KODIAK ALEUTIANS SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING

Volume II

March 19, 2002

9:00 a.m.

Best Western Inn
Kodiak, Alaska

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Della Trumble, Chair
Paul Gunderson, Vice Chair
Pete M. Squartsoff, Secretary
Speridon Simeonoff, Sr.
Alfred B. Cratty, Jr.
Vincent M. Tutiakoff
Ivan Lukin
Thomas Panamaroff
Patrick Holmes

Coordinator: Michelle Chivers

P R O C E E D I N G S

(On record)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Good morning everybody. I'm sorry I didn't make it yesterday. I want to thank everybody, Pete, for doing such a wonderful job, I hear. This morning we'll call the meeting to order. It's my understanding the next item is going to be number 10 on the agenda, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Subsistence Management. However, if I may, I'd like to go ahead and move back up to the Chair's report prior to doing that. Also, Pat is going to be doing the customary trade, so if anybody wants to testify in regard to that, they need to fill out a testimony form and hand it to me. Thank you.

Michelle, do we need to do a roll call calling back to order or just reconvening?

MS. CHIVERS: Al Cratty.

MR. CRATTY: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Ivan Lukin.

MR. LUKIN: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Vincent Tutiakoff.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Pete Squartsoff.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Patrick Holmes.

MR. HOLMES: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Paul Gunderson.

MR. GUNDERSON: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Speridon Simeonoff.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Della Trumble.

MS. TRUMBLE: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: John Foster.

(No audible response)

MS. CHIVERS: Tom Panamaroff.

MR. PANAMAROFF: Here.

MS. CHIVERS: Richard Zacharof.

(No audible response)

MS. CHIVERS: Okay, we have a quorum.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Michelle. I think we can move on to the Chair's report. The first thing I attended in October was the joint meeting with the Y-K, Eastern and Western Interior for two and a half days and I am very thankful for being able to participate in that meeting. It was quite a learning process and just a good dialogue between all the different groups. I think we came to a fairly good understanding, not only of the various regions, but thought it went really well. We talked the issue of Area M fisheries and the high seas intercept came up quite a bit. NMFS did a really good presentation on the high seas intercept fisheries at that meeting.

The Chair's meeting, I did get in late again. I've been having trouble getting in and out of King Cove, which is normal. This went really well and we did the discussion on regions taking action that affect other regions without consultation was discussed at that meeting and it was a consensus of all the regions that this will not happen again. It was also discussed again at the meeting with the Federal Board and the chairs, so I think this hopefully at this point has resolved itself.

The issue at the statewide meeting on the customary trade in our last meeting in Sand Point, I think it was brought up in customary trade of having a sunset clause so that it can be reviewed every two years.

It's my understanding from the statewide meeting that this would come up every year. It's up for review every year, so that wouldn't be a concern.

The Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, the Harvest Monitoring and Traditional

Ecological Knowledge Studies. In our Sand Point meeting, we had decided that we would take our funding from the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program and move it to the TEK. What happened at the statewide meeting is the funding for the TEK ended up being the Aleutians TEK studies and it did not include the Kodiak one. If you look at the two programs, the Bristol Bay total studies was $99,400 and the Kodiak/Aleutians on the TEK was $91,400. There still doesn't seem to be any relief in trying to split some of this funding. We mentioned in our last meeting that we are three regions and not two. I'm not sure what we can do at this point to try to spread that funding out a little more. I wanted to talk to our council and our workshop about that issue, but I wasn't here yesterday.

I did ask them also if there was any funding available that doesn't get spent on some of these programs to move that to the Kodiak TEK and they said they would. Other than that, I don't have anything else. If anybody has questions.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chair, being that it's my first meeting, what is TEK?

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: TEK. It's traditional ecological knowledge studies. Those are basically studying the subsistence patterns in the regions, trying to get some of the history.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Hearing no other questions, we'll move on to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Subsistence Management, customary trade. Pat McClenahan.

MS. McCLENAHAN: Madam Chair, I'm Pat McClenahan from the Office of Subsistence Management. Please turn to Tab F, Pages 1 through 13.

First, I will review the current status of the Board's actions to refine Federal regulations for customary trade and I'll include a brief report on tribal consultation for customary trade. Then I'm going to request action on Items C-11, C-12 and C-13. Prior to any vote that you make, it would be a good time to break

45 for public testimony and then you can vote on any motions
46 that you make covering C-11, C-12 and C-13.
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48 The Board began the process of refining
49 the Federal regulations for customary trade in December
50 2001. The board supported part of the recommendations of

the Customary Trade Task Force and Regional Advisory Councils to issue a proposed rule allowing unlimited customary trade between rural residents and prohibiting customary trade or barter with fishery businesses. At the same time, the Board chose to keep things as they are for the transactions between rural residents and others and allowed for more discussion by the Councils, tribal governments and the public before proposing additional changes. Comments need to be submitted to the Board by the end of the public comment period, which is now March 29th, 2002.

In late 2000, the Board established a Customary Trade Task Force made up of Regional Advisory Council representatives, fishery biologists, law enforcement personnel, anthropologists and others. The reason for the Task Force was a need to address the issues that existed with the current regulations. They are not specific enough for regulation and enforcement. Additionally, customary trade practices vary from region to region. This may require accommodating regional differences in regulation. We sought Regional Advisory Council assistance in clarifying this part of the regulations.

After Regional Councils met, other input was gathered. Based on their input, the Task Force presented six options for the Board to consider. Among the Council comments were seven region specific recommendations. The six options considered by the Board are found on Tab F, Pages 2, 3 and 4. The board decided to implement Option 5 to publish the proposed rule for public comment with the draft regulatory changes as recommended by the Customary Trade Task Force except maintain the status quo for transactions between rural residents and others. Option 5 provides general support and consensus for unlimited transactions between rural residents. It provides the prohibition of transactions with fisheries businesses, and it allows further analysis and discussion to occur before proposing any further restrictions on the transactions between a rural resident and others in a proposed rule.

The Board decided to initiate a formal

rulemaking process. The Board doesn't believe that this rule will create additional fish harvest or that it will stimulate commercial market sale. Nothing in the proposed rule would set aside or interfere with the existing State or Federal food/health/safety regulations and laws that govern the processing, handling or sale of

fish.

Tribal consultation between the Board and 229 Federally-recognized tribes is ongoing with an open consultation period from February 1st through April 30th, 2002. Mr. Carl Jack is the lead for this consultation, which is similar to that which was conducted on the preliminary draft regulation from the Customary Trade Task Force. The April 30th date applies to all public comments as well. The rest of the dates on the calendar are to be moved forward accordingly.

With regard to Native consultation, the consultation is conducted in accordance with the Department of Interior, Alaska policy on government-to-government relations with Alaska Native Tribes, in close cooperation with the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. Consultation is being carried out because the proposed rule may have a substantial direct effect on Federally-recognized tribes, and tribes are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed rule as outlined above. Approval to publish the proposed rule in the Federal Register was received and it was published February 27th, 2001 (sic). I do have a copy of that with me if you need to look at it. Can you please turn to Tab F, Page 5, and there you'll find the proposed rule.

A summary of the other councils' actions was handed out to you by Michelle this morning. Subpart D, subsistence taking of fish and wildlife. Subpart D of 36 CFR, Part 242 and 50 CFR, part 100 at 27(C) is revised to read as follows:

Subsistence taking of fish, C-11. Transactions between rural residents. The exchange between rural residents and customary trade of subsistence harvest of fish, their parts or their eggs, legally taken under the regulation in this part, unprocessed or processed, using customary and traditional methods is permitted.

Madam Chair, would the Council like to take action on Paragraph C-11 or shall I read all three of them?

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think we should probably take these separately, but I do have one other question maybe in regard to process. In looking at these sections, can we amend them to our recommendation at this point on each of the sections or are we just taking

action as written?

MS. McCLENAHAN: Madam Chair, feel free to amend as you see fit. If you'll look at the actions of the other councils, you'll see that several of them have amended the wording, have gone more towards the wording they proposed the last time.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Go ahead with Section 11.

MS. McCLENAHAN: Would you like me to read Section 11 again?

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat, just go ahead and read them all.

MS. McCLENAHAN: C-11. Transactions between rural residents. The exchange between rural residents and customary trade of subsistence harvest of fish, their parts or their eggs, legally taken under the regulation in this part, unprocessed or processed, using customary and traditional methods is permitted.

C-12. Transactions between a rural resident and others. Customary trade for fish, their parts or their eggs, legally taken under the regulations in this part from a rural resident to commercial entities other than fisheries businesses or from a rural resident to individuals other than rural residents is permitted as long as the customary trade does not constitute a significant commercial enterprise.

C-13. No purchase by fisheries businesses. If you are required to be licensed as a fisheries business under Alaska statute AS 43.75.011, you may not purchase or receive for commercial purposes or barter or solicit to barter for subsistence-taken fish, their parts or their eggs. That concludes the three.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: In the statewide meeting, there was a draft accepted as what was supposed to go out tentatively for public review for the Register. This is the existing law?

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46 MS. McCLENAHAN: Madam Chair, this is the
47 proposed regulation.
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49 CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: The reason I'm
50 asking, if there's a handout that you have that Michelle

gave, if you look under the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council, in the very last paragraph, what Cook Inlet had recommended was utilizing the total cash value per household member of salmon taken in the Cook Inlet area exchange and customary trade or barter to others may not exceed $1,000 annually. At least 50 percent of all fish taken under subsistence regulations must be kept for the family's personal use.

It seemed like a lot of the chairs thought that that was possibly a good section to add to that and that's why I'd like to open the floor for discussion on what your thoughts are to that paragraph. (Pause) We're going to take a 10-minute break and go through this. Like I said, I missed the workshop with them and this is kind of hard stepping in at this point. Thanks.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Okay, I think we're ready. Go ahead, Pat.

MS. McCLENAHAN: Madam Chair, I'd like to make a correction for the record, please. The date of publication of the proposed rule was February 27th, 2002, not 2001. Sorry. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: This issue has been an interesting one. We look at our regions just from the Aleutians and Kodiak and most of our subsistence fish is taken under a state permit. It's something we've done and Arnie could tell you from our region at least, from our standpoint, we've done that for many years and it's worked for us. We don't have large river systems or areas that we can take fish from in Federal waters and I think it's something that we try to stay away from because a lot of our creeks and streams and stuff that are within the refuge, at least in the Izembek, nobody wants to over-utilize to cause any damage.

Given that, what we talked about and kind

of at least come to consensus on at this point is $500 per household member. And to also add the 50 percent must be used for subsistence. I think it's basically what Cook Inlet has in their section. It's not to exceed $500 per household member and then at least 50 percent of all fish taken under subsistence regulations must be kept

for the family's personal use.

I'm not sure if it's appropriate to add in the regulation that a permitting system must be required, a permit system, as a requirement because in that respect you can list your household members.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Under the State guidelines, they have to file for a permit before they get one anyway to get this permit, so I think it's already listed when they file for a State permit. They already list their household.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Madam Chair. Under the permit system that we get, they send you the permit and then you list the household members after you get that permit. On the thing of per household member, I want to clarify that person must be living in the household.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. I think just to back up a little bit, one of the issues that came up, some of the regions did not want a permit system in place. I think that, as part of the regulation and record keeping, that a permit system should be required.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, I don't have a problem with that. I don't know what the refuge would -- if they'd want to issue the permits to Kodiak. I don't know how much of a problem that would be.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chair. This spring I participated with a lot of the tribal entities in Kodiak in a subsistence meeting on salmon and Jim Fall put it together and maybe after Robert's done he might want to comment on the folks from that and then we had folks from all the villages and their thoughts on having additional permits. I think that folks were uncomfortable and we did resolve a way to get the State permit to be more workable. So I think that's a sticky issue for folks that are very rural, is obtaining permits, and it would be good to get some comment from Jim on the success of his meeting and what the thoughts were from the tribal entities and the villages. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thanks, Pat. One of the things, when we look from the Federal perspective, to not only try to work closely with the State, but to recognize that we're talking about the rural subsistence user and that's what I think the focus at this point

should be on.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Madam Chair, may I make a motion to get this thing going on 11? It would read: The transaction between rural resident, the exchange forecast, and the rest of the sentence would remain the same. I would like to add on to number 11, be added and modified with the language to read: The total cash value per household member of salmon taken in the Kodiak/Aleutian area exchanged in customary trade or barter to rural residents may not exceed $500 annually. That's the wording on 11. I'd ask for a second for discussion.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Is there a second?

MR. CRATTY: Second.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Now, we talked at length about per household, per member. We also had the discussion that Pete brought up that the household means those individuals living in the household. My feeling is that when we apply for a subsistence salmon permit, that we list under the State guidelines every individual within your household. That would be the ruling number or individuals that would be involved with this Federal permit. Is that correct? Am I saying it correctly?

MS. McCLENAHAN: Uh-huh.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: I have no more discussion on that one.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Under the State permit system, you can list people -- you know, like I'd put my mother. If I wanted to catch her fish for her, I could put her on my permit system. And that's what I wanted to get away from under this $500.

MS. McCLENAHAN: So I'm to understand that this is people living within your household are the ones that you want to list and you can specify that. Thank you.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: (Nods in the affirmative)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I have a motion made and seconded. All in favor -- do you want a roll call on this section?

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Roll call.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Michelle, can we have a roll call on the motion, please.

(Ms. Chivers calls the roll)

MR. CRATTY: Yes.

MR. LUKIN: Yes.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Yes.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

MR. HOLMES: (No answer)

MR. GUNDERSON: Yes.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yes.

MS. CHIVERS: John Foster. (No answer)

MR. PANAMAROFF: Yes.

MS. CHIVERS: Richard Zacharof. (No answer) I didn't hear what Patrick Holmes said.

MR. HOLMES: I didn't say anything. I was still trying to think. I think, particularly if this is between rural residents, I'll probably vote yes, but I'm concerned for the potential of overharvest of some of these small systems in the Aleutians. I think it's probably a really good idea. I'm torn between my social thoughts and conservation. I think there needs to be some really close monitoring, so I guess I'll give -- you know, I'm new to this whole process, so I'll probably go with the majority and vote yes, but with some worries. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Michelle. I think we have a unanimous vote at this point.

MS. CHIVERS: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat, I know we talked a little bit about this. Any kind of regulation that's set for any subsistence harvest to fish in Federal

waters has to be a proposal, I believe, through this Board that would be passed on to the Statewide Board and the enforcement would have to be with the refuge.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Madam Chair. Motion for number 12, I would ask that it reads in its entirety as it's brought forward with an add-on. That add-on is the total cash value per household member of salmon taken in the Kodiak/Aleutian area, exchange and customary trade or barter to others may not exceed $500 annually. At least 50 percent of all fish taken under the subsistence regulation must be kept for the family's personal use.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Question. Roll call.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Discussion. We just made a $1,000 per household member. Now we're going to the second section and changing it to $500 annually?

MR. TUTIAKOFF: All I'm doing is reiterating in 12 what I said in 11, except that I'm adding that at least 50 percent of all fish taken under subsistence regulations must be kept for the family's personal use and that's all I'm adding on there. So this kind of slows down the abuse that maybe Pat was discussing earlier.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Any other discussion?

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chair, I think this is a pretty good definition here and I really like this phrase of not selling to other fisheries businesses because I'm quite familiar with the problems in AYK and I think a lot of them did spin off from when that did occur, particularly with eggs, so I think that helps quite a bit and that does not constitute a significant commercial enterprise, but I would hope that if this makes it through the whole process, that there's really good monitoring of it. For Kodiak residents, the main areas for subsistence are the Buskin and then Afognak River, the Litnik, those areas are really, really

45 important for folks for food. I think that if there is
46 no way to monitor this, then I think it could be open for
47 abuse, but I'll go along with the majority again on it.
48 It's different here because that's where a very large
49 portion of the effort goes. If we add a value to this
50 monetarily, the I could see -- I kind of like a lot of

Pete's and some of the other folks' thoughts on commercializing it at all. I'm just concerned that this will create more effort and right now to fish the Buskin you've got to be down there at 6:00 o'clock in the morning. I'm sorry, I'm going on. I'll vote with the majority.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat. Any more discussion?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I'd like to hear a little bit from refuge enforcement. Are they going to be able to enforce any of this at all?

MR. GETMAN: Yes. I'm Mike Getman, the deputy manager out at the refuge. When there was talk about a permit process, I think the thing that came to mind was, one, you need to establish objectives for your permit. What is the information we need, why are we requiring one in addition to what we have now with the State process. I would encourage some thinking about, you know, if you're really trying to determine additional number of fish taken because of this change that there would be a mechanism to determine that. You'd also have to look at the aspects of the sale part of that, too. Just because somebody has a permit and catches X number of fish, that doesn't really quantify or give us any avenues for enforcement of that. So I think what we'd recommend before having a permit, think through that whole process to make sure that what we've established could be implemented and for the purposes that you desire.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: The State permitting system does not allow you to sell your fish, but under this Federal thing, only in Federal waters you're going to be able to sell this fish, so you can't use your State permit to do this.

MR. DEBBIN: Right. The concern would be was it a fish taken in Federal water or State water, too, especially like around Afognak Island where there's a certain distance from shore where jurisdictions change.

MR. CRATTY: I'd just like to state for the record that I feel like Pat and Peter there, I don't really agree with it. It kind of concerns me on the small systems and stuff, but then I've got a feeling towards Ivan, what's happening in the communities right now with income and everything. I just want to state

that for the record.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Speridon.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Madam Chair. Personally, I feel that I oppose the sale of subsistence. I've got to constantly remind myself of the population of people we are doing this for. Those people that cannot get out and work and earn enough money to sustain themselves and the cost of living. I had one question. At what level of sale constitutes a commercial enterprise. That's it.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Vince just said anything over $500 per household member.

MR. CRATTY: How are they going to keep track of this? I don't see how protection is going to be able to keep track of what's going on.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: It's interesting when we look at it from our region standpoint. I think one of the issues that did come up is wanting to get a more clear definition of customary trade because at this point, it's my understanding, it is very hard to enforce either by Federal or State agencies the way it's written. So the regulations and the guidelines come into place by your regional definition for enforcement purposes.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: In the smaller communities that we live in, I think that regulation and keeping track of who's doing what will eventually come out. If there's an abuse by an individual or family, I think it's on the community to bring it up and say, hey, you've got to stop because you're going to hurt our system and we won't have any fish and that's where, as a community and individuals, you've got to step forward and say that's enough. If they don't, then it's your duty to report it. Hopefully it doesn't get to that stage because we don't want to create a hard-working individual or family to have them go off and leave their family and go to jail. I don't think that's what we're trying to create here. We're hoping to create a system that will work for many, many years. It takes the individual to

45 step up and say that's enough.
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47 CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Ivan.
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49 MR. LUKIN: Well, I guess for me it's
50 kind of a tough issue. I grew up watching my

grandparents work hard at this stuff when I was a little guy in Afognak and some of you people seen some of that work. Over in those two chairs there, they'll kind of give you an idea of what we've been doing and our people have been doing for years. Somebody mentioned here yesterday about 14,000 years ago. People have been digging up information about our people. Whether it's that many years or not, I don't know, but I'll tell you what. We've been here for a long time and I believe we intend to stay here. I think before you people came we had laws set in place by ourselves and I think we'll continue to follow some of those ways that we were taught.

Then again I think about what's happening just on the island alone, work that our people grew up doing, which was commercial fisheries. Some of us were forced out of that because of the permit system and this 20 points or whatever came into law. Some of us had 18, 19 points and some of us didn't feel it was fair we had to get involved with it as far as paying a bunch of money to stay in something that we grew up doing. But there's just a number of things that I disagree with as far as some of these issues go.

You know, this thing on the goat and whatever else, you look at the animals that were non-native to the island. Over the years, things were worked out for subsistence use. I guess what I'm trying to say is that as long as these different types of whatever is brought in here and we find some use for them, we'll utilize it and some of the things we did in the past we'll continue to do. It's either we could work together or continue to disagree and not get along or whatever, but most of us, for the most part, want to work with you people, but then again I feel that you've got to look towards us and say, hey, you know, look at some of that history of us and do a little bending.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Tom.

MR. PANAMAROFF: I have a question for Pat. Did you say in your presentation something about the product that will be sold would have to meet the DEC

45 and other food product standards?
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47 MS. McCLENAHAN: What I said was that
48 what we're proposing won't change those laws. Those laws
49 are in place. There are State regulations that are
50 already in place and this doesn't intend to impinge on

any of those laws and regulations that are already in place.

MR. PANAMAROFF: Right. But does that mean that smoked salmon, for instance, that may be sold under these provisions would have to have the State certification and all that kind of stuff?

MS. McCLENAHAN: I'm not very familiar with the State regulations about quality of food, but whatever is in place now, you'll still have to meet those regulations. This doesn't change anything in that regard.

MR. PANAMAROFF: So, if somebody takes fish and smokes it and is going to sell it under this 12 to others, they would have to do what the ranchers do with food inspection and so on and so forth before it is sold to ensure public health and safety?

MS. McCLENAHAN: They would have to do whatever is required now. I'm sorry to be vague, but I don't know the State regulations in this regard.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Ida, do you want to answer that maybe.

MR. PANAMAROFF: You're just selling to an individual rather than it going to an institution that will then resell it.

MS. HILDEBRAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe you cleared it up yourselves. If you're just selling to me or some other Native person that has been eating this, there probably wouldn't be any enforcement in that State regulation. If you are, however, selling your subsistence-prepared foods to any organization or any business or whatever that's going to sell it to the general public, then, yes, you'd probably get cited under the State laws.

MR. PANAMAROFF: Okay, it's the general public part thing. I was thinking about several years ago when there was some kind of craft fair in Juneau and

45 somebody had jars of seal oil and DEC came in and took it
46 all, saying it hadn't been inspected and certified and
47 all that, but that was a craft fair open to the public,
48 so that's the distinction.
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50 MS. HILDEBRAND: Well, technically, since

the State law stands, they can apply it even to your sale to me. Thus far they haven't. Most of the State people we are speaking to say they're not interested in that. It's when it's going out and being sold, for instance, to restaurants, to stores to resell and that sort of thing, that's when they would enforce. The sale at AFN or the sale anywhere is technically a violation of the State laws, but it hasn't been enforced because it's so prevalent. I mean it's a small amount, but it is prevalent in Native practice or customary and traditional practice.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Ida.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Question.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: We have a motion on the floor and a second. The question has been called. Can we have a roll call vote, please.

(Ms. Chivers calls the roll)

MR. CRATTY: No.

MR. LUKIN: No.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Yes.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

MR. HOLMES: No.

MR. GUNDERSON: Yes.

MR. SIMEONOFF: No.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yes. I believe we have a 4-4.

MS. CHIVERS: We're not finished yet. Tom Panamaroff.

MR. PANAMAROFF: Yes.

MS. CHIVERS: We have 4 yes, 4 no.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: What was the vote? 5-4?

MS. CHIVERS: 4-4. Excuse me, yes.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: 5-4, yes?

MS. CHIVERS: Yes, 5-4; 5 yes and 4 no.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Madam Chair, I think I voted wrong on this motion. I'd like to change my vote.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: To yes?

MS. SIMEONOFF: To yes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: That will make it 6 yes and 3 no. That section is passed. Thank you. We'll move on to Section 13.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Madam Chair, I'd like to move to adopt Section 13 in its entirety with no additions.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Motion made and second. Discussion. I think Section 13 was pretty self-explanatory. Hearing none, may I have a roll call on Section 13.

(Ms. Chivers calls the roll)

MR. CRATTY: Yes.

MR. LUKIN: Yes.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Yes.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

MR. HOLMES: Yes.

MR. GUNDERSON: Yes

MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yes.

MR. PANAMAROFF: Yes.

MS. CHIVERS: It's unanimous.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Michelle. Pat, is that the conclusion of that portion?

MS. McCLENAHAN: Yes, Madam Chair, that concludes customary trade.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Pat. Move on to Federal and State coordination. I believe that's Steve Klein.

MS. CHIVERS: Madam Chair, I was just informed that we need to state for the record that there was no request for public testimony.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Michelle. For the record, there was no public testimony on customary trade.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. For Federal/State coordination, I have a much shorter briefing, I think. This is just for information purposes. There's no action required by the Council and I'll be happy to address any of your questions there. In your books, under Tab F, Page 15, there is a written briefing on coordination between Federal and State agencies. This morning I just want to update you on the status of working relations between Federal and State agencies relative to Federal Subsistence Management.

As you all know, coordination between the State and Federal agencies, it's critical for successful subsistence management and there's six points I would like to present to you this morning.

First, there is an interim Federal/State MOA or memorandum of agreement that was agreed to in April of 2000 and this was by the Commissioner of Fish & Game, Chair of the Alaska Board of Fish, Chair of the Alaska Board of Game, the Regional and State Directors for Fish & Wildlife Service, Park Service, Forest Service, BLM and BIA, as well as the Chair of the Federal Subsistence Board. Those were the MOA signatories.

Secondly, the purpose of that interim MOA was to establish guidelines for coordination between Federal agencies and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to manage subsistence use of Fish & Wildlife resources on

Federal public lands in Alaska.

Thirdly, there was an MOA working group formed which consisted of representatives of the five Federal agencies, as well as the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Divisions of Sport Fish, CommFish,

Subsistence, Board Support and Wildlife Conservation. This MOA working group has been meeting to develop protocols. Ida Hildebrand is a member in that working group. They're developing these protocols to describe how agencies work together to accomplish our common goals.

Fourthly, in terms of the protocols, the MOA working group is in the process of developing six protocols and these are described in your written briefing. I'll briefly go over those six protocols.

First is subsistence management information sharing and this is guiding how we share information between the Federal agencies and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. A final draft of that has been completed and it's ready for signatures.

The second protocol is on the Yukon River for subsistence fishery management and a final draft has been completed and it's pending signature.

The third protocol that the MOA working group is working on is regulatory coordination and there is -- on page 16 through 18 of your books, there is a thorough briefing on the regulatory coordination. They're anticipating to finish that protocol in late 2003.

The fourth protocol that's under development is fisheries regulatory management planning. The MOA working group is currently in the process of drafting the charge for that protocol.

Fifthly, there's a statewide in-season subsistence fishery management protocol and, here again, the MOA working group is drafting the charge to that group.

Finally, there's a protocol for subsistence use amounts and a team has been formed for that. There is a handout on the back table on the subsistence use amounts protocol. Actually, I believe they've had two meetings on that. The first meeting is

summarized in the handout. So those are the six protocols that are currently under development or nearing completion between Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the Federal agencies.

The fifth issue that we're trying to

involve Council members in both the protocols and coordination between Federal and State agencies. Finally, the Office of Subsistence Management has provided additional funds to the State of Alaska in 2002 for liaison and staff support to enhance coordination and cooperation between State and Federal agencies.

Madam Chair, that concludes my briefing and I'd be pleased to try to answer any questions you might have.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Steve, I have one. I thought I heard you mention under the MOA it allows ADF&G to enforce subsistence-caught fish on Federal waters. Is that what you said?

MR. KLEIN: No, I did not say that.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: We don't want to go back to the customary trade definition at this point. Are there any other questions for Steve?

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chair. I noticed in reading the MOA that was in our handout here a discussion of the scope of involvement of fishery advisory committees and regional advisory councils and I guess that was the biggest reason that I volunteered to seek a seat on the Council, was a hope for continued positive interaction between the advisory committees and the Council. I was wondering where you are on that because over the 30, 40 years I've been on Kodiak, that's always been a goal of folks in town, is to try and work with folks in the villages and we've had some good interactions here on deer in the last recent years and I know the advisory committee is really keen on trying to work out the goat problem. Are you developing protocols on how we should interact? I guess that's a big question for me.

MR. KLEIN: Madam Chair, Mr. Holmes. There is a committee established and, you're right, they're trying to deal with coordination between regional advisory councils and the State advisory committees. They're also trying to develop coordination between like

45 the Board of Fish and the Federal Subsidence Board, so
46 they do have a big charge, but they are slated for
47 towards the end of 2003, so in the next year and a half,
48 to finish that protocol. A draft would be available to
49 all the advisory councils before it was finalized. So, a
50 year and a half they should be complete.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chairman, Steve. I hope that this ends up not being too formal a process because neighbors talking together is probably a lot easier than me or Pete getting permission to call somebody in Anchorage if we can talk together. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat, did we do the new council member training? Was that done yesterday morning?

MS. CHIVERS: No, it has not happened yet.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think it might be appropriate for both Pat and Tom to get the public law and also to make sure that they're understanding this Council and what our roles are in regard to the Federal Subsistence Advisory Council. Maybe it would help for them to also understand the interaction with the State advisory councils and what that process is at this point. I sense we're crossing some boundaries continuously, a couple times this morning. I see a hand up. Ida.

MS. HILDEBRAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to briefly state, I'm on one of those subcommittees of the regulatory protocol. In answer to your question, Mr. Holmes, it's just in the very preliminary beginning stages and last year the Council elected who would serve on those various committees and Bill Thomas, the Southeast Regional Council Chair, and John Hanson of the Yukon/Kuskokwim/Delta Council is serving on that particular subcommittee and it is not to set something so formal that it will become more painful than helpful. I'd like to see how we can blend these two bodies on issues that are important to both bodies.

MR. HOLMES: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I politely got my ears boxed. I really don't know the rules of the game, so that's kind of what I'm trying to find out. I'm certainly not trying to usurp anybody's process.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat, I just

45 recognized that as maybe some crossing of boundaries here
46 and I think it would be very helpful for you to have the
47 training. There's also a manual of the law. I think it
48 would be worthwhile the different various groups of
49 agencies and staff people here to kind of work with these
50 guys a little bit after we get done today if they have

any questions in regard to the various roles and how we all interact I think would be very helpful. Steve, I think that's it. Thank you. Do we want to take about a five-minute break at this point?

(OFF RECORD)

(ON RECORD)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: We'll move on to 10-C or 8-C, statewide rural determination methodology contract. Pat.

MS. McCLENAHAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Pat McClenahan, Office of Subsistence Management. I've asked Pat Petrivelli to join me. In the event that you have some questions, she can help me answer them.

This is an informational report only and no action is required on the statewide rural determination methodology contract. A written report can be found at Tab F on page 19 and 20 in your Council book.

A method for determining whether a community is rural or non-rural was developed at the beginning of the Federal Subsistence Management Program and was used to make the initial rural and non-rural determinations in 1991.

Some concerns about the Board-approved method were expressed at the beginning, and have been raised after that as well. The latest was the reconsideration in 2001 of the 2000 Kenai Peninsula rural determination.

All rural and non-rural determinations are to be reviewed by the Board every 10 years. The next 10-year statewide review is approaching. The Board wanted to evaluate the concerns raised about the methodology currently being used. For that reason, the Board directed the Office of Subsistence Management to contract an independent third party to do the evaluation.

In September 2001 the Office of

Subsistence Management awarded a competitive bid contract to the University of Alaska Anchorage, the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER).

The contract is scheduled to be completed in June 2002. ISER will provide a method of determining

rural and non-rural status for Alaska communities to the Federal Subsistence Board.

The contract is going forward as planned. The first report, a comprehensive literature review, has been completed and all of the focus group meetings have been held.

We anticipate a public review of the two methods for rural and non-rural determination that ISER is developing for us. The review is planned during the regularly scheduled Fall 2002 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meetings.

Two Council representatives, Dan O'Hara and Gerald Nicholai, have been participating in the focus groups and they will participate in the Board deliberations when the Board reviews and makes a decision about any revisions of the rural determination methods. A Board decision is expected in late 2002.

Once the Board has decided on a rural/non-rural determination method, this method, the 2000 census data, and other data, will be used for a new statewide rural/non-rural determination, which is expected in 2003. That concludes my briefing.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Questions.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I have one. Is Kodiak being checked out for non-rural?

MS. PETRIVELLI: The whole state is under review and the methodology will determine the guidelines, but under the old guidelines anything under 2,500 people or less were automatically rural. Anything with populations of 7,000 or more were automatically non-rural and the in-between were evaluated. But the whole state, using the 2000 census numbers, will be evaluated in this process.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I also have a question if the Coast Guard is going to be included in the Kodiak.

MS. PETRIVELLI: Oh, because of the census designated places? There's different areas, but under our old methodology we aggregated those areas. So, like Kodiak would be aggregated with the Coast Guard base and the road area. In this new methodology, we'll have to look -- because on the Kenai Peninsula, those

aggregations were called into question of the criteria that we use, but this new methodology hopefully will provide clear-cut ways of grouping areas, but road-connected areas probably would be. It's hard to say how they would be aggregated, but they would be considered that maybe.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah. The Coast Guard base makes a big difference in the population of Kodiak and they do use our resources.

MS. PETRIVELLI: If there is any change though, there is a five-year grace period. It just depends upon the new methodology.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: You also have in there that the recommendation of Board decision for a final statewide rural/non-rural determination expected in 2003, is that still the goal or does it look like it's going to be met at this point?

MS. McCLENAHAN: Yes, Madam Chair, they are on schedule.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Other questions? (No audible responses) Thank you. Council membership balance. Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Madam Chair. For the record, my name is Steve Klein and I want to provide a briefing on Council membership balance. Again, this is for informational purposes and it really doesn't require action by the Council.

Recently, there was a letter from the Deputy Secretary of Interior, Mr. Steven Griles, concerning membership balance on the Regional Advisory Councils. In that letter, they requested that the Office of Subsistence Management review our procedures for recommending Council members to ensure that we're complying with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) regarding membership balance and representation of all affected user groups. That includes subsistence, sport, commercial, urban, rural, Native and non-Native. A copy

of that letter, along with a transmittal letter from the Chair of the Federal Subsistence Board, was sent to all Council members and there are copies on the back table there. It looks like this with a January 8th date from the Office of the Secretary.

In that letter, which I'll refer to as the Griles letter, they point out that, nationwide, there's an ongoing review of FACA committees to ensure that they're consistent with that act and that the committees and membership are, in fact, balanced. I think it's important to note that they didn't say anything is broke with our process. They just want us to take a look at our procedures and make sure they uphold the intent of the act.

We realize that letter might raise some concerns with you. I want to reassure you that we're looking forward to the opportunity to review our procedures and processes for Council member appointments. As Mitch indicated in his letter to you, we think we have a solid record and that we're complying with the intent of both ANILCA and FACA.

Since we received that letter, a committee of board members or their designees has been established by Mitch to undertake a review of the nominations process, including the selection process. That committee has three guiding principles I'll briefly go over that are guiding their efforts to look at membership balance.

First, they want to keep subsistence management and the goals of ANILCA Title 8 as the primary focus in our procedures to ensure membership balance on the councils in accordance with FACA.

Secondly, they're promoting selection of council members among those who will work constructively to uphold the ANILCA Title 8 mandate.

Thirdly, that they recognize there are several interests that are directly affected by the Federal subsistence program and that these interests should be provided an opportunity to be directly involved in the subsistence management process.

The committee is going to provide their recommendations back to the Board and after review by the Board, recommendations will be forwarded to Deputy

45 Secretary Griles and we'll keep the councils informed of
46 the committee's work and what goes back to Washington.
47
48 That concludes my briefing, Madam Chair,
49 and I'd be pleased to answer any questions.
50

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Steve, will this process at any point in time -- are the councils going to have any input as to the guidelines that are being set prior to them going back to the statewide board for review?

MR. KLEIN: This is kind of on the fast track. The Board will have their recommendations and it will go forward to Mitch and whether it comes back to the councils, that's really going to be up to Mitch and it will be affected by how much time we have before we get back to Washington. I think the committee members on there, they're concerned. I think they feel the process isn't broken. We have a good process. It is working and I think your council is a good example. There are commercial interests, there are sport interests. You have an urban and a rural mix. Hopefully, we can convince Washington that nothing is broke and we don't need any major changes. There might be some changes that need to be made and hopefully those will be constructive changes that improve our processes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I agree, because this council does have people from the various groups that we look at. My concern in reading the letter is there is a public process that allows for the various other groups to participate and I'd hate to see the dynamics of this come apart, so to speak, and redoing that whole process because I feel that this does work the way it is.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I was just a little concerned about how many other user groups are going to be allowed to be on this council or are they going to leave it at this number or are they going to increase numbers?

MR. KLEIN: I can't really guess. I mean right now we have about 100 to 130 council members. I don't see that number -- I wouldn't think that would grow. What they're looking at is the balance among the number of members we currently do have. The preliminary review we did have, there is a mix and hopefully we can convince Washington that we do have a good mix there and

45 the process isn't broke.
46
47 This really is motivated by the highest
48 political levels there. You've got senators and
49 representatives talking to the secretary back in
50 Washington and this is kind of the stuff that comes out.

I know this working group is trying to uphold your interests. They feel as I do and hopefully they can convince Washington.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Madam Chair, I'd recommend that the Council address this issue to Secretary Giles with a response from this Council that we feel that this mix, as you stated, is well-rounded. We have interested parties from every group on this Council and I think they ought to hear that from us. I'd recommend a letter from the Chair stating that we -- don't fix what isn't broken. Don't try to break it anyway. I don't know where this is coming from. I don't understand why -- maybe some group outside the state of Alaska is pushing to get more representation on these regional advisory councils statewide because they see the impact. I think we ought to send a letter to him.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: We can do that. We'll do that. Anything else for Steve?

MR. LUKIN: I'd like to say a couple things here. I think if there's anything -- you know, something comes in and there's different representation coming here, I think we need to think strongly about changing the name of this council. What are we going to call ourselves once we get representation from -- you know, whatever else they're looking at. I don't think we could call it subsistence. We need to start thinking of renaming it if things are going to change. If things do change, the Native people starting to back away and eventually will go back to the ways we were raised on. So I'd just like to let you know that's kind of what I'm thinking at this point.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: The next item is E, Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program and that is Steve Klein.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. For

45 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, we have four
46 topics we want to cover. I think the first three would
47 probably be 15 minutes or less per item. The last one,
48 item four, regional issues and information needs review
49 and update, I would like to spend a little time on that.
50 I think we'd probably need up to an hour for that if the

Council wanted to spend an hour.

Della, you had made reference earlier about the disparate amount of money that's going a little further north and should be in Kodiak and Aleutians. I think that item four really is the solution. We need better focused issues and information needs so that more of that money ends up here. So I would hope we could spend up to an hour on the fourth topic. I think we could probably cover those first three before lunch if it pleases the Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: That's fine, Steve. Go ahead.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. The first topic is the 2003 Call for Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Study Proposals. That is in your book. It's page 21 under Tab F. I'll just provide a brief introduction here for new Council members.

The Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program is a monitoring program to provide information to manage Federal subsistence fisheries on Federal Conservation Units. When the Federal government moved into Federal subsistence management back in 1999, probably one of the good things that came out of Washington was this monitoring program.

The Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture said, well, no matter what happens, whether the Federal government is managing, whether State government is managing, there's not enough information to manage these fisheries and ensure a subsistence priority, so they came up with about $7 million for this monitoring program so that we could provide more information to the managers, whether they be Federal or State.

I have the fortunate position to be the chief of the division that implements this monitoring program. This is definitely something that isn't broke. I'm very proud of the monitoring program and I think it's benefitting our managers and the subsistence users that live along the rivers and on the islands.

45
46 Every year we develop an annual
47 monitoring plan and most of you have been through that
48 process. We're currently developing a plan for 2003.
49 The way this process starts and what I want to just
50 briefly cover in this briefing is the process we're using

for 2003. Page 21 is the request for proposals that did go out. This went out in November of 2001 requesting proposals and that's what starts our annual management plan process.

For 2003, we have about $1.3 million to fund studies and these are divided into several information types. This program is both biological and social. We fund studies for biological studies, stock status and trends, mostly salmon, but we also fund studies for harvest monitoring and traditional ecological knowledge or TEK. Mr. Holmes, you'll learn that acronym real quick here, I suspect.

The funding that is available in 2003, it is less than previous years and generally we're funding these studies in three-year increments. In 2001, we funded a full $7 million and the amount of money in 2003 reflects the continuing commitment of dollars to fund those studies over three years.

Also in 2003 we're funding a Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. We're funding biologists and social scientists in rural areas to help develop and implement this monitoring program and that will run about $1 million a year, so that's further reducing the money. So, in 2003, we're looking at $1.3 million. You will note that in 2004 though we're looking at about $4.5 million available.

With the reduced funding available in 2003, we're targeting primarily two areas. One, continuation of existing projects that were funded in either 2000 or 2001. As you know, some of the projects we're funding are to provide escapement information, to set escapement goals, to monitor escapement, so the in-season managers can provide the subsistence priority. Those generally don't go away after three years. It's something you need to fund over a very long period of time to manage the fisheries there. Some of them probably forever.

Some of those studies that were funded in 2000 and 2001, their funding ends in 2003. They'll be

seeking additional funding. So we want to ensure that those high-priority projects are considered in 2003. We anticipate, of the $1.3 million, about $300,000 would be available for new projects. We did request new projects for 2003, although we identified there would probably only be about $300,000 available.

The process we use, we send out the request for proposals and there's two things we send out with that request for proposals, or what I'm going to say is RFP. One is the issues and information needs. That will be our fourth topic that we cover probably after lunch. But that summarizes the top priorities for all of the 10 councils, including Kodiak/Aleutians. Actually, that appears in your book following this three-page request for proposals.

Secondly, we send a guide, basically instructions, on how to prepare a proposal. The process is, first, we get these two-page proposals that kind of summarize why this is important to subsistence users, what they want to accomplish and how much it's going to cost. We take those two-page proposals and I have a staff of fish biologists and anthropologists that look these over and then we present what we feel are the highest priorities to a technical body that includes the five Federal agencies and Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Division of Sport Fish, CommFish and Subsistence. That technical body reviews them and decides which are the highest priorities and then we request a full-blown investigation plan.

I'm on the Schedule now on page 23. On the schedule there, it says March 31st, investigation plans requested for the strongest proposals. That will be after that technical review committee composed of State and Federal scientists reviews the two-page proposals. We'll select the strongest of those and request investigation plans. The TRC or Technical Review Committee will look at those and evaluate those and make recommendations that we'll bring to the councils for your review and then later to the Federal Subsistence Board. By December, funding decisions will be made by the Board and this will be after your fall meetings where we present our recommendations to you. In January, investigators will be notified and we'll kick that $1.3 million out to the scientists.

For 2003, the two-page proposals, they were due by February 15th. We've received those. We've received about 56. Actually, I think about 10 of them

were from your area. The biologist and anthropologists are looking those over and we'll see you in the fall and present those to you for your recommendations. So that's where we're at with the 2003 process. If there's any questions, I'd be happy to try to answer them.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: At what point do we receive copies of the existing proposals? Is that in September? We don't get them prior?

MR. KLEIN: When we get the investigation plans, we'll summarize those, as in years past, and those will be in your fall Council books. It will be more than $1.3 million worth of proposals because we want you to weigh in and have some selection of what you think should go forward. So it will probably be like $2.5 million worth of proposals and we'll summarize those and present those to you at your fall meeting. Those will be in the fall Council books.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Please continue, Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Madam Chair, Council members. The second topic for the monitoring program is a status of the studies that you funded and the Board funded in 2000 and 2001.

And for the Kodiak/Aleutians region we funded five studies in those two years, three in Kodiak/Aleutians and then two interregional studies that have a direct bearing on the areas you represent. There's a handout on this and it's entitled Status of 2000/2001 Fisheries Resources Monitoring Program Studies. Do they have that Michelle?

MS. CHIVERS: They (microphone shut off)

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Is that this one? Long-term Planning and Monitoring Program.

MR. KLEIN: That's our fourth one, it's a two-page handout.

(Pause)

MR. KLEIN: Well, I stand corrected, I guess you don't have a copy of that, and I apologize for that. I'll do a very good summary there and we'll get you a version of that, I'll have it faxed during lunch

45 and get that in front of you. But I just wanted to
46 summarize the results of the five studies that you have
47 funded. The five studies that have been funded in
48 Kodiak/Aleutians all address salmon, and I'm happy to
49 report that in terms of accomplishing their objective,
50 being on schedule and within budget, all five of them are

doing an excellent job.

One of them has been completed and that is Statewide Subsistence Fisheries Harvest Monitoring. In fact, one of the principal investigators, Jim Fall, is in the audience this morning. But they produced a final report and it's this report on 1999 Annual Report on Alaska Subsistence Fisheries. If you don't have a copy of that we can certainly get you one, it's an excellent compilation of the subsistence fisheries all across the state of Alaska by region and it details what subsistence information we are getting from surveys, the calendars and permit systems and just pulls it all together in one area and it's an excellent reference there for any subsistence work. That study has been completed.

There's four others that are currently ongoing, and I'll provide a brief summary of those. One is on the Buskin River to count sockeye salmon and actually Donn Tracy will be doing an update on that this afternoon when the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has the floor. But on the Buskin they're counting sockeye, they've counted over 20,000 sockeye in 2001. They're completing all their objectives and hiring three local residents to help them operate the weirs on the Buskin River. And, as I said, Donn will give a full presentation on that. And we're very pleased with the results of that study.

A second study is at McLees Lake on Unalaska Island and there they're counting sockeye salmon with a weir as well. And there they counted -- this is operated by the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Kenai Fisheries Office, on -- there they've counted 46,000 sockeye last year and their working with the tribal groups there. And that project also is a success.

The third projects is Mortenson Creek on Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. Again they're achieving their objectives. That's being implemented by the Fish and Wildlife Service as well. They counted -- they were using counting towers to count sockeye and coho salmon as they migrated up Mortenson Creek and they counted over 4,000 sockeye and 5,000 coho last year and

they're achieving their objectives. They're having a little difficulty finding a local residents to work on the project, but all the biological objectives are being achieved.

And then the final project is also by Dr.

Fall there and it's an implementation of statewide subsistence fisheries harvest assessment strategy. And they're having workshops all across the state to try to improve our subsistence harvest estimates and the strategies we use to get that information. And for this project they're planning 12 workshops in the local communities. And, in fact, the first workshop was held in here in Kodiak in May of last year and they brought together tribal and Federal and State representatives, as well as local residents to develop recommendations to improve the permit process, including establishing local permit vendors in each of the six Kodiak Island villages. And the State followed up with that and trained people in the six island villages and provided permits so the could issue the permits right there.

ADF&G also, as a result of that workshop, they're developing operational plans for -- didn't really have those in place before, so with the operational plans, hopefully, identify the objectives and methods for the studies. So Kodiak had one of the workshops, there will be 11 other workshops across the state and we should have a report out for your next Council meeting for your review.

So that's kind of a summary of the five studies that you funded in 2000 and 2001. You'll hear about the one on the Buskin a little later today and Jim Fall is here to answer any questions on the harvest assessment methodology you might have. And we're hoping to have more studies funded in the Kodiak/Aleutians region. And I apologize you don't have a written summary of that, you'll have it after lunch.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Steve. Is there any questions for Steve?

(No audible responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Go ahead and.....

MR. KLEIN: Okay. The third topic, hope you're not getting tired of listening to me, is on the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. There we do

45 have a handout, it's a one-page handout, and it's also
46 available on the back table. The Partners for Fisheries
47 Monitoring Program, which I'll just call Partners
48 Program, this is -- again, when we implemented this
49 fisheries resource monitoring program the Secretaries of
50 Interior and Agriculture, they said we need more

information. They also realized we need more local involvement, and the Regional Advisory Councils are good example of local involvement.

But for this monitoring program what the Office of Subsistence Management has decided is let's fund some people, some biologists, some professional fish biologists and anthropologists out in rural Alaska to help us develop and implement this monitoring program. So we're going to fund up to 10 positions and that will probably be at a cost up to a million dollars there, to implement this Partners Program. The schedule is in the handout. We had call for proposals back in August, those proposals were due in November. And then we had an evaluation panel meet to sift through all the applications there and find out which ones best would accomplish the goals of the program and where we might best fund positions. And we're in the final negotiations of selecting and adjusting the costs for those 10 positions and I was hoping we'd have a public announcement for you before this meeting, but probably shortly after this meeting there should be an announcement of the positions that will be filled under this program and, again, it should be up to 10 fish biologists and social scientists in rural areas of Alaska to help us implement this monitoring program.

And we'll use five-year cooperative agreements to fund those positions, so we'll fund them for five years. And I think this will really be big boost to the program and it'll help us, I think, identify our issues and information needs, it'll help us fund high quality studies, it'll help us coordinate our efforts and I look for it to be very successful part of the overall monitoring program.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Steve. Any questions, discussion?

MR. CRATTY: Yeah, I have a question. Steve, did you guys -- I know you're going to hire scientists and stuff, but you guys think of using local knowledge also?

45 MR. KLEIN: Yes, and actually they'll be
46 hired -- they're not going to work for the Federal
47 government, they'll work for rural and tribal
48 organizations and, yeah, I'm hoping that will help us
49 integrate the local knowledge into this program.
50

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I guess we can continue on, Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Madam Chair, the final topic is Regional Issues and Information Review and Update, and there is a 12-page document entitled Long-term Planning for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, Bristol Bay, Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak/Aleutians Region. Vincent has a copy in his hand, it has a graph on it and these are.....

MS. CHIVERS: It's going to be a loose copy with all the handouts that I gave you.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Is this the one you said would take an hour?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Maybe recommend we go to lunch.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Want to go to lunch?

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Yeah.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Vince has a recommendation to go ahead and break for lunch at this point and then we can just start this after lunch and continue right through then.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Got to get Steve refueled there.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Come back 1:00 o'clock.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, I need to refuel. I'll appreciate that.

(Laughter)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: You were gliding along so smooth there, we just thought we'd keep going,

45 you'd have it done by 12. Okay, if that's okay with
46 everybody we'll go ahead and break for lunch and return
47 at 1:00 o'clock.
48
49 (Off record)
50

(On record)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: After we finish this regional issues and information needs review update we need to go back to Item number 7 or 9, depending on which agenda you have, to the draft resolution by the YK-Delta, Western Interior, Eastern Interior Councils regarding high seas salmon bycatch. And minutes from December 9, 2001. I think, as a consensus, given that the amount of reports and the time I think we need to spend with them, we'll go ahead a spend a half hour on the regional issues and information needs review and I think we kind of talked a little bit about putting together a committee to work on this task. And with that, we'll turn it back to Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Madam Chair, Council members. The handout we're going to use for the next 30 minutes is entitle Long-term Planning for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, Bristol Bay, Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Aleutians Region. And this was prepared by Steve Fried, who's my biologist and he's there for your region and the Bristol Bay, Alaska Peninsula region. And I think he's done an excellent job putting together this document. What we're trying to do with this document is to steer the project proposals that we get for the monitoring program towards your highest priority needs. And I think our whole subsistence management program, you're very important to that process, for the monitoring program you're critical and we rely upon your input to help us direct where we -- what studies we fund, so that we can conserve the resources, manage them and ensure the subsistence priority.

And I think this is one area with the Kodiak/Aleutians Council, we need to do a little better there to focus and prioritize our issues and information needs, and I think that work group will help us. When we have focused issues and information needs and, better yet, if they're prioritized, I think the studies that come in are going to be focused in on that. If we don't have our issues and information needs well identified, the projects drive the process rather than you, so we

45 want to put forth some more effort, and I think the work
46 group will help us do that.
47
48 And it's very timely that we're doing
49 this now. If you look at the figure at the bottom of
50 Page 1 there it kind of summarizes the funding. There's

a lot of information in that graph. What's most important is that in 2004 there should be about close to $5,000,000 available for studies. Sometime by November of this year we'll start the whole process again with a call for proposals for 2004 and there's going to be a lot of -- this year I told you we had 1.3 million available, next year it will be close to five million. And for your region, which is combined with Bristol Bay and Alaska Peninsula that will be about 500,000 that will be available in 2004.

So we got probably about the next seven or eight months to fine tune our issues and information needs. And those are included in your books under Tab F and I don't want to use that as a starting point, but there is a section in there for Kodiak/Aleutians and it's pretty sparse and we haven't identified all the needs that are out there. That's what we need to fix here and begin that process today.

So on Page 3, the way Steve laid this out was really there's five questions we need to answer in terms of coming up with a long-term plan that focuses your issues and information needs. And the first question is how well have the funded studies addressed your issues and information needs? Secondly, have the most important issues and information needs been identified? Do we have the most important needs on the list? Thirdly, which needs require a continued collection of long-term datasets? And earlier I said some information you need to collect year after year, others it might just be for a year or two to get a picture and you might repeat it five years from then. Fourthly, are there matching or alternative funding sources to consider when selecting studies where we can combine our efforts with other funding opportunities, we leverage more, we can do more. So we want to explore that question. And then finally the fifth question, what results have been obtained from funded studies and how have they been used?

For that fifth question I kind of summarized the five studies that have been funded in the Kodiak/Aleutians region. To fully answer this question,

45 though, at your next meeting, your fall Council meeting,
46 we would like the opportunity to present the more
47 detailed results from all of those studies. We'll have
48 results from them and I think that's the best opportunity
49 to answer that question, when we have the actual data,
50 it's been analyzed and recorded upon. So for the fall

meeting I propose we address that fifth question. And, actually, if there's -- we'll get you that handout from 2000 and 2001 summarizing the studies. If there's speakers from, say, the investigators from those studies, that you would like to come to your Council meeting in the fall to present their findings, let Michelle know and we'll do our best to coordinate bringing some of them in to actually present their findings.

So that leaves us with four questions to address today, and this isn't the final end point, we're going to need to continue to work together to develop a long-term plan for the Kodiak/Aleutians region. But by going through these questions we can identify where the information gaps are and begin directing the monitoring program and fill in those gaps.

So two-thirds of the way down on Page 3 is the first question and it's how well have the funded studies addressed the issues and information needs? And, again, we have stock status and trends, harvest monitoring and TEK studies. On Pages 4 and 5 it kind of summarizes what studies have been funded for those three data types. So for stock status and trends 12 studies have been funded by the monitoring program. Eight of them in Bristol Bay, Alaska Peninsula, three in the Kodiak/Aleutians and one interregional or statewide. For harvest monitoring there's been seven studies and for traditional ecological knowledge there's another five.

And then there is another category, really, which we're just beginning to get into, and that's Page 5, database development and information accessibility. As we're getting information from these monitoring program studies, and actually like this year, there's probably a hundred studies going on this year, we need to start getting databases aggregated and making that information available so that you can get them, say, off the Internet, from libraries and we're trying to get databases pulled together to make that information available. And there's two studies there that we've begun funding.

So that's an itemized list of the studies

that we have funded. There's some issues and information needs that you've identified that we have not addressed and one of them is Nelson River weir to count coho salmon and another is outside of your region, a Northern pike assessment in Alagnak River in Bristol Bay. Those are two studies that we have not addressed and more pertinent

to you is Nelson River coho salmon. There's also a listing of four other projects that we haven't addressed within the Bristol Bay, Kodiak/Aleutians area. Some of those we can't address, for example, hatchery enhancement or contaminants studies. And, actually, it was this Council here where they suggested some hatchery enhancement projects. We did take that to the Board and for hatchery enhancement or contaminant studies basically the Board decided that that best be left to the land management agencies and not this monitoring program, so that's an area where we're really unable to do anything with the monitoring program.

If you turn to Page 6, it's kind of -- I'm doing kind of the faster version of this handout here. On Page 6 is the conclusion for the first question and basically Steve Fried, your biologist, his conclusion is that we've been fairly successful in directing funding efforts towards the issues and information needs that you've identified, but we probably need to review and revise that list. And the new list should not include issues that cannot be addressed by the monitoring program and that would include, say, hatchery enhancement or contaminant studies. And we should try to prioritize so that the funding is directed at our highest priorities and your most important issues. So that's kind of the answer to the first question.

The second question is, have the most important issues and information needs been identified for your region? And Steve took a look at your issues and information needs and took a stab at revising that. And if you look at the bottom half of Page 6, it start stocks status and trends, Bristol Bay, Alaska Peninsula, that's for your sister region. On Page 7 for the Kodiak/Aleutians, he's taken a step at revising the stock status and trends issues and information needs for Kodiak/Aleutians. And for salmon there's two species that seem to be most important for subsistence, sockeye salmon, and that includes the Buskin River, McLees Lake and Mortenson's Creek. And those are three areas where we currently have studies and I presume are a priority for this Council. And then also coho salmon and, there again, Mortenson Creek and Nelson -- or Caribou River on

the Peninsula.

So for salmon escapement monitoring those are the highest priorities and I think the work group -- this is just an initial attempt to recategorize your information needs. I would hope the work group could

pick this up and start taking ownership and fine tuning it to what the issues and information needs are for the Council.

In addition to escapement monitoring, there's also escapement goal evaluation and development, so that we can sustain stocks and provide for subsistence needs. That's another information need, we believe, that needs to be addressed.

And then on Page 8 we have the harvest monitoring issues and information needs and that includes harvest estimates where were trying to determine the importance of harvest of various fish species, in various communities and also monitoring annual changes in where people are fishing, the species harvested, particularly for declining salmon runs. So for harvest estimates, that's a priority information need, as well as study design. And the two items we've listed there are validity and reliability of harvest data collection methods and, secondly, developing a plan to implement annual harvest assessments for the most important subsistence fisheries. We're very fortunate to have Jim Fall to help us on some of these studies and we do have ongoing projects, looking at those -- actually both harvest estimates and study design.

And the third information need is TEK and that includes documenting the fishery resource knowledge, both long-term trends and sources of variation and abundance, as well as fish life history and movement patterns. And then, secondly, documenting harvest knowledge and that can include fishery resource uses, harvest methods and traditional practices.

And then the fourth and final data type is database development and information accessibility, and this includes developing databases as well as designing query reports and forms to ensure that information is accessible and available to you.

So for the second question, I think this revised list is more on target with the projects that are ongoing in your area and what the information needs are.

45 I think that's a starting point for this work group to
46 begin further working with the issues and information
47 needs and coming up with a list that truly represents
48 what you view as the highest priorities for projects in
49 the Kodiak/Aleutians area.
50

The third question we're addressing is which issues and information needs require long-term datasets for your region and there I think we can jump straight to the conclusion on Page 10. And within your region there are some species where we do need long-term collection of information, particularly for salmon. And from what we funded in your region, I think it includes the Buskin River, McLees Lake and Mortenson Creek. With other species, other than -- well, there very well could be other systems that need to be monitored and there's probably other -- with the other species, for example, Dolly Varden, those could be priorities for you, too. And that's where we need the work group to start addressing where non-salmon species fit into the priority both for stock status and trends, as well as harvest monitoring and TEK information.

The fourth and final question we need to address are there matching or alternative funding sources where we can get financial resources to fund studies, and Steve identified two. One is the North Pacific Research Board, the second is the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission, where they have funding sources in the millions of dollars, but unfort -- well, most of that funding is directed at marine areas, which that's definitely of importance. I think a lot of our salmon declines, the reason is because of what's happening out in the ocean and, fortunately, there's other funding sources looking at that. Unfortunately it's not really a source that we can pair up with for this monitoring program, which is primarily focused in the fresh water environment.

So there is one potential source, and that's Western Alaska Salmon Initiative that's beginning to come on line and they have $5,000,000 in the Governor's fund, I think that's aimed more at the Yukon-Kuskokwim, but I think there may be potential for some of that to be directed at the Aleutians. And as that process evolves we'll see if we can tap that resource, too, to leverage the funding within the monitoring program.

So that's kind of a summary that

45 addresses those four questions I think we need to address
46 for a long-term planning. Steve Fried took it an attempt
47 at coming up with a list that we felt met -- or
48 identified the issues that are more important to you, but
49 I think that's a starting point and then Steve and
50 probably an anthropologist on my staff would gladly work

with you to fine tune that list and we would hope you have some members on your Council that would work with us to refine that list, so that we have a longer term plan that we can focus our future efforts.

And that concludes my presentation, but I'd like to hear from you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Steve. Just in some of the discussion with some of the Council members, we know that this is of great importance to us and it's an area that we definitely need to put some work in. And I think getting our committee, maybe, of two members from the Aleutians and two from Kodiak, that can work with Steve Fried and the anthropologist, I think, at least try and get some information and direction within the next April and May because for the summer months it's kind of hard to get people together. There's already been mention of forest studies that I've heard from various Council member that they feel, at this point, that need to be looked at.

So I'd recommend at least for the Aleutian side to have Paul Gunderson and John Foster, you think? Or do you want me to do this?

MR. GUNDERSON: Uh-huh, John.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: John?

MR. GUNDERSON: Yeah, John would be fine.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: And John Foster. And if I can get two of you from the Kodiak side to sit on this committee, anyone volunteer?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I'll do it.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pete Squartsoff and Pete Holmes

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Pat.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat Holmes, I'm

45 sorry, Pat. I turned the name thing. Is that okay?
46
47 MR. KLEIN: Madam Chair, that would be
48 outstanding and I'll have Steve get in touch with those
49 four and between teleconferences or meetings, we'll come
50 up with a refined list and bring that back to the

Council. And I guess on the fall Council meeting, then, we could, hopefully, finalize a list and have it prioritize. I think that'll serve the Council very well if we can get that work group assembled and we'll make April/May a priority to do that.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Any other questions for Steve? Pat.

MR. HOLMES: I was just wondering if I could just make a comment. I think it's just wonderful that this program exists because of the areas that you've identified for support are just so important for subsistence here in Kodiak and on the Peninsula and in the Aleutians. And myself having surveyed McLees Lake, in the '80s, and just having that count of 46,000 sockeye into that system, to me, is just so phenomenal because it's an incredibly productive system and so important to the folks on Unalaska for subsistence and I think you're just doing a great job.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Any other questions?

(No audible responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Steve.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think at this time we'll move on to the resolution for the three Councils, if I can find it in here. Looks like it's in Tab C.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: It's under Chair's report.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Under Chair's report. I guess I will cover this one. This resolution is a result of the -- I talked earlier of the joint meeting of the three Council and myself in October. And at that meeting I did mention the issue of the Area M. And the high seas bycatch on the chum salmon was

45 discussed quite a bit and NMFS did an excellent report.
46 And from the course of that discussion and the report the
47 three Council did put together a resolution that they,
48 it's my understanding, have passed. And in a letter
49 from, I think it was, Gerald, who is the Chair of the
50 Eastern Council, wanted to know if other areas or

Councils or regions would, in their winter meetings, support this resolution.

One of the -- and I wish I had some way to display this, is one of the charts that we had shows that there is a large area close to Unimak, it's about basically north of Unimak, that there is a high percentage of the bycatch of chum salmon and this is trawl fishing. And, basically, it's north and west of Unimak. This is not our guys with our salmon fisheries, nor is it the guys that do the bottom fish fisheries in our region, this is -- there was another one that's got the numbers on it.

So basically they're asking for our support with this resolution, and I talked to quite a few people in the region, at least in our region, about this resolution and they, basically, feel that we should support it.

Is there any questions?

(No audible responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Ida, do you have something that you might want to add to any of that?

MR. UBERUAGA: Yeah, I got some additional information on bycatch.

REPORTER: I can't hear a word you're saying, Richard.

MR. UBERUAGA: Richard Uberuaga. I've got some additional information on salmon bycatch and a brief summary of action taken by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council here in February, so I'll pass it out to each of you right now.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Do you want to, after you pass it out, do kind of a verbal review?

MR. UBERUAGA: This is a technical paper and I can give a quick summary of the North Pacific

45 Fisheries Management Council actions. They passed a
46 motion in February -- did you get that, did I send you
47 that? And go the other way now. Council's actions, it's
48 on the second page, there's a summary on this one. I
49 don't think you've seen this one, Della. That's the
50 important one on the second page. Then I got a third

handout, just a short summary of group called Oceania that's done some work bycatch issues.

MS. KERR: Why don't I pass these out while you talk in the microphone?

MR. UBERUAGA: Okay.

(Laughter)

MR. UBERUAGA: So the important action by North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is on the second page of the two or three-page handout, the second handout I gave you. There's a little summary on the action -- they passed a motion, basically, on the -- they're looking at establishing bycatch limits based on average catch over a number of years. So I'll let you read that and as you read that you can see it, it says the motion is to conduct an analysis to consider alternatives. So that's more additional information on the bycatch issue, which I'm sure you're familiar with, so that's all I've got.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Yes. Did anybody have any questions of Richard as he runs away.

(Laughter)

MR. LUKIN: I have one. What's happening with all this fish that's being caught here?

MR. UBERUAGA: I'm going to let you read the technical article where it describes the bycatch that's going on. Beyond this information I've given you, I don't have the specific knowledge about any individual questions you might have, so I can't add anything, other than that. Other than it looks like the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is starting to address the bycatch issue in a meaningful way by looking at alternative to set limits. Beyond that I'm not going to much help to you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: There's a lot of

45 information here and I've received a lot of information
46 from various people and different agencies that pretty
47 much all say the same thing. And the impacts, if there's
48 a -- I don't know if people have a handout on this, Page
49 2 of the overview of the Salmon Bycatch Alaska Ground
50 Fisheries, pretty much tells the story. I guess my

recommendation, at this point, would be to support the resolution. And, unfortunately, I know a lot of us didn't have -- many of you didn't have enough time to go through some of this and, even more so, that we had someone here to kind of do a presentation. And we may, at the fall meeting, ask to have somebody to cover this issue.

(Pause)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Discussion, questions? Go ahead, Pat.

MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I have a question for the gentleman that just spoke up. You have a note here on a motion on the Gulf of Alaska, are they doing something similar for the Bering Sea?

MR. UBERUAGA: I'm not familiar what's going on in the Bering Sea in terms of the bycatch issue. Other people in the audience may be able to help you. This is just information I just found the other day and I thought it would be of interest to you in your understanding of the overall issue, so in terms of Bering Sea, I'm not sure.

MR. HOLMES: So basically this is -- it seems then, you know, that they're at least, philosophically, addressing the Gulf of Alaska, then they probably are considering similar things for the Bering Sea.

MR. UBERUAGA: Again, I don't know what the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is doing, but they are beginning to address the issue, so -- the intent, of course, of the resolution passed by the Tri-Council was to engage North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NMFS and enter -- you know, get the dialogue and communication with the Regional Advisory Council going and sharing of information. That's all I've got.

MR. CRATTY: Yeah, I'd like to make a motion to support this resolution, 02-.....

MR. HOLMES: Second.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Motion made by Al Cratty, seconded by Pat Holmes. All in favor signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Motion carried. Thank you. I do have the report that NMFS did and if I could have Michelle take it back to Anchorage and print, because I think it has more impact as it's printed in color and get a copy to all of the Council members because it is an excellent report. And this is on the Bering Sea.

Next item on the agenda was the minutes of the last meeting.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: We did those.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: You did do that?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: (Nods affirmatively)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Oh, okay. So I guess we are at the call for 2001 Annual Report issues.

MS. CHIVERS: Yes, Madam Chair, we just wanted to see what you wanted in your Annual Report, I'm getting ready to prepare, so I wanted to know what items you wanted listed, or what the Council wanted listed. If you have any suggestions.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Michelle, I think what we've done in the past is kind of went through our minutes and made a list of some of the issues. I think maybe I can try to get a letter or something for that after I get back.

MS. CHIVERS: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: The next item is the agency reports and I'd like Pat Gonzales with the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. I'd like to thank Pat for being here for a couple of reasons and I'm not afraid to

45 say. We haven't had someone from the Izembek Refuge in
46 person for a year and a half. And it's something, I
47 think, this Council, I've heard a lot of concerns about
48 representation from Izembek not being here, it's very
49 important. And I guess we will figure out a way that I
50 need to get that across, because I don't want to put you

on the spot, I'm thankful you're here.

MR. GONZALES: I understand.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: But with that, this is Pat and he is the Acting -- are you Acting Refuge Manager?

MR. GONZALES: Yes, that's correct. Rick Poetter sends his apologies. He had annual leave scheduled long time ago, last year, and it just coincided with this meeting, so I'm here and glad to participate. I'm in a learning mode, but I find the challenges fascinating and I'm glad to be a part of it. So thank you for your time here.

And pardon my ignorance, I had been to a Council meeting before, so I don't know the protocol, so I'll rely on you to guide me through it perhaps.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think there's a written report, if you want to just do an overview of that. And then if any of the Council members have any questions for you, you can do that.

MR. GONZALES: Yes, perhaps that would be the best approach here. We assembled the verbiage that you see here as a team from the Refuge and so what you see summarized here is coming from the Refuge as a staff opinion. Perhaps I could just open it to questions subject by subject.

What's described in here for the 2001 report, we are going to continue in 2002 to monitor the berry production and the use by the Canada and emperor geese within the Refuge, see what kind of trend continues with that. The survival of the Steller's eiders.....

MS. KERR: Excuse me, Pat. That one is under Tab G.

MR. GONZALES: Oh, I'm so sorry, it's under Tab G, when the reports start. Izembek is the first one described. As I was saying, we are going to

continue with our Steller's eider banding. Each September we have a quota of 2,300 birds that feel is a statistically valid sample and we will continue to see what that data will tell us in terms of what the population is doing.

Emperor and brant goose surveys, we'll continue with them. We see, at this time, a three-year average of approximately 67,000 birds for the emperors. As I understand it, 80,000 birds would be a threshold that we could consider hunting at. And we have reached that yet that we feel. We will continue to monitor the population and see if, perhaps, we are getting close to something that would support a hunt. But at this time we feel that we're not there yet.

For the brant, we will continue to monitor their population as well. We feel that there is a trend that they're increasing.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Was it decreasing or.....

MR. GONZALES: Increasing. The brant, we feel, are still increasing out there. We have continued to conduct the counts on them. Our biggest concern, perhaps, is the wintering grounds and the nesting grounds, what's taking place with them. We feel that we're producing birds, but do they have a place to go when they do migrate from the area for the wintertime.

January 30th of 2002, it should have been 2001 actually, found 13,576 brant in the area. The data here says historically that they didn't see more than a thousand birds wintering in the area during the 1970s, so that's a tremendous increase. And why couldn't that support a hunt at some point, but we want to make sure that we're correct in what we're doing. Our mission is to provide wildlife for the continued benefit of the American people, and this is something, we feel, needs to go on for many generations, so we're very careful in what we direct in terms of harvest.

Perhaps if I try to summarize some of this. Where could I begin, I guess? I'm up to the caribou at this point. The caribou issue, where can I begin with that? We haven't been able to do a total count in the fall and winter for going on four years now. And we're concerned that maybe we don't have a real accurate count of what's going on out there. We did try

45 to -- and part of the problem is lack of staff and lack
46 of proper conditions, snow cover and having the resource
47 available, the pilots and planes available. And I guess
48 that's typical for the Aleutians, it's just that's the
49 way it is out there. The weather indicates what we can
50 do and when we can do it.

We have been struggling with a turnover in staff and that's reflected in what we've been able to count out there. We do have a pilot coming on though. We were able to do some counting this year, back in February, on the 15th and 16th. We tried to survey the typical areas that we always do from Herendeen Bay down to Black Hills is the area we would do for the northern portion of what we count. And basically what we saw out there, there was a population of approximately 3,500 animals identified in the last count. And what we saw, basically, was half of that during the 11 hours that we did survey. We were only able to cover approximately half of the total survey area, so that may indicated that the population is about they have estimated before, but until we can to a total count, you know, we can't say what the population may be at.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Does that include Unimak?

MR. GONZALES: No. Actually thank you. Unimak population is probably estimated to be around 900 animals, and we would like to verify that. The latest data that we had seems to support that theory, but we need to get out there and do the formal counts, as we have in the past, and see if the data still holds true for the last counts.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: One of the things, too, Pat, just to mention. I know we talked a little from Cold Bay until we got here on a couple of issues. And one of the issues we did discuss was the survey. And being that you haven't had some of the history of Izembek and our area and the caribou, you know, at some point in time we weren't allowed -- for almost a two or three year period we weren't allowed to hunt, we were fortunate to get the subsistence hunt. And the only reason, basically, we feel strongly that we got it was because we did have a local person from the region participate in the survey, which I think was done with someone from the Federal side and someone from the State side. And that survey showed that our population was a lot higher than had been reported, you know, for a number of years.

The local people kept saying those caribou are not where, you know, they surveys. And you did mention a little bit earlier that the areas that you normally survey, and these caribou were in different areas. I think it's very important that having that local person continue with that survey, it makes a lot of

difference when you get those final numbers.

MR. GONZALES: I agree with that. I think that's an honest way to approach things and I see no reason why we couldn't have a local person from the King Cove area or one of the surrounding facilities, you know, participate with us. It's just another aspect that we'll have to draw into our total plan to do these things, but I think it brings its own merit with it. So I'll tell the Council that's what I'll try to arrange for in the future in our monitoring, to have somebody from the local are involved in it.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: It's not so much more as an honest, it's more as -- you know, everybody's got their areas, you know, I'm not sure -- I think we all think where the caribou are depending on which agency or whether you're a resident. And that just helps making those numbers more accurate.

MR. GONZALES: I agree.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat.

MR. HOLMES: Pat, do you have any idea why the radical fluctuations of numbers, is it a function of habitat or predator/prey or disease or what's going on in that arena? Why did this happen?

MR. GONZALES: That's part of what we're trying to understand in all of this and what's happened in the last few years. There's lots of theories going around and I'm not even qualified to comment on them. You know, one of the theories is the counts were high in the past. I know when I was flying, we were doing the absolute best job we could, we were flying at 500 to 700 feet trying to keep our air speed down as much as possible. We felt like we had 90 percent snow cover. It is a challenging kind of census method. I really can't answer, I don't know. We need to get back on and get these counts done and from that we'll be able to have a better opinion. I think that's the only thing we can do

45 at this point is basically kind of start over and resume
46 where we left off.
47
48 MR. HOLMES: Thank you.
49
50 MR. GUNDERSON: Do you know if they're

going to have the calf survey again this spring?

MR. GONZALES: Yes, Paul, we are planning -- well, it depends on when we get our pilot in. We're hoping to get a pilot hired by mid-April to early May, and if that can happen that will contribute to our ability to get it done. We are going to be doing a comprehensive brown bear census May 28th through June 7th of this spring and all of these, the moose, the bear, the caribou, we're going to be looking at all of these populations a lot closer and see how they're interrelated. We are planning on doing that though, yes.

MR. GUNDERSON: Okay. Because I was wondering if it was going to happen. Now what had happened with the -- did you lose the funding for the use of the aircraft in that facility or.....

MR. GONZALES: No, we've been trying to get the censuses done, it's always been the weather. Either the weather or the habitat conditions weren't right. There three things that have to come together, you have to have the people, you know, the qualified observers, you have to have close to hundred percent snow cover and then you've also got to have, you know, the weather to cooperate so you can get the job done. And, apparently, those haven't come together in the past and that's why these surveys have dropped off. When you don't have a station pilot at Cold Bay ready to go when the moment's allow you to go, you're just really out of luck. It takes too long to bring somebody in from King Salmon or Anchorage and to get it together. That's been the biggest problem is not having the manpower there ready to go.

MR. GUNDERSON: Well what you said you've taken a look at is approximately about a quarter of the area and you had come up with approximately half the number of animals. So under those conclusions, I would say the overall strength of the herd must be around three and 4,000 animals.

MR. GONZALES: That may be correct. The way the weather was when we were doing the surveys on the

45 15th and 16th, we couldn't get into areas where we felt
46 there was good numbers of animals. From what we had
47 seen, a reasonable person would have surmised that, yeah,
48 there's probably more animals if we just continue on this
49 transect path that we're practicing, but the weather
50 wouldn't let us get in there. So we felt confident, the

animals are probably still there, the population is still pretty close to what had been described in the past, but we just couldn't be there this year to verify that.

MR. GUNDERSON: Talking with the locals and what they've seen in the population, I think there hasn't been any real big increase, but the numbers appear to be holding.

MR. GONZALES: From what I know, at this point, I would agree with that. But more than that, we'd like to know what the bear populations are doing and what the wolves are doing as well. Those indicator species surely can tell us something, too.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: What about on Unimak, isn't the threshold set at 600? And did you say that the population appear to be at about 900 at this point?

MR. GONZALES: Well, 900 is what the population was estimated at in the last surveys. In fact, I had a summary here of what those surveys had told us in the past. Well, anyhow, that was the trend, apparently. I don't know about the threshold of 600, I can't comment on that, but I do know that the last population estimate that they came up with from Unimak was around 900 animals, 900 caribou, approximately 250 brown bears as well, and we're hoping to survey those units as well.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think if you look at Page 3, under the caribou, January and April '97, when the surveys were completed, there were 603 caribou on Unimak, 3,240 on Unit 9(D). It seems to me, if I recall, on the Caribou Management Plan for that area was the threshold seemed to be 600 on Unimak. But we may have to go back and look at that. Arnie, do you have any idea?

MR. SHAUL: Somewhere around that neighborhood, but I can't remember the exact figure.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chairman.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yes.

MR. HOLMES: Pat, do you have any of those -- I know often in tracking critter, do you have any radio-collared bears or radio-collared caribou out there, so you might have an idea where the herds might be

at any given time. I know it's kind of like a goat rope, but -- to say the least.

MR. GONZALES: Well, we don't have any bears collared, that I'm aware of, we do have three or four caribou, I believe, that still have collars on them. I don't know if Arnie can verify that or not, but there is -- I know this past summer three collars were found that had been deployed and the animals had died during that time. I think we still do have six or seven animals out there. And Dick Sellers was able to locate some of them in last October's survey. We were out trying to do the survey last October and the weather wouldn't allow us to do it, but he was able to catch a portion of it on his way back to King Salmon in a helicopter. And I think he counted around 1,300 at that time. And I thought he mentioned that he did get a fix on three or four collars that were out there. So that may provide some ability in the future for us to know what they're doing, but we just haven't been able to get out there and be out there, you know, ourselves and the State as well. We just haven't been able to get it together to do an adequate count and look at that distribution.

MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I understand, tough place to work. Thank you.

MR. GONZALES: I guess as far as the moose population goes, this is another subject that we feel we need to take a close look at, a recent look. We feel that there's probably around 100 to 150 moose in the Unit 9(D) area. We counted 14 moose last February 15th and 16th when we were out, that was just inadvertently coming upon them. We were actually out to count caribou, but we were seeing a few moose as well.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I will make some comments in regard to the moose, since I had the proposal in that appears to have gotten passed yesterday. My concern with the way the system is set up, and there's a couple of issues. First of all, in looking at the way this is set up with the State and the drawing, that most of those -- you know, 90 to 95 percent of those got drawn outside of our region. Anchorage had five of them, Kodiak

had two, Eagle River one, Fairbanks one, Juneau one, Wasilla one and Willow one. King Cove had three, Nelson Lagoon three. And that's eight our of 20 permits. Two things kind of happened here. Number one, the prior years it was 10 permits, got increased to 20 permits. We weren't even aware it got increased to 20 permits.

I had been getting calls from people all over the region asking, thinking that we had the permits, that they were Federal permits. And I'm going, no, I don't have a clue where these are, where they're at because they're State permits. Well, it turns out that this was all after the deadline from the State side that we found out that they were available at the post office. A lot of people did not get them filled out, nor were they able to participate. The biggest thing that I hear in our region, as a whole, is that the people that live in the region are not able to get their share, they feel, of the harvest. And so the thoughts were if there's going to continue to be 20 permits that, hopefully, we can have 10 of them from the State and from the Federal.

And I know there is concern from the Federal side because of the area and the location.

MR. GONZALES: Yeah.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: But I think -- and this is one of the issues without Rick Poetter available at our meeting, I feel that we, as a whole, have lost our dialogue with the Izembek Refuge managers. We had come a long when Greg Siekaniec was the manager in Izembek as far as him working with the communities. You know, he contacted people in the region, he made himself available. We just have no clue what you guys are doing over there. And just as a comparison, when I look at the Kodiak Refuge managers and they've done excellent work with their reports and their interactions with the communities. And I'm just going to have to, somehow, get this across to Rick that -- and I don't know where else beyond that, but we really feel some of the lost communications.

MR. GONZALES: Well, I can promise the Council that I will be taking the message back. Yeah, I really comment other that that, you know, we came out in opposition to the 02-21 -- or actually the 23 rather, but, yeah, I really can't comment at this time. I'll see.....

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yeah, I feel it's unfortunate because I think had there been a little bit more interaction with some of the people in the communities in regard to this, that maybe, you know, something could have -- there could have been a little better conclusion.

MR. GONZALES: I will carry the message strongly back.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: The other question, in the past we've always seen a survey that the State had done in the spring on the caribou that Dick Sellers had done. Is there something available from that?

MR. GONZALES: You know, I'll have to check. I haven't seen anything myself. I arrived March 30th of last year and I'll just have to put it on my list of things to check.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: It's usually in June.

MR. GONZALES: I'll have to take a look.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Al.

MR. CRATTY: No, I was just going to state, they give these 20 permits, but it don't look like anybody's getting any moose.

MR. GUNDERSON: No, the location (no microphone)

MR. CRATTY: I mean, even the.....

MR. GONZALES: As far as I know, there's been two moose taken. There was one taken in the 2001 season and then by word of mouth we heard that there was one moose taken last season. And that's part of our concern from the Refuge aspect, is that the areas will apply to Federal lands, as I understand, and they're supposed to be some of the most inaccessible, most dangerous areas to hunt. So typically what we would had expect from a population of hunters -- our concerns is that perhaps these animals might actually get harvested off of Federal properties. And so that presents an interesting enforcement aspect, but bottom line, would the population support the hunting pressure? That's what we'd really like to know in the long term.

I want to thank the Board's patience.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I have a question for you on the guides.

MR. GONZALES: Yes, Pete.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: How many -- are you going to continue to keep issuing these guide permits? From what I added up here, that's just from 2001, 64 to 79 new hunters in the field just for the one year. Beside all the people who go out on their own and the guides that are already there. I know we've been concerned about how many people are being allowed to -- are guide out on the field there in Izembek.

MR. GONZALES: Here again it's difficult for me to comment, but I can embrace what you're saying, Pete. We have to look at the whole -- everything, the whole operation, in my opinion. We do have guides that have operated out of there for a few years and we feel like we have good rapport with them, but at the same time we have to look at the resource, what is happening to the resource.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Right, I know. I think we, what you call it, to limit the number of guides being allowed on the Refuge and nothing, I guess, ever became of that.

MR. GONZALES: These are the conversations I've kind of been in the background on. For me, I've just completed a year and I feel, finally, like I'm almost qualified to start commenting.

(Laughter)

MR. GONZALES: You know, it takes four seasons, in my opinion to be involved in an operation, to see the resource from four seasons and before you start to form an opinion, after two or three years, perhaps your qualified. I'm not there yet, but I plan to be part of it.

So I want to thank you and your patience.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you for being here at the very least and continue your efforts. The rest of it, I'm sure, we're going to have to figure out what to do, but we do thank you for at least being here.

MR. GONZALES: Okay. Well, thank you, folks.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Chair, I think that based on the report from the Izembek and I want to thank, was it Bill?

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Pat.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Pat for being here, but I think we need to send a letter to the Izembek Refuge that we would like to see more participation by their management people and I think that a copy of the letter should go to.....

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Secretary of the Interior.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: .....whoever his boss is. And maybe that will help to stimulate him to show up at our meetings, because we've got information here and, of course, our biggest problem is getting surveys done and being able to make a justified reasoning for any kind of hunts or anything like that. We need to have them surveys done, so that means we have to go out and find the money for them to get it done or take some of that money we gave to the State back so we can get our job done, one or the other.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Is it the consensus of the Council at this time to have a letter sent to the Izembek Refuge manager?

MR. HOLMES: Yes, ma'am.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Will do. Hearing no other items on Izembek, we would like to bring the famous Robert Stovall up from the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

MS. KERR: Madam Chair, Council members, ladies and gentleman, I'm Leslie Kerr, I'm the new manager of Kodiak Refuge. And since I've been here only eight months I have not had much opportunity to get out to the communities on the Refuge yet. It is nice to see at least one individual who I know from my previous life in Kotzebue, where I worked with the Northwest Arctic Regional Subsistence Advisory Council, and Tom Panamaroff, at that time, was the staff person for our

45 state representative, so it was kind of fun to come to
46 Kodiak and see some familiar faces.
47
48 So I'm new and sometimes when you're new
49 what you know is you start getting an idea of what the
50 questions are. The reason Robert is here, of course, is

that he's the one who has the answers is because he's one of the people whose been doing the work. I would like to say that if you are interested in visiting with me, please feel free to let me know, if you want to invite me to your community, please feel free to do that. I know everybody is very busy in the communities and so I'm reluctant to just say, well, you know, this is a good time for me to come, but if there's a time when you think it would be appropriate for me to come visit, please let me know and I would be happy to try to make my schedule work for that.

So it's a pleasure to be here and most of you heard yesterday that is Robert's last Regional Council meeting. And there's going to be a going away party for him on the 19th, so if you're going to be around in town, please let us know and we'll make sure that you have instructions on how to get there. And I should also say that one of the last things that Robert is going to be doing before he leaves is he is in the process of interviewing for a refuge information technician for Kodiak Refuge. Some of you from the Kodiak Island communities will remember Calena Momberger, who worked for us last year in a seasonal position. This is also a seasonal position, but instead of being a temporary seasonal position, it's a permanent seasonal position, so we'll have some continuity in that position. And we will also, shortly, begin efforts to recruit to fill behind Robert, so we should have someone in that position by the end of the summer as well.

So with that, if you have any questions for me, I'd be happy to address the, otherwise I'll turn the floor over to Robert.

MR. STOVALL: Thank you. Madam Chair, members of the Council, I'm going to try and be brief. The report for the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge is in your books this time around and I'll, more or less, paraphrase what I have written here for you folks.

Let's start with the deer mortality surveys that were completed last year. As most of the members know, of course, last year was an extremely mild

winter, so there were no carcasses found in the areas that we surveyed. This year will most likely be different. Those surveys are usually done in April and probably won't be able to get done until the middle or late April and I may not be able to actually do them. There most likely will be substantial difference between

last year and this year in the mortality surveys.

I've included a 10-year average of carcasses found per linear kilometer of the area surveyed for the refuge for your information.

MS. KERR: Why don't you say what those abbreviations mean?

MR. STOVALL: Okay. This is on page 7 and Tab G, by the way. The first table here is a table that shows the areas that we've surveyed. I've had them listed as to what these abbreviations mean on the left side of the table, but I'll go ahead and say what they are now. CCS and CCN is the Chief Cove South and Chief Cove North areas of Spiridon Peninsula on the west side of Kodiak Island. Uganik Island A is an area on the southcentral part of Uganik Island, where we've done surveys at, and Uganik Island B (UGIB) is on the northwestern side of Uganik Island and was only done two years in that area. EAU is eastern arm of Uganik. That's in Uganik Bay. It's the middle arm of three arms. OGB is Olga Bay and that's on the western side of Olga Bay. NSS is north Sitkalidak Strait and that is north of Sitkalidak Island and east of Old Harbor. And then BFB is Blue Fox Bay in the northwestern corner of Afognak Island.

The winter deer browse surveys are also completed in these same areas. There's five areas that we primarily do. There's five areas that we've done every year since I've been here since '92. Those would be the Chief Cove areas, Uganik Island area, east arm Uganik and Olga Bay area. For the deer browse surveys, we've completed -- we did deer browse in those areas. We've done deer browse in the Chief Cove area and in Uganik Island area for the last five years. In general, the browse from last year was much lower than when I first did it five years ago. It kind of mirrors what the weather and climate and population size of the deer has been. The browse surveys appear to mirror the environmental conditions and what the deer winter mortality surveys are showing. The deer tend to concentrate in wintering areas when there's bad winters,

so that means a lot of snow, a lot of cold and the snow is on the ground for a long period of time in the lower elevations from the waters edge up slope.

MS. KERR: Can I say something about this if you're done with the deer?

MR. STOVALL: Sure.

MS. KERR: Madam Chair and Council members. One of the things I'd like to add to this discussion about deer is that we did a biological review of our program this last summer and we should have the draft report completed at some point soon. What we did is we had scientists from the Fish & Wildlife Service, Fish & Game, the USGS Biological Resource Division, a number of people who are good scientists help us take a look at how we're doing our biological work. One of the things that we talked at length about was how we were working with deer on Kodiak Island. It's an important subsistence species and we really have no overall population estimate for refuge lands on the island or for the island itself as a whole. So that's an area that we identified as an area that we need to do further work and we are working to try to figure out how to best accomplish that. It's tricky to count certain kinds of critters in certain kinds of conditions. We don't have the answer yet, but it is something that we're looking into, so I would hope to be able to report back to you in the future any modifications that we are making in our research protocols related to deer population numbers. Thank you.

MR. STOVALL: Carrying on with that, the Kodiak Archipelago Vegetation Cover Map Project is into its second year of three stages that we're trying to get completed. In partnership with the Alaska Geographic Science Center, we began to classify vegetation cover and to generate a cover type map for the entire Kodiak Archipelago, with the objectives to evaluate procedures to do this type of mapping, also to determine the extent of the vegetation cover types on the Archipelago. This cover map is not just for deer. It's an ecosystem approach to managing the lands. Looking at the vegetation as a whole and how that vegetation is interactive with the various species that are there, both the native and the introduced species. In particular, the introduced ungulates of mountain goat, deer and elk.

This is a cooperative effort that's partially funded by several sources, including the Kodiak

Brown Bear Trust,
Koniag, Incorporated, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and
Alaska Department of Fish & Game. This summer we will
continue our evaluation and preliminary mapping and
ground truthing of the vegetation data that was collected
last summer.

Moving towards our migratory bird harvest surveys summary, is in completion. I will try and get a copy of that to all the villages that participated before I leave. These are surveys that were completed from March 11, 2000 through March 10, 2001. We did not complete any surveys for this last year. Essentially, there was a large increase in the harvest, primarily from the village of Ouzinkie, is where it was noticed from. I think that has to do with Ouzinkie's ability to be truthful and very honest with what they were harvesting. Not necessarily a reflection that the other villages are not harvesting birds, they may not have participated at the same rate as folks in Ouzinkie did.

This particular year there was quite a bit of different birds that were harvested. We had swans reported harvested, we had emperor geese. This is the type of information that, because it's honest, it's going to aid in development of a regulation for spring and summer subsistence water fowl harvest, migratory bird harvest and allowing for the take of eggs. So that process is ongoing.

As we speak, the time table is to allow for the regulations to be developed during this month and next month to be reviewed, with final regulations to go to the Flyway Council and the Fish & Wildlife Service Regulatory Council in the Washington office. Our task would actually produce regulations or frameworks of regulations for states to use. This is a little outside of the normal process for them because of the mere fact that it's spring and summer time hunting and that's not the normal process. By the fall, we should have an idea of what type of spring and summer subsistence migratory bird season we'll have for 2003. That's kind of where the time table is at right now. They meet or have met, I'm not sure if they met in February or March. Their next meeting would be in November. Paul Gunderson, as I understand, is a member of the Migratory Bird Co-management Council. He would probably be able to give you a better briefing as to time tables and things.

Moving to the Kodiak brown bear intensive area surveys that were completed. This information is a

survey that's done every year in a specific area on the refuge. This year it was done in the Aliulik Peninsula area, which is on the southwestern part of the island. It had been done in 1993 and it was repeated again last year. In 1993, they had 216 bears counted per 1,000 square kilometers of area surveyed. In 2001, there was

151 bears counted per 1,000 kilometers squared of areas surveyed. It's a decline, but it's a decline that should be viewed with caution as many compounding factor may have biased the results.

Some of those factors would include that the survey flights began 10 days earlier than in 1993 and they could have missed sows with cubs that emerged from the dens later on in the springtime. Snow conditions during the 2001 survey included a snow cover of 90 percent in the high country and this could have influenced bear den emergence patterns, allowing for fewer bears observed this year. Snow cover in these same areas was only 10 percent in 1993, so there's a distinct difference there.

Also, the final thing is that in 1993 the surveys were conducted by biologists who had been doing these surveys for the last 10, 15 years. This year they were conducted by biologists who haven't had that much experience doing the surveys. This inexperience would lead to a decrease in sightability or the ability for the counters to do the proper counting. It is projected for this year that we will attempt to re-do this survey area to make sure that the counts that we did get last year were, indeed, as low as they appear to be as a check of last year's results. If they are higher than that, then these factors probably did play a larger influence on the numbers from last year. So it will be surveyed again this year.

Moving to mountain goat aerial composition counts. With increased interest of subsistence mountain goat harvest on the refuge or on Kodiak Island in particular in the refuge specifically, we were funded to do mountain goat aerial composition counts this year on the refuge and we were able to get at least two or three days worth of good survey work completed on the southern end of the island.

In August, we surveyed three areas, which included Three Saints Bay, where we counted about 60 goats. We counted 51 goats in the Sulua Bay/Hepburn Peninsula area and 120 goats in the Grayback Mountain

area. Other areas surveyed by ADF&G normally would include the Terror Lake, Uganik River, Zachar River and small portions or portions of Kiliuda Bay area. These numbers are added with the State's numbers to get an idea of what the estimated population was. Estimated population of mountain goats has increased in the last

five years both on and off the refuge.

Table 2 on page 14 kind of gives an idea of what the composition counts look like for the past five years and what the total count or estimated population numbers are for all areas, not just the refuge portions. Looking at the bottom row, you can see that the population has basically doubled in those five years based on just the counts. We had put in to be funded for this survey for this year, but we were not funded for it. We try to make do.

MS. KERR: I am trying to pinch every penny two or three times so we can fund the study from refuge base funds, but we're not successful in getting subsistence funds because of the competing priorities within the region, so we'll see what we can do. The preliminary result on our budget is we're about 25 grand in the hole right now based on our projected expenses, if we do everything we'd like to. So we're going to see what we can do.

MR. STOVALL: Finally, I want to briefly summarize our Federal subsistence permits that we had for 2001-2002. Designated hunter permits for deer, we had a total of 46 designated hunter permits issued from the refuge headquarters. I'm not sure on the count from the villages, but I do believe that Old Harbor and Larsen Bay and possibly Ouzinkie and Port Lyons did issue some permits. Not many. Bringing that number probably to near 50 permits issued this year.

The first year that we issued these permits, back in '95, I believe, we had this many permits issued and it had decreased every year up until this year. So this is a spike back up in the direction of these permits being used. I don't have numbers of deer harvested based on these permits. Because the season ends in January, it just hasn't been summarized and given to us yet. Hopefully that information can be forwarded to you.

We issued a total of 12 elk registration permits this year from the refuge office and I'm sure

that Old Harbor did issue at least two other ones. This is the lowest number of permits issued for elk that we've had in the last three or four years. Up until today, I have not heard of any elk being harvested from them.

Last year was a pretty good year for the

Federal subsistence brown bear hunts on the island. In 2001, the calendar year, in the spring season, there was two bears harvested and in December of 2001 there was two bears harvested. The harvesting is going on from the villages of Old Harbor and Larsen Bay primarily. The other villages do not seem to want to participate or have not found interested hunters to participate. I think that's all I have.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Are there any questions for Leslie or Robert?

MR. CRATTY: I have one question for you, Robert. Was it last meeting or last spring you did a survey on the harlequins on the west side of the island? Did you guys ever get back to do that survey again and see whether it declined? I remember they were declining to a number that you guys were concerned.

MR. STOVALL: Right, right. I don't know what Denny's numbers were for harlequins during the sea bird surveys that he did on the west side. Usually they do transects in that area and if he sees them, I'm sure he's counting them. Of course, he hasn't done -- the particular survey that you're speaking of was done, I do believe, in the springtime, in May or June. So, of course, that hasn't happened yet to repeat that type of survey.

Which does bring me to a point. I did want to let you folks know that we had an opportunity to complete a Canada goose aerial survey on the eastern side of the island from Kiliuda Bay down towards Cape Kiavak area. Our bird biologist, Denny, was able to do the flight with a pilot from the Migratory Birds Office in Anchorage on March 4th of this year. This was very recent. They counted 1,081 Canada geese on the east side. The next largest amount of birds counted were greater scop and American widgeon, with over 600 birds counted for each one. Oh, excuse me. The most birds counted were mallards. Canada geese was second.

There's no plans to currently do any additional surveys during the winter of 2002. Boat

surveys were also conducted when they did the sea bird surveys on the east side and they counted 278 Canada geese contained in four flocks in the same general vicinity as these were found. He has a map that shows the distribution of where they found the most birds at. Starting at Gull Cape on the eastern side, north of

Kiliuda Bay, they counted 322 birds in that area. Next, is it Big Harbor, Big Lagoon? Just north of Old Harbor. Midway Bay. They had 264 birds in that area. Then on Sitkalidak Island on the northern side, I think that's McDonald's Lagoon, 144 birds counted. This information is something I do believe we're going to continue to monitor a lot closer in hopes that we can get enough information to possibly start a season for Canada goose harvest.

MS. KERR: If I might address the previous question about the harlequin ducks. I don't have the numbers from Denny's survey at my fingertips, but we can get that information and send it to you. One of the issues that Denny and I have discussed and which was again discussed at our biological review is that it appears that many of the harlequin ducks that we see around Kodiak are part, we hypothesize, of a resident population. Denny believes this because of banding work that he has done and the number of band returns. Most of these bands have been returned from either the same bay or an adjacent bay to where they were banded. Based on the information that he has, it appears that these birds may be resident birds instead of migrants, so there is a concern that we make sure that harvest levels are appropriate since it's not migratory birds coming through, but, in fact, resident birds, we think. So we're doing some additional work to try to figure out how we can prove or disprove that hypothesis. So last summer there was some work done in the vicinity of Akhiok. In August, he does coastal surveys and then he does a duck roundup. You may have seen folks out in your area where they're basically doing a drive of flightless birds and putting bands on them and then we'll be monitoring the band returns to see what we can determine.

One of the things that's different about this area is that the nesting habitat for harlequin ducks, as has been described in other areas, doesn't match the kind of habitat that we have here on Kodiak Island. So one of the questions is, if they are resident birds, where are they breeding? So we'll be keeping you posted on that as well. Thank you.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I have a question for Robert. Do you know what it's going to take to warrant a season on these Canada geese? Like a subsistence season first or go right into an open season?

MR. STOVALL: I would guess, Pete, that

they'll probably go with a regular fall season. If they were to do that, they would have to have enough information that they feel the birds are not the released birds and that there's a breeding population that is actually going on right now. Part of that is going to include a check on genetics and they're currently still gathering material to do that. They want to try and gather -- possibly trying to find egg shells to do a genetic sample in the springtime, in May, and they'll probably contract with the folks in Old Harbor to try and do that. Find some nests and get some material to do a genetic check to see if these birds are, indeed, from the release that was done or whether they're birds that have recolonized the area, I guess.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: What are we looking at in number of years?

MR. STOVALL: It would be real hard to say. Like I say, they have to gather information, analyze the information and then put in for a season and then go through the process of having the season regulated. It could take anywhere between two to four or five years.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: There will be a lot of birds by then.

MR. CRATTY: Robert, I think maybe if you could look at the birds in the fall, you might find more numbers. It seems to me when they first come to the lagoon in the fall, wherever they come from, there's a lot more birds. You know the lagoon right in Old Harbor? I've seen six, seven hundred birds in there.

MR. STOVALL: Yeah, I would guess that the reason why we're not concentrating on the birds that we find in the early fall is because those birds are most likely migratory birds. They're migrating through versus a population that would be establishing or building, which is why we're trying to collect the springtime samples of egg shells and things of that nature.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I think there probably

45 would be some migratory birds involved with them, but in
46 the fall time they're scattered all over the island, the
47 same species anyway.
48
49 MR. STOVALL: Pete, do you see a lot of
50 birds in the late springtime when there's possible

nesting going on?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: No. No, the only spring ones we see are the Brant.

MR. STOVALL: Okay.

MR. PANAMAROFF: I was intrigued by the waterfowl harvest report. The numbers from Ouzinkie seem so far out of whack compared to the other villages. How often do you do those? Is that an annual survey?

MR. STOVALL: Up to this year, we had done it for two previous years in a row and it was initiated so that we could gather information for these subsistence migratory bird harvest that is presently being planned for. There's not necessarily a lack of information, but there's lack of information of any quality about what is being harvested during the spring and summertime of waterfowl on Kodiak Island. For all the right reasons, it's illegal to do it. So we came up with a harvest survey plan to try and collect that information and I was funded to do that plan for two years. I have not been funded to do it since. I'm hoping that the new refuge information technician will have an opportunity to either continue with something similar to the plan I developed or to be able to become funded to do it on an annual basis. But it's some information that needs to be gathered more often.

MR. PANAMAROFF: I guess I was just curious as to whether the numbers you see in Ouzinkie have been consistent over the years. But if it hasn't been something that's been done over a period of time, you wouldn't have any idea.

MR. STOVALL: Yeah, Old Harbor had a similar harvest and they had the largest harvest the first year we did it. So, from that standpoint, it was pretty consistent for Old Harbor at least.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Madam Chair. I've got a question concerning the subsistence elk hunt. The areas for subsistence elk hunt, how is that determined?

MR. STOVALL: Yeah, Mitch, it's only on Federal lands and there's only Federal lands on one portion of northwest Afognak Island. The area between Blue Fox Bay and Panamaroff Bay complex area. That also includes Ban Island. Going to the west, it' the Red

Peaks area and then all the way over to Waterfall Lake.

MR. SIMEONOFF: One more little question. Has there ever been any sightings of elk on mainland Kodiak?

MR. STOVALL: Well, yeah. In the last couple years, I guess, there's been quite a sighting of a small herd of them, 50 or 60 or so animals on the Kupreanof Peninsula area, which is on the northern side of Kodiak Island. As far as we know, though we haven't had anything reported on the refuge portion, which would be south of there, across Viekoda Bay.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Any other discussion or questions? I want to take a few minutes before we let Leslie and Robert leave. It's unfortunate we didn't know you were going to be leaving, Robert, to have something made up for you, for this meeting, to present to you. I'd like to give everybody a few minutes to thank you for your many years of serving on this and I know I, for one, prior to being on this board and have seen you in a lot of the communities and have always seen you at -- I think I recall one meeting that you may have missed for some reason or another, but you've always been there and you've always done an excellent job and I know you've put up with a lot from getting teased with this Council. I think we've all just really appreciated you being there. With that, I'm going to turn it first over to Al.

MR. CRATTY: I guess I've been here as long as you now, Robert, almost. I enjoyed having you on there. You're a good -- gave us the information we needed and there when we called you. Thank you, Robert.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: I want to thank you, Robert, for the times I've stopped by out there and you took the time to visit with me and answered my questions and keep me informed on what's going on and I really appreciated it. I enjoyed having you at the meetings, wherever they were. Thanks, Robert.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: We've been through quite a bit, changes here in the Council, Robert, and I

45 appreciate all your help in working with us to get a lot
46 of these issues that we would have a tough time to decide
47 on. Wherever you go, I wish you good luck.
48
49 MR. LUKIN: I feel the same. Thanks for
50 your patience with us. As to wherever you end up, I wish

you the best.

MR. GUNDERSON: I'd like to thank you, too. It's been a pleasure working with you and I wish you the best in your new venture.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, Robert. We're hoping to try to get a placque. From the future, we'll have a picture of you all the time at our meetings so we don't forget you. I think we need to give Robert a big hand. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

MR. FISHER: I'd like to put in a good word for Robert. He's made my job a lot easier. We'd get a proposal in and I'd look at it and I'd say, oh, man, better give Robert a call. Robert has always been very helpful and if he didn't have the information right on the phone, he would get it and get it to me. Good luck, Robert, wherever you go. Thank you very much.

MS. CHIVERS: I'd also like to say thank you to Robert. I've only been with this council for a little over a year now and in terms of having to hound refuges for reports, Robert is the only one I've never had to hound. I give him a date. He calls me a week ahead of time to say it's on its way and, by gosh, it is. It gets in time for the book, for the printing and it's a complete report and I know the Council appreciates that, but I appreciate it also. Thank you very much.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: If we can just give Robert a big hand of appreciation and good luck.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. STOVALL: I want to say thank you very much. I've been with the this Regional Advisory Council since the Council was formed and it's been probably one of the more rewarding opportunities I've had to interact with people from the whole southern part of Alaska. There's memories that I'm going to take with me and will cherish from the opportunities that I've had to work with all you folks and folks who have come and gone. I'm glad I had an opportunity to. I think good things

have been done for the resource and for the subsistence users. I think everyone, the subsistence resources and users are the better for it. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. With that, I think we'll take a 10-minute break.

(OFF RECORD)

(ON RECORD)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: If we can call the meeting back to order. The next item is marine mammals management report. Doug Burn and Angie Doroff.

MR. BURN: Good afternoon, Madam Chair and Council members. Angela Doroff wasn't able to make it today. I'm Douglas Burn. I'm with the Fish & Wildlife Service, Marine Mammals Management Office, located in Anchorage, Alaska. I'm here to present some information about some population trends of sea otters in southwest Alaska. This is presentation for information only. It doesn't require any Council action. I do have power point presentation that I could use to go through this presentation or, if you'd prefer, I could just hit the high points verbally. It's whatever you'd prefer.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Go ahead and go with the.....

MR. BURN: I realize that sea otters are a bit different than most of the species that I think you're dealing with in the Council, but recognizing that there is a subsistence hunt and handicraft, as allowed by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, we felt that this might be an issue that you'd like to hear something about.

I'd like to begin with a bit of history about sea otters. We know that sea otters were hunted virtually to extinction from around 1741, when the Russians first came to Alaska. They were hunted for their fur. Commercial hunting ceased in 1911 when sea otters were afforded protection under an International Fur Seal Treaty. At that time, there were roughly 13 remnant populations numbering about 1,000 to 2,000 sea otters. Once the commercial hunt stopped, we believe 11 of those 13 remnant populations began to grow and colonized the former range. By the mid 1980s, sea otter populations had expanded to recolonize much of the former range and it was especially true for the Aleutian Islands, where scientists believe perhaps half of the

world's sea otter population existed.

Our first indication of a population decline came in 1992, when our office conducted a survey of the Aleutian Islands. A previous survey was conducted in 1965 by Carl Kenyon. In 1992, when we did our survey,

we found that sea otters had recolonized all the island groups throughout the Aleutians, but they appeared to have declined by roughly 50 percent in the central Aleutians and that was a bit of a surprise for us.

Some later work conducted in 1990, some skiff surveys of sea otters at selected islands, they documented an ongoing, rather dramatic population decline. That work was done by Jim Estes from the U.S. Geological Survey. He's based out of Santa Cruz. He observed that females with pups seemed to be present in typical numbers and that suggested to him that it wasn't a problem with productivity, the problem was with an increase in adult mortality. He looked at evidence of starvation, disease and contaminants and none of those appeared to be factors in the decline. Likewise, there's no evidence to suggest that commercial fishing or subsistence hunting by Alaska Natives has played a role in the decline. There were several lines of evidence, including a lack of observed sea otter carcasses, that predation may be the cause and he has hypothesized that it may be predation by killer whales.

So I would like to review some of the survey data in the Aleutian Islands. We surveyed that in 1992 and we went back in April of 2000, roughly two years ago. What we were doing was surveying the shore line of all the islands. When we did that, we counted all the sea otters along the shore line. In 1992, we counted 8,044. In 2000, we counted 2,442, which was an overall 70 percent decline in abundance. If we take a closer look at the Rat Islands, which was where we believed one of the remnant colonies had existed, in 1992, we counted 1,461 sea otters along the coastline. These dots indicate locations where the sea otters were observed. The larger dot indicates a larger group size. In 2000, using the same survey methods, we counted only 192 sea otters. If we back that up again, we can see that's a pretty dramatic change in only an eight-year period. In this group, that's an 87 percent decline over an eight-year period.

Based on that information that we collected, in August of 2000, we designated sea otters in

45 the Aleutian Islands from Unimak Pass to Attu as a
46 candidate species under the Endangered Species Act. That
47 has no regulatory authority. Basically it just points
48 out that it's a species of concern. We published an
49 announcement of that decision in November of 2000 and we
50 did not -- there was no funding available to prepare a

proposed rule to add them to the endangered species list in fiscal year 2001.

In the meantime, we did some additional surveys. That survey in the Aleutians did not really identify an edge to the geographic extent of the decline, so in May of 2000 and then April of 2001 we conducted some aerial surveys along the Alaskan Peninsula to compare with some data that was done in 1986 and 1989. In June of 2001, we worked with the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and conducted an aerial survey of Kodiak Archipelago for comparison with some data from 1994 and I'd like to show you those results very quickly.

The North Alaska Peninsula shown here was surveyed in 1986 as part of an OCS study. We tried to replicate their survey methods so that we could compare the data. What we're looking at here is this offshore area, the shaded area. We flew strip transects that run north/south from the shoreline out to the approximate 70 meter depth contour. That was surveyed four times. In 1986, the population estimates ranged from roughly 9,000 to around 13,000 sea otters. When we surveyed it in 2000, our estimate is just below 6,000 sea otters. Depending on what you believe to be the abundance in 1986, it equates to roughly a 36 to 56 percent decline in that area.

The South Alaska Peninsula area here. There's actually two portions to this survey. One of them is the strip transects in that shaded area, but also shoreline counts for some of the islands shown in red. In 1986, that area was believed to have somewhere between roughly 15,000 to around 18,000 sea otters. Our survey in 2001 had just over 1,300 otters, which is a fairly dramatic decline, over 90 percent in a 15-year period.

We also looked at the length of the Alaska Peninsula. This was surveyed by helicopter in 1989 as part of an oil spill study. When we look at this, there were shoreline counts. We had a helicopter survey in 1989. Our survey was a fixed wing aircraft in 2001. This area here, from Kupreanof Point to Castle Cape, both surveys had very low densities of sea otters. We're

45 really not sure why, but just not a lot of sea otters
46 there at any point in time.
47
48 Down here in the western area, we see a
49 38 percent decline between those two counting methods.
50 This area here we've actually seen a 20 percent increase.

So this might suggest an edge to the decline along the Alaska Peninsula. We're not really sure exactly what it means.

If we look here at these islands that we surveyed and we plug in the 1989 data, what we see is a trend in three of the four island groups. We see there was a decline between 1986 and 1989 and then a further decline to 2001, which sort of fits this picture that this decline has happened in the last 10 to 15 years.

Last, we did the survey of the Kodiak Archipelago and this is my opportunity to thank Robert Stovall. He was the observer for both our 1994 survey and our 2001 survey and did an absolutely terrific job for us. This technique uses strip transects within that shaded area. In 1994, the estimate was around 9,800 sea otters. In 2001, it was around 5,800 sea otters, which is a 40 percent decline over the intervening seven-year period. If we look at the 1989 helicopter survey that was done, they estimated Kodiak had a population of around 13,500 sea otters, so it seems like this declining trend may extend further back than 1994.

Finally, to summarize all these surveys, what we see over the last 10 to 15 years through large portions of southwest Alaska, the sea otter population has declined fairly substantially. This information has not gone unnoticed. On October 25th, we were petitioned to list sea otters in the Aleutians under the Endangered Species Act. Because we had already made it a candidate, we basically treated it as a second redundant petition. The group known as Center for Biological Diversity, they notified us that they intend to sue us if we did not establish a rule by last October. We did not publish that rule and we have not been sued, so we're really not sure what's going to happen there.

On August 21st, the same group petitioned us to list sea otters statewide as depleted under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. We published our finding on that petition last November and we basically found that the action was not warranted. We acknowledged that, yes, there is a problem with sea otter population in southwest

45 Alaska, but we didn't feel it was a good idea to declare
46 them depleted statewide.
47
48 Finally, in January of this year, we
49 received a petition to emergency list sea otters in
50 southwest Alaska under the ESA and we responded by

letting them know that we did not consider it to be an emergency situation; however, the service has allocated Endangered Species Act listing dollars this fiscal year for the preparation of a proposed rule to evaluate whether or not sea otters warrant being listed as either threatened or endangered.

So what are we doing in the interim. We've planned a workshop for next month. We're going to be having sea otter experts attending this workshop and we're going to be looking at coming up with a research and monitoring plan that we can use to monitor the future population trends and also to look at what potential threats there might be to recovery of the population. We plan to hold public meetings in some of the larger communities in southwest Alaska to solicit input.

Lastly, we expect to publish a proposed rule in the Federal Register by the end of the calendar year. There will be a 90-day public comment period associated with that and we'll be holding additional public meetings to solicit comments. So, if you're at all interested in this issue, you'll probably be seeing me again.

Lastly, with respect to subsistence hunting of sea otters, both the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act do have provisions to allow subsistence hunting of a listed species provided that hunting does not materially affect the population. As I said earlier, the level of subsistence hunting is fairly low in southwest Alaska and we don't believe it's having an impact, so we don't feel that any listing activity is going to have an effect on subsistence harvest of sea otters. That's really all I have. If you have any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer them.

MR. PANAMAROFF: All of this information deals with southwest Alaska. Do you have any idea what's going on with sea otters in other areas of Alaska? Are you just seeing these kinds of declines in southwest area?

MR. BURN: You should have a copy of the fact sheet that we produced last November. We believe there's three stocks of sea otters in Alaska; southwest, southcentral and southeast. The southeast stock is the result of translocations that were conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game in the mid 1960s. They

translocated over 400 otters from the Aleutians and Prince William Sound to I think six locations in southeast. Basically, there was a lot of unoccupied habitat there and the populations took off pretty good and they've been expanding their range and we think that is continuing to occur in southeast. In southcentral, most of our information comes from Prince William Sound, surveys done since the oil spill. We've seen the population has increased through about the mid 1990s and appears to have stabilized over the last few years in Prince William Sound. We are working with the USGS Biological Resources Division. We've contracted them to do a survey of the Kenai Fjords area and Lower Cook Inlet area and we're also contracting with them or trying to direct them to do a new survey of southeast Alaska, a more detailed survey.

MR. HOLMES: Excuse me. When you have your meetings in southwest Alaska, you said you'd be dealing with some of the larger ones. I might suggest that you contact some of the folks, or if there's any type of travel funds available, to get somebody from the village of Atka, provide them some ability to obtain -- and possibly Nikolski. But I know from working in Atka for several summers there's some of the old-timers there that probably have some very good observations of sea otter abundance and variations through time.

MR. BURN: Part of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Section 119, authorizes us to enter into cooperative agreements with Alaska Native organizations. We've been working with the Alaska Sea Otter/Stellar Sea Lion Commission for about the last four or five years. One of the things that they've done with some of those funds has been to fund the TEK. We think this would be a good opportunity to try to use some of those funds to get TEK from villages such as Nikolski and Atka and some of those other places that are in the area where the declines have been observed. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I think just a couple of comments. You had your island up there, which is directly outside of King Cove. We see it all the time when we go over there. Directly inside of King Cove

there's an area in the lagoon that there's about 15 to 30 sea otters that are in there all the time. The one comment I wanted to make was that subsistence-wise, hardly anybody does take sea otters. It's more a viewing thing than anything else. Very few people do harvest them and basically for the pelts.

The other thing that I think I strongly do support is the issue of the killer whales. Ten years ago I'm taking a small boat from Falls Pass to King Cove. We ran into a school of killer whales, about 70 or 80 of them, and this was 10 years ago. The old guy that was on the boat, he was like 70 years old and it was his boat, says he's never seen a school that big ever in all the years he's lived out there. I believe the impacts of that probably play a pretty big role. I think the other item of interest is the southcentral and southeast stocks where they are increasing. I'd be curious to see what the impacts those have at some point in time.

MR. BURN: Right. That's correct. That's one of the reasons we're interested in monitoring and continuing to monitor southcentral because it seems to be outside of the area where the decline is occurring. On the other side of the range, over in Russia, we've been working with Russian scientists to continue to monitor the Commander Islands and at this point in time there doesn't seem to be a decline occurring there also. It does seem to be restricted perhaps from Attu through roughly Kodiak, somewhere along the Alaska Peninsula. Our first step was to try to identify the geographic extent and the magnitude. Now we think we've got a pretty good handle on that and now we're going to try to find out what's going on.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Any other questions, comments?

MR. HOLMES: I was wondering, in having watched the populations expand along Kodiak on the west side over the last 30 years, kind of starting up -- somebody step on my tongue if my thoughts are wrong -- but it seemed like they started up on Shuyak, west of Afognak, and moved in fairly large pods and seemed like the butter clams and whatnot would move and they'd just kind of move down as their population expanded down the west side and then the east side of the island. I was just wondering on your figure of the Alaska Peninsula there, with Chignik kind of being an intermediate area and a decline and an increase, is there any potential there for migration or movement or do you see anything

45 along that?
46
47 MR. BURN: Most of the work that's been
48 done with radio or telemetry of sea otters indicates that
49 they pretty much don't undertake moves more than maybe 10
50 or 15 kilometers for the most part. They tend to stay

fairly close to home. The other thing, being benthic feeders, deep water can act somewhat as a barrier for their movement, so Shelikof Strait, being deep, may also serve to limit movement between Kodiak and the Peninsula. We haven't done any telemetry studies in the area to see if there's any movement in that area.

MR. HOLMES: I didn't mean from Kodiak to the Peninsula, but along the Peninsula.

MR. BURN: It's really a hard area to work. There's nothing there. When we did that survey last year, we were just amazed. We flew for hours and hours and hours and there was just long stretches of empty coastline. It's just a really hard place to work.

MR. HOLMES: Thank you.

MR. BURN: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: I'd like to thank you very much for your report. The Council, I know, a couple times has asked for a report in regard to this. We're thankful that you made it.

MR. BURN: If you'd like, we can remain engaged on this issue and keep you apprised of progress and any new developments.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yes, we'd appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. BURN: Okay.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: The next item that we have on the agenda is Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Buskin River Weir Project. Donn Tracy.

MR. TRACY: Madam Chair and Members of the Council. My name is Donn Tracy with the Department of Fish & Game here in Kodiak. If you could just bear with us here a moment. We're just getting set up. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before the Council this afternoon and give a presentation on the Buskin.

This presentation is, as the last was, informational in nature. It doesn't require Council action at this time. However, as Mr. Klein pointed out, the Buskin River subsistence fishery is currently a project. The stock assessment and management project is

funded by the Office of Subsistence Management and we'll hopefully have continued funding in the future for the ongoing study that has been conducted.

The Buskin River is located about five miles outside of Kodiak, as is shown in this map, and supports a subsistence fishery that generally occurs in this area in the saltwaters offshore from the mouth of the river itself. The principal species harvested in the fishery is sockeye salmon. This fishery occurs typically during the month of June and into early July annually.

As I mentioned, the principle species harvested in the Buskin subsistence fishery is sockeye salmon. Over the past five years, the total reported harvest from the Buskin subsistence fishery has ranged between 6,800 or 6,900 and 10,000 fish. Overall, it's averaged about 8,500 fish over that five-year period. Of that number, about 6,500 of the reported harvest and numbers of fish have been sockeye salmon. This table just shows a percentage representation of the last and shows that during that same time period about 75 percent of the salmon harvested in the Buskin fishery are sockeye, so they're a very important species to the subsistence fishery and the most important to the Buskin River fishery.

This table shows the Kodiak area reported subsistence harvest by location during the last five-year period and, as you can see, the Buskin is highlighted at the top here. During that period, that five-year period, you can see that the Buskin has comprised a pretty large proportion of the reported harvest overall. Another area that has comprised a large harvest during that period is the Afognak Bay area. You can see in the last couple of years the reported harvest from the Buskin has increased and has actually become quite substantial for the Federally-managed subsistence fisheries in the Kodiak region.

This is just a pie chart that shows the harvest over the last five-year period within Federally-managed areas. It just shows the Buskin over here in the yellow and Afognak Bay here in the lighter shade of

yellow comprise a fairly large portion of the reported harvest. Again, this just includes the reported harvest that the Department of Fish & Game is able to obtain through their permitting system.

The Buskin also supports a sport fishery.

There really isn't much of a commercial fishery affecting the Buskin stock. A large portion of the area adjacent to the Buskin area is closed to commercial fishing. On an average year, the number of sockeye salmon harvested commercially is very small, less than 100 fish in most years. Next to the commercial fishery, the sport fishery is substantial. During the same five-year period, 1996 through 2000, the sport harvest averaged almost 2,000 sockeye salmon with about another 1,000 released. You can see there's quite a bit of sport fishing effort as well. Between the subsistence and sport fishery, the Buskin sockeye run is heavily utilized and is an important fishery.

This slide, unfortunately, doesn't show up very well. The Buskin River weir has been operated by the Department of Fish & Game since about 1985. As I mentioned, it's currently funded by the Office of Subsistence Management. That funding has been available since the year 2000. The current funding contract for the Buskin Project expires following this year and the department is seeking continuing funding for this project and did submit a proposal to the Office of Subsistence Management this year for that purpose.

The importance of having the weir on the Buskin is to provide for sockeye salmon escapement monitoring, which allows for in-season management of the fishery and, most importantly, preservation of the primary harvest opportunity by subsistence users. Sampling of a portion of the weir escapement or the number of sockeye salmon that pass through the weir allows for an analysis of the stock composition and development of an escapement goal that should provide for the optimum number of fish in the system to sustain productivity and protect the fishery. The weir of the Buskin also provides an educational platform for subsistence users to learn about fisheries management policy and research goals as well.

Current escapement goal in the Buskin for Buskin River sockeye is a range of 8,000 to 13,000 fish and that is based upon the historic escapement or historic return of fish to the river following the

harvest from the subsistence and sport fisheries. As you can see, it's varied a little bit but remained relatively high and within that escapement goal over the last 10-year period, ranging from about 9,700 fish or 9,600 up to a record return this last year of just over 20,000 fish. During that 10-year period, the average return or

escapement into the Buskin River was about 12,000 sockeye salmon.

This graph just shows the escapement represented by the daily average escapement in the gray bars and the average accumulated escapement by the dashed line during that same 10-year time period. As you can see, the run generally occurs between the beginning of June and early July. There is not a late run component to this fishery. Generally, the run occurs during the month of June and, of course, that's principally when the subsistence fishery occurs as well.

As part of the project funded by the Office of Subsistence Management, the sockeye salmon assessment study has been initiated and the goal of that study are to establish a biological escapement goal, which would actually be based on a statistical population model, which uses brood or parent year information obtained from annual escapement figures and that information is combined with estimated age composition of the annual adult returns.

Management of the fishery towards an appropriate biological escapement goal will result, as I mentioned, in maximum production of fish for subsistence and users and will also ensure the long-term health and protection of the sockeye salmon stock.

Components of the stock assessment study are to enumerate the annual adult sockeye salmon spawning escapement and to account for the sport, commercial and subsistence harvests in order to calculate what the total return of adult fish is. Another component is to sample the escapement and harvest for age, sex and size composition and to use the results to estimate those characteristics for the total return of adult fish.

A third component is to trace the total returns of adult fish back to their parent year, their brood year spawning escapement, using the age and sex composition information and, in turn, estimate the ratio of adult fish produced by each spawner in the parent year. In other words, the goal is to estimate the number

of adult fish that you will get returning from each spawner during a given year of escapement.

Another two components of the stock assessment study are to use this spawn or recruit ratio as it's called to estimate the spawning escapement that

produces the greatest number of returning adult fish, which will provide for maximum productivity of the stock for the subsistence fishery and also protect and sustain the long-term health of the stock.

In order to conduct this study, the data needs to be collected over a fairly substantial period of time. You need to capture a couple generations of fish returning in order to estimate what that spawn or recruit ratio is. Really, in this case, you need about a minimum of 12 years of data to do that analysis. This background photo and the previous one just show some sampling of fish. As most of you know, the way to age salmon or one means of aging salmon is to take scales and read the rings on the scales, which gives you an idea of how many years the salmon spent in fresh water and how many in salt water.

Some preliminary results from the study to date show the age composition of the Buskin River sockeye. If you look across the top of the table, each one of these series of numbers represents the number of years spent in fresh water and then the number of years spent in salt water. For example, a 1+3 or 1/3 fish would be a fish that resided one year in fresh water, migrated to the ocean and then returned as an adult three years later.

As you can see, during the last six-year period, there's been some variability in the percentage of fish in each of these age groups that have comprised the run, but, on average, you can also see that for the most part the sockeye salmon on the Buskin is made up of fish that have spent one year in fresh water and three years in salt water and fish that have spent two years in fresh water and three years in salt water. That's not untypical of sockeye salmon, but it is a somewhat narrow age composition for this stock.

This just shows a graph of that age composition data. It's just a visual representation of the age composition during the last five-year period. You can see here clearly from the bars that the age 1/3 and 2/3 fish comprise a vast majority of the return to

45 the Buskin.
46
47 The other benefit of having this
48 information is that if you have a cohort or a year class,
49 which these two bars here would comprise a year class of
50 fish, that were from the same parent year and if you have

this information, it helps you predict or get some indication on a given year if you have a run failure or a poor return and you see that a large proportion of that return is made up of four-year-old fish, for example, then that gives you some idea of what your return the following year might be. So, having this age composition information is not only helpful for establishing an appropriate goal of escapement, but it's also helpful just on a year-to-year basis to get an idea of what the adult returns may be and what kind of shape the fishery is in.

This table has a lot of numbers in it, but it shows the composition of the total sockeye salmon return to the Buskin River during the last five years and it's part of this stock assessment result -- preliminary result of this stock assessment analysis and it just shows the different portions of the run that comprise the total return; the commercial fishery, commercial, sport and escapement. It's a lot of numbers.

I'm just going to switch right to this graph, which shows the situation a little more clearly. You can see from this pie chart that during the last five years about 60 percent of the total number of adult fish returning to the Buskin made it through the weir and made it up into the system and comprised the actual spawning escapement. About 33 percent of the return went to the subsistence fishery. About 8 percent went to the sport fishery. As I mentioned, the commercial harvest is very little, less than 1 percent, during that five-year period. You can really see from this pie chart that the subsistence harvest or the subsistence fishery or this run is very important to the subsistence fishery because it does comprise a large portion of the total return of adults in a given year.

As I mentioned, the educational value of the Buskin weir is that it serves as a science-based learning medium for young subsistence users through the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Summer Salmon Camp Program. It provides other Federal subsistence users the opportunity to learn about the magnitude of escapement and total return of Buskin River sockeye salmon and gain

insights toward management policies that affect the subsistence fishery.

Madam Chair and Council members, that's all I had. I'd be happy to answer any questions about the Buskin Project if you would like.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you. Is there any questions or comments?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah. Is there going to be continuing funding for this?

MR. TRACY: We did apply for a continuation of funding under the -- and perhaps Michelle could speak to this if I'm incorrect. I believe that for continuing projects we can only apply for one year, for the coming year, and then following this year, if funding is received, then we can submit a proposal for a longer term continuation. But the Department of Fish & Game has applied for continuing funding of this project. The Buskin, as you can probably see from the information provided kind of falls into that category that Mr. Klein identified, a long-term monitoring, and it's probably something that we're going to need to -- we're going to want to have a weir in there to look at the escapement for the foreseeable future.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, that's one thing we've been in support of all along and we would like to see it continue.

MR. HOLMES: Madam Chairman. Do you need to have statement of endorsement from this Council; does that help in your proposal request to get that support? Because this is certainly one of the really important subsistence systems on the island and I know that in the last 30, 40 years that, you know, having the Buskin improved certainly reduced my friends and myself, our forays to other areas, having something right off your front door. So it's really neat, and I certainly would hope to see the program expand. And I have to compliment the refuge for their salmon camp as well, because I think they give a really good environmental program on salmon and it's really well balanced in advising folks on the whole spectrum of salmon and their relationship to the community of the island and it's a great program all the way around, including the weir.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

MR. TRACY: Madam Chair, if I could just respond. I'm not sure, perhaps a letter or some other formal support from the Council would be helpful, but I believe -- oh, I'm sorry.

MS. McCLENAHAN: It would be helpful.

MR. TRACY: It would be helpful. And I believe, as Mr. Klein -- and I'm not -- obviously, not very familiar with the process, but as Mr. Klein pointed out.....

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Yeah, let's just go back a little bit when Mr. Klein and the committee that was set up, Pat, that's where that can be recommended to continue as part of that list of the studies that we needed within our region. I don't think, right now, at this point we need to do that. I think once we get the list and we view those in the fall, we will make the recommendation.

Any other questions?

(No audible responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you for the good report.

MR. TRACY: Well, thank you very much.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Next item on the agenda, I believe, is time and place of next meeting. And if you want to turn to Tab H in the book and I need to mark off some areas that some other regions already have scheduled. If you look at the September 30th and October 1st, Bristol Bay has that meeting scheduled in Naknek. Southcentral is scheduled from the 2nd through the 4th in Cordova, Eastern Interior is the 8th and 9th of October and the 10th and 11th is Seward Pen. So my guess is we need to go from the 9th to possibly the 27th, maybe, somewhere in that area.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: I'd like to recommend September 16th through the 19th.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

MR. CRATTY: In King Cove.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Do we want to pick an alternate site, also, and just include that maybe.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Cold Bay.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Cold Bay, Nelson Lagoon?

(Pause -- off microphones)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Okay, we have a motion made 16th through the 19th and the first site King Cove, second site Nelson Lagoon. All in favor signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Motion carried. And I'll promise you nothing but good weather, you won't get stuck there four days.

Okay, I don't have any other items on the agenda, does anybody have anything before we adjourn?

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Move to adjourn.

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Have we got all our administrative paperwork in; everybody got their stuff in?

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Motion made.....

MR. TUTIAKOFF: Second.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: .....and seconded to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing responses)

CHAIRWOMAN TRUMBLE: Thank you, everyone, for another good meeting.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter of Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 65 through 150 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II, taken electronically by myself on the 19th day of March 2002, beginning at the hour of 9:00 o'clock a.m. at the Best Western Inn, Kodiak, Alaska;

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

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

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 26th day of March 2002.

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Joseph P. Kolasinski
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 4/17/04