

1 YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME II

8
9 Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center
10 Bethel, Alaska
11 March 6, 2014
12 9:04 a.m.

13
14
15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

16
17 Greg Roczicka, Acting Chairman
18 David Bill
19 William Brown
20 James Charles
21 Raymond J. Oney
22 Anthony F. Ulak
23 Harry Wilde, Sr.

24
25
26 Regional Council Coordinator, Alex Nick

27
28 Interpreters: Pat Sampson
29 Charlie Charlie

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Bethel, Alaska - 3/6/2014)

(On record)

ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Good morning, everybody. We'll call the second day of the Y-K Delta Regional Advisory Council to order at 9:04. For the record, we have seven Council members present. Our quorum is still established.

I'd first ask the Staff if there are any announcements or if anyone has any -- Mr. Nick.

MR. NICK: My name is Alex Nick, Council coordinator for the record. Just a reminder about travel changes. I'm going to do this in Yup'ik and English even though we've got interpreters. I noticed that Council members aren't listening. They are listening in English but not in Yup'ik.

What I would like to do is remind Council members whenever there is going to be travel changes or extensions of your travel plans, you need to let me know ahead of time because we have a travel policy that we have to comply with. I understand from a couple RAC members they have plans to extend their travel because they were asked to stay a little longer for other business. Those kind of changes I need to know at least a day before you are scheduled to return and even a few days before that.

The reason is because we have only certain people who are authorized to make travel changes in our office in Anchorage. Even though I'm one of the people who you could contact for travel changes, what I do is I convey that information to our travel clerks in Anchorage and whenever your ticket is going to be used later than the travel date, I would have to contact appropriate staff in our Anchorage office and let them change your travel plans. That's something we should not overlook when we travel to these Council meetings.

Another announcement I would like to give you is that I just received updated bycatch information this morning, so I made a few copies from David Jenkins. I think that covers the information that I wanted to provide to the Council members.

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: You said
2 you're going to say that in Yup'ik.
3
4 MR. NICK: Oh, yeah. I was going to do
5 this in Yup'ik as well. Thank you for reminding me.
6
7 (In Yup'ik)
8
9 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair.
10
11 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: David and
12 then James.
13
14 MR. BILL: (In Yup'ik)
15
16 INTERPRETER: Regarding yesterday after
17 7:00 o'clock we changed our travel status and we didn't
18 have any idea what was going on about my travel status.
19
20
21 MR. BILL: For some reason last night
22 there was a change somewhere along the line that they
23 want us in person tomorrow. Thank you.
24
25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Alex.
26
27 MR. NICK: Yeah, Mr. Bill, through the
28 Chair. (In Yup'ik)
29
30 INTERPRETER: If you're talking about
31 your travel status, you need to contact my office and
32 to contact me as soon as possible. The reason why the
33 tickets you guys have will need to be paid and I'll
34 have to rearrange the ticket status once the travel
35 date is changed.
36
37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
38
39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: James.
40
41 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
42
43 (In Yup'ik)
44
45 INTERPRETER: Yesterday the same thing
46 happened and I didn't know who to contact if it's like
47 after 7:00 o'clock. So in light of that, I'm sorry. I
48 apologize accordingly through David, our coordinator,
49 that after hours is not a good time to contact and I
50 was informed last night regarding my travel status for

1 a later time.

2

3 MR. NICK: Mr. Chair.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

6

7 MR. NICK: Council members. Next time
8 let those people who coordinate your other travel, let
9 those coordinators or travel arrangers know that I need
10 to know at least a day before you travel because some
11 of you are scheduled to travel in the morning. Quyana.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.

14 No other announcements.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I did have
19 one thing that I neglected to mention yesterday, but
20 for everyone here that has a cell phone please mute it
21 so that the meetings are not disturbed. For those of
22 us sitting at the table, please turn them off. They do
23 interfere with the translations and the phone system.
24 Even though they are on mute, we do hear the
25 interference coming through. So for those at the table
26 please turn them off and for those in the audience
27 please put them on mute.

28

29 We're continuing on with the agenda
30 business. Per our policy, we open the floor in the
31 morning for additional public comment and I have two
32 individuals here. First will be Fritz George followed
33 by Phillip Peter.

34

35 MR. GEORGE: (In Yup'ik)

36

37 INTERPRETER: Quyana, Mr. Chair. I am
38 Fritz George. I thank you for you guys sitting here
39 working for our people. At this time the chinooks they
40 are being talked about and we all think the ones that
41 have bachelor degrees that they're smart, but a lot of
42 times they all fail all their regulatory times when we
43 do subsist on the fish, but our elders, we need to ask
44 them and follow what their advices are. I think that
45 will be better and I think the chinooks will increase
46 by the numbers.

47

48 As far as I'm concerned, opposing us
49 for subsistence and then when the roe are starting to
50 put on spawning ground, the sport fishermen are being

1 opened for their fun time. Our elders say the fish are
2 scared. At their weirs or spawning grounds when people
3 are walking around on water and when they are spawning
4 they run away and their roe are spread in any way and I
5 see different types of -- they're like little fish,
6 whitefish, and they're like pointy heads, those fish
7 like to eat them salmon roes before they become little
8 fish.

9

10 At the oceans, a lot of times, even
11 though we -- we need to find out what their appetites
12 are in the ocean. And they're looking at the end users
13 as giving them a tough time and the spawning ground as
14 well as in the ocean. Those need to be closed and I
15 think the chinook will increase in numbers instead of
16 looking at us subsistence users. According to as it's
17 written in ANILCA, I think if they decrease in numbers,
18 the users, the rural residents will be able to fish.

19

20 The sizes that they're decreasing, from
21 8 inches to 6 inches. I heard we're going to be
22 catching like Kanektok River, but, yeah, they are being
23 caught, but when they're being caught they go away
24 like injured and probably before they get to the
25 spawning ground they probably die because of their
26 injuries. So when the fish get to the net and tangled
27 and then when they are let go they probably die
28 somewhere.

29

30 In 1980 Harold Sparks, when he was
31 working for Nunam Kitlutsisti, he was challenging the
32 Japanese that were fishing in the ocean that were
33 catching chinooks, they had like 40 fishermen and that
34 net is about nine miles long and I don't know exactly
35 how big those nets are, but are those still happening?
36 And according to the Russians, they usually have them
37 pay a fee and then let them fish. That's what I heard.

38

39 In the summertime in the Kuskokwim
40 after it rains, after the water rises, a lot of times
41 the seagulls I see them eating the roe. In the
42 summertime the animals are hungry and a lot of times
43 the bears, you know, get to our smokehouses and damage
44 our food and probably eat them. It's not only them
45 animals. A lot of times the smokehouses, the fish
46 racks are also damaged by these bears. A lot of times
47 when the seagulls do eat their hanged fish.

48

49 In summertime, when they change the
50 fish gear size to smaller gear, when that happens it's

1 knowledgeable when you see the fish they probably kill
2 the smaller fish as well.

3

4 It seems like they never start a
5 hatchery on the Kuskokwim and then develop a hatchery
6 in this area. Once they become small fish, they are
7 being released. If that does happen, I think these
8 little fish probably won't be eaten by other bigger
9 animals.

10

11 There seems to be a lot of -- we're
12 kind of over-regulated depending on the fish that we
13 are -- and that's not even working because their minds
14 are too smart to take care of what they have knowledge
15 of because they have degrees in science, but that is
16 not working. It seems like they may ask us to fish,
17 our elders ask us to fish. Even though Katie John
18 passed, there's a lot of Natives that need fresh fish.

19

20 The Staff -- we don't have to follow
21 the Staff discretions because they're making us hungry
22 a lot of times, but I thank you guys for the
23 opportunity to make statements in what I'm stating.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you,
28 Fritz. I noticed the one question you did have I can
29 respond a little bit. As far as the high seas driftnet
30 concern that you raised. I had the privilege of
31 working with Mr. Sparks back when that was occurring in
32 the late '80s and early '90s and that was actually
33 primarily for silvers and it was to move the foreign
34 fleets down below the 88th parallel and that actually
35 did pass through the United Nations in 1992 or 1993, I
36 believe. But those 10-mile driftnets that you
37 mentioned are no longer allowed even on the high seas
38 through United Nations actions. So that ban is in
39 existence.

40

41 The king salmon are primarily within
42 the Bering Sea. They don't go down far enough to be
43 affected by any high seas that's going on right now,
44 but your Russian concerns are certainly true.

45

46 Another thing, since it's been
47 mentioned so often I'll just put it out there too is
48 regarding further limitations on the Bering Sea trawl
49 fleet. The complication that exists here is that that
50 fishery is controlled by the Federal Department of

1 Commerce. It is not under Department of Interior.
2 However, at the last meeting in October there is
3 progress being made. It's slow. The Federal
4 government is this monster ship that take a year to
5 start to turn anywhere.

6
7 It was unprecedented that the
8 Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
9 did call for within a year to incorporate into the
10 North Pacific Council's management that they need to
11 consider the chinook crisis throughout their migratory
12 range in making their decisions. That's never been
13 stated before, so that's progress along those line.

14
15 Also we are currently undergoing at the
16 Federal level a review of and reauthorization for the
17 Magnuson-Stevens Act, which is a 200-mile limit, that
18 people are working very hard to incorporate more
19 consideration into that Act that would require the
20 North Pacific Council to take further actions in
21 consideration of the king salmon and the crisis that
22 we're facing in the AYK region and throughout Alaska.

23
24 That's a little update. I would hope
25 under AVCP, since I see the representative here, that
26 when he gives his report he might have a little bit
27 more comprehensive information for us on that since he
28 just returned from the hearings in Washington, D.C.
29 last week.

30
31 MR. GEORGE: Quyana, Mr. Chairman. For
32 the comments, the articles that we got in Akiachak
33 primarily talking about king salmon, not silvers.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Phillip
36 Peter.

37
38 MR. PETER: Good morning.

39
40 INTERPRETER: A few days ago we had a
41 Unit 4 meeting in Akiak. We were asked if we were
42 being closed on for subsistence. We asked our elders to
43 fish and that's what our plan is. Is that a
44 possibility up to June 30 that we're going to be
45 closed, May 1 through June 30? Is that true? I'm
46 asking because I have no reference if that's true, if
47 any fishery is going to be closed from May through June
48 30.

49
50 MR. CHARLES: Mr. Chair.

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: James.

2

3 MR. CHARLES: I think he asked me. (In
4 Yup'ik)

5

6 INTERPRETER: At the Kuskokwim Salmon
7 Management Working Group meeting I was there the first
8 day, but I was absent the second day because I was sent
9 to other places. Were you there, Greg, the second day
10 or on the 10th or 11th of January?

11

12 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: No. I was
13 off to the Board of Game meetings in Kotzebue at the
14 time. Nothing has been decided yet. That is what's on
15 the table. One of the recommendations, our options
16 that's being discussed and was put forward by the
17 working group was to close on May 15th and if the run
18 does not come in as strong as it has in the past,
19 possibly hold off till about June 23rd before they
20 would have the first opening. That's one of the
21 options that's being discussed.

22

23 The Department had another option
24 that's also being discussed. At this time it would
25 allow for some subsistence opportunity early in the
26 season in early June. That has not been decided yet.
27 They are continuing to have their meetings and
28 discussions and we're looking at around the first week
29 of April, the 3rd or 4th, is when they're supposed to
30 come up with some kind of a final preseason plan that
31 they'll announce to people. Nothing has been decided
32 yet.

33

34 MR. PETER: We're going to have a
35 meeting again this week in Tuluksak, a Unit 4 meeting,
36 to discuss about chinook salmon. We're talking about
37 it right now. I hope they will give us a window of
38 opportunity for the salmon only, first run. Yeah,
39 first run, yeah. I want to thank James Charles and
40 Charlie Brown for re-electing again, staying on Federal
41 board.

42

43 (In Yup'ik)

44

45 INTERPRETER: All of you guys help us
46 and I thank you guys all from the bottom of my heart.
47 It's very important subjects when you guys work on them
48 that's based on our livelihood and a lot of those that
49 are not going to be helping us in our life I am cheated
50 and I have a hard time too. When things are not okay,

1 a lot of things are okay. I just wanted to ask that
2 question and I wanted to understand if the closure is
3 going to be happening this summer. We'll talk about it
4 during our meeting and I'll present it in our meeting.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Next is
9 Nicholai Alexie.

10
11 MR. ALEXIE: Quyana. My name is
12 Nicholai Alexie and I have a question. We had a
13 handout yesterday about this Yukon area proposals to
14 the Alaska Board of Fisheries March 14, 2014. It was
15 Proposal 341. At the bottom of the Page 5 and 6
16 there's this parentheses with MSY = 700K. I just need
17 a clarification. (In Yup'ik)

18
19 INTERPRETER: I would like to have
20 clarification on that status and I'd like to have
21 somebody put it in Yup'ik.

22
23 MR. ALEXIE: I want a simple, clarified
24 explanation on this MSY. How does it apply to my
25 subsistence way of life?

26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: MSY stands
28 for maximum sustained yield. That is a formula that's
29 put together by managers. There's different variations
30 of it on both the Federal and State side. The way it's
31 used under the State is the number of fish that are
32 allowed for escapement under the State is for what's
33 called maximum sustained yield. For the number of fish
34 that go onto the spawning grounds, that you get the
35 maximum number of fish back.

36
37 This, that was put in by Mr. Sandone
38 regarding the Yukon proposal and the graphs that he had
39 there, they're saying that by putting I think it was
40 approximately a million fish up there it's where they
41 get the maximum number of fish back because once you
42 start to exceed those levels you don't get any extra
43 fish back. So his proposal that he put before the
44 Board of Fish board was a change request and got
45 approved was to say using that MSY number, maximum
46 sustained yield, is that there's two million fish that
47 could be harvested in commercial and it would not
48 affect the productivity of fish coming back or the
49 number of fish coming back. They would still get the
50 same numbers of fish coming back. They're basically

1 extra fish. That's what the MSY stands for and it's a
2 formula used by management to do that.

3
4 They found it's pretty consistent. Of
5 course, the scientists argue about it a lot, but pretty
6 consistent throughout salmon streams throughout the
7 world.

8
9 MR. ALEXIE: So if there's 100,000 fish
10 coming in and they need X amount of escapement goals,
11 the return of the fish every year is going -- the
12 numbers keep going down and down, the number of
13 returning fish, do they adjust that MSY?

14
15 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It is
16 reviewed on a regular basis every couple years and
17 adjusted up and down. They do their best. It's not an
18 exact science certainly. With the changing weather
19 conditions that we've got now, the effect -- you know,
20 what you get for survival, that throws a monkey wrench
21 into it too. It's back to the best guess using what
22 they've got established under their scientific
23 processes. That's the best I can do for you.

24
25 MR. ALEXIE: Guyana.

26
27 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: David, go
30 ahead.

31
32 MR. BILL: I'd like to ask who is on
33 the telephone for us today. Can you ask for it.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, I
36 guess I can do that for the record before we move off
37 anymore. We'll start with Federal staff online. Would
38 you please announce yourself for the record.

39
40 MR. PAPPAS: George Pappas, OSM.

41
42 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard, OSM.

43
44 MR. EVANS: Tom Evans, OSM.

45
46 MS. INGLES: Palma Ingles, OSM.

47
48 MR. HAMMOND: Tim Hammond, Bureau of
49 Land Management.

50

1 MR. BUE: Fred Bue, Yukon Management.
2
3 MR. SHARP: Dan Sharp, BLM, from the
4 Anchorage office.
5
6 MR. HARPER: Ken Harper, U.S. Fish and
7 Wildlife.
8
9 MR. ADERMAN: Andy Aderman, Togiak
10 Refuge, Dillingham.
11
12 MS. HENRY: This is Susanna Henry,
13 Refuge Manager at Togiak Refuge also in Dillingham.
14
15 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
16 If there's no other Federal staff.
17
18 (No comments)
19
20 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I'll move on
21 to the State.
22
23 MR. CRAWFORD: Drew Crawford, Alaska
24 Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage.
25
26 MR. ELISON: Travis Elison, Fish and
27 Game, Anchorage.
28
29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing no
30 other State staff representatives, I'll move on. Any
31 other organizations, public that are tuned into the
32 teleconference.
33
34 MR. CANNON: Dave Cannon in Aniak with
35 the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group.
36
37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else
38 that hasn't made themselves known yet.
39
40 (No comments)
41
42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing
43 none. Thank you, David, for reminding me on that.
44
45 MR. BILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I have no
48 other blue card for public testimony, so we can move on
49 then down the agenda. We stopped yesterday after the
50 Yukon River fisheries proposals and the outlook. That

1 brings us to item three under Old Business for an
2 update on the customary and traditional use
3 determinations.

4

5 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
6 name is Pippa Kenner and I'm with the Office of
7 Subsistence Management in Anchorage. I'm an
8 anthropologist. The briefing today for the customary
9 and traditional use determination process begins on
10 Page 23 of your Council books. This isn't an action
11 item. My presentation is to tell you where we are in
12 our review of the customary and traditional use
13 determination process.

14

15 For the public, there were some extra
16 Council books on the back table, but I think they're
17 all gone, so I'm just going to quickly overview what
18 the materials say. I'll start with a short history.

19

20 In 2009, Secretary of the Interior Ken
21 Salazar began a review of the Federal subsistence
22 program. Part of that review focused on customary and
23 traditional use determinations. A year later in 2010
24 the Secretary of the Interior asked the Board
25 to review with Regional Advisory Council input the
26 customary and traditional use determination process and
27 present recommendations for regulatory changes. C&Ts,
28 customary and traditional use determinations, are based
29 on the eight factors and the eight factors are
30 presented on Page 32 of your Council book.

31

32 At their 2011 winter meeting, all ten
33 Regional Advisory Councils were asked for their
34 perspectives on customary and traditional use
35 determinations. Nine of the ten Councils did not
36 suggest changes to the process and their comments are
37 once again presented to you beginning on Page 27,
38 Appendix B of your Council book.

39

40 The Southeast Council asked the other
41 nine Councils to review the customary and traditional
42 use determination process again. The Southeast Council
43 did not support retaining the current customary and
44 traditional use determination process. Instead, the
45 Southeast Council suggests that, when necessary, the
46 Board restrict who can fish, hunt or trap for
47 subsistence by applying ANILCA Section .804 criteria.
48 There are three criteria: (1) who has direct dependence
49 on the resources, (2) who is in proximity to the
50 resource, and (3) who has alternative resources

1 available.

2

3

4 The Southeast Council asked you to
5 consider whether to
6 (1) eliminate customary and traditional use
7 determinations and instead use, when necessary, ANILCA
8 Section .804 criteria,
9 (2) change the way determinations are made, or (3) make
10 some other change, or (4) make no change.

11

12 At your fall meeting, this Council
13 adopted a motion to support Alternative No. 1 that
14 would allow elimination of
15 customary and traditional use determinations and
16 instead use ANILCA Section .804 when it becomes
17 necessary to limit who can harvest a resource.

18

19 Your recommendation is described
20 beginning at the bottom of Page 33 in your Council
21 books and the recommendations of the other Councils are
22 also in this section of the book.

23

24 The Councils' recommendations are
25 providing the basis for our briefing to the Federal
26 Subsistence Board at its April 2014 meeting next month.
27 The Board could then recommend that the Secretaries
28 eliminate, amend, or make no change to the current
29 customary and traditional use determination process.

30

31 Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's the end
32 of my presentation and I'm happy to answer your
33 questions. Pat Petrivelli with the Bureau of Indian
34 Affairs is also here. She's an expert in the C&T
35 process and she can answer your questions also.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any
40 questions.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I guess mine
45 would be -- you kind of answered it already, that
46 you're preparing a briefing for the Federal Board.
47 Will there be Staff or OSM recommendation coming out
48 something similar to the Technical Review Committee
49 proposals and so forth or a policy committee or
50 something of that nature that's going to recommend
51 action to the Federal Board regarding this?

1 MS. KENNER: Thank you for that
2 question, Mr. Chair. I believe I know the answer. Pat
3 might know better. No, actually a review of all the
4 comments will be presented to the Board and if the
5 Board thinks that a change has been asked for, if they
6 can see consensus among the Councils or feel like they
7 can put in a proposal that would meet some of the
8 expectations of the Councils, they'd put in a proposal,
9 the Board would, and then we'd go through the analysis
10 process.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: You don't
13 have anything to add to that, Pat?

14
15 MS. PETRIVELLI: No.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.
18 Anyone else. Just to get it clear in my mind, if the
19 Board felt the changes were necessary, then we'd go
20 into a proposal for a change to the regulatory rule?
21 What would be any further opportunity to -- if there is
22 a final action, it's going to be put forward?

23
24 MS. PETRIVELLI: This part of the
25 regulations are in subpart A and B and they're
26 controlled by the Secretary of Interior. It would be a
27 proposed rule -- because the Secretary asked us to
28 review these regulations as the Board is supposed to
29 review it with the Councils. If there's any changes
30 that the Board recommends, they'll listen to the
31 Councils, the changes they recommend. If they want to
32 forward those to the Secretary, then they would prepare
33 something that would say this is how the regulations
34 would be changed and then the Secretaries would have to
35 decide if they agreed with that. If they agreed, then
36 there would be a proposed rule. Then there would be
37 the six however periods. It would be published in the
38 Federal Register and there would be time for comments
39 and everything.

40
41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: After the 90
42 to 180 days or whatever it is.

43
44 MS. PETRIVELLI: Whatever the Federal
45 Register requires.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: As a Federal
48 regulation. Anybody else.

49
50 (No comments)

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. So
2 we'll move up to number 4 on the rural determination
3 process review.

4
5 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 Again, this is Pippa Kenner. I'm with OSM in Anchorage
7 and this is not an action item. My presentation is to
8 tell you where we are in our review of the rural
9 determination process. The briefing begins on Page 37
10 of your Council book.

11
12 This is very short. Just an update.
13 The public comment period closed in December and
14 recommendations from the 10 Councils, tribal and ANCSA
15 corporation consultations and comments from the public
16 will be presented to the Federal Subsistence Board at
17 its April 2014 meeting, which is next month. For the
18 next step, the Board will make recommendations to
19 improve the process to the Federal government Secretary
20 of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture.

21
22 The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council's
23 recommendation is on Page 41 of your Council books and
24 the recommendations from other Councils also are in
25 this section of the Council book.

26
27 That's the end of my presentation.
28 We're happy to answer questions.

29
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: You didn't
33 actually mention the timelines, although I'm sure
34 they're in there.

35
36 MS. KENNER: Unfortunately, no, the
37 timeline isn't in the book, but it is at our website
38 and I do have a copy of it. I can hand it to you right
39 now if you'd like.

40
41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Would you
42 just say it for people's -- I mean I think I've got a
43 pretty good handle on what's happening there, but if
44 you'd just let people know what that process for a
45 possible rule change similar to the C&T, what the dates
46 are for potential actions.

47
48 MS. KENNER: Thank you for that
49 question, Mr. Chair. The process is at the website and
50 I do have a copy of it right here. I do want to remind

1 you this is a review of the rural determination
2 process. That's how we go about determining what is
3 rural and what is nonrural. We're not in the phase
4 yet, and we won't be for quite a few years of actually
5 going through the determination of specific areas or
6 communities.

7
8 So the next step is for the -- after
9 the Board meets, the proposed rule for any structural
10 changes that the Board thinks are appropriate will go
11 through the Federal Register process between April 2014
12 and June 2014 and the comments that we get back from
13 that review process will be reviewed from up until
14 about November 2014 and then the Federal Subsistence
15 Board will review those comments in the Staff analysis
16 and it will draft recommendations to the Secretaries
17 and that will occur in about January 2015 and then the
18 draft final rule based on the Secretary's direction
19 will be published in the Federal Register in about
20 February 2015 and the comment period will extend to
21 April 2015.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
24 Any questions, Council members, comments.

25
26 James.

27
28 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
29 On Page 41, the timeline, if the RAC decided to change
30 that regulation or if they decide that they don't like
31 the regulation because of what's happening now, would
32 they be able to change it then or within 10 years? I
33 mean the policy made for that.

34
35 MS. KENNER: Through the Chair. Thank
36 you, Mr. Charles, for that question. The process right
37 now where we review rural every 10 years, that's up for
38 -- that's what we've been collecting comments on and
39 the Board, yes, does have the power to make a
40 recommendation that those regulations be changed. That
41 is what we're discussing right now.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Pat, you had
44 something to add.

45
46 MS. PETRIVELLI: That 10 years is in
47 the regulation now and the 10 years says that the Board
48 will look at which communities are rural and which
49 communities aren't. That's what that 10-year timeline
50 is. Now the process that we use, this process was

1 adopted in 1990 when the program was assumed by the
2 Federal and this is the first time we're looking at it.

3

4

5 Now this process thing is another
6 subpart A and B regulation, so that's what -- if
7 there's proposed changes, then the Secretaries will
8 consider it because that kind of -- Pippa's answer
9 merged the two things, so what we're doing is we're
10 looking at the process now, we're fixing the process
11 and then once that process is established, however it's
12 decided, the new process, then that will be used to
13 make the determinations, but the 10-year timeline was
14 to look at who is rural, who is not rural.

15

16 You were asked to comment on saying do
17 we have to do this every 10 years, could we do it every
18 20 years or could we do it whenever it's necessary and
19 when there's significant changes. But people made
20 those comments and the Board will look at that when
21 they're reviewing the comments in April.

22

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any follow
24 up on that, James.

25

26 MR. CHARLES: Okay. So if the group,
27 the RAC, decide the resource is not coming back to the
28 same way as we used to have years ago, so they're
29 allowed to make some recommendations to change that
30 within 10 years. Is that how I understand it right?

31

32 MS. PETRIVELLI: The Federal program
33 operates on this structure. It allows a priority for
34 rural residents on Federal public lands, so that's what
35 the rural determinations are for. The next thing they
36 do is they say there's customary and traditional use
37 determinations and then they say those people have the
38 priority on those Federal public lands. If the
39 resources aren't coming back, that's a different
40 process. That's the .804 and that's like a Tier II
41 situation. In ANILCA, there's .804 regulations and
42 they have the three criteria. It's in the book and it
43 compares and it tells those .804 criteria.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.

46

47 Anything further.

48

49 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair.

50

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: David Bill.

2

3 MR. BILL: I did not really get what
4 you were talking about there on customary and
5 traditional use being changed. Can you explain more
6 and who changes it.

7

8 MS. PETRIVELLI: Okay. Technically,
9 customary and traditional use determinations aren't
10 changed and that's where people get confused because
11 sometimes they want to say to restrict a customary and
12 traditional use determination when there's shortages,
13 but once the Board has made a determination generally
14 that means the residents of those areas have customary
15 and traditional use of that resource. Now whether the
16 resource is there or not has nothing to do if they used
17 it in the past. So it's not a tool to look at things
18 in times of shortage.

19

20 Customary and traditional use
21 determinations are made just to provide the priority
22 for subsistence use of the resource. The .804
23 determination is when there's less resources and they
24 look at three criteria that aren't part of the
25 customary and traditional use determination.

26

27 But this topic that we were on just a
28 few minutes ago, that was changing how the Board does
29 those customary and traditional use determination,
30 whether it would change or not.

31

32 MR. BILL: Follow up, Mr. Chairman.

33

34 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
35 David.

36

37 MR. BILL: Customary and traditional
38 use. Remember back in the days of high seas
39 driftnetting, down in United Nations in New York I was
40 there. Customary traditional use of Yup'iks. They
41 made a big impact in that year by taking the high seas
42 driftnetters out of the ocean. It was Yup'ik way of
43 life that changed the life of the high seas
44 driftnetting.

45

46 For us Native people, customary and
47 traditional use is something that we believe in. We
48 live it, you don't, we do, every day. We live it until
49 we're six feet underground. That's our life. I'm
50 very, very happy that we were part of the biggest thing

1 that ever happened to the United States or the world by
2 taking driftnetters out of there by using customary and
3 traditional use and subsistence. Yeah, I know all of
4 this. I was there with them. I was leading the group
5 from Bering Sea Fisherman's Association.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9

10 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any others.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: If not,
15 thank you, ladies.

16

17 MS. KENNER: Thank you.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Which brings
20 us up to item 5 on the Kuskokwim River salmon
21 fisheries. Is there any staff here to address that.
22 Travis, is that what you're waiting for?

23

24 MR. ELISON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm
25 prepared to give that now.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, that's
28 where we are. You have the floor.

29

30 MR. ELISON: Okay, thank you. Once
31 again, this is Travis Elison. I'm a Kuskokwim area
32 management biologist for the Division of Commercial
33 fisheries for Fish and Game. I guess since the fall
34 meeting some things to update the Council on are we've
35 completed our subsistence harvest preliminary estimate
36 for 2013 for all species, but for -- this update will
37 stick to chinook salmon unless I get questions on other
38 species.

39

40 So the subsistence harvest estimate for
41 2013 king salmon is 46,500. That resulted in a total
42 run estimate of 94,000 and a drainage-wide escapement
43 of 47,500. As we discussed in the fall, all the
44 tributary escapement goals were not achieved and, in
45 fact, all the observed escapements of all the weir
46 projects were the lowest on record. Most of the aerial
47 survey escapement goals were missed except for two were
48 made towards the lower end of the goal, so escapement
49 was very poor last year.

50

1 So looking forward to 2014, we're
2 definitely looking at conservative management. One
3 thing that's changed compared to 2013 is the way we are
4 doing our forecasting for next year's run. In the past
5 four or five years we've used standardized forecasting
6 methodology which looks at a bunch of different models
7 to predict next year's return, so we were using like
8 seven year average return and looking at sibling models
9 where we were using returning three-year-olds to
10 predict how many four-year-olds were returning the
11 following year and also looking at 10-year escapements
12 to predict how many would be returning off that
13 escapement.

14
15 So we'd run a statistical analysis on
16 all those models individually for each age class
17 returning chinook salmon and then we'd take the most
18 statistically significant model and use that as our
19 forecast for each age group and then we'd take the sum
20 of each, the forecast for each age group to forecast
21 the total run.

22
23 What we found with using that
24 methodology, although it was well-adopted methodology
25 within the Department, we found that it had a tendency
26 to forecast towards average total runs, average
27 returns, which resulted in overforecasting here in
28 recent years now that we're on low abundance regime.

29
30 So we looked at forecasting again. We
31 did some hindcasting where you do forecast for previous
32 years and see how it compares to what the actual result
33 was. We actually found that using just the previous
34 year total run estimate was the most accurate and
35 oftentimes the most precise for forecasting. So that's
36 what we're moving to for next year. It's quite simple.
37 It's really similar to how we used to do outlooks
38 before we had a drainage-wide estimate and a run
39 reconstruction.

40
41 So, for 2014 king salmon we're looking
42 at a forecast of 94,000 returning kings and we use a
43 seven-year percent error to come up with a range and
44 that was 24 percent. So the range is 72,000 to
45 117,000.

46
47 The drainage-wide escapement goal is
48 65,000 to 120,000. So that forecast falls right in the
49 middle of the escapement goal. So, theoretically, if
50 the run came back as expected and we had zero harvest,

1 we would just meet our escapement. Essentially there's
2 not really a surplus here. So, as a result, we're not
3 planning on having any directed chinook salmon
4 subsistence fishing periods.

5
6 Which means for management and
7 restrictions and those kind of things for next year
8 we're anticipating closing subsistence salmon fishing
9 maybe late May to early June, depending on the section
10 of the river. It would close in the lower part of the
11 river and then move upstream like it did in 2012 with
12 the rolling closure sections.

13
14 So, in the Bethel area we're probably
15 looking around June 1st, maybe late May for the
16 closures to start and then they'll probably remain
17 closed through most of June until late June. We're
18 planning on going in with a subsistence fishing
19 schedule, so we'll have some scheduled periods so
20 people can plan for these things.

21
22 Right now what we're looking at is
23 having the first subsistence fishing opening on June
24 26th and we're looking at short periods, somewhere
25 between four and eight hours in the Lower River and
26 those fishing periods would increase in time as you
27 move into upriver sections.

28
29 The schedule right now we have four
30 days of closures and then another short fishing period
31 with fishing opening 24/7 in the Bethel area on July 6
32 with six-inch restricted gear. So all our fishing
33 periods we're looking at -- because we want to target
34 sockeye and chum salmon, conserve king salmon, all
35 fishing in June and early July will be with six-inch or
36 less mesh size.

37
38 During the closures we do plan to allow
39 for four-inch or less mesh, 60-foot long nets to
40 harvest non-salmon species, so whitefish.

41
42 A couple more things to point out. I'm
43 sure a lot of people maybe have seen the schedule in a
44 newspaper or something or a working group meeting. The
45 schedule is still preliminary. We still have more
46 meetings with the working group and we haven't really
47 discussed with the working group how to allow these
48 fishing periods here in late June as far as amount of
49 time and the days to do them on.

50

1 Another thing to note is even if we put
2 out a schedule with scheduled fishing periods, we'll
3 still need to use the Bethel test fishery to assess the
4 run. If we're not seeing sufficient numbers in the
5 test fishery to project that we're actually going to
6 meet escapement, then we could potentially pull those
7 periods and keep it closed until the next scheduled
8 period and wait and see if they improve. Until we get
9 to the point where the king salmon run is mostly
10 through the river and incidental harvest would be
11 minimal, then we can provide that opportunity for chum
12 and sockeye with six-inch gear.

13
14 On the flip side of that, if we do see
15 the run come in better than expected, once we get
16 towards -- around June 20th we start getting some
17 confidence in our run assessment. So if we're seeing
18 really good numbers in test fishery around that time,
19 we do have the potential to start providing more
20 fishing opportunity. We could increase fishing period
21 times, add days to fishing time, so we do have some
22 flexibility there, but right now the plan is to go in
23 with a schedule based on the expectation of a low king
24 run and then adjust it accordingly and cease it if we
25 need do.

26
27 So these are the main points I had to
28 update the Council. I can take questions on that.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
31 members. James.

32
33 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 Travis, I missed out on the last part of the last
35 meeting back in January. I was at the meeting I
36 believe on the 10th of January and missed out on the
37 11th when you guys made the schedule. On this -- what
38 you call them, the papers I got are different in our
39 RAC book. The schedule for 2014 preliminary schedule
40 and the fax I got when I was in Kotzebue that time is
41 different. This one I got faxed was six-hour windows
42 up there on June 1st, 3rd and 5th. Now in this RAC
43 book it's four hours on June 23 and 28, I believe it
44 was. So they're different. Will the working group
45 update those the next time they have a meeting?

46
47 MR. ELISON: Through the Chair. Mr.
48 Charles. Yes, this schedule is evolving. It's a
49 working document. We've been changing it around. The
50 schedule you see on Page 71 of your RAC booklet, that

1 was the schedule we originally proposed to the working
2 group back in January and that was the starting point
3 for discussions of what the schedule would look like.

4
5 One of the things we were looking at is
6 the time period where it's closed on this schedule is
7 where we're confident there will be kings in the river
8 in sufficient number that we're going to need to have
9 closures to get that conservation.

10
11 Through discussions in that January
12 working group meeting, there was a lot of discussion
13 about when to start the fishing schedule. Yesterday
14 you heard from the managers on the Yukon how difficult
15 that can be. Last year there were closures before the
16 river even opened and that can cause problems. Another
17 thing is with people trying to harvest whitefish and
18 sheefish in late spring, early summer. So salmon
19 closures could impact that opportunity.

20
21 So we had a long discussion about how
22 to start these closures and when it would be.
23 Eventually there was a motion to initiate the first
24 closure on Section 1 down toward the mouth to initiate
25 that on May 15th and then to apply closures in the
26 following Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 with run timing. So
27 basically as the schedule looks, but just moving that
28 first closure to May 15th and then staggering the
29 closures in the other sections based on that May 15th
30 day. So the working group did pass that motion, so
31 that's the working group's recommendation for when to
32 start the closure is May 15th.

33
34 We're undecided right now as far as the
35 Department's decision on when to start the closures.
36 We do have some concerns of that May 15th. That's
37 generally before we see any significant numbers of king
38 salmon. Some years there are a few kings that do get
39 caught in the Lower River in late May, but recently we
40 see late run timing and there's very few caught in May.
41 We start test fishing on June 1st and sometime that
42 first week we generally see our first king catch.

43
44 Something else we need to consider is,
45 unlike last year, we've had a very mild winter.
46 Temperatures have been warmer, there's less sea ice
47 coverage, so that could potentially be pointing to a
48 little bit earlier run timing than we see here
49 recently. So it's something else we need to consider.
50

1 So we'll have a final decision on this
2 after the April working group meeting. I think we'll
3 take the working group's recommendation to start the
4 closures earlier than what you see on the schedule
5 here. The latest one I put together looking at
6 considering what the working group concerns were about
7 harvesting those early fish, I had the Section 2 Bethel
8 closing on June 1st. So it will probably be somewhere
9 in there, but there will be more discussions on it.

10

11 We kind of ran out of time in January
12 as far as discussing how to allow those chum and
13 sockeye fishing periods to proceed. So that will be a
14 major focus on our discussions April 3rd and 4th. Once
15 we're done with that working group meeting and come to
16 some agreement on what the schedule will look like,
17 then we'll put out a news release shortly thereafter.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.

20 Anyone else.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: For
25 clarification, I guess, Travis, your forecast is coming
26 in right around 94,000 and you want to manage for the
27 midpoint of your escapement goals, which I believe is
28 right around 85 and there could potentially be up to
29 10,000 fish, but you do not have a mechanism in place
30 to have openings early enough without turning the whole
31 fleet loose and potentially taking in one day 20-30,000
32 fish, tripling what you might have there. Is that a
33 fair assessment?

34

35 MR. ELISON: Yes, Mr. Chair, that's a
36 fair assessment. You know, with these forecasts being
37 right within -- basically within -- it's just above
38 midpoint escapement goal and the lower end of the range
39 being within 7,000 fish of the escapement goal, as
40 imprecise as our run assessment is in-season and these
41 forecasts being even more imprecise and inaccurate, we
42 really do need to proceed with extreme caution as far
43 as allowing opportunity that might harvest king salmon.

44

45

46 If king salmon were the only fish
47 returning next year, we wouldn't have fishing periods
48 unless we saw an assessment that said that the run was
49 stronger than we expected because we really do need to
50 meet these escapement goals after missing it two out of

1 the last four years.

2

3 So we're looking at -- you know, we
4 could allow a few kings, maybe 5, 10, 15,000 kings get
5 harvested and still be within our escapement goal and
6 be all right, but we're going to have to be very
7 careful with that. Just by allowing opportunity to
8 target chum and sockeye salmon with six-inch gear, we
9 think that will result in a king salmon harvest that's
10 probably within about that 10,000 range if we go
11 through with the schedule like it's looking now.

12

13 So one of the big focuses this year is
14 to conserve as many kings as we possibly can, but also
15 to provide as much opportunity as we can for the chum
16 and sockeye. It's going to be a tough year because
17 we're looking at three to four weeks of complete salmon
18 fishing closures when typically most people are doing
19 most of their subsistence harvest effort to put fish on
20 racks during that nice drying season. Just with the
21 run timing of kings and other species, it's going to be
22 close to late June, early July when people are
23 typically done, so it's going to be a very difficult
24 season for everything, I think.

25

26 I think we will be able to provide
27 enough opportunity to at least allow people to get
28 sufficient numbers of sockeye and chum salmon.
29 Typically the chum salmon.

30

31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I appreciate
36 the update. I don't know if I want to say thank you
37 for the information. I wish it could have been
38 different, but that's what we're looking at to deal
39 with.

40

41 You had a question? I'll allow a
42 question. Don't go off into a speech. Go ahead,
43 Jackson.

44

45 MR. WILLIAMS: Jackson Williams from
46 Akiak. Earlier -- I will start off with Unit 4 that
47 Phillip Peter talked about. In Akiak we had a meeting
48 last week concerning the chinook and the Unit 4 is the
49 upper village from Bethel. We'll have another meeting
50 like he mentioned on this coming Saturday to really

1 powwow what the people in the upriver villages want to
2 do.

3

4 I had a question. Last year I was glad
5 Akiak sponsored me to go to these meetings on chinook.
6 One of the bystanders that really stick in my mind was
7 during the chinook run test fishery, you know, that we
8 have here. That person that really mentioned during
9 the Anchorage chinook that I went to meeting was
10 telling the Department a really accurate -- when he
11 mentioned that really accurate test fishery, I was
12 really thinking of, you know, we need to get somewhere
13 involved with people around this Kuskokwim that do
14 subsistence fish and most of them -- like the lady
15 mentioned earlier, we're the expert. We're the number
16 one expert on the river. People that do fish in the
17 Kuskokwim. There's no more other experts other than
18 us. We know the fish upside down. Talking to you --
19 what's his name, Greg?

20

21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It's Travis
22 Elison. He's the State area biologist. Can you ask
23 your question, please.

24

25 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah. While I was
26 thinking of that, you know, on the test fishery, you
27 know, depending on -- you mentioned it earlier that --
28 you know, how the test -- and my question was like on
29 your test fishery that is -- you know, if you get
30 early, in some years they're early and they're
31 abundant, what happens to if the fish are abundant on
32 the testing this summer, like really abundant? That's
33 what I'm trying to go after.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 MR. ELISON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
38 Williams. Yes, if we see really good numbers in our
39 test fishery, we're catching a lot early on and it
40 continues through -- almost through the mid point of
41 the run, which should be around June 20th, then it
42 would have the ability to provide more opportunity.
43 You know, it could be some going to six-inch or less
44 mesh 24/7 hours a day.

45

46 If we're seeing good numbers and we're
47 confident we're going to meet escapement, you know, I
48 suppose it's possible that we could see such a -- you
49 know, we could see another 150,000 come back compared
50 to last year, in which case there would be no concern

1 for escapement and abundance and we could open it up
2 with normal regulations, which would be any mesh size,
3 but I think that's really unlikely this year.
4 Statewide, we're looking at some of the lowest returns
5 on record. Everywhere from the Kenai to Kuskokwim,
6 Yukon and Unalakleet, they're all forecasting the
7 lowest runs on record.

8
9 I wish we had better news for everyone,
10 but that's what we're looking at right now. Hopefully
11 it will turn around soon, but I think the likelihood
12 that doing it this year is pretty low. We do have the
13 ability to stay flexible in-season and adjust as we see
14 the run come in, but we want to be careful early on
15 because we could see an early pulse of fish and things
16 could be looking really, really good and if we let
17 everybody go fishing, we could end up in a situation
18 that we did last year where that run ends early and you
19 need more fish to meet your escapement goal, but we
20 already harvested them and the run is over and then
21 there's really nothing you can do. So we need to avoid
22 that situation next year.

23
24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any other
25 questions for Travis. Phillip, question? Okay.

26
27 MR. PETER: Travis, this is Phillip
28 Peter, Akiachak Native Community. I've got a question
29 on the first opening on subsistence fishing. There's
30 going to be a patrolman patrolling around checking our
31 fish and if they see a king for subsistence use, you
32 guys will confiscate or donate it to somebody else who
33 needs them or are we going to keep all the fish what we
34 caught for our consumption use?

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 MR. ELISON: Through the Chair, Mr.
39 Peter. We will allow people to keep those kings. So
40 during those scheduled periods where we'd open it to
41 six-inch or less mesh size gillnets, you know, all the
42 fish caught people could keep. We know people will
43 catch king salmon during that time, but we expect it to
44 be few. When we did this in 2012 and opened a six-inch
45 mesh in late June subsistence fishery, we were seeing
46 -- typical catches was about 100 chum and sockeye total
47 and about 4 or 5 king salmon. It was pretty typical to
48 what we were seeing in boats when we were doing that
49 patrolling effort. So those fish people can retain.

50

1 Now if somebody was caught using large
2 mesh gear, typically those fish would be confiscated
3 and then donated. As long as people are using legal
4 gear, those fish could be retained.

5
6 On a side issue, there's petitions to
7 allow dipnetting in the Kuskokwim River for subsistence
8 fishing. If that were to get adopted, it would be the
9 same situation as on the Yukon where dipnets are
10 allowed, but king salmon could not be retained. The
11 reason is that with dipnets you can release the king
12 salmon alive. So that would be something where people
13 would not be allowed to keep the kings.

14
15 If we did have that ability, we could
16 allow some opportunity with dipnets earlier in the
17 season, so maybe starting the 18th or so, once chum and
18 sockeye are there, we could allow some dipnet fishing
19 because all the king salmon can be released. That
20 might help ease some of the burden of not getting any
21 fresh fish in June.

22
23 That's what I had on that.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That was a
28 good question, Phillip. I think it was more to the
29 point too you focused in on when you do have an
30 opening, but people are probably going to have their
31 whitefish nets out there and if they should happen to
32 catch -- I mean it's highly unlikely they're going to
33 get any large kings in there, but might end up with a
34 few jacks or something like that and that same thing
35 would apply, people would be allowed to keep the kings
36 that were caught in their whitefish gear, right?

37
38 MR. ELISON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
41 Any others. One more. A question?

42
43 MR. GEORGE: Yeah.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay, Fritz.

46
47 MR. GEORGE: Quyana, Mr. Chairman.
48 Travis, I didn't get to hear the size of net the test
49 fisheries use. Then the second one I want to bring up
50 is why not have a test fishery in all the villages from

1 Eek to all the way upriver? If the village can provide
2 the gas to the test fishermen, then these test
3 fishermen can give away its catch to the elders.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MR. ELISON: Through the Chair. I
8 guess the first part of the question was what nets do
9 we use in the Bethel test fishery and the answer is we
10 have two nets. One is a 5-3/8ths-inch net and the
11 other is an 8-inch net. Both of the nets are used to
12 index chinook salmon abundance and then 5-3/8ths is
13 used for chinook, chum, sockeye and coho salmon.

14

15 In the past, there have been a lot of
16 different test fisheries tried in the Kuskokwim River.
17 All the way down to Eek there's been a couple different
18 ones down there. There's been test fisheries in Aniak
19 and other places. Really, for it to -- we really just
20 need a consistent place, consistent method where people
21 are fishing twice a day, same time, same way, and you
22 need that over multiple years in order to understand
23 what that means. So that's one reason we're not
24 pursuing test fisheries in every village.

25

26 Another reason being in a year like
27 this to have 20 or so test fisheries going, that could
28 result in quite a bit of harvest that we might not be
29 able to afford in order to meet our escapement goals.
30 If you have all these test fisheries going through the
31 king salmon run, I mean you could potentially end up
32 harvesting thousands of king salmon just doing your
33 assessment and if all we have is thousands of king
34 salmon to harvest, then we can't even let people go
35 subsistence fishing for chum and sockeye salmon because
36 we've already taken any fish we have above our minimum
37 escapement needs. So that could actually negatively
38 impact subsistence fishermen if it got to the scale
39 where every single village had a test fishery.

40

41 We've considered other test fisheries
42 in the Lower River. We are going to be doing some
43 tagging of kings in the Lower River, so we're going to
44 be looking a little bit more into operations down
45 there.

46

47 Another thing we're doing this year is
48 we're actually going to be doing some site surveys for
49 sonar to see if that might be more feasible now that
50 there's been some improvements in sonar technology.

1 That's something we could potentially move to in the
2 future. It might not be a golden bullet and have all
3 the answers, but it could potentially be better than a
4 test fishery.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Appreciate
7 that and appreciate the question, Fritz. Mr. Runfola
8 from Subsistence Division.

9
10 MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 This is David Runfola, Subsistence Division, Fish and
12 Game. In response to the previous questions regarding
13 working with local folks, I just wanted to make sure
14 that people understood that although we're not, as
15 Travis said, we're not expanding test fisheries in the
16 Kuskokwim, there is a project that's going to be funded
17 this summer where our office, the Subsistence Division,
18 will be working with fishers in the communities
19 downriver from Bethel -- Oscarville, Napaskiak and
20 Napaskiak -- to learn more about fishing.

21
22 Basically to ask for volunteer
23 fishermen to record their harvest while they're fishing
24 and some other aspects of their fishing. For example,
25 how big their net is, what mesh size they're using.
26 This is just a preliminary study. It's not something
27 that's going to be used this summer to count fish or
28 anything like that, but the information is going to go
29 to managers so that they can understand more about how
30 fishing is happening in communities downstream of
31 Bethel.

32
33 The goal is to figure out a way to work
34 with local fishermen so that we can start counting fish
35 as they're coming out of the river, understand how
36 often people are going fishing, how hard they fish, how
37 long they fish, those kinds of questions. What that
38 might answer if we got years of data from that, say
39 three, four, maybe 10 years down the road, I don't
40 know, it could start telling us more about run timing,
41 run strength, but it could certainly help us understand
42 more about subsistence fishing.

43
44 Instead of having -- you know, people
45 tell us all the time, folks come from Anchorage,
46 Fairbanks, wherever, they work out here and they're not
47 fishing like we are, and local people don't generally,
48 you know, share the confidence in the test fishery that
49 the managers do, and they're asking for local folks to
50 be involved, and this is one way.

1 So I can talk more about this later
2 when we have the agency section at the end of the
3 agenda and I certainly can answer any questions from
4 anybody during breaks today, but I really want people
5 to understand that we agree with folks who believe that
6 we should work with locals as much as possible. In my
7 project, for example, we'll even pay for some of that
8 gas. You know, if they participate, we can help them
9 pay for gas. Not a lot, but a little bit.

10

11 So I'm really glad the people are
12 bringing that up and hopefully it begins to address
13 some of the concern that we hear year after year from
14 locals about working with fishermen.

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thanks for
19 the information. I guess the only monkey wrench in
20 that one is for this year and the species of concern
21 being chinook is that we're looking at having no
22 fishing.

23

24 MR. RUNFOLA: May I respond to that,
25 Mr. Chair.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

28

29 MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you. Yeah, it
30 would be great if we could start a project like this
31 when there were lots of chinook in the river, but just
32 beginning the project is important. Starting data
33 collection is important because we need long-term
34 datasets in order to understand these kinds of things.

35

36

37 It seems really simple to know how
38 people fish and how it works, so all you've got to do
39 is ask them, but in order to draw conclusions about
40 that, you need lots of information and it's a good
41 place -- you know, the best we could do is to start
42 now. Even if we just get data -- for example, let's
43 say nobody caught any kings in the time that we were
44 working with local fishermen, we would still get
45 information about the way that people fished, the kinds
46 of gear they're using, where they're fishing, how long
47 their nets are in the water, that sort of thing.

48

49 So it's a feasibility study. The
50 information might be helpful, but it's probably going

1 to be much more helpful after a few years of doing it.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: You've got
6 to start somewhere. James.

7

8 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 That reminds me of working group reports from the
10 villages, working group members reporting when we have
11 our working group meetings. That has passed the
12 information to our biologists and people at the
13 meeting. Charlie reports how many people catch fish at
14 Eek or Henry and I make our reports when people start
15 catching salmon at Tuntutuliak and on up the river. I
16 think it was last year or some time ago that Nicholai
17 Person reported they caught king salmon pretty early
18 that time, so that helps reporting to the working group
19 chairman or whoever is conducting the working group
20 meeting.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you,
25 Dave.

26

27 MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you.

28

29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Charlie.
30 Wait, hold on. We've got a question. Charlie or
31 William.

32

33 MR. BROWN: For this year what kind of
34 gear are you guys going to use for king survey for this
35 year?

36

37 MR. RUNFOLA: Through the Chair. Mr.
38 Brown, do you mean what kind of gear would we use for
39 the project that I just described?

40

41 MR. BROWN: For test fishing.

42

43 MR. RUNFOLA: Oh, I think Travis can
44 answer that question.

45

46 MR. ELISON: Through the Chair. This
47 is Travis. As we always do, we'll be using 5-3/8ths
48 mesh and also an 8-inch mesh net. We fish both those
49 nets every tide.

50

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. Is
2 that it?

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Alrighty. I
7 guess that brings us to the end of that one. We'll go
8 ahead and step down here 12 minutes and come back at
9 quarter till.

10
11 (Off record)

12
13 (On record)

14
15 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We're back
16 on record here at 10:47. All seven Council members are
17 back in the room. Moving into the Fisheries Resource
18 Monitoring Program. Next up.

19
20 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 Members of the Council. I'm Pippa Kenner with the
22 Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage, Alaska.

23
24 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair and RAC
25 members, my name is Gene Peltola, Jr., the Assistant
26 Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence
27 Management in Anchorage.

28
29 MS. KENNER: Today I'm going to present
30 a couple of things to you. This isn't an action item;
31 however, at the end of my presentation I will be asking
32 you for recommendations for the priority information
33 needs for the 2016 Fisheries Resource Monitoring
34 Program. By the end of my presentation you'll
35 understand a little more about what that's about.

36
37 For the public, my presentation starts
38 on Page 44 of your Council books and there are copies
39 of the recommended priority information needs on the
40 back table in a document that has a chinook salmon on
41 the front of it.

42
43 The FRMP or the Fisheries Resource
44 Monitoring Program was established in 1999. The money
45 comes to us through ANILCA and it's run by the Office
46 of Subsistence Management through the Anthropology and
47 Fisheries Divisions. It is an interdisciplinary
48 program. It awards money through grants and
49 cooperative agreements on a competitive basis. We
50 gather information having to do with estimates of

1 harvest of resources, traditional ecological knowledge
2 and also the population of resources in order to
3 further the management of them for subsistence.

4
5 There are six funding regions. There's
6 Northern, Yukon, Kuskokwim, Southwest, Southcentral and
7 Southeast in the State of Alaska. This year the
8 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program on the Kuskokwim
9 funded the projects that you see beginning on Page 48.
10 These are projects most of which will be starting next
11 month. We're funding weirs, we're funding traditional
12 ecological knowledge projects and we're also funding
13 harvest assessment projects. The Yukon projects start
14 on the next page. We're funding an equal number of
15 different kinds of projects in the Yukon Region.

16
17 So, for the second part of my
18 presentation I'm going to ask you for your
19 recommendations on what should be the priority
20 information needs for the next call for proposals that
21 will occur for projects that are starting in 2016, two
22 years from now. We operate on a two-year cycle, so
23 we're beginning now to collect materials to request
24 people to submit proposals for research that will begin
25 in 2016.

26
27 On Page 54 are the priority information
28 needs from the last time we did this for the Kuskokwim
29 region. It involves a combination of information that
30 we're requesting having to do with fishery run sizes
31 and health as well as harvest assessments, house-to-
32 house harvest surveys in community particularly for
33 whitefish and non-salmon species as well as salmon. We
34 also had some requests for traditional ecological
35 knowledge, particularly having to do with whitefish in
36 the Kuskokwim.

37
38 Just to be complete, on the next page
39 are the priority information needs that were in the
40 last call for the projects that are going in to the
41 water next month. They involve the same types of
42 information that were for the Kuskokwim that I just
43 described.

44
45 So what we do when we ask people to
46 send in proposals for projects we ask them to try to
47 address one of these priority information needs. These
48 are the types of projects that we'll be funding based
49 on the information that we need in order to manage the
50 resources to provide for subsistence.

1 I think I'm going to stop there and
2 just ask for any questions.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Questions.
5 David Bill.

6
7 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
8 clarify something here on Page 54. It says subsistence
9 harvest of chinook salmon from the Bethel area by
10 non-residents of the Kuskokwim River drainage. What is
11 that?

12
13 MS. KENNER: Thank you for that
14 question. Through the Chair, Mr. Bill. This was a
15 priority information need that people were talking
16 about two years ago. To make a very long story short,
17 we asked people who lived in the Kuskokwim drainage
18 what they harvest, what salmon they harvest. We
19 actually fund to have people go out to almost every
20 village, go house to house, and ask people what their
21 harvest is. What we don't do is we don't have a method
22 of assessing what people who don't live in this area
23 harvest.....

24
25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Pardon me
26 for a moment. People who are online, somebody is
27 shuffling their papers on their microphone. Please
28 mute your phone, *6. Thank you. Sorry for the
29 interruption. Continue.

30
31 MS. KENNER: So we are asking people
32 who live in the region what they're harvesting, but
33 currently we don't have a method of finding out what
34 people who don't live in the region harvested. People
35 who came in from outside the region. So it was
36 considered that we should probably get a handle on this
37 because there may be quite a bit of, for instance,
38 chinook salmon leaving the region by people who don't
39 live here and otherwise may not need it as much as the
40 people who live here. Maybe we should close to them so
41 they can't do that.

42
43 It was considered a priority
44 information need and there was a proposal that came in.
45 AVCP, the Association of Village Council Presidents,
46 KNA, the Kuskokwim Native Association, were both
47 involved in that project. When it came to how much
48 money we had to distribute this year, this is one of
49 the projects that was taken down to the bottom of the
50 list. So it's a priority, but it's not as much of a

1 priority as some of these other projects are.

2

3 I'd like to add that in addition to
4 that and talking to people at those organizations and
5 others, this year when they're not -- all the people
6 involved with assessing the chinook run in the
7 Kuskokwim agree that this year is not a good year to
8 start a project like this. The reason why is because
9 the river is probably going to be closed for much of
10 the month of June to the directed harvest of chinook
11 salmon and, therefore, we don't anticipate a lot of
12 people coming in from outside of the region to take
13 large numbers of chinook. So it's probably best we
14 don't start up that project this year.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any others.
17 James.

18

19 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
20 So when is the time to prioritize your list, now or
21 when do we do that?

22

23 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Charles,
24 through the Chair. The priorities that I'm talking
25 about right now are not of the projects that have come
26 in, that have requested to be funded. Right now we're
27 going way back to the beginning and we want to ask you
28 and we're asking the Refuge staff and other managers
29 and the public, but particularly the Councils what you
30 think we need to be studying. Is there a data gap?

31

32 Now we are not the only research
33 project in the Kuskokwim and the Yukon right now.
34 There are other funding sources and some of these, what
35 we call data gaps, information that we need, are being
36 fulfilled by other funding sources. So even though I'm
37 asking you for your recommendations on what you want to
38 be studied it may not end up on the priority
39 information list if we find that somebody else is
40 already doing that research. But other than that I'm
41 interested in what you think we need to know to manage
42 our fisheries.

43

44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
45 follow up.

46

47 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
48 Why I asked that is because a lot of us are not on
49 Kwethluk, we don't know what's happening at Kwethluk
50 and Tuluksak, but I know for a fact that since I became

1 a working group member the information we get from
2 those area projects are usually helpful. Not usually,
3 but always helpful. For the little information we get
4 from those rivers that helps our salmon runs or
5 counting numbers and all that and weirs and stuff like
6 that.

7

8 We did not have very much information
9 before. Just a test fishery, like Travis was saying
10 this morning, his people operate the test fishery in
11 Bethel, and we don't have nothing downriver now. We
12 have no test fishers above Bethel, but weirs and stuff
13 like this that Federal government has provided us money
14 to do research on some rivers and that helps me and
15 maybe this group too.

16

17 Like I said, there's nobody from
18 Kwethluk right now, but Kwethluk is included in there
19 and that information can be used for this group.

20

21 So I'm for funding salmon research
22 everywhere on the river around Bethel, thank you.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Ray Oney.

25

26 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
27 Pippa. You mentioned that there was other
28 organizations that are doing research or collecting
29 data. How much of a working relationship do you have
30 with those agencies that are maybe duplicating or maybe
31 gathering good information that may be helpful toward
32 OSM. I just want to know how much of a collaboration
33 you have with those other agencies or organizations.
34 Quyana.

35

36 MS. KENNER: Quyana, Mr. Oney. Through
37 the Chair. With most of these organizations we have
38 very close relationships. As you know, we've had a lot
39 of staff leave and some of those staff were the ones
40 that were our primary contacts with, for instance, the
41 SSI group, Sustainable Salmon Initiative. However, we
42 are in contact with them and we're meeting with them
43 particularly right now when we're getting ready for the
44 next call. We used to have staff who were on the
45 advisory councils for those funding groups and so there
46 is quite a lot of contact with them and, of course,
47 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

48

49 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else.
50 Charlie.

1 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
2 have a question about the test fishing. Right now, the
3 way I heard it a few years back, one time I used to
4 conduct the Uganik test fish myself and the timing of
5 their test fishing is one hour after the slag time. The
6 way I remember the water has got a different
7 temperature, you know. The surface of the water is
8 warmer and going down sometimes those fish have a sense
9 like us, you know. When the weather is hot, they like
10 to stay -- in my opinion, they like to stay on the
11 bottom where it's cooler.

12
13 Right now the Bethel test fishery is
14 using the method an hour after the slag time. To me
15 that is -- the fish usually stay on the surface on the
16 slag time and then after the current change they go
17 back down. I wonder if the test fishery here could
18 change their timing instead of one hour after the slag
19 time. Is that possible to change their method?

20
21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Gene, you
22 want to take that one.

23
24 MR. PELTOLA: Yes, Mr. Chair. Mr.
25 Brown. OSM may have contributed to funding for the
26 test fishery and perhaps may in the future. As for
27 specific methodologies on how the test fishery is
28 executed, that would probably be better addressed by
29 the Department as opposed to the Office of Subsistence
30 Management. One thing in general I could probably say
31 safely is that the agencies, whether they be Federal or
32 State, do value local input.

33
34 MR. ELISON: Mr. Chair, this is Travis.
35 Would you like me to address that?

36
37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, go
38 ahead.

39
40 MR. ELISON: Through the Chair. We
41 always fish one hour after high tide in the Bethel test
42 fishery. We've been doing that 1984. We have
43 discussed in the past about changing that fishing
44 schedule. We've talked about going to set times or
45 maybe fishing on the low tide. The problem is once we
46 change our methodology it's going to affect the
47 catchability. So even if catchability goes up say by
48 fishing at low tide, it's not going to be as comparable
49 to past years.

50

1 So it might tell us we might be
2 catching more fish and we're comparing it to years
3 where we were fishing on high tide catching fewer fish,
4 we're going to think, well, the run is a lot bigger
5 than it actually is and that could lead to poor
6 management decisions. It really just changes the
7 assessment quite a bit when you change that
8 methodology.

9
10 Test fish, it's not really trying to
11 catch the most fish possible, it's just trying to catch
12 them as consistently as possible so you can compare
13 between years and days.

14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
18 Not seeing anybody else.

19
20 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, if I may.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

23
24 MR. PELTOLA: One, I'd like to give a
25 real brief summary of the program as it stands and
26 then.....

27
28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Can I,
29 before we get off that.

30
31 MR. PELTOLA: Yeah.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Actually I
34 was going to just reference I'm glad to see that
35 actually the Tatlawiksuk under the funded projects it
36 did get included back in. I was in attendance at that
37 meeting on the way back from Kotzebue and that was not
38 one of the seven that were acted on by the Federal
39 Board or approved for funding at the time, so I'm glad
40 to see it made it over the threshold of whatever was
41 there and available.

42
43 As far as recommendations for the
44 coming year, and I recognize and appreciate what you
45 said about the salmon being shipped out of the region,
46 the label that's put there as far as just the Bethel
47 area, Bethel being the hub of places going out, but it
48 wasn't just only Bethel. It was a fairly drainage-wide
49 concern. I had people from McGrath calling me that
50 were concerned about that. Aniak was also specifically

1 included, so it's not -- you know, Bethel does have its
2 issues regarding its population levels and so forth.

3
4 I'd kind of like to see that go back in
5 again. If conditions don't change or if they do
6 change, that's something that we're going to need to
7 get a handle on. It's a very relevant issue that I
8 don't -- and the fact that maybe it lost out this time
9 because, yeah, it's a priority, but for some of the
10 ongoing research projects and ones that got sacrificed,
11 yeah, we're looking at reduced funding levels and so
12 forth, but maybe in 2016 some of these continuation
13 projects will not be there and you'd have the ability
14 to do that.

15
16 One other area that I think might be
17 worth looking at and it was raised by some of the
18 public testimony we had here yesterday and also been
19 raised in other forums is we don't really have a handle
20 on what our smolt survival and some of those
21 outmigration patterns that may be affected. There's
22 really not a baseline of that that I'm aware of and
23 that's going to be something to open up to see what you
24 get for proposals and see if we can't get something
25 online with that. You know, in years past we've made
26 our escapements, so we should have our fish going out,
27 but they're not coming back. To help at least
28 establish that within the Kuskokwim drainage what we've
29 got going out, if we could incorporate that in there as
30 well.

31
32 I guess just for the process you've got
33 here, we'll be looking at your request for proposals
34 this fall or next winter in the proposals being
35 submitted in early 2015 and then the Board would take
36 action on it the following winter. So there's still
37 time to weigh in on this before the RFP went out,
38 correct?

39
40 MS. KENNER: As a matter of fact, Mr.
41 Chair, we'll be presenting you another list of priority
42 information needs that's been modified based on all
43 these comments at your fall meeting. Then the call
44 will go out as soon as possible after that to give
45 plenty of time for people to respond to the call.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: So we can
48 mull it over as it comes up. We can add to that list
49 there.

50

1 MS. KENNER: You can.
2
3 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: At the fall
4 meeting. Thank you. Any other questions.
5
6 (No comments)
7
8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead and
9 proceed.
10
11 MR. PELTOLA: What I want to do is give
12 a really brief summary about FRMP and then go into like
13 what you mentioned, why some of the projects were not
14 originally on the list ended up getting funded and how
15 we made the cut.
16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.
18
19 MR. PELTOLA: Generally speaking, OSM
20 puts out the request for proposals based on input from
21 the Regional Advisory Council, the Bureaus, the
22 Department and other individuals. We narrow it down to
23 certain areas where we request those proposals. Once
24 we receive those, the Office of Subsistence Management
25 Fisheries Division writes up the proposal for
26 consideration by the Technical Review Committee.
27
28 As the program is designed, the
29 Technical Review Committee is comprised of members from
30 each of the Bureaus -- the Park Service, the Forest
31 Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, BIA -- and then
32 three members from the Alaska Department of Fish and
33 Game; one from Sport Division, Commercial Fisheries and
34 Subsistence Division.
35
36 Like I said, the way it's designed,
37 that Technical Review Committee makes a recommendation
38 to fund or not fund a particular proposal. Once that
39 list is generated it's presented to the Regional
40 Advisory Councils for their consideration and the
41 Regional Advisory Councils weigh in on their
42 recommendation, what they like to see funded. At the
43 fall meeting, this particular Council modified the list
44 somewhat.
45
46 In addition to the RACs and then the
47 Technical Review Committee is reviewed by the
48 InterAgency Staff Committee, which is comprised of
49 representatives from the Federal agencies, and then
50 finally by the Federal Subsistence Board. That's the

1 process real briefly.

2

3

4 This past fall at a work session the
5 Federal Subsistence Board went through and looked at
6 the list from each of the regions within the state. A
7 majority of the time there was concurrence on the
8 recommendation from a Regional Advisory Council, the
9 InterAgency Staff Committee and such. One of the few
10 exceptions was the YK Delta Regional Advisory Council
11 -- excuse me, the YK Delta list.

12

13 From that list there was concurrence
14 between the ISC and the Federal Subsistence Board. At
15 times there was concurrence with the Regional Advisory
16 Council. Once all those recommendations for funding
17 are made, the list is forwarded back to OSM where I, as
18 the Assistant Regional Director for OSM, signs off on
19 funding.

20

21 As the Chair mentioned earlier,
22 Tatlawiksuk was one of the projects which was not
23 originally requested for funding based on the Technical
24 Review Committee in addition to I also think the
25 Tuluksak weir. So what happened is we took the list
26 which the ISC and the Federal Subsistence Board
27 recommended funding, which there was some parallels
28 with the Regional Advisory Councils.

29

30 The Board went down the list up until a
31 certain number of projects. We have the leeway to fund
32 additional projects beyond that recommendation. Now
33 this part of my discussion is going to kind of lead
34 onto what I wanted to present a little later on in the
35 agenda, if I can have the freedom to do it, and that's
36 to talk about the budgetary situation and staffing.

37

38 We went down the list of fund projects
39 to a certain point and we ceased. That didn't mean
40 that we felt that one project was more beneficial than
41 the other, but a hard choice and decisions had to be
42 made. Those decisions were made based on our budgetary
43 environmental within OSM. Through sequestration, the
44 budget environment in the last several years, we have
45 seen a declining budget, which resulted in declining
46 staffing level at OSM.

47

48 We may have been able to continue
49 further on down the list and fund a lot more projects,
50 but currently we're down 14 positions at OSM. Those
51 are positions that have been previously filled in the

1 past two to three years. Now I have not been told by
2 anybody, but by reading through the files and such, I
3 think a determination was made sometime along the line,
4 and I may be wrong, but this is my gut feeling, that
5 those vacancies were held vacant or those positions
6 were not filled such that the amount of money that OSM
7 divvies out through programs such as FRMP, through
8 Partners and a small amount of money we give to
9 wildlife, so the amount of money we give out from the
10 program was not adversely affected.

11
12 Since coming to OSM I've had the
13 opportunity to observe Staff there for several months
14 now. As some of you know, I'm opening a position in
15 August. We have a very dedicated, a very passionate
16 Staff that truly care about subsistence, but they're
17 also overworked. As I mentioned earlier, we might have
18 been able to go further on down the list, especially
19 with regard to the Kuskokwim, and start funding more of
20 these projects, but I felt that it was important to
21 start filling some of those vacancies.

22
23 I'm leaving on this afternoon's flight
24 and going back to the office. One of the things I have
25 to do this afternoon is make a selection for an
26 outreach specialist. That's the position that puts
27 together the RAC books, puts together the Board books
28 and such.

29
30 MS. KENNER: And gets them out on time.

31
32 MR. PELTOLA: Yeah, gets them out on
33 time, which, because we're at minimum staffing levels,
34 probably below minimum staffing levels, the quality of
35 service that has been provided from OSM, we have
36 received complaints it's not up to par what has been in
37 the past. Like I said, it's not a reflection on the
38 Staff we have, it's a reflection of having 14
39 vacancies, so we're trying to fill those.

40
41 We have coming out here shortly we have
42 the Deputy Assistant Regional Director position at OSM.
43 That's the number two position within the organization
44 there. We have a lead fisheries biologist for our
45 Fisheries Division and numerous others. Filling the
46 position may not necessarily be as easy as you think
47 because we have to go through a certain process.

48
49 The process being is that we have to
50 fill out a waiver request and this is part of the

1 budgetary environment we live in. If we feel we have
2 to fill a vacancy, we have to write up a justification
3 and pass it on to the regional level. If and when it's
4 approved there, it has to go back to our headquarter's
5 office in Washington, D.C. where they have to sign off
6 on it and then we have the authorization to fill the
7 position. At times that process takes several months.
8 It's been fine-tuned by the Service, so the timeframe
9 in order to get those approved, if they are, has been
10 decreasing for this. We're right on the horizon there
11 with regard to that.

12

13 Overall -- I mean this coming fall a
14 lot of hard decisions had to be made with regard to
15 what to fund and what not to fund and that falls
16 squarely on my shoulders because I made the decision to
17 try to start filling positions with concurrence from
18 our Regional Director in the Washington, D.C. office to
19 ensure that the quality of support that OSM provides to
20 the Regional Advisory Council with regard to the
21 regulatory process and everything else is not hindered.

22

23

24 There has been a little -- actually
25 more light on the horizon with regard to our budgetary
26 environment. We've taken up to \$500,000-plus budget
27 cuts over the last couple years on a yearly basis.
28 Here recently in the omnibus bill, which is passed
29 through Congress, there was additional funding coming
30 to subsistence management in Alaska. That was not
31 necessarily slated for OSM but for the program as a
32 whole, a Federal program, and we have not seen those
33 regional allocations come to our office yet, so we
34 might be sitting in a better position this year than we
35 have in the past couple years. Although, unless it
36 occurs again in the future, it's pretty much a one-time
37 shot in the arm.

38

39 Along with our budget cuts we've also
40 been -- what's been placed upon us has been travel
41 caps. OSM provides travel for the Regional Advisory
42 Council members that come to these meetings. We
43 organize and pay for that throughout the state. A
44 Regional Advisory Council meeting could run anywhere
45 from about 15 to possibly 25 or \$30,000 per meeting.

46

47 A lot of times there are requests made
48 by Councils to send a representative from the Regional
49 Advisory Council to another meeting. We have been very
50 supportive as we can of those requests and what we've

1 asked our coordinators to do is write up a
2 justification because we have to look at those on an
3 individual basis. Not necessarily because we don't
4 want to support travel for a RAC member to a meeting,
5 but we have to look at an overall cap and the cap
6 meaning that we have X amount of dollars we could pay
7 for travel on a yearly basis. So I just wanted to have
8 the Regional Advisory Council aware of that also.

9

10 Any particular questions for me at this
11 time.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: James.

14

15 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
16 Gene, so you have budget cuts to the projects that you
17 were referring to or she was referring to a while ago.
18 Is that why you want us to prioritize that list?

19

20 MR. PELTOLA: Not necessarily budget
21 cuts, but we may have been able to fund further down
22 the list. At the Federal Subsistence Board, one thing
23 that I had to ask, because they put a line and said we
24 agree with the InterAgency Staff Committee and some of
25 the Regional Councils to fund to this level, then,
26 especially with regard to Yukon Delta because there is
27 a lot more potential controversy there about what is
28 recommended to be funded or not, I, in the program,
29 asked the Board to further prioritize down that list in
30 case we had additional funding available to fund beyond
31 that point. We were able to get further below that
32 line. We might have been able to go further down the
33 list, but we didn't because we're trying to fill
34 positions within OSM now.

35

36 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any others.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I'm
41 wondering -- you mentioned -- did you have something
42 else? I was just wondering. You had mentioned you
43 were going to be leaving this afternoon. If there's no
44 other questions on this presentation, we could move
45 into the Federal fisheries proposals.

46

47 MR. LUPIE: Mr. Chair. I have a
48 question.

49

50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Pertaining

1 to this presentation right here?

2

3 MR. LUPIE: Yes.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. Make
6 it quick, please.

7

8 MR. LUPIE: Yeah, I'll be quick. Henry
9 Lupie from Tuntutuliak. I would like to ask the
10 Department if they ever do aerial survey program. And
11 I think it was last summer that either the State or
12 Federal -- it was Fish and Wildlife did an aerial
13 survey and during the presentation they pointed out
14 that there was a large number of escapement than the
15 ones that were passing through the weir.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

20

21 MR. PELTOLA: Yes, Mr. Chair. To
22 address the first aspect of that, aerial surveys, I
23 know that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game does
24 conduct aerial surveys. The position I held prior to
25 this was the Refuge Manager of Yukon Delta. I'm not
26 seeing Brian here, so I don't want to speak on behalf
27 of them, but I can speak towards my experience as the
28 manager of Delta. Throughout the years the Refuge has
29 conducted surveys in conjunction with the Department by
30 providing a pilot or paying for a charter so to speak
31 in years past.

32

33 Now going to the second aspect of the
34 aerial surveys versus the weirs. With regard to one of
35 the weirs which is operated would be a Federal or OSM
36 funding on the Kwethluk, there was an aerial survey
37 that was conducted that's potentially showing more fish
38 upriver of the weir than were counted going through the
39 weir. So there were concerns about the effectiveness,
40 whether there was a hole in the weir or not where fish
41 may have had passage that were not accounted for. The
42 Department did do surveys on the Kwethluk upstream of
43 the weir. The Refuge did surveys upriver from the
44 weir.

45

46 Also, I know that the staff involved in
47 operation of the survey did look at the totality or the
48 drainage-wide trend at the time. There was a similar
49 occurrence with regard to low numbers to passage of
50 other weirs within the drainage with regard to run

1 timing going upriver Kwethluk.

2

3 When it came down to the effectiveness
4 of the weir or not, as a manager I took the approach,
5 okay, so we had more fish there past the weir that were
6 counted in aerial survey above the weir than we had
7 actual passage through. The light that I looked upon
8 that as, okay, let's double the number of fish that you
9 may have seen in the aerial survey. The bottom line is
10 that it didn't even come close to the bottom and the
11 escapement goal for that particular drainage.

12

13 So, yes, some may have conceded that,
14 yes, some may have made it past, but in the big picture
15 it wasn't significant with regard to where we were in
16 the run on that -- in the drainage as a hole in that
17 particular tributary.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
20 What time do you have to leave because I would
21 certainly like to have you here for the next two items
22 of business.

23

24 MR. PELTOLA: Yeah, I should be here
25 probably until your lunch break if you take it at noon.
26 I'm not sure what time it is now. If there's anything
27 you'd like me to address, I'd be more than happy to.

28

29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We can go
30 into those two items. One is the fisheries proposals
31 and then the special actions of the Board, which you're
32 directly involved with.

33

34 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair.

35

36 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Did you have
37 another question before we move on.

38

39 MR. BILL: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I just
40 want to ask Mr. Peltola if he's coming back on the
41 fishery reports this afternoon.

42

43 MR. PELTOLA: The portion that I wanted
44 to cover under agency reports or what I addressed part
45 of the FRMP discussion.....

46

47 MR. BILL: Will you be able to be here?

48

49 MR. PELTOLA: I won't be here. I'll be
50 on the jet heading back to Anchorage. The topics I

1 wanted to cover there were the budgetary and staffing
2 levels.

3

4 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair. I want to say
5 something, but I might be out of order. That's
6 why.....

7

8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We will have
9 the Refuge staff. Mr. Peltola is no longer with the
10 Refuge. The agency that's referred to within those
11 reports is the local Refuge Manager. Mr. Peltola no
12 longer serves in that capacity.

13

14 Someone online please mute your phone.
15 You have your side conversations going on.

16

17 Okay. So moving on to the Federal
18 fisheries proposals and we have Don Rivard.....

19

20 MS. INGLES: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.
21 This is Palma Ingles. Did you want me to do the
22 Partner's briefing that was part of number 6.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: My
25 apologies. I thought that was covered yesterday by the
26 KNA representative, but if you have something else, go
27 ahead.

28

29 MS. INGLES: I do. Just for the record
30 this is Palma Ingles. I'm the coordinator for the
31 Partner's Program and I wanted to give you a very short
32 update on the Partner's Program. At the fall RAC
33 meeting I gave you an overview of the Partner's
34 Program.

35

36 Just to remind you, in the fall, in
37 November, we will put out a call for new proposals for
38 funding. The funding cycle is for up to four years and
39 then the proposals will be due May 2015 and the new
40 start date for funded project will be January 1st,
41 2016. I will be giving you more information on the
42 call for proposals at the fall RAC meeting and going
43 over specifically what we're looking for.

44

45 So, if anybody has any questions, there
46 is an overview on Page 58 in your books and feel free
47 to contact me by phone or email if you have any
48 specific questions on this call that's going to be
49 coming out.

50

1 I'll take any questions. Thank you,
2 Mr. Chair and Council members.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thanks,
5 Palma. Any questions on that item.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.
10 Moving on to new business. Call for Federal fisheries
11 proposals. Is Don going to cover that? Mr. Rivard.

12
13 MR. RIVARD: Yes, I'm here. Can you
14 hear me, okay, Mr. Chair.

15
16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Loud and
17 clear on this end.

18
19 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Thank you. Good
20 morning, everybody. My name is Don Rivard. I'm a fish
21 biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management
22 here in Anchorage. Looking on Page 59 in your books
23 and this is the call for proposals to change Federal
24 subsistence fish and shellfish regulations and the
25 Federal Subsistence Board is accepting proposals to do
26 so through March 28th. This is for the 2015-2017
27 regulatory years, which starts April 1, 2015 and runs
28 through March 31, 2017.

29
30 So if you go to Page 62 of your book is
31 the actual form, a guideline that we ask people to use
32 as they submit proposals. Again, just to let you know
33 that the call for proposals to change Federal
34 subsistence fish and shellfish regulations is now open
35 until March 28th.

36
37 In past years, Mr. Chair, sometimes
38 your Council has come up with some proposals during
39 your meetings.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 That's all I have.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Does anyone
46 have any specific recommendations for a proposal? Mr.
47 Peltola.

48
49 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. I might point
50 out that during OSM's review of the various proposals

1 we have on the books, the Kuskokwim Drainage
2 specifically is one of the few areas that has not had
3 very much modifications so to speak with regard to --
4 from back to the inception of the program. It's pretty
5 much stood the same for about the last, you know, 10,
6 15-plus years. This is of note.

7

8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
9 I don't have a proposal prepared, but I do have one in
10 concept. I think given what we've been seeing with the
11 king salmon and the restrictions that have come into
12 place, it's my intent to -- or put forward as an intent
13 to have a proposal in front of the Board to address
14 this matter. This was something that was put forward
15 by my tribal council and has actually gone to the Board
16 of Fisheries already, who are very intrigued by the
17 concept, but couldn't see how to get there from here
18 yet.

19

20 That is the issue and I speak to it
21 because Bethel -- I work for the tribal council and we
22 have a very, very strong concern that we are
23 essentially being equalized out of existence and the
24 cultural values that our people hold are in jeopardy as
25 a result of this and the restrictions that are being
26 put forward. We would like to see something to protect
27 our people's interest into the future.

28

29 To do this, under Title VIII of ANILCA
30 and what you have there where the specific statement of
31 purpose for Title VIII of ANILCA was to protect the
32 cultural values of the Native people and was also put
33 in place to fulfill, as Congress said, the obligations
34 left unaddressed by passage of the Alaska Native Claims
35 Settlement Act and those promises and those premises
36 that are put forward there are being seriously put in
37 jeopardy.

38

39 So what we would like to see, and I
40 believe it's something that is fully within the
41 parameters of the Federal Subsistence Board to do so,
42 but to protect those cultural activities that are being
43 put in jeopardy. I would look to put a proposal
44 forward that when we are in times of limitation, such
45 as we are now, severely so, we're having no fishing at
46 all, but even when you have these severe limitations
47 that are being put into place that there be created a
48 conditional use permit that people are going to be
49 fishing for king salmon, the ones that are of main
50 concern. That because of these restrictions that

1 people could conduct a customary and traditional
2 activity of drying and smoking, fish racks and smoke
3 houses, that you put forward a permit that allows that
4 to go forward.

5
6 The other subsistence uses --
7 throughout ANILCA it speaks to the use, it doesn't
8 speak to the user, and those other uses that other
9 rural residents or some Native residents as well, as
10 far as freezing and canning and so forth, they have an
11 alternative resource of the other fish species, whereas
12 with the drying and smoking of king salmon you are
13 confined to the month of June.

14
15 This kind of leads into what was
16 referenced yesterday on record by one of our presenters
17 that we are being faced with a special action or
18 actually I guess it would be -- I don't know if it's
19 called a special action or an .804 determination, but
20 all these may apply there as well when we were looking
21 at possibly having 10-20,000 fish available as a
22 harvestable surplus at most. Rather than go to a Tier
23 II, which essentially puts us into a lottery system
24 because you're going to have a lot more people eligible
25 than you will numbers of fish to come to any kind of a
26 reasonable opportunity, that by coming up with a permit
27 specific to those conditions for king salmon when these
28 limitations are in place, it's for the drying and
29 smoking.

30
31 I'm picking numbers out of the air a
32 little bit, but I think they're fairly close because
33 I've been dealing with these kind of things for a
34 while, but we're looking at probably about 500 active
35 fish camps at most within the drainage right now or
36 people that do dry and smoke. I know that within the
37 Bethel area alone we have upwards of 200, but in the
38 past there's only been about 70 of them that are really
39 active. People got them through permits or whatever to
40 use for a weekend place to go away or go camp out of
41 town, but there was about 70 active fish camps from
42 Kuskokwak, bottom of Kuskokwak down to Oscarville
43 Slough and Napaskiak.

44
45 But if you take 500 permits and if we
46 had a 20,000 fish surplus -- and, again, this is just
47 to give you a scenario to do it -- you would be talking
48 40 fish per camp and that gets something on the racks.
49 When you have the cultural aspect of this being totally
50 denied at present as a result of that because we can't

1 let everybody go fishing without jeopardizing
2 overharvesting what we've got there for a harvestable
3 surplus in one opening.

4
5 You should not have to have people go
6 out with a four-hour opening when you have the avenue
7 to spread that out and say each fish camp gets at least
8 40 fish. That's our best guess for a harvestable
9 surplus. If there's only 10,000 fish, that's down to
10 20 fish per camp, but at least you've got something
11 hanging. At least people have a taste of fish. It's
12 an evisceration of the cultural ties or if you want to
13 reference the State court ruling on the protest fishery
14 that occurred, it borders on the religious aspect as
15 well that have been directly recognized by the State.

16
17 In any kind of review that you do
18 regarding whether it's an .804 analysis or what it may
19 be, that you incorporate that as what I would call as a
20 Tier I if you're at the State level or if it would call
21 for a Federalization of the fishery, I don't know. If
22 you have to go there -- like I say, we were told that
23 you're undergoing that review right now. I believe the
24 State has the ability to do that as well in compliance
25 with that Section .803 that says you've got to
26 cooperate.

27
28 Once that review is in place and you
29 can perhaps come up with some kind of a scenario,
30 whether this year or next year down the line that the
31 Fish Board could adopt that as an emergency regulation
32 and put it out for future action. Like I say, we put
33 it forward from our council to the Fish Board on their
34 last cycle and attempted to put one in for the Federal
35 this time around. We were approached after the
36 deliberation. The proposal did fail because it wasn't
37 fleshed out enough for it, but they were very intrigued
38 with it.

39
40 It's time to start thinking out of the
41 box and it's quite a ways out of the box. The same
42 thing is in the State statute and regulation specific
43 to the use and you can differentiate the preference
44 amongst the beneficial uses the same as, I believe, the
45 Federal Board can protect its use because this one is
46 jeopardized where the others are not where they do have
47 those alternatives.

48
49 I guess finally just ask as this moves
50 forward, you know, everything is still in negotiations

1 like we heard from Mr. Elison at the State level and
2 the working group process and so forth, but if there
3 would be an opportunity and the Federal Board I believe
4 is going to have to take this up in April, would there
5 be -- I know you just mentioned about the funding
6 concerns and so forth, but is there any way that
7 perhaps when that comes out that this Council could be
8 consulted again whether through a meeting -- and I
9 believe the Western Interior, had they been aware of
10 this as well, would really, really want to weigh in on
11 this same issue.

12

13 I know I tossed a lot out at you there.

14

15 MR. PELTOLA: Yes, Mr. Chair. There
16 have been several proposals presented through the
17 Federal system with regard to potential for harvest
18 strategies, methods and means and such coming before us
19 here recently. We'll get into some of those early on.
20 Any work that we've done OSM has not looked at the use
21 aspect of things particularly.

22

23 With regard to you discussion about the
24 ONC's desire to enter a proposal, there are two
25 processes in which we could address that. One would be
26 through the regulatory process, which was mentioned by
27 Mr. Rivard early on, but if anything was to occur from
28 that, it would not be applicable until potentially the
29 next season if it got through the Board.

30

31 The second aspect of that would be a
32 special action request. Due to the complexity of the
33 various State and Federal programs that may affect the
34 Kuskokwim and the Yukon, which would need to be
35 addressed by the RAC, I believe there's a mechanism in
36 place which we can utilize to bring this body back
37 together to address those.

38

39 Our one concern would be compliance
40 with FACA, the Federal Advisory Committee Act. We have
41 normally a 45-day publishing requirement before the
42 body meets. I think there's leeway there to get that
43 down to a shorter period of time based on discussions
44 we've had with OSM and a couple Staff members and
45 myself. So I believe, yes, there is a mechanism in
46 place to bring the body back together based on your
47 request to address a proposal that may come about for
48 this season on the Kuskokwim or even potentially the
49 Yukon that may need to be addressed.

50

1 With that being said, I'd want to
2 clarify our total requirement under FACA with regard to
3 regulation of that, but I believe there is a mechanism
4 in place to do such.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Again, what
7 day is -- the Federal Board meeting is the 15th through
8 the 17th or something along those lines of April, so
9 that's about five weeks away. We've got the working
10 group meeting the first week of April. Depending on
11 what came out of that. I don't know if it would have
12 to be something just a day or two before that we'd put
13 on there. I would highly recommend if at all possible
14 put the input from both this Council and the Western
15 Interior. I don't want to speak for them, but I think
16 they would be very much in agreement.

17
18 MR. PELTOLA: From OSM's standpoint,
19 we'd do whatever we can in order to meet the desire of
20 the RACs to meet together as a body to have discussion
21 about any proposal that may come forth. Going back to
22 the potential for ONC to submit a proposal. We look
23 upon OSM as being a support agency. A lot of times
24 people think that we try to dictate things. With that
25 being said, we've assisted other individuals, other
26 organizations with preparing their request. If you
27 were to request of our office to assist you with regard
28 -- not to the content of your proposal, but the
29 structure of it to be presented. If you chose to take
30 a special action request route, we could assist you
31 with that also.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: But overall,
34 I just want to make sure we get it on the record that
35 in the course of these .804 determinations -- not just
36 for this one, but in future -- and, actually it ought
37 to be something that would be incorporated statewide.
38 When you have these limitations being put into place,
39 you start to look at these and specifically some of
40 these conditional uses where one use is precluded in
41 basically deference to everybody or all rural Alaskans
42 when they do have alternative resources.

43
44 If I wasn't the Chair, I'd make a
45 motion to recommend that from this Council.

46
47 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. Like I said,
48 I'm departing on this afternoon's flight going back to
49 Anchorage, so I'll be back in the Anchorage office this
50 afternoon and also tomorrow and I could get back to you

1 as soon as I can to get clarification whether we could
2 provide that opportunity for the body to come back
3 together.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
6 Anyone else.

7
8 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, if I may. You
9 had mentioned the coordination meeting with the working
10 group and such. I think that's slated for like the 2nd
11 to 3rd or somewhere around there, April. You also
12 mentioned the Federal Subsistence Board. Are those the
13 timeframes you're potentially looking at for this body
14 and potentially the Western Interior to meet prior to
15 that? Just for clarification.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That would
18 be helpful, yeah. The InterAgency meeting, I believe,
19 is on the 2nd and the working group is scheduled for
20 the 3rd and the 4th right now.

21
22 MR. PELTOLA: Okay. Thank you.

23
24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: If it's
25 doable, yeah.

26
27 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else
30 on proposals. I'm sorry, who is that online. Go
31 ahead.

32
33 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, this is Mike
34 Williams, from Akiak Native Community. We've been
35 listening to some of the recommendations by the tribes
36 here and we have been very concerned and continuously
37 meeting up here. Fortunately I've been on the working
38 group for many, many years and the concern for king
39 salmon has been on the table for quite some time now.

40
41 One of the things that is Akiak Tribe's
42 position is that in times of shortage that we have
43 positioned ourselves along with folks from upriver on
44 the issue of Federally qualified users to have the
45 first shot at the resources, especially the kings.

46
47 Our thought over the years is that
48 we're not taking 4,000 kings in Akiak. We're not
49 taking 2,000 kings in Akiak. We're taking much less
50 than that and I think that opportunity is commendable

1 with if we have surplus to deal with, maybe we could
2 have our tribe to manage, you know, 20, 40 fish per
3 family, but, you know, we're getting to the point where
4 we're thinking about the future and with the issue of
5 rural preference must be honored because it is Federal
6 law.

7
8 We've been really trying hard working
9 with the Department of Fish and Game from the State
10 side and where those court decisions have put the State
11 in a tough position where everybody is a subsistence
12 user. Our preference has been to amend the State
13 constitution to allow rural preference, to have the
14 State be in compliance with that. I think that has
15 been a long going position of all of the rural
16 legislators or individuals.

17
18 We really depend on the resources. We
19 would like to have Native preference and those
20 proposals have come before, you know, through the AFN
21 and other meetings that we've attended over the years.
22 But I think with the summer coming up and, you know, I
23 think our preference with the proposals of dipnets and,
24 you know, we're very concerned about how we are
25 changing our behavior.

26
27 But those are some of the things that
28 Akiak Native Community has been looking at, discussing
29 these issues with the elders and with the users that
30 have been using our resources during our lifetime. I
31 think subsistence is so important and a way of life and
32 making sure that those are honored.

33
34 I wanted to thank ONC for their
35 concerns on making sure our subsistence fishing rights
36 are honored into the future. I think, as we have seen
37 the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Great
38 Lakes Fish Commissions that have been in play for
39 years, we're taking a look at that seriously as well
40 and those ideas of how we can rebuild stocks of
41 concern, specifically the king salmon, and I think in
42 the long run the people need to be engaged in making
43 sure that the resource rebounds.

44
45 We've seen the moose population, we've
46 seen the moratoriums occur, but I think that's the last
47 thing that we want to do. But Akiak Native Community's
48 resolution is that we have -- if push comes to shove,
49 that the Federally qualified users take the first shot
50 at -- you know, especially the Bethel focus point that

1 we've been hearing about and I think at that point we
2 need to make sure that some kind of regulation be put
3 on and to honor the Federally qualified users of
4 Bethel.

5
6 Those are my comments. Moses, do you
7 have any comments? But those are the positions and
8 we're having ongoing discussions up here with our
9 tribes and it's a big concern.

10
11 Thank you very much for the
12 opportunity.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you,
15 Mike. We had some very, very strong testimony here
16 from -- the most testimony we've ever had before at a
17 Regional Subsistence Council meeting and that point was
18 raised very strongly. We want to see something that's
19 equitable. If there's any chance at an opportunity,
20 let's spread it out so all the villages throughout the
21 whole drainage. ONC is specifically sensitive to that
22 because we are put in that position of -- as Calvin
23 Simeon said it years ago, we get equalized out of
24 existence.

25
26 To what level it may apply as far as
27 another issue with this whole Federal and State dual
28 management is that -- I don't believe it applies so
29 much on the Kuskokwim since the authority is all the
30 way into the State lands, am I correct on that, or
31 there are places that are not, but when it comes to
32 like hunting issues, there are -- one-third of Alaska
33 no longer gets a subsistence priority under the
34 promises that were made from ANCSA and were contained
35 in Title VIII of ANILCA because they are no longer
36 under Federal jurisdiction. The people that live in
37 those areas which constitutes the upper half of the
38 Kuskokwim, once you get out of the Refuge when it comes
39 to the hunting issues, they have no more protections of
40 Title VIII because the vast majority of that area up
41 there is State land.

42
43 I'm sorry going off on a tangent, but
44 it's a relevant argument to the whole issue. Go ahead,
45 Gene.

46
47 MR. PELTOLA: One thing I'd like to
48 mention, which was brought up by Mr. Williams in Akiak,
49 is with regard to any potential action which may come
50 about from a special action request. The Department of

1 Interior, therefore the Fish and Wildlife Service,
2 therefore the Office of Subsistence Management is
3 required to engage in tribal consultation. I'd like to
4 also mention that the Refuge here has done a very
5 extensive effort to reach out and consult with the
6 tribes and villages within a majority of the villages
7 on the river here, though the Department has also
8 accompanied them I believe for the most part. That
9 effort would continue through the regulatory end with
10 regard to consultation from the Office of Subsistence
11 Management.

12

13 One thing I'd point out though, since
14 you expressed a potential for the Regional Advisory
15 Council to meet again to potentially take up any
16 special action request that may come about for this
17 coming season, is that comments made at the Regional
18 Advisory Council are not considered tribal
19 consultation. So, therefore, we would proceed with an
20 independent session, whether it be a meeting or such,
21 depending on the circumstances. How that would play
22 out is not necessarily cast in stone, but there would
23 also be an independent consultation effort with regard
24 to anything that may come about for this coming season
25 on the Kuskokwim or the Yukon.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you
28 for that clarification. Okay. Ready to move on to item
29 two. I don't have a proposal prepared from this
30 Council, but we'll certainly get to weigh in on
31 anything that comes down the line and we can amend it
32 and do all kinds of recommendations if we so choose.

33

34 Item two, the special action request to
35 the Federal Subsistence Board. I actually had Jackie
36 Cleveland down here.

37

38 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. This is Don
39 Rivard.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Mr. Rivard,
42 go ahead.

43

44 MR. RIVARD: There were three that were
45 put in your book. Two are fisheries related and the
46 other one somebody else would have to address, but if
47 we could I'd like to do the two fishery ones now just
48 because Dave Cannon, who wrote the special action
49 request on behalf of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Working
50 Group is online right now to talk about it

1 straightforward and he's only available until 2:00
2 o'clock.

3

4 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, we can
5 -- it shouldn't take more than a half hour or so. We
6 can probably do those two before lunch.

7

8 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Would you like me
9 to start?

10

11 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes. Please
12 proceed.

13

14 MR. RIVARD: Okay. The first special
15 action request can be found on Page 67 in your book.
16 Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group. They would
17 like to add dipnets as legal gear for fishing for
18 salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage. At this time,
19 only gillnet, beach seine, fishwheel, or rod and reel
20 are allowed in Federal regulations.

21

22 The working group has either submitted
23 or will submit shortly a similar emergency petition to
24 the Alaska Board of Fish and the State regulations only
25 allow for the use of gillnets, fishwheels, beach
26 seines, and hook and line attached to a rod or pole.
27 So neither the State or the Federal regulations allow
28 for dipnets for harvesting salmon in the Kuskokwim
29 River Drainage.

30

31 The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management
32 Working Group is requesting that the use of dipnets be
33 allowed during this critical period when king salmon
34 numbers are at an all-time low. As part of this
35 request, they are asking that the following provision
36 be included in the regulation, "All king salmon caught
37 with a dipnet must be released alive to the water.

38

39 Should the Federal Subsistence Board
40 adopt this special action request, Mr. Cannon made it
41 clear that they would like this to be effective as of
42 May 24th.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dave Cannon is
45 on the line to further speak to this if you would like.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I'd just ask
50 for clarification. Has there been a similar Federal

1 action taken on the Yukon side as well? Do you know?
2 I know it has under the State regulation, but has there
3 been a similar request made for Federal recognition of
4 it?

5
6 MR. RIVARD: I'm not aware of that, Mr.
7 Chair. I could check real quick somehow and I can also
8 look in the regulations.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
13 I think you've explained the request unless anybody
14 wants to hear anything further. To me, it seems that
15 this is providing another option in what's going to be
16 a tough year anyway. I know it's going in under the
17 State regulation. I don't know whether if it wasn't
18 necessary on the Yukon and it's allowed for subsistence
19 why it would be necessary to have it under both State
20 and Federal here, but I guess for consistency it
21 certainly doesn't hurt to have an additional
22 opportunity and option for using it on the books.

23
24 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. This is Don
25 Rivard again.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
28 Don.

29
30 MR. RIVARD: In the Yukon, dipnets are
31 already allowed under Federal regulation.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: With that, a
34 motion would be in order to support and vote for that
35 support or not, to allow the use of dipnets for
36 subsistence on the Kuskokwim similar to what's done on
37 the Yukon.

38
39 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. I have
40 something to add. This is Don Rivard again. Last week
41 the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council also
42 took this up and they voted to endorse the use of
43 dipnets in the Kuskokwim.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I need a
48 motion for action on this one.

49
50 (No comments)

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: In absence
2 of a motion to do so, I don't know if it's appropriate
3 for Robert's Rules, but I would highly recommend that a
4 proposal be supported.

5
6 Mr. Peltola.

7
8 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. This is a
9 circumstance where the comment I made earlier on that
10 the Kuskokwim has not, you know, had very many, if any
11 at all, regulatory modifications to the extent like
12 others like the Yukon and that's why this proposal is
13 brought forth, to allow the opportunity for dipnet use
14 on the Kuskokwim which was previously allowed in
15 regulation.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
18 members. James.

19
20 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 So if we add the dipnet, that would include gillnet,
22 beach seine and fishwheel, rod and reel, so that's just
23 an addition, dipnet, to that long list, whatever.

24
25 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. That's
26 correct. It would add another method.

27
28 MR. CANNON: Mr. Chairman. Dave
29 Cannon.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
32 Dave.

33
34 MR. CANNON: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
35 Members of the Council. One thing that dipnets would
36 allow, in the discussion earlier by Travis, in the
37 limited amount of fishing that might go on this summer,
38 these dipnets would probably allow fishers to be out
39 there trying to catch sockeye and chums and give them
40 additional time on top of those closures that gillnets
41 would not be allowed. So people should be able to get
42 out there and harvest definitely more of the other non-
43 king salmon salmon species.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I believe on
48 the Yukon as well it's been -- we heard some testimony
49 that it's actually been effective as a commercial.

50

1 MR. CANNON: Yes. So I just wanted to
2 put it into context where it sounds like the gillnet
3 fishery, you know, may be restricted to only a few days
4 throughout the season, but people more than likely
5 would be able to fish quite a bit longer with these
6 dipnets during the season starting earlier, in possibly
7 mid June.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It occurred
10 to me as well that with the fisheries disasters monies
11 that are being made available, how soon it may come,
12 but it was just recently announced through the Federal
13 action for the fisheries disasters monies could be
14 something that would be used to help the villages and
15 local councils and whoever purchase those nets.

16
17 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. This is Don
18 Rivard.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
21 Don.

22
23 MR. RIVARD: I just need to correct
24 something I said earlier. Dipnets are not an allowable
25 gear type for harvesting salmon in the Yukon. Just as
26 in the Kuskokwim, it's not an allowable type at
27 present.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It's only
30 for commercial then under the State law? It's not a
31 Federal law, but it's under State it's allowed for
32 commercial and subsistence?

33
34 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. This is Fred
35 Bue, Yukon Fisheries Management.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
38 Fred. Are you going to tell me that the State
39 (indiscernible).....

40
41 MR. BUE: Yeah, I.....

42
43 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA:Federal
44 government as far as subsistence goes on the Yukon?

45
46 MR. BUE: Yes. And so Mr. Rivard is
47 right, we don't have dipnets as legal subsistence gear
48 under State regulations. It's not their normal fishing
49 gear, but they have a clause in times of chinook
50 conservation you may use dipnet to harvest chum salmon

1 or other species with the condition that you release
2 all chinook salmon. So it's a tool Fish and Game
3 implements and we do not object to it in-season, so
4 that's how Federal management goes along with that.
5 Mr. Chairman.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: And in
8 absence of a Federal action, I would -- I know it's
9 dangerous to presume, but it would be the same case on
10 the Kuskokwim since I'm not getting a motion coming out
11 here for us to act on to support or not.

12

13 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. This is Don
14 Rivard.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
17 Don.

18

19 MR. RIVARD: Travis can confirm this as
20 well, but I believe dipnets are not allowed in the
21 Kuskokwim, so this is another reason why the Kuskokwim
22 River Salmon Working Group is putting a proposal in
23 front of the Board of Fisheries as well.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes, that is
28 correct. I'm aware of that.

29

30 MR. CANNON: Mr. Chair. Dave Cannon.

31

32 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: One of the
33 reasons why it was mentioned to hold off with the
34 adoption of an emergency regulation under the State
35 system is that it can only be effective for 60 days, so
36 there was a concern about turning it in too early back
37 in January, in which case, even if the Board approved
38 it, it would expire before the fish got here.

39

40 MR. CANNON: This is Dave Cannon and
41 maybe Travis can jump in, but it's actually longer than
42 60 days. I believe it's 120 days. The feeling is --
43 and it has been submitted to the Board of Fish that it
44 would definitely run through into mid July once
45 accepted.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.
48 That's good.

49

50 MR. ELISON: Mr. Chair. This is

1 Travis.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,

4 Travis.

5

6 MR. ELISON: I believe it's 90. We
7 have 60, 90 and 120 thrown around. Most recent I heard
8 reliable source is 90 days for that actions for
9 emergency petitions. So, timing-wise, it looks good if
10 it were adopted at the upcoming Board meeting, which
11 starts March 17th.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: As long as
14 we've got June covered. We note January would have
15 been too early.

16

17 Council members, a motion for
18 supporting this special action to the Federal Board for
19 dipnets.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Going once.

24 Going twice.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It's gone.
29 We'll have to rely on the Fish Board to follow through
30 with their promise to keep an eye and help as much as
31 they could through their process.

32

33 We have one more then?

34

35 MS. KENNER: Two.

36

37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Ms. Kenner,
38 are you going to address those or is there anyone else
39 to speak to the other request?

40

41 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
42 special action request that came from Dave Cannon,
43 there's actually two. You've only addressed one.

44

45 MR. CANNON: I can address the other
46 one if you want, Mr. Chairman.

47

48 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, go
49 ahead, Dave.

50

1 MS. KENNER: Page 72.

2

3 MR. CANNON: Yeah, basically the
4 Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group again
5 supports this special action request and what it would
6 do is it would like to add a gear limitation of 25
7 fathoms in length to the regulations only when the need
8 for chinook salmon conservation warrants such a
9 restriction as determined by the Federal in-season
10 manager. Currently, gillnets are allowed no longer
11 than 50 fathoms.

12

13 The reason for this, and I'm assuming
14 that in your packet there there's the actual special
15 action request. I would just like people to look at
16 the numbers and these were already discussed by Travis
17 earlier, but if you look on some of the different
18 bullet points, number 3, this last year there were
19 46,000 king salmon estimated to be harvested in the
20 subsistence fishery when only 47,000 escaped to the
21 spawning ground.

22

23 As Travis mentioned, it's estimated
24 that possibly 90,000 or even down to 70,000 and up to
25 117,000 king salmon may come back this year. So this
26 restriction would hopefully allow more king salmon to
27 pass through the fishery on up into the spawning
28 grounds and also disseminate some of the harvest of
29 what's most likely going to be a limited king
30 subsistence harvest to some of the upriver fishers who
31 last year were unable to catch hardly any.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Is there a
36 motion to support the special action to the Federal
37 Board that would allow the use of 25 fathom nets rather
38 than 50 fathom nets.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 MR. CANNON: If I could add one more
43 thing, Mr. Chairman.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
46 Dave.

47

48 MR. CANNON: We have talked with the
49 troopers on this and there would be no need to have to
50 cut or damage existing nets in any way. They could be

1 tied off basically half of the net inside the boat.
2 So, the existing nets, as long as they were properly
3 tied and stowed away in the boat, would work.

4
5 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. This is Don
6 Rivard.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
9 Don.

10
11 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. Last week,
12 after we got -- well, it's been about two weeks now,
13 after we got this request in, we consulted with our
14 legal folks here at the Department of the Interior.
15 The current regulation states that subsistence gillnets
16 are limited in length to 50 fathoms in the Kuskokwim
17 River Drainage. However, because it would be less than
18 that that's being requested, the Federal in-season
19 fisheries manager has the authority to impose such a
20 length restriction of less than 50 fathoms for
21 conservation purposes and this would allow for the use
22 of nets less than, again, 50 fathoms. So there's no
23 real need for a special action.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That does it
28 for me. I'll just go through the procedure here. Is
29 there a motion to support an action that's not needed.

30
31 Mr. Charles.

32
33 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 Did I hear somebody, David or somebody, say that we
35 could tie half of the 50 fathom and make it 25 instead
36 of cutting it?

37
38 MR. CANNON: Yes. Mr. Chairman, Mr.
39 Charles. In our discussions with the troopers in
40 Bethel, that's what they said could be done.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I believe
43 another discussion too, they'd run just a little piece
44 of survey tape or something like that tied off at the
45 25 fathom mark would be sufficient.

46
47 MR. CHARLES: Mr. Chairman. I move to
48 adopt this special action proposal.

49
50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: There's a

3 MR. ONEY: Second.
4
5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Moved and
6 seconded. Do we have any further discussion.
7
8 (No comments)
9
10 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I'd just
11 reference my comments on the previous special action
12 what all is applicable here. Any other further.
13
14 (No comments)
15
16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Ready for
17 the question.
18
19 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair.
20
21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: David Bill.
22
23 MR. BILL: The net has to be cut down
24 to half if it's less than 50 fathoms?
25
26 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: No, it does
27 not have to be cut, but you can only have 25 fathoms in
28 the water is what they're saying. It's to allow some
29 opportunity without the concerns of an overharvest when
30 you have a limited number of fish. No, you would not
31 have to cut the net. That's what he was making clear.
32 You could just mark a 25 fathom and leave half of it in
33 your boat and only put half in the water.
34
35 MR. BILL: Let me ask the other way.
36 If it has to be under 50 fathoms, what if the person
37 only used 49 fathoms?
38
39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That's what
40 Mr. Rivard just explained, that under Federal law this
41 is actually unnecessary because it says you're allowed
42 up to 50 fathom. So, if it's anything less, it's
43 already allowed under Federal law. It is not allowed
44 in the State. The State needs a special -- but that's
45 something that's going to go to the Board of Fisheries.
46 It's not a Federal.
47
48 MR. BILL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49
50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Further

1 discussion. Are we ready for the question. Charlie.

2

3 MR. BROWN: Yes. Sometimes we, in my
4 fishing area, when we have foul weather, that doesn't
5 sound right to me because sometimes we drift and we
6 have to move to the other end of the net when we're
7 situated. It's kind of a situation to me if half of
8 the net is in my boat. I wouldn't move to the other
9 side.

10

11 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, that's
12 a wrinkle in that one. Andy further discussion or the
13 question.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: All those in
18 favor say aye.

19

20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21

22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any opposed
23 same sign.

24

25 (No opposing votes)

26

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: None. We'll
28 be in support of this special action. There's one more
29 then.

30

31 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. Yes, there is one more
33 Federal special action. It's on Page 63. I'll go
34 ahead and start with a description of this and someone
35 else online might want to follow up.

36

37 This is a special action by a resident
38 of the community of Quinhagak representing the IRA
39 council, Jacqueline Cleveland, in the area of the
40 Kanektok and Arolik River drainage. That includes the
41 community of Quinhagak. The State regulations allow
42 for a harvest of one antlered bull from September 1st
43 to September 30th. However, the Federal public lands,
44 which are extensive in those drainages, are closed to
45 the harvest by anyone. The lands are closed. So the
46 harvest is only open right now on the State-managed
47 lands, including the corporation lands.

48

49 The members of the IRA council and
50 their representatives have been in consultation with --

1 oh, not formal. Have been talking to the managers of
2 the Refuges and the State managers describing the moose
3 population in the area. The Quinhagak IRA council
4 feels like the area should now be opened in Federal
5 regulations also.

6

7 As far as the biological consequences
8 of this, I am not informed and I'm hoping that there's
9 somebody online who could respond.

10

11 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I was hoping
12 that myself. We did have the Togiak Refuge staff
13 online earlier. Are you still there?

14

15 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes. Can you hear me?

16

17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes, you're
18 coming through. Proceed.

19

20 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman. This is Jackie Cleveland. I'm the natural
22 resource director for the Native Village of Quinhagak.
23 We had assumed that we would be on after lunch, so the
24 person who was with me to help present it, who
25 originally wrote the special action back in '09, I
26 believe, has gone out to lunch. We had assumed that
27 the two fish ones were going to go before lunch and
28 then we would come on after, but I stuck around just in
29 case. Is it possible.....

30

31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Jackie, can
32 I interrupt you.

33

34 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes.

35

36 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Actually now
37 is a good time for us to break for lunch too and if you
38 don't have the people there that you were anticipating
39 to speak to your proposal, I think it would be a good
40 time for us to go to lunch and we'll be back here at
41 1:30.

42

43 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr.
44 Chairman. The other person is Willard Church, former
45 natural resource director, who originally wrote this
46 back in '09.

47

48 Thanks.

49

50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: And if the

1 Togiak Refuge staff aren't there, you might want to
2 give them a call and make sure they're back online.
3
4 MR. ADERMAN: Mr. Chair. This is Andy
5 Aderman with the Togiak Refuge.
6
7 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. You
8 copied all of that? 1:30.
9
10 MR. ADERMAN: Yes, sir.
11
12 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman. This is Tom
13 Evans from OSM. I copied that as well.
14
15 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you.
16 Have a good lunch.
17
18 (Off record)
19
20 (On record)
21
22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Back on
23 record here at 1:40. We have all seven Council members
24 back in the room although they're not all back at the
25 table yet. We left off with the last special action
26 request regarding caribou.
27
28 Could the folks online identify
29 themselves so we know who's here again for the record.
30
31 MR. ADERMAN: Andy Aderman and Pat
32 Walsh with the Togiak Refuge in Dillingham.
33
34 MS. CLEVELAND: Jackie Cleveland and
35 Willard Church, Native Village of Quinhagak.
36
37 MR. EVANS: Tom Evans with OSM.
38
39 MR. ELISON: Travis Elison with Fish
40 and Game.
41
42 MR. CRAWFORD: Drew Crawford with Fish
43 and Game.
44
45 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else.
46
47 (No comments)
48
49 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. We're
50 ready to proceed. We did get a brief introduction of

1 the special action. Go ahead, Quinhagak, if you'd
2 present your special action and we'll hear from the
3 Refuge and the staff if they've got anything to add.

4
5 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.
6 This is Jackie Cleveland again and I just wanted to
7 make a correction. This is about moose, not caribou.
8 I have Willard Church here to present it. Thanks.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
11 Willard.

12
13 MR. CHURCH: My name is Willard Church
14 from Quinhagak. Who am I speaking with?

15
16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: This is Greg
17 Roczicka. I'm the vice Chair. Lester is absent from
18 this meeting, so I'm chairing. At the table is Harry
19 Wilde, William Charlie Brown, David Bill, Ray Oney,
20 Tony Ulak and James Charles are here as the YK Delta
21 Subsistence Council, along with a good turnout of the
22 audience here.

23
24 MR. CHURCH: Okay. Hello, everyone. A
25 lot of the folks that are there on the YK Regional
26 Advisory Council I meet over the years and talked with
27 and also participated in a few meetings while I was
28 with the YK Regional Advisory before. You're probably
29 all familiar with this proposal here since this is the
30 second time we've submitted it through the Native
31 Village of Quinhagak. The first one was back in the
32 latter part of 2009 and the proposal was not supported,
33 but the council here is very insistent that we resubmit
34 the proposal and try to gain some support for it so
35 that we can push it forward.

36
37 As you probably all are familiar with,
38 Federal lands here on the Kanektok and Arolik Rivers,
39 they've been closed for quite a long time. I became
40 aware of this in the latter part of the '90s and early
41 2000s, which really surprised me because, having grown
42 up here on my river, the river of our people, you know,
43 we were raised and taught that all the areas are our
44 areas to hunt on. Being raised by my grandfather,
45 Adolf Foster, and my grandmother, we went out and
46 hunted everything and that was the way we lived, the
47 same with my uncles.

48
49 So, back when I found out through the
50 Togiak Refuge that Refuge lands were closed to moose

1 hunting, that really surprised us. So I think from
2 that point on Quinhagak decided that we're going to
3 work towards reversing that closure and try to get it
4 open because there's a big need here. People today,
5 without the snow cover that we usually have during the
6 winter, we're kind of struggling right now with making
7 sure that we have enough meat in the freezer. It's
8 probably the same for a lot of other villages out
9 there.

10

11 But Quinhagak being in the southern
12 portion of the delta here and the northern portion of
13 the Togiak Refuge, our area is slightly warmer and we
14 don't have any snow covering at all. So people here
15 are really struggling right now with trying to get meat
16 and put it in their freezer and be able to feed their
17 families for the next 12 months.

18

19 So I think there's a real need right
20 now at this point in time, especially with winter and
21 the spring season just starting up. All the
22 preparation needs to be done now before the fall season
23 starts. It may be the same for a lot of other
24 communities out there, but coming from Quinhagak and
25 being a hunter here and representing myself and my
26 fellow hunters, I'm going to speak to the issue here.

27

28 With Fish and Game and Fish and
29 Wildlife, we've been going back and forth with this
30 proposal for a couple years now. It's actually been
31 over four years. Back in the earlier days, 2009, we
32 had been discussing a moose management strategy, which
33 wasn't supported here in Quinhagak because of some
34 changes that were made to the original proposal, which
35 Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife did not support.
36 That was to make some exceptions for a harvest during
37 special needs time.

38

39 So they moved on and went down to
40 Goodnews and convinced the Goodnews people to support a
41 strategy. From that point on the population of moose
42 started increasing down on the Goodnews drainage. At
43 the same time there was some work being done on the
44 north side on the Eek River drainage to where they also
45 supported the moratorium. As we all know, the
46 moratorium on the Lower Kuskokwim worked so well that
47 you have a lot of moose there.

48

49 So, realistically, from this
50 standpoint, you had strategies that were in place which

1 were working, you know, which increased populations on
2 the north, the south and the east side of us. We all
3 know how moose habits are. They're a migratory
4 species. They move back and forth between river
5 drainages. This is ongoing, especially for bull moose.
6 We've looked at radio collaring projects that were
7 conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out of
8 the Togiak Refuge and that reconfirmed for us our
9 response of moose being able to move between four or
10 five different drainages. It just firmed up that
11 theory.

12

13 With that in mind and with the
14 moratoriums that had previously been in place, it's
15 only natural to believe and to think and to realize
16 through observation that the overlap of moose
17 populations would occur here on the Kanektok and Arolik
18 Rivers, which it has done. You know, it's a real shame
19 that people here have to be restricted to hunting just
20 on State-managed lands. State-managed lands are gravel
21 bars that are unvegetated, village corporation
22 properties and Native allotments. You know, that's
23 State managed lands.

24

25 If you go into the Refuge and the lands
26 up there, they're considered State managed or the
27 gravel bars. You know, you're putting a lot of
28 pressure on that small area of land mass and
29 restricting people to hunt on those lands puts a lot of
30 pressure on a very small trying to grow population of
31 moose.

32

33 With this proposal here, it will
34 release some of that pressure. It will also give folks
35 an opportunity to go out and hunt on Federal public
36 lands, which we believe we have a right to. Look at
37 the history of Quinhagak with the recent archaeological
38 study that was conducted here. We've had a human
39 presence in this area for 7,000 years. People here
40 have been using this land, this river and these
41 resources for a very, very long time and they're going
42 to continue to use them into the future.

43

44 When I look at the situation that's
45 developed over the last four years, I think, from how I
46 understand it, using an example, it's like two bull
47 moose locking horns over a territory that they feel
48 they have a right to. You know, we can cooperate to
49 make things a little better for everyone involved and
50 to help try to grow a moose population.

1 One thing would be to free up some of
2 the pressure on the limited land area that we're
3 required to hunt off of, which would give an
4 opportunity for that population of moose to be able to
5 expand further out and give people an opportunity to
6 hunt a broader area, which basically would relieve
7 pressure on those small areas of land that are
8 identified in your regulation booklets.

9
10 You know, back in the day when you were
11 working on the moratorium for the community of Eek and
12 for the Eek River drainage, you know, you make some
13 promises that people will be able to hunt on lands, you
14 know, not just limited to State lands. Because when you
15 did open it up, they were limited to hunting a very
16 small area. You know, being the neighboring village,
17 we looked at what was occurring there and we were very
18 surprised.

19
20 You know, when you look towards
21 establishing a population, everyone has an expectation
22 that the people from Eek would be able to hunt both
23 State and Federal lands and when they were limited to
24 State, you know, from the Quinhagak standpoint, your
25 management system lost a lot of credibility because of
26 that decision that was made to limit those people
27 living up in Eek.

28
29 I think, you know, if you're going to
30 be working with the communities out here, you have to
31 be straight up with them. That's what we're trying to
32 do here in Quinhagak. You know, we have a situation
33 right now to where we have a very difficult winter
34 without snow. People are in a situation right now
35 where they're running out of meat.

36
37 You know, you have a growing population
38 of moose on the north, the south and the east that are
39 migrating over our drainage system and I think it might
40 be time now for you people that are on the Council to
41 really sit down and take this into consideration.
42 We're looking at a tough season up ahead of us and I
43 don't see any reason why a decision should be made not
44 to support it like it was done in 2009 with growing
45 numbers of moose and more liberal regulations occurring
46 north of us.

47
48 You know, there's no reason why Federal
49 public lands should not be open and I think it's time
50 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and OSM to step

1 up and manage for subsistence. That's the law as I
2 understand it, you know, in ANILCA, subsistence
3 priority. We do have a priority here today.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you,
8 Willard. Questions, Council members.

9
10 James.

11
12 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
13 Willard and Jackie, my name is James Charles. I'm a
14 RAC member here and I'm also a Lower Kuskokwim Fish and
15 Game Advisory Committee member. We've talked about
16 Lower Kuskokwim moratorium for a long time for moose
17 like you guys, but finally our people agreed to go
18 ahead and send that proposal in to close the area for
19 five years or 1,000 moose.

20
21 We had that moratorium -- I don't
22 remember what year that was, but moose population grew
23 in this area and on down to Tuntutuliak area. Wherever
24 the area was closed the population grew pretty fast and
25 then we don't have to travel all the way upriver or
26 other places, so it makes it easier for our people, our
27 hunters, so they can go home to Tuntutuliak at night or
28 Napakiak or other places, maybe Bethel too. I don't
29 know about Bethel people. But when the season opens,
30 it's a lot easier.

31
32 As you know, the gas price has gone up.
33 It's not easy to travel all the way to Holitna to go
34 shoot a moose. It takes a lot of money. Now you would
35 save some money too if you go ahead and propose for a
36 moratorium and close it. I'm telling you what happened
37 in this area. If your group decide to go ahead and
38 make a proposal to close your area, we don't have
39 anybody from Quinhagak right now, but that's a good
40 thing.

41
42 We learn from Yukon River and then this
43 one and you are using this area for an example too, so
44 that's how it worked. Since this area was done, it was
45 done by State Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 MR. CHURCH: This is Willard. Can I
50 make a comment in regards to a closure?

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
2 Willard.

3
4 MR. CHURCH: Yeah, like I said before,
5 Federal public lands here on the Kanektok and Arolik
6 Rivers they have been closed. They've been closed for
7 a very, very long time to moose hunting. These are
8 Federal uplands. You know, you talk about closing an
9 area and closing a season. You look at your own
10 regulation book and it says that there is no Federal
11 open season, that Federal public lands are closed.
12 They've been closed a very long time. You say you make
13 sacrifices for five years to close lands to moose
14 hunting while these drainages, the Kanektok and Arolik
15 Rivers, they've been closed for much longer than five
16 years. As far as I know when I became aware of the
17 regulations, they have been closed and there has been
18 no change to the closures.

19
20 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman. This is Tom
21 Evans. I have a question if I could.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
24 Tom.

25
26 MR. EVANS: The question I have is how
27 many moose are in the area? That's one of the factors
28 that kind of dictates whether a hunt is a viable option
29 at this time. Have there been any recent censuses in
30 the area? Maybe Andy or somebody could speak to that.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Before we go
33 there I wanted to get Willard's take on that and I was
34 going to follow along, you know, is there habitat there
35 and what is the reason given for keeping those lands
36 closed that you've been given? We'll have the Refuge
37 guys give their take on this as well a little later.

38
39 MR. CHURCH: Well, we haven't been ever
40 told by Refuge staff why these Federal public lands are
41 closed. They just told us they were closed and they've
42 been telling us that ever since the late '90s, early
43 2000s when I was involved with the natural resource
44 program. Yeah, that's a good question. I think Refuge
45 staff should respond to it.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yeah, we're
48 essentially, I would think, talking about the same
49 moose population. David, did you have anything before
50 we go to the Refuge guys? You had your hand up

1 earlier.

2

3 MR. BILL: Yes, Mr. Chair. This is
4 David Bill, Sr. I'm from Nelson Island with the RAC
5 and Central Bering Sea Advisory Group. I feel pretty
6 hot seeing the village being forbidden not to hunt in
7 their area. They are the people who were born there.
8 It is their mother land. Right now, especially this
9 year, all over the area there is no snow. The people
10 are short of food now, even in my area. I don't know
11 how it is in Kuskokwim Bay. I don't think anybody
12 wants to see anyone go hungry while there's food being
13 around.

14

15 When I was told -- last time when I was
16 talking to somebody here, one of the Fish and Wildlife
17 guys, they said how do we go about having these guys to
18 hunt moose in their area. The guy told me we have to
19 go through the legislature. They are the ones that can
20 do it. I think we should help those guys down there.
21 They are our Native brothers. They are no different
22 from us. They are desperate to get food. What they
23 have, they want to catch it like we do. We in Nelson
24 Island has to go to Kashunuk and all the way up the
25 Yukon just for food and that's about \$3,000 round trip
26 on gas.

27

28 I think it would be better for anyone
29 or it will be equal to help out these people when they
30 need help. We don't want to turn around and say, ah,
31 forget it. We want to help them. We were born to help
32 each other. We were not born to look away when
33 somebody needs our help no matter what color you are.

34

35 You say there's regulations that cannot
36 be changed. They can be changed. The regulations can
37 be changed. The only thing that cannot be changed is
38 the man of the Word. His language is not supposed to
39 be changed. A manmade regulation can be changed. Don't
40 tell us it cannot be changed because it can. There is
41 no such word as can't. If we have to go to the
42 legislature to help these guys, we should do it.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We'll hear
47 now from the Refuge Manager, Andy, I believe.

48

49 MR. ADERMAN: Yeah. Good day, Mr.
50 Chairman and Council members. Can you hear me okay?

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Loud and
2 clear. Proceed.

3
4 MR. ADERMAN: Okay. I guess first I'd
5 like to start out with the reason the moose season was
6 closed in that area. There was a number of surveys
7 done in late winter around this time back in the '90s.
8 Six of them, in fact, that failed to turn up any moose.
9 So, the first six surveys zero moose were counted. We
10 did 10 surveys subsequent to that and we found from one
11 to 30 moose. The most recent count last March was 30.

12
13
14 That's been the history of the moose
15 population in a nutshell in that area and those counts
16 include the entire drainages, the Refuge lands and the
17 non-Refuge lands. Habitat-wise, there's about 8
18 percent of the area is considered good winter moose
19 habitat. There's a lot of room for moose to grow in
20 there yet.

21
22 That's all I have. I think my
23 supervisor, Pat Walsh, would like to say a few words.

24
25 MR. WALSH: Hello, Mr. Chairman. Can
26 you hear me?

27
28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes. Go
29 ahead.

30
31 MR. WALSH: This is Pat Walsh from
32 Togiak Refuge. So, for the reasons that Andy just
33 discussed, we can't support this proposal, but we do
34 have a suggestion. We suggest that this proposal be
35 tabled until all the interested parties truly work
36 together to develop a moose strategy, just like Willard
37 mentioned.

38
39 I'll talk a bit more to that as I've
40 been working on this moose strategy for 13 years, so I
41 know that history as well. This would include the
42 village of Quinhagak, Togiak Refuge and the Alaska
43 Department of Fish and Game. ADF&G is very much
44 interested in working on a moose strategy for this
45 area. Once we have such a strategy developed that we
46 can all agree with, we would come back to this Council
47 and present it to them.

48
49 Willard talked to a number of other
50 communities that have done such a thing, that have

1 worked through cooperative management strategies with
2 the agencies. You're as aware as I am of how well
3 these strategies have worked. For us at Togiak Refuge
4 we work closely with the village of Goodnews Bay and
5 Platinum and previous to that the village of Togiak.
6 In both of those examples, moose populations went from
7 virtually no moose to large successful populations with
8 harvests every year.

9
10 The reason this has happened is really
11 pretty simple. In each of these cases people agreed to
12 quit harvesting moose, in particular quit harvesting
13 cows, and the populations took off. In the example of
14 the Kanektok and Arolik drainages, we've met with the
15 village and the people did not agree to quit harvesting
16 moose, just as Willard has pointed out. So harvests
17 have continued there and there have been so few moose
18 that the harvests have basically removed a high
19 percentage of the population each year. It's only been
20 this last year that we've seen the population really
21 begin to increase, so that's really encouraging to us.

22
23
24 We think that this population is going
25 to grow and become a truly harvestable, sustainable
26 resource, but it's not there yet. So we suggest that
27 all the interested parties work together just as in the
28 example of other communities that have done this and
29 we're confident that there will be a harvestable
30 population that will feed people indefinitely.

31
32 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.
33

34 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I guess the
35 question that comes to my mind right off the bat is if
36 there is already a hunt that's allowed on State land
37 and we're talking about the same animals and the same
38 population that, as we all know, don't recognize
39 whether they're on State, Federal or private land or
40 boundaries of any sort.

41
42 I guess I'm wondering if it's
43 considered that this population can support a harvest
44 that's occurring, but limited to State lands, why
45 couldn't it be allowed on Federal lands? Does your
46 organization also oppose the hunt that's occurring on
47 State private lands?

48
49 MR. WALSH: Mr. Chairman. This is Pat
50 Walsh again. If we were managing those lands, we would

1 not open them to hunting until the population was
2 higher than it is right now. I can't speak for the
3 State. Maybe there is somebody there who can. But the
4 overall population, all it can do is sustain.
5 Basically removing these new colonists that move into
6 the area -- and Willard mentioned that, the moose do
7 move, and that has been the majority of what's happened
8 there and we have radiotelemetry data that show that
9 moose have moved from the Goodnews or Togiak drainages
10 into the Kanektok drainages.

11
12 When those animals are immediately
13 harvested, they don't get a chance to establish a
14 population and that's not a good way to manage a moose
15 population, based strictly on immigration. What really
16 needs to happen is the population needs to become
17 established where its own production supports the
18 harvest.

19
20 MR. CHURCH: Yeah, I've got a.....

21
22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
23 Willard.

24
25 MR. CHURCH:that I want to make.
26 This is Willard Church again.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
29 Willard.

30
31 MR. CHURCH: Okay. On the fourth page
32 of this proposal, which each of the RAC members should
33 have, down towards the lower part of the page, there's
34 a comment that was made which originated from the
35 former Refuge Manager through informal discussions
36 about moose moratoriums, moose management strategies
37 and moose hunting in general.

38
39 The Refuge Manager has informally
40 stated that it is really not necessary for Quinhagak
41 residents to support a moose moratorium for the
42 Kanektok and Arolik River drainages since the
43 populations are very likely going to be migrating into
44 the proposed area as the population on both sides of
45 the drainages increase. You know, that's a given and
46 we've seen this.

47
48 Like I said before, you know, based off
49 of the Togiak Refuge's own radio collaring project, it
50 firmed up for us that moose are migratory, that they're

1 moving through these drainages, you know, with the
2 population, as I said before, increasing on the north,
3 the south and the east.

4
5 As Pat Walsh has stated, you know, with
6 higher counts occurring, even though there is a hunt
7 that's on State lands taking place, it's showing to us
8 the moose are migrating into these drainages and
9 they're increasing even with a State hunt.

10
11 So I still don't accept their logic
12 that we need a strategy or a moratorium. All we need
13 is for our Federal public lands to be opened on the
14 Kanektok and Arolik Rivers, basing it on the fact that
15 the moose are migrating into this drainage and to the
16 Arolik River drainages because of the sacrifices that
17 people had to make on the north, the south and the
18 east. We are beneficiaries of those closures as well
19 and we're seeing that through the counts.

20
21 You and your strategy, you want to
22 close us down for five years. You're going to be
23 putting our people between a rock and a hard place.
24 We're talking about people's need to be able to have
25 meat, to be able to put it on their table and put it in
26 their freezer. You know, not really support something,
27 especially when it comes to putting our people's food
28 resources at stake here. You know, we're talking about
29 feeding people. That's what it comes down to. Those
30 are the basic facts.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any
33 questions for either one, the Refuge or Willard.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I have a
38 request for public to speak. Tim Andrew with AVCP on
39 this special action.

40
41 MR. ANDREW: Good afternoon, Mr.
42 Chairman. Members of the Council. My name is Timothy
43 Andrew. I'm the director of natural resources for the
44 Association of Village Council Presidents. I am here
45 to provide testimony on behalf of AVCP on this special
46 action request.

47
48 I'd just like to inform the Council
49 that we have made special action requests before the
50 Federal Subsistence Board. One being on the Mulchatna

1 Caribou when we continuously see the decline of the
2 herd to close the hunting opportunity to non-Federally
3 qualified hunters. We've also pressured the U.S. Fish
4 and Wildlife Service to close the chinook salmon
5 harvest to non-Federally qualified users.

6
7 There seems to be a resistance from
8 Fish and Wildlife Service, OSM to not close to
9 non-Federally qualified hunters or fishermen. In my
10 opinion, that's leading towards the model of State
11 management, which is subsistence opportunity for
12 everyone.

13
14 When a resource becomes so limited in
15 any area, I don't care where it is, Yukon, Kuskokwim
16 River, or perhaps a small area of a game management
17 unit, if this is an area that's distinctly identified
18 trying to develop moose populations, if there is a
19 harvestable surplus, that harvestable surplus is
20 supposed to go to the Federally qualified hunters who
21 have customary and traditional use determinations for
22 those areas. But, you know, ever time we try and make
23 these proposals it gets extremely frustrating that they
24 have to consider what the State of Alaska has to say
25 about it. There's a lot of deference to the State
26 management system and it's not supposed to be that way.

27
28 The Federal managers have an obligation
29 to live up to what the law says, ANILCA. ANILCA says
30 you've got to close the opportunity to non-Federally
31 qualified hunters or fishermen first before you
32 restrict the Federally qualified. That's its mission,
33 to protect subsistence, it's supposed to be, for rural
34 residents.

35
36 What I see the trend going, it's
37 extremely disturbing that it's moving towards a system
38 of management that's like the State of Alaska. It's
39 not supposed to be that way. It's extremely
40 frustrating.

41
42 You know, we have low salmon returns on
43 the Yukon/Kuskokwim Rivers, yet our Federal managers
44 have yet to even exercise extraterritorial
45 jurisdiction, which is allowed by ANILCA. They have
46 never exercised a closure to non-Federally qualified
47 users only and it's time that the RACs, the people, the
48 people in the villages like the Native Village of
49 Quinhagak stand up and say it's time for a closure to
50 non-Federally qualified users.

1 ANILCA was created to protect Alaska
2 Native subsistence. You see it in the congressional
3 language. It was not a measure to make sure that
4 everybody had subsistence opportunity.

5
6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 I'd gladly answer any questions.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I agree with
11 a lot of what you say, but I fail to find how it
12 applies to this proposal here because we do have a
13 State hunt being allowed while the Federal land remains
14 closed and it puts you in that odd situation of where
15 Federal subsistence opportunity is supposed to be
16 structured to provide that opportunity and it isn't
17 there with the State, so I'm in a little bit of a
18 quandary about this one.

19
20 And I believe that hunt that's there
21 under State -- and I may be wrong. Anybody online or
22 perhaps even you can correct me, but I think that's one
23 of those registration hunts where the permits are only
24 available within the community of where the hunt
25 occurs. It was something that was structured.

26
27 The other thing I'm hearing that I'm
28 having a little struggle with regarding this is that
29 what Willard has mentioned here from Quinhagak is the
30 exact same words we heard when we talked about a
31 Kuskokwim moratorium where the average harvest was 15
32 to 20 moose in Unit 18 on the Kuskokwim and people, by
33 gosh, we want to kill those 20 moose every year. And
34 by having a moratorium, instead of 15 to 20 moose per
35 year, now we're up to 100. We may be up to 150 the
36 next time around.

37
38 The same thing the guys from Alakanuk
39 and Robert Moore, the chairman of the Lower Yukon
40 Advisory Committee at the time. By gosh, you know,
41 there was three moose -- or they flew for three days
42 with five planes and they couldn't find one moose.
43 When they had the moratorium, they started hunting when
44 there was, I believe, around three or four hundred
45 moose. It was very slow, but now they have five, six,
46 seven thousand moose within that habitat. But, by
47 gosh, people were no way. It's the difficult thing of
48 -- but the snowmachines that are there now. It wasn't
49 wolves that were killing off our moose that caused the
50 population to decrease.

1 Again, that's where I'm wrestling with
2 this thing. Again, I agree with everything you say,
3 but I'm having a hard time putting it into the context
4 of this request.

5
6 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chairman, if I may
7 respond. You know, it's not that I'm saying that the
8 State hunt should go away. I'm just saying Federal
9 managers take a look at what's available on Federal
10 land, determine the harvestable surplus and provide
11 that Federally qualified hunt opportunity to Quinhagak
12 if they so desire as long as it does not adversely
13 affect the population.

14
15 Also with the comment for the areas
16 that have had moratoriums, it's a very good thing. I
17 saw it on the Lower Yukon, I saw it on the Lower
18 Kuskokwim. What I failed to see during those processes
19 is the Federal managers identifying the harvestable
20 surplus, providing that harvestable surplus to
21 Federally qualified, but yet they wait until they can
22 provide subsistence opportunity to any resident of the
23 state of Alaska. They wait until they get to that
24 point.

25
26 I don't know why that is in existence.
27 Are they afraid of being sued? I don't know. It's
28 just a trend that's extremely disturbing. In every way
29 possible they're circumventing Federal law.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: It doesn't
32 make sense if there's going to be a hunt open, if
33 there's a harvestable surplus and people are satisfied
34 with five moose rather than possibly 50 moose as a
35 harvestable surplus over a moratorium. I'm having a
36 hard time seeing a justification for not having it open
37 because we're talking same population, same harvest.

38
39 Anyway, anybody else.

40
41 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42
43 MR. CHURCH: Yeah, Greg, this is
44 Willard Church again. I've got another comment I'd
45 like to make.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead,
48 Willard.

49
50 MR. CHURCH: You know, with your

1 management strategy for moose and your moratorium,
2 they're a good thing. There is no doubt about it. You
3 can see the results based on the surveys that were
4 conducted both in the Lower Kuskokwim, the Yukon, the
5 Togiak River area, the Goodnews and so forth.

6
7 Right now we're in a situation here
8 where, like I said before, we have no snow covering.
9 People haven't been able to access areas where they can
10 harvest caribou or other resources. It's going to be a
11 tough year. If the managers are going to close us down
12 for five years, if they had their way, in order to meet
13 some sort of goals they're trying to establish so they
14 can say, yeah, we got the Kanektok River and the
15 Quinhagak to support this. At the same time we
16 sacrifice the needs of the people here, the needs that
17 they have for providing for themselves just so a Refuge
18 manager or biologist can say, yeah, we have our numbers
19 that we need.

20
21 Five moose a year, that's a lot of meat
22 for a lot of people here in the village. Ten moose a
23 year would be even better. Being able to hunt both on
24 State land and Federal land, we could feed a lot more
25 people than we're doing right now. At the same time,
26 with an established season, you've got better
27 monitoring of the hunt and of the area especially I
28 think is needed. You know, there are some advantages
29 to opening up Federal lands for Federally qualified
30 subsistence users.

31
32 We've identified who has customary and
33 traditional use of this resource on the proposal
34 itself. It says residents of Quinhagak, Goodnews,
35 Platinum and Eek. You know, they historically
36 throughout time, as long as I can remember, have come
37 over here and hunted our drainages. Like I said
38 before, we're talking about providing food for people
39 that need it and that's under the law, Title VIII of
40 ANILCA. There's a requirement there.

41
42 Like I said before, you know, OSM and
43 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other Federal
44 managers need to step up to the plate to start managing
45 for subsistence, for our subsistence needs. We know
46 how the system works. The State managers come in and
47 they push their agendas forward in order to meet their
48 goals, while at the same time we're being neglected
49 under the Federal system that all of you are supposed
50 to be representing. You're there to represent us.

1 We're the subsistence users here. I think that message
2 needs to be gotten across to everyone that's on the
3 Board.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any further
8 questions.

9

10 MR. WALSH: Mr. Chairman. This is Pat
11 Walsh of Togiak Refuge.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hold on. I
14 have someone here with a question. Can you stand by
15 and I'll have this fellow ask his question and then you
16 can respond. Jackson.

17

18 MR. WALSH: Yes, sir.

19

20 MR. WILLIAMS: This is not really a
21 question, but I'm going to share.....

22

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: For the
24 record. No. We need a question specific to the
25 proposal.

26

27 MR. WILLIAMS: Oh, the proposal?

28

29 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes.

30

31 MR. WILLIAMS: But, you know, I was
32 relating to what Quinhagak was saying. Can I respond
33 to what I've been hearing Quinhagak.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: If you can
36 do it very quickly.

37

38 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, really quickly.

39

40 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: No long
41 stories.

42

43 MR. WILLIAMS: You know, last week or
44 so we went to conference business in Anchorage and that
45 was the people that were giving us information at that
46 conference and one really caught my eye because
47 listening to Bill here and the person who was talking
48 on Quinhagak. You know, they were saying some kind of
49 a project for moose. They were giving the example of
50 Galena that had disaster in Yukon this spring from ice

1 damage to the village.

2

3 I forgot the name, but I suggest to the
4 person in Quinhagak those people that went to Quinhagak
5 will know the person on their agenda that were telling
6 the people that went there -- like I was thinking
7 automatically listening to him and Bill, we're in a
8 situation. I don't know if it would be related to
9 disaster, but that program can do that. But I was
10 thinking automatically, you know, there's so many moose
11 around Marshall and St. Mary's, you know, so many and
12 what they did in Galena, they were given an example
13 that they contacted the Department and if they can hunt
14 for those people that were in disaster moose and they
15 did provide it.

16

17 I would really suggest that the person
18 that's on the phone contact the people that went to the
19 business conference and they got the information.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Mr. Walsh,
24 Pat.

25

26 MR. WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
27 wanted to respond to a couple of Willard's comments.
28 First, I'd say that we do take our responsibilities
29 under ANILCA to manage for subsistence opportunities
30 very seriously. That's the reason that we work with
31 villages to provide that. That's really the single
32 most important reason that we do that.

33

34 Relative to moose, this is a growing
35 subsistence opportunity. Moose have only recently
36 arrived in our area. Willard talked to an
37 archeological record of people being on the land for
38 thousands of years and we're familiar with that record
39 too and that's true. The archeological record shows
40 that moose were not on the land until just recently.
41 There's other evidence that shows that too and I think
42 you're all familiar with that.

43

44 They've really not been present for
45 much of the area that we manage until the last 20 or so
46 years and they're still growing in number in some
47 places where they've only recently begun colonizing
48 those areas. The Kanektok drainage is the last
49 location on the area that we at Togiak Refuge manage
50 that falls into that situation.

1 The reason there are moose being
2 harvested every year by people from Quinhagak is
3 because of the sacrifices that people in the villages
4 around them have done over the last 10 years.
5 Moratoriums that other people put in place where they
6 in good faith allowed the moose populations to grow.
7 Those moose populations are the ones that are migrating
8 into the Kanektok drainage and providing the current
9 opportunity now.

10
11 If people in the Kanektok drainage were
12 to attempt to allow that moose population to grow by
13 backing off on the harvest now, that population would
14 grow far faster than it will. I think it's going to
15 grow on its own anyway, but it will be much slower and
16 take much longer before we could support opening
17 Federal lands to a harvest.

18
19 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
22 members.

23
24 MR. BILL: One last comment, Mr.
25 Chairman.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We want to
28 move forward with an action item on this one whether we
29 support or not. Keep that in mind. Maybe make a
30 motion at the end of what you've got to say.

31
32 MR. BILL: Very quick one. For you
33 guys who are closing the area are watching the Federal
34 lands down in Quinhagak area, the people have a right
35 to be there. The people have a right to hunt in their
36 traditional way. If the people are scaring the moose
37 population by being there, get the sports fishermen out
38 of there, then the moose will grow faster. Involve the
39 sport fishermen also. Take them out of the river.
40 Don't let them sport fish for five years or more.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Mr. Nick,
45 you had a comment.

46
47 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
48 the record, my name is Alex Nick, Council coordinator
49 for the YK Delta RAC. My duty and responsibility is to
50 let you know what you're responsible for as a RAC

1 appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, serving
2 your region, which in your operating manual identifies
3 which area you're responsible for.

4
5 You are responsible to make
6 recommendations in Unit 18. Unit 18 is your region and
7 Unit 18 is from Kotlik all the way over to Platinum and
8 up the Yukon River all the way up to past Russian
9 Mission and in the Kuskokwim River all the way up to
10 the village of Kalskag.

11
12 You're also dealing with two management
13 areas when it comes to -- Federal management area when
14 it comes to Federal lands. Togiak Refuge and Yukon
15 Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Every time when
16 there's subsistence issues in those areas you come to
17 play, whether it's on the Togiak Refuge land or on
18 Yukon Delta within Unit 18.

19
20 I just wanted the Council members to
21 understand according to your powers, duties and powers
22 in your manual, you are to make good decisions or good
23 recommendations when it comes to subsistence management
24 of the resources.

25
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: And the
29 special action request is specific to that. It says
30 from this portion of Unit 18 on Federal public lands.
31 So that is contained in the proposal.

32
33 We need to move forward with this one
34 or we're just going to be going in circles. I need a
35 motion from someone to take an action on this.

36
37 MR. ONEY: Mr. Chairman. Raymond Oney
38 here. I make the motion to adopt the Federal special
39 action request by the Native Village of Quinhagak.

40
41 MR. CHARLES: I second the motion, Mr.
42 Chairman.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Motion to
45 support the special action by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr.
46 Charles. Any further discussion.

47
48 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair. Is the motion
49 for.....

50

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: By adopt I
2 believe he meant support.
3
4 MR. BILL: Is the motion to -- I don't
5 know how you.....
6
7 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: For the
8 record, the motion, as I understood it -- and correct
9 me if I'm wrong maker and second both. The motion is to
10 support the request for this special action by
11 Quinhagak to the Federal Subsistence Board.
12
13 MR. BILL: Thank you.
14
15 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Does anyone
16 have anything further of the Council regarding this.
17
18 (No comments)
19
20 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I'm going to
21 ask for a roll call vote on this proposal.
22
23 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
24 might want to restate the motion and then I'll go ahead
25 and do the roll call.
26
27 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Is everyone
28 clear on the motion to support the special action
29 request of Quinhagak. It was a move to support. So if
30 you wish to back their request, you vote yes. If you
31 think it's unwarranted at this time, you vote no.
32
33 MR. NICK: Start with Mr. William
34 Brown.
35
36 MR. BROWN: Yes.
37
38 MR. NICK: Mr. James Charles.
39
40 MR. CHARLES: Yes.
41
42 MR. NICK: Lester Wilde is excused.
43 Paul Manumik is excused. Anthony Ulak.
44
45 MR. ULAK: Yes.
46
47 MR. NICK: Harry Wilde.
48
49 MR. WILDE: Yes.
50

1 MR. NICK: Mary Gregory is absent.
2 Raymond Oney.
3
4 MR. ONEY: Yes.
5
6 MR. NICK: Greg Roczicka.
7
8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Yes.
9
10 MR. NICK: Robert Aloysius is excused.
11 David Bill.
12
13 MR. BILL: Yes.
14
15 MR. NICK: Seven yes and zero no. Mr.
16 Chair.
17
18 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: The motion
19 carries. Okay. Moving on. That was the last of the
20 special action requests. There are no further for that
21 agenda item. Moving on then, Mr. Nick. You're up next
22 with the FY2013 annual report.
23
24 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Members of the Council. As you remember during your
26 fall meeting we asked for topics for your 2013 annual
27 report. We did not get any, so there's no annual
28 report at this time. In your book on Page 76, it tells
29 you what your annual report is all about -- rather what
30 you need to do. I think one of the very good examples
31 is the issues that you heard from the public when
32 there's public testimony, the issues that they face
33 with respect to subsistence and all other issues that
34 you talked about in the past.
35
36 On Page 76 of your book, you will
37 notice that when it comes to annual report that page
38 talks about background, report content, report clarity
39 and report forms. So in your future annual report what
40 you will need to do is come up with topics for me to
41 draft along with your recommendations of how it should
42 be dealt with by the Board.
43
44 At this time for 2013, because it was
45 not clear whether or not you came up with topics, I
46 reviewed the transcripts several times to make certain
47 that there's no topic. If I remember vaguely in
48 February, last winter, Mr. Aloysius mentioned something
49 about abandoned beaver dams. One other thing that your
50 Council would have to do when you come up with annual

1 report topics you would need to approve that in the
2 form of an official action so that we would be able to
3 draft it for you and come back to you and then let you
4 review it and then approve the annual report.

5
6 One other thing that I wanted to
7 mention to you also is when the report is done, when
8 the annual report is done, it goes through Chair review
9 before it goes forward. I've talked to Mr. Roczicka
10 and also Mr. Wilde in the past and I'm glad that both
11 Mr. Wilde and Mr. Roczicka had a chance to review and
12 edit when necessary before those annual reports go
13 forward in the past. That's how we dealt with them.

14
15 All we have to do this time is draft a
16 letter and inform the Board that there's no annual
17 report and let them know that there's no annual report
18 for 2013. Mr. Chair. If you have any questions, I'll
19 try to answer those.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any
22 questions, Council members, on that.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I guess I
27 would just mention regarding that is that there are
28 many issues unresolved, but we have put them forward
29 before. Not because the Board couldn't deal with them
30 and exercise the due deference which they are supposed
31 to do, but they choose not to and that was a
32 straightforward subject and that one is still
33 outstanding and if they want to see what our problem
34 was, they can review our last annual report and see
35 those are still standing issues of concern.

36
37 Okay. Tribal consultation
38 implementation guidelines and draft ANCSA consultation
39 policy. This has a little star by it as an action
40 item.

41
42 MS. PETRIVELLI: Mr. Chair. I'm Pat
43 Petrivelli with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I'm not
44 a member of the work group, but I was for one meeting.
45 If Jack Lorrigan could have attended the meeting or
46 been on teleconference, he would have made this
47 presentation. The work group summary is on Page 84 of
48 your work book.

49
50 It's a notice from the Federal

1 Subsistence Board's Consultation Work Group and they're
2 requesting feedback on two documents. At the same
3 time, they also distributed these documents to the
4 tribes and the ANCSA Native corporations. The
5 documents it's looking for your input on are the Draft
6 Implementation Guidelines that would be used. The
7 Federal Board has adopted a Tribal Consultation Policy
8 and now this is the Implementation Guidelines that this
9 work group is working on. The other document is the
10 ANCSA corporation policy summaries.

11
12 So we'll start with the Draft
13 Implementation Guidelines Summary. There's a few
14 bullets there. These guidelines are intended to
15 provide Federal staff additional guidance on the
16 Federal Subsistence Board's Tribal Consultation Policy.
17 The Implementation Guidelines include when
18 consultations should be regularly offered, meeting
19 protocols for these consultations, communication and
20 collaboration with tribes throughout the regulatory
21 cycle, training guidance and topics for Federal staff
22 and the Board, reporting on consultation, and how to
23 make changes to the policy or guidance as needed or
24 requested. The proposed meeting guidelines are in the
25 book on Page 86 through 93.

26
27 The other thing that they want your
28 input on is the Draft ANCSA Corporation Consultation
29 Policy Summary. This policy is adapted from the larger
30 Department of Interior Policy on Consultation with
31 ANCSA Corporations. It has a preamble, guiding
32 principles and policy. I assume that starts on Page
33 94. They took the bigger DOI policy and just adapted
34 it to the Federal Subsistence Program needs. It's kind
35 of brief. It's Page 95 through 97.

36
37 The list of the work groups who were
38 involved in developing these two documents is on Page
39 85. They did expand the group since last year and I
40 think they added corporation members and a few other
41 people to just add more diversity in the
42 representation.

43
44 Besides the tribes being asked for
45 input and the corporations and all the councils,
46 Federal staff are also being asked for input on these
47 documents. So this is just a work in progress still.
48 Once those comments from all the different groups are
49 made, the group will amend this stuff accordingly
50 before submitting it to the Federal Board.

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: So it
2 remains a work in progress and it has not been put
3 forward to the Board and it may not be until probably
4 next winter or their next regulatory cycle.

5
6 MS. PETRIVELLI: Yeah, I think having
7 it ready for the April Board meeting is very ambitious
8 because there's too much on the plate for the April
9 Board meeting because of all the wildlife proposals and
10 other things.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
13 members.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I see it
18 evolving. It has incorporated several of the
19 recommendations that have come forward. I don't see
20 anything popping out for me at the present. Hearing
21 none, we're ready to move on.

22
23 Next we have our Council nominations
24 process and outreach. Who is here to address that.

25
26 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Alex
27 Nick, for the record, Council coordinator. Is there
28 someone online who is going to speak to this from OSM?

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 MR. NICK: Hearing none, I'll go ahead
33 and go through the summary of this. Federal
34 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council members
35 information. You can find that on Page 98 of your
36 workbook. It tells you about the membership
37 application deadline. It will be March 21, 2014. I
38 would like to stress to people online and in the
39 audience that if you submit an application for Council
40 membership or nominate someone, you need to try to mail
41 it early or send it to me as soon as possible so it
42 will be received by our office in Anchorage close of
43 business March 21st. You can find all of the
44 information on Pages 98, 99 and 100.

45
46 It was good to see that someone during
47 this meeting submitted an application for RAC
48 membership. The nomination process is kind of lengthy.
49 For those of you who apply for 2014 membership, we
50 wouldn't know until early December or January if you

1 are appointed or reappointed for your seat.

2

3 I'll take any questions if there is
4 any.

5

6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Questions
7 anybody.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I don't have
12 a question, but I'll note for the record, you didn't
13 mention it specifically, we do have two vacancies
14 currently on this Council and five additional seats for
15 members whose term expires the end of this year. So
16 essentially there are seven seats.

17

18 MR. NICK: Mr. Chair. I forgot to
19 mention they're still going through a vetting process
20 for the vacant seats at this time. We wouldn't hear --
21 we probably will hear soon what's going to happen with
22 those vetting preparations. Mr. Chair.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anything
25 further on this.

26

27 MR. NICK: I encourage those who are
28 online and those in the audience to apply for
29 membership. All applications are considered. There is
30 only one thing that will probably prevent those
31 applications not being considered would be because the
32 information is not complete. So you need to put down
33 all information. If you reapply for your seat, you
34 should not say please use my previous application.
35 That won't work. You need to fill out all the spaces
36 in the application like you're applying for the first
37 time.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Or just
42 change the date and resubmit it.

43

44 (Laughter)

45

46 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That brings
47 us to agency reports. Do you guys want to take a short
48 break here before we finish out the agenda. We just
49 have the reports left. We'll step down for 10 minutes.

50

1 (Off record)

2

3 (On record)

4

5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay, folks,
6 let's wrap this up here. We're back on record at 3:07.
7 Ready to move on to the final portion of the agenda
8 with the agency reports. We did hear from the Office
9 of Subsistence Management earlier. We'll move on to
10 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We have Togiak
11 referenced in the bulletin. Are you guys still online?
12 Did you have anything to add here?

13

14 MR. ADERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Andy
15 Aderman with the Togiak Refuge. Our information
16 bulletin is in your book starting at Page 105. I won't
17 go over anything real specific other than to say that
18 due to the lack of snow we haven't been able to get
19 population counts conducted this winter and it's also
20 affected our winter moose hunts and caribou hunts.
21 Some very low harvests going on. If there's any
22 questions related to Togiak Refuge or the information
23 bulletin, I'll try to answer those at this time.

24

25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Does anybody
26 have any questions other than what we've already
27 covered under the previous agenda item.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: If not,
32 thank you, Mr. Aderman. I skimmed through it and it's
33 pretty thorough. It usually is.

34

35 Thank you for that.

36

37 MR. ADERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

38

39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Next is
40 Yukon Delta Refuge report.

41

42 MR. SUNDOWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
43 Members of the board. My name is Robert Sundown. I'm
44 a subsistence resource specialist with the Yukon Delta
45 National Wildlife Refuge. I don't have a formal report
46 before you other than to give you an update on the
47 status of the Refuge.

48

49 As you guys may or may not have known,
50 we have been severely short-staffed. We don't have a

1 Refuge Manager. We don't have a Deputy Refuge Manager.
2 We don't have a supervisory wildlife biologist. We're
3 in the process of filling some RITs and we lost our
4 pilot as well as our law enforcement officer, so we're
5 severely short-staffed and in the process of filling
6 those positions as quickly as we can.

7
8 I believe the Refuge Manager position
9 is in the process of being selected. The application
10 process for the fish biologist, which is also vacant,
11 has been closed with applicants being screened at this
12 point. That's all we know.

13
14 Aside from that with the personnel
15 issues, there's been a couple moose surveys that we're
16 being forced to abandon at this point. We had a moose
17 survey on the Kuskokwim that we were hoping to do, but
18 like everywhere else in Western Alaska we seem to be
19 lacking snow, which forces us to cancel the moose
20 survey. There was another survey that we were going to
21 participate in with the State in Unit 19A. We're being
22 forced to cancel that at this point. That was in
23 conjunction with the McGrath management office.

24
25 On a good note, we did extend the moose
26 season or help extend the moose season with the help of
27 locals and your advisory committee, so thank you for
28 doing that. I don't have anything else to add.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
31 members. Ray.

32
33 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 You say the extension of the moose season has been
35 extended until when?

36
37 MR. SUNDOWN: Through the Chair. It's
38 both with the State and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife.
39 It's now March 31st for Unit 18 Remainder and Unit 18
40 Lower Yukon.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Other
43 questions. James.

44
45 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
46 How about caribou season, when does it end this year?

47
48 MR. SUNDOWN: The caribou season is
49 projected to end on the 15th of March, next week. It's
50 kind of a tough situation because there is no snow.

1 They're probably the happiest they've ever been.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I do have a
4 couple questions here. First, in the event that next
5 week suddenly a south blow comes in and it's not coming
6 in at 45 and 50 degrees, would there be a chance for
7 some kind of a survey to be able to be put together if
8 we did get six inches or a foot of snow cover to get
9 your sightability and maybe even at this time -- well,
10 at least you'd get some calf:cow ratios, but maybe some
11 composition counts as far as bull:cow. I don't know if
12 they're starting to poke out enough to be able to tell
13 the difference on an aerial survey. Is there a change
14 that might still happen?

15

16 To follow in the course of that
17 question, is the funding for those surveys specific for
18 this year? Does it go away if you guys are unable to
19 do it this season or will it still be available for
20 next year to be able to conduct them at the first
21 opportunity?

22

23 MR. SUNDOWN: Good questions. The
24 first one with funding, yeah, we will be able to use it
25 for the next season when it comes around. For this
26 season, if we do happen to have a nice dumping of snow,
27 we will -- I think we have the flexibility to
28 transition into a survey. So, we continue to hope that
29 we get snow. I think the rest of the Delta is hoping
30 we get snow.

31

32 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I guess the
33 same question goes along the same lines as far as your
34 staffing issues. The vacancies are not because of the
35 sequestration and reduced funding, it's just a matter
36 of the logistics of working through your hiring
37 processes and so forth or is there funding issues
38 involved there also?

39

40 MR. SUNDOWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 Again, the biggest issue with replacing staffing has
42 been some new technical requirements before we fill any
43 vacancies and it's directly related to funding.
44 There's an approval waiver process that has to be
45 forwarded to D.C. before every new position gets
46 replaced and that's something relatively new that we're
47 dealing with. So, yeah, it's directly related to
48 sequestration.

49

50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any

1 questions, comments. William.

2

3 MR. BROWN: Yeah, I've been wondering
4 about extension on Yukon Unit 18. Why was it extended
5 from February to March? What's the reason?

6

7 MR. SUNDOWN: There's excess of 10,000
8 moose. There was a special action request from the
9 Association of Village Council Presidents citing lack
10 of opportunity, so we supported it and obviously the
11 Federal Subsistence Board supported it and there's no
12 shortage of moose on the Yukon. In fact, probably one
13 of the biggest runaway success stories, as James
14 alluded to earlier, from that moratorium that started,
15 it's a fantastic problem to have. I mean we've seen
16 multiple high percentage increases in the moose
17 population there. And extending the season will also
18 help the moose biologically by thinning the numbers.
19 That's the primary reason is lack of opportunity by
20 local folks.

21

22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Would it be
23 appropriate maybe a special action for no closed
24 season?

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any other
29 questions from the Council.

30

31 MR. ONEY: I have one, Mr. Chairman.

32

33 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Ray, go
34 ahead.

35

36 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
37 The villages that are south of the Yukon, have they
38 been noticing any increases in the moose population as
39 a result of the Yukon moratorium? If they're
40 populating south of the Yukon, like maybe Scammon Bay,
41 down toward Hooper Bay, in that area?

42

43 MR. SUNDOWN: Thank you. That's a
44 great question. I've been involved with every survey
45 that we've done and there has been a dramatic
46 population increase off two of the corridors in the
47 Lower Yukon and it's the Kashunuk River as well as the
48 Black River and both of those have their starts in the
49 vicinity of Mountain Village or south of Mountain
50 Village for the Black River and for the Kashunuk just

1 south of Pilot Station. So both of those have really
2 increased in population. There's been a dramatic jump
3 in what we call the Andrefsky census block as well as
4 the Paimiut census block over the years that we've done
5 surveys.

6
7 Primarily the latest survey that we did
8 was just two seasons ago in the Andrefsky census block
9 and it was from 2006 to 2012 and we saw a dramatic
10 increase in the moose population there and that is a
11 large feeder population for both the Kashunuk and the
12 Black Rivers. Both those rivers go south and west and
13 make available a population for Scammon, Hooper Bay,
14 Chevak for the Black River and basically Nelson Island,
15 along with Newtok, for the Kashunuk.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: William.

18
19 MR. BROWN: I have one more question
20 for you. What about the wolf predators, is there any
21 problem on the Lower Kuskokwim with wolf predators?

22
23 MR. SUNDOWN: Not that we're aware of.
24 I think the local hunters utilizing State regulations
25 do a pretty good job of keeping the population in
26 check. It's not something we consider an issue.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else.
29 James.

30
31 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
32 Since the caribou season is going to be closed next
33 week, I think the hunters should be aware of that too
34 because I didn't know. Next fall, when it opens again,
35 the people around here should know that they have to
36 have permits now to go caribou hunting and that should
37 be announced on the radio like we did before.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anything
42 more.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: A question
47 for the.....

48
49 MR. PETER: What portion of Lower Yukon
50 open moose?

1 MR. SUNDOWN: The boundary for
2 everything outside of the Kuskokwim is the Johnson
3 River. So if you went north of Nunapitchuk and there's
4 a big lake that the Johnson River drains into,
5 everything north and west of the Johnson River is open
6 for moose and it's any moose, cow, calf or bull.

7
8 MR. PETER: Okay.

9
10 MR. SUNDOWN: If you go downriver of
11 Mountain Village, it's two moose, cow, calf or bull.

12
13 MR. PETER: There's two, huh?

14
15 MR. SUNDOWN: Yeah. Just so you guys
16 know, there's some drastic changes coming about with
17 the regulations next season. The reason I mention it,
18 as James said, we probably want to keep ahead of
19 letting people know. Next year there will be no Lower
20 Yukon and no remainder in the State regulation system.
21 I'm fairly sure that our system is going to follow
22 through. It's just going to be remainder. Everything
23 north and west of the Johnson River including a half
24 mile buffer zone.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That buffer
27 zone also applies during the winter hunt. It's there
28 year round even though it's mainly put in place for the
29 fall moose hunt.

30
31 MR. SUNDOWN: Yes.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. Thank
34 you, Robert.

35
36 MR. SUNDOWN: Thank you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Next we'll
39 have Bureau of Land Management. Is anyone here from
40 BLM or online with a report for us?

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing
45 none. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, any staff
46 online or present.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing

1 none. Moving on to item F on the organizations report.
2 Association of Village Council Presidents.

3

4 MR. ANDREW: Good afternoon. For the
5 record, my name is Timothy Andrew, director of natural
6 resources for AVCP. My apologies for being unable to
7 attend the meeting yesterday. I had an incredible
8 blood pressure spike and I had to stay home for the
9 entire day, but thank God I'm feeling a lot better
10 today.

11

12 One of the issues that Robert had
13 alluded to in his report to you from Fish and Wildlife
14 Service is the disappearance of the Unit 18 remainder
15 and Lower Yukon area. Now the State management system
16 currently has the closure at -- or they start from --
17 the regulation would be from August 1 until March 15th.
18 As you can see the conditions out there, it's pretty
19 unlikely that we will see any major precipitation
20 between now and the 15th.

21

22 What I would like for this Council to
23 consider is putting in an amendment to the proposal to
24 the Federal Subsistence Board to lengthen the hunt for
25 that Unit 18 portion, excluding the Kuskokwim River
26 management area, to close March 31st rather than March
27 15th just to give the weather and hunters some leeway
28 for the opportunity to harvest moose just in case this
29 weather event happens again.

30

31 Like the Refuge, in my department we
32 are extremely short-staffed again. I lost my fisheries
33 biologist in January and I'm currently trying to fill
34 that position. If you know of anybody that has a
35 bachelor of science degree in biology, I'd appreciate
36 it if you'd send those people to apply my way. More
37 recently I attended a trip to D.C. and we had a long
38 series of meetings with the staffers of various
39 senators and representatives that sit on various
40 committees. Primarily the Senate Commerce Committee
41 and the Senate Subcommittee of Commerce, which is the
42 oceans, science, transportation and the Coast Guard.

43

44 I had the opportunity to testify before
45 that committee, as Greg said earlier, and the focus of
46 my testimony before that subcommittee was the
47 reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Magnuson-
48 Stevens Act is the act that governs the actions of the
49 North Pacific Fishery Management Council that governs
50 the trawl fisheries that occur right outside of our

1 coastal areas out here.

2

3 The focus of my oral testimony was
4 based on three things. Number one, to reduce bycatch.
5 Basically, as you all know, all of our backs are
6 against the wall, both Yukon/Kuskokwim Rivers as far as
7 chinook salmon. We can't possibly restrict subsistence
8 any more to meet escapement. You can't pull fish out.
9 You can't revive fish that we have in our smokehouses
10 and put away in our freezers and whatnot to make that
11 escapement. The only place that we can possibly
12 achieve any savings for the spawning grounds is from
13 the trawl fishery. I know genetics and the current
14 science that they use tends to minimize the impacts
15 that the trawl fishery has on our fisheries, on our
16 escapement, but every fish counts at this point.

17

18 The Yukon River has been in dire
19 straights basically since 1998. 2007 was the last
20 commercially directed chinook salmon fishery or king
21 salmon fishery on the Yukon. It is closed from
22 commercial fishing whether incidentally where you get
23 fish during a chum salmon directed fishery back in
24 2010. So it's been going downhill extremely fast. We
25 are looking for various ways to contribute some of the
26 resource that we have to make the Department and Fish
27 and Wildlife Service also the Department of Fisheries
28 and Oceans in Canada responsible to rebuild the
29 population.

30

31 On the Kuskokwim side, as you all know,
32 there's anticipated closures this coming summer and
33 it's unprecedented. All of us are going to suffer in
34 one way or the other as Travis pointed out, the
35 Kuskokwim River fisheries manager. Since it's been
36 such a challenging time, we had hired a person to take
37 a look at the methods, the means, how they develop
38 models, how the Department of Fish and Game developed
39 models and used those models, implements those models
40 to do forecasting for the Kuskokwim River. His name is
41 Dr. Bill Bechtel (ph) and, unfortunately, he's not able
42 to make this meeting, but I would like to bring him to
43 a RAC meeting to disclose what his findings are and
44 what his recommendations are. They're quite
45 disturbing. They're quite revealing. I really look
46 forward to his participation in the Kuskokwim River
47 Salmon Management Working Group and the InterAgency
48 meeting that's going to occur in April for the
49 Kuskokwim.

50

1 We're also going to try and utilize him
2 because I found out that they utilize the same model
3 for forecasting for the Yukon River and also setting
4 escapement goals and whatnot. There are some
5 significant flaws within the science. That's something
6 that I'm not able to explain because this guy is one of
7 the top statisticians and biometricians that we could
8 possibly hire. He's very good.

9
10 We did attend the Board of Game meeting
11 along with James and Greg up in Kotzebue. AVCP
12 submitted a proposal for lifting the moose regulations
13 in Unit 18 remainder, but what ended up happening was
14 the Lower Yukon and the Unit 18 remainder got combined
15 because there's so much moose out there that -- I mean
16 there's so much moose that each of us can get a moose
17 and still not hurt the moose population or perhaps two
18 in that Lower Yukon area.

19
20 We also submitted a proposal for the
21 recognition of customary and traditional use
22 determinations for Unit 18 muskox, the mainland
23 population. Unfortunately, it seemed like this Board
24 of Game composition does not want to do any more
25 customary and traditional use determinations for muskox
26 or for anything else.

27
28 The next proposal that came up was
29 customary and traditional use determinations for
30 grouse. We see grouse all over the place. There's so
31 much to be had out there, but still yet they did not
32 want to recognize the customary and traditional use
33 determinations for those species.

34
35 Working with the Board of Game is
36 extremely frustrating, very challenging. They're made
37 up of primarily people that are interested in the sport
38 hunting aspect of game, not so much subsistence
39 hunting. We do have one person that sits on the Board
40 of Game from the area, Stosh Hoffman. He tries his
41 best but he's only one person.

42
43 The other thing that came up was the
44 people of Mekoryuk also brought forth a proposal not in
45 the traditional aspects, but brought up a need before
46 the Board of Game that they needed to establish the
47 amounts necessary for subsistence for muskox on Nelson
48 Island. This Board seemed to not want to hear that and
49 they were more interested in how the reallocation from
50 the sport harvest to subsistence users would impact the

1 guides that are operating or that have been operating
2 out there for a number of years.

3

4 Those people out there are extremely
5 short on red meat. As you know, their reindeer
6 population has not been doing very well, so they're
7 turning their attention toward the muskox. The only
8 remedy at the moment is to come before you for them or
9 before the Federal Subsistence Board to take action to
10 Federalize the muskox hunt out there for their benefit
11 to feed their families.

12

13 We also had a proposal before the Board
14 of Game to utilize all of the parts of migratory birds.
15 For several years now some of the local people have
16 been witnessing parts of migratory birds, swans, geese,
17 ducks, you name it, being thrown into our dumpsters
18 here in Bethel with only the breast meat salvaged. It
19 raised quite a bit of an uproar here in this community
20 and I'm pretty sure it's something that if it happened
21 in the villages you'd be pretty upset about it too as
22 well. So we submitted a proposal before the Board of
23 Game to have all hunters during the fall hunt to
24 utilize 100 percent or the majority of the bird with
25 the exception of the feathers and areas of the entrails
26 and whatnot that are inedible. We're also submitting a
27 proposal to the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management
28 Council as well.

29

30 I believe that concludes my report. If
31 you have questions, I'd be more than happy to answer
32 them. Mr. Chair.

33

34 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Council
35 members.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Tim, you
40 mentioned specifically the potential of this Council
41 taking an action on a proposal to have the moose season
42 close on the 31st of March, whereas the Board of Game
43 -- you know, that was kind of their compromise
44 solution. The other proposal there from the Department
45 was to maintain it as a closure on March 1st and keep a
46 one moose bag limit. You came up with a March 15th
47 date. One of the rationales put forward in those
48 discussions -- I understand you missed that part. Just
49 the way the meeting kind of shakes out sometimes.

50

1 Was it because we are looking at a
2 concern with the caribou right now needing some
3 reduction in the harvest level so it can rebound more
4 quickly than it probably would under natural -- you
5 know, less hunting pressure in those circumstances.
6 And by having it close on the same date would encourage
7 people to go harvest moose rather than if it closed on
8 the 31st, then people would say, well, I can still go
9 try to get caribou because I got two weeks to get a
10 moose if I don't get a caribou.

11
12 Part of the reason I think the
13 moratoriums worked so well here is that the Mulchatna
14 caribou were so plentiful during that time, so people
15 had an option to go fulfill their meat needs from the
16 caribou. It's kind of the other way around now. I
17 guess I'm tossing that out since Tim did bring it up in
18 his report.

19
20 Is there an interest to pursue a March
21 31st recommendation to the Federal Board rather than
22 the March 15th for moose in the remainder over on the
23 Yukon side? Again, that population, the harvest is not
24 going to make a difference on its growth. It's going
25 to crash sooner or later. I can't make motions. I can
26 only ask for them as the Chair.

27
28 I'll ask the Council members if there's
29 an interest in pursuing that.

30
31 Ray.

32
33 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 I'll go ahead and make that motion. I think we already
35 heard from Robertson that it is extended to the end of
36 March or March 31st. I guess for future reference I
37 think we should make that recommendation and I'll go
38 ahead and propose that the extension of the moose
39 harvesting be extended to March 31st rather than March
40 15th.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Is there a
43 second.

44
45 MR. CHARLES: I'll second the motion.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Motion by
48 Ray Oney, second by James Charles for that.
49 Essentially what was being put forward by Tim is that
50 it did go into regulation under the State for March

1 15th, but the Federal Subsistence Board has yet to meet
2 and will meet in mid April to discuss their wildlife
3 changes and if that change was to occur, then what is
4 in place right now is just the result of a special
5 action. It's only good for this winter and that would
6 put it into Federal regulation through the next cycle
7 for the March 31st with the August 1 opening date as
8 well, maybe have that, and a two moose bag limit of any
9 moose, all of those in there.

10

11 Is everybody clear on the motion?
12 Ready for the question.

13

14 MR. BILL: Question.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Question on
17 the motion to support the March 31 closing date for
18 moose in the remainder of Unit 18 or the Yukon drainage
19 of 18, whatever it may be labeled to end on March 31 to
20 the Federal Subsistence Board. All those in favor say
21 aye.

22

23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24

25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any opposed,
26 same sign.

27

28 (No opposing votes)

29

30 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing
31 none. We'll move that way.

32

33 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you
36 for your work, Tim. Okay. It brings us to
37 Orutsararmiut Native Council. The staff that was going
38 to be here to address that is involved in another major
39 deadline and could not be here for the meetings today.
40 I believe I've said enough. I don't have a prepared
41 report at all and I've mentioned several items
42 throughout the course of the meeting, so I'd just ask
43 if you guys got any questions for me from ONC. I'll
44 just toss that out there if anybody has questions for
45 ONC activities.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.
50 Hearing nothing. Kuskokwim Native Association, that

1 report was given to us yesterday by the individual who
2 was also on another meeting deadline that they had to
3 leave, so that report has been given.

4
5 Which brings us on to our future
6 meeting dates. Ms. Kenner.

7
8 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. The representative of
10 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game was momentarily
11 out of the room when you called for his report and he
12 has returned if he could give that report.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay.
15 Without objection.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing
20 none. Go ahead.

21
22 MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 Council. David Runfola, Alaska Department of Fish and
24 Game, Subsistence Division in Fairbanks. I just want
25 to give a brief update on our current research and give
26 the Council and the general public information about
27 accessing information about our chinook salmon research
28 that's coming up.

29
30 I have a packet of information that I
31 will give to Mr. Nick. I'm not following it, so it's
32 just additional information for you that you might read
33 at a later date.

34
35 We're currently in the fourth and final
36 year of a large survey and ethnographic interview
37 project funded by Donlin Gold, LLC to document
38 subsistence harvest and use throughout the Kuskokwim
39 and portions of the Yukon River drainage in preparation
40 for their environmental impact statement. We've been
41 contracted by Donlin Gold to conduct comprehensive
42 surveys and ethnographic interviews in approximately 30
43 communities to date.

44
45 Like I said, we're in the fourth and
46 final year. We've surveyed almost every community in
47 the Kuskokwim area and we currently hope to survey one
48 more this year in the Kuskokwim. We'll be working with
49 a special project in Nikolai to document traditional
50 land use patterns in the Kuskokwim. Outside the

1 Kuskokwim we've completed a survey project and
2 interviews in Scammon Bay and we plan on going to Pilot
3 Station next month to do the same.

4
5 We also have two OSM -- I'm sorry, for
6 this region one OSM project coming up. That's the
7 Lower Yukon non-salmon harvest monitoring and
8 ethnographic interview project that will begin -- we're
9 currently consulting with tribes on determining who
10 will participate. Our goal is to have six communities
11 involved in the Lower Yukon area, Unit 18. We're going
12 to request that we complete brief surveys regarding the
13 harvest of non-salmon fish, such as whitefish, burbot,
14 lampreys, commonly known as eels locally, as well as
15 learning more about traditional and historical fishing
16 harvest patterns and local knowledge about the
17 fisheries.

18
19 There's additional information about
20 other research projects that I'm not going to discuss,
21 but the information is summarized in my packet.

22
23 Regarding the Alaska Department of Fish
24 and Game Chinook Salmon Research Initiative, a number
25 of projects have been developed by the Department
26 throughout the state. Several in the Kuskokwim and
27 Yukon River drainages that vary from studies that will
28 be in the coastal areas, in the rivers studying
29 juveniles, as well as understanding more about
30 migration and when smolts go out into the ocean,
31 counting smolts, that sort of thing.

32
33 Our division has six Chinook Initiative
34 projects. You may have heard discussion of this in the
35 recent past. These projects began to be developed in
36 the summer of 2012, funded partly by Federal money and
37 by State money. The purpose of the Chinook Salmon
38 Initiative is to address gaps in our knowledge of the
39 factors affecting chinook salmon abundance in Alaska.

40
41 The six projects that are ready to
42 begin this season operated by Subsistence Division
43 staff include a local knowledge ethnography study in
44 the Kuskokwim as well as one in the Yukon where we will
45 be contacting knowledgeable individuals and communities
46 to tell us more about their knowledge and experience in
47 headwaters areas that might help us understand more
48 about the places where chinook salmon are spawning and
49 overwintering as juveniles.

50

1 Two projects on the Yukon -- or one
2 project on the Yukon, one on the Kuskokwim that we're
3 abbreviating as patterns and trends. We're going to
4 contact households that have participated in post-
5 season salmon surveys and develop an interview protocol
6 to determine if they can tell us other than abundance
7 of chinook salmon are there any other factors that
8 affect their changes in their harvest of chinook salmon
9 over time.

10
11 There's also going to be two in-season
12 harvest monitoring projects. One in the Kuskokwim,
13 which I discussed earlier today and I won't repeat that
14 information, but if you have questions, you're welcome
15 to ask me. Another one in the Lower Yukon, which is
16 the harvest monitoring project of chinook salmon and
17 other salmon species that will be a little different
18 than what I talked about for the Kuskokwim. This is
19 more along the lines of in-season surveys that will
20 take place in three communities.

21
22 There is a website dedicated to the
23 Chinook Salmon Initiative. It represents a very large
24 push for increased research to learn more about king
25 salmon, chinook salmon. It's a significant development
26 in chinook salmon research in Alaska throughout the
27 state. There was a lot of effort going into these
28 projects and there's been a lot of effort to
29 communicate with the public at least at this point
30 online in addition to a symposium that happened back in
31 the fall of 2012.

32
33 The website address is in the packet.
34 If people want to learn more about the Chinook
35 Initiative and you don't have a website address, you
36 can call people at Fish and Game and they will get you
37 to somebody, or you can go to Google, type in Alaska
38 Fish Game Chinook Initiative and if you go into Google
39 that's the first thing that will come up. If you click
40 on that, you get to the home page for the Chinook
41 Initiative and all the drainages and all the projects
42 are listed with contact information. So the Department
43 welcomes inquiries from the public to learn more about
44 these projects. It's really important that folks -- we
45 really want to help folks learn more about these
46 projects, so we'd be happy to give you more
47 information.

48
49 That's all I have.
50

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Thank you,
2 Dave. Questions.

3
4 James and then Ray.

5
6 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
7 I've reported at the working group meeting that we
8 downriver from Bethel did okay for king salmon last
9 summer and above Bethel was hurting and worst upriver.
10 They tell me that they didn't catch king salmon above
11 Aniak or around Aniak. Some people say they didn't
12 catch king salmon. That came into my mind right away
13 was Donlin Gold, that barge traveling up the river.

14
15 There's a lot of traffic on the river
16 and it's not like it used to be years ago. The barge
17 or whatever it's called, the sternwheeler goes up the
18 river once or twice per summer. Now we have traffic
19 going up and down all the time, up and down. Those
20 poor fish they're scared to go upriver.

21
22 Where river is wider downriver, we did
23 okay because there was some fish or king salmon
24 downriver and where the river gets narrower the traffic
25 I think was scaring the fish away and maybe that's why
26 they didn't catch very much salmon above Bethel where
27 the river gets narrower. Down where I come from it's
28 wide, so we did okay last summer. I thought everybody
29 was doing good.

30
31 So that's my report.

32
33 MR. RUNFOLA: May I respond.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

36
37 MR. Runfola: Through the Chair. I
38 can't comment on the effect of barge traffic on salmon
39 abundance, however I would -- and if someone from comm
40 fish is listening, they could confirm or correct me.
41 In years of low abundance, of course, the majority of
42 returning chinook salmon are spawning in rivers from
43 Aniak downstream, so in years of low abundance you
44 would logically assume that a lot of those fish are
45 gone by the time you get past the Aniak River mouth so
46 that the folks upriver from there are most likely
47 seeing a lot fewer in these years of low abundance.
48 It's much more noticeable for them in years of low
49 abundance because most of those fish are already out of
50 the river by the time they're fishing.

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Is that it,
2 James?

3
4 MR. CHARLES: That's it.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Actually the
7 Holitna drainage is the one that's the greatest
8 contributor for king salmon to the Kuskokwim according
9 to Department reports.

10
11 Anyway, Ray and then Charlie.

12
13 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
14 When it first came on, ichthyophonus was a big issue
15 back then. I guess they were trying to look for why
16 the decline of chinook salmon was occurring on the
17 Yukon and I guess there was a lot of users in the river
18 that were reporting ichthyophonus all up and down the
19 Yukon. I'm wondering if that's still an ongoing study
20 or is that still occurring? I'd like to know more
21 about that.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Go ahead.

26
27 MR. RUNFOLA: Through the Chair. There
28 are current studies learning more about ichthyophonus.
29 I'm not certain how many of them are occurring in fresh
30 water and how many are occurring in the marine system,
31 but I believe the Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim Sustainable
32 Salmon Initiative is currently funding a project
33 studying ichthyophonus and there are researchers who
34 have been looking at that for several years and they
35 continue to. I'm not certain what the relationship is
36 to abundance and I don't know that anyone does at this
37 point, but it is still something that people are
38 monitoring.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: William.

41
42 MR. BROWN: In your booklet on this
43 last it says in-season subsistence. What does that
44 mean, in-season subsistence harvest? That's my
45 question.

46
47 MR. RUNFOLA: Well, as I said, there
48 were two projects that are ready to go, one for the
49 Kuskokwim, one for the Yukon. In-season meaning during
50 the fishing season we would like to follow the

1 subsistence harvest of all salmon species, but
2 particularly chinook salmon, so in order to get a daily
3 or weekly or monthly count of the total amount of --
4 total number of salmon coming out of the river,
5 currently the Department relies mostly on the post-
6 season salmon survey.

7

8 Researchers go to all the communities
9 in the Yukon and the Kuskokwim. I'm sure many of you
10 have talked to people in September, October, November
11 and they ask households to tell them how many fish they
12 caught. Currently that's the standard that the
13 Department is using.

14

15 More information in this case is better
16 is the point of view of the Department and we've
17 developed these two projects basically to figure out a
18 way to estimate the number of king salmon that people
19 might catch throughout the summer when it's happening.

20

21 At the end of the project we'd like to
22 compare those estimates that we get during the salmon
23 fishing season to the post season surveys as a way to
24 figure out whether or not it's something we want to
25 continue to do. If we want to keep coming back in the
26 summer and work with fishermen and households using
27 fish to count them.

28

29 So in-season means basically counting
30 the number of subsistence salmon during the fishing
31 season. This is something that normally isn't done
32 because people aren't required to report their -- as
33 the Council knows, people are not required to report
34 their subsistence harvest, so it requires support and
35 participation from communities and goodwill between the
36 Department and local fishers and tribal councils, which
37 is part of what we're going to do. We're going to go
38 out and talk to tribal councils and local fishermen to
39 explain to them why we're doing it and hopefully it
40 will be accepted and supported by the communities.

41

42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Follow up,
43 Charlie. Go ahead.

44

45 MR. BROWN: Last spring I asked one
46 time when we had a working group meeting what age fish
47 you guys are expecting this coming summer, age, you
48 know.

49

50 MR. RUNFOLA: Well, I don't work for

1 the part of the Department that provides that
2 information. However what I do know is, if you're
3 asking about king salmon, the majority of the fish that
4 come back are four, five and six year olds, they tend
5 to be, with a fewer younger fish and a fewer older
6 fish. I think the assumption that that would be the
7 case again this year because that's usually what
8 happens. Granted, sometimes people report catching
9 lots of jacks. That's been happening lately, but I
10 think the information that the Department gets from the
11 weirs and the Service gets from the weirs indicates
12 that there still tend to be fish of that age coming in.
13 The majority of those fish are four, five and six year
14 olds.

15
16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Anyone else.
17 David Bill.

18
19 MR. BILL: If you do enforcement out on
20 the waters, how far out do you go in the ocean?

21
22 MR. RUNFOLA: I'm not involved in
23 enforcement at all. Our division doesn't work with
24 enforcement. We're strictly research, so I probably
25 shouldn't comment on that, but there might be somebody
26 in the room who knows that.

27
28 MR. BILL: Mr. Chair. Then the
29 question I was going to ask you doesn't work because
30 you don't go that far.

31
32 Thank you.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. If no
35 other questions, thank you, Dave.

36
37 MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. That
40 then brings us to item 12, future meeting dates.

41
42 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
43 Alex Nick, for the record, Council coordinator. Before
44 we get into that, Mr. Chair, unless I overlooked, I
45 thought you were going to be discussing about the April
46 8, 9 and 10 meeting representative or delegate from
47 your Council, which I briefly mentioned. I think it
48 was during the agenda discussion.

49
50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I missed

1 getting that down then.

2

3 MR. NICK: Okay. There's going to be --
4 this is from YRDFA.

5

6 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Proceed with
7 that one then.

8

9 MR. NICK: Thank you. There's going to
10 be a meeting called Alaska Preseason Summer Fishing
11 meeting on April 8 and following that on April 9 and 10
12 there will be a meeting called International Salmon
13 Summit. What they're asking for is you need to justify
14 why your delegate would need to attend and would also
15 mention how your delegate's attendance would benefit a
16 council. Then I would do the cost analysis of that.
17 Like Gene mentioned earlier today, every time when
18 there's other meetings the Council coordinators would
19 have to justify the cost of members attendance;
20 airfare, hotel, what have you.

21

22 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Can you give
23 us a little bit further -- who is sponsoring this? You
24 say it's an International Salmon Summit? International
25 as in U.S./Canada?

26

27 MR. NICK: I don't know if there's
28 anyone from YRDFA on the line. Is there anyone from
29 YRDFA?

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 MR. NICK: I can't justify -- I can't
34 explain any of that. I just got this message just
35 before the Council meeting.

36

37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I believe we
38 have some Staff here that may be familiar with what's
39 being discussed. If you'd come forward, please.

40

41 MR. MASCHMANN: Gerald Maschmann with
42 U.S. Fish and Wildlife. The meeting on April 8th will
43 be run by YRDFA and this is the preseason salmon
44 meeting where we're trying to get folks from the entire
45 Alaskan portion of the drainage to meet and meet with
46 managers, talk about the run outlook, get ideas on
47 management.

48

49 Back to back with that, the Canadian
50 First Nations is somewhat sponsoring the International

1 Summit. Those folks that were at the April 8th meeting
2 then meet in the same room with representatives from
3 the Canadian delegation and we get more dialogue going
4 across the border. Both of these projects or meetings
5 are being paid for by the Yukon River Panel, which is
6 the Canadian side and the U.S. panel when they meet to
7 discuss the border agreements and border escapement.
8 That's the organization, the treaty organization.

9

10 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: When you say
11 paid for by the Yukon River Panel, that would be only
12 their delegates from the specific villages. Would it
13 include a representative from the RACs? It didn't
14 sound like it from the way Alex explained the cost
15 analysis through Federal or is that being offered
16 through this for our representative from the RACs to
17 attend from the Yukon River Panel or expenses would be
18 covered by the Panel?

19

20 MR. MASCHMANN: That's my
21 understanding. YRDFA is kind of the ones corralling
22 everyone and making all the arrangements. Both
23 meetings are being paid for by the Panel. I think they
24 have the money and your RAC representative with the
25 justification, if chosen, would have their trip paid
26 for by the Panel with that pot of money.

27

28 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. Well,
29 I think we do have one representative, the other being
30 Mr. Manumik, who is no longer active, but we do have
31 for our fisheries consultation representative would be
32 Ray. That would be appropriate if you're available
33 during those times. Are you available April 8th
34 through 10th? Ray.

35

36 MR. ONEY: Yeah, there's a conference
37 that's coming up that I'll be attending, so I don't
38 think I'll be able to make that with the work I'm
39 doing.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Well, it
42 would be good to have a representative there,
43 especially if we're dealing with the Panel on the First
44 Nations and what would be considered the tribal
45 councils on the U.S. side. They call them First
46 Nations rather than tribes, but it's the same thing by
47 the communities. Since it is the Yukon, it certainly
48 should be someone within that drainage to go. I don't
49 know if Lester would be available or able. I guess we
50 probably need to know within the week or 10 days. Is

1 there any timeline mentioned how soon?

2

3 MR. NICK: This is Alex Nick for the
4 record. I didn't have very much time. I just jotted
5 down the message because I was just getting ready to
6 come and attend your meeting when I got the message. I
7 could check on that, Mr. Chair. If your Council wants
8 to go ahead and name one or two potential delegates,
9 then I could ask those Council members and work from
10 there, Mr. Chair.

11

12 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I know,
13 Harry, you carried that load for so many years and you
14 were kind of looking to get out from that, otherwise
15 I'd be recommending you right now. In absence of that,
16 in the interest of having it and they are extending
17 this offer to have that interaction at the tribal
18 level, my recommendation would be for Lester and in the
19 event that he's unable to make it perhaps Tony Ulak
20 could cover that.

21

22 MR. ULAK: Yeah.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: April 8th to
25 10th, you'd be able? I don't know if we need a motion
26 or we can just do it by consensus. I would request
27 consensus for that recommendation. It's not a motion.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Does silence
32 mean consent? Is there any objection to Lester and
33 Tony?

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Okay. That
38 covers that item. Now we can talk about the next
39 meeting.

40

41 MR. NICK: That works for me. If you
42 remember, the Council selected the fall 2014 meeting to
43 be held on October 14, 15 here in Bethel. We need
44 confirmation of that, Mr. Chair.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Is there
47 anybody that has a strong concern with those dates,
48 October 14, 15? We've already voted on it and it's
49 been selected.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Going once,
4 going twice. Okay, no change.

5

6 MR. NICK: Okay, Mr. Chair. Going on
7 to the winter 2015 Regional Advisory Council meeting.
8 Open window for that meeting is February 9 and then
9 March 20. Excuse me, February 9 to 13 is open.
10 February 16 is a holiday, 17 through 20 is open. Week
11 of February 23 there's only scheduled, which is Bristol
12 Bay, from February 24 to 25. Week of March 2 through 6
13 there's one meeting, Western Interior, from March 3 to
14 4 and the rest of it is open. Mr. Chair.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: That would
17 be mainly going over the final recommendations on
18 fisheries proposals as far as action. Members, what's
19 your pleasure.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: To speak to
24 my druthers, I'd say that February 26 and 27 or the
25 March 5 and 6, but that's just me.

26

27 MR. ONEY: Mr. Chairman. I move that
28 the winter meeting for YK RAC be on February 26, 27.

29

30 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Do we have a
31 second.

32

33 MR. ULAK: Second.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Seconded by
36 Mr. Ulak. Do we have any further discussion, 26, 27.

37

38 MR. NICK: Mr. Chair. Alex Nick for
39 the record. I do have a little concern about those
40 dates 26, 27. Travel date, return date, 28th of
41 February would be on the weekend, on Saturday. I would
42 prefer that your return date be not weekend because if
43 there's any problems we won't be able to contact our
44 office in Anchorage.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Would there
47 be any concern as far as overlap on the Staff
48 attendance and so forth if it was to be the 25, 26, or
49 something like that?

50

1 MR. NICK: It really don't matter as
2 long as there's two meetings for that week. We have a
3 limit of two meetings per week.

4
5 MR. ONEY: Okay. With that in mind,
6 I'll go ahead and amend the meeting change to 25, 26.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Does the
9 second concur?

10
11 MR. ULAK: Yeah.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Further
14 discussion.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 MR. CHARLES: Question.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: All in favor
21 say aye.

22
23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: We're done
26 with that one.

27
28 MR. NICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Which brings
31 us to our last one here, closing comments. I'll start
32 to my left here. James, lead us off.

33
34 MR. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
35 I want to thank everybody who participated at this
36 meeting and the public who came to testify because our
37 meeting here is for the people up and down the river.
38 It's not just one, not just me or Greg or something,
39 it's for everybody. So I thank the Staff who prepared
40 this meeting and I want to thank everybody.

41
42 Thank you, Greg.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Tony.

45
46 MR. ULAK: I want to thank the Staff
47 here, the people that came here to talk, especially the
48 elders that talked about their way of life and how
49 they're dealing with subsistence way of life. I know
50 it's my first year, I'm learning a lot, but I take into

1 consideration what I hear, especially when we're
2 talking about controlling and following what we need to
3 do as a subsistence fishermen and try to abide by laws
4 that the State gave us in regards to regulations that
5 are here and are being processed.

6

7 We also need to be aware that we work
8 together, not fight over each other, whether it be
9 State employees or us as a Regional Advisory Committee.
10 To work together is better, so let's work for that.
11 Quyana.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Harry.

14

15 MR. WILDE: Mr. Chairman. I think I'm
16 getting where I'm unable to keep on coming over or
17 having meetings. After my wife pass away I got
18 grandchildren, young boy, somebody have to take care of
19 him, so it is my responsibility with him to make sure
20 he go to school and all that. But I have one of my
21 grandchildren named Jack, he's old enough to take care
22 of everything and he's a fisherman, so I was going to
23 let him take my place here because his responsibility
24 to make sure I always -- he's not taking anything that
25 he have to be doing. He's responsible.

26

27 Thanks for all these years that I've
28 been doing the best I can and I appreciate that you
29 guys are helping me. I met a lot of people and a lot
30 of you guys working really hard, I know that. So from
31 now on I'll be thinking of you guys, where you guys
32 are, what you guys are doing. Quyana.

33

34 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Quyana,
35 Harry. We can't express enough the gratitude for the
36 time of your life that you've given to these issues.
37 We might get you for one more meeting. Your term
38 doesn't expire until the end of 2014. You can bring
39 your boy along and let him get orientation with us.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 Charlie.

44

45 MR. BROWN: (In Yup'ik)

46

47 INTERPRETER: I would also like to
48 thank everybody that showed up here and we're all
49 working together and whenever we work together as one
50 it seems our workload is easier and all these difficult

1 situations we can address. Also that we not only
2 ourselves, when we have issues that we need to address,
3 it's not a very easy process to go through, but when
4 there are a lot of people, public participation, it
5 does give us understanding and you give us issues that
6 we were not aware of and it gives us a better, broader
7 picture of how to address the issues.

8

9 I also thank all the Staff that have
10 worked together to try to get this meeting into
11 fruition. I also thank this process, the meeting. I
12 understand and realize that the process to get the
13 meeting into order is a big -- it just doesn't happen,
14 so I'm very thankful that you guys prepared for this
15 meeting and make it happen.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: David.

20

21 MR. BILL: I'd like to thank our
22 driver, the lady who's been driving us for two days
23 from meeting to there and dinner and the Staff. (In
24 Yup'ik)

25

26 INTERPRETER: So I'm going to say it in
27 Yup'ik here. We were told ever since we were children
28 that when we are going to leave the house, they would
29 tell us that when you leave the house, whenever you see
30 anybody that needs help, you make sure you help that
31 person and don't just turn a blind eye. So today
32 that's true right now because we, right now, the RAC
33 committee, are told to help those that are not able to
34 help themselves and our people from back home put us
35 back here and they recommended that we represent them,
36 so it's not our own ego that are sitting here.

37

38 Sometimes we look at the educated
39 people and it's like they're -- like an old man had
40 said, when an old man was going to die, he told me once
41 before a long time back that you need to forget how
42 ugly you are, but you need to help with the best of
43 your ability because in the whole wide world there is
44 not a person that is bigger or stronger than us, so the
45 only person that you need to be aware of is God because
46 you are going to have to face them in judgment. So we
47 need to forget how sinful we are like my old man had
48 said.

49

50 Even though a person is like even a

1 person you don't want to help them, you still need to
2 help them. We need to remember these things that were
3 told to us. I know when we were talking about -- we're
4 not even helping the -- when Quinhagak had asked for
5 help from us, even though we do not live at Quinhagak,
6 we still extended a hand to help them. It is my
7 thought process that it would be really good for us to
8 help people even if we don't live with them.

9

10 We're not going to be breaking any laws
11 or Federal laws or any kind of laws in trying to help
12 people, but if we're wrong in one of our things,
13 somebody will let us know we're breaking rules or
14 whatever.

15

16 But I'm very thankful that we have this
17 process to be able to help people and I'm also thankful
18 that our representative from Tuntutuliak and we will be
19 meeting together on trying to get some issues together
20 and I'm not sure if we're going to meet again or not,
21 but when we do, we're always trying to help people out.

22

23

24 I'm not mobile anymore. I don't just
25 jump onto a snowmachine or four-wheeler like I used to
26 when I surveyed the land, so I'm not able to do that
27 anymore. So back in the day when I used to run around
28 on the tundra, it was never always a smooth trail when
29 I went by snowmachine. When I went to Quinhagak, they
30 told me that you are going to -- and my grandfather,
31 Mr. Lupie, had told me that I'm thankful that you are
32 going out village to village trying to help the people.

33

34 So always in the back of my mind when
35 I'm traveling to the meetings, he used to tell me (in
36 Yup'ik). I forgot to say that. He used to call me a
37 (in Yup'ik), so I'm thankful for my ability to help
38 people.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Ray.

43

44 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
45 First of all I'd like to thank everyone that has made
46 this meeting possible and also, especially to those
47 people that have traveled a long ways to come to this
48 meeting from the surrounding villages and also that are
49 being sponsored by your tribe or your corporations.
50 That tells us that you're concerned about issues in

1 your area. So please continue to do that. Come to
2 these meetings whenever possible.

3
4 Like we heard earlier, this is the most
5 people that I've seen giving testimony to concerns that
6 were coming up at this meeting. So continue to do that.
7 Continue to be part of this process because we're here
8 to advocate for you or to give advice to the Federal
9 Board that are issues of concern to you or your area.
10 So continue to advocate for your people and continue to
11 meet. Quyana.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I agree. I
14 have to echo that as well, the public participation and
15 folks coming here and putting things on the record. A
16 lot of people don't really realize how absolutely
17 valuable that is. I mean we're here as advisory and
18 that's where we get our direction from and we do our
19 best with the people that make those final decisions to
20 bring across what you tell us and recommend to us to
21 do. But having it on the record is something that you
22 just can't replace.

23
24 What I was also impressed with this
25 time is all of us feel the frustration, why you'd want
26 to beat the table and tell people what you really
27 think, but also what was included in the record this
28 time was people offered different ways of addressing it
29 for solutions. The fact that you're still here at the
30 end of the meeting, that also says a lot.

31
32 Folks will come in many times -- you
33 know, I've been doing this for 25, 30 years, dealing
34 with the regulatory process, and you'll hear people say
35 you'll never listen to us. But they come in the
36 meeting, say their piece, do their three minute or five
37 minute, make a speech, walk out and they're done and
38 they say you never listen to us. When it comes time
39 for the decisions to be made, you know, and they could
40 really have some input on shaping what occurs, they're
41 not around.

42
43 That goes across the board whether
44 you're talking about State Boards or Federal Boards.
45 I've been to the State Board of Fish and Board of Game
46 meetings where at the end of the meeting there wasn't
47 this many people left. Maybe two or three sitting
48 there. That's actually what our Council has seen in
49 the past too. Just a few Staff people and maybe one or
50 two. So I've got to thank you for coming, you guys,

1 and seeing the process through.

2

3 I look forward to more of that in the
4 future.

5

6 On the point of making the record, I
7 wanted to say something that I missed earlier. I have
8 high hopes for things that may occur through this
9 special action as far as the special permit that can
10 recognize the specific customary and traditional uses
11 of folks from the village and the tribal involvement
12 that can occur from that, whether it comes down the
13 line in the form of international fishery commissions
14 or such.

15

16 For the record, that special action for
17 a permit with special recognition for villages is
18 something that there's actually a precedent for. Some
19 of you that have been around for a while may remember
20 back from 1988 through '93, I believe it was, with the
21 Quailgnnut Caribou Group or Kilbuck Herd for others,
22 but at that point in time there was considered to be 50
23 to 70 animals for a harvestable surplus. The Federal
24 government issued 10 permits per village of those that
25 had the customary and traditional recognition. Gave it
26 to the Councils and said you guys decide who gets the
27 permits. So there is a precedent for that.

28

29 I deal with a lot of frustration
30 sometimes when the Board says we can't do that. No,
31 it's not that they can't do that. It's that they
32 choose not to do it or they have some legal advisor
33 telling them that they probably should not do that.
34 When they do that, watching things over the years, if a
35 good record is established and they follow process and
36 procedure, there's not many judges and courts that are
37 going to overrule them.

38

39 So sometimes I think it's the lawyer
40 who just doesn't want to have the hard work to do and
41 he'd prefer not to go there and advises them along
42 those lines. I've seen that happen in many cases where
43 policy overrides what is very straightforward in Title
44 VIII of ANILCA and subsistence does come out second to
45 abstract concerns of Lower 48 animal welfare groups.
46 There's several precedents for that.

47

48 Anyway, thanks for the Staff, of
49 course. You guys do a lot more work than you get
50 credit for. I'd specifically like to mention as well

1 that providing the translation, the simul translation
2 services, that is really a very big plus and OSM, I
3 know you guys are drained for budgets and Staff travel,
4 but, man, having that here and available for folks is
5 really a big plus and I hope to see that continue.

6

7 With that, thanks for coming.

8

9 Jackson, do you want to have a last
10 word?

11

12 Go ahead.

13

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Jackson Williams. I'm
15 very thankful that -- I really appreciate more
16 involvement and, you know, a lot of times, like the
17 Chair Greg, you know, a lot of these are really born
18 into me. I always wonder -- you know, in Akiak, we
19 don't stand around. Our elders are the ones that
20 really taught us the way of life. The reason why we're
21 different, I guess, from all the other villages, Akiak,
22 as some of you might not know it, was the first village
23 with white people. There was a first hospital in Akiak
24 and I didn't catch it. I was born after that hospital
25 was long gone. But those people that were associated
26 with foreigners at the time, they really picked up a
27 lot of things from the foreigners that came to our
28 village at the time, especially one.

29

30 I mentioned it maybe in my testimony
31 earlier, but I'll mention it again. One of the elders
32 telling us young people at the time, was telling us
33 like this, there will be fish swimming and we'll watch
34 the fins swimming along and there will be nothing we
35 can do about it and that is a scary process to get
36 into. So right now our opportunity to close is being
37 into fruition now, so we are being regulated when we
38 can fish. Were being affected by it. Really we are.

39

40 I'd also like to include this. You
41 guys all know that your forefathers and your
42 grandparents, all of us that are in here, that this,
43 especially Kwethluk, Mr. Jimmy (indiscernible) from
44 Kwethluk way back, that old man, when he was very
45 feeble and he couldn't walk anymore and he went to
46 Akiak during the church services there and he told us
47 to be careful when the famine years are coming.

48

49 So we really need to think about this,
50 that we might get into the famine areas. So all those

1 people that are going to die I know they foresee these
2 things and we really need to think about these things
3 and not take anything lightly anymore. I haven't
4 really faced starvation, but I know that when people
5 face starvation that it really cramps their stomach,
6 their whole body. It's not a physical pain that we want
7 to experience.

8

9 So when my dad went as a prospector in
10 a plane and he went prospecting up into the mountains
11 for gold and they were dropped up in the mountains one
12 time and the weather got bad and they couldn't pick
13 them up for over a month up in the mountains, so they
14 ran out of supplies. He told us -- when my dad got us
15 all together and he told us when he was really starving
16 up in the mountains and he started hunting mice for
17 food. He told us starvation is not very good to face.
18 He said that he really wanted to eat his clothes and
19 garments because he was really hungry.

20

21 I haven't experienced starvation, but I
22 heard the effects of starvation firsthand from the guy
23 who -- and I'm really thankful that -- and I do say
24 things because my dad taught me our way of life. It's
25 the culture. My family would always tell us how to be
26 like or how our way of life was. The Williams family
27 were always told how to respect the land and everything
28 else like that. I try to attend the meetings because
29 of my grandchildren, because I want my grandchildren to
30 have a better way of life than I've had and especially
31 my village too.

32

33 Since 2012, when we started with the
34 seven-day closure and five-day closures, but now it's
35 more and more increasing. So from May up into July
36 it's going to be closed and I thought there was going
37 to be windows for fishing, but our way of life is being
38 curtailed further and further. This is one of these --
39 a closure from May to June 26, it comes to mind that we
40 are going to be looking at the fish swimming by and
41 we're not going to be able to do anything about our
42 fish swimming by. So that's becoming true. If we work
43 together, we are going to accomplish a lot of things in
44 there. There's a lot of work that we need to be
45 working on.

46

47 Thank you very much and thank you for
48 all those that came here.

49

50 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Are we ready

1 to adjourn?

2

3 MR. ONEY: Closing prayer.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Do you want
6 to do that? Okay. We'll have our closing prayer prior
7 to adjournment and, Ray, would you do that for us.

8

9 MR. ONEY: We'll all stand.

10

11 (Closing prayer)

12

13 MR. ONEY: Mr. Chair. I move we
14 adjourn the meeting.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: I didn't
17 even have to ask for it this time.

18

19 MR. CHARLES: Second.

20

21 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Any

22 objection.

23

24 (No objections)

25

26 ACTING CHAIRMAN ROCZICKA: Hearing
27 none. We're done.

28

29 (Off record)

30

31 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

