

1                   **BRISTOL BAY SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
2                                   **PUBLIC MEETING**  
3                                   February 15, 1995  
4                   Bristol Bay Borough Assembly Room  
5                                   Naknek, Alaska  
6

7                                   **VOLUME I**  
8

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

10  
11 Daniel O'Hara, Chairman  
12 Robert Heyano, Vice Chairman  
13 Robert Christensen, Member  
14 Peter M. Abraham, Member  
15 Harold Robin Samuelsen, Jr., Member  
16 Timothy J. LaPorte, Member  
17 Helga Eakon, Coordinator  
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P R O C E E D I N G S

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2  
3 MR. SAMUELSEN: February 2nd, 1995 (sic) at 7:10 p.m.  
4 I guess what we need to do is have a roll call and  
5 establishment of a quorum, Helga.

6  
7 MS. EAKON: Dan O'Hara. Robert Heyano.

8  
9 MR. HEYANO: Here.

10  
11 MS. EAKON: Sam Stepanoff. Robin Samuelsen.

12  
13 MR. SAMUELSEN: Here.

14  
15 MS. EAKON: Tim LaPorte.

16  
17 MR. LaPORTE: Here.

18  
19 MS. EAKON: Robert Christensen.

20  
21 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Here.

22  
23 MS. EAKON: Pete Abraham.

24  
25 MR. ABRAHAM Um-hum. (affirmative)

26  
27 MS. EAKON: Quorum is hereby established.

28  
29 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you, Helga. Since everybody is  
30 at the Council has introduced themselves, I'd like staff to  
31 introduce themselves. And I'll start with you, Helga.

32  
33 MS. EAKON: Helga Eakon, Regional Advisory Council  
34 Coordinator.

35  
36 MS. EDWARDS: Terri Edwards with the office of  
37 Subsistence Management.

38  
39 MR. MORRISON: John Morrison, Fish & Game Department.

40  
41 MS. COILEY: Pippa Coiley, Fish & Game Subsistence  
42 Division in Dillingham.

43  
44 MR. FISHER: Dave Fisher from Wildlife Service,  
45 Anchorage.

46  
47 MR. BRELSFORD: Taylor Brelsford. I'm with the Fish &  
48 Wildlife Service in Anchorage and part of the Bristol Bay  
49 Regional Team.

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1  
2 MR. SELLERS: Dick Sellers, Wildlife biologist with  
Fish & Game.  
4  
5 MR. RABINOWITCH: Sandy Rabinowitch with National Park  
Service, staff committee member.  
7  
8 MR. PIERCE: Bill Pierce, Katmai National Park.  
9  
10 MS. SAVAGE: Susan Savage, Subsistence Specialist,  
Katmai National Park and Aniakchak National Monument.  
12  
13 MR. DENTON: I'm Jeff Denton with Anchorage District  
Bureau of Land Management, Subsistence and Wildlife biologist.  
15  
16 MR. POSPAHALA: Dick Pospahala, Fish & Wildlife Service  
representative of the inter-agency staff.  
18  
19 MR. ANDERMAN: Andy Anderman, Togiak National Wildlife  
Refuge, Dillingham.  
21  
22 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you. I'm acting as chairman, I  
guess Danny is going to be a little late according to Helga.  
They boarded the plane and I guess it was Penair and they were  
losing a door and a handle broke on the door as they were  
losing it. So hopefully he'll be here within the hour.  
27  
28 MS. EAKON: And we haven't heard, Sam Stepanoff was  
supposed to have been on the 6:25 flight from Chignik Lake. I  
understand there's one sometime tonight.  
31  
32 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Number 4, we need to review and  
need a motion to adopt the agenda. It's under Tap 4 of your  
Book.  
35  
36 MS. EAKON: Mr. Chairman?  
37  
38 MR. SAMUELSEN: Go ahead, Helga.  
39  
40 MS. EAKON: Dick Pospahala and Sandy Rabinowitch, who  
are both on the staff committee and also the chair, Dan O'Hara  
have to return to Anchorage tomorrow night and because the  
proposals are the heart of this meeting, I would suggest that  
we go right into them because we do have 17 proposals. So I  
would suggest after our Agenda Items 1-6 to go straight away to  
8(b).  
47  
48 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay.  
49  
50

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1 MS. EAKON: And after the proposals, 8(d) because Sandy  
 Rabinowitch does -- he will have an opportunity to explain the  
 National Park Proposed Regulation on Same Day Airborne, okay.

4  
 5 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Who are we going to have -- I  
 have to leave tomorrow night because of a medical emergency in  
 my family.

8  
 9 MS. EAKON: Okay.

10  
 11 MR. SAMUELSEN: So who are we going to have on the  
 Council here at 6:00 o'clock tomorrow night?

13  
 14 MS. EAKON: The Bristol Bay Borough is going to have  
 meetings so we will not have a meeting tomorrow night. Instead  
 we are thinking we are going to resume at 9:00 o'clock on  
 Friday, 9:00 to Noon. There will be Tim LaPorte, Robert  
 Christensen, Robert Heyano, .....

19  
 20 MR. HEYANO: Maybe.

21  
 22 MS. EAKON: ..... will be here Friday morning, and  
 Pete?

24  
 25 MR. SAMUELSEN: I thought Pete had to leave tomorrow?

26  
 27 MS. EAKON: No.

28  
 29 MR. ABRAHAM No.

30  
 31 MS. EAKON: So we will still have a quorum.

32  
 33 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Great. I misunderstood you a  
 while ago, I thought you said Pete had to leave tomorrow.  
 Okay. Item Agenda 4 here, any changes? Is there any objection  
 to moving into proposals immediately after Agenda Item 6?  
 Hearing none, that's what we'll do then.

38  
 39 MR. HEYANO: You need a motion to adopt the agenda?

40  
 41 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yes.

42  
 43 MR. HEYANO: Mr. Chairman, I move we adopt the agenda  
 as presented and with the suggestion that after Item 6 we take  
 up 8(b) and 8(d).

46  
 47 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Second?

48  
 49 MR. ABRAHAM: Here.

50

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1  
2 MR. SAMUELSEN: Second by Peter. Any further  
discussion?  
4  
5 MR. HEYANO: Question?  
6  
7 MR. SAMUELSEN: The question's been called. All those  
in favor, signify by saying aye.  
9  
10 IN UNISON: Aye.  
11  
12 MR. SAMUELSEN: Opposed, same sign.  
13  
14 (No opposing responses)  
15  
16 MR. SAMUELSEN: So carried. Moving on. Item #5,  
review and adoption of October 1994 minutes.  
18  
19 MR. CHRISTENSEN: I make a motion to read the minutes.  
20  
21 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. There's been a motion to the  
reading of the minutes. Are they in this packet, Helga?  
23  
24 MS. EAKON: Yes. Directly after your Tab 5, you do  
have a copy. After this .....

26  
27 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yeah. I think mine are missing.  
28  
29 MS. EAKON: Here. I have an extra copy, Mr. Chair. I  
might make a comment that after the draft minutes were mailed  
out last year, only one agency called in corrections and that  
was Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. So what you have before  
you are the corrected minutes. And a copy was mailed to you  
earlier.

35  
36 MR. SAMUELSEN: Helga, these books are getting thicker.  
37  
38 MS. EAKON: I know, you guys do a lot of business.  
39  
40 MR. SAMUELSEN: Looking for a motion to move to adopt.  
41  
42 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Move to adopt.  
43  
44 MR. LaPORTE: Move to adopt, I'll second that.  
45  
46 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Bobby's made a motion to adopt  
the minutes and Tim seconded it. Further discussion?  
48  
49 MR. ABRAHAM: Question.  
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1  
2 MR. SAMUELSEN: The question's been called. All those  
3 in favor, signify by saying aye.

4  
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6  
7 MR. SAMUELSEN: Opposed same sign.

8  
9 (No opposing responses)

10  
11 MR. SAMUELSEN: So carried. Number 6, moment of  
12 silence for Roy. Can you tell us a little bit about Roy,  
13 Helga?

14  
15 MS. EAKON: Okay. Mr. Chairman and members of the  
16 Council, Mr. Roy Otton was appointed by Secretary of the  
17 Interior to serve a two year term on the Seward Peninsula  
18 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And was serving on the  
19 Council up until his untimely death in a plane crash in  
20 December of 1994. He served a one year term as vice-chair of  
21 the council during its first year of operation. He was a  
22 highly respected leader in the region. And as a courtesy to  
23 the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, all  
24 Councils are offering this moment of respectful silence in  
25 his memory.

26  
27 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Moving on to proposals. They're  
28 under Tab 8, I do believe, Helga?

29  
30 MS. EAKON: Yes, it is. Tab 8(b). And as I had  
31 explained to the chair earlier, the spokesman for the Togiak  
32 National Wildlife Refuge has to leave in the morning and has  
33 respectfully -- has requested that we go -- start off with  
34 discussion and deliberation on Proposal 31 and 32. Proposal 31  
35 appears on Page 86 of the Council Book on the analysis.

36  
37 MR. SAMUELSEN: Council, if I remember Proposal 31 was  
38 based on -- and it's in our minutes, Page 8, bottom paragraph,  
39 I'll read this section, Robin Samuelson, passed the  
40 Chairmanship to Sam Stepanoff and moved that a limited moose  
41 and caribou be allowed in Unit 17(A) with the caveat be based  
42 on the population estimate survey that U.S. Fish & Wildlife  
43 Service is going to do this winter. The staff analysis will  
44 inform the Council as to the feasibility of these hunts. With  
45 concurrence of the second, he amended his motion to delete  
46 caribou. Before we move to take staff reports, I don't know  
47 how in depth your -- how long is your staff report on Proposal  
48 32.

49  
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1 MR. BRELSFORD: I think it's fairly brief, Mr. Chairman  
2 and we could be quite brief in view of the effort to move  
3 through our business.

4

5 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Staff reports then.

6

7 MR. BRELSFORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm Taylor  
8 Brelsford. And I was hoping somebody else would get to be the  
9 lead off batter. Warming up the meeting is -- well, we've done  
10 business before, so we'll just go ahead. This is, as you  
11 noted, is a proposal that was originated in the Bristol Bay  
12 Council on behalf of the Togiak Traditional Council and the  
13 Bristol Bay Native Association. It essentially asks for an  
14 opening of 26 days for moose hunting in Unit 17(A) following a  
15 period of approximately 10 years in which moose hunting has  
16 been closed in that area due to the status of the resource,  
17 biological status.

18

19 And as you mentioned, the expectation was that there  
20 would be some current biological information on which to make  
21 your judgment. And kind of thumbing ahead to the conclusion,  
22 we don't yet have that most recent information and it is  
23 anticipated that the survey will occur between now and the  
24 Federal board meeting. So to some extent your deliberation is  
25 going to have to be a matter of anticipating or making --  
26 taking into consideration what the findings of that survey  
27 might be in the next six weeks. We don't have those results  
28 firmly in hand right now.

29

30 I think it might be helpful to mention a bit of the  
31 regulatory history and some of the biological status just for  
32 your background. This, as I've mentioned, is a closure that  
33 has been in place since the early 1980's. The land in question  
34 largely under Federal jurisdiction, Unit 17(A) falls  
35 primarily within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. The  
36 status of the -- the biological status of the moose population  
37 in Unit 17 was poorly monitored until about 1970 when surveys  
38 began. There have been several times at which the moose  
39 population in Unit 17(A) was surveyed in 1981, in 1987, in 1991  
40 and in January of '92. You'll note in the written materials,  
41 this proposal analysis begins on Page 87. That the results of  
42 each of those surveys are essentially counts that you could  
43 count on one hand; a very very small moose population. Three,  
44 four moose in various occasions. I guess the highest of these  
45 was in January of 1994, in which 84 moose were found in 10.8  
46 hours of flying.

47

48 Moving down it indicates that the management objective  
49 for the moose population in Unit 17(A) set by ADF&G is to

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establish a minimum population of 100 moose and that habitat conditions appear adequate to support a population of that size. On the next page begins a survey of some of the human use situation. Residents of Unit 17, all of the communities in Unit 17, plus residents of the neighboring communities of Goodnews Bay, Platinum and Kwethluk have been determined by the Board to have customary and traditional uses of moose in Unit 17(A). This is somewhat of large population all together, 9,800 people roughly, however, I think as a practical matter, only the villages nearest Unit 17(A) would be likely to participate in moose hunting in that drainage. Other people, other communities are likely to hunt in areas nearer where the moose densities are better. So we're effectively talking about 4x communities, those would be Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Goodnews, Platinum and Kwethluk. And in that case we're talking about a village population of about 2,300 people who are primarily Alaska Native. Moose, as you might imagine is a very highly favored resource in these communities. We don't have real complete community studies, particularly -- we have particularly important gaps in the case of Togiak and Twin Hills. However, many of the other communities in Unit 17 have been documented and you'll see that the rates of participation, the number of households involved in moose hunting, trying to hunt moose and successfully harvesting moose are actually quite high. From 32 to 67 percent of households hunt for moose and as many as 52 percent of households in some communities have been successful in harvesting moose.

28

29 The harvest areas, the traditional use areas of each community are in some cases not documented. But some of the general information regarding the community of Togiak, for example, indicates that this community traditionally hunted throughout the Togiak River drainage as well as some of the areas in the Wood-Tikchik Lakes and Mulchatna drainages to the east. It's probable that Twin Hills would use approximately the same area. Several of the other communities that have documented uses in this area have been noted further in the written version.

39

40 I think we did receive some important correspondence on this proposal from the Nushagak Local Advisory Committee which indicated a concern that this be done with due regard for the conservation considerations. And, in particular that correspondence suggested that the survey scheduled for February 1995 ought to be really conclusive, that nothing ought to be done until that firm information is in hand.

47

48 So, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, it is clear that a number of communities have a historic and a traditional

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interest in moose hunting in this area. However, the Biological status has been improving, but is still somewhat tenuous bases on a history of difficulty and that the outcome, your deliberations on this will really turn primarily on what the February hunt turns up. I think the final paragraph here suggests that you may want to focus on the population objectives and what an appropriate harvest allocation would look like if the minimum number of moose are found in the February survey.

10

11 So with that, I'd like to conclude and maybe offer an opportunity to Andy to fill in any gaps that I might not have properly touched on and then we would both be happy to answer questions if you have them.

15

16 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you. Andy.

17

18 MR. ADERMAN: Yes. Andy Aderman, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. I was just going to add that we are planning the survey to begin tomorrow, weather permitting. And hope to be through with that survey by the end of next week.

22

23 MR. SAMUELSEN: Didn't you guys try to survey -- you did some survey the day before yesterday?

25

26 MR. ADERMAN: Yesterday we did get up and we were basically checking on snow conditions. Kind of a pre-requisite for the survey technique that we're using is to have complete snow cover. And basically the upper portion of the Togiak drainage has complete snow coverage, areas to the south and in the Koliganek drainage, pretty marginal. But we feel that we will be able to conduct a survey.

33

34 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. I was talking with your pilot this morning and he said last year where he seen some moose, there was no moose this year. Did he make that comment or observation to you?

38

39 MR. ADERMAN: Yes.

40

41 MR. SAMUELSEN: All right. Like yesterday -- okay.

42

43 MR. ABRAHAM: Mr. Chairman.

44

45 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yes.

46

47 MR. ABRAHAM: You said something about no moose over there?

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1 MR. SAMUELSEN: Where the pilot and Andy flew  
 yesterday. Last year at that time they observed quite a few  
 moose in that area and this year they went back and I don't  
 know if it was the snow conditions or what, they didn't observe  
 any moose in that area that they observed. However, it was  
 just a preliminary as Andy stated, getting set up.

7  
 8 MR. ABRAHAM: Well, you know, I think this time of the  
 year or this time -- this year, they're much lower than last  
 year, not way up there. Because, what, two weeks ago, a couple  
 of people counted in one area on a snow machine, there was 14  
 they counted, in this one area right there. And on this  
 Bristol Bay Region, Page 88, on these villages that you  
 mentioned on 17(A), that includes Kwethluk and Manokotak -- or  
 Kwethluk don't come to Togiak Valley, so does Manokotak,  
 doesn't come to Togiak Valley, only people that comes to Togiak  
 Valley are Togiak, Twin Hills, Goodnews and Platinum. So these  
 too villages over here, you know, they're a long ways off. And  
 Manokotak has opportunity to go up at Mulchatna area because  
 they have an access to it. And Kwethluk has access to  
 Kuskokwim area, but they don't have access to Togiak Valley.  
 So you might just want to erase those off and that number of  
 population of 4,875 residents in that area there, well, those  
 4,875 residents out of that 4,800 may be only 10 percent of  
 those people hunt, not all the 4,875 people. Thank you, Mr.  
 Chairman.

27  
 28 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you, Pete.

29  
 30 MR. BRELSFORD: Mr. Chairman, let me express my  
 appreciation. Pete, of course, it's of course, critical that  
 the Council offer your understanding and judgment about  
 contemporary resource patterns. The staff work is often based  
 on written documentation that's available on file. And the  
 Kwethluk use maps do show some uses up in the Upper Togiak lake  
 area, however, I certainly take your point that that may not be  
 a practical situation today. And that the communities that are  
 most likely to be involved would be fewer in number than it  
 appeared to me when I was preparing this. So there's no effort  
 to this to suggest that the written material is more accurate  
 than the .....

42  
 43 MR. ABRAHAM: Yeah.

44  
 45 MR. BRELSFORD: ..... things people in the communities  
 hunting today might know about it. So I think in your  
 deliberations, you'll want to look upon your current  
 understandings.

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1 MR. ABRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, on this 17(A) on this moose  
 2 thing over here, we're focusing on Togiak Valley area only,  
 3 Togiak and Cordova area.

4  
 5 MR. SAMUELSEN: Um-hum. (affirmative)  
 6

7 MR. ABRAHAM: And nothing else, because outside of that  
 8 area there, like Kwethluk and stuff like that, you know, they  
 9- they don't come to Togiak particular just for the moose, you  
 10 know. Because they have no access to it. So those names might  
 11 be stricken off from the record.

12  
 13 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you. Well, Council members,  
 14 since I made the motion back in October, I think it's only  
 15 fitting that I give my justification on how I perceive the  
 16 action that I think we should take. So if you'd allow me; I  
 17 made that motion as stated there with the caveat that -- and I  
 18 think it was our full understanding that if surveys weren't  
 19 done, we wouldn't act on this proposal. I think it's mighty  
 20 dangerous on trying to second guess what the aerial survey  
 21 might be, the numbers -- the final numbers might be. Staff has  
 22 indicated that ADF&G did their first survey in 1981, their  
 23 first major survey. During 5.5 survey hours, only three moose  
 24 were observed. The next paragraph you go down and six moose in  
 25 355 hours of flying in '92. And then all of a sudden 84 moose  
 26 in 10.8 hours of flying in '94. I'd like to see us error on  
 27 the side of conservation. It's a real delicate herd. We  
 28 haven't set the parameters on -- there's been numbers floating  
 29 around of 100 moose and then we'd have a hunt -- I think if a  
 30 hunt takes place on this herd, regardless of numbers, it needs  
 31 to be a strictly controlled permit hunt. We don't have a  
 32 bull/cow ratio number, we just don't have any biological  
 33 information on this herd at this time to make a good sound  
 34 decision. And I think if we pass and even had a limited amount  
 35 of hunt that -- that we might do real detrimental harm to that  
 36 herd and slow the rebuilding process. I think that the people  
 37 of Togiak have an alternative resource which is caribou. I've  
 38 heard Togiaker's going over to the Goodnews side earlier this  
 39 winter and getting caribou. There's the Mulchatna caribou,  
 40 some of them have gone up the Nushagak River and gotten  
 41 caribou. So I think there's an alternative resource available  
 42 and I'd like to see the Togiak moose population survey come in  
 43 and, I'm not excluding this, but I think we could take it up  
 44 next year once we get better biological data. Because if we  
 45 allow any type of a hunt on this, I feel, fragile herd, it's  
 46 just going to take longer to rebuild it and it's going to be  
 47 closed further down the road. And if there's 200 moose in that  
 48 area, Glory Hallelujah, you know. We'll look at it -- we'll  
 49 look at survey numbers, we'll hear staff's recommendation and  
 50

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at that time we'll make a good biological decision on how many animals we want removed out of there. But at this time, I don't see the numbers.

4  
5 MR. ABRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, remember we asked for  
6 a two year study on this moose population over here?

7  
8 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yeah.

9  
10 MR. ABRAHAM: Well, you know, this is the first year,  
11 right? So we -- we still need -- like you say, we still need  
12 numbers before we do any acting on or whatever and I'm with you  
13 with it completely. Because there is -- like you said, there  
14 are different sources now. In fact, we're being raided by  
15 caribou right now in Togiak, over there. They're only about 24  
16 miles behind -- behind the mountains that we came, you know,  
17 they're just (indiscernible) up there. Some say, you know,  
18 there's about 10,000 and some say there's about 5,000, there's  
19 quite a lot. I went up there to see for myself and there's  
20 quite a few.

21  
22 And the moose kill this year, I counted a little bit,  
23 you know, unnamed count and I lost count of it when I got up to  
24 23, I think this year. But for caribou, I think there is 27  
25 total, of kills, in Tog- -- just in Togiak and Twin Hills.  
26 That's not including Goodnews, you know, the people up there.  
27 That's the number I got, but moose I'm not sure, I lost count  
28 somewhere.

29  
30 MR. SAMUELSEN: Helga.

31  
32 MS. EAKON: Go ahead, Tim.

33  
34 MR. LaPORTE: I didn't know what the Gasaway technique  
35 was for surveying; could you let us know a little bit of what  
36 that's about?

37  
38 MR. ADERMAN: I'll try to real briefly. It's a  
39 technique that the state biologists developed whereby you  
40 classify your habitat and you also use the number of moose, you  
41 go out and do like a pre-flight and you fly over the study  
42 area. And hopefully you have knowledge of that area and you  
43 have areas of low density, medium density and high density.  
44 And if you can accurately determine what strata the different  
45 habitats go in, you can reduce the variance and get a lot  
46 better population estimate of your moose. So a low density  
47 category you may have, say less than one moose per square mile  
48 some figure way lower than that. And then medium up from  
49 that and high you could be, you know, over 10 for winter -- a  
50

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Winter density. After you stratify then you go out in Super  
Cubs and then intensively search the various units and look for  
moose. And that's -- hopefully I answered your question.

4

5 MR. LaPORTE: Yeah. Well, basically if you're going to  
look for moose you got to go look where they live. Thanks.

7

8 MR. SAMUELSEN: Robert.

9

10 MR. HEYANO: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We  
discussed this proposal at our December 14th and 15th advisory  
committee and had a very lengthy discussion on it. And we  
discussed things like not only population numbers, but where  
they were disbursed in 17(A), too. And, you know, the thing  
that Peter brought up, the take that's currently happening, you  
can't just ignore that, you got to factor that in somehow or  
have some insurance if there was an established season that  
that would cease or you would be taking a lot more moose than  
you originally thought. We drafted -- wrote a letter to Aaron  
who is the Togiak Wildlife Refuge, asking at a minimum, that  
before a hunt is allowed and sometime after the survey numbers  
are completed that our advisory committee along with Togiak  
advisory committee and the -- Larry Van Daele, the State game  
biologist sit down and discuss some management objectives for  
that heard and go over some of the information.

26

27 As you are aw- -- you know, I'm sure as you're well  
aware of is that we've successfully had the State Board close  
areas in Unit 17(C) for the winter hunting of moose in an  
attempt to establish more moose -- in 17(A), those areas that  
are bordering 17(A), so we're very concerned about the moose  
population in 17(A).

33

34 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay.

35

36 MS. EAKON: Mr. Chair.

37

38 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yes.

39

40 MS. EAKON: I would like to share with the Council that  
there were two public written comments that came in regarding  
this. First of all, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
postponed their comments, they wanted to look at the results of  
the consensus. Second of all, Joe Trifluc (ph) faxed results  
of the Togiak Fish & Game Advisory Committee of February 8,  
1995 where the committee agreed with the justification as  
stated in the proposal and felt that this would be a step in  
the right direction. However, the committee support was hinged  
on what the joint U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Alaska

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Department of Fish & Game moose surveys will show on actual numbers of moose in the area.

3

4 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you, Helga. Council, what do you want to do, do you want to -- somebody like a motion to support this proposal or recommend we turn this proposal down or how do you want to handle it?

8

9 MR. ABRAHAM: I make a motion that we hold this off until we have accurate numbers, say another year of study because of the fragile of the heard and that Togiak has another source.

13

14 MR. SAMUELSEN: So this proposal will come up again after February of '96?

16

17 MR. ABRAHAM: '96, yes. Because we need some numbers first before we take any action on it. So let's -- let it hang, let it float until we get the right numbers. Because I like to keep it in the paper in case the numbers keep, you know, coming up or numbers keep going down, otherwise we'll just close the doors, drop it completely.

23

24 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Can we put a sunrise position on this proposal?

26

27 MS. EAKON: You could just table it until next year, that way it will be active for discussion a year from now -- table action until next year.

30

31 MR. SAMUELSEN: Is that what you want to do, Pete?

32

33 MR. ABRAHAM: Yeah. Table it until 1996, February.

34

35 MS. EAKON: Okay.

36

37 MR. SAMUELSEN: Is there a second?

38

39 MR. LaPORTE: Second.

40

41 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Move to table as non-debatable, it's tabled according to the Rules of Robin -- I don't know.

43

44 MR. LaPORTE: Robin's Rules of Order.

45

46 MR. SAMUELSEN: Robin's Rules of Order. Okay. One within the hour, moving good. Next.

48

49 MS. EAKON: Mr. Chair, before we do, I'm sorry. I

50

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forgot to introduce our Court Reporter. Joe, our regular  
 Reporter is serving on long term duty, and he did say, please,  
 tell the Council, give them my best wishes. Anyway, this is  
 Tina Hile and she had asked that everyone please try to speak  
 up so that she records us properly.

6  
 7 MR. SAMUELSEN: Joe, isn't in L.A., is he?

8  
 9 MS. EAKON: No, he's in Anchorage.

10  
 11 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. You said, longtime jury duty.  
 12 Okay. Which one is next, Helga?

13  
 14 MS. EAKON: Proposal 32 and the same team will also  
 15 discuss that.

16  
 17 MR. SAMUELSEN: Taylor.

18  
 19 MR. BRELSFORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Proposal #32  
 20 discusses moose hunting seasons in Units 17(B) and (C). And  
 21 this is an effort to follow through on a request discussed in  
 22 the regional -- the Bristol Bay Regional Council to align  
 23 seasons. There's some confusion in the regulatory language and  
 24 all confess that several of us in the office misread some of  
 25 the regulations and so I'll try and be quite careful about  
 26 this.

27  
 28 The results of Proposal #32 for Unit 17(B) and 17(C),  
 29 the harvest limit would change to one bull, rather than one  
 30 antlerless (sic) bull and a State registration permit would be  
 31 required. The fall seasons in all portions of the two units  
 32 would be August 20th to September 15. And the December 1 to 31  
 33 season would be retained in the portions of units where they  
 34 presently occur. This represents an 11 day earlier opening in  
 35 part of Unit 17(B) and a five day earlier closure in both  
 36 portions of Unit 17(B). The State system does have spike-fork  
 37 regulation and I want to kind of clarify what the effect would  
 38 be in this proposal on Federal lands.

39  
 40 In a key exception to the general registration permit  
 41 requirement, hunters holding only a harvest ticket may hunt in  
 42 all parts -- all portions of Unit 17(B) and (C) only from  
 43 September 1 to 15 and they only take bulls with a spike-fork  
 44 antler plus or three brow tine antler configuration. The antler  
 45 configuration restrictions do not apply to hunters having the  
 46 registration permits. So, in effect, there are two separate  
 47 hunts occurring. The registration permit hunt, which would be  
 48 primarily the principal hunt for local hunters is not subject  
 49 to the antler configuration restrictions and it has a longer

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seasonal window, including the December opening. On the other hand, hunters without the registration permit could come and hunt for just the period September 1 to 15 with their harvest ticket, no registration permit, but they would be subject to the spike-fork -- to the antler configuration restrictions.

6

7 So I believe the proposed changes actually come fairly close to what the Council was discussing last time in terms of aligning seasons and it does not impose a whole new series of restrictions -- antler configuration restrictions on local hunters provided they are operating with the registration permit.

13

14 These -- the current Federal regulations are similar to the old State Regs, however, the State regulations changed a year ago, so the action proposed here would bring the Federal regulations in line with recent actions by the Alaska Board of Game. Federal lands in Unit 17(B) include a portion in the Northern -- northeastern corner of 17(B) that falls within Lake Clark National Preserve and a very small part of Togiak National Wildlife Refuge in the extreme western end. Scattered tracts of BLM land and part of the Togiak Refuge were found in Unit 17(C). The point here is the Federal lands are a very small proportion and they're very widely disbursed in Units 17(B) and (C). And that tends to support the importance of having consistent seasons as much as possible.

27

28 Moose were -- let me think about how much of this biological stats to offer for a second, please. I guess probably the important part is to say in the middle of the lengthy paragraph, that the population appears to have increased in both units during the last decade, as moose are now common along the Nushagak and the Mulchatna drainages. However, the population is still below State management goals. In particular, few moose are found on the Togiak Refuge lands in the units, except in the Sunshine Valley area where a small population uses the refuge lands. Moose numbers in the Lake Clark Preserve area in the north of the unit have steadily declined throughout the late 1980's and the early 1990's. Since 1991, the population has declined at an average rate of six percent. I think that section concludes by pointing out that most of the harvest occurs on State lands rather than on the Federal lands under the jurisdiction of this program.

44

45 Turning on the next page to the human use aspects, again, the residents of all the communities in Unit 17, plus the neighboring communities of Nondalton, Levelock, Goodnews Bay and Platinum have been determined to have customary and additional use of moose in Units 17(B) and 17(C). Residents

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of Kwethluk have customary and traditional use of moose in the northwest corner of Unit 17(B). Taken all together, the 15 communities have a fairly large population of 5,100 residents. And again, most of these are Alaska Native people. Moose are a very highly valued food resource among the villages eligible for these subsistence harvests. The rates of participation range from percentages of households trying to find -- trying to harvest moose, 32 percent to 71 percent of all households among these communities. As far as the communities that are actually successful, from 16 to 59 percent of households are successful in taking moose during the study years reflected in that area.

13

Let me take just a second so we don't need to do it again, but these tables that try to summarize the community harvest information from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Subsistence Division, in the middle portion, these figures refer to the percentages of households trying to harvest moose, successfully harvesting moose, utilizing moose or consuming moose, giving away moose or receiving moose, then the last two columns talk about the community harvest levels and total number refers to the estimated total community harvest that year and the pounds refers to the estimated poundage. The figure -- these tables will be laid out the same and all the columns mean the same things as we go on. So perhaps saying it once will kind of help interpret the tables and that will do it.

28

There's a brief discussion of traditional harvest periods. I think the key there, in terms of traditional harvest practices is that none of the accounts suggest that subsistence harvest were focused on particular antler configurations that people took, animals of whatever antler shape was available. Touching on the matter of traditional use areas, the villages involved had very wide ranging subsistence harvest areas. And I think we need to underscore the fact that very little of this harvest occurs on the Federal lands because they are relatively remote to most of the villages.

39

I think to sum up, the point is that this would -- in light of the relatively small proportion and widely disbursed tracts of Federal lands, this change would make the regulations less confusing to both subsistence and non-subsistence hunters. Federal biologists feel that shortening the season and imposing the antler restrictions on those hunters who come without the registration permits would benefit the population by reducing the overall number of young and middle aged moose taken on the Federal lands. In that respect, this proposal would contribute to the conservation of a healthy moose

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population in these units. I believe that that concludes my report, Mr. Chairman. And, Andy, if I've left anything out that's critical here, please add in, and otherwise we'll answer questions.

5  
6 MR. ADERMAN: I think you covered it, Taylor.

7  
8 MR. SAMUELSEN: Taylor, do you know, looking at the year the harvest surveys were conducted, we go anywhere from 1981 to '89, have you had talks with the State people on upgrading these harvests -- this harvest survey?

12  
13 MR. BRELSFORD: With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I think it might be helpful to ask Pippa who works with the Subsistence Division about any current research plans that are underway.

17  
18 MR. SAMUELSEN: Pippa, could you .....

19  
20 MS. COILEY: In what area?

21  
22 MR. BRELSFORD: This would be 17(B) and (C), the Mulchatna .....

24  
25 MS. COILEY: The communities?

26  
27 MR. BRELSFORD: Right. Nushagak.

28  
29 MS. COILEY: Through the registration from .....

30  
31 MR. SAMUELSEN: You might have to come up to the mike.

32  
33 COURT REPORTER: Could you move up a little bit.

34  
35 MS. COILEY: This is a very brief answer. I didn't want to act like I was going to jump into some large research project.

38  
39 MR. SAMUELSEN: As old Joe used to say, if you're going to say anything, make sure it's into the mike.

41  
42 COURT REPORTER: That's right.

43  
44 MS. COILEY: The department of Fish & Game, through the Division of Wildlife Conservation in their permit hunt in 17(B) and (C) has estimated that the return of those permits and the return of moose tags, in general, is pretty widespread, meaning we get most of those back and we have a pretty good estimate of what's being taken. But it's not -- at this time, it's not

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added together by community. And that's the difference between the data that Subsistence Division collects and the data that is usually collected and compiled by the Division of Wildlife Conservation. The estimates of what the harvest is for caribou aren't as good, but for moose they're probably pretty accurate. And at this time the Division of Subsistence with Fish & Game doesn't have any research project to do those type of surveys for moose in any of the communities in 17(B) or (C).

9  
10 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Thank you, Pippa. Further questions of Pippa? Okay. I note that Dan O'Hara has arrived at 8:00 o'clock and he wants me to go until we take a break here which will be right after action on this proposal. So do you have anymore, Taylor?

15  
16 MR. BRELSFORD: No, sir.

17  
18 MR. SAMUELSEN: Robert?

19  
20 MR. HEYANO: Mr. Chairman, I move we adopt Proposal 32. view it basically as a housekeeping proposal to keep the seasons in line on both the State and Federal land in Unit 17.

23  
24 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Is there a second?

25  
26 MR. ABRAHAM: Second.

27  
28 MR. SAMUELSEN: Second by Peter. Further discussion?

29  
30 MR. ABRAHAM: Question.

31  
32 MR. SAMUELSEN: The question's been called for. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

34  
35 IN UNISON: Aye.

36  
37 MR. SAMUELSEN: Opposed, same sign. So carried. We'll make a five minute break here.

39  
40 (Off record)

41 (On record)

42  
43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: In case you don't know who I am, my name is Dan O'Hara and a funny thing happened on the way to King Salmon, Smiley, right. He can verify that the guy closed the door and the handle broke off and we went out the back. But they turned that plane right around and we got out here right away. So I apologize for not being here and I appreciate Robin and the committee going ahead and handling what has to be

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done here tonight. I guess all of you in the back can hear?

2

3 (Nodding Affirmatively)

4

5 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I understand that Proposal 31 has  
been tabled. And I was just wondering if there was any  
objection to leaving it tabled or do you want to bring it off  
the table or what's the wishes of this panel? Robin, just fill  
me in very briefly.

10

11 MR. SAMUELSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Peter had  
made a motion to table it, it was seconded, a motion to table  
is non-debateable. However, we need to reflect in the minutes,  
according to Helga a vote. So I don't have any objection to  
tabling it.

16

17 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. Is there a consensus from the  
panel then to leave it tabled? Is that okay everyone? Helga,  
let the minutes reflect that there is no problem with the panel  
leaving #31 tabled. It really can't come off until whoever  
tabled it brings it off, but we have had a consensus on that  
fact. What is the next proposal we are going to be doing?  
Excuse me, before I do that and Robin has mentioned this also  
that we do have a public comment card. And what we're going to  
do is, if you have a comment you'd like to make, as each  
proposal comes up and you'd like to fill one of these out and  
come on up and after the team leader gives us the information  
on the proposal and any report that might pertain to that and  
then before the panel acts on that proposal, we'll have public  
comment on that, right? Okay. And so this is what it looks  
like. It looks to me like we might be addressing the proposal  
because we might be looking at a fairly close time line between  
now and tomorrow night. We do have to leave tomorrow, so that  
will be fine and I have no objection to working as long as  
you'd like to work tonight within reason.

36

37 What's the next proposal, Helga?

38

39 MS. EAKON: The next proposal will be Proposal 21 and  
40 which will be dealt with together. And Taylor Breelsford and  
Lee Fink will present the staff analysis.

42

43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Twenty-one and 22, okay. And who,  
Taylor and Lee?

45

46 MS. EAKON: Lee Fink.

47

48 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: All right.

49

50

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1 MR. BRELSFORD: So we'll be turning to Page 3 in the  
 2 middle section of the board books where the draft staff  
 3 analysis are found. Mr. Chairman, with your permission I think  
 4 what we'd like to do is start with a mapping discussion real  
 5 quickly just to orient everybody to the layout of Federal  
 6 public lands in Unit 9(B). Helga, this map of the entire  
 7 Bristol Bay Council Region is found in the board books?

8

9 MS. EAKON: Yes. At the very front, you should each  
 10 have a copy of this colored map.

11

12 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yes.

13

14 MS. EAKON: You do, okay.

15

16 MR. BRELSFORD: Many of you will be familiar with the  
 17 fact that the majority -- virtually all of the Federal public  
 18 land found in Unit 9(B) is actually in the northeastern corner  
 19 where it falls within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.  
 20 We have actually prepared a more detailed map of the part and  
 21 preserve lands to provide a little more specific information.  
 22 And since we'll have several proposals that touch on the park  
 23 and preserve lands and land status in that very specific area,  
 24 I thought it would be helpful if Lee briefed everyone on that  
 25 and we'll rely on that in several proposals later on today and  
 26 tomorrow. So, Lee?

27

28 MR. FINK: All right. In your books on Tab 7A4, .....

29

30 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Pardon me?

31

32 MR. FINK: In your booklets on 7A4 .....

33

34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: 7A4?

35

36 MR. FINK: Yeah.

37

38 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay.

39

40 MR. FINK: A more detailed map and as Taylor said, I  
 41 think it would serve us well to just go through the land status  
 42 issues that we deal with at Lake Clark National Park. And  
 43 mostly we're -- whenever the proposals include Unit 9(B), this  
 44 will probably be pretty important information. I have little  
 45 bigger map over here on the wall, can you hear me if I move  
 46 over here?

47

48 COURT REPORTER: I can hear you.

49

50

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1 MR. FINK: This may show up a little better, I don't  
 2 know how well you can all see it, it may be a little more  
 3 clearer than the maps you have in your books. And all inside  
 4 the red boundary is the entire Lake Clark National Park and  
 5 Preserve. To the right of this blue boundary is the park  
 6 itself. Just a quick little overview. Lands within the park  
 7 are only opened to subsistence hunting, no sport hunting  
 8 allowed in the park. The preserved lands which it incorporated  
 9 a little bit of Unit 9, 17 and then some of 19, those lands are  
 10 also opened to sport hunting. But the majority of the  
 11 subsistence hunting takes place in the park which is already  
 12 closed to sport hunting. So it is -- we are dealing with, you  
 13 know, somewhat limited resource and limited population that's  
 14 accessing these hunting areas.

15

16 To hunt in the park you have to be a qualified  
 17 subsistence user which means that you reside, for park  
 18 purposes, in one of several resident zoned communities, Pedro  
 19 Bay is a community, Iliamna and Newhalen, Nondalton and then  
 20 Lime Village. Lime Village is a resident zoned community, but  
 21 it's actually quite removed from the park and they show very  
 22 little or no traditional use, I don't believe, in Unit 9. But  
 23 historically they did -- there was travel between Nondalton and  
 24 Lime Village so historically they've had some use in the park  
 25 area and therefore, initially they were included.

26

27 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: What about Kakhonak.

28

29 MR. FINK: Kakhonak is not a resident zone community.

30

31 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That's interesting.

32

33 MR. FINK: Yeah. I guess they're in the ANICLA --  
 34 Taylor, you probably have more knowledge on that.

35

36 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We don't need it. I was just  
 37 surprised it was not in there. Go on.

38

39 MR. FINK: So as we look more closely at the area  
 40 around Lake Clark, where the majority of the subsistence hunts  
 41 take place, the land that is highlighted in yellow was all  
 42 selected by Kijik Corporation and has now been conveyed to  
 43 Kijik Corporation and removed from preserve status. So all of  
 44 our regulations only deal with Federal public land, so anything  
 45 that has been selected or conveyed to private ownership, you  
 46 know, our regulations do not pertain to. And there are some  
 47 small in-holdings of Native allotments along the shoreline that  
 48 our regulations would not apply to. But the majority of the  
 49 land is -- this was traditional hunting land that was selected

50

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by Kijik and is now in private ownership so our subsistence  
 regs don't apply there. Over around the Kijik Lake area which  
 is -- will be interesting in some bear proposals because that's  
 fairly good bear habitat, but that has all been selected by  
 CIRI and it has not been conveyed to CIRI, but it is selected  
 and therefore it is excluded from these regulations.

7  
 8 So we actually end up talking about a very small  
 proportionately piece of land. It's basically from Port  
 Adsworth, which is -- I think maybe I left that community out  
 of resident zoned community right here, basically the land  
 comes up this southeast shore of Lake Clark and at the head of  
 Lake Clark there will be some bear issues that are of interest  
 in the Tlikakila, but all very small pieces of land. It's very  
 geographically confined in here. So all the hunting, the  
 access is via the lake and the lake shore. So that will be --  
 I think we talked about that at the last meeting or the meeting  
 before and we have several proposals that will be effecting  
 these fairly confined land areas.

20

21 MR. SAMUELSEN: Lee, Mr. Chairman?

22

23 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yes.

24

25 MR. SAMUELSEN: Lee, which regulations does the Kijik  
 Corporation fall under then, State regulations?

27

28 MR. FINK: Yes. They manage -- they fall under --  
 their lands are closed to all sport hunting now, but basically  
 they follow the State Game & Fish regulations for their  
 shareholders that are allowed to hunt on the land.

32

33 MR. SAMUELSEN: And does the CIRI, do they have IC on  
 that?

35

36 MR. FINK: No. CIRI -- it's only in the selected  
 status.

38

39 MR. SAMUELSEN: So they fall under Federal?

40

41 MR. FINK: So they fall under -- these lands would fall  
 under Fish & Game. They would be excluded from these -- from  
 the regulations that we're concerned with because it is  
 selected. So that any regulations that would come from the  
 Federal board would not be applied on this fairly big patch of  
 land here.

47

48 MR. SAMUELSEN: And all the in-holding allotment,  
 individual allotment holders, they fall under State regs?

50

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1  
2 MR. FINK: State regs, that is correct.  
3  
4 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yeah.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Lee, when you look at the end of Lake  
Clark, you've got a -- the proposals that we're going to be  
dealing with are the brown bear proposal?  
9  
10 MR. FINK: Yes.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And of course you know in the fall  
time what it looks like going through Big Lake Clark, as you  
come to Lake Clark, there's two passes, .....  
15  
16 MR. FINK: That's correct.  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: ..... one on the right and one on the  
left?  
20  
21 MR. FINK: Yes.  
22  
23 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Have you seen those bear in there?  
24  
25 MR. FINK: There's .....  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: By the jillions.  
28  
29 MR. FINK: ..... lots of bears in this stretch.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And that's available hunting area for  
the proposal we're talking about?  
33  
34 MR. FINK: That is, yes.  
35  
36 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And, of course, you've got spring  
bear coming out of there, they go both ways, salt water and  
Lake Clark in the spring time?  
39  
40 MR. FINK: That is true. They're not -- they don't --  
they don't stay in the area, they don't linger like they do in  
the fall, but they certainly -- they den quite heavily in the  
pass and when they come out of the dens, they migrate down the,  
you know, down the river bottom and then to wherever they're  
going.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I remember going through there year  
after year and that one bear would come out of that left-hand  
side and walk all the way -- somebody got him one year though  
50

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Because he never came back. Okay. That's your report.

2

3 MR. BRELSFORD: I think, Mr. Chairman, for a reference  
by the Council members, the same close analysis is available in  
the handout, the brightly colored handout that you have in  
front of you, the red lands would be the Federal public lands  
under jurisdiction program. The proposals that we're talking  
about would apply -- would have effect on the pink or red  
lands, the non-tinted lands would be Native selections or lands  
otherwise under the jurisdiction of the State Fish & Game  
regulations. So Proposal #22 -- I mean Proposal #21 and 22  
come from the villages of Newhalen and Iliamna respectively.  
And they propose a revision in the brown bear harvest  
regulation that would provide for the same harvest  
opportunities that were extended last year to the neighboring  
community of Nondalton. So, in effect, these would treat these  
two additional communities the same as Nondalton on the basis  
of the board's actions last year. Specifically, what it would  
do is change from a management regime -- a harvest regulation  
of one bear per four years to one bear per year under a Federal  
registration permit for the residents of these communities.

22

23 There's a sort of issue involved in this that we will  
address several times in the next day looking at proposals in  
this area. We found ourselves last year with requests from one  
community for additional accommodation of traditional harvest  
practices. Nondalton had forwarded several proposals and those  
were treated on a one community basis. Not surprisingly this  
year, neighboring communities have come with individual  
requests for similar treatment. And we thought it might be  
useful for the benefit of the Council to look at whether there  
would be additional communities yet to come that would have the  
same status, the same eligibility, the same historic harvest  
practices and try and treat those as a group, rather than  
waiting for requests to come in from each community one at a  
time. So the analysis will consider several villages, in  
addition to the two that have submitted their requests this  
particular year. What I mean by that is the cluster of  
villages that have eligibility for brown bear -- subsistence  
brown bear harvests in this unit, we think it might be best to  
treat them all as a group once and for all, rather than having  
proposals from one village at a time for more years to come.

43

44 So in that respect, Pedro Bay and Port Alsworth would  
also be communities that have very similar characteristics and  
our analysis will refer to those communities as well. I've  
noted, as far as regulatory history that the change occurred  
last year in the Federal program on the basis of its request  
from the community of Nondalton. The State regulations in this

50

And

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region have been the same since 1975 and at that point the alternating spring and fall hunts were introduced with the one Bear per four year stipulation. There's additional information about the management objectives of the State's approach. I don't think that really concerns us specifically in your deliberations on this proposal. Moving on to the biological status of the brown bear population in Unit 9(B), there are some general density estimates for Unit 9(B) and more specific information about the portion -- or a more specific estimate about the portion of Unit 9(B) within Lake Clark National Park. The estimate is that approximately 250 animals would occur in that portion. And it's suggested that a reasonable management objective would be a harvest limit in total of about 10 bears per year in the park portion of 9(B) based on that population. The biologist feel that a harvest limit of this 10 brown bears would allow for the subsistence need while maintaining the population at a natural and healthy level. Harvest records indicate that over a roughly 30 year period, nearly 300 bears were taken in Unit 9(B). The rest of that paragraph points out an important difference in the fall and spring harvests in terms of the number of females that are taken. And the point is that more female -- females comprise a higher portion of the harvest in the fall of the year so that fall harvest would have a disproportionate impact on the female component of the bear population. And the biologists have suggested that any increase in female harvest would need to be closely monitored if subsistence harvests are permitted each year as is now the case for the single community of Nondalton. The proportion of bears taken by local residents versus non-local residents is described in the bottom paragraph on Page 4. 8.5 percent of the brown bears sealed during the 30 year period were taken by residents of Unit 9(B), it means that better than 90 percent were taken by non-local residents. We've -- turning to the next page, we've touched on the land status in the very limited extent of land that would be effected by the proposed change. And then the analysis discusses some of the human use and first eligibility questions. I think to kind of move through this more quickly, there are six resident zone communities, but one of those, Lime Village, located in Unit 19, has a traditional area primarily to the north and west of the Lake Clark portion of the park, it would be up in the Unit 19 portion. So as a practical matter, the villages effected by this regulation in this portion of the park would be Iliamna, Newhalen, Pedro Bay and Port Alsworth in addition to Nondalton. So these would be the four additional communities that we want to take into consideration.

47

48           There's some information about the seasonal traditions  
49 harvest practice that's taken from a detailed study in

50

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Nondalton. The uses that were made of brown bear as a food resource and the traditional brown bear hunting areas. There are actually maps that describe brown bear hunting areas for two seasonal periods for the fall season among the Nondalton people, followed by some maps that refer to the use areas for Lake Clark and Port Alsworth and for Iliamna and Newhalen. You'll see that the Port Alsworth residents utilize an area from Lake Clark to the north and west starting in Lake Clark and moving to the north and west, while Iliamna, Newhalen and Pedro Bay are shown to harvest primarily along the north shore of Lake Iliamna as far up as the Tazimina Lake drainage on the inside Lake Clark Preserve, but not reaching to Lake Clark itself. The rates of participation, the proportion of households participating in brown bear harvesting is actually somewhat lower than moose that we've talked about previously. The highest rate of participation was a total of 21 percent of households harvesting brown bears in one of the study years covered. The table on Page 8 summarizes the community study information. And the one point to make is that you'll see a significant variation in the harvest levels, particularly in Nondalton. In '73 a single bear was taken, whereas, in 1981 a total of nine brown bears were taken. In '83 in the same community there were no brown bear recorded. Additional information from sealing records combined with the community studies by the Subsistence Division suggested a total of 37 bears were taken by these five communities under consideration during a 30 year period. So the total harvest level is relatively modest viewed across a long period of time. At the bottom of the following page the land status situation is again summarized and I don't think we need to repeat any of that.

31

32 So let me turn to the concluding page. Considering the status of brown bear populations in the Lake Clark vicinity, as well as the traditional harvest practices, it does seem appropriate to provide additional opportunities for subsistence brown bear harvests. An annual harvest of no more than 10 brown bears would be consistent with the protection of healthy and natural brown bear populations in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. Because of this harvest quota, the longer season will not in itself risk over harvest, but it can be expected to result in a greater proportion of female bears in the harvest. Again, the proposal specified only the communities of Newhalen and Iliamna, but we've suggested that the Council might consider paying attention to the circumstances of Pedro Bay and Port Alsworth at the same time.

46

47 In the end, we think it would be very important for the Council to provide some specific advice about how these 10 permits might be distributed among the five participating

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communities. And with that, I think I'll conclude my remarks and maybe give Lee another opportunity if there was anything further he had to ask -- had to add. Did we cover it?

4

5 MR. FINK: You covered it pretty well. Unless there's any specific questions.

7

8 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any questions from the panel members?  
9 Okay. Well, I think that covers it pretty well now.

10

11 MR. LaPORTE: Just one question, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah. Go ahead.

14

15 MR. LaPORTE: As your observation from being a park ranger working up in that area, have you seen residents of the other user communities, Pedro Bay, Iliamna, Newhalen, say for instance, up in that area hunting or have there been any observed attempts up in that area?

20

21 MR. FINK: Fairly limited. But, you know, I guess we didn't feel that maybe it was our place to eliminate them. You know, they are resident zone communities and they have -- but, mean, the hunting in general is fairly limited in that area. We're speaking of a very small piece of land and it gets pretty limited use overall. Nondalton and Port Alsworth probably the two primary users, but, you know, occasionally we don't know where everybody comes from if we don't, you know, contact them on the ground. Certainly some could well be from Newhalen, Iliamna. The likelihood that they're from Pedro Bay is not real great, that's a pretty good trek. The only thing that this could possibly afford Pedro Bay would be the -- over by Pedro Bay there's a couple other rivers, the Pile River, in particular, goes up into the park. So if they were to obtain a permit, they could go up the Pile River and access bears. That would be the one exclusion to the very limited section of land at the head of Lake Clark.

38

39 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: How up far Pile River?

40

41 MR. FINK: Well, the .....

42

43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I mean how far up Pile River before you get to Preserves?

45

46 MR. FINK: Probably about five or six miles.

47

48 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Oh, that's not too far.

49

50

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1 MR. FINK: Yeah. So it's conceivable. And that is the  
2 reason we've basically left that option open so it wouldn't  
3 exclude residents of Pedro Bay from accessing, you know, a bear  
4 up the Pile River if they -- if they were so inclined.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: How about the Chicok drainage; would  
7 there be anybody from Pedro Bay going to Chicok or up in that  
8 area or not -- or does that not go into Preserve?

9  
10 MR. FINK: Most of that hunting -- of the good hunting  
11 area there is excluded from the Preserve. It's outside the  
12 boundary.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah. Okay. That's pretty  
15 accessible.

16  
17 MR. FINK: It is pretty accessible. But the majority  
18 of it is outside the boundary. Chicok Lake, in particular, is  
19 out -- is just outside the boundary, that's where the boundary  
20 ends.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions? Okay. Who is  
23 the next group of bureaucrats that comes up and sits at that  
24 table and talks to us about this proposal?

25  
26 MR. BRELSFORD: We've got 23, 24, 25, and 26 I'll be  
27 talking on.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Are you going to talk on all of them  
30 once -- we're just dealing with 21 now?

31  
32 MS. EAKON: Twenty-one and 22.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay.

35  
36 MR. HEYANO: Twenty-two.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Did you want to go on to 22 and then  
39 we'll have the next .....

40  
41 MR. BRELSFORD: I've actually -- they were combined.  
42 They were two of the four communities that we're suggesting you  
43 look at instead of one community at a time.

44  
45 MR. HEYANO: Mr. Chairman.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Um-hum. (affirmative)

48  
49 MR. HEYANO: I guess I got a question. The five  
50

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communities can hunt in the park, right, who can hunt in the Preserve?

3

4 MR. FINK: Anybody.

5

6 MR. HEYANO: All right. So when we're talking about the five communities in these proposals, we're just talking the park boundaries?

9

10 MR. FINK: Just talking the park boundaries.

11

12 MR. HEYANO: Okay.

13

14 MR. FINK: Well, the extended -- any extended Federal subsistence season would then apply to the Preserve boundaries also. We kind of have to manage it in two ways. We have a State -- the State's season and any qualified subsistence user is eligible to hunt in the park and/or the preserve under the State season. And basically what we get to in these regulations, you know, these are extensions on those seasons, now we're extending them or expanding them or adding, you know with the Federal subsistence seasons we're kind of deviating from what has been the traditional State season for the past 30 years -- 20 or 30 years.

25

26 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: For 10 animals?

27

28 MR. FINK: Pardon me?

29

30 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: For 10 animals.

31

32 MR. FINK: For 10 animals, that is correct, for 10 animals. That's what we're saying, you know, under the current regulations, all the villages except Nondalton which received an extension last year, you can only hunt brown bear season is every other year. Last year the regulation was set in place for Nondalton residents only to be able to harvest bears every year, one bear each regulatory year. And now we're seeing that those nearby villages would like to, you know, enjoy that same yearly bear harvest and so to do that now we have to expand our Federal subsistence regulations again to encompass the other villages that are surrounding.

43

44 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah, Tim.

45

46 MR. LaPORTE: Does that make sense?

47

48 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah. No, it doesn't make sense?

49

50

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1 MR. HEYANO: I guess when we passed the regulation last  
 2 year for the community of Nondalton, that included all Federal  
 3 lands.

4  
 5 MR. FINK: For Nondalton, yes.

6  
 7 MR. HEYANO: For .....

8  
 9 MR. BRELSFORD: Well, they're the same lands. I mean  
 10 Nondalton could've only exercised those Federal permit hunts on  
 11 the same lands.

12  
 13 MR. FINK: Right.

14  
 15 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: On the lands you explained just now?

16  
 17 MR. FINK: On the same lands we explained.

18  
 19 MR. HEYANO: Which is park and preserve?

20  
 21 MR. FINK: Which is Federal public land regulate --  
 22 these Federal Subsistence Board Regulations effect any Federal  
 23 public land.

24  
 25 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. Robert -- just let me ask a  
 26 question. The 10 animals you can be taking is within those  
 27 boundary lines up there, excluding the yellow?

28  
 29 MR. HEYANO: Park or preserve or both?

30  
 31 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Park.

32  
 33 MR. HEYANO: Just the park?

34  
 35 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We're not issuing 10 permits outside  
 36 that park? They can get 10 bears in that park?

37  
 38 MR. FINK: Right.

39  
 40 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah.

41  
 42 MR. HEYANO: So this proposal just deals with .....

43  
 44 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That right there.

45  
 46 MR. HEYANO: ..... bears on lands inside the park, not  
 47 the preserve? I guess the problem I'm having, I understand  
 48 that there's five communities who can hunt in the park. On the  
 49 preserve, there's more than five communities who are able --

50

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Who are eligible for subsistence hunting. If we pass this regulation and it includes all Federal land, the park and the preserve, those five communities can hunt inside the park, but all the other subsistence users can hunt in the preserve every year and take a bear if we pass this proposal, right?

6  
7 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: No.

8  
9 MR. FINK: No.

10  
11 MR. BRELSFORD: No.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: There's so many communities that can take a total of 10 bear permits within those boundary marks up here and that's all we're doing.

16  
17 MR. FINK: Or preserve.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That's a park, isn't it?

20  
21 MR. HEYANO: Park and preserve are different.

22  
23 MR. FINK: Well, the park and preserve are a little different, but we're mainly dealing with park lands.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We're only dealing with park lands unless I .....

28  
29 MR. HEYANO: No.

30  
31 MR. FINK: No. We're not only dealing with park lands. It's just that it's primarily park lands.

33  
34 MR. BRELSFORD: If you look again here, the pink areas that -- the dotted line distinguishes the park from the preserve. By far most of the pink area on the shoreline is in the park, in the preserved portion of Lake Clark, most of the shoreline has been taken out of the Federal -- out of Federal jurisdiction as a result of Native selections. So that's kind of the distinction we've made that effectively most of the hunting on Federal public lands using the lake for access is going to occur inside the park portion. I think to respond more specifically to Robert's question, if you'd look at Page 24 the proposed regulation would say -- would specify a special situation for certain villages, named villages. The rural residents of Nondalton and Iliamna; Nondalton, Iliamna, Nizhulen, like that, they would have one bear by Federal registration permit only, but then the following line would say, Unit 9(B), one bear every four regulatory years. So the

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Other communities eligible to take bears in 9(B) would be governed by the following -- the following paragraph that says one bear per four years.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Which is a State regulation?

6  
7 MR. BRELSFORD: This is -- that has been incorporated into the Federal Subsistence Regulations as well.

8  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Um-hum. (affirmative)

11  
12 MR. HEYANO: One more question, Mr. Chair?

13  
14 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Sure.

15  
16 MR. HEYANO: Who has c&t finding for brown bear in Unit 9(B)?

17  
18  
19 MR. BRELSFORD: All eight villages in Unit 9(B) have not eligibility. And that means in the preserve portion all eight villages located in 9(B) would have opportunities. In the park portion, only the residents (indiscernible).

20  
21  
22 MR. HEYANO: All eight?

23  
24  
25 MR. BRELSFORD: I'm sorry. Maybe I didn't explain that very well in the outset and I appreciate the chance to clarify.

26  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah. Tim.

29  
30  
31 MR. LaPORTE: But on our passing of the proposal for the Nondalton residents, that was 10 bears for Nondalton, was that .....

32  
33  
34 MR. FINK: Last year -- the proposal last year I don't think had a limit. It was .....

35  
36  
37 MR. BRELSFORD: Registration.

38  
39  
40 MR. LaPORTE: Registration?

41  
42  
43 MR. FINK: ..... registration permit hunt and there was a number set.

44  
45  
46 MR. LaPORTE: But then is the 10 bears, is that a suggestion by the -- by the .....

47  
48  
49 MR. FINK: Yes.

50

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1  
2 MR. LaPORTE: ..... park, I guess or by the -- and that  
would be -- so that would make -- instead of Nondalton, it was  
wide open for Nondalton, now we want to add Iliamna, Newhalen,  
Pedro Bay and limit Nondalton, Pedro Bay, everything to 10  
bears?

7  
8 MR. FINK: Correct. It would be Port Alsworth .....

9  
10 MR. LaPORTE: Yeah. Port Alsworth, Nondalton, Iliamna,  
Newhalen, Pedro Bay, five villages?

12  
13 MR. FINK: Five villages and they would be limited to  
14 bears.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: The State of Alaska is going to --  
are they going to make comment on this proposal, Dick, before  
we -- Sellers, are you guys going to address this proposal  
before we act on it tonight?

20  
21 MR. SELLERS: Go right ahead. We've written comments  
that I think you have. But I'd be happy to answer any  
questions. We don't have a lot of hard data from that area. I  
would like to mention though that there is a difference in bear  
management between harvesting a male and female. It's a real  
important distinction to make and whatever harvest quota is  
stated, you know, it's based on assumption that there's some  
selectivity towards males. You can -- obviously you can kill  
20 males with no problem, but if you kill 10 females every year  
you might soon run into some problems.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Thank you. All right. Does the  
panel have anymore questions for Taylor or for Lee? Okay. So  
that I know exactly what we're talking about, it would be the  
five communities, Lee, -- can you hear me over there, okay?

36  
37 COURT REPORTER: Yes.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: This is Nondalton's withdrawal here,  
40 we can't touch that, but all the way up through here, all  
the way down around here, 10 permits are going to be issued in  
there? No?

43  
44 MR. BRELSFORD: No. It's only in 9(B).

45  
46 MR. FINK: It's only 9(B).

47  
48 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Over in this area?

49  
50

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1 MR. FINK: Well, this is park, but Unit 9(B) is  
 2 actually is anything that drains into Lake Clark. So where the  
 3- that would be these, but, you know, realistically we're  
 4 speaking of hunting this small section of the Tlikakila River  
 5 because that's where the bears are concentrated.

6  
 7 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Robert, that's what we're talking  
 8 about.

9  
 10 MR. FINK: That's what we're talking about.

11  
 12 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions by the panel?  
 13 Tim.

14  
 15 MR. LaPORTE: I still don't have it quite square in my  
 16 mind, these 10 bears here. But by -- basically by passing  
 17 Proposal #21 and 22, we actually limit Nondalton's taking then?

18  
 19 MR. FINK: That is correct.

20  
 21 MR. LaPORTE: As compared to right now of -- they're  
 22 basically wide open for the taking, now they chance with --  
 23 with five communities they chance drawing permits basically?

24  
 25 MR. FINK: And that is something, I guess, we're  
 26 looking to Council for some guidance on is how -- how to manage  
 27 these 10, you know, permits.

28  
 29 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: What did you issue last year?

30  
 31 MR. FINK: We didn't issue any.

32  
 33 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Nobody took anything last year?

34  
 35 MR. FINK: Nobody took anything.

36  
 37 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: No one may take anything next year  
 38 either.

39  
 40 MR. LaPORTE: That's a tough -- it's a tough area to  
 41 get to.

42  
 43 MR. FINK: It's not easily accessible, you know, it's a  
 44 long boat ride at best.

45  
 46 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yeah. I think we could structure the  
 47 permits at -- 50 percent of the permits will be issued for  
 48 males, 50 percent for females, I believe? No?

49  
 50

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1 MR. FINK: Well, we weren't -- we were more conc- -- I  
 2 don't know how -- we were more concerned like how we would  
 3 distribute the permits to the villages. Nondalton shows the  
 4 highest use .....

5  
 6 MR. HEYANO: Passing the buck.  
 7

8 MR. FINK: Nondalton, you know, probably traditionally  
 9 if we went back into the record would show the greatest number  
 10 of take and probably is therefore entitled to the largest  
 11 number of permits. And how the other villages .....

12  
 13 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: It's pretty tough for the Federal  
 14 government to make a judgment like that, now we could do it,  
 15 but you guys would have a hard time.

16  
 17 MR. FINK: That's right.  
 18

19 MR. SAMUELSEN: Mr. Chairman, I don't even think we  
 20 should do it. I think that the villages effected, if they're  
 21 all going to be included, use the model of the Nushagak  
 22 Peninsula herd where a number of villages sat down and divvied  
 23 the pie and then brought the proposal forward I think works  
 24 at best then us trying to guess here what's the usage in each  
 25 villages.

26  
 27 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Plus it's not shooting females, could  
 28 it a stop to it.

29  
 30 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay.  
 31

32 MR. ABRAHAM: Excuse me.  
 33

34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yes.  
 35

36 MR. ABRAHAM: Has there been a bear census on for like  
 37 years and years, is there a decline or decrease on this  
 38 particular thing we're talking about right now? Has there been  
 39 bear study?

40  
 41 MR. FINK: The park has never conducted a bear study.  
 42 We are basically working off State ADF&G records. Dick  
 43 probably has a better handle on the bear population than I do.  
 44 But the park itself, we have never conducted a bear study per  
 45 of our own. I mean just what we casually see and record.

46  
 47 MR. ABRAHAM: To me, you know, it seems like it's  
 48 fair for five villages to have 10 permits. According to your  
 49 study over here, these cats over here, there hasn't been any --  
 50

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a lot of kills it seems like, you know, and here we are. If you issue 10 permits and all of a sudden, you know, everybody's going to want a bear because they're fighting for theirs. But before that because there was no numbers the people just go out and get their needs, possibly it's under reported.

6

7 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: It's possible.

8

9 MR. LaPORTE: Just knowing the geographic area there, Newhalen and Nondalton people and especially when these issues come up in our local advisory committee's, any time they're thinking of Unit 9(B), they're thinking down the Lake Iliamna and there's all kinds of -- I mean you fly down there and you see 20, 30, 40 bears in just a straight line flight. Upper Talarik, Lower Talarik Creek and all the streams that are real salmon spawning streams there. And that's -- it's hard for us to keep getting across to them that 9(B), that this subsistence board covers is way up at the head of Lake Clark, I -- that's why I was asking Lee if he'd ever seen anybody up there. I don't personally know that it's -- it's not a well traveled route to go up there, but where they're taking their bears is down in Unit 9(B) as well, but all on State lands in the Talarik Creek area and the Newhalen River area where there's substantially more salmon grounds and that. Bear populations are many, many times what's available up in the park. So it's 26...

27

28 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. We'll call on you in one minute, we're going to take the panel and these gentlemen that are here right now. Any other questions you have of Lee and Taylor? Excuse me, Robert.

32

33 MR. HEYANO: I guess, going through the comments from the State, you know, they estimate the population at 250 and they recommend a harvest of only -- of 12 bears, and then subtracting four to six bears that are killed in defense of life and property, they're recommending a permit hunt of six to eight.

39

40 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Well, this might be a good time to ask the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to come on up and address your concerns and I'd like to ask you some questions anyway. State your name for Tina.

44

45 MR. SELLERS: Dick Sellers, Alaska Department of Fish & Game. Did you have particular questions or would you like me to make some general comments first?

48

49 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Well, it's interesting having you

50

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make the statement that whether you take too many females is going to be a problem versus more males. And maybe you could help us understand it a little bit so we can see whether or not we're going to be, you know, doing biological damage if we go ahead and act on this proposal is kind of what I'm interested in.

7

8 MR. SELLERS: Well, as with most big game populations, there's virtually never going to be a shortage of males in terms of breeding available females. And with bears, in particular, since only about a third of the females are receptive each year, the other two-thirds are tied up with litters already, so there's virtually no concern, especially in a population like Lake Clark that doesn't get much sport hunting pressure, the park doesn't get any, the preserve gets very little. So there's not a whole lot of concern about the male/female ratio. But because bears have such low reproductive rates, they don't mature until they're five or six or older, years old, you know, they breed every four or five years so you have to be real conservative on how many females you're removing from a population.

22

23 And I think somebody over here I might mention asked about the general trend in bear populations. We don't have good data from that part of Unit 9, but everywhere else in Unit 9 that we do have data indicates that it was a real general increase from the mid-70's until the late 80's and then it seems to have leveled off. But we're probably at an all time historic level in terms of bear densities throughout Unit 9.

30

31 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: So, Dick, you don't really have a commercial effort in this part of the hunting area then, really?

34

35 MR. SELLERS: Not much. Not compared to south of here.

36

37 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: As compared to coming on below Kiamna and getting up into that, you know, groundhog area, up at that area, there's a lot of spring time commercial hunts going on up in there and you have pretty good populations in there. So we're dealing strictly with just a subsistence issue on Federal lands with this one?

43

44 MR. SELLERS: Right.

45

46 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Do you have any suggestions on -- why is it -- maybe you or Lee can answer the question, that we're getting a larger number of females being killed versus males? Anyone have an answer to that?

50

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1  
2 MR. SELLERS: Well, I'm not sure that we are. There's  
3 just the cautionary note that I think the Park Service rang  
4 earlier was that if you increase the amount of fall hunting  
5 time, typically the sex ratio taken during a fall hunt is more  
6 heavily weighted towards females. Usually in a fall hunt you  
7 may be as close as 50/50, usually it's more like six males and  
8 four females. If you're hunting during the spring, it's quite  
9 typically seven or eight males and two or three females.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Because you're looking for an animal  
12 that's a big animal and trophy type thing?

13  
14 MR. SELLERS: Well, there are a number of reasons,  
15 females den earlier in the fall, usually by mid-October they're  
16 a fair percentage of the females are already in denning  
17 habitat if not already denned up. And then in the spring,  
18 females are later coming out of the dens, so if you have a late  
19 spring during the mate season a good share of the females may  
20 not be available until the very end of the hunt.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: So the fall season is -- you possibly  
23 could kill more females?

24  
25 MR. SELLERS: You would likely kill more females.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And a spring hunt you would get more  
28 males?

29  
30 MR. SELLERS: Right.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And the Alaska Department of Fish &  
33 Game opposes this proposal?

34  
35 MR. SELLERS: As written. I think it's, you know,  
36 we're not questioning the availability of some bears for  
37 subsistence use, we're just concerned about how it's  
38 implemented, how much confusion there is over what areas are  
39 open. We're also concerned as some of you may know that there  
40 some potential for commercial exploitation of bear parts.  
41 And we're real concerned about opening the door for any kind of  
42 widespread illegal activity, and not to say that any of the  
43 villages requesting this have that in mind by any means, but if  
44 you have liberal seasons then there's a potential for some --  
45 some abuse by some people.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other comments, any other  
48 questions of Dick? Yeah.

49  
50

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1 MR. SAMUELSEN: State opposes as written, how -- do you  
 2 have a proposal or amendment to the proposal that you'd like to  
 3 see included?

4

5 MR. SELLERS: Well, I think we would be more  
 6 comfortable if the proposal specified that the Federal lands  
 7 involved are within Lake Clark Park and Preserve. That would  
 8 narrow the enforcement issues. And, you know, somehow monitor  
 9 the harvest so that it, you know, doesn't exceed what is  
 10 expected to be a sustainable harvest. I don't think we have  
 11 any good suggestions to help you get to that end.

12

13 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay. Thank you.

14

15 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions? Yes, Robert.

16

17 MR. HEYANO: If it was 10 bear, what would be the  
 18 appropriate ratio of male to females out of the 10?

19

20 MR. SELLERS: Well, certainly if it was six or male,  
 21 the 10, that would be a comfortable range.

22

23 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We can't determine that, I mean .....

24

25 MR. SELLERS: You know, I don't think you can control  
 26 that by specifying on the permit that that's only good for a  
 27 male or female, but you can effect that ratio by the timing of  
 28 the seasons. If your season's later in October that's going to  
 29 reduce the number of females because I said by mid-October,  
 30 normally some of the females are already in high elevations  
 31 looking for dens. So the later in October you have a season,  
 32 the higher the percentage of males and, of course, you need to  
 33 look at the use patterns, it's not a time people want to be up  
 34 there fighting the weather or whatever. But the later in  
 35 October the better in terms of high percent of males. And in  
 36 the spring, again, is a better season for taking more males.

37

38 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: It's a shade unusual to see a bear  
 39 out past the 23rd of October pretty much unless it's a male,  
 40 that's right?

41

42 MR. SELLERS: It depends on the local. If there's late  
 43 and I'm not all that familiar with the area that most people  
 44 hunt up there, if there's a late run of salmon there could be  
 45 bears out locally well into November.

46

47 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That looks like a hog ranch when you  
 48 fly through Lake Clark pass with those bears. There's an  
 49 incredible number of bears in that area. And I don't know how

50

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1 you could get them, it's a tough area to get to, but it's  
2 incredible. You've seen them, Tim, flying through there?

3

4 MR. LaPORTE: Yes.

5

6 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: They're fishing on something.

7

8 MR. LaPORTE: Yes.

9

10 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I was just really impressed with the  
11 number of animals there. And if we don't have any more  
12 questions then we'll go on to the next step in our proposal  
13 here. Thank you, Dick, we appreciate you taking time. Yes.

14

15 MS. COILEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to  
16 mention, Tim, at your last advisory committee meeting, it was  
17 my understanding that during the last State Board of Game  
18 cycle, this last meeting they were reauthorizing the western  
19 Alaska brown bear management area. And attached to that were a  
20 couple of amendments, one from the Nushagak Advisory Committee  
21 and another from the Iliamna Advisory Committee where they  
22 requested that that special brown bear management unit be  
23 extended to 9(B). And the reauthorization occurred, however,  
24 the amendment weren't brought up, so I just wanted to mention  
25 that. The advisory committee for that area, for State  
26 regulated lands has suggested several times and finally this  
27 time in an actual amendment to allow for one brown bear to be  
28 taken a year following specific guidelines within that  
29 management plan.

30

31 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Thank you. Yes. Here they come.

32

33 MR. KRIEG: My name is Ted Krieg. I work for Bristol  
34 Bay Native Association Natural Resources Department. I guess I  
35 was just kind of waiting for public comment .....

36

37 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yes.

38

39 MR. KRIEG: ..... so I guess this is it?

40

41 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yes.

42

43 MR. KRIEG: There's a couple of things here. First off  
44 we did have somebody lined up in Newhalen that wanted to get in  
45 a telephone conference but there's problems. I know people  
46 really tried earlier today to get the phone system working and  
47 that didn't work out, so we're hoping it can be working later  
48 because I know there's some people that really want to be in  
49 some of these later proposals also.

50

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1  
 2           There's -- I guess this is kind of a confusing issue.  
 And there's a couple of things I wanted to bring up. First of  
 all, I did talk to Pedro Bay about the Traditional Council, we  
 work through the Traditional Council and, you know, go by their  
 guidance. And, you know, I mentioned to them that there would  
 be an opportunity that we could up in a proposal that they  
 could also have a brown bear hunt for every year and we just  
 left it at that. I offered it to them and they thought about  
 it and, you know, didn't respond to me one way or the other.  
 And I just figured that's, you know, that was their decision.  
 I don't think we have the idea that this -- the permit system  
 was going to be, what appears to me right now, to be really  
 cumbersome. Last fall towards the end of November I started  
 calling Nondalton to see if, you know, how this permit system  
 was going, if people wanted to hunt what was going on. And one  
 thing that happened is that everybody -- it was a new, you  
 know, a new season, people weren't quite prepared and half of  
 the Park Service wasn't quite prepared either because when I  
 called over to Port Alsworth to find out about what was going  
 on with this, they didn't have the permits printed up at the  
 beginning of October. And I think by about the 3rd, I was  
 looking at my phone log and I think by about the 3rd of  
 October, it looked like they had the permits printed up. But  
 at that time people from Nondalton weren't -- weren't quite  
 sure -- and here again, I don't know -- like Lee said that  
 nobody -- they didn't issue any permits. And as I started  
 looking into it a little bit more, well, I talked to Nondalton,  
 talked to Port Alsworth, tried to line up getting the permits  
 to have somebody go to Nondalton and actually issue the  
 permits. That was something that Nondalton felt like they  
 would be -- it would be better for them. It's kind of hard --  
 I think at the time the weather wasn't all that good either, it  
 would have been a long trip to get to Port Alsworth. And I  
 talked to Ralph Tenge, the superintendent of Lake Clark  
 National Park and Reserve and he said he would do everything he  
 could to try to set that up. I actually didn't follow-up on  
 that anymore. I don't know what happened after that, but  
 permits weren't issued.

40  
 41           Also, it's not only -- maybe Lee can clear up this  
 question a little bit, too, but there's the main permit, but  
 there seems like there's another permit. It seems like there  
 was more than one permit that people had to get and it didn't  
 seem like it -- if somebody was there to issue the permits,  
 they could do it, you know, permit number one, two or three or  
 whatever they needed. I think there was like a park use permit  
 or something like that also. So that made it a little -- it  
 seemed to me to be a little bit more cumbersome also. And I  
 50

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I guess I'm -- you know, I'm still a little bit confused about giving the people the option to be able to hunt if they only want to hunt every four years and they don't have to go through the registration permit process. I guess they can do that on State land, but, you know, I guess I'm still a little confused about what actually happens here, you know, whether somebody decides they want to go. You know, are we locking in these communities that they have to go for one bear every year and therefore, they only get the 10 bear limit. There's some questions like that. I don't know if I helped, you know, bring up anything that might help iron this issue out or if I just confused the issue more, but that's all I have at the moment.

13

14 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Lee, do you have a comment?

15

16 MR. FINK: Yeah. I guess I should clarify a couple of those points.

18

19 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I'd like that, appreciate it.

20

21 MR. FINK: There is only one permit required. There's no use permit. It's only the Federal registration permit. It didn't work real smooth this year, there were a few snags there, I'm sure. It was the first year, folks from Nondalton weren't sure where to get them, we really hadn't made any plans to go to the villages and issue them. We assumed that they would stop by our office on the way up lake and just pickup a permit. This -- I think the whole process is fairly confusing because you end up with several seasons. One season where you don't need a permit and in the case of the bears it's every other year. And then there would be an odd year when you would need -- it would require a permit. But if we're going to diverge from what have been the more traditional seasons that we've adhered to over the past years, it seems, from a management standpoint that the Federal registration permit is a good tool for us because it gives us a real good account of what impact the resource is taking and what type of a success ratio. Because, you know, we have to issue them the permit and then we get some feedback back. Whether they did hunt, what their success ratio was and so we have then a real good handle on the harvest, you know, whether it be bears in this case or sheep or whatever resource we're looking at. And it also makes as, you know, I think Dick mentioned, you know, when you start -- it can get very confusing for the hunter in the field and -- when you get differing State and Federal regulations when you have State enforcement people who aren't sure why these folks are out hunting when their seasons are closed. And when you get a permit in hand that says, you know, it kind of protects the hunter so somebody who isn't real familiar with

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all these jumble of regulations that we're trying to figure out, you know, he can say, well, here's my permit and I'm hunting on a Federal registration hunt and I'm in the right to be here and it gives us good feedback. And so if we use this tool we'd like to, you know, probably try to make it easier in the future for the users where we go to the various villages and, you know, advertise and say we're going to be in Nondalton or Iliamna on such a day, stop by and pick up a permit if you plan on obtaining one for whatever because now we're getting several species that are requiring Federal registration permits.

12

13 That's a little digression from what we're speaking on right now, but it's going to -- as we try to iron this out and make it workable, you know, I think Federal registration permits are a good tool. They're a good tool for the manager, I think they help maybe protect the subsistence user in some cases, and hopefully give us a good handle on the resource. And, you know, we're mandated in the Park Service to manage for a natural and healthy population, so it's hard for us to say, you know, it's hard for the people to say, well, you know, we can harvest X number of bears if we don't know what's being harvested.

24

25 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Well, it's not too unusual to -- we do a cow hunt here in December which is totally different from what anyone else does anywhere else and yet, even as big of a community we have here, we can handle it all right. Sellers handles it just fine, so it can be done. It's different, but that December hunt or cow hunt is different and, you know, we're fine.

32

33 MR. FINK: Well, that takes some getting used to. Like you say, it's a new step .....

35

36 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: You know, once you figure it out.

37

38 MR. FINK: ..... people aren't used to it and I think it's going to take some time for everybody to get comfortable with it.

41

42 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: If you don't have anymore questions for Lee? Yes.

44

45 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. On this permit hunt, it's for these five villages and they go up into Lee's office and get a permit to go hunting the bear; is it Nondalton needs three bears, they would go up there and pickup three permits to hunt every year and make them all male hunts?

50

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1  
2 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We haven't said that yet in a  
3 proposal.

4  
5 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Well, I'm asking if that becomes the  
6 case, then let's say another village come by and they want  
7 three bears and pretty soon we got over 10. I mean who's to  
8 know the other village took, you know, more than that much; how  
9 is it going to be limited?

10  
11 MR. SAMUELSEN: That's what they're asking us guidance  
12 for.

13  
14 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yeah.

15  
16 MR. HEYANO: Mr. Chairman.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah, Robert.

19  
20 MR. HEYANO: You know, I think Robin touched on it a  
21 little bit that -- I don't know how the rest of you people feel  
22 but I would feel very uncomfortable at this time knowing that  
23 it looks like from the input that the maximum allowable harvest  
24 should be 10 bears. And, you know, from what I heard that if  
25 is 10 bears than no more than six -- I mean no more than  
26 four should be females, I guess is how it is. I would like to  
27 see the five effected communities to have an opportunity to sit  
28 down and work out how those 10 permits -- or how those 10 bears  
29 are going to be divvied up and come back to us with a  
30 commendation. I think, you know, keeping in mind that there  
31 would only be 10 and out of those 10 we're looking for more  
32 than four to be females. Do you think that's a workable  
33 solution?

34  
35 MR. FINK: Well, I think that would be a, you know,  
36 good workable solution to go back to the villages. And, you  
37 know, we didn't really have that opportunity to suggest that.  
38 But we certainly didn't feel comfortable allocating the numbers  
39 either, you know, so I think that's a good solution from our  
40 standpoint that the villages would get together and, you know  
41 we don't feel at this time, I think the bottom line is that  
42 we could not put a number on the, you know, if we're going to  
43 afford this every year opportunity we can't just -- the  
44 population wouldn't tolerate just a blanket open, you know,  
45 number of permits. So we're going to have to restrict it  
46 somehow. And to let the villages restrict it themselves, I  
47 think would be the best.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Excuse me, do you have a comment  
50

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then?

2

3 MR. HEYANO: No. I was ready to make a motion.

4

5 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Well, I just want to say before you  
~~make~~ make the motion, Tim, what kind of advisory -- isn't there an  
~~advisory~~ advisory part up there that goes along with this -- us?

8

9 MR. LaPORTE: As far as the Lake Clark National Park?

10

11 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah.

12

13 MR. LaPORTE: Yeah. There's Lake Clark National Park  
~~Advisory~~ Advisory Board.

15

16 MR. FINK: Yeah. There's a subsistence resource  
~~Commission~~ Commission specifically for the park.

18

19 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: And what do they say about this?

20

21 MR. LaPORTE: We haven't met. The last meeting -- the  
~~day~~ day of the meeting, Glenn, everybody was stuck somewhere. It  
~~was~~ was terrible weather.

24

25 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Weather again.

26

27 MR. LaPORTE: Yeah. I think Glenn was stuck in Russia  
~~or~~ someplace.

29

30 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Do we have anymore public comment on  
~~this~~ this? All the departments are satisfied and have been able to  
~~spea~~ speak. Okay, Robert.

33

34 MR. HEYANO: Okay.

35

36 MR. LaPORTE: Just one other comment I just want to  
~~throw~~ throw in off the pavement. It seems kind of -- and we're  
~~really~~ really laboring over this, but yet, like Ted said, he went up  
~~to~~ to Pedro Bay -- my personal thought, Pedro Bay, they don't care  
~~if~~ if they get bears up at the head of Lake Clark or not, they got  
~~so~~ so many bears crawling over even in their yards, they didn't  
~~even~~ even ask for -- and, you know, I almost wonder, is this being  
~~generated~~ generated from Bristol Bay Native Association? Are you going  
~~out~~ out and asking them to get in there and get some permits going  
~~are~~ are the villages actually coming to you?

46

47 MR. KRIEG: Permits or put if proposals?

48

49 MR. LaPORTE: No. On the proposals. Are the villages

50

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requesting that we got to get our fair share or is it something  
that Bristol Bay generated?

3

4 MR. KRIEG: No. We've just -- we've opened it up to  
them and they request it from us. And, you know, we go through  
them .....

7

8 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: You have a season in BBNA where you  
go to villages and say we're going to deal with proposals now  
and want your thoughts or how do you open it up when you say  
you open it up?

12

13 MR. KRIEG: Well, I -- you know, two years ago I did my  
initial, you know, surveys of the villages and since then we've  
gone on that information, you know, ideas that we talked about  
at that time. And there's people coming, you know, board  
members are coming in all the time and whenever we get a chance  
we talk to people and, you know, just let them -- let them know  
the deadlines that are coming up for proposals and, you know,  
some of things we talked about and whether they would want to  
put in a proposal at that time.

22

23 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay.

24

25 MR. SAMUELSEN: Mr. Chairman, I also work for BBNA and  
BBNA doesn't advocate -- staff doesn't advocate -- solic- --  
putting in any proposals, we take our marching orders from the  
Additional Council. And probably 50 to maybe even a little  
more percent of the proposals that they think they're dealing  
with on Federal lands are really dealing with the Board of Fish  
and the Board of Game. So we just help, assist, write  
proposals and put them in the proper format, address them to  
the proper regulatory agencies such as this body and move them  
forward.

35

36 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Follow-up on them as .....

37

38 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yes.

39

40 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. All right. Any other comments  
from the panel members and we'll go ahead and act on this or  
table it or for further information; what's the wishes of the  
panel?

44

45 MR. HEYANO: Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess I would  
commend we table Proposal 21 and 22 until such time the five  
affected communities can get together probably with the help of  
the there and decide which of the five or all of the five and  
how they're going to divvy up, from what I hear, for the

50

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protection of the resource, we can't issue no more than 10 and  
of that 10, I think the proposal should take into consideration  
we want to limit the female take to no more than four.

4  
5 MR. SAMUELSEN: Base it on timing, when the season is  
open accordingly.

7  
8 MR. HEYANO: Well, is that the only option open to us,  
us .....

10  
11 MR. SAMUELSEN: No.

12  
13 MR. HEYANO: ..... season dates?

14  
15 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: There's dates attached to the  
proposal.

17  
18 MR. FINK: I don't know how you control the sex take.  
Unless we had, you know, once four females were taken we closed  
the season. Other than like Dick suggested, you know, with  
some modification to the season and making it a later season,  
that hasn't been addressed, that one part of the proposal  
either.

24  
25 MR. HEYANO: Maybe, Mr. Chairman, we'll just leave it  
road like that and since we can take this up every year and  
since there hasn't been any permits issued .....

28  
29 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That's what I would do.

30  
31 MR. HEYANO: ..... to date and then see what the five  
communities come back with their recommendation.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I would act on it. They may kill 10  
bears next year.

36  
37 MR. SAMUELSEN: Second, Mr. Chairman.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. That's a motion?

40  
41 MR. HEYANO: Yes.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. The motion is -- just make it  
like it is, 21 and 22; any further discussion panel members?  
All in favor say, aye.

46  
47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Opposed?

50

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1  
2 (No opposing responses)

3  
4 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Let it show that it passed  
unanimously. Thank you, Lee. Five minute break and we'll be  
back in session.

7  
8 (Off record)  
9 (On record)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We're back in session. And what  
we're going to do so you'll have an idea, if you're planning --  
some of the Council members haven't even checked into the hotel  
yet. And we'll put on the floor tonight 23 and have staff  
reports on it, Helga will give us some information on public  
comment that has come into her, written comment. If you have  
anything you want to say on 23 and want to sign up, I want to  
remind you again we'll be doing that, most everyone probably  
heard that before. And Robin suggested that we take the staff  
reports, public comment and then not act on this proposal until  
tomorrow and then we can be out of here probably, we hope, by a  
little after 10:00. And then, Tina, there may some calls  
coming in from outside, some of the communities calling in on a  
teleconference that might want to testify?

25  
26 MS. EDWARDS: My understanding is that they're  
interested in speaking on 25 and 26.

28  
29 MR. KRIEG: Some of the later ones. But I'll -- maybe  
in the morning. I don't think you have to worry about that  
tonight.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. We won't worry about that  
tonight then. Okay. We have -- 23 is the next one, right.  
Have.

36  
37 MR. FISHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess what I'd  
like to do is, since 23, 24, 25, 26, and 26(C) deal with the  
North -- northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou herds, I guess I'd  
like to just kind of talk a little bit about the herd and then  
get into 23 and then maybe we can wind it up that way.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Sure.

44  
45 MR. FISHER: One other thing I guess I'd like to extend  
46 the Bristol Bay boys did it again, I know you .....

47  
48 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: By one point.

49  
50

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1 MR. FISHER: Yeah. I hope these next ones go as fast  
 2 as the previous four have gone. I think they'll take a little  
 3 bit more discussion. A little bit on the Northern Alaska  
 4 Peninsula caribou herd. Like every other caribou herd in the  
 5 State of Alaska, this caribou herd has fluctuated in size in  
 6 1900 and in 1940 and around 1985 to '86 were the historic  
 7 peaks. And if you'll notice that's approximately 40 years  
 8 apart, maybe it takes the range that long to recover. But in  
 9 the late '40s the numbers were low, around 2,000, 1963 to '64,  
 10 the herd recovered to around 10,000, and then in the next 30  
 11 years up to about 1994 the herd numbered around between 10 and  
 12 20,000. The '93 estimate was somewhere around 16,000, the  
 13 current population estimate is around 12,500 which represents a  
 14 decline of a little over 20 percent and this was a survey that  
 15 was conducted in 1994.

16

17 Fish & Game management objectives for this herd are to  
 18 maintain it around 15 to 20,000. However, there's some factors  
 19 that are present and seem to indicate that this level may need  
 20 to be -- maybe -- we may want to take a look at it or some of  
 21 these factors are responsible for the herd decline. One of  
 22 these factors is the fact that the traditional winter range  
 23 from Ugashik to the Naknek River is showing signs of being  
 24 overgrazed. And this was one of the things that Dick pointed  
 25 out to me when -- I believe it was in 1988 when we were out  
 26 translocating caribou for that Nushagak herd was showing some  
 27 of the impact that the range had -- was getting at that time.

28

29 The expansion of the winter range north of the Naknek  
 30 River to Lake Iliamna is another factor. This started in 1986.  
 31 If you take a look at that range between the Naknek River and  
 32 Lake Iliamna, you find that it's in pretty good shape, a lot  
 33 better than the range is down here, so that's one of the  
 34 reasons the animals are moving. As I just mentioned, a change  
 35 in the migration pattern over the last 15 to 20 years. The  
 36 best calving migration north to the wintering grounds is  
 37 occurring earlier and earlier. And in the summer of 1994 there  
 38 was around 5,000 animals observed near Egegik in July. The  
 39 winters on the Alaska Peninsula have been fairly mild the last  
 40 few years, so that really isn't too much of a factor.  
 41 Predation has not been -- in talking to some of the local  
 42 hunters here, that predation has not been extreme. The herd  
 43 productivity seems to be good, bull/cow ratios are good. And  
 44 the problem appears to be -- appears to be low calf survival as  
 45 demonstrated when -- in the fact that during the survey there  
 46 was 10 of the 34 -- or 35 radio collars were cows. The reasons  
 47 for this are not really well known. Predation, as I mentioned,  
 48 disease could be a problem, some of the animals could've been  
 49 wounded. But it appears from, again, from talking to some of  
 50

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the local people here that it's probably a range situation.

2

3 As you know the Fish & Game closed the Big Creek and  
 4 Smelt Creek area to reduce this harvest. And Federal lands --  
 5 public lands did remain open for subsistence users. The area  
 6 was reopened by the Board of Game through advice from the local  
 7 advisory committee to where they changed the harvest and they  
 8 also changed the -- they went from -- they went to one caribou  
 9 per month to the one cow limit, and this was to reduce the non-  
 10 local hunters. Another factor that's -- I think will enter in  
 11 once we have all the harvest data in for this year is the fact  
 12 that the Air Force base has closed.

13

14 Moving on to Proposal 23, this was submitted by the  
 15 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at the request of the Federal  
 16 Subsistence Board. And what this would do is this would close  
 17 Federal public lands in Unit 9(C) to the hunting of caribou  
 18 except by eligible rural residents. And as I mentioned  
 19 previously, in order to limit the take, the Board of Game  
 20 closed Smelt Creek and Big Creek drainages on October 1, they  
 21 were opened again in mid-November with the new limit. However,  
 22 the Federal Subsistence Board closed Federal public lands in  
 23 9(C) on November 14th. Federal public lands in this unit  
 24 consisted of the Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, Katmai  
 25 National Preserve, Alagnak Wild River Corridor and BLM lands.  
 26 The lands that are effected for the caribou hunters in 9(C),  
 27 especially the Becharof National Wildlife Refuge are only about  
 28 five percent of those lands would be effected. The Kenai -- or  
 29 Katmai National Preserve and Alagnak Wild River Corridor is  
 30 about six percent. I'm not sure what the BLM land is because  
 31 that land status is changing. The closure by the Federal  
 32 Subsistence Board will remain in effect until the end of the  
 33 current season. It wasn't a permanent closure, that's why they  
 34 wanted us to submit Proposal 23. When you look at some of the  
 35 harvest data that we analyzed, you see a trend -- and that  
 36 harvest data is on Page 23; the harvest for taking of caribou  
 37 off of Federal land, you see sort of an upward trend in the  
 38 table and you also see a downward trend in the harvest for on  
 39 Federal lands. These harvest figures include animals from the  
 40 Preserve, Katmai National Preserve. Most of the animals that  
 41 are on the Katmai National Preserve are animals that have come  
 42 down -- that are members of the Mulchatna herd. So looking at  
 43 the animals that are harvested from the Becharof Refuge we find  
 44 that there are probably very few, they only have five percent  
 45 of the land that's opened in 9(C).

46

47 Cultural information, residents of 9(B), 9(C), 17 have  
 48 not for caribou in 9(C), however, the residents in 9(B) and  
 49 Unit 17 are more -- would more readily be taking animals out of  
 50

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the Mulchatna caribou herd. Naknek, south Naknek, King Salmon and Egegik are more dependant on animals from the northern Alaska Peninsula herd and would most directly affected by this proposal. Forty-eight to about 96 percent of the households hunt caribou. Thirty-six to 72 percent successfully harvest caribou and this is from ADF&G subsistence studies done in the early '80s. And caribou are the most -- constitute the most widely-used terrestrial mammal in the subsistence usage. They make-up somewhere between 29 and 61 percent of the total poundage, so you see they are very important. The harvest effort in 9(C) on Federal public lands is not well documented. Subsistence harvests, especially on the Becharof Refuge is somewhat limited due to the access and again, the small amount of land in 9(C) that is open.

15

16 Staff, in summarizing the -- in looking at this proposal, we have comments here we discussed at one of our staff meetings in Anchorage and we found that closing Federal public lands in 9(C) would shift some of the harvest to State and private land. The decline in herd is probably due to range deterioration as I talked about a little bit earlier. And eliminating non-subsistence hunters would probably not stop this decline, but it would probably increase it by increasing proportions of bulls in the herd as non-subsistence hunters primarily take bulls, trophy hunters and we estimate that about 25 percent of the bulls harvested are by non-subsistence hunters. So the more large bulls that are left, these would compete with the cows and the younger animals for the range conditions that currently exist. The four communities, Naknek, King Salmon, South Naknek and Egegik are the ones that are directly effected by this proposal. They currently have ready access to the herd right now, right on State and private lands. And in some instances they are able to use the Mulchatna herd that is on preserve lands. The recent base closure and the change in regulations should reduce the number of caribou hunters and help alleviate some of this pressure. The -- to sum this up, the staff feels that it is not necessary to close Federal public lands at this time in 9(C) in order to conserve a healthy population. That pretty well sums up, briefly, on #23. I'll be happy to take any questions.

41

42 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any questions. Robin.

43

44 MR. SAMUELSEN: When are the -- when is the Mulchatna herd in Unit 9(C)?

46

47 MR. FISHER: Pardon?

48

49 MR. SAMUELSEN: When is the Mulchatna herd usually

50

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migrate in 9(C), area 9(C)?

2

3 MR. FISHER: In October or November.

4

5 MR. SAMUELSEN: Can you give me a breakdown on how many  
6 animals are harvested during October and November versus .....

7

8 MR. FISHER: Mulchatna versus .....

9

10 MR. SAMUELSEN: Well, what I'm trying to .....

11

12 MR. FISHER: I'm sorry.

13

14 MR. SAMUELSEN: What I'm trying to figure out is what  
15 contribution in 9(C) throughout the year is -- the harvests  
16 contributed to the Mulchatna caribou herd. If the Mulchatna  
17 caribou herd is in that area 9, October through November and we  
18 got a harvest of 300 animals per year, let's say, and  
19 October/November 30 are taken, so 10 percent are contributed to  
20 the Nush- -- or to the Mulchatna caribou herd. So I'm trying  
21 to -- in my mind I'm trying to justify your comments here.

22

23 MR. FISHER: Well, it's pretty hard to breakout. Most  
24 of those animals that are taken in the preserve would be  
25 Mulchatna animals versus most of those animals that are taken  
26 south of the preserve and below would be Northern Alaska  
27 animals. I would have to take a look at the individual coding  
28 bits and I -- I didn't bring that information with me so I  
29 don't have it.

30

31 MR. SAMUELSEN: Okay.

32

33 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Not necessarily so. Sellers can  
34 probably tell us. And I've flown this area in February when  
35 the animals start separating, two years ago, I think it was,  
36 you had a horrendous amount of animals walk all the way up,  
37 almost to the Kaskanak Flats, Dick, up in that area, they laid  
38 all over just north of the branch, the Aluklik up there. And  
39 then when it come time for the animals to separate, you could  
40 see two groups of animals just like that walking away from that  
41 area. But there was a lot of harvest that took place probably  
42 near Naknek with snow machines and Levelock and I think -- they  
43 were -- and it was ideal condition for snow .....

44

45 MR. SAMUELSEN: February.

46

47 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: February, January -- I don't know if  
48 sellers is aware or not, but he may want to address this later  
49, but I know that that Mulchatna herd must come all the way

50

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down to the North Naknek side here; is that right, so you're going to have some harvest there.

3

4 MR. FISHER: I think the estimated -- estimated last year, I think there was somewhere around 15 to 20,000 animals were down versus 3,000 to 4,000 Peninsula animals that were up and they were .....

8

9 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Maybe 5,000, yeah.

10

11 MR. FISHER: ..... mixing.

12

13 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: They mixed and they separated, too. You could see them walk in both directions, just as clear to -- you said something about Alagnak in your presentation .....

16

17 MR. FISHER: Did I, I didn't .....

18

19 MR. SAMUELSEN: It's Alagnak, I think he said.

20

21 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay. All right. Because I was going to say, that's something like a different drainage system.

24

25 MR. FISHER: The Alagnak Wild River Corridor, I think I was referring to.

27

28 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Alagnak, yeah.

29

30 MR. FISHER: Or the branch river.

31

32 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Anything else?

33

34 MR. SAMUELSEN: No.

35

36 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions of Dave? Robert.

37

38 MR. HEYANO: What's your current bull to cow ratio?

39

40 MR. FISHER: I'd have to ask Dick, specifically, but I think it's somewhere around 35. It was up in the 40s at one time, but I think it's dropped a little bit around to -- I would say around 35 bulls to 100 cows. Dick, is that ballpark.

45

46 MR. SELLERS: Yeah.

47

48 MR. FISHER: So that's good.

49

50

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1 MR. HEYANO: That's a healthy ratio.  
2  
3 MR. FISHER: Yeah.  
4  
5 MR. HEYANO: And how about your cow to calf ratio?  
6  
7 MR. FISHER: Oh, boy, I think in the low 20's; is that  
8- is that .....  
9  
10 MR. SELLERS: No, it's 34 .....  
11  
12 MR. FISHER: Thirty-four.  
13  
14 MR. SELLERS: ..... calves per -- yeah.  
15  
16 MR. HEYANO: And where does that rank on the scale?  
17  
18 MR. SELLERS: It's good, it's not exceptional. It's  
19 below what it's -- it's normally been in the 40s, so it's a  
20 little bit down, it's not bad. For instance, the Southern  
21 Peninsula herd is easily in the teens, 15/20 calves I think.  
22  
23 COURT REPORTER: Can you come on up?  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah. Come on up and maybe you  
26 can .....  
27  
28 MR. SELLERS: Normally the calf/cow ratio has been in  
29 the 40s, it dropped down to 34 calves per 100 cows this year  
30 which is slightly below the long term average, but it is  
31 certainly respectable.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions, panel members?  
34 Okay -- yes, go ahead.  
35  
36 MR. SAMUELSEN: I haven't had a chance to go through  
37 your -- about a 10 page handout here since the break here. Are  
38 you still experiencing that die-off rate on the North Peninsula  
39 Caribou herd that you experienced last year; is that continuing  
40 and if so, why?  
41  
42 MR. SELLERS: Our -- Mr. Chair, our last flight was  
43 about two weeks ago and we covered everything from here down to  
44 Port Heiden and all the caribou -- all the radio-collared  
45 caribou that were north of Port Heiden were still alive. There  
46 were several that we expect were still south of Port Heiden.  
47 We got fogged out of there so we couldn't check on those. But  
48 far the winter survival looks pretty good at this point.  
49  
50

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1 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: How many animals is that, Dick?

2  
3 MR. SELLERS: Less than 20 radio-collared.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Okay.

6  
7 MR. SAMUELSEN: Would -- and last time you -- that was  
8 last spring, I think, that we had the die-off of 40 percent or  
9 whatever, of the collared ones?

10  
11 MR. SELLERS: Yeah. The -- we don't -- monitored them  
12 we hadn't enough money to monitor them very frequently, so  
13 sometimes a period between when we know they were alive and  
14 when we verified they were dead is several months or even half  
15 a year. So it's hard to pinpoint exactly when they died. And  
16 we didn't get a chance to visit the site and pickup the radio-  
17 collar until June when we had a helicopter. So there wasn't  
18 enough left to tell why they died, except that they were spread  
19 out all the way from Lake -- or Naknek Lake all the way down to  
20 Sandy River. So it didn't look like it was a localized thing.  
21 And the other thing that was really startling this year was  
22 when we radio-collared 16 caribou in April, by the following  
23 June, four of them had already died and none of them were  
24 related to capture, they had all moved a considerable distance  
25 from where we captured them. So it looked like that late  
26 spring period was real tough on them this past year.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Why would a late spring be tough on  
29 them?

30  
31 MR. SELLERS: Well, probably Robert can tell us a  
32 little better than I can. But it was a pretty late spring down  
33 on the calving grounds and the new vegetation didn't green up  
34 as early as it does in a good year, so that there may -- if  
35 they were already nutritionally stressed from not having real  
36 good food on their winter range and their calves are getting  
37 big and there's a lot of nutritional drain going into the calf  
38 growth and they're pretty dependent on new vegetation to carry  
39 them that last few weeks into gestation and then the first  
40 month of nursing. And if they're not getting good food in that  
41 critical late spring period, it can really be tough on them.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: That's good.

44  
45 MR. SAMUELSEN: Predation, was predation a problem, did  
46 you notice?

47  
48 MR. SELLERS: Well, we can't say for sure. Obviously  
49 we got a lot of bears and wolves out there and they're taking  
50

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some. But we're going to try to get a little better handle on that this spring, we're going to intensify our research efforts. We're going to catch a bunch more caribou in April with the help of the Fish & Wildlife Service and look at survival and production a little more intensely during June and we'll probably get a little better feel for predation on the calving grounds.

8

9 MR. SAMUELSEN: Because like over in the Dillingham area the wolf population in the last couple of years has just sky-rocketed. I mean it's unbelievable how many wolves are in the area and the bear population. So both of them, you know, .....

14

15 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I don't think that was the problem over here. Just, you know, from everybody you talked to who flies, they know, you know, see the wolves and keep track of them, some more than others. And I think it was something else maybe.

20

21 MR. SAMUELSEN: Yeah.

22

23 MR. SELLERS: You know, I apologize for not getting that handout to you sooner, I just wrote that last week for our local advisory committee and I didn't expect to be talking about this tonight. I was thinking tomorrow, so I was hoping you'd have tonight or tomorrow to go through that material.

28

29 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: We will have.

30

31 MR. SAMUELSEN: We will be talking about it tomorrow, too.

33

34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Thank you. Do you have another question.

36

37 MR. HEYANO: Yeah. When you radio-collar the caribou, do you also take samples to see, you know, fat content, basically the health of the animal?

40

41 MR. SELLERS: We have tried some really sophisticated techniques to look at fat content and they don't seem to work as well on caribou as they do on humans. But we do weigh them, we take measurements and we take blood samples. Blood is currently being analyzed to screen for any disease, we don't have the results back from even last April, it takes awhile. They have to accumulate enough samples from all over the state to send in a big batch. But the animals we handled in April looked healthy. They were as big as, you know, and weighed as

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1 much as normal. So that's part of the confounding thing is  
 2 typically if you see a caribou herd crashing, the first thing  
 3 that you notice is poor calf production, especially in the fall  
 4 calf/cow ratio. That was real apparent in the southern herd,  
 5 you know, back before it even crashed, the productivity went  
 6 down. The fact that productivity is still high in this herd  
 7 gives us some reason for hope that, you know, they're not  
 8 necessarily going to crash overnight. We are concerned about  
 9 winter range conditions, but as long as the body size doesn't  
 10 start to taper off and as long as they produce a lot of calves  
 11 and the calves seem to survive fairly well, there's some room  
 12 for hope that it's not a long term decline.

13

14 MR. FISHER: It might be the fact that they're just  
 15 slowly expanding the range is probably a good sign that it's  
 16 not going to fall overnight.

17

18 MR. SAMUELSEN: Dan, I got a question for you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Yeah.

21

22 MR. SAMUELSEN: Landing up on the little airport up  
 23 here, Robert and I both noticed that before it was wing-tip to  
 24 wing-tip lined with planes and there's -- you notice a  
 25 noticeably decline of local airplanes, did they just move up to  
 26 King Salmon or is there less local pilots in the area?

27

28 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: I think there's a lot less local  
 29 pilots because of the past few years of bad fish prices,  
 30 really. You know, a lot of people don't have planes anymore,  
 31 they've sold them. There's been a big decline.

32

33 MR. CHRISTENSEN: You know, we used to do a lot of wolf  
 34 hunters and now there's just -- there's wolves everywhere.  
 35 There's no more trappers down here.

36

37 MR. SAMUELSEN: And that's what I'm getting at, I'm  
 38 trying to see the whole picture here and I know what a pack of  
 39 about 20 wolves could do. And sometimes on nice afternoons  
 40 when we think about going fishing, they say -- they're laying  
 41 there, well, let's go practice, go kill caribou. And they do  
 42 for sport as well as we go sport fishing.

43

44 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Well, those people from California  
 45 wouldn't want to hear that.

46

47 MR. SAMUELSEN: Well, that's tough, that's the truth.  
 48 When we got a herd that is in this decline and the biologists  
 49 can't get out to them in time and the carcasses are spread, you

50

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know, I'd like to know what is exactly happening out there. Because that was pretty startling information that Sellers' produced there this spring.

4  
5 MR. CHRISTENSEN: We need to air hunt wolves.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Any other questions?

8  
9 MR. SAMUELSEN: Not to get in the wolf issue here.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: No, any other questions of Dick?  
12 Okay. I think, Dave, do you have anything else?

13  
14 MR. FISHER: No.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: It's 10:00 o'clock. And maybe  
17 tomorrow morning we can start off with Helga giving us the  
18 written reports. What time would you like to start tomorrow  
19 morning?

20  
21 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Early.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: 8:30 -- 8:00 to early?

24  
25 MS. EAKON: 8:00 is fine.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: Is 8:00 o'clock okay or do you guys  
28 want to go 8:30?

29  
30 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yeah.

31  
32 MR. SAMUELSEN: That's fine, you're the boss.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN O'HARA: 8:00 o'clock sounds good. We'll  
35 recess from this point until 8:00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

36  
37 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

38  
39 \* \* \* \* \*

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