiak city is right here and our study took

1 place in Womens Bay down near the Coast Guard base.  
2 It's an area that has a good strong history of both  
3 commercial and subsistence fishing for king crab,  
4 tanners and also for Dungeness. It's also considered a  
5 nursery habitat for king and tanner crab in this area.  
6 Our lab has been studying this particular population  
7 for several decades now because there has continued to  
8 be a population here, albeit a small one even after the  
9 crash in the 1970s.

10

11 I'll run through the life history real  
12 quick of this species. King crab females carry eggs  
13 under their abdominal flap for about a year. They  
14 hatch in the spring. There's about a two to three  
15 month larval period followed by settlement. They  
16 settle on a complex habitat in order to avoid  
17 predation. They're cryptic at this life history stage.  
18 But as they get bigger they change their behavior  
19 because they outgrow the habitat hiding places and they  
20 start a behavior known as podding, which is analogous  
21 to schooling in fish. These pods are anti-predator,  
22 probably is their function. They usually start at  
23 about three years of age, this type of behavior and are  
24 about 30 to 40 millimeters carapace length. They grow  
25 into adults and mate and the cycle continues.

26

27 One of the ways we study the species  
28 here is using acoustic tags. These are actually really  
29 nifty tools that we can use. You can see the relative  
30 size to a quarter here. It's basically a battery, a  
31 small circuit board and a speaker. This tag will emit  
32 a unique series of beeps on an ultrasonic frequency so  
33 you can't hear it with your ear, but we have  
34 hydrophones that we can use to locate the crabs after  
35 we release them. So these tags are epoxied onto the  
36 backs of king crab, which are then released back into  
37 the wild.

38

39 This is what they look like once they  
40 get out. We're able to follow these guys both from the  
41 surface and also by diving using hydrophones. This is  
42 a video here of a diver. The thing that looks like a  
43 gun in his hand is simply the hydrophone. It's  
44 directional. So you can tell if you're pointing it  
45 towards the tag, it's a lot louder. If you point it  
46 away, it's not too loud. Then we can use that to locate  
47 the crabs on the bottom. This is a pod of king crab in  
48 Womens Bay here. Somewhere in there should be the tag.

49

50 This study was actually not designed

1 for the purpose of looking at ghost fishing. This was  
2 mostly looking at the behavior and ecology of these  
3 crab. We tagged almost 200 red king crab between about  
4 40 and 160 millimeters of carapace length. Had both  
5 males and females and this was done over nearly 20  
6 years worth of effort here.

7

8                   Each of the crabs was tracked until  
9 they either molted, died or we lost them. Losing  
10 usually mean that the battery ran out and we couldn't  
11 track them anymore. Typically we went out once a week  
12 to locate them and dove on a subset of whatever tags  
13 were currently out in the water. On the diving trips  
14 they would note the disposition, habitat and behavior  
15 of these crabs, whether they're still alive or just  
16 molted and then where they were and what they were  
17 doing.

18

19                   Jumping into a little bit of the data  
20 here. This is the sort of habitats we often found them  
21 associated with. Foraging in mud and soft sediments  
22 was a major place where we found them, but we also find  
23 them associated with structural characteristics such as  
24 dock pilings. Also, about 10 percent of the time they  
25 were associated with crab pots. That kind of got us  
26 interested in looking at that a little bit more  
27 carefully.

28

29                   It comes out if you look at the crab  
30 activity, so this is what they were doing down on the  
31 bottom. A lot of the time they're resting. They often  
32 seem to rest during the day and forage at night. Some  
33 of the time they're eating or moving around, but 4  
34 percent of the time, and this is total crab time on the  
35 bottom there, they were trapped in pots.

36

37                   Drilling down into this a little bit  
38 further there was a total of 32 crabs that were caught  
39 out of the original 192. Of those, 12 of them were  
40 found dead inside of a pot. The other 20 were found  
41 inside of pots and were released. So when we find pots  
42 on the bottom, we try to be good citizens and we open  
43 them up and cut them open so that they don't go on  
44 catching them and release the crab. We did have one  
45 crab that died in a derelict gillnet in Womens Bay as  
46 well, but most of the issue that we see for ghost  
47 fishing in Womens Bay is from crab pots here.

48

49                   This is what it looks like and the  
50 video is important here just to show you what a

1 derelict pot looks like on the bottom. This one here  
2 is as we're swimming up and we should see it in just a  
3 second here. A lot of the issues, these pots stick  
4 around for a long time. So this looks like a homemade  
5 pot. It's got this fairly good gauge mesh on it. The  
6 tunnel up here is a five-gallon bucket that's had the  
7 bottom chopped off of it and you can see that the way  
8 this pot has collapsed -- now this bucket, the tunnel,  
9 there's no way for the crabs to get out through there.  
10

11                   You can see that there's a good number  
12 of fairly large size king crab in here. The mesh is  
13 way too small for them to ever really be able to get  
14 out. As we go around to the other side over here,  
15 you'll see one that's very nicely trapped. You'll  
16 notice on this pot there is no biodegradable release on  
17 here. So the material of these pots is often fairly  
18 durable. I mean they do have to be in saltwater and  
19 survive there, but the problem with that is when you  
20 lose them, they tend to last for a long time. So this  
21 guy is completely stuck in the mesh. He's half out,  
22 but just wrapped around him.  
23

24                   The types of ghost pots that were  
25 encountered, about half of them were Dungeness pots.  
26 About 30 percent of them were commercial types of pots.  
27 These are more tanner crab type pots, so conical mesh  
28 or pyramid style. The rest of the 20 we either  
29 couldn't tell what they were or they were kind of  
30 homemade or kind of more flimsy sport-type pots that  
31 you can buy.  
32

33                   The biggest issue is about more than  
34 half of them, 62 percent of the pots, were intact. The  
35 other issue is that of those 62 percent none of those  
36 had biodegradable releases. So you probably know that  
37 there is an escape mechanism requirement for all pots  
38 and it's designed to minimize ghost fishing and it's  
39 simply a biodegradable or a galvanic release mechanism  
40 that either drops out a side panel of the pot or allows  
41 the top of the pot, the lid to pop open in the case of  
42 a Dungeness pot. There seems to be very low compliance  
43 with this, at least among the pots that we were finding  
44 on the bottom.  
45

46                   This is a Dungeness pot just to  
47 illustrate that. This has got about 20 king crab in  
48 there. If you look on the bottom, you can see remains  
49 of crabs that have died. These are large crabs, so  
50 mature females, mature males. Probably some of them --

1 it's hard to tell from the video, but probably some of  
2 them are of a size that would be in the fishery.

3  
4                   You can see the escapement ring here,  
5 which is designed for Dungeness crab, is way too big  
6 even for this smaller female that's standing right by  
7 it. Then where the release mechanism should be on  
8 these cords here, so we'll get a good look at them in a  
9 second, but you can see on the side here there's no  
10 release mechanism here on that. Dungeness pots are  
11 stainless steel mesh, so this is not going anywhere for  
12 a long time.

13  
14                   So here's the pot, the lid hold-down,  
15 and you can see it's all wire and it's all elastic. So  
16 that's not going to degrade anytime soon. There's no  
17 rotten cotton or anything in there as there should be.

18  
19                   So what effect does this have on the  
20 population. Well, because this is a tagging study we  
21 were able to go back and calculate the rates at which  
22 crab were molting and the rates at which they were  
23 dying and be able to -- the nice thing about getting a  
24 rate from this is that you can then ask well what  
25 effect is that having on the population. All we needed  
26 was the number of crabs that died and the time of death  
27 for each of them.

28  
29                   One of the questions we had to sort of  
30 deal with in this data is what is the count of the  
31 ghost fishing mortality. Obviously the ones that were  
32 killed in pots died, but a lot of them were in pots and  
33 were released. They would have died if -- a lot of  
34 them probably would have died if we hadn't rescued  
35 them. So what we decided to do is actually do two  
36 calculations. One just counting the ones that were  
37 killed and the other one counting the ones that were  
38 killed and the ones that were caught.

39  
40                   That gives you kind of a lower limit  
41 and an upper limit of what the possible population  
42 level effects could be. That's what's graphed over  
43 here. The upper graph is the conservative estimate,  
44 bottom graph here is the more liberal estimate for  
45 mortality. There's three lines on here. This is  
46 percent mortality over time. This dark bar here, the  
47 solid line, is overall mortality. The dashed line here  
48 is mortality from other sources, so this is predation  
49 by octopus and sea otters as well as fishing mortality.  
50 The dotted line is ghost fishing.

1                   What you can see is here in the  
2 conservative estimate ghost fishing makes up  
3 approximately 40 percent of the overall mortality for  
4 these crab in Womens Bay, which is a huge percent of  
5 the mortality. The more liberal estimate, it makes up  
6 about two-thirds of the mortality. The overall effect  
7 is that in this study somewhere between 16 and 37  
8 percent of the red king crabs were being killed in  
9 ghost pots every year.

10  
11                   Now this, of course, only applies to  
12 the size of king crabs we were studying, so this is  
13 greater 40 mm. What I've graphed here is the  
14 probability of crab in each of these different size  
15 bins to be either killed, that's the black bars, or  
16 caught, that's the gray bars, in pots. You can see  
17 that the smallest crab we didn't ever observe getting  
18 killed in a pot. That is likely partially due to the  
19 fact that smaller crab can get out more easily, but the  
20 sample size, which is above each of these bars here, we  
21 also didn't have a lot of samples in that particular  
22 size class here. There was no effective sex, so  
23 females and males were both equally likely to be  
24 killed.

25  
26                   Just some observations as to why these  
27 pots seem to be lost. Obviously being cut by props is  
28 an issue. Pots may be lost or abandoned out there.  
29 You set it at the end of the season and just kind of  
30 forget about it. Sometimes lines get cut maliciously.  
31 Pots get tangled together because sometimes people  
32 don't rig them right and things come untied.

33  
34                   A big thing we observed in Womens Bay  
35 is ice. What happens is the bay freezes over. You get  
36 a buoy like this one here that gets encased in ice and  
37 then as the ice breaks up and moves out of the bay it  
38 actually pulls the pot along with it. I think 2012 was  
39 the year we had just huge amounts of ice in there. It  
40 actually pulled up one of the navigational buoys which  
41 has -- the anchors on that is in the tons and dragged  
42 it like a mile and a half out of the bay. So pots are  
43 no big deal. But that just moves them either into too  
44 deep water where the buoy is submerged or just far  
45 enough away that whoever's pot it is can't find it.

46  
47                   Also ice on the top can degrade buoys  
48 and lines. You can see this buoy right here has a thin  
49 sheet of ice that's sliding across it and that just  
50 slowly wears it down and that's what it will end up

1 looking like if it's not moved. Also if you leave out  
2 a pot too long the line gets culled and it gets sunk.

3  
4 So I can't help but conclude that ghost  
5 fishing was a fairly substantial source of mortality in  
6 Womens Bay. There are ways to reduce it. One is just  
7 finding ways to make sure people comply with the pot  
8 requirements. Biodegradable releases would take a big  
9 chunk out of this if people would put them in. Rigging  
10 pots properly, keeping pots out of traffic zones,  
11 making sure people check the pots on a regular basis.  
12 All those types of things will reduce the number that  
13 are lost.

14  
15 Another option is, of course, to  
16 actually go out there and remove them, but that's a lot  
17 more difficult because it's hard to find a pot from the  
18 surface. I'm about out of time. There's a lot of  
19 people who helped with the diving and other aspects of  
20 this project. I'd be happy to take any questions.

21  
22 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

23  
24 MR. SCHWANTES: I've got to tell you  
25 I'm frustrated. I'm pretty upset quite frankly. I  
26 think this is an end run you're making. This board has  
27 heard this before and you brought this forward as a  
28 tanner crab issue. You didn't talk about tanner crab  
29 one time. You've been talking about king crab and this  
30 ghost fishing issue. This board has dealt with this.  
31 We've heard this before.

32  
33 MR. LONG: I was asked to come here.  
34 Somebody called me and said please show up and give the  
35 talk again, so this isn't me pushing anything at all.

36  
37 MR. SCHWANTES: Well, it would have  
38 been nice if you'd have said you wanted to bring a king  
39 crab issue for us instead of telling us you're coming  
40 here to talk about tanner crab, when in fact you  
41 haven't talked about tanner crab one time. That's what  
42 was on our agenda, tanner crab, not king crab.

43  
44 MR. LONG: I believe that was -- that  
45 was not my mistake. It was always going to be king  
46 crab and there must have been a miscommunication  
47 somewhere along the way. So I apologize for that.

48  
49 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. The next  
50 question I have is -- obviously you're.....

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Hold on a  
2 second. Carl, do you want to address that real fast.

3  
4 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. I don't think it's  
5 fair to the presenter to do that. We were requested to  
6 provide -- the Council requested a report on Womens Bay  
7 crab, so this presentation is on Womens Bay crab. The  
8 tanner crab was specifically addressed by Department of  
9 Fish and Game, so that was on the agenda and we covered  
10 that. So now this presentation was specifically  
11 related to Womens Bay and specifically the concern over  
12 the impacts of ghost crab pots. So that is the report  
13 that was requested and that was the report that was  
14 given.

15  
16 Thank you, Madame Chair.

17  
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. I'll apologize  
19 for that. Let me ask you this. What have you done or  
20 have you taken any steps to encourage enforcement. I  
21 mean you're saying obviously there's problems, no  
22 biodegradable and this and that. So what steps have  
23 you taken to improve enforcement to help alleviate this  
24 problem?

25  
26 MR. LONG: Well, that's outside of my  
27 purview. I mean I really don't know whose job it is to  
28 do the enforcement. I'm guessing it's Fish and Game.  
29 I was just asked to come here and bring the information  
30 and hope that somebody here knows how to take it to the  
31 next step.

32  
33 MR. SCHWANTES: Is there still a  
34 commercial fishery in Womens Bay?

35  
36 MR. LONG: Not of king crab, no. There  
37 hasn't been a commercial fishery for king crab since,  
38 what, '78.

39  
40 MR. SCHWANTES: But there is still a  
41 Dungeness fishery, right?

42  
43 MR. LONG: Correct.

44  
45 MR. SCHWANTES: From what I'm hearing  
46 you say 50 percent of the ghost pots.....

47  
48 MR. LONG: Uh-huh.

49  
50 MR. SCHWANTES: .....are Dungeness

1 pots.

2

3

MR. LONG: Correct.

4

5

MR. SCHWANTES: So you're concerned about the ghost fishery, yet you've taken no effort to close that Dungeness fishery when, in fact, 50 percent of those ghost pots are Dungeness pots, is that right?

9

10

MR. LONG: I haven't done anything, but that's not -- we don't manage that fishery. I mean the Dungeness is not our purview.

13

14

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

15

16

MS. SKINNER: Thank you. I just wanted to thank you for coming to report on this today. I particularly like, from my perspective not being a diver, having the videos. It was very useful to see what happens with the pots. And as far as the paper, I really appreciate the time period that you have data for. I realize, I think from what you said, that the ghost fishing effect was not the point of collecting the data, but I think this was, I think, a very valuable demonstration that kind of came out what you were collecting the data for.

27

28

But, yeah, when I read the paper, I found it very interesting. I couldn't understand all the scientific technical detail and seeing the presentation and the video was very helpful. So I think from more of a less scientific perspective it really helped me. So thank you for bringing this today.

35

36

MR. LONG: Good. I'm glad it clarified the paper some. We can be obtuse.

38

39

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead.

40

41

MR. ROHRER: Through the Chair. Sam Rohrer here. Yeah, I too appreciate the presentation. It's interesting. I mean it's incredibly frustrating to think we have that kind of loss going on from ghost fishing. As I sit here and think about the way it needs to be addressed, part of it's with enforcement, but a lot of it needs to be done through education. People just do not have a clue that that's a consequence of not having escape mechanisms. I see the newspaper still in the room and I hope that you

1 recognize that, that you're hearing this conversation  
2 and maybe you can have that in your report in the  
3 paper.

4  
5                   Maybe some of the other guys, Hank  
6 Pennington, who writes things in the paper, maybe he  
7 could talk about it. Certainly, when folks go into  
8 Fish and Game to pick up their permits, subsistence  
9 permits, to have an informational packet that goes with  
10 that saying 50 percent -- what was the number you used,  
11 50 percent or.....

12  
13                   MR. LONG: 16 to 37 percent of the crab  
14 per year were being killed.

15  
16                   MR. ROHRER: I mean that's insane. To  
17 have that number in front of people though when they  
18 pick up their permits would help. I just think people  
19 don't have a clue. They just don't have a clue.

20  
21                   MR. LONG: And, you know, you want to  
22 catch crab, so you don't want your pot popping open  
23 halfway through and all the crab getting out.

24  
25                   MR. ROHRER: Exactly.

26  
27                   MR. LONG: So you need to -- no, I  
28 think that's -- and we've we've given the talk at like  
29 KMSS and some of the more public -- or a version of  
30 this talk at those ones.

31  
32                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

33  
34                   MR. SCHWANTES: Can you tell me if this  
35 study was done in conjunction with the Department of  
36 Fish and Game?

37  
38                   MR. LONG: No. Again, this study was  
39 not originally for ghost pots. It was something that  
40 kind of came out of the study just from the number of  
41 crab they saw going into the pots. So it wasn't --  
42 other than the scientific permitting process, they  
43 weren't directly involved with it.

44  
45                   MR. SCHWANTES: So they weren't  
46 involved in the crab population study at all?

47  
48                   MR. LONG: Oh, within the paper? Yes.  
49 Fish and Game does the trawl survey around Kodiak that  
50 estimates the population in Chiniak Bay.

1 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. But they weren't  
2 involved in this diving research.

3  
4 MR. LONG: No, they weren't involved in  
5 the diving at all.

6  
7 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. Thank you.

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I have a  
10 question in regard to your doing this presentation.  
11 Has this presentation been given to the Sun'ag Tribe?

12  
13 MR. LONG: No, it has not.

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Because in  
16 talking to John Reft, and we've heard it before, it's  
17 been a concern of theirs and they're going to be able  
18 to come to the table here shortly. I'll ask if you'd  
19 stay here in regard to that because I think when you  
20 talk about education, I think it's very good.

21  
22 MR. LONG: I agree that that's probably  
23 a key thing. At least help get people to understand  
24 that this isn't just an arbitrary rule.

25  
26 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, I know  
27 you're not being able to see what's being presented,  
28 but do you have any questions?

29  
30 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Madame  
31 Chair. I had kind of a -- well, I don't know. When  
32 you were dealing with the Dungeness crab in the Dungeness  
33 pots in the ghost fishing, was there a simultaneous  
34 study going on with the king crab? When I was reading  
35 this, I was thinking when did we switch over to king  
36 crab. We dealt with Dungeness and the ghost pots and  
37 now we're doing the same thing with the king crab.

38  
39 Another question, is there a project  
40 going on that's going to plant some red king crab in  
41 Womens Bay soon?

42  
43 MR. LONG: I can speak to the last half  
44 of that. Our group is also the one that's doing the  
45 release of the hatchery-reared king crab. We did a  
46 successful release Trident Basin this last year and  
47 we're planning a second one -- these are all  
48 experimental scale releases, so about 10,000 animals is  
49 what we're releasing.

50

1                   So results from this year is that they  
2 seemed to be surviving about as well as we think their  
3 wild counterparts do down in Southeast. That's the  
4 only place we have an estimate for survival rates for  
5 this size. So that's actually very hopeful information  
6 as far as it goes. That's a very short answer.

7

8                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I have Pat and  
9 then Tom and then Sam.

10

11                   MR. HOLMES: Like Becky and Sam, I  
12 appreciate your presentation. Your colleagues had  
13 presented this to us a couple years ago and we got  
14 distracted on some other discussions. One of the  
15 points that did come out then, it was suggested to --  
16 again, this is one of those subsistence things where  
17 it's Federal waters, Federal bay, Maritime Refuge,  
18 Department does the permits, the Department does some  
19 enforcement, protection does supposedly the most. But  
20 I think the key points raised on education in the  
21 newspaper and perhaps just a little picture of one of  
22 those pots crammed full of king crab and a little  
23 poster you could do with PowerPoint for the Department  
24 where they issue the permits and please pay attention  
25 would do a whole lot.

26

27                   I would suggest you might also explore  
28 with Paul Chervenak, he left, he's chairman of the Fish  
29 and Game AC. They have a lot of interaction with the  
30 actual enforcement as well as coordinating some  
31 research efforts about maybe giving that presentation  
32 at a Fish and Game AC meeting for awareness there. I  
33 think that's really good.

34

35                   Particularly the suggestion of having  
36 an emergency closure or a regular closure during the  
37 ice months. Because if we had a winter like we had a  
38 year ago, then we'd have another 50 pots on the bottom.  
39 So I think that that has some real merit and it's  
40 particularly important and I think it's particularly  
41 important to Tom because that's the last place on this  
42 end of the island -- I won't tell Tom the second to the  
43 last place.....

44

45                   (Laughter)

46

47                   MR. HOLMES: ....where there are a few  
48 king crabs and a person can get them. So it's a  
49 passionate and frustrating thing, but I believe it  
50 could have some fairly simple answers. I was

1 brainstorming a little bit earlier with J.J. because we  
2 had an announcement early in our program about research  
3 money that relates to subsistence that will take a year  
4 or two to get the funds, but there are outreach  
5 programs going on in fisheries and oceanography classes  
6 at the high school. The high school has the KIC that  
7 the Department of Fish and Game uses during the summer.  
8

9 I'm just thinking that might be a  
10 really dandy capacity building project where you could  
11 have a NOAA biologist, Fish and Game shellfish  
12 biologist, a boat that's jointly used by the high  
13 school and Fish and Game and have four pots or six pots  
14 and do a little population estimate for the bay and  
15 kind of track that through time and then we'd have a  
16 bunch of potentially new Fish and Game or NOAA techs  
17 that could say, wow, this is really something. I did  
18 something for my community. That might be something  
19 well worth exploring.  
20

21 MR. LONG: Thank you.  
22

23 MR. HOLMES: And also you have tribes  
24 that are trying to do the same type of capacity  
25 building. So a thought for you. I really appreciate  
26 you working on that because it's been so long since  
27 I've had a king crab I don't know what they taste like.  
28 So thank you so much.  
29

30 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.  
31

32 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, do you have any  
33 -- just three things here. Any estimate on the number  
34 of ghost pots, any suggestions for removal of those  
35 ghost pots and then, as a result of your study, what  
36 are your recommendations?  
37

38 MR. LONG: Let's see. The first one  
39 was the number of ghost pots. The way this was done,  
40 it wasn't in a survey type method, so extrapolating  
41 what we saw is difficult. It was about 162 pots if I  
42 remember correctly that were found in Womens Bay over  
43 the course of this study. But Womens Bay is not very  
44 big and that's a lot of pots. And these crab really  
45 like them. I mean they -- you know, you can break them  
46 open and then they're perfectly fine, but the crabs  
47 will keep returning to those places over and over  
48 again. So there are just islands there.  
49

50 What was the next question? I'm sorry,

1 I forgot.

2

3 MR. SCHWANTES: Any suggestions on  
4 possible removal of those pots and then, finally, what  
5 is your suggestion. As a result of the study you've  
6 done.....

7

8 MR. LONG: Uh-huh.

9

10 MR. SCHWANTES: .....what would be your  
11 recommendation.

12

13 MR. LONG: So for removal, I know the  
14 ways that it's been done before is locating them with  
15 side scan sonar of some sort and then -- let's see,  
16 Brad Stevens did similar work with the tanner crab  
17 stuff out in Chiniak Bay a decade or so ago, but I  
18 think they dragged like a wide bar that had chains and  
19 hooks attached to it across the bottom. So they do the  
20 side scan sonar and say, okay, this is high density  
21 area and they dragged that across and then haul it up  
22 and there's be pots stuck to it or hooked up by it. So  
23 that's probably the most time effective way  
24 of removing them, but it's not an easy thing to do.  
25 You need a good-size vessel to haul that much stuff up.

26

27 My personal feelings, and this would be  
28 my personal feelings and not a NOAA recommendation, but  
29 I think closing the fishery during ice -- periods when  
30 the ice comes in would be a huge benefit. I think the  
31 Dungeness fishery tends to be in more shallow areas and a  
32 lot of places where we're finding these are in 80 feet  
33 of water, which is way, way too deep for Dungeness. So I  
34 think a lot of the loss you're seeing is probably due  
35 to movement by ice flows into those areas. That seems  
36 the most likely way from what we've observed.

37

38 Hopefully increasing awareness and  
39 compliance with the biodegradable release regulations,  
40 you know, that pops open in 60 days is not as big of a  
41 deal as something that's still down there a decade from  
42 now. Those would probably be my two best ideas on how  
43 to deal with it or reduce it.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBULL: Sam.

46

47 MR. S ROHRER: Sam Rohrer here again.  
48 One thought that needs to go along with the education  
49 thing. I'll bet you a lot of folks think once the  
50 bait's gone it's not a risk. Once the bait is gone,

1 the pot's not fishing anymore. That's really  
2 interesting what you said. Even when you guys destroy  
3 them, cut them open, the crabs still just congregate.

4

5 MR. LONG: They love it.

6

7 MR. ROHRER: So, again, I'll bet 90  
8 percent of the folks out there thing, oh, yeah, once  
9 the bait is gone we're good. The other thing, as I  
10 recall when we had this presentation, I think it was  
11 two years ago, maybe last year, whenever it was, a  
12 while back, Andy Schroeder from Island Trails Network  
13 talked a little bit about this. At the time I thought  
14 he was pursuing some funds to actually do some cleanup  
15 work. Do you know what happened with that?

16

17 MR. LONG: Yeah, a little bit. So they  
18 did get some money to do some preliminary work. I  
19 think they worked with Mark Blakesly. They were trying  
20 a different technique for removing them where they used  
21 an ROV that had scanning sonar in the front, so they  
22 dropped that down, used the scanning sonar to try and  
23 drive it to a pot and then use the ROV to hook into  
24 that. They were able to remove some of the pots from  
25 the bay, but it sounded like it wasn't a very time/cost  
26 effective way of doing that. So that's the last I've  
27 heard from that effort. I forget how many, but it was  
28 like maybe a half a dozen pots that they pulled up, so  
29 not a huge number.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

32

33 MS. SKINNER: You may have said this  
34 during your presentation. So when the divers found the  
35 pots that had the crab in them, they opened them up and  
36 released the crab. What exactly did they do? Did they  
37 cut the metal or did they flip it open or.....

38

39 MR. LONG: Yeah. It depends on the  
40 type of pot. So if its got a cuttable mesh that you  
41 can cut with a dive knife, we'll just slash open the  
42 sides and make sure that -- you know, if there's a big  
43 gap in the sides, that's not a big deal. For the Dungy  
44 pots, it was open the lid up and then bend it so it's  
45 not going to come open again. And if they're upside  
46 down, Dungy pots can get flipped upside down, so flip  
47 it right side back up again.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Are there any  
50 more questions. The lady from Sun'aq, did you want to

1 -- part of this discussion had to do with this, is that  
2 correct? Do you want to go ahead and come up to the  
3 table at this time. And then if you can just stay, it  
4 would be good.

5

6 MR. LONG: I'll stay right here.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Apparently Tom  
9 has one or two more questions and then we'll continue.

10

11 MR. SCHWANTES: When was this study  
12 done?

13

14 MR. LONG: The data was collected  
15 between 1991 and 2007.

16

17 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay.

18

19 MR. LONG: So it's a long time span  
20 over which -- and I came on in 2009 and we've been  
21 doing more limited tagging in the bay. Since I've been  
22 here we've hit a lot of pots down there. Shoot, we  
23 found a pot down in -- we were doing a dive survey down  
24 in Old Harbor area and we found -- you know, it was a  
25 very limited one and we still ran across a Dungy pot  
26 down there as well. So it's not just Womens Bay.

27

28 MR. SCHWANTES: So you're saying 1991  
29 to 2007.

30

31 MR. LONG: That's the timeframe.

32

33 MR. SCHWANTES: Has there not been  
34 anything done since 2007?

35

36 MR. LONG: In Womens Bay or.....

37

38 MR. SCHWANTES: Yes, in Womens Bay.

39

40 MR. LONG: We've done some other  
41 habitat work in Womens Bay since then, but this  
42 particular study, that was when this particular study  
43 ended.

44

45 MR. SCHWANTES: So there's been no  
46 ghost pot study done since 2007.

47

48 MR. LONG: Correct. That is correct.

49

50 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. And then my

1 final question is there's obviously a number of pots in  
2 there. Do you have any recommendations on what you  
3 would think it would take to map those pots?

4

5 MR. LONG: The side scan sonar is  
6 probably your best bet for locating them and that is a  
7 technology that I'm not overly familiar with, so I  
8 don't know how long it would take to do a survey of the  
9 bay. I think we would have locations of all the pots  
10 we found in this study, so you could potentially do a  
11 map of those and find areas of particular concern where  
12 they tended to be congregated for whatever reason. So  
13 that would certainly be a way that data could be used  
14 to focus that sort of effort.

15

16 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay, you're up  
19 finally. I feel bad for you. I have to apologize.

20

21 MS. MARSH: That's okay. Thank you,  
22 Madame Chair and members of the Council for giving me  
23 this opportunity to speak. My name is J.J. Marsh. I'm  
24 the current CEO of Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak. We had a  
25 presentation by Andy Schroeder down at one of our  
26 Council meetings not too long ago and we were made  
27 aware of this and it was a concern for our members. I  
28 was born and raised in Kodiak and was raised on a  
29 subsistence lifestyle and I very strongly want to  
30 ensure that the lifestyle continues for generations to  
31 come.

32

33 I'd like to briefly -- hopefully  
34 briefly -- speak regarding the subsistence crab fishing  
35 in Kodiak. It goes along with what Chris was saying.  
36 It goes off of the report that we read that Andy  
37 Schroeder from Island Trails did. Subsistence crab  
38 fishing was very common for the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak  
39 members in Womens Bay, but crab stocks have depleted  
40 now and crab fishing is infrequently done by our  
41 members.

42

43 We believe that the causes for crab  
44 decline are not being addressed with common sense, a  
45 phrase that Iver used to use all the time. We believe  
46 the time for studies is done. There's adequate  
47 evidence now to demonstrate that subsistence crab  
48 fishing is at risk in Womens Bay due to -- I'll give  
49 you four reasons.

50

1                   A population explosion of sea otters,  
2 which has not been brought up today, in specific  
3 locations that have decimated crab and shellfish  
4 locally. The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge  
5 biologists are finishing a report in reference to page  
6 70 of the Kodiak/Aleutians February 2015 RAC book that  
7 we believe will support our observations that sea otter  
8 populations in Womens Bay and to Larsen Bay, another  
9 isolated site that it exploded.

10

11                   We know that sea otters have a flexible  
12 diet and take easily-obtained crab, sea urchins,  
13 octopus and then move on to the next easy food, such as  
14 large horse clams and then smaller clams and on and on  
15 until all are eaten. Until sea otter population  
16 numbers are reduced, all of the management practices,  
17 including halting of crab fishing or removal of  
18 derelict crab pots, will be pointless and does not make  
19 sense.

20

21                   Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak supports a  
22 special harvest program to reduce sea otter numbers in  
23 locations such as Womens Bay and request the assistance  
24 of the RAC to meet this goal.

25

26                   Another reason for the decline, a  
27 continued presence of derelict crab pots in Womens Bay,  
28 which Chris spoke about, reference NOAA's published  
29 report in February 2014 documenting the effects of  
30 ghost pot fishing on a population of red crab in Womens  
31 Bay. Most mortality is due to lost crab pots. Of  
32 course, you already know this.

33

34                   To quote the report, between 16 and  
35 37 percent of the population of red king crab shell  
36 length greater than 60 millimeters in Womens Bay were  
37 killed by ghost fishing per year during the period of  
38 this study, making ghost fishing a substantial source  
39 of mortality. These results indicate that the steps to  
40 reduce ghost fishing in Womens are warranted.

41

42                   Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak will search for  
43 funding to remove or establish a bounty for removal of  
44 derelict crab pots in Womens Bay and other neighboring  
45 bays. Also assistance from RAC Council would be needed  
46 to meet this goal.

47

48                   The third reason we believe that  
49 there's a decline is concentrated crab fishing effort  
50 in Womens Bay proximity afforded to U.S. Coast Guard

1 military residents. Alaska Natives and non-military  
2 permanent residents of Kodiak compete with U.S. Coast  
3 Guard based personnel and others with military  
4 credentials for crabbing in Womens Bay. U.S. Coast  
5 Guard military residents have access to a  
6 publicly-restricted boat ramp and other infrastructures  
7 on base.

8  
9 Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak supports giving  
10 the highest priority and right to harvest of  
11 subsistence crabs to tribal elders. If subsistence  
12 crab fishing is restricted in any way to meet a  
13 management goal, then all other competing users should  
14 be first restricted. Sun'aq requests assistance from  
15 the RAC to meet this goal.

16  
17 The fourth reason is the ice conditions  
18 that Chris spoke on on Womens Bay sometimes causes loss  
19 of crab pots and other complications. Crab pots are  
20 lost and they flip over, blocking escapement  
21 mechanisms. Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak supports crab  
22 fishing season restrictions during the ice prone  
23 periods and biodegradable escapement mechanisms should  
24 be built to allow crab escape no matter what position a  
25 crab pot rests in. We also request RAC help to meet  
26 this goal.

27  
28 In conclusion, it is time to treat the  
29 causes for low crab numbers in Womens Bay. No more  
30 talk.

31  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Are there any  
35 comments with regard to her testimony at this time or  
36 questions. Pat.

37  
38 MR. HOLMES: I'd like to condemn you  
39 folks -- compliment you folks.....

40  
41 (Laughter)

42  
43 MR. HOLMES: Sorry. I'm all hung up  
44 arguing with these other people. Compliment. Duct  
45 tape back again. Commend. I guess now that Iver is  
46 gone I can be the one with senior moments. Anyway, I  
47 think you're spot on. I don't know what effect our  
48 Council can have on the sea otters other than to  
49 support your overall proposal and your desires to try  
50 to improve the crab fishing because of its importance

1 to subsistence. So I think that we could have some  
2 type of statement endorsing what you're trying to do.

3  
4 On the sea otters, I'm not -- Carl,  
5 that's a different commission. Is there an Alaska sea  
6 otter, marine mammals, who does that? I think that's  
7 out of our turf. I wish it was ours. If you're making  
8 mittens, let me know, I'll get some.

9  
10 Anyway, I would like to compliment you  
11 on your efforts on changing the biodegradable locations  
12 and things like that. I would go and talk to Wayne  
13 Donaldson at commercial fisheries. He's a shellfish  
14 coordinator. Then you can ask them either for an  
15 emergency thing or go through the Board of Fish process  
16 to refine those type of things. You could also go chat  
17 with him about the things.

18  
19 I think that raising awareness because  
20 the Maritime Refuge is someone that could be contacted  
21 to do a joint EO with Fish and Game and Wayne is the  
22 guy at the State to close the bay during winter months  
23 or when we usually have ice. NOAA could say, okay,  
24 January to February most years. Just close it because  
25 there's no Dungeness fishing going on then and that  
26 gets the gear out of the water.

27  
28 I think your educational efforts and  
29 everything is really swell to have somebody be able to  
30 pick up the ball and proceed with that. I would  
31 suggest after chatting with Wayne maybe go down and see  
32 the young Nicholson boy. I think he's a sergeant at  
33 public safety. Shane Nicholson and have a chat with  
34 him. If they've got a little free time to do a little  
35 enforcement during the summer when most people are  
36 putting the pots out. Heck, if there's a buoy out  
37 there that doesn't have a name on it, out it goes.  
38 They're really good at that. Tom Schwantes used to be  
39 good at getting pots that didn't belong there.

40  
41 Anyway, this is swell. I'm really glad  
42 that you're going to take that on as a project. I  
43 guess I would suggest that our Council give you some  
44 resolution of go for it or something to endorse what  
45 you're doing if other folks agree. I don't know.

46  
47 MR. ROHRER: This is Sam Rohrer for the  
48 record. I appreciate your presentation. The thought  
49 occurred to me your talk of doing a bounty on ghost  
50 pots. I don't know how many people are around town

1 that are diving that deep, but certainly there are some  
2 folks here who like to dive. Who knows. Maybe  
3 advertise and the idea of offering a bounty on them is  
4 a neat idea. If nothing else, it will get the issue  
5 out there and, again, bring awareness to it. We  
6 haven't had bounties on stuff in forever. That's going  
7 to get people talking and it would bring awareness to  
8 it.

9

10 The other thought is I would love to go  
11 out there and volunteer to go shoot sea otters.  
12 Obviously I can't.

13

14 (Laughter)

15

16 MR. ROHRER: But one of the things that  
17 stops people is, I assume you guys well know, is if a  
18 Native goes out and shoots a sea otter, they have to do  
19 something with the handicrafts. You'd have to be  
20 careful of this and probably have your attorneys do  
21 some double checking to make sure, but I don't know why  
22 you couldn't offer a bounty on sea otters as well for  
23 Native folks to shoot sea otters. The challenging part  
24 is you'd have to have lined up the fur-sewers who are  
25 willing to make something out of handicraft or.....

26

27 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: (Indiscernible).

28

29 MR. ROHRER: Well, that's a good point  
30 or keep them.

31

32 MS. SKINNER: Line the whole house with  
33 them.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 MR. ROHRER: Absolutely. But that  
38 right now -- no regulations, no rules, nothing would  
39 have to change. You could offer funding for local  
40 Native folks and encourage them to go out there and  
41 shoot some sea otters. I'm all for it. Tell them to  
42 come down to Uganik Bay and get some down there too.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

45

46 MR. KOSO: Yeah, just to reiterate a  
47 little more of Sam's statement there on that bounty. I  
48 know Southeast has been trying to do that for quite a  
49 few years now and they have not been successful at  
50 that, so I don't think that's an option. They've dealt

1 with it for over two years and they were unsuccessful  
2 in doing that. I just thought I'd throw that out. Sea  
3 otters.

4

5 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, you want to avoid  
6 that word. I would just have internal communications,  
7 buy gasoline or something, but I wouldn't use that type  
8 of phraseology. I would hope -- is the lady from the  
9 Mirror still here? Yeah, drop that part.

10

11 (Laughter)

12

13 MR. HOLMES: You know, local customary  
14 and traditional and whatnot.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Coral and then  
17 Tom.

18

19 MS. CHERNOFF: Coral Chernoff from  
20 Kodiak. I do sea otter harvesting and I think one  
21 thing that people don't realize why it's so hard to get  
22 people. It's a lot of work. It's a lot of work to  
23 skin them. They're really hard to flesh and then after  
24 you do that there's very few places that tan sea otter  
25 hides. And then if you've ever fur-sewed, it's not  
26 that easy. I had five sea otters two years ago and I'm  
27 on my last one. I do fur-sew. It takes a lot of time.  
28 Then you can sew all you want, but you've got to be  
29 able to sell it to pay for your time that you've put  
30 in. So there's a lot of issues surrounding that.

31

32 I had a question. You talked about the  
33 sea otter population exploding. Do you have numbers  
34 for that, how many there was over what sort of time  
35 period?

36

37 MR. LANCE: This is Tom Lance with  
38 Sun'ag Tribe. This is anecdotal information that I  
39 received from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The sea  
40 otter survey that was just completed by McCrea Cobb, in  
41 his report yesterday he didn't talk about some specific  
42 areas, but there are some where they actually saw  
43 population increases and Womens Bay is one of them.  
44 This report will be coming out pretty soon, the  
45 published version of it.

46

47 I was talking to the Fish and Wildlife  
48 Service folks and they told me, yes, there's a bunch  
49 that float in from around the corner at night and feed  
50 and then they float on back out to a place I won't say

1 just for the record at this point. There is more  
2 information to be coming out on that.

3  
4 Folks that have lived with sea otters  
5 know that they -- large populations of sea otters will  
6 decimate the shellfish. After they finish the crab  
7 they go to the shellfish and then after that they'll  
8 even get desperate enough to eat starfish. At that  
9 point then they probably start either moving or dying  
10 themselves.

11  
12 Yeah, if that answers your question.

13  
14 MS. CHERNOFF: Yes.

15  
16 MR. LANCE: Okay. Thank you.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

19  
20 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, you know, we've  
21 heard about these ghost pots for a number of years and  
22 it seems like nothing has been done about them. I  
23 really like the idea of getting rid of those pots. I,  
24 for one, have a skiff with a block on it and I know  
25 there's a number of other people around here that do  
26 and I think maybe if Sun'ag would push something like  
27 that, we could get a group of people out there who  
28 would be willing to go out there. If we could get some  
29 divers and locate those pots, then we could get rid of  
30 them. I don't think it would be that big of a problem.

31  
32 MR. HOLMES: Are you talking about a  
33 pot party, Tom?

34  
35 (Laughter)

36  
37 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: We're not  
38 allowing you to say anything else.

39  
40 (Laughter)

41  
42 MR. LANCE: If I could respond to Mr.  
43 Schwantes' comment. My name is Tom Lance again. Not  
44 to be confused with the other Tom. That is something  
45 that was pursued initially by Island Trails Network,  
46 Andy Schroeder, and they were interested in collecting  
47 marine debris and pots are classified as marine debris.  
48 After a test they gave up to pursue other more  
49 important issues on their plate, but just recently we  
50 had a presentation from Andy Schroeder at a tribal

1 council meeting and he mentioned this and that's what  
2 raised our attention to it. We said, hey, the tribe is  
3 interested. If you're interested, let's both work on  
4 it together and maybe we could get something going. So  
5 that's where we're at right now. It's in the planning  
6 phases.

7

8

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

9

10

MR. SCHWANTES: I don't think it would  
11 be that big of a problem to get rid of those because I  
12 know a number of commercial fishermen who lose pots  
13 every year and they go back out there with grappling  
14 hooks and retrieve them. I mean they know where they  
15 lost them. They just go back out and drag and retrieve  
16 them. You know, especially if we could get an idea of  
17 where they're located out there, then we could go out  
18 and drag and I think we could clean them up.

19

20

MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is  
21 Mitch.

22

23

MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Hold on a  
24 second, Mitch. We'll put you in the line here. Go  
25 ahead.

26

27

MS. WOLKOFF: Hi. My name is Sharon  
28 Wolkoff. I was just listening to the discussion. I  
29 had an idea, would it be possible for a temporary  
30 closure of the Dungeness fishery until the ghost pots  
31 are cleaned up since they are marine debris and it  
32 needs to be cleaned up. If the Dungeness fishery is  
33 going to be continuing, you're still going to be  
34 getting more pots down there and it will still be  
35 collecting king crab.

36

37

Another thing I noticed too was a lot  
38 of the pots are disconnected at the line, from the ice  
39 cutting off the lines. It looks like Dungeness is  
40 fished mostly in the shallow areas. Would it be  
41 possible to put like a line that's not so breakable,  
42 like the lead line of subsistence nets. I think those  
43 are pretty durable and I don't think they could be cut  
44 off as easily from the ice.

45

46

The next thing was, you know, I like  
47 the thing about more education and maybe showing more  
48 of those pictures like Pat was saying. That's all I  
49 got. Thanks.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you.  
2 Mitch and then Rebecca.

3  
4 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Madame  
5 Chair. I just had a question. I was thinking about a  
6 question that was asked earlier about the number of  
7 ghost pots that were in Womens Bay and it was stated  
8 that 162 pots were found. I'm just curious, were those  
9 pots removed or were they just left down there.

10  
11 MR. LONG: So on diving, removing them  
12 is not usually possible. They're way too heavy for a  
13 diver to bring up, but they're disabled. So if you  
14 open up a ghost pot, then it's no longer going to be  
15 able to ghost fish, so it's essentially no longer a  
16 threat from that perspective.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, did you  
19 have any other questions or comments?

20  
21 MR. SIMEONOFF: No. Thank you, Madame  
22 Chair.

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I think just a  
25 thought -- Rebecca. When we were talking about this  
26 162 pots, that's in 2007. It's 2015. You know you can  
27 probably double or triple that number. So keep that in  
28 mind. I mean all of us should keep that in mind.

29  
30 MS. SKINNER: Thank you. If this  
31 Council is going to put forward some sort of  
32 correspondence or documented support, I fully support  
33 removing the ghost pots, supporting efforts to do that.  
34 I do have concerns, however, with increased initiatives  
35 to hunt the sea otters. One thing is I don't -- at  
36 this point, we haven't seen data for that, so I would  
37 say I'm not comfortable making any sort of  
38 recommendation or voicing support until I see the data  
39 on the otters in Womens Bay.

40  
41 My other concern after listening for  
42 the last two days about indigenous species and predator  
43 control, the otters are indigenous and I guess I feel  
44 conflicted about seeking to reduce an indigenous  
45 species. I guess I just feel like we haven't seen the  
46 data or had enough discussion to really weigh in on  
47 that. I would not feel comfortable doing that today,  
48 but I do fully support efforts to remove the ghost pots  
49 because those were left there by people. They should  
50 not have been left there. They're marine debris and I

1 think whatever we can do to help get those out of the  
2 bay I fully support.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
5 Rebecca. You know, I went to high school here many  
6 years ago. Every May there was the king crab festival.  
7 May would be a good month to make that effort in  
8 conjunction with what goes on in this community. Just  
9 a suggestion.

10

11 Pat. Do you have any information on  
12 what Southeast has been trying to do with the sea otter  
13 population or anybody in the room for that matter.

14

15 MS. PETRIVELLI: They raise the issue  
16 every year and the Fish and Wildlife Service has given  
17 presentations and there is talk about the idea of  
18 developing a sea otter management plan, but it's up to  
19 the different commissions that are involved in that  
20 activity to work with the Fish and Wildlife Service and  
21 do that. I haven't been there for about a year, but I  
22 don't know if they've made a sea otter management plan.

23

24

25 I know Lianna Jack is on the Sea Otter  
26 Commission in Old Harbor, right? Oh, Melissa is not  
27 here. But Lianna Jack is the executive director -- she  
28 was a year ago -- of the Sea Otter Commission and she  
29 was in Old Harbor, but I'm not sure -- I know Sitka  
30 Tribe did develop a tribal management sea otter  
31 management plan and I think it's up to the tribes  
32 themselves to make progress on those initiatives.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you.  
35 Mitch, did you hear that as the chair of the Marine  
36 Mammal Commission in this area?

37

38 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes, I did, and I can  
39 say the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission has been  
40 introducing to tribes a marine mammal management plan.  
41 When we have our spring meeting in may, I'm going to  
42 try to upgrade that and instead of just dealing with  
43 harbor seals we can deal with all marine mammals and  
44 that would be a tribal marine mammal management plan.

45

46 We have introduced this project to  
47 Ouzinkie, Old Harbor and Akhiok. It's complete. We  
48 need one final meeting with the Harbor Seal Commission  
49 to make any last-minute changes before they put it up,  
50 post it for a couple weeks and then take action on it.

1 The idea of having a marine mammal management plan and  
2 including the sea otters and Steller sea lions, that's  
3 an idea that was brought forth. I will pursue that  
4 further when we have our meeting in May or June.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick, did you  
7 have a comment?

8  
9 MR. KOSO: Yeah, just a comment. I  
10 talked to a lot of the Southeast people from Sitka  
11 there. Got some good friends. And Coral mentioned  
12 some tanning. The Sitka Tribe put in a real nice  
13 tannery I think about three years ago now and they did  
14 it just particularly to do their sea otters because  
15 they were becoming so plentiful. I know there's a lot  
16 more now Native people down around Sitka, Ketchikan  
17 areas that are actually harvesting a lot more of the  
18 sea otter now. They're definitely still a population  
19 explosion there, but they certainly are curtailing that  
20 quite a bit, at least the way I understand it.

21  
22 There's been a lot more sewing and  
23 different things being made with it and there's been a  
24 lot of sales to the tour boats that come in. I know I  
25 talked to one of my friends there. He said he can't  
26 keep up with these sales just on making the little kind  
27 of like a necktie scarf. So they're working on it down  
28 there and the tribe itself has been a big help by  
29 putting in the tannery. They do a very nice job on it.  
30 So if you do have some hides you need to get tanned,  
31 you don't have to send them out of state anymore. You  
32 can actually do it through Sitka.

33  
34 Thanks.

35  
36 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. I  
37 guess, Carl, from a procedural standpoint in this  
38 Council and the report that was given, as a Council  
39 what can we do at this time?

40  
41 MR. JOHNSON: Well, the Regional  
42 Advisory Councils in general get involved in providing  
43 comments on processes that are outside of the Federal  
44 Subsistence Management Program. You know, you can  
45 provide comments on what other agencies are doing or  
46 provide letters in support of tribal efforts and  
47 different management things. Really, that's the best  
48 thing the Council could do, would be to submit some  
49 kind of letter of support for efforts that are being  
50 taken to address -- you know, as Council Member Skinner

1 indicated, for example, efforts to reduce ghost pots in  
2 Womens Bay, writing a letter of support to that.

3

4 But, beyond that, there's no applicable  
5 proposals that could be done regarding any marine  
6 mammal issues because that's outside of the Federal  
7 Subsistence Management Program.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Isn't there --  
10 in Womens Bay, there is a subsistence for king crab.  
11 Is that still in place?

12

13 MR. JOHNSON: If there's Federal  
14 subsistence jurisdiction and you could submit a  
15 proposal that could address something as part of the  
16 regular fishery cycle and the next time the proposals  
17 will be open would be the winter cycle next year.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. And in  
20 the interim I think to add it to our annual report as  
21 an ongoing concern because it's just about -- when you  
22 look at this report, a lot of it is ongoing issues and  
23 there needs to start being hopefully a plan for  
24 resolution on some of this.

25

26 Carl, if you're going to respond, and  
27 then Tom.

28

29 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Madame Chair,  
30 that's certainly something we could add to your annual  
31 report. You know, indicate that you received this  
32 briefing on the ghost pot issue in Womens Bay, express  
33 concern about this subsistence resource and also  
34 address the law enforcement issue that I know is  
35 identified that if there's a regulation that's -- if I  
36 remember the presentation correctly, 62% of the pots  
37 found did not have the required biodegradable release,  
38 then that's also something you could add and perhaps  
39 request that it be forwarded on to the appropriate  
40 agency for addressing that concern.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: And then  
43 possibly include the increased population of sea  
44 otters?

45

46 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I would agree with  
47 what Council Member Skinner indicated, however, is that  
48 while you received a very well scientifically-based  
49 report on what's going on with ghost pots, there hasn't  
50 been a report presented at this time regarding the

1 status of sea otter population and any adverse impacts  
2 it may have on shellfish.

3

4 MR. SCHWANTES: The other thing that we  
5 can do with this, if we want to support a closure  
6 during the icebound periods, we could work with ADF&G  
7 and they can submit a proposal to deal with that.

8

9 MR. EVANS: This is Tom Evans with Fish  
10 and Wildlife Service, OSM. I was going to recommend  
11 the same thing. You could request a special action or  
12 emergency order to close the season for the next  
13 season, then put in a proposal on the next fishery  
14 cycle if you want to have a proposed regulation to do  
15 that. That's just another option.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Is everybody  
18 good with that at this point? Well, it's a start to  
19 hopefully try to do something. Thank you for being  
20 here to speak. Please apologize to John Reft for me  
21 because he waited patiently and we kind of -- there  
22 seems to be a lot going on in this meeting this time.  
23 But I thank you very much for being here.

24

25 I think, Carl, we have on the agenda  
26 OSM.

27

28 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Tom Kron with  
29 OSM. I'll make this real short. I know we have time  
30 issues here. First of all, Orville Lind was going to  
31 talk about this this morning and I'm not sure what  
32 happened. He was not able to do so, but just a short  
33 update on the implementation of the Federal Subsistence  
34 Board concerning tribal policies and ANCSA consultation  
35 policies.

36

37 After three years of hard work of the  
38 work group, on January 23rd at the Federal Subsistence  
39 Board meeting, they implemented the Tribal Consultation  
40 Policy Implementation Guidelines and the ANCSA  
41 Corporation Consultation Policies and I wanted to thank  
42 you, Della. I think I saw you working during one of  
43 the meetings, but you served as chair and were real  
44 involved in this process and we were unable to loop in  
45 when the Federal Board was taking it up when Crystal  
46 presented things, but thank you.

47

48 I wanted to let the rest of the Council  
49 be aware of that.

50

1                   Again, those documents were implemented  
2 by the Board, but they will be reviewed on an annual  
3 basis for effectiveness, so there will be opportunities  
4 for improvement and modifications as needed.

5  
6                   Quickly, I will provide a summary of  
7 some staffing changes at OSM. Starting with Karen  
8 Deatherage, who is here at the meeting, was hired by  
9 Carl, Office of Subsistence Management. She worked  
10 previously for the National Park Service and Bureau of  
11 Land Management and as an interpretive range in  
12 specific aspects of public affairs. Again, she's  
13 assigned specifically to work with this Council in the  
14 future. We all appreciate having her here and wanted  
15 to make sure that you were up to speed on that.

16  
17                   Orville Lind, who I think many of you  
18 know, was also hired since your last meeting as a  
19 Native liaison for OSM. Again, he has statewide  
20 responsibilities. He worked for 23 years for U.S. Fish  
21 and Wildlife Service as a refuge information  
22 technician, refuge ranger and Native liaison in the  
23 Bristol Bay region. He's also the former village chief  
24 for Chignik Lagoon and Port Heiden.

25  
26                   There have been a number of additional  
27 positions that have been filled and I will just --  
28 again, I've got information here, but I know you've got  
29 time commitments, so I'll just say that again. There  
30 have been a number of vacant positions we've had there  
31 at OSM that they were able to fill since your last  
32 meeting.

33  
34                   Thank you, Madame Chair.

35  
36                   MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you. Does  
37 anybody have any questions. If we can maybe get some  
38 of those staff changes and everything just in an email  
39 or something to us would be good because they're not in  
40 the report.

41  
42                   Thank you.

43  
44                   All right, Carl, where are we. We've  
45 got a number of issues we've got to finish up here  
46 today before we leave. Where should we start?

47  
48                   MR. JOHNSON: Madame Chair, I'd say we  
49 can start with hopefully the easier thing, which is to  
50 confirm the date and location of your fall meeting.

1 That calendar is currently on page 149 of your meeting  
2 book. You have previously identified the 25th and 26th  
3 of September in Adak as your primary choice with a  
4 secondary choice of Cold Bay on September 29th and  
5 30th. So right now the primary determining factor for  
6 Adak is going to be cost. We're going to be exploring  
7 comparing the commercial flight options versus a  
8 charter flight option to try to execute that for the  
9 Council. We'll be able to get a report to you within  
10 the next month or two on that.

11

12 The other issue is the winter 2016 all-  
13 Council meeting. If you recall from a previous  
14 meeting, all the Councils were encouraged by and in  
15 support of the notion to have an all-Council meeting  
16 during the winter 2016 meeting cycle. To that end,  
17 following the Federal Subsistence Board meeting, all of  
18 the Council Chairs who were present met with the  
19 Council coordinators and our Native liaison, Orville  
20 Lind, to talk about planning that meeting.

21

22 This meeting, by the way, will be five  
23 business days where all 10 Councils will be together to  
24 conduct a joint sessions and concurrent sessions and  
25 this would then constitute your entire meeting cycle.  
26 The entire Council meeting cycle for the winter would  
27 be done in five days. The primary date that was  
28 selected was the last week of February and then the  
29 back up the week after the Iditarod. We have  
30 determined to have the meeting in Anchorage just based  
31 on facilities and also logistics and based on that the  
32 selection of the Dena'ina Center for the location of  
33 the meeting. The last week of February is not  
34 available, so we settled on the secondary date, which  
35 is March 7th through 11th, 2016.

36

37 Currently how the structure will be is  
38 there's going to be a single large meeting room and  
39 then six smaller meeting rooms. The first day would be  
40 a joint session of all 10 Councils, 109 Council members  
41 all together in the same room, to discuss joint issues  
42 of concern between the Councils. The Council Chairs,  
43 when we had this meeting after the Board meeting, they  
44 determined the best starting point would be to look at  
45 all of our annual reports for the last few years and  
46 then identify common issues that are common to all the  
47 Councils and then have those be kind of the starting  
48 point on the joint agenda.

49

50 After the first day there will be kind

1 of a staggered where you'll have in those six smaller  
2 meeting rooms you'll have some Councils having their  
3 own individual sessions for a full day and then we're  
4 also having a variety of different training and report  
5 sessions going on. So if you're not in your Council  
6 session, you can go to some type of training or some  
7 type of multi-regional report. For example, having all  
8 of the three Yukon River Councils getting a joint  
9 report from the State and Federal managers on Yukon  
10 salmon or, for the northern Councils, getting a joint  
11 report on the status of the Western Arctic Caribou  
12 Herd.

13

14                   So those types of reports will be going  
15 on and then the types of training that were identified  
16 by the Chairs, and this also helps us to fulfill one of  
17 our obligations under the Tribal Consultation Policy,  
18 was to have training on ANILCA and other laws related  
19 to subsistence management, having training on Robert's  
20 Rules of Order, have training on dual management so  
21 people can better understand how the State and Federal  
22 dual management process works, have training on Federal  
23 Indian law, training on cross-cultural communication,  
24 training on understanding the difference between how  
25 C&T operates versus Section 804 in ANILCA. Then also  
26 an overview of the regulatory process, so people can  
27 understand how they can get involved in the State and  
28 Federal regulatory process.

29

30                   Then other types of reports and panels  
31 that were discussed would be have a panel so  
32 representatives from the Park Service Subsistence  
33 Resource Commission, the State local ACs and the AMBCC  
34 can talk about how their Council systems work so people  
35 can talk to them and better understand how they  
36 operate.

37

38                   Other topics were tribal consultation.  
39 Have a panel discussion about how tribal consultation  
40 should work. Also one that was suggested was we need  
41 some kind of discussion on an explanation from the  
42 agencies on how they manage and maybe probably looking  
43 at more of a holistic management versus single  
44 population management.

45

46                   So those were kind of the things that  
47 were discussed. We're working on kind of ironing out  
48 how the schedule would flow, but that's where we're at  
49 right now for the all-Council planning process. The  
50 Chairs and the coordinators along with Orville Lind

1 and our subsistence outreach specialist, our public  
2 affairs person, Deborah Coble, will continue to move  
3 forward on planning this and then probably have a very  
4 solid product ready for you at the fall meeting cycle.

5

6 Thank you, Madame Chair.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you, Carl.  
9 Listening to that list is good, but one of the things  
10 that we talked about quite at length today, in fact  
11 almost two hours, was on the migratory birds and the  
12 effect on the different regions. As a suggestion to  
13 the YK and Bristol Bay to have some sort of work  
14 session with them and have reports and be able to --  
15 you know, at that time there's definitely going to be  
16 more information out there to talk about how we can  
17 work through some of these issues in the future moving  
18 forward.

19

20 Pat.

21

22 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair, I was  
23 wondering, beings we had the discussion of the date for  
24 the meeting in Adak, 25th and 26th, and I know we need  
25 to get the end of the week there, correct me if I'm  
26 wrong Rick, to get the right flights in and out. But I  
27 was wondering, it would be really good, I think, if we  
28 can find some way to where we can accommodate Mr.  
29 Rohrer because he's off on doing his guiding in the  
30 fall. I was just wondering if there's any date that we  
31 could achieve that where we could get his participation  
32 because he's always such a thoughtful and productive  
33 member of our Council and he just ends up missing our  
34 fall meetings all the time.

35

36 We just agreed and were chatting with  
37 the microphones off. Sam will be able to make it to  
38 Adak, so my point is moot.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Okay. Moving  
41 on, we do have the letter to Tim Towarak, the Chair,  
42 from Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory  
43 Council. We have the draft in front of us. There were  
44 some discussions of adding the Council Charter, which  
45 included the members, the three from the Pribilofs West  
46 and three from the Aleutians and Peninsula and three  
47 from Kodiak.

48

49 I think that's important to also kind  
50 of talk about the makeup of the Council right now is

1 three members from the Aleutians/Pribilofs total and  
2 seven from Kodiak and that's a concern. Like I say, we  
3 all agree to work together, but when you look at a  
4 total of 10 seats, there's a lot going on out there  
5 that we need, I think, to kind of take a look at the  
6 way that's set up. I believe that Mitch would agree  
7 with me also.

8

9 The other thing that was to be added  
10 was the declining salmon in Upper Station. Do you  
11 still want that added in there?

12

13 MS. SKINNER: Yes.

14

15 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: We talked about  
18 the ghost pot issue. I think that's very important.

19

20 MS. SKINNER: I had written down deer  
21 research as well.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Deer research.  
24 Does anybody have anything else that we want to add?  
25 One of the things is -- I'm not sure how we would do  
26 this, is a presentation by Doug from Izembek and the  
27 procedure to changing the -- what was it? He was  
28 giving us that plan and regulations and trying to push  
29 that on in as short amount of time without a lot of  
30 information and the impacts of that, I think, could be  
31 pretty detrimental and pretty scary, to be honest with  
32 you, and that process needs to be looked at, I think.  
33 Any time they take into consideration doing some of  
34 this stuff and basically I feel like it's getting  
35 pushed on us without really any information to the  
36 Council.

37

38 Adding to that, there seems to be a lot  
39 of turning today going into these EISs. I'm going to  
40 be really looking at what's going on and then out  
41 toward Adak and what's happening in Unit 90 and 10. I  
42 missed the report from Unimak. There's no caribou in  
43 Unimak. Trust me, trust me. I'm going to knocking  
44 stuff off the table now. There's something wrong here.  
45 There's something very wrong. Anyway, that's my  
46 opinion.

47

48 Rebecca.

49

50 MS. SKINNER: Just a clarification.

1 Are we modifying the Emperor Geese paragraph that's  
2 already in the draft report based on discussions today?

3

4 MR. HOLMES: I hope so.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Yeah.

7

8 MS. SKINNER: We are? Okay.

9

10 MR. ROHRER: Can I.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Go ahead.

13

14 MR. ROHRER: This is Sam Rohrer for the  
15 record. Just to clarify, you were talking about, for  
16 lack of a better word, the pending proposed regs that  
17 will be coming out, commenting on those. So just make  
18 sure that that's clear, that we'll be commenting on  
19 those.

20

21 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair, if I could  
22 kind of clarify for new members. Often what we'll do  
23 is we'll put together a list of topics and the gist of  
24 what we're trying to do in our letter to the Board,  
25 Carl will do some magic and put it together and then  
26 kind of run it through an email, but we're sort of  
27 improving the concept and once we get the concepts  
28 approved at the meeting, then we can kind of finalize  
29 the letter and then return it back to him with our  
30 thoughts. That's generally the way we've done it in  
31 the past.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Carl.

34

35 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, Madame Chair.  
36 Regarding the Refuge's proposed rule, yesterday one of  
37 the Council members had indicated to kind of fit that  
38 in to the item number two, which is the dual management  
39 of caribou population related to predatory impacts of  
40 wolves. I would guess that the discussion would go  
41 something along the lines of your dissatisfaction with  
42 how the proposed rule is processed, is going on and  
43 then especially the perceived effort to reduce  
44 opportunities to take predators in light of there being  
45 problems with predator issues in certain areas in this  
46 region. Is that a correct assessment?

47

48 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Yes and no. In  
49 light of removing caribou. Yeah, basically you said  
50 removing predators, but you're on the right track.

1 MR. ROHRER: Through the Chair. That  
2 is the right connection, but there's also the second  
3 portion of the proposed regs that we have concern with,  
4 which is the lengthening of all the closure periods and  
5 that really is a separate deal, but the first part is  
6 certainly tied to the caribou issue.

7  
8 Thank you.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, do you  
11 have anything else if you're online here?

12  
13 (No comments)

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Does anybody  
16 have -- Pat, do you have anything else?

17  
18 (No comments)

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

21  
22 (No comments)

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rebecca.

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Coral, Tom, Sam.

29  
30 (No comments)

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: I think we're  
33 good. Closing comments. I would like to start with  
34 Rebecca maybe and go around.

35  
36 MS. SKINNER: Well, this being my first  
37 meeting as part of this Council, I really appreciated  
38 the last two days. I thought we had a high-quality  
39 discussion and I really appreciated -- I realize  
40 everybody has left now, but I appreciated all of the  
41 presenters that came in and shared their reports. But  
42 I guess mainly I think we had high-quality discussion  
43 and I really appreciate that. We seem to engage pretty  
44 freely in dialogue, so I think that's important to  
45 share our perspectives.

46  
47 Other than that, thank you for a great  
48 first RAC meeting.

49  
50 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Rick.

1 MR. KOSO: I think I said enough for  
2 one day, so I'll pass.

3  
4 MR. HOLMES: I'll leave my duct tape  
5 off and I'd just like to say that once again I'm just  
6 so impressed and it makes me feel good on what our  
7 Council has been able to work through today. I can't  
8 remember much of it, but I think we are doing a lot of  
9 good for the folks we represent and it just makes me  
10 feel really swell. I was quite impressed with the  
11 comments not only from our existing members but  
12 particularly from our new members and being so  
13 insightful and being able to pierce through the clouds  
14 of ambiguity and come up with some very good focus for  
15 us.

16  
17 Thank you very much, Madame Chair.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Coral.

20  
21 MS. CHERNOFF: I was expecting to have  
22 a little more time.

23  
24 (Laughter)

25  
26 MS. CHERNOFF: Well, this was my first  
27 meeting, but I'm very impressed with all the thoughtful  
28 comments and I'm just excited about doing some more  
29 work with you guys.

30  
31 Thank you.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Tom.

34  
35 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, Madame Chair. I  
36 thought it was a very productive meeting. I thought it  
37 was an excellent meeting and I appreciated the comments  
38 of the members and especially the participation and  
39 comments from the new members. I thought it was very  
40 productive.

41  
42 Thank you.

43  
44 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Sam.

45  
46 MR. ROHRER: Sam Rohrer here. Yeah, I  
47 just want to say welcome to our new members. It's fun  
48 having new members on here, so appreciated your guys's  
49 comments. Also just to mention, you know, I have a lot  
50 of friends around the state who are on different RACs

1 or sit in and listen to different RACS. Not all the  
2 other meetings go as well as ours do. There can be  
3 some challenging RACs out there. So I just appreciate  
4 how well ours works together and really appreciate  
5 that.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Mitch, are you  
10 online?

11

12 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes, I am. Thank you,  
13 Madame Chair. I just want to say thank you to the  
14 board for keeping me on for another couple years and  
15 welcome to our new members. I, too, really appreciate  
16 the accomplishments of our meeting. There's been times  
17 when we just really hash things out and we go late into  
18 the evening. We're getting to a point where we work  
19 well together and we get things done.

20

21 I'd just like to also say I'm a real  
22 advocate for getting out to the villages to the hub  
23 areas and I'd like to stress to Carl to push really  
24 hard to try and get us out to Adak this fall.

25

26 I'd also like to welcome our new  
27 coordinator, Karen Deatherage. If Carl can't push  
28 hard, we can push Karen, either way, to get us out  
29 there.

30

31 It's been good. You know, I've been on  
32 this board for a number of years and when I first got  
33 on here I was really kind of nervous about speaking up  
34 about the respect we should have for the resources that  
35 we're trying to protect. One thing I teach my kids and  
36 grandkids is when you go out there, if you don't have  
37 respect for the land or resources, you're not going to  
38 get anything or the weather will get bad on you. It's  
39 happened. I was taught by my grandfather and my uncle.  
40 I'm happy and proud that I can see my grandson  
41 practicing what I was taught. That's what we're about,  
42 is our subsistence way of life, is passing on to the  
43 next generation the way it was passed on to us.

44

45 I can endlessly speak about these  
46 things for a while, but I'll stop there. Thank you  
47 very much.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
50 Mitch. Antone, are you online?

1 MR. SHELIKOFF: I'm online here.  
2 Antone in Akutan. On the agenda I didn't hear anything  
3 on the Aleutian proposal. And I would like to say  
4 welcome to the new members on the Council. I expect a  
5 lot of emails from Karen Deatherage and will probably  
6 do a lot of reading, like I have. I've done a lot of  
7 reading and a lot of printing too. That's all I have  
8 to say for the new members and the Council. Thanks.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you,  
11 Antone. That issue has been thrown out. If you look  
12 at the Aleutians East Borough website, I think they may  
13 have some PR stuff, but there's nothing we need to  
14 worry about at this time, but we're watching it  
15 closely.

16  
17 For myself, I welcome the new members  
18 and we've said our goodbyes to Vince and Pete, but I  
19 also want to thank Carl. You'll be moving on and I  
20 think you've done a great job, from what I can tell,  
21 and we're going to miss you. And, Karen, I guess we  
22 welcome you and moving forward.

23  
24 I will say this has been probably one  
25 of the meetings that we've had that the abundance in  
26 the people that we've had available has been great. A  
27 lot of information and that helps so very much in  
28 moving forward and I appreciate that a lot. I've  
29 learned a lot the last couple days in many different  
30 areas.

31  
32 With that, I just want to thank  
33 everybody. It's been great. We've got one more comment  
34 before we can adjourn.

35  
36 MR. EVANS: Just one more thing. It  
37 came to my attention that I guess if you want to have a  
38 proposal, that you need to submit a proposal before May  
39 25th. You have to agree as a Council that you might  
40 want to work on it and it's got to be something that  
41 you've got to take action on here for the wildlife  
42 proposal cycle that's coming up March 25th. So I just  
43 wanted to let you know that before we adjourn here.

44  
45 MR. KOSO: Della, I forgot to welcome  
46 our new members too. I just want to say you two will  
47 work out really well. I listened to you. You're both  
48 very good at what you do and I'm really happy to see  
49 you as part of our team. Karen, congratulations.  
50 Welcome aboard. I don't think Carl is going away like

1 Della thinks. I think he's going to be sticking around  
2 and making sure we do our job. Anyway, thanks all of  
3 you. It was a very good meeting.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Carl is not  
6 going away. He's just moving on to a different  
7 position. We can still find him.

8

9 MR. JOHNSON: Actually I'll be staying  
10 in my current position. What's been going on in the  
11 last three years is this Council has not actually had  
12 its own dedicated Council coordinator and the division  
13 chief or acting chief has been filling in, so now you  
14 actually have somebody who is dedicated to you 100%  
15 full time. And I don't think I'll have to be pushing  
16 her very much. I think she'll actually be pulling me  
17 around a little bit and that's just fine.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: All right.  
20 Thank you. A motion to adjourn.

21

22 MR. SIMEONOFF: I so move.

23

24 MS. SKINNER: Did we need to respond to  
25 the comment that was made if we're going to take  
26 action, if we want to make comments.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: It's only  
29 wildlife proposals.

30

31 MS. SKINNER: Oh, okay. So we don't  
32 have any. Okay. Thank you.

33

34 MR. HOLMES: Do you want a serious one  
35 or a funny one?

36

37 MR. KOSO: I'll second that, Mitch.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: For the  
40 fisheries, Pat, we'll be putting some together, the  
41 next year.

42

43 MR. JOHNSON: Madame Chair, there's a  
44 motion on the floor.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: All in favor for  
47 adjournment signify by saying aye.

48

49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Opposed same  
2 sign.

3  
4 (No opposing votes)

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR TRUMBLE: Thank you  
7 everybody. Good night.

8  
9 MR. SIMEONOFF: Good night. Thank you  
10 all.

11  
12 (Off record)

13  
14 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

