

1 KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 Kodiak, Alaska
7 March 25, 2008
8 9:00 o'clock a.m.
9

10
11 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:
12

13 Speridon Simeonoff, Sr., Chairman
14 Patrick Holmes
15 Jim J. Hamilton
16 Tom Schwantes
17 Johnny Parker
18 Sam Rohrer
19 Richard Koso
20 Thomas Johnson, Jr.
21
22 Regional Council Coordinator, Michelle Chivers
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44 Recorded and transcribed by:
45
46 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
47 700 W. 2nd Avenue
48 Anchorage, AK 99501
49 907-243-0668
50 jpk@gci.net/sahile@gci.net

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Kodiak, Alaska - 3/25/2008)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Good morning.
Let's call the meeting to order for the
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
Today is March 25th, 2008 and my time says 9:09. May
we have roll call, please, Jim.

MR. HAMILTON: Sure. Good morning
everyone. Welcome new members. Schwantes.

MR. SCHWANTES: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Holmes.

MR. HOLMES: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Parker.

MR. PARKER: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Rohrer.

MR. ROHRER: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Cratty.

MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. My
understanding is that Al is still out fishing and was
unable to make the meeting. Thank you.

MR. HAMILTON: Hamilton, here. Koso.

MR. KOSO: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Simeonoff.

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Here.

MR. HAMILTON: Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Here.

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Once again, good
morning. I'd like to start this morning with we have
new members on the Kodiak/Aleutians Council. I'd like

1 to start with introductions. Can we start from over
2 here.

3

4 MR. ARDIZZONE: Good morning, Mr. Chair
5 and Council Members. My name is Chuck Ardizzone. I'm
6 the supervisor/wildlife biologist from OSM.

7

8 MS. CHIVERS: Council coordinator,
9 Michelle Chivers.

10

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thomas Johnson, Jr. from
12 Kodiak. I'm a Sunaq Tribal Council member and I just
13 got onto the Cook Inlet RCAC too, along with this one.

14

15 MR. SCHWANTES: Tom Schwantes. I've
16 lived in Kodiak since 1979.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I'm Speridon
19 Simeonoff from Akhiok.

20

21 MR. ROHRER: Sam Rohrer from Kodiak,
22 born and raised here. Been on the RAC since 2004, I
23 think.

24

25 MR. KOSO: I'm Richard Koso, originally
26 from King Cove, commercial fished in that area for most
27 of my life and I moved out to Adak about five years ago
28 and I've been living there since.

29

30 MR. PARKER: Johnny Parker, Kodiak,
31 Alaska. I was born and raised here and I'm a Sunaq
32 Tribal member and belong to Afognak and Koniag and I've
33 hunted all around the island on the State and Federal
34 and private lands. I'm new to this board, so it's a
35 learning experience. Thank you.

36

37 MR. HAMILTON: Good morning. Jim
38 Hamilton, hunting and fishing guide. Lived in Kodiak
39 for about 21 years.

40

41 MR. HOLMES: Pat Holmes, Kodiak. Came
42 here before the earthquake, went to college and been
43 here ever since. Strong proponent of subsistence.

44

45 MS. STOKES: I'm Delores Stokes. I'm
46 with the Sunaq Tribe environmental department,
47 originally from Sand Point.

48

49 MR. PYLE: Good morning. Bill Pyle,
50 wildlife biologist, Kodiak Refuge.

1 MR. SAITO: Brandon Saito, subsistence
2 biologist from the Kodiak Refuge.

3
4 MR. WHEELER: Gary Wheeler, Refuge
5 manager, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

6
7 MS. SIEKANIEC: Sandra Siekaniec, the
8 Refuge manager at the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

9
10 MS. LEE: I'm Tonya Lee from the Kodiak
11 National Wildlife Refuge. I'm also a local here,
12 member of the Sunaq Tribe as well.

13
14 MR. MALUTIN: Iver Malutin. I work
15 with KANA and I'm also a representative for the Prince
16 William Sound Regional Advisory Council and I just want
17 to take this opportunity to thank everyone for being
18 here. It's really nice to see a full board here and I
19 just want to thank every one of you that just got newly
20 appointed on the board because having come to these
21 meetings many, many times and it's always with a lot of
22 empty seats, it's really nice to see all of you on the
23 board. Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thanks for good
26 introductions. At this time we'll have the election of
27 officers. Michelle.

28
29 MS. CHIVERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Before we start the election of officers I just want to
31 remind everyone to use your microphones. So each time
32 when you go to speak if you would turn your microphone
33 on and then turn it off when you're finished speaking.
34 Thanks.

35
36 As for election of officers, the Chair
37 will serve a one-year term and they will conduct the
38 Regional Council meeting, attend and represent the
39 Regional Council at the Federal Subsistence Board
40 meeting. This person is also a voting member of the
41 Council and they will sign all reports, correspondence,
42 meeting minutes and other documents for external
43 distribution.

44
45 We can handle the election of officers
46 either of two ways. We can either go by secret ballot
47 vote or by voice vote. So if somebody just wants to
48 nominate somebody and then somebody makes a second,
49 that would probably work. I mean sometimes in other
50 Councils they don't like to know who's nominating who,

1 but I think we're fine here. We'll go ahead and open
2 it up for the Chair. Thank you.
3
4 MR. ROHRER: I nominate Speridon
5 Simeonoff for Chair.
6
7 MR. HOLMES: Second.
8
9 MS. CHIVERS: Any other nominations.
10
11 MR. HAMILTON: I have a question. Can
12 we nominate non-present members like Al Cratty?
13
14 MS. CHIVERS: Yes, you can. So, are
15 you nominating Al then?
16
17 MR. HAMILTON: No, just other seats.
18
19 MS. CHIVERS: So are there no other
20 nominations?
21
22 (No comments)
23
24 MS. CHIVERS: Speridon, I'll let you
25 take over for vice-chair and secretary.
26
27 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you,
28 Michelle. The floor is now open for vice-chair.
29
30
31 MR. HAMILTON: I nominate Al Cratty
32
33 MR. ROHRER: Second that.
34
35 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
36 seconded. Any other nominations.
37
38 (No comments)
39
40 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: If there are no
41 other nominations, then the nominations are closed. Al
42 Cratty is the vice-chair. The floor is now open for
43 secretary.
44
45 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chair. I nominate
46 Jim Hamilton.
47
48 MR. HOLMES: Second.
49
50 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Jim Hamilton is

1 the nominated. Are there any other nominations.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing none, the
6 nominations are closed and Jim Hamilton is the
7 secretary. That takes care of our election of
8 officers.

9

10 The next item is the review and
11 adoption of the agenda. Are there any additions.
12 Michelle.

13

14 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. If everybody
15 would look at Page 2 of the agenda, item D(1) halfway
16 down the page, there was going to be a presentation by
17 our Fish and Wildlife field office on the Big Creek
18 project, but due to our significant budget cuts that
19 was one of the projects that was cut this go round, so
20 it will not be presented. That project has been cut
21 from this year. It may be up again next year. I think
22 when it comes time to bring up projects that the
23 Council would like to see, if the Council would like to
24 bring it up at that time when we have somebody here
25 from our fishery division, that might be something
26 you'll want to bring up. As far as I know, that's the
27 only project that's been cut in this area. So we are
28 not going to have that presentation today. Thank you,
29 Mr. Chair.

30

31 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you,
32 Michelle. Any other amendments to the agenda. Pat.

33

34 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I'd suggest
35 beings that we have a vacancy, I was through the Fish
36 and Game office last week and Larry Van Daele said if
37 this committee desired, he could do a brief
38 presentation on the population of deer on the island
39 and his best guess of what's happening if the Board
40 would like that.

41

42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Where would you
43 want to put that, Pat.

44

45 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. I would
46 suggest we have it under ADF&G. If he wants to follow
47 the Buskin River report, that would work.

48

49 MR. HOLMES: Michelle, could you give
50 me a wild guess as to what time that would be and I'll

1 give him a call.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: We won't know what
4 time that will be until we get to it.

5

6 MR. HOLMES: Okay, I'll call during a
7 break and ask him to come.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Okay. Any other
10 additions or amendments to the agenda.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing none, then
15 a motion would be in order to adopt the agenda as
16 amended.

17

18 MR. SCHWANTES: I make a motion we
19 adopt the agenda as amended.

20

21 MR. KOSO: Second.

22

23 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
24 seconded. Any discussion.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
29 discussion. Is there any objection.

30

31 (No objections)

32

33 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
34 objection, the motion carries. The minutes of our
35 September 20th, 2007 meeting we had in Kodiak, has
36 everyone had a chance to go over the minutes. A motion
37 would be in order to accept those minutes. Pat.

38

39 MR. HOLMES: Two brief changes.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat, I'm sorry,
42 would you make a motion to accept the minutes for the
43 purposes of discussion.

44

45 MR. HOLMES: Move that we accept the
46 minutes so we can get it on the table and then I'll
47 talk. I'm sorry. Got ahead of myself, Mr. Chairman.

48

49 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: If you'd like, you
50 can make the motion to accept the minutes and then

1 under discussion you could bring up your ideas.

2

3 MR. HOLMES: I'd like to move that we
4 adopt the minutes as proposed.

5

6 MR. HAMILTON: Second.

7

8 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
9 seconded. Discussion. Pat.

10

11 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I have two
12 small points. One under the discussion of new
13 business. It says Ms. Wanda Katelnikoff is working on
14 an environmental impact statement. It probably should
15 read she's working on comments to because it's the FAA
16 that's doing the impact statement.

17

18 MS. CHIVERS: Pat, can you tell me what
19 page that's on.

20

21 MR. HOLMES: Page 8, new business,
22 second paragraph from the bottom, second sentence. It
23 says Ms. Wanda Katelnikoff is working on an
24 environmental impact statement and it should read she's
25 working on comments to an environmental impact
26 statement.

27

28 MS. CHIVERS: Okay.

29

30 MR. HOLMES: Page 9 is has Pat Holmes
31 made a motion to support the resolution to the FAA and
32 I have my original notes on that and it probably should
33 read closer to made a motion for a resolution to the
34 FAA requesting that any changes to the Kodiak Airport
35 not impact subsistence. I didn't really come out to
36 support the project, but that my intent was that our
37 resolution request that any changes that take place not
38 impact subsistence at the Buskin. Thank you.

39

40 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. Rather than a
41 resolution coming out of that, a letter was submitted
42 to FAA and all Council Members should have received a
43 copy of that. Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
46 discussion to the minutes.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no further

1 discussion, is there any objection to the motion.

2

3 (No objections)

4

5 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
6 objection, then the motion carries.

7

8 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. We're going
9 to have some people that are going to be joining us on
10 line at 9:30 and the agency that is setting up the
11 teleconference will be calling at 9:25. The next item
12 on the agenda is Council Member reports. Maybe we can
13 hold that after the proposals are finished. I'm
14 guessing the Council Member reports will take about 10-
15 15 minutes. For the new Council Members, just to kind
16 of give you guidance as to what the Council Member
17 reports are, if you've heard anything that's happened
18 in your area -- most of you are from Kodiak, but if
19 you've heard anything that's happened with wildlife
20 issues, fishery issues, that you'd like to bring to the
21 Board's attention, we carry that information forward to
22 the Board. And then we can have some of the Council
23 Members that have been on the Council for a while start
24 and you can kind of get a feel for what's said in those
25 report. My suggestion would be let's hold that off
26 until after we do the wildlife proposals. Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Okay, we'll take a
29 short break and you can get them on line.

30

31 (Off record)

32

33 (On record)

34

35 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I guess at this
36 time we have Terry Haynes or who is that?

37

38 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. We'll start
39 with the presentation from Chuck with each of the
40 proposals and then the gentlemen on the State will
41 speak up when it's time for the State comments.

42

43 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. Chuck,
44 you have the floor.

45

46 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. Council
47 Members. Good morning. My name is Chuck Ardizzone for
48 the record. I'm sitting here because Laura is at the
49 Bristol Bay meeting, so I'm going to give the
50 presentations today.

1 Proposal WP08-01 is found on Pages 14
2 through 25 of your book. This analysis is quite
3 lengthy mostly because it includes all the regulations
4 from the 26 Game Management Units in the state. My
5 presentation today will be quite short since I will
6 just touch on the key points.

7
8 Proposal 08-01 requests that the
9 closing dates of the wolf hunting and trapping seasons
10 statewide be extended to May 31; that the harvest limit
11 be increased to ten wolves per day for the dates of
12 April 1 to May 31; and that any restrictions to
13 disturbing or destroying wolf dens be removed from
14 regulations.

15
16 The proponent seeks to expand and
17 increase hunting and trapping opportunities on wolf
18 populations statewide in order to provide for more
19 productive moose and caribou populations, which are
20 important subsistence resources to rural Alaskans
21 throughout the state. The proponent states that
22 reinstatement of historic wolf control activities such
23 as denning or spring baiting will help to promote and
24 maintain more productive moose or caribou populations
25 that are highly important as basic subsistence food
26 resources in rural Alaska. The goal of the proposal is
27 to provide adequate and sustainable harvest levels of
28 moose and caribou.

29
30 In May 2004, the Federal Subsistence
31 Board adopted a Predator Management Policy. As
32 described in the policy, the Board administers the
33 subsistence taking and uses of fish and wildlife on
34 Federal lands through regulations that provide for the
35 nonwasteful harvest of fish and wildlife by Federally
36 qualified rural residents, consistent with the
37 maintenance of healthy populations of harvested
38 resources. Such subsistence taking and uses are for
39 direct personal or family consumption.

40
41 The policy goes on to note that
42 wildlife management activities on Federal public lands
43 other than the subsistence take and use of fish and
44 wildlife, such as predator control and habitat
45 management, are the responsibility of and remain within
46 the authority of the individual land management
47 agencies.

48
49 Given that the proponent of Proposal
50 WP08-01 requests expanded harvest of wolf through more

1 liberal trapping and hunting seasons, harvest limits,
2 and the opportunity to take pups at den sites, which
3 would promote more productive moose and caribou
4 populations, thereby ensuring sustainable harvests of
5 said populations. This proposal falls outside of the
6 purview of the Board, but within the purview of Federal
7 land management agencies in coordination with the State
8 of Alaska.

9
10 The preliminary OSM conclusion is to
11 oppose this proposal and that is found on Page 24. If
12 there's any questions, I'll try and answer them.

13
14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: This proposal,
15 you're proposing to increase the bag limit of
16 harvesting of wolves so that you can maintain a stable
17 population of moose and caribou?

18
19 MR. ARDIZZONE: (Nods affirmatively)

20
21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: It's pretty
22 obvious that it's pointing toward predator control and
23 that's not what we're about. Is there any other
24 questions for Chuck.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any comments from
29 different agencies. Alaska Department of Fish and
30 Game.

31
32 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman. This is
33 Terry Haynes with the Department of Fish and Game in
34 Fairbanks. Can you hear me okay.

35
36 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes, we can.

37
38 MR. HAYNES: Thank you. Our comments
39 on this proposal are on Pages 26 and 27 of your meeting
40 book and I will just hit a few key points in our
41 comments.

42
43 The Department does not support this
44 proposal. No evidence is presented indicating that the
45 proposed changes are needed to
46 provide for the continuation of subsistence uses of
47 wolves by Federally-qualified subsistence users.

48
49 Any element in this proposal, whether
50 season extension, increased harvest limit, or

1 disturbing/destroying dens, could result in overharvest
2 of wolves and create conservation concerns in some
3 areas. In southeast Alaska, for example, increased
4 harvests could lead to wolves being listed as
5 threatened or endangered. The poor pelt quality of
6 wolves taken in spring
7 in most areas reduces their value for subsistence uses.
8

9 We'd also note that State regulations
10 do not authorize wolf dens to be disturbed or
11 destroyed. With that, I'll be happy to answer any
12 questions you might have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.
13

14 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
15 Comments:

16
17 Wildlife Proposal WP08-01:

18
19 Liberalize wolf harvest regulations
20 statewide.

21
22 Introduction:

23
24 This statewide proposal would extend
25 the wolf hunting and trapping season by moving the date
26 to May 31; increase the hunting bag limit to 10 wolves
27 per day during the period from April 1 to May 31; and
28 delete any restrictions to disturbing or destroying a
29 den.

30
31 Impact on Subsistence Users:

32
33 Adoption of this proposal would: (1)
34 provide additional time and methods for Federally-
35 qualified subsistence users to hunt and trap wolves on
36 Federal lands in spring; (2) substantially increase the
37 harvest limit in some areas for wolves taken under
38 Federal subsistence hunting regulations on Federal
39 lands; and (3) authorize dens on Federal lands to be
40 disturbed or destroyed for the purpose of harvesting
41 wolves. These liberalizations would create wolf
42 management and conservation issues in some areas that
43 would likely result in reduced subsistence
44 opportunities to harvest wolves in the long term.
45

46 Opportunity Provided by the State:

47
48 State hunting regulations allow harvest
49 of wolves in May and/or authorize a bag limit of 10
50 wolves per day in some units where the wolf populations

1 can sustain these harvests. State regulations do not
2 authorize dens to be disturbed or destroyed.

3

4 Conservation Issues:

5

6 Any element in this proposal -- season
7 extension, increased harvest limit, or
8 disturbing/destroying dens -- could result in
9 over-harvest of wolves and create conservation concerns
10 in some areas. In southeast Alaska, for example,
11 increased harvests could lead to wolves being listed as
12 threatened or endangered. The poor pelt quality of
13 wolves taken in spring in most areas reduces their
14 value for subsistence uses.

15

16 Enforcement Issues:

17

18 Differences in Federal and State
19 regulations resulting from adoption of this proposal
20 create enforcement issues in areas with mixed land
21 ownership.

22

23 Other Comments:

24

25 No evidence is presented indicating
26 that the proposed changes are needed to provide for the
27 continuation of subsistence uses of wolves by
28 Federally-qualified subsistence users.

29

30 Similar proposals to manipulate
31 predator populations that benefit prey populations were
32 submitted to, and rejected by, the Federal Subsistence
33 Board in 2005 and 2006 for the following reasons: (1)
34 the Federal Subsistence Board and the Department of
35 Fish and Game were concerned that extending the season
36 statewide when wolves have pups at the den site is
37 contrary to sound wildlife management principles; (2)
38 The Federal Subsistence Board and Department of Fish
39 and Game noted that hides of wolves taken in May are
40 not prime and are of low value for making clothing and
41 handicrafts; and (3) the Federal Subsistence Board
42 reiterated that its policy adopted in 2004 is to not
43 promulgate regulations specifically for predator
44 control.

45

46 The proponent desires that each Federal
47 land management agency take action to facilitate active
48 predator management on Federal units. The State of
49 Alaska is actively engaged in intensive management of
50 wolves in some areas of the state in order to restore

1 healthy prey populations, but Federal land management
2 policies limit the effectiveness of State efforts. The
3 State would welcome opportunities to work with the
4 proponents to encourage Federal land managers to
5 reevaluate their land management policies that limit
6 the State's active management tools on most Federal
7 lands.

8

9

Recommendation:

10

11 Oppose the proposal but support the
12 Council(s) interest in encouraging cooperation between
13 the Federal land management agencies and the State to
14 allow active management of predators.

15

16 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. Are
17 there any questions.

18

19

(No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
22 questions. I guess a motion would be in order for
23 Proposal WP08-01. Michelle.

24

25 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. Before we get
26 to that point I'm going to go over the summary of
27 written public comments and also what recommendations
28 other Councils made.

29

30

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes.

31

32

33 MS. CHIVERS: We did receive one
34 written public comment and it's in your book on Page
35 28. I won't read the whole thing, but it's the
36 Defenders of Wildlife, Alaska Wildlife Alliance and
37 Alaska Center for the Environment. They all oppose
38 this proposal as well. They're talking about denning,
39 the destruction of the wolf dens and disturbance and
40 killing of wolf pups in their dens.

41

42 Then what I have here is a summary of
43 the actions the other Councils took at their meetings.
44 Southeast opposed this proposal. They said disturbing
45 dens and killing pups is culturally unacceptable in
46 Southeast and not supported by sound management
47 principals and could have negative results.

48

49 Southcentral Council also opposed the
50 proposal and they said it's clearly a predator control
51 proposal and not within the program's purview.

52

1 The Yukon-Kuskokwim Council supported
2 the proposal with a modification. I'm not sure what
3 the modification is, so I really can't tell you why
4 they supported it.

5
6 The Western Interior Council opposed
7 this proposal. They mentioned there's poor quality
8 pelts and it could be seen as a predator control and
9 contrary to sound management principals of wildlife
10 management.

11
12 The Seward Peninsula Council opposed
13 this proposal. Predator control is not part of the
14 Federal Subsistence Management Program.

15
16 Northwest Arctic also opposed this
17 proposal and they concur with the analysis conclusion.

18
19
20 Eastern Interior did support with
21 modification. They wanted to modify to extend the
22 season in the Eastern Interior region to May 31st.
23 They said take would be incidental when hunting bears
24 and it's not in the vicinity of wolf dens, so it
25 reduces the chance of harvesting the females.

26
27 The North Slope Council opposed this
28 proposal. They look at it as predator control, which
29 is not part of the Federal Subsistence Management
30 Program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you,
33 Michelle. We're at Federal, State and Tribal.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: No comments from
38 Federal, State or Tribal organizations. Fish and Game
39 Advisory Committee.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Good enough. Just
44 a reminder, if you want to testify at this meeting,
45 there's a pink paper you can fill out and give it to
46 Michelle. Regional Council deliberations. Any
47 comments from the Board.

48
49 MR. HAMILTON: Just a comment. I guess
50 it's a pretty rare day that I agree with Defenders of

1 Wildlife. That's my only comment. There's a fine line
2 in all of this. It's an interesting proposal. I would
3 tend to agree in opposing it. That's my only comment.

4

5 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
6 comments.

7

8 MR. ROHRER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. At the
9 end of ADF&G's comments they have a recommendation,
10 oppose the proposal but support the Council's interest
11 in encouraging cooperation between the Federal land
12 management agencies in the state to allow active
13 management of predators. I like that recommendation.
14 I agree it's not the Subsistence Board's place to enact
15 predator management policies; however, if predator
16 control is a concern for rural residents, I think for
17 us to ask for a resolution to encourage Federal land
18 management agencies to cooperate with the State, I
19 think that would be a good thing. I think we should
20 come up with a resolution like that.

21

22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Would that
23 resolution come from this board?

24

25 MR. ROHRER: Yes.

26

27 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Do you want to
28 work with Michelle and provide some wording for it that
29 we can forward to the agencies.

30

31 MR. ROHRER: Yeah, can you come up with
32 wording like that? Actually, I think the wording that
33 ADF&G uses in their recommendation is more or less what
34 I'm thinking. But, yeah, Michelle, you could fine tune
35 that.

36

37 MR. HAMILTON: Mr. Chair. I'm just
38 wondering if we could make a statement supporting --
39 making a statement or comment to the effect that we
40 support the ADF&G comments. Is that easier?

41

42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: That would work.

43

44 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chairman. I like that
45 idea, but I think it would be a little bit stronger if
46 we actually single out that specific recommendation as
47 a resolution from this Advisory Board. I think that
48 would be stronger

49

50 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

1 MR. SCHWANTES: I agree. I think we
2 should oppose the proposal but support a resolution to
3 go forward stating that we agree with that
4 recommendation.

5
6 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Iver, you have a
7 comment.

8
9 MR. MALUTIN: Yes. This is from not
10 necessarily my tribe, but I am a tribal member. What
11 we're talking about here doesn't directly pertain to
12 you, but indirectly it does because indirectly what
13 they're talking about is trying to get subsistence food
14 for maybe some of the tribal councils, maybe someplace
15 in Alaska, and we don't want to do anything that would
16 be detrimental to some of the areas that really have a
17 critical problem. I think what Sam is saying is maybe
18 there could be some kind of deviation away from the big
19 problem to help some of the tribes that are really in
20 need. I don't know of any instance up there who is
21 really in need and who isn't in need and if there is a
22 need and if there is a wolf problem, then somehow it's
23 got to be taken care so we can help those tribes get
24 the subsistence food they need. I would not like to
25 see us say anything that would be detrimental to just
26 chopping them off and not able for them to get their
27 subsistence food that they need. Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Iver.
30 Mr. Schwantes.

31
32 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chair. I think
33 that's what we would be doing. From reading this
34 information, I don't believe this is under our
35 authority to go after predator control, so I think the
36 thing to do is to oppose this proposal, but then go
37 forward with a resolution supporting the Federal and
38 State work together in predator management to assist
39 those areas that need it. Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Michelle.

42
43 MS. CHIVERS: Are you presenting that
44 in the form of a motion?

45
46 MR. SCHWANTES: Yes.

47
48 MR. HOLMES: Second.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and

1 seconded. Any discussion.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
6 discussion. Is there any objection.

7

8 (No objections)

9

10 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no
11 objections, then the motion carries. Next proposal WP-
12 08-05.

13

14 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. This
15 proposal is found on Pages 30 through 39 in your books.
16 Once again for the record my name is Chuck Ardizzone.
17 Proposal WP08-05 is a statewide proposal that requests
18 the removal of all unit-specific regulations related to
19 the statewide sale of brown bear handicrafts made of
20 skin, hide, pelt or fur and that sales of brown bear
21 handicrafts made of claws, bones, teeth, sinew, or
22 skulls should occur only between Federally qualified
23 subsistence users.

24

25 The proponent submitted this proposal
26 in order to refine Federal regulations, which, in its
27 view, allow for unconstrained commercial sale of
28 handicrafts made from brown bear parts and create
29 market incentives for poaching.

30

31 Under current Federal subsistence
32 regulations, brown bear fur with claws can only be used
33 to make handicrafts for sale if the bears were
34 harvested from units in Eastern Interior, Bristol Bay
35 and Southeast Alaska. Other parts, such as bones teeth,
36 sinew, or skulls can only be used in handicrafts for
37 sale from brown bear taken in Southeast Alaska. The
38 proponent s description of persons eligible to sell
39 handicrafts made with these parts would increase the
40 types of bear parts eligible for sale in much of the
41 State, but would narrow all sales only to those between
42 Federally qualified rural residents.

43

44 Between 2002 and 2007, the Federal
45 Subsistence Board considered seven proposals regarding
46 the sale of handicrafts made from some of the nonedible
47 parts of bears. Throughout this period, the Board has
48 consistently provided for the sale of handicrafts made
49 from the skin, hide, pelt, fur, claws, bones, teeth,
50 sinew, and skulls of brown bear taken by Federally

1 qualified subsistence users from units where these
2 practices are considered appropriate.

3
4 Retaining, as a legal practice, the use
5 of brown bear claws and other non-edible parts for
6 handicrafts for sale is consistent with previous Board
7 action with Section .803 of ANILCA. Also, it is not
8 expected to significantly increase harvest.

9
10 No evidence has been found to suggest
11 that current Federal subsistence regulations adversely
12 affect brown bear populations, nor that Federal
13 subsistence regulations have led to an increased legal
14 or illegal harvest of brown bears.

15
16 Thus the proponent's conservation
17 concerns are related to activities allowed -- do not at
18 this time appear to have merit. The OSM preliminary
19 conclusion is to oppose this proposal. If there's any
20 questions, I'll try and answer them.

21
22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Discussion or
23 questions.

24
25 MR. KOSO: I have a question. On this
26 bear hunt -- I mean you have subsistence hunts, but I'm
27 a little confused because normally the bear seasons are
28 open during the -- it's either permit or regular open
29 season. Whether they have the actual season for
30 subsistence hunting outside of the regular seasons.
31 I've never seen it. I've always seen a subsistence
32 hunt during the time of openings.

33
34 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yeah.

37
38 MR. ARDIZZONE: If you look at our reg
39 books, there's a number of seasons, but they might
40 correspond with State seasons. We might not have a
41 separate subsistence season. Sometimes the seasons are
42 the same as State season, so I'm not sure exactly what
43 to point out in the book. What unit would you be
44 interested in?

45
46 MR. KOSO: Well, I was just looking at
47 the proposal itself and, to me, it's kind of confusing
48 because I never seen there was an actual subsistence
49 bear that wasn't in the regulation book as an
50 opening/closing. I've never seen anybody hunt that I

1 know of -- I could be wrong, different areas is
2 different areas, but I know in our region I've never
3 heard of anybody hunting outside of a season that
4 wasn't scheduled.

5
6 MR. ARDIZZONE: Subsistence seasons are
7 scheduled.

8
9 MR. KOSO: I've never seen them
10 different than the regular bear seasons that come to
11 play is what I'm saying.

12
13 MR. ARDIZZONE: Right. And they may
14 not be. The Federal season may be exactly the same as
15 the State season. It's just if you're hunting on
16 Federal lands or State lands. I mean you can hunt on
17 Federal lands under State regulation or subsistence
18 regulations many times, so sometimes there's no clear-
19 cut difference.

20
21 MR. KOSO: I guess that's what's
22 confusing. It's like ducks or something, you've got
23 different seasons. You've got a commercial season and
24 then you've got a subsistence season. I've never seen
25 that with the bear.

26
27 MR. ARDIZZONE: There may not be a
28 different season.

29
30 MR. KOSO: All right. That's all I
31 have. Thank you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

34
35 MR. SCHWANTES: I believe, to help
36 answer your question, I think Mr. Rohrer can help me
37 out here, but in the Federal subsistence hunting
38 regulations there is a subsistence brown bear hunt on
39 Kodiak from December 1st through December 15th and from
40 April 1st to May 15th and I think that is different
41 than our normal bear season.

42
43 MR. ROHRER: Yeah, it is. I'm not sure
44 the actual dates on it and Larry I'm sure knows that,
45 but, yeah, I think there's four subsistence bears that
46 can be harvested on Kodiak, is that correct, two for
47 Old Harbor, one for Port Lions and one for Akhiok, is
48 that right? And one from Karluk.

49
50 MR. KOSO: Okay. Thanks.

1 MR. SCHWANTES: According to the
2 regulations, Akhiok has one permit, Karluk has one
3 permit and Larsen Bay up to three, Old Harbor up to
4 two, Ouzinkie up to two, and Port Lions up to two.

5
6 MR. KOSO: Thank you. I never seen it
7 in our area.

8
9 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

10
11 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I guess to
12 add my dim recollection of how we got to where we're
13 at, I believe our Council has been pretty consistent
14 for the areas that we're involved in against the sale
15 of bear parts because of the potential of increased
16 poaching and because rural residents -- you know, we
17 all realize the value of bears culturally as well as
18 the guided sport hunts, so we kind of left other areas
19 in the state open to choose what they wished to do
20 because we felt it was a difficult thing for us to tell
21 folks in Southeast what not to do.

22
23 That said, I can agree with the intent
24 of the State proposal here on trying to tighten things
25 up, but in doing their proposal they're doing two
26 things. One is to remove the unit-specific
27 regulations, so that, to me, is difficult with the way
28 that our Council has looked at this before.

29
30 The second part of it, that the sale be
31 restricted only to qualified Federal subsistence users.
32 That part I could agree with because it's more
33 restrictive than what exists in the present Federal
34 regulations. So those are two of the things I'm trying
35 to struggle with because they kind of contradict the
36 philosophy that we've gone with before. If I'm
37 incorrect, somebody could remember better, please
38 correct me.

39
40 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat.
41 Mr. Van Daele, would you like to comment on this.

42
43 MR. VAN DAELE: Thank you, Mr.
44 Chairman. Larry Van Daele, Alaska Department of Fish
45 and Game Kodiak. We have an ongoing concern with the
46 commercialization statewide of bear parts and that
47 concern is based on three factors primarily. One is
48 the biology of brown bears. Of course, they're very
49 slow producing animals and we need to be very careful
50 of them. Of course, in some parts of the state we do

1 want to reduce bear populations for predator concerns,
2 but statewide we're concerned on a biological basis.

3

4 The second concern we have is as part
5 of an international community we know that there is
6 illegal sale of bear parts and our colleagues in
7 Russian and Japan and other places where brown bears
8 exist have cited through SITES and other international
9 concerns that if we cannot track these bear parts, then
10 we don't know which ones were taken by Federal
11 subsistence users, which ones were poached, which ones
12 were taken by commercial users and being sold, et
13 cetera. So although it may look good on paper, in the
14 real world this may, in fact, cause a loophole that is
15 a big concern of ours.

16

17 The third concern has to do with what
18 Member Holmes mentioned. Here in the coastal areas of
19 the state, particularly in Kodiak, the brown bear is
20 very carefully managed as an important economic
21 species, as an important traditional species, and to
22 allow the sale of parts would be an increased incentive
23 for people to either poach or to come and kill one of
24 our bears when they normally wouldn't have and it could
25 impact our management program around here.

26

27 That being said, I don't want to speak
28 for the tribes of Kodiak, but there is a strong
29 tradition of respect for brown bear on this island and
30 sale was not part of that tradition as I understand it,
31 but I'll leave that to you. Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Larry.
34 I guess we go to Federal, State and other tribal.
35 Michelle, I'm sorry.

36

37 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. I was going
38 to say Terry Haynes is on line. He may have some
39 additional information under Alaska Department of Fish
40 and Game. Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Terry, do you have
43 anything to add.

44

45 MR. HAYNES: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I had
46 a hard time hearing some of the discussion. There was
47 some paper shuffling going on. I will just add a few
48 more comments regarding the proposal. Our written
49 comments begin on Page 40 of your Council books.

50

1 The real essence of our proposal is to
2 allow the sale of brown bear handicrafts between
3 Federally-qualified subsistence users. To not allow
4 the sale of these handicrafts to other people because
5 that's something that, in our judgment, extends beyond
6 the purview of the Federal program and is in conflict
7 with State regulations. The reason being that State
8 regulations do not allow the sale of brown bear claws.
9 As long as those sales are limited to transactions
10 between Federally qualified subsistence users, we don't
11 have a problem with that.

12
13 And we don't have a problem with
14 broader sales if brown bear fur is defined under the
15 State regulations and this is the essence of the
16 problem. The Federal regulations define brown bear fur
17 to include the claws. State regulations do not. As
18 you probably know, brown bear claws can be a valuable
19 commodity on the market.

20
21 So we're not trying to limit the
22 opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users
23 to sell or have brown bear handicrafts to use for
24 ceremonial or traditional activities, but we are
25 concerned about the incentives that are created by
26 having the more liberal Federal regulations. Larry Van
27 Daele pointed out some of the kinds of concerns that we
28 have and the potential for misuse of the regulation.

29
30 So we think by adopting this proposal
31 would allow these traditional uses of brown bear fur
32 and brown bear handicrafts to continue under the
33 Federal regulations and it would reduce the likelihood
34 that Federally qualified subsistence users would be
35 prosecuted for engaging in sales that are prohibited
36 under State law when they are on State or private
37 lands.

38
39 One thing we have been looking at is
40 some way of marking brown bear claws so that there
41 could be a way of tracking how many brown bears taken
42 under Federal regulation are being used for the purpose
43 of making and selling handicraft. Right now there's no
44 way of knowing how many brown bears are being harvested
45 under the Federal regulations and being used to make
46 and sell handicraft.

47
48 So our intent is to provide a little
49 more security for brown bears and at the same time not
50 put constraints on the use of brown bear parts for

1 traditional purposes under the Federal regulations.
2 I'll try and answer any questions if you have them.
3 Otherwise, that's the end of our comments. Thank you.

4
5 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
6 comments:

7
8 Wildlife Proposal WP08-05:
9

10 Change the regulations regarding sale
11 of brown bear handicrafts to allow sales of handicrafts
12 made from brown bear fur in all units and to restrict
13 sales of handicrafts made from claws, bones, teeth or
14 skulls to transactions between Federally-qualified
15 subsistence users.

16
17 Introduction:

18
19 Current Federal regulations allow
20 essentially unconstrained commercial sale of
21 handicrafts made from bear parts taken in some units as
22 a customary and traditional activity, without
23 substantial evidence demonstrating that such sales have
24 ever occurred. The sale of such handicrafts is limited
25 only by an unenforceable provision that prohibits sales
26 constituting a "significant commercial enterprise."
27 The current regulations also allow the purchase of
28 these handicrafts by persons who are not Federally-
29 qualified subsistence users, despite such purchases
30 being prohibited under State law and, as was pointed
31 out in the spring 2006 Federal Subsistence Board
32 meeting, that sales can even occur over the internet.

33
34 Sales of handicrafts made from brown
35 bear claws, teeth, skulls, and bones present a
36 particular problem, because these are potentially high
37 value items, and allowing sales creates market
38 incentives for poaching both in Alaska and other
39 states.

40
41 Black bear handicraft sales, although
42 not customary and traditional, do not create the high
43 level of conservation concern raised by sales of brown
44 bear handicrafts. Similarly, sales of brown bear
45 handicrafts do not raise the same level of concern if
46 limited to the skin or fur as defined in state
47 regulations; and even sales of handicrafts made with
48 claws and teeth do not currently raise extremely high
49 levels of concern if limited to sales among Federally-
50 qualified users.

1 Changing the regulation to continue to
2 allow the sale of brown bear fur products to anyone
3 (State allows sale of untanned brown bear hides) while
4 limiting sales of handicrafts made with brown bear
5 claws, teeth, bones and skulls to sales to other
6 Federally-qualified subsistence users should help
7 eliminate commercial markets and the masking of illegal
8 sales in Alaska and elsewhere.

9
10 Unit specific restrictions on sales are
11 almost impossible to enforce without tracking and
12 documentation requirements and are not needed for the
13 lower value fur handicrafts. This proposal will
14 eliminate the unit-specific sale allowances in order to
15 make the regulations more user-friendly and more
16 enforceable.

17
18 Impact on Subsistence Users:

19
20 This proposal will not restrict any
21 customary and traditional activity because sales of
22 brown bear handicrafts are not customary and
23 traditional. The Federal Subsistence Board's current
24 allowance of such sales was not based upon a
25 determination that such sales are customary and
26 traditional but was based upon the Board's unsupported
27 argument that the Board can authorize any use if the
28 take is customary and traditional (see e.g., January 2,
29 2006 letter from Chairman Demientieff to Commissioner
30 Campbell).

31
32 This proposal will continue to allow
33 rural residents to: sell brown bear fur handicrafts to
34 anyone (as allowed under State law); barter brown bear
35 handicrafts with anyone under Federal regulations; and
36 sell brown bear handicrafts to other rural residents
37 under Federal regulations. Therefore, this proposed
38 regulation change will not impair the ability of rural
39 residents or urban Alaska Natives to obtain such
40 handicrafts for ceremonial, religious and cultural
41 purposes.

42
43 Further, adoption of this proposal will
44 significantly reduce the likelihood that Federally-
45 qualified subsistence users will face State prosecution
46 for engaging in sales that are prohibited under State
47 law when they are on State or private lands.

48
49 Opportunity Provided by State:

50

1 Under 5 AAC 92.200, handicrafts made
2 with bear fur may be sold to anyone, but sales of
3 handicrafts made with claws, skulls, teeth, and bones
4 are prohibited. Whole bear skins, with claws attached,
5 taken in certain predator control areas may be sold
6 under 5 AAC 92.031, but only after sealing and under
7 terms of a permit issued for that bear skin.

8

9

Conservation Issues:

10

11 The Federal Subsistence Board created a
12 new market for bear claws and other high value bear
13 parts which likely masks illegal sales, thereby
14 compounding problems with the international trade of
15 endangered species and contributing to the illegal
16 harvest, over-harvest, and waste of bears in other
17 states and countries, as well as Alaska. Markets for
18 high value bear handicrafts create a conservation
19 concern because brown bears are protected under the
20 Endangered Species Act in other states and Mexico, and
21 the origin of brown bear products cannot be determined
22 by visual inspection. Brown bear are also listed on
23 Appendix II of the Convention International Trade of
24 Endangered Species (CITES).

25

26

27 In Alaska, economic incentives
28 associated with harvesting brown bear to make
29 handicrafts create conservation concerns because brown
30 bears develop slowly and have a low reproductive rate,
31 making small populations extremely susceptible to
32 over-harvest. Allowing a widespread sale of high value
33 bear parts without any kind of tracking mechanism is an
34 invitation to poachers. Further, the existing
35 regulations are unenforceable and inconsistent with
36 sound wildlife management principles.

36

37

Enforcement Issues:

38

39

40 This proposal will reduce enforcement
41 issues created by the existing Federal regulation in
42 several ways: (1) By limiting the pool of eligible
43 purchasers for high value bear parts, it will
44 significantly reduce the economic incentives for
45 poaching in other states and countries as well as in
46 Alaska. (2) By allowing the sales of brown bear fur
47 handicrafts from any Game Management Unit, as allowed
48 under State law, his proposal will eliminate
49 unenforceable unit-specific sales authorizations in
50 existing regulation. (3) The proposed regulation will
51 reduce the likelihood that Federally-qualified

1 subsistence users will face prosecution for attempting
2 to engage in sales on State or private lands that are
3 prohibited under State law.

4

5 Jurisdiction Issues:

6

7 The Federal Subsistence Board lacks
8 jurisdiction to allow sales of any wildlife handicrafts
9 when and where such sales are not customary and
10 traditional. In the past, the Federal Board has
11 rejected this argument, asserting that if any use is
12 customary and traditional, then the Board can authorize
13 any other use. It should be noted that the Board's
14 argument is inconsistent with its litigation stance in
15 the Chistochina Unit 12 moose case where it argued that
16 "customary and traditional use" is related to "how
17 resources are used after they are taken," and "not to
18 or a prerequisite condition for the taking itself."
19 State v. Fleagle, (Case 3:06-cv-00107-HRH) Doc. 32 at
20 22.

21

22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Michelle.

23

24 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. For those of
25 you that are on line, if you're not speaking at the
26 moment, can you please press mute on your phone. We're
27 hearing a lot of conversation and paper shuffling in
28 the background. Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

31

32 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chairman. I guess
33 this question would go back to Terry and Larry. I
34 wonder because our Council really isn't keen on the
35 sale of bear parts period in our areas, so the thing
36 that causes me difficulty is removing of all unit-
37 specific regulations. My thought pattern is going
38 towards the Federal qualified user question, but
39 leaving that within the units that already are set up
40 under the Federal regs for sale of parts. I'm quite
41 concerned about expanding it to the whole state. Would
42 you comment on that, Terry? Would you folks have
43 heartburn if we were to stay with implementing this
44 only for areas that do have the harvest?

45

46 MR. HAYNES: Through the Chair. Yes,
47 you are correct. Our proposal would allow these
48 transactions to occur statewide, but if they occurred
49 between Federally qualified subsistence users and other
50 people, what we are proposing is that those kinds of

1 transactions would have to be consistent with the State
2 law. Certainly we want to respect regional differences
3 in how people treat and respect and use brown bears, so
4 I think if you wanted to have different circumstances
5 for your region, we certainly would respect those.

6

7 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

8

9 MR. SCHWANTES: I have a couple
10 questions and I'm not sure who can answer them for me.
11 First of all, can somebody tell me how long this
12 regulation has been in effect.

13

14 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. I believe
15 it's been in effect since 2004.

16

17 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you. I have a
18 couple more questions for Larry or Terry, whoever. Is
19 there any indication that because of these regulations
20 there's been an increase in harvest or illegal harvest
21 or illegal sale of bear parts?

22

23 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman. This is
24 Terry Haynes. No, we have no evidence of that at this
25 time. One thing I should point out as well. Brown
26 bears taken under the Federal regulations require that
27 the meat be salvaged. That is not a requirement under
28 State regulations. Under the Federal regulations there
29 is another requirement that probably does serve to
30 limit the number of brown bears that are being
31 harvested under the Federal regulations. Although I
32 have no evidence of there being a problem, the lack of
33 a tracking system does cause us some concern because we
34 wouldn't necessarily have a good way of identifying a
35 problem if and when one did arise, but at this time we
36 have no evidence of there being excessive numbers of
37 brown bears being taken for purposes of making and
38 selling brown bear handicrafts.

39

40 MR. SCHWANTES: I have another question
41 then. Can you give me an idea on how many of these
42 bears are being taken under the subsistence
43 regulations.

44

45 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman. I would
46 defer to the Federal Staff to see if they have
47 statistics on brown bear harvests under the Federal
48 regulations in those areas where the brown bear
49 handicrafts regulations do apply. I don't have that
50 information in front of me.

1 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Chuck.
2
3 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. I don't
4 have the information either. I'm not sure how many
5 bears are taken in these areas under Federal
6 regulations.
7
8 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Brandon.
9
10 MR. SAITO: This is Brandon Saito from
11 the Kodiak Refuge. We had two bears taken last year,
12 one in Old Harbor and the other in Larsen Bay.
13
14 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.
15
16 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Chuck.
17
18 MR. ARDIZZONE: Just as a point of
19 clarification, currently, as Mr. Holmes has said, your
20 region does not allow handicraft sales, so those two
21 bears wouldn't have been able to be in the market
22 anyway.
23
24 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Sam.
25
26 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chairman. I agree
27 with what Pat says. Traditionally this board has
28 always been against any sale of handicrafts from bears
29 for this region. I wish Pete Squartsoff was still
30 here. I mentioned this to him when he was walking out
31 the door because he has always been one of the
32 strongest proponents against that; always, again,
33 saying that we've never traditionally sold bear parts.
34
35 I like this proposal except for
36 removing the unit specific. Again, like Pat said, I
37 would support the proposal with modification. Put back
38 in making this unit specific. Thank you.
39
40 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.
41
42 MR. HOLMES: Going along with that
43 thought, I'd like to toss out some verbiage here for
44 folks to think about. The Kodiak/Aleutians Regional
45 Advisory Council supports Proposal WP08-05, modified to
46 include only those units presently allowing handicraft
47 sales of bear parts. Second sentence. We support the
48 sale of handicraft articles made from claws, bones,
49 teeth, sinew, skulls of brown bears to only other
50 Federally-qualified subsistence users. And I'd like

1 some feedback.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Go ahead, Sam.

4

5 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. Pat, could you
6 read that again, please.

7

8 MR. HOLMES: You bet. The K-RAC
9 supports Proposal WP08-05, modified to include only
10 those units -- that should probably be game management
11 units, GMUs, presently allowing handicraft sales of
12 bear parts. We support the sale of handicraft articles
13 made from claws, bones, teeth, sinew, skulls of brown
14 bears to only another Federally-qualified subsistence
15 user.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Would that be a
18 motion, Pat.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: Yeah. I guess I was kind
21 of building off of Sam's comments, so I guess we could
22 make that a motion if that's acceptable with Sam. Is
23 that what you were looking for?

24

25 MR. ROHRER: Yeah, I think it is.

26

27 MR. HOLMES: I'd like to move what i
28 just said.

29

30 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Is there a second.

31

32 MR. SCHWANTES: I second it.

33

34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
35 seconded. Under discussion. I would like to point out
36 that Kodiak Island villages, as far as I can remember
37 from my elders talking to me, we have never made
38 available sale of bear parts from subsistence hunts.
39 If another region wishes to start doing that, I
40 wouldn't object, but it's kind of against our tradition
41 to disrespect a bear like that.

42

43 I would support it, but I would like to
44 just maybe add some verbiage that maybe the Kodiak
45 region would be exempt from that. Chuck.

46

47 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. I think
48 that's what Mr. Holmes' verbiage does do. You
49 currently have no sales, so it wouldn't allow it in
50 your region.

1 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
2 discussion.

3
4 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
5 hear what Larry says or thinks about our proposal or
6 modified proposal.

7
8 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chair. Member
9 Rohrer. I concur with what Pat says there. It's kind
10 of our tradition on this island not to play in other
11 people's sandboxes, but to watch out for our own and I
12 think that's what he's doing with that.

13
14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Go ahead, Pat.

15
16 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chair. I guess I'd
17 like to get some feelings from Rick on the peninsula.
18 I can maybe comment from 35 years of experience out
19 there, but he was born there. I was kind of wondering
20 what folks on the peninsula -- if they have similar
21 thoughts, but I'd let Rick address that.

22
23 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair. To be honest, I
24 don't know of anybody that did any bear subsistence
25 hunting down there. I've known guys did for commercial
26 uses -- I mean their own private use type of deal. As
27 far as selling, I don't know anybody that ever sold
28 bear parts to my knowledge of all the years I've lived
29 in that part of the country, which is 40, 50. As far
30 as I'm concerned, selling bear parts is a no. I don't
31 agree with it and I'll probably vote against it. Thank
32 you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any further
35 discussion. Iver, would you like to make a comment.

36
37 MR. MALUTIN: My name is Iver Malutin
38 and I'm with the Sunaq Tribe. I'm not representing
39 them currently, but I think I'm representing them
40 indirectly. I was born and raised in Kodiak and I'm
41 76. What I'm hearing here is exactly the way it should
42 be in Kodiak because that's the way it's been in the
43 past. From all my discussions with my mother, dad,
44 their grandparents, it's always been the same. One of
45 the things that comes to mind is I don't think we
46 should hinder any other region from trying to do
47 something that we don't do here.

48
49 If Larry goes out and gets a bear at
50 Port Lions or wherever, if it's killed because of

1 safety or protecting somebody's life, is there any kind
2 of a mechanism that maybe those parts can go to some
3 other place or would that be objectionable to the group
4 here. I don't know. I'm just wondering. Larry, what
5 do you do with the parts you get from bears that you
6 have to kill?

7

8 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chairman. Bears
9 that are donated in defense of life and property or
10 illegally killed are donated to museums or schools, the
11 skulls. The hides are usually sold at auction at the
12 Fur Rendezvous and the money goes back to the
13 Department and it's used primarily for shipping more
14 hides the next year and caring for those hides. It
15 essentially pays for our program and keeps it going
16 just for that small portion of it.

17

18 MR. MALUTIN: Just to go on a little
19 bit further. There's absolutely no way to enforce the
20 regulation that they're talking about right now. When
21 we started herring fishing up in Togiak, the walrus
22 were killed by the hundreds up there and there was just
23 a massacre up there and it happens all over the place
24 and there's just absolutely no way to enforce
25 regulations in a lot of places in Alaska because of
26 remoteness. That I really agree with Larry here and
27 we've got to protect what we have and keep it
28 close-knit. I really commend the board for taking the
29 position they are. Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Iver.

32

33 MR. HOLMES: Iver, before you go,
34 you've got a lot of relatives in the Chignik area.
35 Could you conjecture on their feelings about this.

36

37 MR. MALUTIN: You bet. My family is
38 the Sconberg (ph) family and they were born and raised
39 in Chignik. There's absolutely been no indication, no
40 talk, no anything about selling any portions of bear.
41 Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. John,
44 did you have something.

45

46 MR. PARKER: No. I agree with Iver and
47 Mr. Van Daele. I don't like to disrespect and go
48 against the grain, so I'll agree with everyone here.
49 It's just bad juju to sell bear parts. That's all I
50 have.

1 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
2 discussion. After we take care of this motion, then
3 we'll get into different agency discussions. If
4 there's no further discussion on the motion.
5
6 (No comments)
7
8 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Do I hear any
9 objections.
10
11 (No objections)
12
13 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chairman. I believe
14 you need a second for the motion still.
15
16 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Rick seconded it.
17
18 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. We're talking
19 about Pat's -- has the motion been amended or is it a
20 new.....
21
22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Who amended the
23 motion?
24
25 MR. ROHRER: That's what Pat -- it's
26 not a new proposal, it's just an amended proposal.
27
28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Straighten me out
29 on this. Your motion was verbiage to add to this
30 proposal?
31
32 MR. HOLMES: Yes, Mr. Chairman. What
33 it would do would be supporting the proposal but
34 modifying it. Should I read it again?
35
36 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: If that's an
37 addition to this proposal, you would put it in there
38 where it needs to be and then we'll take it from there.
39
40 MR. HOLMES: Basically what this would
41 do is this would modify the proposal that's presented
42 by the Department and it would not go along with
43 removal of all unit-specific regulations, but it would
44 support continuing the same unit regulations that exist
45 under Federal law and then it would go along with
46 supporting a more restrictive perspective and keep the
47 sale of handicrafts within traditional Federally
48 qualified subsistence users, which was the whole intent
49 when this came up from Southeast a couple years back.
50

1 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Then the motion
2 would be to support WP08-05 with new verbiage added
3 from the Kodiak/Aleutians Region.

4
5 MR. HOLMES: Yes, sir.

6
7 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Okay. It was
8 moved and seconded. Was there any further discussion.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no further
13 discussion, is there any objection.

14
15 (No objections)

16
17 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Seeing no
18 objections, then the motion carries. We can get into
19 agency comments.

20
21 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. The only
22 other thing we had was summary of written comments. We
23 had on Page 42 a couple corporations that opposed the
24 proposal because they do not harvest brown bear. That
25 was the Copper River Native Association and AHTNA. I
26 also received from the Gates of the Arctic SRC where
27 they opposed the proposal. They take the position of
28 deference to the interest of subsistence users in their
29 home regional advisory council areas and thus opposes
30 the State changing regulations to limit the sale of
31 bear handicrafts to other Federally qualified
32 subsistence users where this practice is considered
33 customary.

34
35 As for the other Regional Advisory
36 Councils, the Southeast opposed this proposal. They
37 said brown bears are culturally important. No
38 conservation concern since there is minimal subsistence
39 harvest, there's no recorded abuse and that would
40 create an unnecessary restriction.

41
42 Southcentral opposed this proposal.
43 They said there's no conservation concern and no record
44 of abuse. The Y-K Council opposed. There's no
45 justification. Western Interior opposed the proposal.
46 They said there's no record of abuse and it would
47 unnecessarily restrict subsistence users. The Seward
48 Peninsula opposed this proposal. The proposal would be
49 detrimental to subsistence users. Northwest Arctic
50 concurred with the OSM analysis conclusion. The

1 Eastern Interior opposed this proposal. There's no
2 conservation concern or reported abuse and it would be
3 unnecessarily restrictive. The North Slope stated they
4 opposed it. It would be detrimental to the subsistence
5 users. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you,
8 Michelle. Fish and Game comments.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Federal, State and
13 Tribal agencies.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Fish and Game
18 Advisory Committee.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: We've heard the
23 written public comments. Any public testimony.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Regional
28 deliberations. I think we've taken care of that.
29 Okay. We'll move on. Proposal WP08-25. Chuck.

30

31 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. WP08-25
32 begins on Page 44 in your Council book. This proposal
33 requests that the harvest limit for caribou on Unimak
34 Island (Unit 10) be reduced from four to two caribou.

35

36 There has been an increase in requests
37 for Federal registration permits for Unimak Island due
38 to the closure of Federal and State seasons in
39 regulatory year 2007/08 for caribou in Unit 9D. There
40 are concerns that the existing four caribou harvest
41 limit could have adverse impacts on the Unimak Caribou
42 Herd. Surveys indicate a declining trend for the
43 caribou population on Unimak Island with a low calf:cow
44 ratio. A four caribou harvest limit may be too high,
45 especially if mostly cows are harvested.

46

47 The current regulation for four caribou
48 has been in place since 2004. I'll get into a little
49 bit of biological background. The most recent herd
50 composition surveys observed by State biologists were

1 conducted on October 23, 2007. They can be seen in
2 Table 1. The bull:cow ratio of the herd was 31
3 bulls:100 cows, but the ratio has declined since 2005.
4 The herd appears to be experiencing low calf
5 recruitment as the calf:cow ratio is 6 calves:100 cows,
6 similar to the ratio observed in 2005.

7

8 The current population count conducted
9 in April 2007 is 806 caribou, a decline since the 2005
10 population count of 1009 caribou.

11

12 A little harvest history. During 2003
13 to 2006, there were no permits requested from the
14 Refuge, and therefore no Federal harvest reports. In
15 2007, the Refuge issued 12 permits. Three
16 individuals applied for four permits each. Total
17 annual reported harvest for those hunting under State
18 regulations is typically 12 to 14 bulls.

19

20 If adopted, the harvest limit for the
21 herd would be reduced from four to two caribou. A
22 reduced harvest limit will lessen the hunting pressure
23 on this caribou herd and help slow the population
24 decline, particularly if there is an increase in the
25 numbers of hunters on Unimak Island. Federally
26 qualified subsistence users would still have the
27 opportunity to harvest caribou on Unimak Island, but
28 their harvest limit would be reduced.

29

30 The preliminary conclusion for this is
31 to support this proposal. If there are any questions,
32 I'll and answer them.

33

34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Department of Fish
35 and Game.

36

37 MR. HAYNES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our
38 comments for Proposal 25 and 26 did not make it into
39 the Council meeting book and I don't know if Michelle
40 has copies to provide to you. If not.....

41

42 MS. CHIVERS: Terry, I do have the
43 comments here if you'd like me to read them.

44

45 MR. HAYNES: No, I can provide it. I
46 just didn't know if the Council Members had our
47 comments.

48

49 MS. CHIVERS: They do have them.

50

1 MR. HAYNES: Thank you. The Department
2 supports this proposal because reducing harvest of Unit
3 10 caribou on Unimak Island is important for conserving
4 this herd and avoiding implementation of more
5 restrictive management measures.

6
7 Population surveys indicate that the
8 Unimak Caribou Herd is declining. Reducing the harvest
9 limit is prudent, given the rapid decline occurring in
10 caribou herds in adjoining areas. Reducing the harvest
11 limit as proposed is a conservation measure.
12 Continuing to allow a Federal harvest limit of four
13 caribou on Unimak Island violates recognized principles
14 of wildlife conservation and will be detrimental to the
15 satisfaction of subsistence needs.

16
17 Mr. Chairman. The management
18 coordinator for this area, Gino Del Frate is on line as
19 well if you have questions about management of this
20 population or other questions that you'd like him to
21 address. With that, that concludes our comments.
22 Thank you.

23
24 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
25 Preliminary Comments to the Regional Advisory Council.

26
27 Wildlife Proposal WP08-25:

28
29 Reduce the harvest limit for caribou in
30 Unit 10 (Unimak Island).

31
32 Introduction:

33
34 This proposal would reduce the harvest
35 limit for caribou on Unimak Island in Unit 10 from 4 to
36 2 caribou in order to reduce hunting pressure and slow
37 population decline.

38
39 Impact on Subsistence Users:

40
41 Reducing harvests is necessary for
42 conserving this caribou herd and avoiding
43 implementation of more restrictive management measures.
44 No information is presented in the proposal or in the
45 Office of Subsistence Management Subsistence Permit
46 System Database to indicate that the proposed harvest
47 limit reduction will negatively impact subsistence
48 users.

49
50 Opportunity Provided by State:

1 State regulations authorize residents
2 to harvest one caribou in Unit 10 (Unimak Island)
3 during August 10 September 30 or November 15 March
4 31 seasons. Nonresident harvest is limited to
5 September 1-30.

6
7 Conservation Issues:

8
9 Population surveys indicate that the
10 Unimak Caribou Herd is declining. Reducing the harvest
11 limit is prudent, given the rapid decline occurring in
12 caribou herds in adjoining areas. The current
13 population size and bull:cow ratios are within
14 management objectives.

15
16 Other Comments:

17
18 Reducing the harvest limit as proposed
19 is a conservation measure. Continuing to allow a
20 federal harvest limit of 4 caribou on Unimak Island in
21 Unit 10 violates recognized principles of wildlife
22 conservation and will be detrimental to the
23 satisfaction of subsistence needs.

24
25 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any questions.
26 Mr. Schwantes.

27
28 MR. SCHWANTES: Terry, can you tell me
29 what the 2007 population was and also what the harvest
30 was for 2007.

31
32 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman. I'll defer
33 to Gino to see if he might have that off the top of his
34 head.

35
36 MR. DEL FRATE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 Gino Del Frate. I'm the management coordinator. Lem
38 Butler sends his apologies. Apparently he's attending
39 a Bristol Bay RAC meeting. I don't have the numbers
40 handy but I understand that the 2007 harvest increased
41 maybe 12 animals total.

42
43 MR. SCHWANTES: Do you have any
44 indication of the 2007 population?

45
46 MR. DEL FRATE: Stand by one second. I
47 think I have it right here.

48
49 MR. HOLMES: Table 1.

50

1 MR. DEL FRATE: Mr. Chairman. On 2007
2 our biologist surveyed a total of 433 caribou. That's
3 a composition survey, so it's not a total count. I
4 believe there's an estimate and if the Refuge folks are
5 on line they may have the numbers in front of them. I
6 think they estimate there's probably less than 800
7 animals and probably between 400 and 800.

8
9 MS. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chairman. This is
10 Sandra Siekaniec at the Izembek Refuge. We did do a
11 survey in early spring of 2007 and counted 806 caribou.
12 We have not done a survey since.

13
14 MR. SCHWANTES: Do you have any
15 indication what the harvest was, the total harvest for
16 2007?

17
18 MS. SIEKANIEC: We have not gotten our
19 numbers in yet from subsistence hunters. So far what's
20 been reported is two animals. I believe, as he
21 mentioned before, the State season is about 12 to 14
22 bulls that they harvest in the fall.

23
24 MR. SCHWANTES: One more question. To
25 your knowledge, has there been an increase in hunter
26 activity on Unimak since the decline of the Unit 9
27 herd?

28
29 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes. That's the reason
30 why I put this proposal forward and presented it to the
31 Board last time. My concern has been because 9D is
32 closed people are now going to Unit 10 and we did have
33 a 300 percent increase in permit requests.

34
35 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

36
37 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair. On 9D, the
38 caribou declined in the area, would that be from
39 migration north or would it be some other action going
40 on there that we don't know about?

41
42 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes, it's not through
43 migration. The State is trying to evaluate what the
44 cause is, but it's been a drastic decline. The last
45 telemetry flight that we did, we estimate the
46 population is now under 400 animals, which is a strong
47 concern there. There's some issues with potential
48 habitat concerns, predation concerns, weather concerns
49 during the winter. We've had some pretty harsh winters
50 that can affect their survival rates. So I think it's

1 more than one thing that's causing this, but we do need
2 to be concerned about it.

3

4 MR. KOSO: Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
7 questions. Thomas.

8

9 MR. SCHWANTES: Can you tell me what
10 the State did as far as regulations to reduce take in
11 this area?

12

13 MS. SIEKANIEC: They have done nothing
14 at this time with the State season. Right now I
15 believe it's one bull in the fall, so there are guides
16 that take people out to Unimak that go out for bear
17 hunting and they do opportunistically take some
18 caribou.

19

20 MR. SCHWANTES: So the action they took
21 at the recent board meeting was strictly for 9D?

22

23 MS. SIEKANIEC: That's correct. It had
24 nothing to do with Unit 10.

25

26 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

29

30 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. Sandra,
31 what is the population management goal for Unimak?

32

33 MS. SIEKANIEC: Recently we have a new
34 management plan, I believe it was all handed out to you
35 guys. The original management plan included both Units
36 9D and Unit 10. This recent plan took those apart and
37 only talks about Unit 9D. I'm still working with the
38 State biologist to get some numbers for Unimak.
39 Because the information is limited, we have not
40 proceeded any further, so there's no actual management
41 plan that talks about just Unimak.

42

43 MR. HOLMES: I believe the overall goal
44 for the whole area was, what, 875 was the stop hunt
45 level or the bottom threshold for both combined.

46

47 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes. In the previous
48 plan, initially we were talking about trying to
49 maintain a herd size of about 1,000 animals on the
50 island. That's what we thought it could support. So,

1 yes, I would say we're probably at the point where
2 you'd need to start looking at concerns. There is no
3 actual plan in place right now that talks about just
4 Unimak.

5
6 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I was
7 wondering if the State folks in Fairbanks are on line
8 and if they've heard anything recent from Lem on what
9 he thinks carrying capacity would be down there for
10 Unimak Island or is that still in development.

11
12 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman. This is
13 Terry Haynes. I'll defer to Gino to see if he might be
14 able to answer that question.

15
16 MR. DEL FRATE: Mr. Chairman. Gino Del
17 Frate. There's no habitat work that's gone on, so it
18 would be pretty hard to estimate a carrying capacity
19 for that area. Generally speaking, because that area
20 is so far away, when the population -- if it's weather
21 or whatever happens, harvest doesn't necessarily drive
22 the population. The habitat will support some animals,
23 population will start to go up. Our management plan or
24 goal is as the population is increasing, we liberalize
25 the harvest and as the population gets down to lower
26 thresholds, we pull back on the harvest, although the
27 harvest is so small that it's pretty much
28 inconsequential with regards to what we're doing at
29 this time. Should harvest pressure from residents in
30 the area increase as the Refuge manager suggested, then
31 we may be a little more concerned if the population is
32 declining, then we may have additional harvest
33 pressures that would cause the herd to continue to
34 decline. But at this point with such a small harvest,
35 we're not concerned. I think it's a proactive measure
36 to reduce the harvest on the Federal side down to two
37 bulls. At two bulls, it's still substantially higher
38 than the State season of one bull for non-residents and
39 one caribou for residents.

40
41 MR. HOLMES: Thank you. Back in the
42 '80s I did try to fly down there for Fish and Game
43 doing salmon surveys and those caribou do kind of get
44 around in some difficult places to look at them. My
45 concern is not only the numbers, but the really low
46 cow:calf ratios they've shown some really similar
47 decline, although not quite as drastic as the adjacent
48 peninsula critters, but it's getting kind of down
49 towards some thresholds and I think, Mr. Chairman, when
50 we bring this up I'm probably going to support the

1 proposal. It looks like it's getting towards the need
2 for proactive work. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I do have a
5 question. In developing your management plan, has
6 there been any consultations with the villages in Units
7 9D and 10 for traditional and ecological knowledge of
8 the subsistence users that live in the areas?

9

10 MS. SIEKANIEC: We have met with some
11 of the villages in Unit 9D and we have talked to them
12 about what they're seeing out there, what their
13 concerns are and issues. We have not gone to Unimak
14 Island because it wasn't as much a concern to us as 9D
15 is, but that will be something we'll definitely do when
16 we start to implement a different plan.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you.
19 Thomas.

20

21 MR. SCHWANTES: I believe, if my memory
22 serves me right, you said there were only two caribou
23 taken in 2007 under the subsistence permit.

24

25 MS. SIEKANIEC: The season has not yet
26 closed. It closes on March 31st and people will have
27 to report after that date. So far only two have been
28 reported. That doesn't mean that's the total number
29 taken.

30

31 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
34 questions.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chairman. I would
39 move that we support this proposal.

40

41 MR. HOLMES: Second.

42

43 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
44 seconded. Any discussion.

45

46 MR. KOSO: I have one question, Mr.
47 Chairman. Can you tell me who manages the Adak Caribou
48 Herd there?

49

50 MS. SIEKANIEC: The Federal lands are

1 managed through the Alaska Maritime Refuge.

2

3 MR. KOSO: Is that out of King Salmon?

4

5 MS. SIEKANIEC: It's out of Homer.

6

7 MR. KOSO: Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other

10 discussion.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no

15 discussion. Is there any objections.

16

17 (No objections)

18

19 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing no

20 objections, then the motion carries. Did we forget

21 anything, Michelle?

22

23 MS. CHIVERS: Actually you just kind of

24 skipped over the summary of written public comments,

25 but there were none. And then public testimony, I

26 don't know if we have anybody who wants to testify on

27 that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28

29 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I apologize for

30 that. I would ask if there's any public testimony.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Okay. Good thing.

35 We can move forward. Next on the agenda is Proposal

36 WP08-26. Go ahead, Chuck.

37

38 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. This

39 analysis begins on Page 49 of your books. Proposal

40 WP08-26 requests that the Federal season for caribou in

41 Unit 9D be closed due to the decreased population and

42 low productivity of the local caribou herd.

43

44 Current surveys of the Southern Alaska

45 Peninsula Caribou Herd in Unit 9D have shown a marked

46 decrease in the population, calf recruitment, and

47 survival. The closure is requested due to conservation

48 concerns and to provide for future long term

49 subsistence use of this resource.

50

1 This proposal requests that the actions
2 taken in Special Actions WSA07-03 and WSA07-04 be
3 adopted into Federal regulation. On July 30, 2007, the
4 Office of Subsistence Management, via delegated
5 authority, approved Special Action WSA07-03 to close
6 the fall season from August 1 to September 30 to the
7 taking of caribou in Unit 9D. On November 14, 2007,
8 the Federal Subsistence Board approved Special Action
9 WSA07-04 to close the winter season from November 15 to
10 March 31.

11
12 Both Federal and State regulatory
13 managers concur that the Southern Alaska Peninsula
14 Caribou Herd population decline poses a potentially
15 significant conservation concern that warranted these
16 actions. The State also issued an emergency order in
17 July to close resident hunting in Unit 9D for caribou.

18
19 Surveys conducted by State and Refuge
20 biologists in recent years showed a marked decrease in
21 both total population numbers and calf recruitment,
22 which can be seen in Table 1 on Page 55 of your book.
23 In October 2007 ADF&G conducted a composition count of
24 the Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd. The
25 calf:cow ratio was .5 calves per 100 cows, which is the
26 lowest recorded to date.

27
28 Based on 2006 and 2007 counts, there
29 were no calves recruited into the population to offset
30 adult mortality during those years. The 15 bulls:100
31 cows observed in 2007 continues to confirm a decreasing
32 sex ratio that stays below management objectives.
33 Current population demographics are not sufficient to
34 maintain the health and productivity of the caribou
35 herd.

36
37 As Sandra said already, she's handed
38 out the current plan, which I can't speak to, I haven't
39 had a chance to read, but if you have questions I'm
40 sure she can answer that later.

41
42 Harvest history is shown on Table 2 on
43 Page 57 of your book. Closure of the Unit 9D caribou
44 season would eliminate the Federal subsistence harvest.
45 The preliminary conclusion is to support this proposal
46 because of the declining caribou herd low calf
47 recruitment and we want to make sure the caribou herd
48 is around for future generations. If there's
49 questions, I can try and answer them.

50

1 MR. KOSO: I got a question. What's
2 the reason for not closing October? You've got it
3 closed down except October during the rut season. On
4 your closures on this, you've got it from August 1 to
5 September 30, then November 15 through March 31.

6
7 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chairman.

8
9 MR. KOSO: Now you've got an opening
10 about in there to October month.

11
12 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. There is no
13 Federal season in October.

14
15 MR. KOSO: Oh, maybe that's the reason.
16 I was just trying to get clarification. Thank you.

17
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Chuck, this closure,
19 that includes subsistence hunts, everything?

20
21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: This closure I'm
22 addressing right now would be under Federal subsistence
23 regulations. I'm not sure if the State season is
24 closed. It is closed.

25
26 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chair. It's my
27 understanding the State did close that area and also
28 took some action for predator control in that area, is
29 that correct?

30
31 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes. Actually, the
32 State has closed the season. So what this proposal
33 will do is just be in conjunction with the State to
34 close the whole area. As I mentioned before, the last
35 telemetry survey we did we estimated the population to
36 be under 400 animals. The State is looking at this as
37 being a severe decline and they have petitioned to the
38 Board of Game and gotten approval to do a limited
39 predator control on the calving grounds on the State
40 lands.

41
42 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
43 Preliminary Comments to the Regional Advisory Council.

44
45 Wildlife Proposal WP08-26:

46
47 Close the caribou season in Unit 9D.

48
49 Introduction:

50

1 In October 2007, the Federal
2 Subsistence Board approved Special Action request
3 WSA07-04, submitted by Izembek National Wildlife Refuge
4 to close the federal caribou season in Unit 9D from
5 November 15 to March 31. The August 1 September 30
6 fall season had been closed earlier through WSA07-03.
7 This proposal requests that the caribou hunting season
8 be closed in Unit 9D to match action taken by the
9 Department of Fish and Game to close the state season
10 until the caribou population recovers sufficiently to
11 allow resumption of harvesting. As is noted in the
12 proposal, the recently revised management plan for the
13 Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd states that the
14 management goal is to maintain a population of 3,000
15 5,000 caribou with a fall bull:cow ratio of 20-40 bulls
16 per 100 cows. The management plan directs that
17 harvesting will not be authorized when the population
18 falls below 875 caribou and has been in decline for 3
19 years. July 2007 surveys counted only 600 770
20 caribou, down from a population of 4,200 counted in
21 2002. The current ratio of 16 bulls per 100 cows is
22 below management objectives and is not expected to
23 improve in the near future because almost no calves
24 were observed in the most recent surveys and no calf
25 recruitment is projected for 2007.

26

27 Impact on Subsistence Users:

28

29 Eliminating hunting opportunity will
30 impact subsistence users who hunt caribou in Unit 9D in
31 the near term. However, allowing any harvest of
32 caribou from this population would only exacerbate the
33 population decline and would be detrimental to its
34 reproductive potential and to the long term interests
35 of subsistence users.

36

37 Opportunity Provided by State:

38

39 In July 2007, the Department of Fish
40 and Game closed the state s caribou season in Unit 9D
41 by emergency order, due to a precipitous population
42 decline attributable to poor calf recruitment for the
43 previous 5 years.

44

45 Conservation Issues:

46

47 Allowing no harvest of caribou in Unit
48 9D is necessary for conservation purposes.

49

50

Other Comments:

1 The proposed season closure is a
2 necessary management action. Retaining an open season
3 for caribou in Unit 9D violates recognized principles
4 of wildlife conservation and would be detrimental to
5 the satisfaction of subsistence needs.

6
7 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chairman. I would
8 move we support this proposal.

9
10 MR. HOLMES: Second.

11
12 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Moved and
13 seconded. Discussion.

14
15 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. I have a
16 question for the Refuge manager.

17
18 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Go ahead.

19
20 MR. ROHRER: Is Federal lands -- where
21 the State is doing the limited predator management
22 program, is Federal lands involved?

23
24 MS. SIEKANIEC: No. We actually sent a
25 letter to them saying that we did not object to them
26 doing predator control on State lands; however, Federal
27 lands have a requirement to go through an environmental
28 assessment process, so at this time we are not allowing
29 any predator control on the Federal lands.

30
31 MR. ROHRER: And are you going through
32 that environmental assessment process?

33
34 MS. SIEKANIEC: No, not at this time.
35 The actual calving ground are all on State lands and
36 the State feels this is a perfect opportunity to do
37 some predator control where it's impacting the animals
38 the most.

39
40 MR. ROHRER: So you're saying the
41 State's not interested in doing any on the Federal
42 lands?

43
44 MS. SIEKANIEC: Not at this time.

45
46 MR. ROHRER: Thanks.

47
48 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

49
50 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I'd like to

1 thank the Staff and I hope Anchorage Fish and Game
2 folks are on there. I thought Lem did a really good
3 job at our last meeting on giving us a background on
4 the South Peninsula Caribou Herd. When he talked about
5 looking at the calves and females being in good shape
6 and when they come back in the fall basically most of
7 them being dead and the population numbers now, if
8 they're around 400, if you think back to the '80s when
9 the population was higher, we're talking about 4,000
10 animals in that area, so things are pretty severe. I
11 think it's down to the point where if we don't do
12 something we're going to see things go really down the
13 toilet like they did in Kenai many years ago and I
14 think it's definitely time to have some action and I'm
15 going to go along with Staff, both the State and
16 Federal, and folks from out in that neck of the woods.
17 I've talked to I think we should go along and close the
18 season. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat.

21 Mr. Koso.

22

23 MR. KOSO: Yeah, I've got one question.
24 This question comes up to me all the time. How long do
25 you anticipate this to carry on before you get another
26 subsistence?

27

28 MS. SIEKANIEC: That's kind of up to
29 when the population starts rebounding. In the past,
30 when we've had closures, I believe it's been about four
31 years and then we've been able to reopen, so we're
32 hoping something similar would occur.

33

34 MR. KOSO: Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Just one question
37 before we move on. All the communities in Unit 9D,
38 they're all aware of the proposal to close subsistence
39 hunting?

40

41 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes, they are, and most
42 of them support it.

43

44 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. Any
45 further discussion.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any objections to
50 the motion.

1 (No objections)

2

3 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Hearing none,
4 motion carries. That takes care of the proposals.

5

6 Call for proposals to change Federal
7 subsistence fisheries regulations for the 2009-2011
8 regulatory years, March 31, 2009 to April 2011.
9 Michelle.

10

11 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair, we can cover
12 this one right quick and then we do need to go back to
13 the Council Member reports and the .805(c) letter, but
14 I'll just cover this one right quick.

15

16 Right now the Office of Subsistence
17 Management is accepting proposals through March 27th,
18 which is this Thursday, to change the Federal
19 regulations for the subsistence harvest of fish and
20 shellfish on Federal public lands. And we are
21 beginning the two year cycle, so the proposed changes
22 are for the 2009 through 2011 regulatory years, which
23 would begin April 1, 2009 and would run through March
24 31, 2011.

25

26 So, at this time, if the Council has
27 any proposals they would like to submit for the
28 fisheries proposals, we would need to get those
29 collected and bring those into the office before the
30 deadline of this Thursday. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. That's
33 taken care of. We have to move back to Item 7, Council
34 Member reports. I didn't make it to the last Federal
35 Subsistence Board meeting, so I'd like to ask Michelle
36 if she could give us an update on that.

37

38 MS. CHIVERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
39 the Council turns to Page 11 in your booklet, it does
40 state that this letter does come from the Federal
41 Subsistence Board and it's regarding the proposed
42 changes to the subsistence fisheries regulations. The
43 only proposal that this Council actually took a look at
44 was a cross-over proposal, which is on Page 12, and it
45 was Proposal 11 and it was for the Alaska Peninsula and
46 Chignik area. Their proposal was to add snagging to
47 the legal methods of harvesting salmon for the Alaska
48 Peninsula and the Chignik areas.

49

50 The Kodiak/Aleutians Council took no

1 action on this proposal because they stated it's hard
2 to make a recommendation that would affect people
3 within the region when there is not enough information
4 available that was provided to the Council. However,
5 the Bristol Bay did support the proposal with the
6 modification to allow the harvest of salmon without a
7 permit by snagging.

8

9 The Board action adopted the proposal
10 with the modification as recommended by the Bristol Bay
11 Regional Advisory Council and the Board's justification
12 was that it would legalized additional traditional
13 methods for take of salmon in the Chignik and Alaska
14 Peninsula areas. The addition of these gear types and
15 methods should not increase the salmon harvest because
16 it would be a focused fishery to provide a small number
17 of salmon to provide for subsistence needs.

18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you,
22 Michelle. Any other board members wish to make a
23 report. Pat.

24

25 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I got
26 positive feedback from folks here in town on the letter
27 that you wrote to the FAA asking them to be sure to
28 protect subsistence at the Buskin River with those
29 proposed field extensions and the people I talked to
30 expressed their strong concern.

31

32 I did get a request from a gentleman,
33 and I'll just mention that even though it's not our
34 concern, from a fellow that lives in Chiniak, evidently
35 folks out there are having some difficulties with the
36 National Marine Fisheries Service and the management of
37 subsistence halibut. It sounds like they're not
38 getting their permits because the village of Chiniak is
39 not on the Federal subsistence list, so I referred
40 those folks to the appropriate people and Iver is
41 looking into it. He's on that advisory committee. And
42 also have asked Mr. Tom Pearson, the local NMFS
43 management biologist, if they could look into it and
44 see if they could help the folks out there. But it's
45 not the concern of our board. Just information on
46 subsistence in general.

47

48 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thanks, Pat. Do
49 you think Chiniak was not listed as rural by NMFS or
50 just not recognized?

1 MR. HOLMES: From what I gathered, it's
2 not on their list and they seem to have a different
3 list than all the other Federal agencies. I'm trying
4 to refer those folks to the appropriate people. Also
5 so they can get the determination information from OSM
6 as far as all the other Federal agencies are concerned
7 to help their arguments. Even though it's not OSM's
8 turf, we have gone through some pretty extensive
9 processes of what's rural and nonrural and it seems to
10 be a bit of bureaucratic oversight rather than any
11 intention.

12
13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat.
14 Any other board members wish to make a comment or
15 report. Sam.

16
17 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. I actually
18 don't have a report, but I was curious -- Al Cratty
19 would be the main one I guess I would direct this to
20 but he's not here, but you might as well from Akhiok.
21 Just curious how the late season registration goat hunt
22 went this last winter in the villages. I'm not sure if
23 anyone from Akhiok participates in that, but I know
24 people from Old Harbor do. I'm curious if any other
25 board members have heard about that.

26
27 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Late season?

28
29 MR. ROHRER: The State's late season
30 registration goat hunt where you have to pick the tags
31 up in the villages.

32
33 MR. HOLMES: You might want to ask Mr.
34 Van Daele there. He helped broker that compromise.

35
36 MR. ROHRER: Well, I would be
37 interested in that, but I was more interested in what
38 the people in the villages were saying how it worked
39 for them this year or if there was any participation
40 this year.

41
42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Well, from Akhiok
43 I know some of the villagers went out hunting. I was
44 one of them. All the opportunities I had I got out in
45 the field and it was kind of bad to get up on the
46 mountain. They looked like they were nice and close,
47 but getting up there and the prospect of bringing it
48 back down. A subsistence goat hunt seems to be in a
49 very bad time of the year. On the other hand, there
50 was a year when we got up there and it was just

1 beautiful the whole time. There's give and take on
2 both sides of that. As far as Akhiok, nobody has
3 gotten a goat this year. That's primarily due to bad
4 weather. I know there was some people in Old Harbor
5 that got their goat, my son being one of them. From
6 what he tells me, they get their goat pretty easy over
7 there.

8
9 MR. PARKER: Mr. Chair. A question for
10 -- I think Larry might be the best person to answer.
11 For the folks in Port Lions to get a registration goat
12 permit for, I believe, 471, which is Center Mountain,
13 Wild Creek, that is a registration hunt, right, in the
14 late season?

15
16 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Go ahead.

17
18 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chairman. Mr.
19 Parker. Yes, it is.

20
21 MR. PARKER: But, in all actuality,
22 we're closer to 471 than Port Lions. They would have
23 to go to the head of Kujuiak to be in the open area,
24 correct?

25
26 MR. VAN DAELE: That's correct.

27
28 MR. PARKER: How many folks in Port
29 Lions are utilizing that hunt? I was just curious.

30
31 MR. VAN DAELE: I don't have the
32 numbers with me this morning. I could get those for
33 you. To my recollection, no one from Port Lions
34 harvested a goat in that area.

35
36 MR. PARKER: Thank you.

37
38 MR. HOLMES: As long as we're on goats,
39 Larry, folks from town, like anyone else, can go out to
40 the village and do the registration and -- anyway, if
41 somebody wanted to do a 471 on that post-season hunt,
42 they could go to one of the villages that has a
43 registration program and register to do that, couldn't
44 they?

45
46 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chairman. Yes,
47 that's true, Mr. Holmes. It is a hardship because the
48 village closest to the hunt area is the one where the
49 permits are issued and they're issued two weeks prior
50 to the start of the season typically. If we want to

1 get into details about goats and goat management and so
2 forth, I could go ahead and do that or we could wait a
3 little bit and I have a short presentation on the
4 status of the wildlife here on Kodiak if you'd like
5 that also.

6

7 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I think we'll wait
8 for your report and include the whole thing in there.
9 Thank you. Any other board reports.

10

11 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes.

14

15 MR. KOSO: I've got a report. Maybe
16 it's a little off subject on what you're talking about.
17 I'm talking about salmon here a little bit on the
18 subsistence numbers that ADF&G allows us or the Feds
19 allow us. Like Adak, we're only allowed like 25
20 salmon. In order to get a good reporting, I think they
21 better up that a little bit, you know, for subsistence
22 because 25 salmon is not much salmon for subsistence
23 catch. In Adak area, we have to go quite a distance to
24 get fish. I know a lot of the folks out there were
25 wondering why it was such a low cap, 25 salmon, when
26 most of the other regions are anywhere from 250 to
27 1,500. So that was just a concern that the people had
28 out there. I think as far as reporting-wise, they're
29 probably much better off if they raised that. They'd
30 get a more accurate report.

31

32 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Isn't that the
33 same as all the other areas? In Akhiok we get 25, but
34 we can go back and get another permit.

35

36 MR. KOSO: The trouble with Adak is
37 we're so far out there and we've got such a long
38 distance deal, we don't have an office that we can get
39 something right away to do that, so it's a little bit
40 out of touch.

41

42 MR. HOLMES: Rick. Mr. Chairman. You
43 can just call either in the summer to the Cold Bay
44 office and I'm sure they would give you an extension.
45 When I was involved in it, I don't think it's changed
46 at all. That's just sort of a preliminary type of a
47 cap, but if a person needs to have more fish or if
48 you're going out to fish for somebody else, if you
49 bring them along and their permit or just talk to the
50 area biologist about what you're doing, they are as

1 flexible as they can be on the numbers.

2

3 MR. KOSO: Well, I did talk to them as
4 a matter of fact in Cold Bay. We all get our permits
5 through Cold Bay. But the fact of the matter is
6 they'll only issue the 25. I questioned them on, you
7 know, the reporting that people are going to give you
8 is not going to be accurate if they're only going to
9 get 25. I'm not saying they're all thieves or
10 anything, but most people get a little more. So if
11 they were to up that to 75 or 100 fish where most
12 people could use that, especially if you're smoking or
13 doing something, then you would get a more accurate
14 report at the end of the year. A lot of people are not
15 going to go back and get the second one because a lot
16 of times you can't get a hold of them in Cold Bay
17 because they're out doing surveys. It's a tough deal
18 there sometimes.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: I'd suggest while you're
21 in town maybe stop down at the office. Dave Sterritt
22 is the coordinator of all the salmon folks and kind of
23 the boss and Jim McCollough is the regional management
24 folks, and just have a chat with them. They might be
25 able to come up with more flexible.

26

27 MR. KOSO: Thank you.

28

29 MS. RUSS: Hi. My name is Elisa Russ.
30 I am the Cold Bay assistant area management biologist
31 and I did try to issue permits to Adak as quickly as
32 possible and did receive some comments from folks that
33 they were issued quite quickly and I was able to fax to
34 most people, but I do appreciate your comments. I am
35 happy to reissue by fax additional permits if needed.

36

37 MR. KOSO: Yeah, I think I was one of
38 them that you faxed. I got a lot from other people
39 that don't have a fax, that kind of stuff out there.
40 It's a little bit different deal. It was easy for me
41 and I talked to them, but a lot of people don't
42 understand the process. I was just more or less
43 throwing out why not give a higher rate of fish caught
44 versus a 25 and I think we would see a better reporting
45 process. I would say put it that way. Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I can understand
48 Rick's concern, you know, after going out and getting
49 25 fish, then you've got to come back home and request
50 another permit before you go back out. Why can't he

1 just get all his fish while he's out there. But when
2 he comes back he has to report 25 fish. If he caught
3 100 or 200, he's still going to report 25 fish. Having
4 a permit with a greater number is probably more
5 feasible for people out in rural areas.

6

7 MR. KOSO: The logistics in Adak is
8 quite different from a lot of other regions. We have
9 to go almost to another island to even get red salmon
10 and that's what everybody concentrates on. It's quite
11 expensive to go out and get 25 fish and come back and
12 expect to do it again.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: John, go ahead.

15

16 MR. PARKER: If memory serves me
17 correct, we battled this here too and you're allowed to
18 put your family members on your card, so I put my wife
19 and my son and daughter, so that's 100. And we go out
20 and we get into a good jag fast and sometimes it's over
21 that, so then you're looking for your uncle or cousin
22 to give a few to. If we can get that at the Buskin,
23 that fills the smoker and a little bit more. Of
24 course, the price of fuel now getting up Pasagshak,
25 that's a little further, but that is a way to combat
26 the 25, is to have the family members on your permit.
27 If you have a big family, you obviously need to fill
28 the smoker a few times. But going in to get a new card
29 is a little bit painful, especially in your area.

30

31 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

32

33 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. this year
34 at the Board of Fish, correct me if I'm wrong, the
35 local Fish and Game Staff had a proposal for Kodiak
36 Island that liberalized folks that did not live in
37 Kodiak to not have a limit on their subsistence and
38 they would rely on harvest reports by having folks go
39 to villages or the village council to do personal
40 interviews. I could see that sort of thing evolving
41 for Adak. I think Adak was initially -- again, I'm
42 going from memory -- put in at the 25 limit back when
43 it was a military base and I don't think things have
44 been readjusted.

45

46 I can't any longer speak for the
47 Department, but when I was the area guy for the
48 Aleutians, basically anybody west of Unalaska, with the
49 exception of Adak, like Atka, we just didn't bother
50 with permits for them. Even here I know some of the

1 area biologists have gone out only having a 25 limit
2 for themselves and another 25 for their wives and one
3 fellow got 200 fish one time in one hit.

4
5 If you do exceed your bag limit, what
6 you want to do is just let the area office know as soon
7 as possible that, gee, you went over and would they
8 readjust it. I'm sure that's been the past practice
9 for that. But I'd suggest you get together with Elisa
10 and Bob Sterritt while you're here and see if they can
11 come up with some flexible ways to deal with it.
12 Anyway, it's a good point to bring up.

13
14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat.
15 Iver, would you like to say something.

16
17 MR. MALUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
18 name is Iver Malutin. One of the things I'd like to
19 talk about -- I did talk to ADF&G about subsistence and
20 I also talked to Joanne. In the Kodiak area, only on
21 the road system your numbers will apply on your permit,
22 25 per person. Outside the road system the numbers --
23 you can get any amount of fish. One of the things we
24 do with the halibut is that we go to the tribal
25 councils and sounds like Adak has a communication
26 problem. Do you have a tribal council there?

27
28 MR. KOSO: No. All we got is a city.

29
30 MR. MALUTIN: If you had some local
31 entity that she could work directly with, it would be
32 really, really good because then they would have
33 somebody to contact constantly every day whenever you
34 have a problem. That's the problem we have all the
35 time.

36
37 Another thing I'd really like to
38 stress, I would like you to think every single time you
39 come to every single meeting some way to get
40 subsistence foods to the elders. Any way that we could
41 get a proxy hunt of any magnitude, any kind of a proxy
42 hunt for anything that we do have, keep that in the
43 back of your minds. Especially you that are younger
44 and knew.

45
46 I'm trying to get proposals for elk and
47 goat for elders and I'm not getting to first base, but
48 I'm going to keep working on it and I hope that maybe
49 you guys will think about that on Federal lands as well
50 so we can get some of these things to the elders. I

1 really appreciate all your concerns and I'm glad that
2 we're wide open here and we're talking about State and
3 Federal lands, I think, and State and Federal waters
4 and that's okay and that's what I like about this
5 board. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Iver.

8

9 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair. You know, the 25
10 fish, that's okay. It's easy enough to go and get
11 that. I guess what I was trying to impress upon you is
12 that if you raise the quota, your conservation part of
13 the fisheries will be more accurate. The reporting
14 system will be more accurate because a lot of people,
15 when they go out, there's not a lot of boats in Adak to
16 be able to get to the fish. When they do get there,
17 they get quite a bit of fish. A lot more than the 25.

18

19

20 What I'm saying is if you gave a bigger
21 quota to catch at the time, then the people will report
22 a more accurate number of fish. It's more of a
23 conservation type of thing that I was referring to.
24 It's not so much -- you know, it was easy for me to
25 call you and get that stuff, but it just wasn't enough.
26 For the cost of getting there and back, I'm not going
27 to go for 25 fish. It's just not worth it. But I will
28 go for 100. That's what I'm trying to say. It's one
29 of those deals you could get better accuracy if you
30 raised the limit of your subsistence catch.

31

32 MS. RUSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
33 definitely appreciate what you're saying. Definitely
34 accuracy and reporting would be the priority.
35 Sometimes on return of subsistence permits the catch
36 reported is above the allowable limit and there often
37 is a reason why they couldn't get the permit extended
38 or the catch was more than expected and we want the
39 accurate numbers. So I can appreciate what you're
40 saying and would like to have further discussion about
41 it with Fish and Game. Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other Council
44 comments or reports.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any public
49 testimony.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Wildlife reviews.
4 Regional Council recommendations. Do we have any of
5 that?

6

7 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. We just
8 covered that. The next item on the agenda would be the
9 agency reports. I don't know if you want to go ahead
10 and start those or if you want to break for lunch or if
11 you want to work through.

12

13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

14

15 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. I was
16 wondering if the Council would accept having Mr. Van
17 Daele give his report because he kind of came out this
18 morning on short notice and then he can get back to
19 work.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: That can be
22 appreciated. We can do that.

23

24 MR. VAN DAELE: Thank you very much,
25 Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to fit in to your
26 busy schedule here. You've got a very full agenda. As
27 Pat says, I need to get back to work because this is
28 not work for me, this is fun to come in front of you
29 guys, so I take annual leave just to come here. If I
30 can hear Mr. Hamilton speak in favor of the Defenders
31 of Wildlife, it's worth my free time.

32

33 MR. HAMILTON: Worth the price of
34 admission.

35

36 (Laughter)

37

38 MR. VAN DAELE: What I'd like to do
39 briefly here, maybe 10, 15 minutes or so, is just give
40 you a very concise outline of the status of our
41 populations in big game animals and furbearers here on
42 the Kodiak Archipelago.

43

44 Starting off with deer. As you can
45 look out the window and see we are having another tough
46 winter on deer. This will be the third or fourth in a
47 row. Whether or not we'll have a real steep decline in
48 numbers depends on what happens in the next month or
49 so. From what we've seen in aerial surveys and what
50 we've got from incidental reports, the deer have

1 survived fairly well up to this point. However,
2 they're on the beaches and they're very thin. So it
3 really depends on what happens in the next month or so.
4 If this weather pattern keeps up, we're going to have a
5 tough winter for them.

6
7 With that in mind, we need to be aware
8 that the Board of Game will be meeting in March of '09
9 to discuss Unit 8 proposals and if we have anything we
10 want to bring in front of the Board, I think it needs
11 to be a joint proposal with this subsistence board. As
12 Mr. Malutin pointed out, you guys have a wonderful
13 track record of working closely together with the State
14 side and we all appreciate that.

15
16 Our deer numbers have bounced back
17 since our catastrophic decline of '98-'99. If you look
18 at the second page of the handout I've given you there,
19 the top two graphs are the number of deer harvested and
20 the hunter success. We don't have a way to count deer
21 around here accurately for deer numbers. We rely on
22 two things. One is information we get from people like
23 yourselves and, secondly, the information we get from
24 the annual deer harvest questionnaires that we send out
25 to a random sample of hunters. Those two factors
26 really track pretty closely. So although we can't tell
27 you exactly how many deer there are, we've got a pretty
28 good idea of what the trends are.

29
30 As I say, the population has been
31 bouncing back until the last couple winters and now
32 they're starting to slide back down. The biggest
33 problems seem to be on the north end of the island.
34 The south end of the island seems to be doing fairly
35 well so far.

36
37 The other concerns that we have with
38 deer have to do with the physiology of the deer
39 themselves. Usually I don't have music in my
40 PowerPoint presentations, so this is kind of cool.
41 Chronic wasting disease is something we've been looking
42 at for the past five years or so. Again, in your
43 handout there, you can see the number of deer and elk
44 that we've looked at. All those critters we've looked
45 at have been negative for chronic wasting disease. We
46 have no suggestion whatsoever that we have the problem
47 here on the island. However, we are going to continue
48 to monitor it and we appreciate all the help we've
49 gotten with that.

50

1 The other thing that's come up more
2 recently in the press has been concern with the sterile
3 bucks, particularly on the south end of the island, but
4 small occurrences in other places, commonly known as
5 steer deer or cryptorchid deer or whatever. There are
6 in fact instances of that particularly in the areas
7 where the deer are eating in the tundra or eating on
8 the kelp in large amounts. We have not seen any
9 indication that it's influenced the productivity of the
10 herd. In fact, down in the Aliulik Peninsula our data
11 indicate from the harvest and from the incidental
12 observations that they're just as productive as
13 anywhere else. So we don't share the concerns for the
14 population as a whole as has been expressed in the
15 public and in the press and so forth.

16
17 We also have no indications there are
18 DDT concerns with these deer right now, again as has
19 been expressed in the public. The reason I bring this
20 out is because we're starting to get calls in our
21 office. People are afraid to eat the deer because they
22 think something is wrong with them, they're cancerous
23 or whatever, and we're even getting calls from people
24 that are afraid to put kelp on their gardens because
25 they think there's DDT on the kelp. If we think
26 there's a concern, we'll be the first to report it to
27 you and other entities. Just keep that in mind.

28
29 So, any questions on deer or comments.

30
31 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I have one
32 question. You mentioned sterile bucks. Is that being
33 determined by hunters out in the field or are they
34 sending you samples? How is that determined?

35
36 MR. VAN DAELE: With the sterile bucks,
37 there's two things that have been done. The official
38 thing we've done through the Department is in this
39 annual questionnaire we have a question on there did
40 you see anything unusual about your deer, please
41 describe it. People will talk about antlers that are
42 retained all the way into November, December month and
43 the antlers are hollow basically and they're very
44 strange, consequently sometimes called cactus bucks.
45 We've seen about 13 percent of the deer down the
46 Aliulik and Hepburn Peninsulas with this type of
47 occurrence and, again, spotted numbers in other places,
48 but overall not a whole lot.

49
50 The other reporting has been from an

1 individual, Dr. Jacobson, who's done his own research
2 without Department sanction, and he's taken samples
3 from the field and reported those to the press and to
4 other agencies and other folks. He has a much higher
5 reporting rate than we do, much higher incident rate
6 than we do, and I can't speak to the accuracy of his
7 numbers or not.

8

9 It's your backyard that a lot of this
10 is happening. What have you seen?

11

12 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I haven't seen as
13 far as being in Akhiok. I know we have a lot of deer
14 there. They come right into the village and during the
15 cold spells they just -- in fact, the planes have to
16 buzz the airstrip to get them out of the way. They
17 were trying to move off the island and a whole big herd
18 of them moved out to a little tiny island. They were
19 just piled there during low tide. They tried to swim
20 across and not very many of them made it. But there
21 was a lot of deer.

22

23 Right now I think all the larger deer
24 have moved and in the village we have all the
25 yearlings. They're very small and they're not afraid
26 of anybody.

27

28 MR. VAN DAELE: But you're seeing
29 productivity? There's still plenty of young ones
30 coming out each year?

31

32 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yeah, young ones.
33 I don't know if they're weaned or how that works, but
34 they're hanging out near the village. We've had to put
35 down a couple dogs in the village because they were
36 chasing them and killing them. Now we've got small
37 dogs.

38

39 MR. SCHWANTES: Larry, does the
40 Department have any plans to do any further studies on
41 this? You mentioned the big difference in Dr.
42 Jacobson's finding compared to what you're getting on
43 your surveys. Does that lead you to want to do any
44 further studies on this?

45

46 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chairman. Member
47 Schwantes. I'll answer that twofold. One, as a
48 scientist, you bet. I'd love to have \$3 million to do
49 this and find out what's going on. I do think that Dr.
50 Jacobson does have some valid concerns. We don't know

1 what comes in from the kelp. We don't know what comes
2 in from the Chinese power plants and so forth.

3

4 That being said, I'm only a part-time
5 scientist. I'm mostly a manager here. As a manager, I
6 have a very limited budget for deer. All indications
7 are the deer population as a whole is continuing to be
8 productive and it's influenced much more by winter than
9 it is this particular item that Dr. Jacobson has
10 brought out. Therefore, I'm going to err on the side
11 of practicality and say, no, I don't have any plans at
12 this point in time until a big pot of money comes out
13 and it becomes a priority.

14

15 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

18

19 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. Larry. I'm
20 wondering if -- you know, I ended up with one of those
21 a while back and it was darn tasty. It was a rather
22 dumb deer and it was right down on the beach where all
23 the bucks that were in the rut were trotting around on
24 the mountain top. I'm wondering if this is, rather
25 than crisis, if it's perhaps more of an opportunity
26 thing and that they're fat, they're not interested in
27 chasing does. If we're having cold winters, obviously
28 the bucks and the fawns are the first ones to die off,
29 so the first deer you're going to run into on the beach
30 late in the winter, if you're at a place where they're
31 going to be, are going to be these fat fellows that are
32 having a grand ol' time and don't care. To me, as more
33 of a meat hunter, whatever is available I'm going to
34 eat it if it's not affecting the population itself. I
35 just wonder if it's more of an opportunity thing
36 reflective of them just being fat and happy. Anyway, an
37 anthropomorphic view.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: John.

40

41 MR. PARKER: Larry, it tends to happen
42 more on the south end than the north end or Afognak. I
43 mean comparatively speaking, right? I mean there's a
44 big difference.

45

46 MR. VAN DAELE: Much more so, yes.

47

48 MR. PARKER: In one of your articles in
49 the paper I could have swore there was something in
50 there about when the does are carrying the young and

1 it's their diet possibly.

2

3 MR. VAN DAELE: Yes, sir. What the
4 indications are -- and, again, this is from the
5 research that Dr. Jacobson and his colleagues have
6 done. It appears that when the fetus is in utero, when
7 it's just starting to develop, if the female has high
8 levels of estrogen in her diet or some other non-
9 natural thing, the male fetus testes will not start to
10 develop properly. When that fetus is born, it doesn't
11 have a chance to actually turn into a valid, viable
12 buck. It's one of these steer deer, one of this
13 cryptorchid deer. It isn't just an on/off switch.
14 There's a lot of gray area. It could have one testes
15 descend and not the other. It could have them still
16 viable but inside; they never totally descend, but
17 they're still there, so its sperm count may be lower
18 than normal although it's not totally zero. Or they
19 may never descend at all and it's like a steer or if
20 you take your dog in and castrate it type of thing. So
21 there's a lot of gray area in there.

22

23 The interesting thing is it does occur
24 much more often on the south end of the island where
25 these deer in places that Sitka Black-tail deer did not
26 evolve. God put them in southeast Alaska with a bunch
27 of trees, not in caribou habitat like the south end of
28 the island. They do, in fact, eat a lot of kelp off of
29 that area, so it may have some impact. We don't know.
30 We're speculating here.

31

32 As I mentioned to Member Schwantes, as
33 a scientist, I think it's fascinating. I think it
34 would really be interesting to find out. Practically,
35 I kind of tend to lean towards Member Holmes' idea that
36 you still have productivity, you still have animals
37 that seem pretty darn good to eat.

38

39 MR. PARKER: Yeah, I mean they're a
40 Pacific northwest, southeast Alaska animal to live near
41 the trees and as long as they can survive winters like
42 this, like you said there's no money to chase this down
43 the way Jake has, and he's kind of turned it into a big
44 scare so to speak from what I've seen, but that's about
45 it.

46

47 MR. VAN DAELE: Anything else on deer?
48 I'll move on to elk real quick here.

49

50 (No comments)

1 MR. VAN DAELE: Our elk populations are
2 stable, right around 900 elk, which is right where we'd
3 like to have them. We found that if we have more than
4 1,000 elk on Afognak we tend to start having problems
5 with productivity and also with antler development,
6 indicating that that's our carrying capacity over there
7 is about 1,000.

8
9 The herds are listed on Page 3 on the
10 top of your little chart there. Herd compositions are
11 moving around somewhat because of the timber harvest up
12 there, so the herds are not as cohesive as they were
13 10, 15 years ago. That's not necessarily a bad thing
14 because as these harvested units start to regrow you
15 get more elk habitat as long as they have a place to
16 hide from these kind of heavy snow events. So that
17 mosaic is actually advantageous to some elk herds.

18
19 Our harvest again has been pretty
20 stable because of this same sort of thing. In the past
21 five or six years we've got a tremendous amount of
22 cooperation from Afognak Native Corporation and also
23 from Natives of Kodiak and Ouzinkie Corporations up
24 there on finding ways to balance the needs of their
25 timber management program and balance the needs of the
26 subsistence species, like deer and elk.

27
28 They've made a proposal to the
29 Department to embark on a joint long-term research
30 project to look at the ungulates up there together.
31 This year we're going to put 18 conventional radio
32 collars on the elk and two GPS collars as the first
33 step in this long-term project. So everything on elk
34 looks pretty darn good. We're in good shape with that.

35
36 Any questions with regard to elk?

37
38 MR. PARKER: It says right here your
39 bull harvest is increasing.

40
41 MR. VAN DAELE: Yes.

42
43 MR. PARKER: On a lot of those hunts
44 they're either sex hunts, but it sure seems to me
45 everyone likes shooting bulls and if there's not enough
46 spikes -- you know, if there's not anymore bigger
47 bulls, they shoot spikes. There will come a point in
48 time where you'll just have cow hunts, right? I mean
49 you're not going to let them kill all the bulls off.

50

1 MR. VAN DAELE: That's correct. That's
2 correct. We've gotten very good productivity since
3 we've kept the herd size a little bit lower. Each year
4 for the past three years we've had at least one bull
5 that's come out of there that would make Boone &
6 Crockett record book, which hasn't happened since the
7 '50s. So we don't have any indications that our bull
8 numbers are hurting. One place we did have concerns
9 about that was the Molina Herd and that's why we went
10 to one sex or the other types of hunts, to try to get
11 people to take those cows. So that's exactly right,
12 we're not going to let them shoot up all the bulls.

13
14 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Is there any elk
15 movement onto the mainland, Kodiak Island?

16
17 MR. VAN DAELE: Not in the past two
18 years or so. I flew a survey up there with Trooper
19 Jones about a month ago throughout the Port Lions area,
20 Kupreanof Peninsula, the places you'd expect to see
21 elk, and there was very good consistent snow cover, no
22 sign whatsoever of them in that area. So since those
23 two bulls that came across to Port Lions and eventually
24 got shot down in Saltry a couple years ago we haven't
25 seen any indication of elk here on the main Kodiak
26 Island itself. We have unconfirmed reports about elk
27 kind of between the straits and Ouzinkie down to
28 Termination Point, but, again, those haven't really
29 been seen by anybody, just rumors. Do you know of any?

30
31 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: No, i haven't.
32 The subsistence elk hunt, I notice it happens way up in
33 the northwest corner of Afognak. Can we work that
34 somehow to get a subsistence hunt in the other areas of
35 Afognak?

36
37 MR. VAN DAELE: Well, unfortunately the
38 subsistence hunts have to occur on Federal lands and
39 those are the only Federal lands on Afognak is that
40 northwest corner part, the National Wildlife Refuge.

41
42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Would that require
43 a proposal with the State to try and get a subsistence
44 hunt on other parts of Afognak?

45
46 MR. VAN DAELE: It would be very
47 difficult to get a subsistence hunt through the State
48 system at this point in time. I think through the
49 registration hunts that we have now that follow on to
50 the drawing hunts. At least in the northern part of

1 the island people have a pretty good opportunity to get
2 up there. Only, for instance, around the Duck Mountain
3 Herd area they're right around the logging camps,
4 that's been the only place we have not opened up for
5 registration hunts.

6

7 Right now I believe subsistence
8 opportunities are being fulfilled through the State
9 system without trying to get something special. Like I
10 say, I think it would be extremely difficult through
11 the State system to get a subsistence only hunt.

12

13 Mountain goats. Although mountain
14 goats are not a subsistence species, we do manage them
15 jointly, in quotes, because of the cooperative efforts
16 again between your board and the Board of Game. What
17 we've seen since we liberalized the goat seasons,
18 allowed the registration hunt and so forth is a
19 dramatic increase in the number of goats that we've
20 taken on the island. To the point that Unit 8 is now
21 the highest goat harvest area in the entire state.
22 We're killing more goats than anywhere else in the
23 state of Alaska right now.

24

25 Our goat population, however, is
26 continuing to increase. That's something we're going
27 to have to work on jointly this spring or this coming
28 fall, is how are we going to handle that because we
29 know we cannot continue to stockpile goats on the
30 island. There's a point in time where they're going to
31 reach too many goats and they're going to crash and we
32 don't want that to happen. We'd like to utilize this
33 resource and keep it at a level below their carrying
34 capacity.

35

36 The registration hunts that we have now
37 are very tightly managed. As we mentioned earlier, you
38 have to go to the village closest to the hunt area, you
39 have to go two weeks before, it's not open to non-
40 resident hunters, you have to come in in saltwater with
41 float planes, it's late in the season as you mentioned,
42 and although some folks -- like in Old Harbor, Teacon
43 was able to go out there, although Ralphy tells me he
44 worked pretty hard for it. He almost died, but that's
45 okay. But if Teacon wants to say it was easy, that's
46 fine. But certain areas it works that way, but other
47 areas, for instance up on the north end, it's real hard
48 for folks from Port Lions to get them and we have a
49 limited number of permits available. Larsen Bay, not
50 that many people go out from Larsen Bay any more for

1 goat hunts, even though they have quite a few next
2 door.

3

4 How can we slow down this population
5 increase or even lower the goat population somewhat and
6 still accommodate the needs of the villagers. That's
7 something I think we need to discuss at length here.
8 Set aside a meeting or so. Pat, you've spearheaded a
9 lot of these joint meetings. That's something I think
10 we should think about in the future.

11

12 But goats are doing great is the bottom
13 line. We've got a lot of goats out there. We've got a
14 lot of happy hunters. We're issuing 500 drawing
15 permits per year, which is the maximum the Board of
16 Game will allow us. I could ask for more drawing
17 permits, but I think we need to look at registration
18 permits now. Perhaps those two southern areas, 475,
19 477, be straight registration and that would mean you
20 could hunt that from August all the way into November
21 month.

22

23 MR. PARKER: Would that be even for
24 non-residents or just residents?

25

26 MR. VAN DAELE: That would be something
27 we'd have to discuss. I would say both because we need
28 to reduce the goat populations in some areas.

29

30 MR. PARKER: Right. Like on the north
31 end here on North and South Road, you open that up
32 registration archery but you never really mop up those
33 surplus goats because the weather and daylight in
34 December. If you let a few folks with the rifles go
35 out after the bow hunters, then you would probably get
36 those surplus goats taken care of.

37

38 MR. VAN DAELE: Through the Chair.
39 That's partially true. On the North Road system we are
40 getting the number of goats that we want and it's
41 working just fine. On the South Road system, as you
42 say, it's weather dependent. Some years we do, some
43 years we don't. Depends on how many bow hunters we
44 have that want to go up into the Sacramento Range or
45 whatever.

46

47 MR. PARKER: I heard there was some
48 goats in the South Road that just moved and you had a
49 hard time finding them. Was that just a local rumor or
50 was that true?

1 MR. VAN DAELE: What's going on, I
2 believe, on this South Road system and the north to
3 some extent is what we call a sore sink situation where
4 you're killing over 20 percent of the goats that you
5 know of on the South Road system. Most goat managers
6 harvest around 5 percent. We're harvesting at 20
7 percent around here.

8
9 The main part of the island that
10 inaccessible right on the spine is a source for those
11 goats. They move out of that area into our South Road
12 system and that's where the sink is. That's kind of
13 where the drain is. We shoot more than we could
14 normally take because these are flooding into that
15 area. It's all part of the balancing act we try to do
16 with these various hunt areas.

17
18 I don't know how deep we want to get
19 into it this morning because you have a full agenda,
20 but I do think again that we need to get together a
21 subcommittee of folks and discuss all of these nuances
22 again about the goats. Where do we want to go and how
23 can we do that in a fair way to both the guides, the
24 Alaska residents and the local residents so we don't
25 jeopardize this compromise that we came up with five,
26 six years ago, whenever it was.

27
28 MR. SCHWANTES: Do you have anything to
29 say on that, Rohrer? I'm sure you do.

30
31 MR. ROHRER: I have lots of things to
32 say. Actually, just one question. What do you think
33 the carrying capacity is for the island for goats?

34
35 MR. VAN DAELE: Our management plan
36 says 700 goats is what we're looking at, 700 to 1,000
37 basically. We don't have studies that tell us that
38 number, so, again, I'm being a manager when I pull that
39 number out. A thousand seems to be a number a lot of
40 managers -- like you heard that from Unimak, too. So
41 it's a nice, round number, but we don't know for sure.
42 The long-term carrying capacity is going to be much
43 lower than the short-term carrying capacity because
44 these are an introduced species. Typically what you
45 see on an introduced species, especially if it doesn't
46 have any predators and it's pretty resistant to winters
47 is they'll build up to a certain point, but when they
48 crash, it happens real fast and they don't rebound very
49 rapidly.

50

1 I think part of what we've seen with
2 the deer has been that. That's why we haven't seen a
3 rebounding of deer here on the north end of the island
4 like we would expect because they went up so high in
5 the early '80s that it made it tough for them to
6 rebound to a number comparable to that in the future.

7

8 MR. ROHRER: Then my question for the
9 Chair, what do we have to do to come up with a joint
10 subcommittee with the Fish and Game Advisory Board to
11 look at this issue?

12

13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: There is a
14 committee on Kodiak that we can appoint a member to
15 that committee. I'm sure some villagers would like to
16 get involved in that. I know I was part of that before
17 when we first started this registration hunt for goats.
18 From the village, I would be interested. From this
19 board, I would ask if there's anyone interested in
20 being appointed to that committee. Pat.

21

22 MR. HOLMES: Yes, Mr. Chairman. We did
23 have some restrictions from OSM suggested to us and the
24 way we were able to keep our committee operating, they
25 actually only wanted to have five or six people
26 working, I forget, but we did get input from each of
27 the villages where they harvested goats. If you'd
28 like, I think we can probably just use a format that
29 we've done before and have three folks from the RAC and
30 three from the Advisory Committee to get to that six,
31 but have consultation with all the villages and then we
32 ended up having input from the villages, from the
33 guides, from people that outfit and generally we had a
34 pretty good working group and we were able to use the
35 local office here and basically have teleconferences
36 and a cup of coffee in the evening and just kind of
37 have some chats and lay out the groundwork of where
38 we're at and where we want to go. If you don't mind,
39 I'd volunteer to try to get both representatives that
40 we had and the structure that was acceptable before.

41

42 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat.

43

44 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chair. Larry, if
45 you're concerned about not taking enough animals, why
46 do we have the restrictions that you have to go to
47 those areas to apply for those permits. There's a
48 number of people in Kodiak who travel to those areas to
49 hunt deer and would like to be able to hunt under
50 registration permit but because of the cost of having

1 to fly into those areas to get the permit they don't do
2 it.

3

4 MR. VAN DAELE: Mr. Chairman. Mr.
5 Schwantes. The reason behind that is two-fold. One,
6 it was a compromise because of a long, drawn out
7 discussion on whether this should become a Federal
8 subsistence species or remain a State species. As a
9 State species, as I mentioned to the Chair, it is
10 difficult to have subsistence only hunts. So this was,
11 quite frankly, a roundabout way to get a subsistence
12 hunt because it made it much easier for local residents
13 to be able to get the permits than it was for the meat
14 fleet to drop off deer hunters and go goat hunting.

15

16 The second side of it was biological.
17 In the past, when we've had registration hunts for
18 goats in Kodiak, it has really harmed the accessible
19 goat areas. In other words, the small lakes we have
20 around here that people could fly into. If it was open
21 for registration, they got hit real hard. There was a
22 lot of wounding loss, there was a lot of derby-style
23 hunting, basically, for lack of a better word. We felt
24 this would slow that down because it had been so long
25 since we had a registration hunt here and people had
26 been restricted for so long. I think it's worked on
27 both those accounts. It's provided the opportunity for
28 the local folks, be they Kodiak city people that go
29 hunt the road system or be they Akhiok people that have
30 to go in and get it from Mitch's office or one of the
31 offices down there. It's worked fine.

32

33 Now we've reached the point that we
34 have a lot of goats out there and we need to decide how
35 best to harvest them. I don't think it would
36 necessarily be a bad thing now to overharvest
37 accessible areas because of this sore sink type of
38 thing I talked about. It may be that we have to just
39 really hammer the goats for three, four years, get the
40 population down and then get restrictive again once
41 they get to that lower level. I think we've gotten to
42 the point that we need to be concerned about the long-
43 term future of this population.

44

45 The Refuge will say we need to be
46 concerned about the habitat because that's their
47 mandate, is the habitat part, but I'm looking at just
48 the goats, just the harvest opportunities in the
49 future. So that's the history behind that and why I
50 think we possibly need to change it somewhat now.

1 MR. SCHWANTES: I guess my question,
2 going along with that then, is what's the process to go
3 about changing that so that people from Kodiak could
4 get those permits in Kodiak rather than having to go to
5 the villages to get them. I think that's one of the
6 things that's eliminating some of the people from
7 taking those late season goats.

8
9 MR. VAN DAELE: You're exactly right.
10 The process, we could do it a couple different ways.
11 For the short term for this coming season, we have it
12 within our ability to administratively say permits are
13 available in more places or for a longer period of
14 time. That's not something the Board has to do. But
15 we have a very strong tradition here of working
16 together and I'm not going to sign an edict that says
17 that without the agreement of all the villagers and all
18 the different local entities.

19
20 The second thing, the more permanent
21 solution to this, would be to go to the Board of Game
22 when they meet in March a year from now and during that
23 Board of Game cycle come up with a proposal that's not
24 generated from an agency but from the public or this
25 joint group that says this is the package we would like
26 to see. On the north and central part of the island
27 the goats are pretty stable. We don't need to
28 liberalize that too much. On Kodiak city road system,
29 we've got a lot of people that want to kill the goats.
30 We don't want to be too liberal on that. On the south
31 and west areas of the island, yes, we do want to
32 liberalize and here's how we want to do it and here's
33 the compromise we came up with so we don't jeopardize
34 the subsistence needs of the local villagers. That's
35 the long-term solution.

36
37 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. I
38 think it was proposed before to have the registration
39 here in Kodiak. It was opposed because a lot of people
40 in the village will wait just a few days before they go
41 out hunting before they get the registration permit.
42 If it were the case to have the permits available here
43 in Kodiak, when the villagers go to get them, they'd be
44 all gone and they'd lose out on their opportunity. Why
45 they wait so long I don't know. I try to get mine as
46 soon as they come out.

47
48 MR. VAN DAELE: One clarification on
49 that, Mr. Chairman, is if we go with a registration
50 hunt, we do not limit the number of permits that are

1 available in registration hunts. So we have an
2 unlimited number. The only thing we would limit is if
3 we got to a certain point that we felt the harvest was
4 excessive, we'd close the hunt by emergency order. So
5 that really wouldn't be a concern in that you'd run out
6 of permits if it was available in Kodiak or everywhere
7 else. There's even talk of having it available over
8 the internet. The reason we go to that in some places
9 and we may consider it even here is manpower because
10 our office in Kodiak is pretty overwhelmed in the fall
11 with just the three of us that are there and all the
12 various hunts we have to sign up for. But, again,
13 these are things we need to look at all the options
14 over a cup of coffee or tea, like Pat suggested, and
15 weigh them all out to see where we want to go and how
16 we can accomplish this.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Another question.
19 For the registration hunt, how many goats would be
20 available for that?

21

22 MR. VAN DAELE: By hunt area?

23

24 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes.

25

26 MR. VAN DAELE: We could probably
27 harvest 100 goats in those two areas with no problem
28 whatsoever. I'm pulling the number right off the top
29 of my head. We'd have to look at that carefully.
30 We'll have to sit down and see how many goats do we
31 want to have. I'll give you my opinion biologically.
32 The Refuge will give their opinion biologically. You
33 guys can talk about the cost benefits of each, the risk
34 analysis of doing various things and then we come up
35 with a number. Again, we're talking about an
36 introduced species, so we have a lot of flexibility.
37 Unlike brown bears we want to be very conservative.
38 With the goats we can have lots of flexibility.

39

40 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you.

41 Thomas.

42

43 MR. SCHWANTES: Just one thing. Those
44 registration permits could be restricted to residents
45 of Unit 8, couldn't they?

46

47 MR. VAN DAELE: No. They can be
48 restricted to residents of the state of Alaska, but not
49 residents of Unit 8. The only way we could do that
50 restriction to residents of Unit 8, we'd get into

1 what's called a Tier II situation. That wouldn't be
2 applicable in this case.

3

4 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

5

6 MR. VAN DAELE: And I'm allergic to
7 Tier II.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I'm pretty sure
10 once more this discussion will come up in the
11 committee. So, in the interest of time, I guess we'll
12 move forward.

13

14 MR. VAN DAELE: Just two more quick
15 things. One with furbearers, as you'll note on Page 5
16 of your handout there. Our beaver harvest is pretty
17 low, pretty stable. There's not much of a demand for
18 the beavers. Otters we were concerned about a couple
19 years ago because we were seeing a dramatic increase in
20 the number of otters that were taken as the price went
21 up. As the price has crashed, so has the number of
22 otters that have been taken, so we're not too concerned
23 about that right now. The other species we really
24 don't have a good handle on. They kind of come and go
25 as they see fit.

26

27 Brown bears, of course, is our major
28 management concern around here. They're a very high-
29 profiled animal. All indications are the brown bear
30 population is very healthy, increasing slightly
31 throughout the archipelago. Our harvests have been
32 liberalized somewhat. From the research that we did,
33 we felt we could go to the Board and ask for a few
34 liberalizations. What we asked for and received was
35 Afognak was broken into three hunt areas now for bears
36 and more permits are available up there. More permits
37 are available on the east side of the island and on the
38 north end of the island somewhat. We reduced a little
39 bit on the south and west side of the island. We
40 removed the restriction on skull and sex of bears that
41 could be taken on the southwest side of the island,
42 again because the population has rebounded.

43

44 What we also did is we worked with the
45 local Fish and Game Advisory Committee to make it so if
46 someone wounds a bear, that counts the same as a dead
47 bear. They can't go after another one. Again, that
48 level of respect that we talked about earlier is the
49 rationale behind that.

50

1 The size of the bears has been going up
2 for the past 20 years or so. It's somewhat stable now.
3 Nine percent of the bears that we kill on Kodiak a year
4 are Boone & Crockett sized, which no one else can
5 really claim. So we've still got a lot of bears.
6 We've still got a healthy population of big bears also.

7
8 Bear problems in the villages are being
9 addressed very actively by the villages themselves.
10 Larsen Bay and Port Lions have done an excellent job of
11 fencing off and electrifying their dumps, keeping them
12 clean. Old Harbor is hopefully going to be online to
13 do that here in the near future. Akhiok, you guys work
14 on your own program down there, but you seem to have a
15 minimal number of bear problems. So I think our bear
16 problems are reduced because of education and because
17 of real strong effort in the villages to make things go
18 the right way.

19
20 Here in town we have the subcommittee
21 that was spun off from the bear plan we did five years
22 ago. They called themselves KUBS, Kodiak Unified Bear
23 Subcommittee, which is actually a subcommittee of the
24 Fish and Game Advisory Committee, and they meet twice a
25 month throughout the winter for the past six years and
26 we continually look at ways that we can work together
27 to improve bear/human relations island-wide. Anything
28 we do as an agency, and Fish and Wildlife Service is
29 the same way, we take through this subcommittee, so we
30 do this again as a joint effort, not just as an agency
31 going off on its own. And your handout has some of the
32 things the group has done on that.

33
34 One final thing with brown bears. This
35 past year we've completed a long-term study on the
36 bears. Twenty-five years worth of data was
37 consolidated and looked at very carefully. As a result
38 of that analysis, we were able to model what the bear
39 population has done. We were able to go to the Board
40 with these recommendations that I talked about earlier
41 and we were able to look at some of the new studies
42 that we need to do around here.

43
44 A couple new studies that we're
45 initiating this year, one is to look at the food habits
46 of the bears much more carefully and doing that by
47 collecting hair from all the harvested bears and
48 analyzing the hair. You literally are what you eat.
49 You can tell what a bear is eating all the time that
50 it's hair was growing. That's being done through

1 Washington State University.

2

3 The second research project that we're
4 doing has to do with Old Harbor. We're going to put 10
5 of these GPS radio collars around the village of Old
6 Harbor this spring and these collars will give us the
7 relocation of the bear every two hours and we'll
8 download that information and see where they are, what
9 they're eating and so forth. Both now when the dump is
10 in its normal situation and hopefully in a year or two
11 when the dump has been electrified and cleaned up, see
12 how the bears react to that.

13

14 In conjunction with this study we hope
15 to work very closely with the school down there to get
16 the school kids involved in tracking the bears and
17 understanding a little more about what bears need and
18 how people respond to them and so forth.

19

20 So that's about it for the wildlife
21 side of things. I'm open for any questions or comments
22 or clarifications.

23

24 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I do have a
25 comment or question. I was talking with my in-laws
26 that live in Minnesota and he said he saw an article in
27 the paper where there was a big bear harvested on
28 Kodiak Island and he was asking me how big was that
29 bear because the bear guide offered to cut the hide in
30 half in order to get it out of the field. I told him I
31 didn't see that article. Do you know about that?

32

33 MR. VAN DAELE: Yes, sir. There was an
34 article that was in the Anchorage paper and then to the
35 Associated Press to a bunch of other areas. The bear
36 itself was really not much bigger than our normal bears
37 around here. In fact, its skull size was 27.5 inches,
38 so it wasn't even one of our 9 percent that are
39 trophy-sized. It was just another big Kodiak bear that
40 made it to the rest of the world. I think it was Jake
41 Jefferson. Is that right, Jim? I think that's where
42 that article came from.

43

44 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
45 questions for Mr. Van Daele.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: None. Thank you
50 very much.

1 MR. VAN DAELE: You're welcome. Thank
2 you for the opportunity.

3
4 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Would you like to
5 take a break for lunch. Okay, be back at 1:00 o'clock.

6
7 (Off record)

8
9 (On record)

10
11 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Let's call the
12 meeting back to order. My time says 1:14. Before the
13 break we heard Larry Van Daele's report. We go to OSM
14 briefing on rural/nonrural. That was informational.
15 It's in your packet on Page 59.

16
17 Briefing on draft customary and
18 traditional use policy.

19
20 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. I have some
21 talking points for that. The C&T information is on
22 Page 60 of your book. For the record, my name is Chuck
23 Ardizzone.

24
25 In fall 2007, a draft policy on
26 customary and traditional use determinations was
27 presented to each of the Subsistence Regional Advisory
28 Councils for review and comment. The draft policy was
29 developed in response to a request from the Deputy
30 Secretary of the Interior.

31
32 The draft policy lays out the existing
33 Board process for addressing customary and traditional
34 use determinations, which has been utilized since the
35 inception of the program. Part of this process is to
36 consider the eight factors in a general, holistic way,
37 rather than in a rigid manner. The policy does not
38 represent a change from the way customary and
39 traditional use determinations have been made in the
40 past; it simply clarifies the approach taken by the
41 Board, as requested by the Secretary of the Interior.

42
43 A three month public comment period was
44 provided to allow for broad public review and input. A
45 total of thirteen comments on the draft policy were
46 received.

47
48 Comments on the draft policy spanned a
49 broad range of perspectives, ranging from supporting
50 the status quo, to making minor modifications, to

1 requests of rulemaking to accommodate clear
2 administrative procedures, to suggestions that the
3 Board enter rulemaking to eliminate the need and
4 requirement of customary and traditional use
5 determinations.

6
7 The briefing on the C&T policy in your
8 Council book concludes by noting that the Board will
9 attempt to prepare a draft for Secretarial approval
10 this spring; however, since this briefing was prepared
11 the Board has decided to defer further work on the
12 draft policy pending the outcome of related litigation.
13 A lawsuit was brought against the Federal Subsistence
14 Board by the State of Alaska involving C&T
15 determination and District Court ruling in favor of the
16 Federal Subsistence Board has been appealed by the
17 State. So currently this policy is on hold at the
18 moment.

19
20 If there's any questions I'll try and
21 answer them.

22
23 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

24
25 MR. HOLMES: Are the comments online?
26 I'd be interested in reading what these different folks
27 had to comment pro or con on the C&T.

28
29 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chairman. Mr.
30 Holmes. I'm not sure, but I can check on that for you.

31
32 MR. HOLMES: Thank you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
35 questions.

36
37 (No comments)

38
39 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Let's move on.

40
41 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. Now I'll
42 give you an update on the salmon bycatch in the Bering
43 Sea/Aleutian Islands pollock fishery. On Page 62
44 there's a letter that was sent by the Chairman of the
45 Board to I think National Marine Fisheries.

46
47 To give you a little background about
48 what's going on. The salmon bycatch by the Bering
49 Sea/Aleutian Islands pollock fishing fleet has been
50 increasing at a rapid rate over the last five years.

1 The latest five-year averages from 2003 to 2007 is that
2 there's been 82,000 chinook and 358,000 non-chinook
3 salmon caught in the fishery. Bycatch peaks of 122,000
4 chinook salmon in 2007 and nearly 712,000 non-chinook
5 salmon in 2005. Fifty-six percent of the bycatch
6 comprised of salmon returning to Western Interior
7 Alaska rivers and 24 percent were bound for the Yukon
8 River alone.

9

10 Some recent developments. In December
11 2007, the National Marine Fisheries Service announced
12 its intent to prepare an EIS on salmon bycatch
13 reduction measures in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands
14 management area. Proposed actions could include new
15 regulatory closures, salmon bycatch limits or a
16 combination of both. These management measures could
17 incorporate current or new bycatch reduction methods.

18

19 In February 2008, the Federal
20 Subsistence Board and the Chairs of the Eastern
21 Interior, Western Interior and Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
22 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils
23 submitted letters all urging the National Marine
24 Fisheries Service to significantly lower the salmon
25 bycatch.

26

27 The Board recommended that the EIS
28 examine at least one alternative that would reduce
29 salmon bycatch to levels below their 1990 to 2001
30 averages. The Board alternative is consistent with the
31 U.S./Canada Yukon River Salmon Agreement signed in
32 2002, which requires the U.S. to increase in-river
33 returns of Yukon River origin salmon by reducing marine
34 catches and bycatches of Yukon River salmon.

35

36 Also in February 2008 the Northern
37 Pacific Fishery Management Council made two notable
38 changes for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands salmon
39 bycatch motion. One was the expansion of the problem
40 statement to more fully point out the conservation
41 concerns and the importance of salmon subsistence
42 fisheries. The second was lowering the upper range of
43 the hard caps from 108,000 to 87,500 chinook salmon.

44

45 Some of the next steps in this North
46 Pacific Fishery Management Council and Bering
47 Sea/Aleutian Islands salmon bycatch EIS, in April 2008
48 there will be a meeting in Anchorage and there will be
49 a review of the scoping report and public comments,
50 which may further refine alternatives to be analyzed

1 and identify a preliminary preferred alternative.

2

3 In June of 2008, there should be a
4 meeting in Kodiak which will review the initial draft
5 of the EIS and identifies the preliminary preferred
6 alternative and recommended release of the draft EIS
7 for public review.

8

9 Between July and August of 2008 there
10 will be a 45-day public comment period for the draft
11 EIS and then in September 2008 there will be a meeting
12 in Anchorage and final action taken on the draft EIS.

13

14 If the above time line holds, the
15 National Marine Fisheries Service should publish the
16 final EIS in February 2009, then initiate the
17 rulemaking process shortly afterwards. Some of the
18 versions of the final rule could be effective in
19 September of 2009. That's all I have.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Questions.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: It would be
26 interesting to point out the letter to Sue Salvesson
27 from Mike Fleagle that the recent harvests of
28 subsistence for an average of 10 years was 129,000 and
29 that was equivalent to BSAI's bycatch in one year.
30 They've got to wait until December to make a
31 determination on facts like that? I mean the facts
32 speak for themselves.

33

34 MR. KOSO: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. Do
35 you have a breakdown of the Bering Sea and Aleutian
36 Islands separately? I mean take from 170 west versus
37 170 east, would you have a breakdown on that
38 interception?

39

40 MR. ARDIZZONE: I don't at this time.

41

42 MR. KOSO: It would be interesting to
43 see that because it's almost two separate fisheries. I
44 mean time-wise it's separate for sure.

45

46 MR. ARDIZZONE: I can check with the
47 office, but I don't have that information.

48

49 MR. KOSO: When I was in Adak just
50 about two, three weeks ago, it seemed like there was a

1 rumor that there was a tremendous amount of king salmon
2 caught just in the course of a couple days. Most of
3 them people have observers on Board. It was like one
4 day 12,000 on just one or two boats that I heard, but
5 that's just rumor. I wasn't sure if that's fact. It
6 would be nice to get a breakdown on the regions to see
7 how much the Adak fishery west of 170 versus east of
8 170 Bering Sea.

9

10 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Go ahead.

11

12 MR. ARDIZZONE: Mr. Chair. I just
13 wanted to get clarification on those areas again so
14 when I get back to the office I can check for you.

15

16 MR. KOSO: Yeah, the areas I was
17 referring to was -- they've got different areas. West
18 of 170th and east of 170th. They're still dragging in
19 the region.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you.

22

23 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair. If I'm not
24 mistaken, I think there's meetings starting in
25 Anchorage at North Pacific Council and I think they're
26 going to address some of these problems we're talking
27 about right now which start on April 1st. I think this
28 is part of the agenda that you're talking about.

29

30 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
31 questions for Chuck.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you. Move
36 now to Izembek Wildlife Refuge. Sandra.

37

38 MS. SIEKANIEC: For the record, I'm
39 Sandra Siekaniec. I'm the Izembek National Wildlife
40 Refuge manager. My report to you is on Page 65. I'm
41 just going to hit the highlights and anything that's
42 changed since I wrote the report.

43

44 One thing you were provided with was
45 the final management plan for the 9D caribou herd. If
46 you look on Page 4 it does provide some guidelines that
47 we're going by as far as when we would open the season.
48 Actually it starts on Page 3. As the calf/cow ratio
49 increases and the bull/cow ratio increases, we probably
50 will consider opening the subsistence season, but it

1 will be awhile I think with the current numbers.

2

3 As I mentioned before, we did do a
4 telemetry flight the end of February. From that study
5 we counted 348 animals. It was a very clear day. It
6 was easy to count the caribou, so we don't think we
7 missed very many. We're estimating the population as
8 below 400 animals, which is dire, I think.

9

10 As was mentioned before, too, the State
11 is considering doing some predator control. They are
12 planning on coming out in April and deploy seven
13 additional collars and then also come out in the summer
14 and do a calf mortality study, so we're hoping to get
15 some additional information and figure out what's
16 causing the decrease in the population. We are also
17 trying to help them with some Federal funding to do
18 some of those activities.

19

20 There has been an increase in moose.
21 We did have an increase also in some requests for moose
22 permits for subsistence. I have not gotten any reports
23 back from that yet, but I think we issued at least
24 three moose permits.

25

26 The Brant numbers are increasing
27 somewhat, so there has been some liberalizations of
28 some of the seasons. It has not changed much on the
29 subsistence hunts in the spring except for they have
30 lifted some regulations that were on the nesting
31 grounds. Total population right now this winter was
32 147,000 Brant and we had the second highest count of
33 Brant in the Izembek area this winter with 28,000. So
34 last year we had a record 40,000. We normally see only
35 10,000, so we're seeing quite a few more birds staying
36 in Izembek during the winter.

37

38 Emperor Geese are still not high enough
39 population to do subsistence hunting and we're also
40 going to be doing additional avian influenza testing
41 this summer and fall. Swans and Stellers Eiders and
42 some hunter harvest testing.

43

44 Does anybody have any questions for me.

45

46 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair.

47

48 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes.

49

50 MR. KOSO: I have a question on the

1 Emperor Geese. Do you guys do surveys out in the
2 islands too or just around the Cold Bay area? Like
3 Dutch Harbor, Adak, those other areas.

4
5 MS. SIEKANIEC: The primary surveys
6 that they do are along the peninsula coast. I'm not
7 sure if they were actually doing any surveys down in
8 Dutch Harbor. I'll have to check on that.

9
10 MR. KOSO: Yeah, because I know there's
11 been a request from certain people that asked me if I
12 would check on it if they could possibly have an
13 Emperor Goose subsistence season. Dutch Harbor seemed
14 to have a tremendous amount of Emperor Geese and Adak
15 also has a good population. I've seen a few hundred of
16 them out there in Adak.

17
18 MS. SIEKANIEC: Right. They typically
19 winter along the peninsula and the coast, so you're
20 probably seeing the majority of the population. You're
21 not seeing just a small portion. So that's a concern
22 is that if we do impact those birds it will affect the
23 whole population not just a small portion.

24
25 MR. KOSO: One other question. On the
26 Brant, we used to have a season in Cold Bay. I know it
27 seems like it was abused at one time. Are you looking
28 to ever have another subsistence season there?

29
30 MS. SIEKANIEC: Brant are open during
31 the subsistence season.

32
33 MR. KOSO: They are now? They used to
34 open end of August and it seems like you closed that
35 off because there was some guy just abused the system
36 and took a lot one season and then you closed it down
37 or something.

38
39 MS. SIEKANIEC: What the Co-Management
40 Council decided to do when they started having some
41 issues there was to shut down the Brant season mid-
42 August to end of August, so right now they're open
43 until middle of August but after that point they
44 aren't, which that's about when they start showing up
45 at Izembek. You'll have to talk to the Co-Management
46 Council to change that.

47
48 MR. KOSO: Thank you.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Your surveys, are

1 they aerial surveys or do you have people in the ground
2 making counts?

3

4 MS. SIEKANIEC: For which species?

5

6 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: For Brants or
7 Emperors.

8

9 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, all the waterfowl
10 species are all aerial surveys. We do have some
11 surveys in the fall for Brant to figure out what the
12 production has been. We document how many adults
13 versus how many juveniles people are seeing. Those are
14 on-the-ground surveys. Most of the population totals
15 are from aerial surveys.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Do you do any
18 surveys -- you probably don't, but you don't do any
19 surveys on Kodiak now?

20

21 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, I know they cover
22 the whole coast and I think they do cover part of
23 Kodiak when they're doing their annual surveys.

24

25 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Okay.

26

27 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair.

28

29 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes, Rick.

30

31 MR. KOSO: One more question on the
32 Emperor Geese. Your surveys, do they go all the way to
33 Port Mohler or to Port Heiden how far up north do you
34 go when you do your survey? Are they all counted in
35 the same survey?

36

37 MS. SIEKANIEC: They have a survey
38 transect that they cover and they start at the lower
39 part of the peninsula and go all the way up towards the
40 Yukon Delta and up north, so they cover all that area
41 along the coast and up when they're counting the
42 numbers.

43

44 MR. KOSO: But your numbers that you
45 put here for the region, this doesn't include all the
46 way north, does it? I mean like if you took the Cold
47 Bay region, you must have a cut off point for that
48 area.

49

50 MS. SIEKANIEC: The numbers that I am

1 giving you are total coast population numbers, not just
2 Izembek.

3

4 MR. KOSO: Okay, thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

7

8 MR. SCHWANTES: I got one question.

9 Can you tell me what you're looking at for a population
10 before you'd consider opening a subsistence season?

11

12 MS. SIEKANIEC: It has to be 80,000 or
13 more for a three year period. That's before they even
14 consider it. It doesn't mean they're going to open it,
15 but that's when they can consider it and right now the
16 averages just aren't working out that way.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
19 questions.

20

21 MR. HOLMES: I was wondering with the
22 expanding population of the Aleutian Canadians, are you
23 seeing more of those in the Izembek area?

24

25 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes, we do see Canada's
26 in that area and they tend to use the uplands of the
27 Refuge quite a bit for feeding on berries, so it is a
28 pretty important resource for them and we have been
29 seeing some increase in numbers of those.

30

31 MR. HOLMES: And I believe the Co-
32 Management Council re-opened that season for them last
33 year, didn't they?

34

35 MS. SIEKANIEC: The Canada's?

36

37 MR. HOLMES: Yes.

38

39 MS. SIEKANIEC: Yes.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
42 questions.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Sandra.

47

48 MS. SIEKANIEC: I just wanted to say
49 thank you to the Council for supporting the two caribou
50 proposals that we have on board and we will try to do

1 the best we can to make sure the numbers increase so
2 that we can re-open them. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Next on the agenda
5 is Kodiak National Wildlife. Brandon.

6

7 MR. SAITO: My name is Brandon Saito
8 from the Kodiak Refuge, subsistence biologist. Mr.
9 Chair, I'd like to do our activity report.

10

11 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Uh-huh.

12

13 MR. SAITO: I'll try to summarize some
14 of these. For brown bear, subsistence brown bear hunt,
15 we had four permits issued last year. It's a two-part
16 season running first part of the fall is December 1st
17 through the 15th, 2006 and then April 1st to May 15th
18 for the spring season. Two bears were harvested, one
19 in Old Harbor and one in Larsen Bay. This year we have
20 five permits that we're in the middle of issuing right
21 now.

22

23 Intensive aerial survey. Every year
24 the Refuge and Fish and Game assess trends in bear
25 density. Survey results are used in conjunction with
26 harvest data to regulate subsistence and sport
27 hunts. In May, we plan to survey the Spiridon
28 Peninsula.

29

30 Old Harbor Brown Bear Resource Use. As
31 Larry Van Daele mentioned earlier, the Refuge, in
32 conjunction with ADF&G plans to investigate habitat
33 use, movements, and demographic patterns of bears near
34 Old Harbor. This is the first project to employ GPS
35 technology to relocate the bears. Data will be used in
36 conjunction with a recently completed habitat map to
37 determine what resources bears are utilizing. Data on
38 the movements and resource use will be used in
39 conjunction with a companion research project that will
40 look at hair samples to indirectly determine what they
41 have been eating.

42

43 Sitka Black-tailed Deer Designated Deer
44 Hunt Program. This subsistence season runs from August
45 1st through January
46 31st. For the 2006-2007 season, we had 56 permits
47 issued and 75 deer taken. The four year averages are
48 46 permits and 62 deer, so we're just a little bit
49 above the average this year.

50

1 Deer Mortality Survey. We suspect that
2 this winter was similar to the last few harsh winters
3 and might have a substantial impact on the deer,
4 especially to the northern part. Our deer mortality
5 surveys are scheduled for completion in April
6 2008.

7
8 Roosevelt Elk. The Refuge includes
9 54,000 acres of elk habitat on Afognak and Ban Islands.
10 One herd, comprising about 120 animals, regularly
11 summers on the Refuge. Hunting elk on the Refuge has
12 been permitted since 1998. This last year six
13 subsistence elk permits were issued but no elk were
14 taken during the 2007 season running from September 15
15 through November 30th. This year we plan to cooperate
16 with ADF&G on capture and radio-collaring in June.
17 Collars will provide a basis for tracking herds and
18 estimating herd composition, population size, and
19 setting harvest quotas.

20
21 Sea Otter. The sea otter harvest in
22 2007, 26 sea otters were harvested on Kodiak Island,
23 with a five-year average
24 harvest of 62 otters. This number is a little low, but
25 sometimes it takes a while for the numbers to come in.
26 Only coastal Alaskan Native subsistence hunters of one-
27 quarter degree or more Native blood are eligible for
28 this hunt. If a dead sea otter is found anywhere, you
29 can contact the Refuge at this 800 number here.

30
31 For fisheries we had the Big Creek Weir
32 Project in there but, as was mentioned earlier, that
33 was canceled for this year

34
35 Migratory Birds. We had a coastal
36 Harlequin Duck survey. The survey efforts were done in
37 August 2007 and covered over 600
38 kilometers of the Refuge s western bays with a total of
39 3,101 Harlequin Ducks tallied. These surveys have been
40 conducted about every three years since 1994. I
41 actually have a handout here. This was a poster we had
42 recreated since last time we had a discussion about the
43 decline of Harlequins in Uyak Bay. We went down to
44 Larsen Bay and posted it in their tribal council office
45 and spoke with the council about this to see if anybody
46 was worried about the decline in Uyak. Afognak and
47 Uganik have been stable since '94. Uyak has dropped
48 from about 1,300 to a little over 300. So that was in
49 response to questions the Council had had last year.

50

1 For Refuge news, the Kodiak National
2 Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center opened to the public
3 November 17th, 2007, with a day-long community event
4 that welcomed about 1,000 visitors to the new
5 downtown facility. The Center is open year-round and
6 hosts regular public talks and evening programs that
7 feature current and on-going wildlife research projects
8 from across the archipelago.

9
10 The Center has also welcomed several
11 workshops and public meetings in affiliation with our
12 conservation partners and local conservation-oriented
13 community groups. Some recent events have included the
14 2007 Annual Refuge Information Technician Workshop,
15 Alaska Fish and Game Advisory Committee Meetings and
16 Kodiak students from six elementary schools. Upcoming
17 events for 2008 include hosting regular Wildlife
18 Wednesday public talks, Whale Fest and the 2008 joint
19 meeting for the Refuge Chiefs and Refuge Supervisors.
20 The visitor center will host an estimated 20,000
21 members of the public during its first year of
22 operation.

23
24 Other Cooperation. Our U.S. Fish and
25 Wildlife Service tribal wildlife grants. The Refuge
26 has continued to provide support for implementation of
27 a tribal wildlife grant for the Natives of Larsen Bay,
28 who intend to use the grant to build its
29 resource management capacity through acquisition of GIS
30 equipment, training, and high-resolution digital
31 orthophotos of the Karluk River watershed, Karluk, and
32 Larsen Bay vicinity.

33
34 Kodiak Summer Science & Salmon Camp
35 2008. The Salmon Camp will enter its 13th year of
36 educating Kodiak s youth about their natural world and
37 the human dimension of how people relate to, and are
38 shaped by, their own backyard. This perennial favorite
39 runs June through August and reaches a wide audience of
40 campers across Kodiak. Students from kindergarten
41 through sixth grade attend one of seven week-long day
42 camps.

43
44 A new camp program, Salmon Adventure
45 Camp, targets middle school youth and will involve an
46 overnight element. The camp seeks to educate young
47 people about the natural and cultural systems that
48 define Kodiak s geography, and empower them to
49 investigate their own connections to this special place
50 through hands-on learning, self-reflection and group

1 discovery.

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Do you have any questions?

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CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Mr. Schwantes.

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MR. SAITO: You're talking through the designated deer hunter program or for all deer in total?

MR. SCHWANTES: Total subsistence harvest January 1 to January 31st.

MR. SAITO: For designated deer hunter program, we, out of the Kodiak Refuge office issue the permits and through some of the villages and we can track the actual harvest through there. Since the State season and the Federal season go together for -- they run through each other and we can use your regular deer tags for the State and Federal subsistence seasons, it's hard to track which deer are actually taken, so the State does get all the information back for all the deer that are taken, but it's hard to say which deer are subsistence deer.

We get the information back from the State on the actual hunter survey that was mentioned by Larry. You can tell which deer are taken -- any deer that's taken after January you can tell that's a subsistence deer, but we just recently put the question on that survey that says was the deer taken on Federal land, but it doesn't specify if it was taken under Federal regulations. So we're working on that.

MR. PYLE: Brandon, may I answer that?

MR. SAITO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes.

MR. PYLE: Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. I'm Bill Pyle, wildlife biologist, Kodiak Refuge. For the past few years we have been cooperating with Fish and Game on the annual harvest

1 survey questionnaire, a sub-sample of the deer hunters
2 in the archipelago. We have added a question to that
3 survey in cooperation with Fish and Game once again
4 that says did you harvest the deer on Federal lands and
5 then we've kind of clarified the Refuge area on the map
6 that goes along with the survey.

7
8 I don't have the numbers in front of
9 me, but I believe that the estimate for the subsistence
10 harvest -- I mean January is the only month we can say
11 anything about it because of the mixed hunt that occurs
12 prior to that, but it's probably less than 500, but I'd
13 be glad to follow up and provide you that specific
14 information.

15
16 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you. Another
17 question I have, do you have any numbers over the last
18 five years of number of elk that are taken under the
19 subsistence hunt?

20
21 MR. SAITO: Was it three years, four
22 years ago now there was one elk taken.

23
24 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. Then a final
25 question. On your Harlequin surveys, are you concerned
26 about that decline and is it possible that that decline
27 is because those birds are being pushed out of that
28 area because of the influx of activity in the last 10
29 years or are you actually looking at a problem with
30 that species?

31
32 MR. SAITO: Our avian biologist, who
33 has been conducting these surveys, as it says in that
34 poster, he believes it's caused by hunters. As you can
35 see in the band returns, the birds that are captured we
36 banded almost 400 Harlequins. I think there's 25 band
37 returns that have been reported. There's two photos on
38 the right-hand side that showed the band return
39 locations versus the locations of lodges and hunting
40 camps and you can see that they match almost perfectly
41 to the locations of those.

42
43 MR. SCHWANTES: So I guess what you're
44 telling me is you're looking at this decline as due to
45 harvest primarily.

46
47 MR. SAITO: Yes.

48
49 MR. PYLE: This is Bill Pyle. An
50 additional comment. Brandon mentioned that he recently

1 traveled to Larsen Bay and that's part of an effort to
2 get the word out to inform people with the hope that
3 folks will become aware of the problem, have a concern
4 and take a voluntarily measure of reducing the harvest.
5 In fact, a few years ago we contacted waterfowl hunting
6 guides, notified them of the concern and asked them to
7 consider voluntarily reducing -- informing their
8 clients and asking that they voluntarily consider
9 reducing their harvest of Harlequins, which, from a
10 sport hunting context, are a very popular species. So
11 we'll just continue the follow up. The question has
12 been asked before why not, given the concern and the
13 level of documentation, do something from a regulatory
14 standpoint. I guess that would be a last resort. The
15 fact of the matter is regulations are usually set at a
16 much larger scale and this is a very, very local issue.
17 We just happen to be in the right place at the right
18 time and have documented this problem. It seems very
19 logical for us just to do the follow up and try and
20 work it out locally. Thank you.

21

22 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

23

24 MR. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman. Bill and
25 Brandon. I continue to be quite concerned about
26 Harlequin ducks in Larsen Bay. A year or two ago they
27 were down about two times. This last set of surveys
28 shows that they have dropped three and a half times
29 since the mid 1990s and that's pretty serious. You
30 know, it is a food item over there as well. I asked in
31 the previous two RAC meetings if you folks would
32 consider doing a harvest log book with the people that
33 are taking those ducks because all you have is your
34 population data and you have no information or do you
35 have information on how many ducks are being shot by
36 sport people. I see it's an easy thing to ask for a
37 voluntary reduction, but are they doing it because it
38 looks like the population is declining more. And even
39 though our Council is advisory on this, is this
40 something that should be addressed by the Co-Management
41 Council or something to address? Tell me why I
42 shouldn't be concerned.

43

44 MR. SAITO: Mr. Chair. When I traveled
45 down to Larsen Bay this last week, I had this poster
46 blown up to about 44 inches or 50 and hung it in the
47 tribal council hall and I got to sit down with some of
48 the guides and the council there and talked to the
49 people if they had any concern about this. I explained
50 the poster to them and they said it's not a subsistence

1 species. Nobody takes them. Nobody that they knew had
2 ever taken Harlequin Duck for subsistence use and they
3 weren't concerned at all about the usage.

4
5 I'm going to be going down there again
6 this week and posting these at the major lodges and
7 hunting areas and ask them if they'll keep a log of how
8 many Harlequins they actually take. I have received
9 some reports from other bands that have not been
10 reported, so we know of at least 40 banded birds, which
11 give us a lot more information than just a log book of
12 the number taken.

13
14 MR. HOLMES: Thank you. I guess the
15 old codgers I talked to probably weren't at your
16 meeting. Anyway, I hope you keep a close eye on it. I
17 assume you also talked to the village council while you
18 were there and other folks besides the guides and lodge
19 owners.

20
21 MR. SAITO: Yeah, it was the tribal
22 council mostly. We didn't get to the city council.

23
24 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Brandon, down in
25 Akhiok, this Harlequin is commonly known as the rock
26 duck, right? In Akhiok we don't harvest that duck
27 because of the smelly, oily bird that it is. It says
28 in here that subsistence hunt you can have six, 12 in
29 possession. Those subsistence hunters, I find it hard
30 to believe they're eating those birds. Do you have
31 real documentation that they are harvesting those birds
32 for the kitchen table?

33
34 MR. SAITO: For the subsistence birds,
35 I think the regulations that are reported here are just
36 the sport hunting regulations. For the subsistence
37 regulations, I don't think there is a limit. There is
38 the migratory bird harvest survey, which we haven't had
39 the data come back yet for that survey, which surveyed
40 most of the villages and asked how many birds of
41 different species people have taken. It's not
42 operating this year because of the movement of
43 personnel.

44
45 MR. PYLE: Bill Pyle. If I may add a
46 comment. The harvest survey was conducted in 2005-2006
47 and ran for a year. Was Akhiok part of that survey,
48 Brandon?

49
50 MR. SAITO: Yes, it was.

1 MR. PYLE: We should get a
2 representative understanding of the composition of that
3 harvest, different waterfowl species, across the
4 different seasons. Though the subsistence hunt runs
5 essentially spring/summer, the harvest survey takes in
6 not only that but the rest of the year.

7
8 MR. PARKER: Mr. Chair. I just have a
9 quick question. The State hunt -- October to January,
10 right?

11
12 MR. PYLE: (Nods affirmatively)

13
14 MR. PARKER: The Federal birds can't be
15 used for mounting. The State hunt can, right, so there
16 lies the -- I mean they're an attractive duck. No one
17 is going to eat the rock duck, but they're mounting
18 them. This is something that the State and Feds follow
19 suit, right? You guys agree with this hunt? I mean
20 you're banding them, but they'll kill every one of them
21 if you let them for the rooms. That's my consensus on
22 it. What do you think? I mean most of the villagers
23 don't eat rock ducks, right?

24
25 MR. KOSO: I differ a little bit with
26 you guys because I was raised on those things years
27 ago. We've made many poor man's soups out of those.

28
29 (Laughter)

30
31 MR. KOSO: I've eaten many of those, so
32 it isn't like we didn't eat them. It's just that now
33 we can afford to buy something else. So I think that's
34 the difference between today and 30 years ago. I don't
35 think too many people eat them anymore. In dire
36 straits, they're certainly a good bird to eat if you
37 have to.

38
39 MR. PYLE: Bill Pyle. If I may add
40 another comment about Harlequin Duck. I'm not
41 convinced that the Refuge has made consistent and
42 concerted effort over the last three years. We've had
43 this intermittent effort, but Brandon is on it. Let's
44 see what happens over the course of the next year or
45 just in terms of being able to get more communication
46 going with the waterfowl hunting guides. My impression
47 is that this is kind of the premier trophy duck species
48 that the sport hunters are after. I think the
49 increased communication is really the key in working
50 with the hunting guides and maintaining our monitoring

1 effort. Hopefully within a couple years we'll see some
2 turnaround. But they are a long-lived species and have
3 a relatively low reproductive rate compared to a lot of
4 waterfowl species and it's going to take a little
5 while.

6

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Jim.

7

8

9

MR. HAMILTON: Mr. Chair. It seems
10 like one of the harder things to get a handle on is
11 mortality, wounding. My observations, I guided
12 waterfowl hunts in Uyak Bay about 10, 12 years ago and
13 went through a process of basically being told the
14 villagers would take the meat and that was kind of a
15 justification for a couple years. We found basically
16 no takers. At that time, steel shot was the only legal
17 shot available at that time. Bismouth and heavy shot
18 and some of the other hybrid stuff hadn't come out yet.
19 What I saw was an increasing rate of wounded ducks. I
20 would think that's a part of this equation. That's my
21 personal observation. An unscientific one. I got to a
22 point where I couldn't give them away. A trophy hunter
23 wants to collect as many as he can to high-grade the
24 best one, so you kind of go through this process. You
25 tell the guy he only needs two. His taxidermist is
26 telling him he needs eight. Finally, for me, it was
27 hard to justify because the meat wasn't really being
28 salvaged properly. The trend I've seen, I started
29 seeing more and more crippled ones in the Uyak area and
30 then I started seeing less altogether. So I would say
31 that's probably a big factor in this.

32

33

CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Are you going to
34 expand your surveys on the Harlequins to cover other
35 areas besides Uyak Bay? Like will you get into Alitak
36 Bay and north of that?

37

38

MR. SAITO: Right now the survey is
39 just the west side and covers Afognak to Uyak. Our
40 avian biologist is actually retiring this year. I'm
41 not sure of any expansion measures until our next avian
42 biologist gets up to speed.

43

44

MR. PYLE: Bill Pyle. We're not doing
45 any surveys this year because of the transition we're
46 in. We'll be hiring during the summer. At the same
47 time, Brandon will be doing the follow up to Larsen
48 Bay. I expect we'll be back on the survey page next
49 year. We have, in fact, done surveys of a large
50 stretch of country over in Alitak Bay. Usually the way

1 these surveys work is we'll flip-flop east and west
2 side of Kodiak Island where we'll run three consecutive
3 years over on the east side, jump to the west side,
4 alternating between the two. So we do have the data.
5 We can't present that to you at the moment, but there
6 is a baseline. In general, there's lower numbers of
7 Harlequin Ducks that are generally seen in lower
8 densities on the east side, but there's no apparent
9 trend in terms of a decline. It's more like what we
10 see in, for example, Uganik or up there in Afognak,
11 essentially stable population.

12
13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
14 questions. Pat.

15
16 MR. HOLMES: Going to another critter,
17 to the Lesser Canadians that our joint study group got
18 the State to reopen. How is that hunt going or have
19 you heard anything from your migratory cousins? At one
20 point there was some discussion of doing some genetic
21 testing from down in Akhiok or Old Harbor and I'm
22 wondering what's going on with the Lesser Canadians.

23
24 MR. PYLE: We're not sure, but we'd be
25 glad to check in with our contacts and Council Member
26 Al Cratty and other people in Old Harbor that are
27 contacts and get back to you. The harvest is -- we've
28 been doing it for the past couple years and it
29 certainly was a concern that the Council worked on and
30 Fish and Game Advisory Committee as well. We really
31 don't have any statistics. There really wasn't any
32 follow up, Pat, in terms of the genetics, but there was
33 some analysis of some of the feather samples that Denny
34 sent up. As far as that small sample indicated, these
35 were birds that were coming down from Shuyak Island and
36 wintering there and the population has been gradually
37 building and expanding and presenting that type of
38 harvest opportunity. We'll get back to you with some
39 kind of assessment.

40
41 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
42 questions.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I'd like to make a
47 comment. I'd like to apologize to Rick. I was raised
48 on Scoters and Emperors. I used to take sport hunters
49 out in my little boat and on the way to the hunting
50 area I'd be driving along and we'd pass a bunch of rock

1 ducks by a reef and they'd scramble to get their gun
2 out and I'd slam the boat in neutral, whoa, whoa, what
3 are you doing. He said I want one of those ducks. I
4 said, no, you can't take it, we're in a moving boat and
5 we don't even hunt them around here. He was pretty
6 persistent. He got his shotgun out and loading it up
7 and said I'm going to take one. I said, hell, no. You
8 shoot and I'll take you back to land so you can get on
9 a plane and go home. He finally saw my reasoning.
10 From that time on I told hunters before they got in my
11 boat you don't hunt from my boat. You wait until I
12 drop you off, otherwise you stay here. I didn't like
13 the idea of people hunting illegally from my boat. But
14 the rock ducks are pretty popular as a sport and trophy
15 bird. That's all.

16

17 If there are no other questions, thank
18 you very much.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Department of Fish
23 and Game, Buskin River. Who is doing this for Donn?
24 Oh, Donn's here.

25

26 MR. TRACY: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,
27 and Members of the Council. My name is Donn Tracy and
28 I'm with the Kodiak Office of the Alaska Department of
29 Fish and Game, Sportfish Division. I'm going to give
30 you an update on the Buskin River sockeye salmon stock
31 assessment project.

32

33 I actually came today because I know
34 there are some new members on the Council that perhaps
35 aren't as familiar with this project, so I came here
36 with a suite of options to discuss the project based
37 upon the amount of time the Council had available and
38 what your interests were.

39

40 Unfortunately, one of the options I
41 have is a PowerPoint presentation and I didn't bring
42 the necessary media for that, but there are a couple
43 items in that presentation that I think are very
44 interesting and worth bringing to the attention of the
45 Council, so I'll still talk about those.

46

47 Another option that I brought, which
48 turned out to perhaps be the most appropriate is I
49 prepared a one-page summary of the current status of
50 the project and it's a table that has a lot of

1 information on it. I'll go through it by category.
2 It's just a summary of the 2007 project results and
3 some things we're anticipating for 2008.

4
5 This project has been funded by the
6 Office of Subsistence Management since 2000 and the
7 2008 season will be the second year of a current three-
8 year funding contract for this project. During the
9 coming year Department of Fish and Game will be
10 submitting a new proposal for continued funding because
11 of the change in funding cycle for fisheries monitoring
12 projects. My understanding is those contracts will now
13 be administered on a two-year basis instead of three-
14 years and that will necessitate that we, even though
15 this coming year we're in the middle of a three-year
16 contract, we'll need to submit a new proposal,
17 otherwise we'll miss the two-year funding cycle that
18 we'll need to continue this project in the future.

19
20 The project itself is a stock
21 assessment project. The purpose is primarily to
22 monitor and assess the sockeye salmon run on the Buskin
23 drainage and use information from that to establish and
24 evaluate an appropriate escapement goal, which will
25 allow for adequate escapement each year and then also
26 maximize harvest opportunities particularly by
27 subsistence users. The Buskin River sockeye fishery is
28 the largest in terms of harvest volume. It's the
29 largest Federal subsistence fishery in the Kodiak
30 region.

31
32 The means by which that monitoring
33 assessment is accomplished is through the use of weirs,
34 fish weirs, and on the Buskin we actually operate three
35 different weirs, two of which are funded by the OSM
36 project or by the Federal Subsistence Program and those
37 weirs are situated at the outlet of Buskin Lake and
38 then also on a tributary creek that flows into the
39 Buskin River from a couple of smaller lakes in the
40 system named Lake Katherine and Lake Louise. Locally,
41 most folks refer to Lake Katherine as Genevieve, if
42 you've heard of that term. Those two weirs are the
43 weirs we use to monitor the sockeye run and are funded
44 by the Federal Subsistence Program.

45
46 We also operate a weir later in the
47 season further down in the drainage for monitoring coho
48 salmon escapement. That weir is placed further down
49 because of the fact with sockeye all incoming fish
50 either spawn in Buskin Lake and its tributaries or they

1 spawn in those two smaller lakes. So by putting a weir
2 at Buskin Lake and then one on the tributary creek that
3 comes out of the lower of those two small lakes we can
4 actually use the weir counts as a direct measure of
5 escapement. Once those sockeye salmon make it into
6 Buskin Lake there's no more harvest, no sport fishery
7 that occurs. So that makes it very convenient to put
8 the weir at that location because we count the fish
9 through the weir and we don't have to subtract or
10 estimate any additional harvest to come up with a
11 number for the escapement.

12
13 The same thing with those tributary
14 creeks. We put a weir on a little outlet creek.
15 There's no sport fishery up in those smaller lakes or
16 anywhere beyond that point, so that's also a direct
17 measure of escapement.

18
19 With the coho weir, we have to move it
20 down and we have to estimate and subtract the upriver
21 sport harvest, but the reason we have to move the weir
22 down is because a lot of those adult coho salmon will
23 spawn not only in Buskin Lake but also in the main
24 river itself.

25
26 As I mentioned, the two weirs that we
27 use for sockeye monitoring have been funded by the
28 Federal Subsistence Program since 2000. In the upper
29 left corner of the summary sheet I passed out you can
30 see the escapements for sockeye salmon on the Buskin
31 drainage in the most recent five-year period, including
32 2007.

33
34 The column on the right is Lake Louise
35 and that is the smaller weir. The current escapement
36 goal on the Buskin is 8-13,000 fish. We don't yet have
37 or have not yet incorporated the Lake Louise escapement
38 into the goal for the Buskin system because that's been
39 a relatively new part of the project in terms of
40 monitoring escapement. The Department of Fish and Game
41 never had a weir on that Lake Louise tributary prior to
42 2002. If you look at that column for Lake Louise on
43 the right, that's actually the full data set that we
44 have for that system.

45
46 We have salmon escapements in Buskin
47 Lake dating much further back to I believe 1990. In
48 fact, Pat would know for certain what the earliest date
49 is. But Lake Louise, we've only had a weir in that
50 system since 2002, so you're seeing the whole data set

1 for that system. The escapement goal we currently use
2 to manage the fishery is 8-13,000 fish and that's
3 measured against those weir counts for Buskin Lake.

4
5 You can see during the last five years
6 we've far exceeded the upper end of that range, so
7 there's been a great surplus of sockeye salmon in the
8 Buskin system. The subsistence fishery has been able
9 to proceed without any restriction. The sport fishery
10 has been able to proceed and, in fact, we've even
11 liberalized sport fishing opportunity in the Buskin in
12 the last couple years to try and whittle down that
13 number of fish a little bit. If you get too far above
14 that 13,000 mark, we can actually have problems with
15 production due to over-escapement. In the last five
16 years and really for a long time haven't had any
17 problem achieving that escapement goal for the Buskin
18 system.

19
20 I think I'd like to next draw your
21 attention to the big pie chart on the right-hand side.
22 As I mentioned, the Buskin is the largest subsistence
23 fishery in terms of number of fish harvested annually
24 within the Kodiak/Aleutians region. You can see that
25 in comparison to come other areas where subsistence
26 harvest occurs in Kodiak that the Buskin River makes up
27 about 61 percent of the total sockeye salmon harvest.
28 It actually averages about 10,000 fish a year that are
29 reported on subsistence permits. We use that
30 information along with the escapements to estimate or
31 measure the total run of sockeye salmon to the Buskin
32 system each year.

33
34 As far as that escapement goal goes, it
35 was most recently evaluated by the Department of Fish
36 and Game and reviewed by the Board of Fisheries this
37 year in January and the Department reported to the
38 Board on escapement goal and that included the Buskin.
39 For the time being, we've decided that 8-13,000 is
40 still an appropriate goal. There has been an extensive
41 analysis done. We've come up with some alternative
42 escapement goal ranges, so far none of which have been
43 significantly different than this. The most recent one
44 that we came up with in this last evaluation was about
45 6-9,000 fish and that's a little bit lower than the
46 current range, but it's still within that 8-13,000.

47
48 As a precautionary measure, we kept the
49 goal where it's at now in consideration of the fact
50 that the updated analysis gave us a range that was

1 still within the current range. Plus the fact that
2 we'd like to obtain more data so that we could complete
3 a stock assessment model. Typically for sockeye salmon
4 you need to obtain at least a dozen years of escapement
5 data, harvest data, age composition information in
6 order to develop a reasonably precise model for your
7 escapement goal.

8

9 So we're still obtaining more
10 information for the Buskin and we'll be re-evaluating
11 that escapement goal in the future. Should we come to
12 the conclusion it does need to be changed at some point
13 in time, the Department will take that action. The
14 next time the goal will be reviewed is in 2011 during
15 the next Board of Fisheries cycle.

16

17 Other components of this project that
18 I'd like to talk about include an intern program, which
19 is a capacity-building component for this project. The
20 Department of Fish and Game each year hires high school
21 students as interns to work on the Buskin project.
22 They work on the weir and with us collecting and
23 cataloging and even some fundamental analysis of the
24 data that we collect, the age composition data and
25 escapement information.

26

27 The intern program has been implemented
28 since 2003 and it's been highly successful to the
29 extent that all of the current seasonal Sportfish
30 Division employees here in Kodiak are former student
31 interns from the sockeye stock assessment project. In
32 fact, some of our former interns are now working for
33 Commercial Fisheries Division, other programs within
34 Department of Fish and Game, much to the benefit of the
35 community and the Department, obviously. It's kind of
36 a loss for Sportfish because we're losing our pool of
37 quantified and qualified applicants for seasonal work.

38

39 The process of hiring interns is
40 conducted through the Kodiak School District. As a
41 matter of fact, my assistant, Suzanne Schmidt, today
42 and right now is interviewing applicants who have been
43 screened by the Kodiak School District on the basis of
44 not only career interest in fisheries or resource
45 management but also academic achievement. Those are
46 the two basic criteria the school uses to screen
47 students for the internships. Once they select a pool
48 of candidates, they submit those names to Department of
49 Fish and Game. We interview them, put them through a
50 formal interview process to give them that experience

1 and then we select two candidates each year to work
2 throughout the summer on the project.

3
4 One other thing I wanted to mention
5 quickly is last year for the first time in this project
6 based on interest expressed by the Council to document
7 historic use patterns of subsistence in the Buskin
8 fishery and Kodiak in general, we started conducting
9 interviews with subsistence users on the fishing
10 grounds. If you look at the underlined table right in
11 the center of the sheet, the heading is 2007
12 subsistence interviews summary, we conducted interviews
13 on the fishing grounds last year from June 7th through
14 June 23rd.

15
16 We interviewed a total of 103
17 subsistence users. All of those users were Kodiak city
18 residents, which would make them qualified Federal
19 subsistence users. Almost all those folks, 100,
20 typically fished the Buskin. The average length of
21 time those folks have been fishing at the Buskin is
22 about 15 years. There were a large number who also
23 said they occasionally fish other locations, about 57
24 of the 103. The most popular locations besides the
25 Buskin were Pasagshak and the Afognak River. So the
26 interviews we conducted provided some very useful
27 information I think and we're going to continue those
28 again this year and in subsequent years as long as we
29 have the resources and see if the results change over
30 time.

31
32 Now to talk about some of the things
33 we're doing this year. We're also continuing a tagging
34 study that we started last year and I talked about the
35 two run components or what we thought were run
36 components and we now know are actually distinct
37 populations of sockeye, but I talked about the fish
38 going into Buskin Lake and then also into those smaller
39 lakes. Once we move the weir down to that lower site
40 that we use primarily for coho monitoring, we still
41 have some incoming sockeye, and we move the weir in
42 early August. Once we do that we don't know what
43 proportion of the sockeye that are still incoming at
44 that time are going into Buskin Lake or what proportion
45 are going into the smaller lakes upriver.

46
47 What we did last year to try and
48 estimate the proportion or apportion the sockeye run
49 after August 1st in those two areas is we started
50 tagging fish that we captured at the weir. To quantify

1 the recoveries of those tags we've been keeping that
2 smaller weir on the tributary creeks through August,
3 through September, and been tallying the numbers of
4 tagged fish that subsequently come up into those
5 smaller lakes so that we can apportion the number of
6 fish going to each part of the system and that's very
7 important in evaluating escapement goal and estimating
8 productivity of the run. You need to know where those
9 fish are headed.

10

11 So we did that last year. We're going
12 to continue it this year. One thing I've talked about
13 in the past is whether or not those two run components
14 were part of the same population or separate
15 populations of fish. This year we were finally able to
16 conduct a DNA analysis of the fish entering Buskin Lake
17 and the fish entering the tributary and it turns out
18 they are distinct populations of fish, which is very
19 important to know for evaluating escapement goal and
20 managing the fisheries that utilize those runs.

21

22 What we're going to do in the future is
23 try and obtain some funding so that we can continue
24 this DNA analysis and take samples from the subsistence
25 fishery so that we can apportion what percentage of the
26 fish caught out here in Chiniak Bay for subsistence are
27 headed into Buskin Lake and what percentage of fish are
28 headed into those tributaries. So that was a real big
29 accomplishment for the project and a real significant
30 finding.

31 In our renewed proposal for funding this project, we
32 will include a cost component to conduct that DNA
33 analysis.

34

35 I think that's just about all I had. I
36 want to say that last year we submitted a proposal to
37 move that coho project under the OSM funding program.
38 The proposal made it through part of the evaluation
39 process but ultimately rejected. We'll probably submit
40 it again this year. I understand there have been some
41 funding reductions though that prioritize the need for
42 subsistence funding.

43

44 The last thing I wanted to talk about
45 real briefly -- and this is one I wish I would have had
46 a PowerPoint or a projector. In the past I've talked
47 about the age composition for the Buskin Lake and the
48 Lake Louise run components and unfortunately this
49 information is not in your booklet, but those fish are
50 made up primarily of fish that spend one year in

1 freshwater and three years in the ocean or fish that
2 spend two years in freshwater and three years in the
3 ocean. So it's made up of age 1, 3 and age 2, 3 fish
4 predominantly. One thing that made us suspect there
5 was something different with the Lake Louise population
6 before we knew it was a separate population was that
7 most of the Lake Louise fish were usually in that age
8 1, 3 category and more of the Buskin Lake fish were in
9 that age 2, 3 category.

10

11 This last year and also in 2006 we
12 noticed a shift in the age composition and this is what
13 I wanted to show you. In 2006 we had a really high
14 percentage of fish both in Buskin Lake and Lake Louise
15 that were age 1, 2 and those fish are usually not seen
16 or large enough to get intercepted. We even saw a
17 couple in the subsistence harvest. There were still a
18 large number of age 2, 3 fish.

19

20 In 2007, we again collected age
21 composition samples from subsistence Buskin Lake and
22 Lake Louise and last year almost all the fish that we
23 sampled were age 1, 3 and those fish would have been
24 from the same brood year that last year's 1, 2 fish
25 were. There were virtually no age 2, 3 fish and no
26 other stratification within the age composition. That
27 dramatic change in the age structure of this run is
28 possibly cause for concern. Without the broader age
29 classes that we normally find, it's very possible we
30 could see a big down-turn in the number of fish showing
31 up here in the next year or two, particularly in 2008.
32 So it is possible that the next time I report to the
33 Council in September our escapement graph or table will
34 show a significant down-turn in 2008 from what we see
35 in the past.

36

37 Anyway, I think that's about all I had,
38 gentlemen. Thanks for your time and if there's any
39 questions you have, I'd be happy to answer them.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Did you have a
42 question, Pat.

43

44 MR. HOLMES: I just wanted to say, as
45 usual, Donn, that's an excellent report. I think you
46 really shine when you come address this Council on
47 what's going on in the Buskin Lake and the last point
48 you made was one concern I had in looking at your
49 report of the change in age composition. I think
50 you're definitely right, we could be looking at lower

1 harvest. I think it's good to know that. I'll be
2 changing my fishing patterns.

3
4 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Any other
5 questions.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Donn.

10
11 MR. TRACY: Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: This brings us to
14 the end of our agenda. Is there any other business or
15 anything we forgot to take care of.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: The date of our
20 next meeting. Confirmation of September 24th and 25th.

21
22 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes, Michelle.

25
26 MS. CHIVERS: I did put some new
27 updated calendars in the blue packets for everyone. I
28 just wanted to bring up we've undergone quite a budget
29 cut and one of those sheets that I also put in the blue
30 folder is this one-page thing on regional hubs.
31 They've asked that each of the Councils meet in a
32 regional hub and the hub would be a community that
33 requires only one leg of a trip for most of the Council
34 members. If you look at that sheet, they've asked that
35 the Kodiak/Aleutians Council for the time being hold
36 all the meetings in Kodiak until our funding improves.
37 So what we'll be selecting is just dates for the next
38 meetings.

39 For the fall 2008 meeting those are the dates the
40 Council selected and we need to decide if those are the
41 dates we want to retain or if you want to move the
42 meeting dates to a different week. If you did move to
43 a different week, the Office has asked that you move it
44 to an earlier date because they're not allowing us to
45 hold more than two Council meetings in one week at this
46 point because we're strapped with Staff as well.

47
48 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: The airline
49 service out of Akhiok is Monday, Wednesday, Friday. If
50 we have our meetings on the 24th and 25th, that would

1 give me a flight out on Monday, two days before the
2 meeting, unless you want to charter me out.

3

4 MR. KOSO: Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes, Rick.

7

8 MR. KOSO: Yeah, I think those dates
9 will be fine for me. I'm just a little bit
10 disappointed we couldn't have them in the region to
11 where some of the villages could participate a little
12 more because they certainly can't participate here. I
13 just wanted to note that for the record. I would like,
14 if possible, to maybe get one in Cold Bay, King Cover,
15 in that region one of these times. I know we've got
16 money problems, so we have to do what we have to do.

17

18 MS. CHIVERS: If there is an issue that
19 needs to be addressed in those particular areas, if we
20 can put a justification together stating why we'd like
21 to meet there and have people participate in that area,
22 they may let us go there, but for the time being,
23 unless we have a really good circumstance that we can
24 justify going to those areas, they've asked that we
25 meet in Kodiak.

26

27 MR. KOSO: Just by looking at the 9D
28 and 10 units that region is getting impacted pretty
29 hard. That's just my point I wanted to make if any
30 time possible we could get the meetings down in that
31 region, I would like that and I think the village
32 people would love to see that happen. Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Pat.

35

36 MR. HOLMES: Sam, how does this date
37 fit with your and Jim's guiding?

38

39 MR. ROHRER: Not very well for mine. I
40 don't know about Jim, although he's probably free that
41 time. Actually, that later week in October works a
42 whole lot better for me or earlier in September, but my
43 schedule in the fall is a pain, so don't change it
44 because of me, I guess.

45

46 MR. HOLMES: I just wondered because
47 the whole change of the Council by the lawyers and
48 whatnot was to make sure that we had folks from your
49 industry involved, so I'm wondering if we should go
50 early in the first week in September if that makes it

1 better for you folks, but I don't know about everybody
2 else. I suggest we avoid the week of the 15th because
3 that's usually when we get the big equinox storm.

4

5 MR. ROHRER: The first week of
6 September won't work for me, but the second or third
7 week would be just fine or that week of October 14th
8 and 15th.

9

10 MS. CHIVERS: We've already got two
11 meetings in that week, sorry.

12

13 MR. ROHRER: Oh, I'm looking at the old
14 calendar.

15

16 MS. CHIVERS: There is an updated
17 calendar in the packet.

18

19 MR. HOLMES: How about the 10th and
20 11th, Wednesday, Thursday, and that would be earlier in
21 September.

22

23 MR. KOSO: I wouldn't be able to make
24 that one. I can go later, but not earlier. I guess
25 everybody is going to have something coming up.

26

27 MR. HOLMES: After the latter part of
28 September and October probably my wife and I will be
29 down seeing our kids. I guess that's why I was rooting
30 for earlier in September, but 24th, 25th will work for
31 me, but into October won't be too good. But then you
32 can do without me, too.

33

34 MS. CHIVERS: Maybe we can select a
35 date and an alternate date and as it gets closer to
36 that meeting time I can poll the Council and see which
37 works best for people. Right now at first everybody
38 was saying the meeting date that was selected seemed
39 like it would work fine, but maybe if we select an
40 alternate date, but it would have to be earlier than
41 the current date because the following dates all have
42 two meetings per week.

43

44 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: I would go for
45 earlier if the 24th and 25th don't work. October is
46 annual meeting time for me in Kodiak.

47

48 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chairman. The 10th
49 and 11th would be fine for me and the 23rd, 24th as
50 well.

1 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Keep it on the
2 23rd and 24th. That's good. Pat, did you have
3 something, or John.
4
5 MR. PARKER: You're not going to put it
6 too close to Labor Day weekend, are you? Okay.
7
8 MR. KOSO: That 23rd, 24th is good for
9 me. Too early in September I won't be able to make it.
10
11 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chairman. If
12 everybody would turn to the winter page, 2009. We
13 would like the Council to select maybe a date and an
14 alternate date. It looks like the first two weeks of
15 February are out because already two Council meetings
16 in those two weeks. We're open beyond those dates.
17
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Mr. Chairman. For my
19 winter schedule, the week of the 8th of March would be
20 good or the 29th of March would be best for me, but
21 I'll work around whatever.
22
23 MR. ROHRER: Mr. Chair. The later in
24 March the better for me.
25
26 MR. KOSO: I'm flexible.
27
28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: March 31st to
29 April 1st. The calendars are set.
30
31 MS. CHIVERS: Mr. Chair. At this point
32 we don't know what dates the Bristol Bay Council
33 selected. Just in case the Bristol Bay Council
34 selected the same dates, we might want to select an
35 alternate date because Laura Greffenius is our
36 biologist and if they selected those dates, we would
37 need an alternate date she could attend.
38
39 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: We could back it
40 up to the 24th and 25th and the 31st and 1st.
41
42 MR. SCHWANTES: How about if we keep
43 them in the same week?
44 If we do the 30th and the 31st and they do the 1st and
45 the 2nd, why won't that work.
46
47 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: How is that?
48
49 MS. CHIVERS: I can find out when I get
50 back to the office. If they haven't selected this

1 date, then we'll go with the 31st and 1st of April. If
2 they have selected those dates, like you said, we can
3 adjust within that week as long as she'll be able to
4 get between Bristol Bay and here or Dillingham and
5 here.

6

7 MR. HOLMES: We decided at 2:48 though.

8

9 MR. ARDIZZONE: I wrote 2:47.

10

11 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Is Bristol Bay
12 part of your charges?

13

14 MS. CHIVERS: No, but Laura Greffenius
15 is our wildlife biologist and so she is the wildlife
16 biologist for Bristol Bay as well, so it's her we have
17 to accommodate in terms of going to two different
18 meetings.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Which other
21 Council do you take care of?

22

23 MS. CHIVERS: I just have this one
24 currently.

25

26 MR. ARDIZZONE: Just the best one.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: Yes. Best
29 coordinator for the best board. Okay. Alternate dates
30 are March 24th and 25th.

31

32 MS. CHIVERS: Uh-huh.

33

34 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: The calendar is
35 done now for sure.

36

37 MR. KOSO: I make a motion to adjourn.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SIMEONOFF: That's the next
40 one. If there is nothing else, a motion has been made.
41 My time says 2:52. We are adjourned. Thank you very
42 much everyone.

43

44 (Off record)

45

46 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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 02 through 107 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, taken electronically by Computer Matrix Court Reporters on the 25th day of March 2008, beginning at the hour of 9:00 o'clock a.m. at 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 2nd day of April 2008.

Joseph P. Kolasinski
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 03/12/12