

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME I

8
9 Galena, Alaska
10 March 5, 2013
11 9:00 a.m.

12
13
14 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- 15
16 Jack Reakoff, Chairman
17 Ray Collins
18 Donald Honea
19 Jenny Pelkola
20 Pollock Simon
21 James Walker
22 Robert Walker

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25
26 Regional Council Coordinator, Melinda Hernandez

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Galena, Alaska - 3/5/2013)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning. This is Jack Reakoff. We're going to bring the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council to order. It's March 5th and we're in Galena. And so we're going to call the roll. And so, let's see, Melinda stepped out for a second, so I wanted to say I really appreciate Galena coming up with a cover dish for the Council and we had a real nice dinner here at the community hall this last evening. And I always like coming here to Galena to my daughter and son-in-law and granddaughter live down here, but I also lived in Galena for two years when I was a kid and so I have sort of a -- I know a lot of people around this area.

So do you have a roster there, do you want to call the roll there, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Thank you. Robert Walker.

REPORTER: Jenny.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Turn your mic on.

MS. PELKOLA: Sorry. Robert Walker.

MR. R. WALKER: Yes.

MS. PELKOLA: Don Honea.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MS. PELKOLA: Pollock Simon, Sr.

MR. SIMON: Here.

MS. PELKOLA: Timothy Gervais.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim called and said -- or correction, emailed and said that he could not attend the meeting as of just a couple of days ago. He's got some personal financial issues and so forth

1 and so he wanted to be excused, and very much wants to
2 attend our meeting next fall.

3

4 Continue.

5

6 MS. PELKOLA: Raymond Collins.

7

8 MR. COLLINS: Here.

9

10 MS. PELKOLA: Jack Reakoff.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.

13

14 MS. PELKOLA: James Walker.

15

16 MR. J. WALKER: Here.

17

18 MS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola, here.

19 Carl M. Morgan.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl asked to be
24 excused also and I forget what his reason was.

25 Melinda.

26

27 MS. HERNANDEZ: I believe Carl had
28 another meeting that had been scheduled that he wasn't
29 able to get out of.

30

31 MS. PELKOLA: And Eleanor Yatlin.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Eleanor came down
36 with the flu and said she was way under the weather and
37 couldn't attend this meeting also so we do have a
38 quorum.

39

40 And so we'll have an invocation. Would
41 you like to say that Ray, or do we have an elder.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We don't have
46 anybody else here. Go ahead Ray.

47

48 MR. COLLINS: Heavenly Father we thank
49 you for this opportunity to gather here and discuss the
50 management of the resources that you've provided us and

1 so we ask for your wisdom and guidance now as we make
2 decisions concerning the use of the resources so that
3 it might also provide for now and also protection for
4 future generations. We ask for your guidance in this.

5
6 In Jesus name.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray. And so
9 we'd like to go around the room and introduce the
10 guests that we have here. Let's start over here on the
11 left side of the room.

12
13 Go ahead.

14
15 MR. MEARS: Jeremy Mears. Fish and
16 Wildlife Service, Subsistence Branch in Fairbanks.

17
18 MR. MATHEWS: Vince Mathews with Kanuti
19 Refuge.

20
21 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Alyssa Frothingham
22 with the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

23
24 MR. SPINDLER: Mike Spindler, Refuge
25 Manager Kanuti Refuge.

26
27 DR. JENKINS: David Jenkins. I'm the
28 acting Deputy Assistance Regional Director of OSM.

29
30 DR. CHEN: Good morning, Council
31 members. My name is Glenn Chen. I'm a Staff Committee
32 person from the InterAgency Staff Committee, Bureau of
33 Indian Affairs.

34
35 MR. CEBRIAN: Merben Cebrian,
36 subsistence biologist for BLM Anchorage Field Office.

37
38 MR. HAVENER: Jeremy Havener. I'm the
39 subsistence coordinator for Fish and Wildlife Service
40 here in Galena.

41
42 MR. MCLAIN: Chris McLain, Galena
43 citizen here. Jack's son-in-law.

44
45 MR. ESMAILKA: Randy Esmailka, Galena
46 citizen.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So
49 we'll review the agenda, and so you had some notations,
50 Melinda.

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: I do. If everybody
2 could get their agenda's opened up we have a couple of
3 things to add and a couple of things to switch around.

4
5 First thing is we're going to go ahead,
6 under Item D, we might not take it up quite this
7 morning but we want to add Alyssa Frothingham with TCC,
8 sorry TCC, sorry the acronym left me for just a second.

9
10 (Laughter)

11
12 MS. HERNANDEZ: And also KNA is also
13 going to go nearby as well. So we can write that in
14 under Item D. We might not take it up first thing this
15 morning but we're going to get to them early in the
16 agenda due to scheduling.

17
18 Second page, we've got under Item No.
19 11 I, we just need to correct a little bit of wording
20 here. It's not the presentation of the proposed rule,
21 it's a request for comment on the rural determination
22 process. I just wanted to clarify that for everybody.

23
24 Also a little further down the page
25 under ADF&G, we see No. 1, Rita St.Louis is supposed to
26 be coming in this morning, we need to add an Item No.
27 2, Yukon Fisheries.

28
29 And the only other thing I have, Mr.
30 Chair, is usually we pick the meeting dates towards the
31 very end of the meeting, we're going to do things a
32 little differently this round, at OSM we're trying to
33 do a better strategy of communicating to the Councils
34 that are meeting on the same weeks, so Western Interior
35 is going to go ahead and be able to pick and go over
36 meeting dates a little bit earlier, Mr. Chair. Is
37 there a preferred time you'd like to do that.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That could be --
40 where is it slated -- it's fairly early in this agenda.

41
42 MS. HERNANDEZ: Maybe right after lunch
43 maybe we'll set our new dates, that way we can call to
44 the other meeting and let them know what we've decided.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that would
47 work good.

48
49 MS. HERNANDEZ: Wonderful. That's all
50 I have, Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
2
3 MS. HERNANDEZ: And as we usually do,
4 we'll adopt the agenda as a guide so we can retain some
5 flexibility for scheduling and folks on the
6 teleconference and what not.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do like to get
9 public comments as soon as I can get them so as people
10 come in I don't want them waiting. If we get people on
11 line that want to make comments on any issue I would
12 prefer to get any of the on line people to be able to
13 comment, so we'll break the agenda for the public
14 comment. That's what this Council meetings are for,
15 they're a public forum.
16
17 Do we have anybody on line there that
18 would like to speak on any issue regarding fish and
19 wildlife management for Federal issues in the Western
20 Interior?
21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thank you for reminding
23 me, Mr. Chair.
24
25 Is there any public on the line.
26
27 (No comments)
28
29 MS. HERNANDEZ: Can we go ahead and get
30 the Federal employees and State folks to introduce
31 themselves real quick. Why don't we start with you
32 Dan.
33
34 MR. SHARP: Yeah, this is Dan Sharp,
35 Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage.
36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anybody else there.
38
39 MR. FOX: Trevor Fox, wildlife
40 biologist with OSM in Anchorage.
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Trevor. Any
43 additional people on line.
44
45 MR. BUE: Good morning. This is Fred
46 Bue with Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks.
47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning. Fred.
49
50 MR. MILLS: Good morning. This is Dave

1 Mills with the National Park Service in Anchorage.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Dave.
4
5 MS. ROBBINS: LaDonn Robbins and Mike
6 Talhauser with the Kuskokwim Native Association in
7 Aniak.
8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
10
11 MS. HERNANDEZ: And, Marcy, were you
12 still on.
13
14 MS. OKADA: Yeah, this is Marcy Okada
15 with the National Park Service office in Fairbanks.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Marcy.
18 Anyone else.
19
20 (No comments)
21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thanks for joining us,
23 Mike. We wish you could have been here in person for
24 one last meeting.
25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And if somebody's on
27 line I would like a reminder -- I've been on the phone
28 and you're this faceless person out there and you get
29 forgotten. And as the Chair I would prefer to try and
30 stay on top of remember who's out there listening and
31 may want to make comment. And if anybody on the call
32 would like to make comment, just state -- get our
33 attention -- and I want full participation on the phone
34 also.
35
36 So any other Council members have
37 comments on the agenda. Anyone want to insert anything
38 into the agenda.
39
40 (No comments)
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's a pretty
43 full agenda and it looks good to me. The Chair will
44 entertain a motion to adopt the agenda.
45
46 MR. HONEA: So moved.
47
48 MR. COLLINS: Second.
49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don,

1 seconded by Ray. Any further discussion.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
6 the agenda signify by saying aye.

7

8 IN UNISON: Aye.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

11

12 (No opposing votes)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the agenda is
15 adopted. And so we're at election of officers. I'll
16 turn the gavel over to Melinda.

17

18 MS. HERNANDEZ: Good morning everyone,
19 Melinda Hernandez, Council coordinator.

20

21 I'd like to open up the floor for
22 nominations for Chair of the Western Interior Regional
23 Advisory Council.

24

25 MR. COLLINS: Would you remind us who's
26 in these positions. I know Jack is the Chair, who are
27 the others.

28

29 MS. HERNANDEZ: Sure. We've got Jack
30 as the Chair currently. Vice Chair we've got Ray
31 Collins. And for the Secretary we have Jenny.

32

33 Anyone like to make a nomination for
34 the position of Chair.

35

36 MR. HONEA: I nominate Jack Reakoff as
37 Chair.

38

39 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do we have a second.

40

41 MR. J. WALKER: Second.

42

43 MS. HERNANDEZ: All right. We have a
44 motion by Mr. Don Honea for Jack Reakoff and we have a
45 second by James Walker. Is there any other
46 nominations.

47

48 MR. R. WALKER: I make a motion for
49 nominations to be closed.

50

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: Motion to close by Mr.
2 Walker.
3
4 MS. PELKOLA: Second.
5
6 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do we have a sec --
7 second by Jenny Pelkola.
8
9 MR. COLLINS: Did you ask for a
10 unanimous ballot, that way you're making it at the same
11 time.
12
13 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, ask for unanimous
14 ballot for Chairman.
15
16 REPORTER: Turn your mic's on when
17 you're talking -- someone, at least one person.
18
19 MR. R. WALKER: Okay. I make a motion
20 to table and make a unanimous ballot for Chairman.
21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: All right. That sounds
23 good, is everyone in agreement.
24
25 MR. COLLINS: I didn't hear you.
26
27 MS. HERNANDEZ: Oh.
28
29 MR. R. WALKER: Amen. Just say amen.
30
31 (Laughter)
32
33 MS. HERNANDEZ: Motion to unanimously
34 adopt the Chair. Is everybody good with that.
35
36 (Council nods affirmatively)
37
38 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay, Jack,
39 congratulations. I'll turn the Chair back over to Jack
40 Reakoff.
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate
43 your confidence. And so we're Vice Chair, open for
44 nomination for the Vice Chair position.
45
46 MR. R. WALKER: Nominate Ray Collins.
47
48 MS. PELKOLA: Second.
49
50 MR. HONEA: Motion to close.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray Collins has been
2 nominated, seconded by -- made by Robert, seconded by
3 Jenny, and motion to close nominations by Don. Further
4 discussion.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
9 Ray Collins for Vice Chair of the Western Interior
10 Regional Council signify by saying aye.

11
12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ADAMS: Opposed, same sign.

15
16 (No opposing votes)

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Secretary. Open
19 nominations for Secretary position.

20
21 MR. J. WALKER: Nominate Jenny.

22
23 MR. HONEA: Second.

24
25 MR. R. WALKER: Second.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny's been
28 nominated by James Walker, seconded by Don and Robert.
29 Any further nominations.

30
31 MR. R. WALKER: I make a motion
32 nominations be closed and unanimous ballot.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to close and
35 unanimous ballot, do we have a second.

36
37 MR. HONEA: Second.

38
39 MR. COLLINS: Second.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further discussion
42 on Jenny.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
47 Jenny as Secretary of the Western Interior Regional
48 Council signify by saying aye.

49
50 IN UNISON: Aye.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.
2
3 (No opposing votes)
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Review and approval
6 of the meeting minutes of our last meeting. Has the
7 Council reviewed the minutes from our Holy Cross
8 October 10th and 11th meeting.
9
10 I have reviewed the minutes, I have not
11 found anything.
12
13 MR. HONEA: Motion to adopt.
14
15 MS. PELKOLA: Second.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt and
18 seconded. Discussion on the minutes.
19
20 (No comments)
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further
23 discussion.
24
25 (No comments)
26
27 MR. R. WALKER: Question.
28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's on
30 adoption of the minutes from our October 10th and 11th
31 meeting in Holy Cross.
32
33 Those in favor of adopting the minutes
34 signify by saying aye.
35
36 IN UNISON: Aye.
37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.
39
40 (No opposing votes)
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council member
43 reports. We'll go around the table here. Robert.
44
45 MR. R. WALKER: What?
46
47 (Laughter)
48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have a Council
50 member report, you have comments.

1 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 I talked with our area of Holy Cross,
4 Anvik, Shageluk and Grayling. One of our concerns is
5 that we're getting more and more pressure on our moose
6 hunting season here. We got transporters. We've got
7 guides. And we've got people just coming down by boat.
8 It's really starting to pound and hammer our area a
9 lot more harder than it has been the last three to four
10 years. We're getting a lot more aircraft that are
11 flying out of Holy Cross that are flying back with just
12 antlers. I believe that Fish and Game has been
13 notified so there may be an investigation into this
14 alleged wanton waste. We don't have enough State or we
15 don't even have any Federal wildlife officer, you know,
16 that could do a lot more -- I know they're being
17 stretched to the limit, but we can't be always being
18 doing things after they are done, we'd like to see them
19 done while they're being in -- in the process of doing
20 it so won't have to waste so many animals just for the
21 antlers, so to speak, what has been brought forward.

22

23 Another issue came from Holy Cross that
24 the pike proposal failed at the State Board of Fish
25 meeting. That was a little discouraging for the Holy
26 Cross community.

27

28 Another issue that was brought forth
29 was that what's going to happen to our salmon this
30 summer. Talking with Grayling, Shageluk, Holy Cross,
31 we would like to know when the North Pacific Fisheries
32 do have their meetings so somebody would know the dates
33 so that they could attend these meetings, whether
34 they're in Seattle or wherever they have them because
35 these are already cut and dried by the time they get to
36 Alaska no matter how many people do go to Anchorage or
37 Fairbanks for these North Pacific Fisheries meetings.
38 It's already done. I mean it has been decided before
39 they got here.

40

41 So something we have to think about.

42

43 The Federal government question was
44 brought to why the Federal government say we're here
45 for your subsistence, we're here to help you but on the
46 other hand we are the -- the Federal government opened
47 the land to transporters and guides, where we have to
48 compete with them. They have more money, more
49 equipment, they're better organized. Just like a
50 machinery for killing animals and where the local

1 people don't have that much funding, they don't have
2 that much equipment to use, so a lot of times they
3 don't even have a rifle to go out and get a moose while
4 these guides and transporters have funding, machinery,
5 boats, airplanes, guns, on account of this funding
6 where they could do whatever they please. And it'll
7 almost be like, you know, when you look at it from our
8 perspective here that why are the Federal government
9 telling us that, you know, hey we're here for you with
10 our fingers crossed, I mean I feel like a damned fool
11 sometimes when I'm talking to these guys, like, hey,
12 you're on the Federal Board, yeah, well, why don't you,
13 you know, why aren't you -- we're trying but our hands
14 are tied too.

15

16 So this is something, Jack, that, you
17 know, we're going to have to take another hard look at
18 because in the next 10 years I bet those moose are
19 going to be hammered into nothing here, the way it's
20 going. Not only our area but this area too. Because
21 when I rode from Nulato down to Kaltag through all the
22 sloughs across on the other side, I only seen four
23 moose tracks and this was like the end of September,
24 there's no moose down there. I mean these guys are
25 being hardpressed for their subsistence way of life and
26 we're supposed to be here helping them. I mean is this
27 a joke here. I mean this is stuff we're going to have
28 to start thinking about, all these agencies.

29

30 Thank you very much, Jack.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Robert. A
33 question. This Paradise Controlled Use area that's
34 basically along the Yukon River, which is also a State
35 Controlled Use area from Pia -- well, down to Russian
36 Mission, is this controlled use area being violated by
37 aircraft transporters or is that -- people feel that
38 the enforcement of the controlled use area is not
39 adequate?

40

41 MR. R. WALKER: Mr. Chairman. You know
42 you can land an airplane outside a controlled use area
43 and you can drop a hunter off and they can paddle in
44 and this is where a lot of the violations are, they're
45 occurring because nobody doesn't check on them. They
46 go to sites where they're out of the regular traffic
47 sites and where a lot of people can't go with a boat
48 because it's back on the lake and this is what happens.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

1 MR. R. WALKER: Half of the lake could
2 be in the controlled use area, other half could be out
3 in the unit, they land outside of the unit, paddle
4 across the river, shoot the moose, take the antlers,
5 paddle back, they're out of there. Bang.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Robert.
10 Yeah, at Holy Cross people were talking about the
11 increasing hunting pressure from non-local users, boats
12 coming down the Yukon River past Galena all the way
13 down there to hunt in that area. The Federal Refuge
14 lands have, you know, there's those -- come right up
15 against the river but right up river of Grayling. All
16 these BLM lands that are down around Anvik and Holy
17 Cross, Shageluk, those have very little control and the
18 guide use area -- BLM has been working on developing a
19 guide capacity so the Legislature is in progress of
20 working on -- I hear that there's been progress made on
21 the guide use area on the State and BLM lands but
22 unless the Legislature enacts something, the BLM is
23 going to have to address this guide use issue.

24
25 But transporters is a completely, you
26 know, aircraft and boat transporters is a pretty much un
27 -- there's no capacity. They can take an unlimited
28 amount of hunters. And so I was told by a transporter
29 yesterday that he felt that there needed to be caps set
30 on the number of people that are allowed to be
31 transported.

32
33 So I do feel for the people of your
34 area, the increasing hunting pressure and user
35 conflicts, all culminate to animals being displaced,
36 when you have more hunters, it pushes the animals away
37 from the areas where local people are traditionally
38 hunting.

39
40 If the GASH can come up with a strategy
41 on proposals, I would like that to happen, or this
42 Council. I can't.....

43
44 MR. R. WALKER: Mr. Chairman. On the
45 GASH AC Board there are two transporters there so it's
46 kind of like fighting a losing battle here. It's just
47 like, you know, whatever proposal you put in there,
48 they're going to strike it down because that's the way
49 things are done.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll have to
2 discuss this issue some more on strategies that this
3 Council. We have limitations also but we do want to
4 have a meaningful subsistence priority.

5
6 Thanks, Robert.

7
8 Jenny, did you have some comments.

9
10 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah. Jenny Pelkola from
11 Galena.

12
13 I attended the fishing summit in
14 Fairbanks which was very interesting. We had different
15 agencies there and everyone expressed their concerns
16 about our fishing this summer as we're going to have to
17 be reduced to six inch mesh.

18
19 And also Louden has a proposal going to
20 TCC to open the chum salmon during the chinook closure.

21
22 And also we have some local concerns
23 about many of our people that come here from Fish and
24 Wildlife that are trapping, doing all their trapping on
25 -- I don't know if it's -- well, say their trapping
26 area and some of them it seems like they feel like
27 they're being pushed out of their area, not only the
28 Fish and Wildlife but a lot of people that transit into
29 Galena.

30
31 With that, I guess that's all I have
32 for now.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question Jenny, this
35 trapping conflicts, are these agencies people getting
36 on people's traplines and competing with local
37 trappers?

38
39 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah, that's what I hear
40 from trappers. And also, before I forget, I agree with
41 what Robert said about we have a lot of moose hunters
42 also coming into our area which has been going on for
43 years and years and people have expressed their
44 concerns about it but, yet, it seems like we're not
45 being heard. So I think we need to really -- I don't
46 know what we could do but keep pushing the issue
47 because we have people that depend on moose meat,
48 depend on our fish and depend on all our stuff that we
49 get locally and, yet, you know, we have all these big
50 hunters coming in like Robert said with their big boats

1 and expensive everything and we, local people, some of
2 us have just little tiny boats which, you know, we go
3 out and try to fend for our families so it's something
4 that we should continue to work on.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. And
9 so I had a question on the six inch mesh in the
10 proposal -- there is -- TCC is going to submit a
11 proposal to allow chum salmon -- or basically open with
12 six inch mesh during the closures during the chinook
13 run?

14

15 MS. PELKOLA: That's what they're
16 requesting. In fact they have one from Loudon and I
17 think one from TCC that's going in.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

20

21 MS. PELKOLA: Coming up.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Ray.

24

25 MR. COLLINS: I'm representing the
26 Council on the working group for the Kuskokwim on the
27 fish management and we're going to have our meeting in
28 mid-March in Anchorage to look at the results from last
29 year and any studies that were done and then meet and
30 make recommendations for this next year.

31

32 But like the Yukon we had closures all
33 the way up river last year to get -- and it did result
34 in getting more fish up to the spawning areas. But it
35 really works a hardship all along the river when we
36 have such closures, especially during good drying
37 weather and so on and so we're looking for strategies,
38 too, that'll somehow allow people to take some fish.

39

40 One thought I had is with those live
41 boxes, I noticed -- I was watching Alaska Men on there
42 and I see that they're using live boxes and they were
43 dishing out the salmon with their net there when they
44 were catching the kings, they could easily have let the
45 large ones go and kept some, just the small jacks, so
46 that would be one strategy that might be used, not a
47 total closure but require live capture if you're using
48 wheels and then release any fish over a certain size or
49 something. Keep some of the little jacks, which don't
50 contribute much to spawning.

1 But I mean we're looking for answers
2 just like the Yukon is in how we might we manage that
3 and still provide some fish for the locals. So that
4 seems to be the main concern along the river right now.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I had a question for
7 you, Ray, the Board of Fish acted on several Kuskokwim
8 proposals and was the working group pretty much
9 satisfied with the Board of Fish actions?

10
11 MR. COLLINS: Well, we haven't met
12 since then. We'll be discussing that in March so I
13 can't really say the reflection of.....

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

16
17 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, so I'll have that
18 information after we have our meeting.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

21
22 James.

23
24 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Jack. First
25 off it's good to be back attending the meetings, I
26 missed the one in Holy Cross but I had other concerns
27 and issues.

28
29 I just have a question, I guess for
30 Robert and Jenny, in regard to Unit 21E, Bob, you know,
31 GASH and that area has always had that problem with the
32 boundary line of controlled use area being the Innoko
33 River, and with the adjacent lakes right up to the
34 river itself, that's what's allowing access to the
35 float planes that come in there and drop their hunters
36 off and the river's just right there, and that's a
37 major problem.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

40
41 MR. J. WALKER: So that boundary needs
42 to be looked at and all the adjacent lakes within the
43 mile of the boundary line should be closed, I feel,
44 reviewed to be closed and that would alleviate some of
45 the fly-in hunters.

46
47 I don't have anything else but Robert
48 you covered pretty much everything that's a concern to
49 our area.

50

1 Thank you, Jack.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah -- oh, go
4 ahead.

5

6 MR. J. WALKER: Jenny, in regards to
7 that six inch gear, was that six inch or smaller or
8 just six inch?

9

10 MS. PELKOLA: They just said six inch.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's my
13 understanding that when they've implemented six inch
14 gear restriction, that's six inch maximum and you can
15 use everything down to whatever. So it's six inch is
16 the maximum gear size. And that seems to be the
17 direction of the managers right now to conserve chinook
18 salmon.

19

20 On discussing the controlled use areas,
21 the last round of Board of Game there was many
22 proposals from the Fairbanks Advisory Committee and so
23 forth to review the controlled use areas to possibly
24 eliminate the controlled use areas, so expanding
25 controlled use areas with the current Board make up
26 would be a very hard sell and I would actually be
27 concerned about opening up a can of worms by submitting
28 a proposal to increase the size of controlled use area.
29 Because a lot of the Paradise Controlled Use down here
30 along the Innoko by Shageluk, this is all State and BLM
31 controlled lands, they might want to start trimming it,
32 if anything. So if we had a different Board make up I
33 would be more prone to submit an expansion to the east
34 of the Innoko River. But with the political make up of
35 this Board of Game I would be real concerned about them
36 actually trimming it off, you know, because that gives
37 the platform for the primary users, which are basically
38 Fairbanks and Anchorage to begin lobbying the Board,
39 and there's all these truly lobbying, they go out in
40 the entryway and the bathroom and they get these Board
41 members talked into doing things that we might not
42 actually really like, and so I would caution the
43 Council about what this Board would do with controlled
44 use area expansion.

45

46 I do think that in the Innoko Refuge,
47 you know, that we could submit some kind of proposals
48 to close, or get closure -- aircraft access closure,
49 but, you know, is that actually an area that people,
50 you know, if you look at your map here, that gets away

1 from the main Innoko drainage and would that be
2 beneficial to close two miles away from the Innoko in
3 the Refuge; what do you think about that?

4
5 MR. J. WALKER: I think that would
6 alleviate some of the problem within the two mile area.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In the pink area?

9
10 MR. J. WALKER: Yes.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. So that
13 would be up river of Shageluk?

14
15 MR. J. WALKER: (Nods affirmatively)

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question for
18 Refuge is this Paradise controlled use area, that is
19 also a Federal closure, can the Council submit a
20 proposal to expand the controlled use area in the
21 Innoko Wildlife Refuge to the east of the Innoko River
22 two miles. Does anybody on line or in the room --
23 would be able to answer that question?

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll put a
28 placeholder there, at that thought, and we'll get a
29 hold of somebody that can answer that question. And so
30 at some point we'll have Innoko on line or we'll
31 discuss that further so you can put a placeholder
32 there, James.

33
34 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Pollock, you got
37 comments.

38
39 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 There's a lot of concern around Allakaket, the moose
41 population is down and we didn't get any caribous
42 coming through this winter.

43
44 There were plenty of chum salmon in the
45 summer run but like everywhere else there was hardly
46 any kings. So we didn't put away that much king salmon
47 so it's a concern.

48
49 And the intensive management, wolf
50 control is in full swing now. They got some wolf the

1 last few days, maybe some of the moose will come back
2 after they're done and so I'm excited.

3

4 There's a concern around Allakaket and
5 Alatna, there's a proposed road from Prospect, Bettles
6 and towards Ambler where there's lots of minerals and
7 they want to get the minerals out and they're proposing
8 a road that would travel just a few miles north of
9 Allakaket which would -- so our way of life is going to
10 be impacted right there since the road's going to be
11 with public money and sooner or later there's going to
12 be people going up the road since it's a public road so
13 that's a concern. We'll be -- peoples might be coming
14 up to trap and hunt to an already limited wildlife
15 resource so we couldn't compete with anybody from
16 outside and the hardships already there.

17

18 So that's my concern, Jack, thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.
21 And so has the Department of Transportation been having
22 meetings in Allakaket on the road to Ambler this
23 winter?

24

25 MR. SIMON: Not recently. But I have
26 seen -- going to meetings in Shungnak, other areas and
27 they've been there, the peoples from DOT, but nobody
28 has said go ahead, put in the road yet, all the local
29 residents that I spoke to about the road, the effects
30 of the road has opposed, nobody's in favor of the road
31 so far.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

34

35 MR. SIMON: Anywhere I go they oppose
36 the road.

37

38 Thank you, Jack.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

41

42 Don.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hey
45 it's good to be here in Galena. We always get real
46 good public participation whether it's in fishing,
47 especially fishing issues and hunting issues. So it's
48 good to be here.

49

50 I just wanted to kind of reiterate on

1 Jenny's thing there also about I attended the fishing
2 summit in Fairbanks and the predictions are -- they
3 don't look very well, it's even forecasted to be worse
4 than last years so I'm a big proponent of doing the --
5 you know you have a bountiful summer chum and -- but if
6 it -- I'm always pushing for that, the fall run or the
7 summer run.

8

9 So -- and also I kind of miss some of
10 the members not being here because, you know, every
11 time we don't see them we don't hear their concern. I
12 know Carl is always concerned the, whether it's the
13 Mulchatna or whatever the caribou herd, in his
14 particular area. So I just -- whenever we miss one of
15 these meetings we don't bring that concern to the
16 table.

17

18 But, you know, I'm just -- you know, I
19 think the composition, the makeup of this Board, for
20 each of -- you know, and I respect Robert's comments
21 that, you know, about the numbers, about the moose
22 numbers and that, you know, we have to live out here
23 and those people that come out there and do the hunting
24 and stuff from urban places, whether they fly in from
25 Anchorage or something, we have to physically live in
26 our villages and we have to be concerned about the wolf
27 populations and stuff like that, whereas they get a
28 window of a month to come out and do what they want.
29 So, I mean it's always been my feelings that we are
30 responsible for our numbers, for our moose populations
31 and stuff and I will do anything, you know, to try and
32 keep those numbers up.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

37

38 I, too, feel the Council's strength
39 wane when we don't have Council members here,
40 especially to voice concerns. I would, you know, like
41 I would really like to get Carl and Eleanor and Tim on
42 the phone to at least call in for this part, if they
43 can't participate, at least call in for this part and
44 so maybe at a break or something we can get a hold of
45 them and I would like to get their concerns. You know,
46 this is an important part of the Council meetings, is
47 to bring forward issues that have formulated since our
48 last meeting. And so, you know, if I couldn't attend a
49 meeting I could at least call in for this part of the
50 -- for the Councils edification.

1 And so I will go over my Chair's
2 report. You know at our.....

3
4 MR. R. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, could I
5 -- Jack.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead,
8 Robert.

9
10 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.
11 Chairman. One of the things that I mentioned was that
12 the proposal of the pike fishery in 21E below Holy
13 Cross above Piamuit, in the Piamuit area, that proposal
14 didn't pass at the Board of Fish. I got a -- I didn't
15 really know what was the reason why it didn't pass. We
16 have people coming from the Kuskokwim that are taking
17 50 to 100 pike, you know, per sled load home and this
18 is -- they have tents and they stay down there for a
19 week sometimes and just fish, fish, fish, fish and haul
20 fish home, I mean this is getting a little more than I
21 think our river could handle. Because a lot of these
22 are just 100 year old pike that are being taken -- a
23 lot of them are just being taken for their eggs. So
24 there's something that why this proposal didn't pass at
25 the Board of Fish.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The proposal for
28 reduced bag limits for pike in that portion of 21E
29 failed also at the Federal Subsistence Board level and
30 so the line of reasoning was that there was no
31 biological concern with the pike at this time but if
32 this issue continues when the fishery proposals come up
33 for call, this Council could submit, again, a proposal
34 with more reasons for restricting the bag limit on pike
35 in 21E.

36
37 Whereas up on the Koyukuk, the Koyukuk
38 River Advisory Committee meeting there's concern about
39 too many pike, that there's too many pike and
40 predation. In fact they look at, you know, guys --
41 some people in Huslia are talking about there's too
42 many pike and they're actually eating up all the
43 whitefish and other fish. And so, you know, there's
44 that facet also.

45
46 But there's no call for proposal for
47 the Federal Subsistence Board right now but this
48 Council could discuss that when we cover fisheries
49 issues.
50

1 Any other comments on the Council
2 member's reports.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll go over the
7 Chair's report.

8
9 At our last meeting in Holy Cross, we
10 discussed the need for a special action request because
11 the new customary and traditional use determination for
12 Aniak, Upper and lower Kalskag and Chuathbaluk will now
13 be able to hunt in that lower portion of Unit 21E
14 around Piamuit Slough, we requested a special action
15 request. It was clarified by OSM that there's been a
16 delegation of authority to the Refuge manager and the
17 Refuge manager can set that eight moose quota in the
18 lower portion for the winter hunt without a special
19 action request. I responded to OSM with appreciation
20 for them looking at that and clarifying that issue, our
21 concerns, to the Council. And so that, when Innoko
22 makes their report, they'll delineate that.

23
24 I did attend the Federal Subsistence
25 Board meeting January 22nd, I think it was, down in
26 Anchorage, or that week. They covered the fisheries
27 proposals. The Board of Fish, as you see in your
28 packet here, the Federal Subsistence Board eliminated
29 the need for a permit here in 4B and C for the Federal
30 driftnet fishery, which may or may not be utilized this
31 year since there's very few chinook salmon. The
32 Federal Subsistence -- it's good for Council to attend
33 the Federal Subsistence Board meeting. There's all 10
34 Regional Council Chairs who attend the meeting, we
35 dialogue with the Board during their deliberations and
36 assist the Board. And so that's actually a very
37 important part of the Council's action, is to get the
38 Council to clarify for the Federal Subsistence Board.
39 There are two new Board members, Charlie Brower and
40 Chris.....

41
42 REPORTER: Christianson.

43
44 MS. HERNANDEZ: Tony.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:Chris -- Tony
47 Christianson. And so I was very happy that there were
48 two new rural Board members on the Federal Subsistence
49 Board and it sort of tempers the Board's actions a
50 little bit and they have good input also.

1 There's lots of discussion of this six
2 inch mesh size and I commented to the Board that six
3 inch and less gear size has a high dropout mortality
4 for king salmon. King salmon get caught on the face,
5 they pop out of the net and there's no indices, there's
6 no calculation of how many fish are actually falling
7 out of the net. I discussed that with the Board.
8 There was the call for fisheries monitoring program,
9 there was no response by any agency or so forth to come
10 up with a study to enumerate that, and so I talked to
11 the Deputy Commissioner of Fish and Game and delineated
12 to the Department, the need to understand how many king
13 salmon are going to be killed with six inch and less
14 gear size. I got a favorable response from the Deputy
15 Commissioner. He told me that he was going to discuss
16 this with Staff and that they possibly would develop a
17 study. And so we got to know how many king salmon
18 we're killing with six inch gear when we have a
19 directed commercial chum salmon fishery in the Lower
20 Yukon River, and Kuskokwim.

21
22 I am on the Koyukuk River Advisory
23 Committee. We had a meeting in Hughes February 16th.
24 We covered the biology of the moose population and so
25 forth here. I had been contacted by Kenton Moos. we
26 have this winter hunt for 21D around Huslia and so
27 Koyukuk/Nowitna Staff called me, they transmitted
28 electronically all the biological data. They had very
29 poor counting conditions but the basics are the
30 cow/calf ratio was 10 calves per 100 cows. And so
31 there's -- at this time -- and the number of cows has
32 gone down. And at this time we cannot have a cow hunt,
33 there's been a quota of 10 moose hunt around Huslia in
34 March, so we have a fall back for bulls only April 5 to
35 April 15. And so as the Chair I had to go along with
36 the biology and we talked about this at the Koyukuk
37 River Advisory Committee also with the Advisory
38 Committee. So Koyukuk/Nowitna will have the bulls only
39 hunt in April. And last year there were four bull
40 moose taken in Huslia. And so those moose at that time
41 of the year are recovering and especially when there's
42 no snow like this. We did talk about, at the Advisory
43 Committee, there's a Unit 24B winter moose hunt from
44 December 15th to April 15th, that State hunt and
45 Federal hunt have a sunset in the regulatory 2014 so
46 the Advisory Committee voted to submit a proposal to
47 continue the moose hunt, winter moose hunt in 24B,
48 which I did. I was elected Chair of the Advisory
49 Committee and so I transmitted a proposal to the State
50 Board of Game for their March deliberations of next

1 year. This Federal hunt also has to have a proposal
2 and so that's one of our action items for this meeting,
3 is to submit a Federal proposal that would basically
4 mirror the State proposal. The area biologist, Glenn
5 Stout is not opposed to the hunt, he says that there
6 has been no moose harvested since the hunt started in
7 December of 2010. And so there's no biological reason
8 not to have the opportunity for basically subsistence
9 hunters to be able to hunt bull moose. And as time
10 goes on, if somebody really needs meat, a late winter
11 bull moose, and especially on this kind of a year, I've
12 seen bull moose on my trapline that I'm sure they got
13 fat, at least in their ribs and brisket, and so they're
14 looking like they're in really good shape because
15 there's no snow and so they come right out of rut, they
16 go right at the -- they get into recovery and they're
17 looking in top shape to me. Of course I'm not going to
18 -- I don't have that hunt where I live.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We don't have
23 caribou where I'm at. We've had caribou coming into
24 the Central Brooks Range last year by the thousands.
25 This year I saw one caribou track, and so the caribou
26 are way east, way west. There's some -- a few caribou
27 around the Bettles area and I hear some people from
28 Allakaket got some caribou over there. But the caribou
29 are very nomadic and so they move around and so you
30 can't count on caribou. But they feed, I think it's
31 like 45 villages in the northern portion of Alaska,
32 they rely heavily on caribou. And so caribou are a big
33 deal. And so this year I'm going to have to roam far
34 and wide trying to come up with a caribou. And I like
35 to hunt caribou more towards the spring when they come
36 into better condition.

37

38 And so with no snow we've had wolves
39 that are literally starving to death in our area.
40 We've had kids catch adult female wolves in lynx traps
41 that would never even hold a wolf, such a small trap,
42 and so got wolves that are -- when there's no snow they
43 have a hard time catching animals and so they -- if
44 they don't start catching something then they start
45 losing their health, the wolves actually start dying
46 off, and I consider that a natural part of the
47 ecosystem but a positive thing for the moose and dall
48 sheep, is the wolf population reducing because it's
49 been pretty high in our area, to the game population.

50

1 I couldn't trap until the middle of
2 January when we finally got some snow. And so our hare
3 population is declining from a very small peak, and
4 that's because we have lots of lynx that have moved
5 into the Brooks Range from the Yukon Flats and they
6 basically ate the few hares that we had around. And so
7 it's been a real poor trapping season. I don't see
8 hardly any marten tracks and I hear all over Alaska
9 that there's been a huge marten population decline, and
10 I would like to know what the biology of marten is and
11 whether the Department of Fish and Game or Fish and
12 Wildlife has any information on why marten populations
13 would decline, and -- because marten are very large
14 contributors to the subsistence trappers income source.
15 The marten prices are really high and so people would
16 like to catch marten but there aren't very many around.

17
18 I will bring before the Council a
19 subsistence sheep proposal. We had a special action
20 request last year to allow subsistence users near where
21 I live to be able to take half-curl and larger sheep,
22 and it used to be 7/8th, and so that special action
23 request was very much appreciated by the people of my
24 area and so now I have a proposal template to present
25 to the Council on a permanent proposal to the Federal
26 Subsistence Board.

27
28 I did try to make an online proposal to
29 the OSM and I couldn't find an online proposal, and I
30 wonder if you could go over that issue with the
31 Council, just briefly, Melinda. I try to get the
32 public to submit proposals but if we -- we need a
33 little bit cleaner system for online transmission.

34
35 Go ahead, Melinda.

36
37 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Jack. I looked
38 into that when I received your call and emails real
39 recently. What Jack had basically done was asked if
40 there was a form that was fillable similar to what's on
41 the State Board of Game and Board of Fish, as far as
42 submitting proposals. When you make an official
43 government form, of course, you have all of these
44 different processes you have to go through. The form,
45 it's really difficult to change things afterwards, and
46 so I think what we have up there, it's just going to be
47 something as simple as perhaps a Word document that
48 folks could pull the different bullets and items that
49 they need to cover in order to submit a proposal and
50 just make it easier. These proposals can be submitted

1 very easily. Email. Fax. Whatever way that they're
2 sent to OSM, we're very flexible. But I think that the
3 form that -- the way it's online right now it's just in
4 a PDF. I'm going to talk to the publication folks and
5 we're going to see if we can get it into a Word
6 document, that way it's very easy for folks to either
7 typewrite on the Word document, they can cover those
8 bullets, they can copy and paste the information into
9 an email and send it to the appropriate person. So
10 we'll go through whatever channels we need to, to make
11 sure that that's as easy for the public as possible.

12

13 So, thank you, Jack, for bringing that
14 up.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Melinda.
17 It's not a huge deal, it's just that I want the system
18 to be as easy as possible for the public to make
19 proposals, to bring issues into the system so this
20 Council and the Federal Subsistence Board can address
21 issues.

22

23 Going back to the Koyukuk River
24 Advisory Committee meeting. The Homer Advisory
25 Committee was urging all the Advisory Committees to
26 support a 5,000 fish, chinook, cap for the Gulf of
27 Alaska. I feel that this Council also should transmit
28 a cap of 5,000 chinook, which is the minimum bycatch
29 cap. And so I feel that that that's a real big issue,
30 is this bycatch. Some of the chinook reared in the
31 Gulf of Alaska and then come through into the Bering
32 Sea, and so we don't know where all these chinooks go
33 but we do know that bycatch is a big issue.

34

35 We also covered, at the Koyukuk River
36 Advisory Committee, wood bison, reintroduction, and so
37 there's been some real progress and so tomorrow we'll
38 have Rita St.Lewis that will actually give some
39 information of what the wood bison reintroduction, at
40 what point it's at.

41

42 I would like the Council to adopt a
43 letter to be transmitted to the North Pacific Fisheries
44 Management Council requesting a 5,000 chinook salmon
45 bycatch. And since we're on that issue I would
46 entertain a motion to transmit that letter.

47

48 MR. J. WALKER: So moved.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by James. Do

1 we have a second.

2

3 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.

6 Discussion on the letter.

7

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I could -- the Homer

12 Advisory Committee made a real clean, short and concise

13 letter, I can send Melinda a copy of that as a template

14 for the Western Interior's letter.

15

16 Any other discussion -- you got a

17 comment there, Melinda.

18

19 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Jack. I'd really

20 like for this Council to get in the habit of going

21 ahead and at least beginning these letters at the

22 meeting that way, you know, I know not everybody's

23 connected via email and when we leave, you know, it's

24 kind of difficult to get everybody's input, so Jeremy's

25 going to get a screen and perhaps if I can work on that

26 letter tonight we can put it on the screen tomorrow and

27 we can all go through it and work on it together and

28 have it done.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be a good

31 thing.

32

33 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Don.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I totally

38 agree with this idea. It's a very good idea. But I

39 also, maybe, to suggest that we somehow get this out to

40 other organizations.

41

42 At the fishing summit in Fairbanks it

43 was kind of confusing, all these boards and the

44 formation, Jenny knows what I'm talking about, the

45 formation of another board between TCC, while the Yukon

46 and Kuskokwim, AVCP, I believe and TCC, and it's really

47 just a concept right now. It's not -- there's not like

48 a board or anything like that, but it's kind of

49 confusing when we have all these little different, you

50 know, our own regional -- our own village advisory

1 boards or local boards or something, and then to have
2 the Western and, you know, to have our RAC meetings and
3 to have different organizations, I think -- I mean my
4 emphasis to them at that meeting was, well, it's kind of
5 confusing. I mean we should have one local voice so I,
6 you know, I don't know how to get this particular thing
7 out and shared with each of them so that we could
8 support each other.

9

10 That's all.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. There are
15 many different organizations involved in fisheries
16 concerns about the chinook salmon. But like the Board
17 of Fish, the more people that actually speak up on an
18 issue the more -- actually it's good to have many
19 different people saying the same thing and so this
20 bycatch issue is -- this Council should be another
21 voice saying that we want to too.

22

23 And so I can give Melinda -- I got this
24 Homer letter in my computer, I can jump drive that over
25 to you and you can use it as the template and then the
26 Council can review the letter and we can adopt the
27 letter tomorrow. So we won't continue with the motion
28 at this time until we've reviewed the letter.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

33

34 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I guess what I'm
35 saying is I just want the word out there. I want all
36 of them to know, you know, I mean how do we get a forum
37 to get everybody, you know, to make it known that we're
38 doing this or, you know, for supporting each other.

39

40 Thanks.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good comments, Don,
43 appreciate that.

44

45 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. Do we want
46 to table that motion for a little bit later.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're going to
49 table that motion until we've developed this letter for
50 review, and so it'll be nice and clean and we can put

1 it on the screen tomorrow and then we can adopt the
2 letter at that time, that motion.

3

4 And so that would be everything that I
5 have from my reports.

6

7 The .805(c), do you want to go over
8 that Melinda.

9

10 MS. HERNANDEZ: Sure, Jack. Folks, the
11 .805(c) letter, there's copies on the public table, it
12 didn't make it into the book printing. Council, in
13 your yellow folders on the right-hand side, it's going
14 to be your very first item.

15

16 The .805(c) letter is essentially a
17 letter from the Board letting the Councils know what
18 actions were taken at the last meeting. There are a
19 couple of typos I'd like to fix really quick. I
20 apologize. My .805(c) letter was first out of the gate
21 and there's a couple of typos we missed.

22

23 If you will look on Page 3, first full
24 paragraph, instead of YK Council, it should be the
25 Western Council -- Western Interior Council.

26

27 And then on the very next page bolded,
28 towards the bottom, Proposal FP11-08, I accidentally
29 put in the FP13-09 description. Nothing in the Board
30 action was changed but I simply put in the wrong
31 description. So bolded there, it's supposed to be
32 FP13-09.

33

34 Jack, did you want to talk about, since
35 you were there at the meeting, did you want to talk
36 about what happened on the Yukon proposals, since I'm
37 sure folks will be really interested in that.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. I did attend
40 this meeting, while the Federal Subsistence Board was
41 deliberating these proposals, I sort of delineated the
42 4B and C. There was a permit here to fish drift
43 gillnet in 4B and C, basically from Galena down to 4A
44 at Koyukuk. When the proposal was originally adopted I
45 -- there was concerns that there were going to be
46 unbelievable amount of fish taken around Galena here
47 and I refuted that. I said it's the same subsistence
48 users that fish from Galena, may utilize -- and Ruby
49 would utilize that area, and there's not going to be a
50 significant increase, and there hasn't bee. And so

1 they've finally taken that off.

2

3 The proposal for the pike restrictions
4 and bag limit down in 21E, the Board rejected the
5 proposal. They felt that there was not enough Federal
6 lands there and that the similar proposal at the Board
7 of Fish that does have authority in the area of
8 concern, they rejected the proposal because they felt
9 there was no biological concern. If this is still a
10 concern for Holy Cross and Anvik regarding pike we can
11 submit another proposal when the Board of Fish has a
12 call for proposals.

13

14 The proposal 13-06, 07, and 08 were
15 lumped together and that was from the working -- this
16 customary trade, and so the working group came up with
17 developed language. The Western Interior Council
18 adopted language from the working group regarding
19 customary trade and so our position was that we were
20 going to support customary trade, which is sale for
21 cash of chinook salmon, only to customary and
22 traditional -- people who have customary and
23 traditional use of Yukon River king salmon. And so the
24 Board basically adopted that proposal.

25

26 And so we do want to be perfectly clear
27 to the public and to the Council, it does not preclude
28 barter, you can trade Yukon River king salmon for sugar
29 or salt or something outside to other users, this only
30 is regard to the sale under customary trade.

31

32 There was proposals for setting dollar
33 amounts, those did not pass. Those were deferred.

34

35 They took basically no action on some
36 of those other proposals because of the action that
37 they did take.

38

39 The proposal to make personal and
40 family consumption as a priority, we opposed that,
41 because we recognize that customary trade is an
42 important part of subsistence and so that was deferred
43 because of action taken on the other proposals.

44

45 Some of the proposals, they go onto
46 what they call the consensus agenda, if there's no
47 conflict with the Councils, and there's no real
48 biological concerns they go on to consensus agenda and
49 so other proposals were basically adopted. At the
50 beginning of each day the Federal Subsistence Board

1 opens the floor to people to comment on the consensus
2 agenda items and so there's sort of a procedure, and so
3 the Federal Board wants to give the public as much
4 opportunity to comment on proposals.

5
6 Melinda.

7
8 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Jack, I don't
9 think we've got anything else to take up -- the --
10 thank you for bringing up the consensus agenda. There
11 was one proposal on the consensus agenda, I think it
12 was Proposal 2, but, yeah, this letter does primarily
13 just cover the proposals that were not on the consensus
14 agenda, so those are the only ones you'll see some
15 emphasis on there towards the end in the attachment.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These are the
18 deliberated proposals that we're looking at. And I
19 forget what Proposal 2 was, but there were no comments
20 on the consensus agenda proposal that affected this
21 region and so that proposal was adopted. They
22 basically adopt a whole block of proposals if there's
23 no conflicts with those proposals.

24
25 So we're moving into.....

26
27 MS. HERNANDEZ: Jack.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead,
30 Melinda.

31
32 MS. HERNANDEZ: I need to check, is Jan
33 Caulfield on the line.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 MS. HERNANDEZ: Jan Caulfield.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay, go ahead. We had
42 the facilitator from Western Arctic Caribou Herd
43 Working Group, she was going to try to call in this
44 morning. She is on a flight this afternoon but she was
45 going to try to call in to give a summary and introduce
46 herself. She has sent along a sheet that's in your
47 supplemental folder.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So if she
50 pops up we can get her on there as soon as we can.

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do you want to see who
2 else has called in?
3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, is anybody else
5 on?
6
7 MS. HERNANDEZ: Is anybody new on from
8 this morning who didn't get a chance to introduce
9 themselves, please, on the teleconference line.
10
11 MR. VENT: Yeah, this is Darryl Vent,
12 Huslia.
13
14 MS. HERNANDEZ: Hi, Darryl, how are
15 you.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning Darryl.
18
19 MR. NEWLAND: Eric Newland with the
20 Alaska Department of Fish and Game still here.
21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: Hey, Eric. Any other
23 new folks on the line that weren't on this morning.
24
25 MS. YUHAS: Jennifer Yuhas, Alaska
26 Department of Fish and Game.
27
28 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Jennifer.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.
31
32 Anybody else.
33
34 (No comments)
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to
37 move to D, public and tribal comment on non-agenda
38 items.
39
40 Is anybody from the public here who
41 would like to speak on non-agenda items.
42
43 (No comments)
44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to give full
46 opportunity. Darryl, did you want to speak on any non-
47 agenda items.
48
49 MR. VENT: No, just what I told you
50 about pike when we were in Fairbanks about, you know,

1 the problem we're having with pike up this way on the
2 river.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. You want to
5 lay out your concerns with pike on the Koyukuk compared
6 to what we have down around Holy Cross and Anvik,
7 Shageluk area. Do you want to lay out what people's
8 position are on pike predation.

9

10 MR. VENT: You want me to speak a
11 little bit on that?

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Just a real brief
14 thing for the Council so that they understand.

15

16 MR. VENT: Okay. My concern was that,
17 you know, probably back early '70s, '80s we used to,
18 you know, take care of the pike and make sure that they
19 didn't grow in numbers, you know, we'd catch them in
20 nets and stuff. Now, that we're starting to see more
21 problems with our muskrats, our ducks, our geese, our
22 whitefish, you know, any other fish, because this is a
23 predator fish and we're starting to notice that they're
24 starting to grow in size now. Before it used to be
25 probably about 24 inches, now we're starting to get
26 around probably 36 to 40 inches so it's becoming a
27 concern, and we just want to kind of get a head start
28 on things before it really becomes a problem. I know
29 if we don't do nothing now, later on it's going to be
30 worse and then we'll have to deal with it. But if we
31 deal with it now maybe it'll make it a lot less
32 problems, you know, wouldn't give us too many problems
33 later on. Because I know that in some of the other
34 villages they're noticing the same thing so maybe
35 that's why they're having problems with their kings,
36 all their fish that's coming -- the small fry that's
37 coming down the river, maybe they're not having a
38 better chance because these fish, these pikes are going
39 to clean them out too. So it could help us in the long
40 run if we learn how to control this predator fish.

41

42 Thanks.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darryl for
45 that briefing. That's something for the Council to
46 consider.

47

48 Any other public or tribal members who
49 would like to comment on non-agenda items.

50

1 (No comments)
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see anybody at
4 this time.
5
6 Time out.
7
8 (Council nods affirmatively)
9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll take about a
11 10 minute break, 15 minute break.
12
13 (Off record)
14
15 (On record)
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to bring
18 this meeting back to order.
19
20 Robert. Robert Walker.
21
22 MR. R. WALKER: What?
23
24 (Laughter)
25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're wanted at the
27 front of the room.
28
29 (Laughter)
30
31 MR. R. WALKER: I can hear you from out
32 here.
33
34 (Laughter)
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're okay, okay.
37
38 (Laughter)
39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we're back to
41 order again. So we're on old business, and so we have
42 No. 1 here, we've got Trevor Fox on the phone, you want
43 to give an overview of this.
44
45 MS. HERNANDEZ: Oh, just one second,
46 Trevor. Council, in your packet, yellow folder on the
47 right-hand side, right after the .805(c) letter you're
48 going to see a wildlife closure review briefing as well
49 as a map that Trevor has provided for you in color,
50 right-hand side, they look like this.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
2
3 MS. HERNANDEZ: All right, Trevor.
4
5 MR. FOX: Thanks, can you guys hear me
6 okay.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you
9 great. Go ahead.
10
11 MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
12 Melinda mentioned there's that closure review briefing
13 document. And just before I get into the actual
14 closure review I just wanted to direct everybody to the
15 last few paragraphs of the briefing and that'll just
16 kind of set what the closure review process is.
17
18 So closure reviews contain a brief
19 history of why a closure is implemented along with a
20 summary of the current resource conditions and a
21 preliminary.....
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me.
24
25 MR. FOX:OSM recommendation.....
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me, Trevor.
28
29 MR. FOX:as to whether.....
30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Trevor. Trevor.
32
33 MR. FOX:the closure reviewed
34 should.....
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Trevor.
37
38 REPORTER: Trevor. Trevor, hold on.
39
40 MR. FOX:be continued or.....
41
42 REPORTER: Trevor, hold on.
43
44 (Laughter)
45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You kind of lost us
47 there, which paragraphs are you reading?
48
49 MR. FOX: The last two paragraphs on
50 that wildlife closure review briefing document.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: On the first page.
2
3 MR. FOX: That's the one Melinda was
4 referencing.
5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: On the first page?
7
8 MR. FOX: Yes.
9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.
11
12 REPORTER: Trevor, go ahead.
13
14 MR. FOX: Okay. Yes, as I said the
15 closure reviews contain a brief history of why a
16 closure was implemented along with a summary of the
17 current resource conditions and a preliminary OSM
18 recommendation as to whether the closure should be
19 continued or deleted from the regulations.
20
21 The Councils are asked to consider the
22 OSM preliminary recommendation and share their views on
23 the issue. Input from the Councils is critical to the
24 development of regulatory proposals needed to address
25 the regulations, adjustment to the regulations, and any
26 regulatory proposals that may result from this review
27 process will be considered through the normal
28 regulatory cycle. The current window for wildlife
29 proposals closes on March 29th and Councils may choose
30 to work with OSM Staff to develop a proposal, however,
31 proposals addressing these issues can be submitted by
32 anyone.
33
34 So that just sets up what this closure
35 review is.
36
37 And the closure review 12-20 begins on
38 Page 18 of your meeting book.
39
40 This closure review includes Federal
41 public lands within the Kanuti Controlled Use area of
42 Unit 24B, which the lands are closed to the taking of
43 moose except by Federally-qualified subsistence users
44 of Unit 24, Koyukuk and Galena.
45
46 The closure was initiated in 1992 when
47 the Federal Subsistence Board adopted a modification of
48 Proposal 115, which was justified by higher than
49 recommended harvest levels and to provide continued
50 opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users

1 on Federal public lands within the controlled use area.

2

3

4 The Kanuti Controlled Use area was
5 adopted from State regulations when the Federal
6 regulations were implemented in 1990. The State
7 modified the boundaries for this controlled use area in
8 2010, however, the boundary was not changed under
9 Federal regulations, therefore, there is a misalignment
10 between the two systems. This closure encompasses the
11 Federal public lands within the Federal controlled use
12 area definition.

12

13

14 Population surveys have been conducted
15 in the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge since 1989 but a
16 more standardized methodology has been in place since
17 1999. According to the survey data, the moose
18 population has been relatively stable at approximately
19 1,000 moose since 1999, and, overall, this is a low
20 density population, which is typical of predator
21 limited populations in Alaska. The bull to cow ratios
22 have been relatively high which, at/or above the
23 management plan's objective, however, relatively high
24 bull to cow ratios may be required to allow adequate
25 breeding with the low density population. Calf to cow
26 ratios have also been above or within the management
27 objectives of 30 to 40 calves per 100 cows, however,
28 the yearling bull to cow ratio, they have been pretty
29 low during most years would suggest limited recruitment
30 to breeding age. In 2010 and 2011 surveys were
31 conducted on portions of Unit 24B outside of the Refuge
32 and allowed for comparison of composition estimates
33 within the Refuge and the total survey area. Calf to
34 cow ratios were similar between the two areas and bull
35 to cow ratios were lower on the Refuge, although they
36 were high in both areas.

36

37

38 As for the harvest, reported success
39 for Federally-qualified subsistence users attempting to
40 harvest moose in Unit 24B has been low, at an average
41 of 2.3 moose were reportedly harvested between 2006 and
42 2011.

42

43

44 The OSM preliminary recommendation is
45 to maintain the status quo on this closure.

45

46

47 The justification is that the closure
48 is necessary to continue subsistence uses. The closure
49 was originally justified due to higher than recommended
50 harvest levels. And currently harvest is restricted to
51 Federally-qualified subsistence users, and under this

1 restricted harvest the population has remained fairly
2 stable. The bull to cow ratio suggests the population
3 can sustain the current harvest level so lifting the
4 closure could increase harvest pressure which could
5 result in a decline in the moose population and reduce
6 harvest opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence
7 users.

8

9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Trevor.

12

13 Does the Council have any questions of
14 Trevor's presentation of WCR12-20.

15

16 Ray.

17

18 MS. YUHAS: Mr. Chair.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Got someone on line,
21 go ahead.

22

23 MS. YUHAS: Jennifer Yuhas, Alaska
24 Department of Fish and Game. Just wanted the Council
25 to know for the record that the State did not have an
26 objection to the status quo and the analysis.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I was going
29 to get to your comment here in a second but I'm glad to
30 hear that at this time.

31

32 I got Ray Collins had a question or
33 comment.

34

35 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

38

39 MR. COLLINS: Have they considered any
40 actions to raise population. In other words, is the
41 carrying capacity good, I mean in terms of browse and
42 food and everything, but there's just lack of
43 recruitment, some kind of predator control or something
44 that would allow more recruitment of those young
45 animals? I don't think hunting isn't holding it down,
46 it looks like it's predation that's holding it down, or
47 are there habitat restrictions?

48

49 MR. FOX: Yes, through the Chair. As
50 far as I know the habitat is in very good condition and

1 as far as the predator control, I'd let the State talk
2 to that. I'm not sure where they are, if there's
3 intensive management going on in the area. But it does
4 seem to be a predator limited system. As I said the
5 habitat seems to be in good shape. There's good
6 productivity, but it's the recruitment to breeding age
7 that seems to be where some of the limitations are.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was a good
12 question. The State is in progress with the IM program
13 and the biologist cannot actually be here or be on the
14 line to actually comment on that.

15

16 Is there any other comments or
17 questions from the Council on Trevor's presentation.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to move
22 through these agency comments here.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none.
27 Jennifer, do you have biological Staff there with you
28 that can comment on the IM program to delineate for Ray
29 what the State is doing there at this moment?

30

31 MS. YUHAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
32 do not have someone here with me. I thought Jim
33 Woolington was on his way to your meeting and I can't
34 see who's there present. But the Chairman is correct,
35 regarding current State efforts, I don't have status
36 reports on that right now.

37

38 As you know on the Refuge, actions are
39 subject to the Federal Subsistence Board policy on
40 predator control, which the current Chairman, Tim
41 Towarak, is interested in revisiting and so I'm not
42 sure if the door could be open at a later date for that
43 on the Federal side as well.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will bring up Mike
46 Spindler, Refuge manager for Kanuti. This area entails
47 part of, near the Refuge, and so just give the Council
48 a briefing on the IM program that they have there.

49

50 Mike.

1 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, thank you, Mr.
2 Chair. Council members. For the record, Mike
3 Spindler, Refuge manager, Kanuti Refuge.

4
5 Do you have this map that was just
6 passed out?

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

9
10 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. I'm showing the
11 map that's titled WPCR12-20 and if you look right at
12 the village of Alatna and Allakaket, right about in the
13 middle of the map, you will see light pink squares
14 extending up the Alatna River, that's northwest of
15 Alatna, and light pink squares that go down along the
16 Koyukuk River towards Hughes, and some light pink
17 squares that go into the middle of Kanuti Refuge; those
18 are either State lands or Native Corporation lands, and
19 this intensive management program is ongoing right now,
20 at the moment. Area biologist Glenn Stout has given
21 the Refuge a briefing prior to the start of the
22 program, and we have traded land status maps so that
23 all the aircraft involved have accurate GPS locations
24 of where the Refuge lands start and where the Native
25 lands start. And so the intensive management program
26 is applicable only to the State and the Native lands,
27 and not to the Federal Refuge lands.

28
29 So if you see there, even southwest and
30 southeast of Allakaket into the Refuge boundary, there
31 are Native land inholdings and so what we have done
32 with the State of Alaska, said we will cooperate with
33 you guys on the science, they're doing -- this is an
34 experimental predator removal program. And
35 experimental design, the control, which is kind of a
36 misnomer, you should state in this case, the baseline
37 of no control is basically the Federal Refuge lands,
38 and the experimental area, which is the wolf removal is
39 the State and Native lands. So they are comparing the
40 results of where the removals and using the Federal
41 Refuge lands as non-removal part of the experiment. So
42 after four years of removal, they will compare
43 population statistics, like moose population density,
44 bull/cow ratios, recruitment, especially recruitment,
45 and they'll be looking at those statistics in both
46 areas as a comparison. Plus they have collared, I
47 believe it's around 50 short yearling moose calves,
48 almost a year old, they did that a year ago, April, I
49 believe it was, a year ago April, so they'll be looking
50 at survival of those age class moose in particular with

1 the radio-collaring project.

2

3 And all the cooperation we've done,
4 we've done quite a bit in sharing costs of the radio-
5 tracking for this large moose telemetry project and
6 everything that's for the baseline of the project we
7 have helped with, but we had to draw a clear line in
8 the sand because Federal Refuge lands are America's
9 lands, and they are subject to policy, in Refuges it's
10 called the Biological Integrity Policy, so the way you
11 would address predator control there, and it is done in
12 some places, where you have a species that is clearly
13 very, very threatened, but it's a very high scientific
14 bar to pass before you would allow that kind of a wolf
15 removal on a Refuge.

16

17 I think that this is a good situation
18 because the concentration of Native and State lands is
19 near where the village is and then the rest of the
20 Refuge lands are quite a bit further from the village,
21 so we'll see how much it affects the success of the
22 hunters. Ultimately that's the measure that we really
23 want to look at, is the success that the hunters are
24 having.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mike. There
27 was a presentation made to the Koyukuk River Advisory
28 Committee on the intensive management program, and I'll
29 add to Mike's biological overview.

30

31 The Subsistence Division is also going
32 house to household survey taking into account what the
33 harvests have been in Allakaket and Alatna, and then
34 they're going to track the success rate of the hunters
35 after -- throughout this study period. And so that'll
36 also factor into the analysis of the effectiveness of
37 the intensive management in this Allakaket/Alatna area.

38

39 So I just wanted to bring that -- you
40 had that question.....

41

42 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:whether there
45 was an intensive management and that's actually in
46 progress right this minute. They're actually there
47 for, how many more days, Pollock, like three more days?

48

49 MR. SIMON: (Nods affirmatively)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there are
2 three more days of the intensive -- they killed -- the
3 last thing we heard was like 16 wolves -- 16 wolves as
4 of yesterday or something.

5
6 So that gives the overview of the moose
7 population in this closure area. It gives an overview
8 of the intensive management that's taking progress --
9 another comment, Ray.

10
11 MR. COLLINS: Well, what we found in
12 McGrath where we had the same situation was, you know,
13 the numbers down and stayed down, bears were a major
14 predator, too, and they're often one of the primary
15 killers of the young calves when they're born, and are
16 they going to do anything in that area.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The State did not
19 want to delve into bear because on the Koyukuk bears
20 have hu'lani's and so there's no -- they didn't want to
21 get into that because of culture reasons. People do
22 utilize bears there, black bears.

23
24 And so any other questions from the
25 Council on the presentation to this point.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so this Jennifer
30 Yuhas -- you want to give your title again, Jennifer,
31 for the Council, so they're -- I don't think the
32 Council's fam.....

33
34 MS. YUHAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
35 My.....

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:familiar
38 with.....

39
40 MS. YUHAS:official title is the
41 State's Federal Subsistence Liaison Team leader, and
42 I've been told I can't shorten that because I am the
43 State's liaison to the Federal Program, not the State's
44 subsistence person. And we have a full team that works
45 on these, which includes all of the directors, the
46 Governor's DC office and the Commissioner's office.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jennifer.
49 So Jennifer attends the Federal Subsistence Board
50 meetings and makes comments with her team on Federal

1 proposals and the State's position on those proposals.

2

3 And so your official position on the
4 closure is non-objection at this time, to clarify for
5 the Council, again, Jennifer?

6

7 MS. YUHAS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. And if
8 there's a delay here, there's a lot of cracking going
9 on in the phone and an echo and so I apologize if
10 that's cumbersome but the State's official position was
11 that we had no objection to retention of the closure
12 and agreed with the OSM analysis.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate
15 that. Other Federal agencies, do we have any other
16 Federal agency comments.

17

18 Mike.

19

20 MR. SPINDLER: (Shakes head negatively)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, okay. Tribal
23 comments on the closure. Has the tribal council of
24 Allakaket and Alatna actually discussed maintaining a
25 closure to non-rural users around Allakaket/Alatna on
26 the Refuge, have they discussed that, are they in favor
27 of that Pollock?

28

29 MR. SIMON: Yes.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: For the record, do
32 you want to turn your mic on.

33

34 MR. SIMON: Okay, the council is in
35 favor of that.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So any
38 other tribal comments.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: TCC comments.

43

44 MS. FROTHINGHAM: (Shakes head
45 negatively)

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Has Orville
48 Huntington reviewed this closure?

49

50

1 (No comments)
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't know, okay.
4 InterAgency Staff Committee, any comments from them.
5
6 (No comments)
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Advisory groups,
9 neighboring Regional Councils.
10
11 (No comments)
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This does not affect
14 them. Local Fish and Game Advisory Committee.
15
16 The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee
17 did not review this closure at our meeting. We were
18 compressed to a four hour meeting and covered the most
19 pertinent business. But I'm sure if -- it'd be my
20 impression that the Advisory Committee would support
21 this, but I can't say for sure.
22
23 National Park Service Subsistence
24 Resource Commission has also not taken this up.
25 Pollock is the Chair of Gates of the Arctic Subsistence
26 Resource Commission and this closure did not come up
27 before the Commission.
28
29 Summary of written comments. Do we
30 have any summary of comments, Melinda.
31
32 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. No written
33 public comments were provided. And I also just wanted
34 to remind anyone here from the public if at any time
35 you d like to address the Council, just for the record,
36 if you could fill out a blue form and bring it up at
37 any time, agenda or non-agenda item.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Do we
40 have any public testimony.
41
42 (No comments)
43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don t see any public
45 testimony at this time.
46
47 Regional Council recommendation. The
48 Chair will entertain a motion to adopt WPCR12-20 at
49 this time to get it on the floor.
50

1 MR. COLLINS: I so move.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt to
4 maintain the closure.

5

6 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion by Ray, second
9 by Jenny. Discussion on the proposal. Do you want to
10 talk about the need for the closure, Pollock. Would
11 you like to speak to the need for the closure for.....

12

13 MR. SIMON: No comment.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No comment. I m the
16 net closest Council member to that area. I speak in
17 support of maintaining the closure due to the fact that
18 the success rate for hunters is very low. The time
19 spent under the household analysis was that the hunters
20 have gone from like 15 days hunting to over 21 days
21 hunting per moose that's actually taken. The moose
22 population is low and aggregating that by elimination
23 of the closure would allow additional hunting pressure
24 on a very limited resource. And so I am in favor of
25 maintaining the closure at this time on subsistence
26 needs.

27

28 Any other comments from the Council
29 members.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Federal
35 Subsistence Bard would like to have as many reasons as
36 to why they would maintain the closure. Any other
37 Council members like to comment on this.

38

39 Pollock.

40

41 MR. SIMON: Yeah. During the hunting
42 season, September, that area, Allakaket area, Alatna
43 water drops pretty low sometimes, sometimes there s
44 only about a foot over and sometimes it s difficult to
45 travel to the resource where we might see moose. But
46 it s been different, last fall, where there was wet and
47 a lot of rain and water was high so we managed to go
48 back to sloughs and lakes and had better success. But
49 it s tough around that area because sometimes the water
50 is too low to go back to the sloughs.

1 Moose population is way down and it s
2 kind of hard to compete with the outside hunters,
3 although now there s no peoples from outside coming
4 around the area to hunt.

5
6 Thank you, Jack.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.
9 Supplementary information on hunting conditions there.

10
11 Any further discussion by the Council.

12
13 MR. HONEA: Yes, Jack.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

16
17 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
18 guess I just had a question as to how long this would
19 be in effect, I think I see three years on there. But
20 I guess I m just wondering, you know, how long the wolf
21 control project has been ongoing and what s I guess
22 until the numbers come up, is that a factor.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is the first
25 year that they re actually implementing the predator
26 control program for the wolves and so it'll be a lag
27 time before we start seeing an affect on the moose
28 population, especially local to Allakaket and Alatna.
29 And so currently this is an ongoing program and the
30 moose population has been at low equilibrium for
31 several years now. And until such time that that moose
32 population starts to increase the subsistence priority
33 for Federally-qualified users of those communities
34 should have a priority and so that s why the in 1992
35 there was a call for a need to close the area to non-
36 subsistence users on the Federal lands.

37
38 So at this time I think we answered
39 many of the questions here.

40
41 There s a conservation concern. Our
42 recommendation to maintain the closure is warranted.

43
44 So without further belaboring this
45 issue the Chair will call for a question on maintaining
46 the closure in the Kanuti the Federal lands to non-
47 subsistence users.

48
49 MR. R. WALKER: Question.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Questions called.
2 Those in favor of support of WCR12-20 signify by saying
3 aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same
8 sign.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the motion
13 carries.

14
15 MS. HERNANDEZ: Hey, Jack. This is
16 Melinda. I just wanted to, on behalf of the Council
17 and our Chair, throw out some kudos to Trevor Fox.
18 Trevor s been a great biologist for our region and I
19 really appreciate all the extra effort, between
20 meetings, Trevor, and how you keep the Chair, the
21 Coordinator and all of us informed, and so thank you so
22 much for your hard work. I just had to throw that out
23 there. Trevor's been working really hard and he's made
24 my job a lot easier because I don't have to worry about
25 the biology since I'm not a biologist.

26
27 So I just wanted to throw that out
28 there, thank you so much Trevor.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do also appreciate
31 that, Trevor. At some point you'll have to attend on
32 of our meetings but I understand your various reasons
33 why you haven't so far but I do appreciate your good
34 work that you've been doing for the Council.

35
36 So we've covered that issue.

37
38 The second one would be approval of the
39 draft annual report for FY2012. Melinda.

40
41 MS. HERNANDEZ: Council. Audience. And
42 those on the phone. You'll find the draft annual
43 report for 2012 on Page 28 of the book. We've got
44 three issues that we put down for last year.

45
46 No. 1. This Council s expressed
47 concern many times about a lack of a rural subsistence
48 representative on the North Pacific Fisheries
49 Management Council.

50

1 No. 2. We wanted to send out some
2 support for a letter that the Western Arctic Caribou
3 Herd Working Group had sent to the Governor outlining
4 many concerns about roads and how it affects caribou
5 and all the resources in the Interior. Jack provided
6 me a copy of that letter and I have been in touch with
7 the facilitator as well and was able to attend my first
8 meeting this winter and touched base there with Pollock
9 and so they've responded and thank you for including
10 that in the annual report.

11
12 No. 3. We've got the concerns
13 regarding the performance of chinook salmon last year.

14
15 So this is in draft form. It has to do
16 with issues from 2012 so if the Council has any
17 lingering issues from last year, if there s any other
18 work we d like to do with this document we can do that
19 here at this meeting.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So does the Council
22 have any comments on these issues or is there we can
23 include additional issues. Has something arisen
24 locally that the Council feels the Federal Subsistence
25 Board should be aware of that will impact is
26 impacting or will impact subsistence needs.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to you
31 know the Western Arctic Herd Caribou Working Group is
32 delineating concerns about these roads. I would like
33 this to be there mainly in reference to the Ambler Road
34 but there is the, what they call the Foothills Road,
35 the road that goes to Umiat. There's also a road
36 that's slated to go to Nome and that would go past
37 Galena here. And these various roads affect would
38 then affect the resources of this region dramatically.
39 And so it s not just one road, it s actually three
40 different roads that the State is planning to develop
41 that would actually have huge, huge impacts to the
42 subsistence resources.

43
44 I think that the Federal Subsistence
45 Board should be aware of our concerns about those
46 roads. That we feel that there would be huge social
47 economic impacts to the subsistence communities with
48 the increased hunting pressure then, and fishing
49 pressure that would ensue.

50

1 Pollock.

2

3 MR. SIMON: Yeah. That Haul Road
4 started in 1974 and that was the last year we had
5 caribou close by Allakaket. Before that time it was an
6 annual run of caribou in October through the village
7 and moose the winter, close to the village. The
8 village the peoples had a lot of meat. And like I said
9 the pipeline was put in and for 10 years we didn't have
10 any caribou come through, I don't know why is that. I
11 think now that I'm finding out the reason is there's
12 traffic on the road north and south and now there's
13 hunting pressure at the north where they come into our
14 area to hunt, pressure there for the caribou, very
15 more to the west they make it around the area. So last
16 year there was no caribou coming down directly but they
17 made a loop around and come in from the west through
18 Allakaket, this area there's no caribou again. But I'd
19 say that roads and development will affect the
20 migration route of caribou.

21

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.
25 Building on Pollock's statement. The Board of Game
26 changed the caribou bag limit and season in 2010 to
27 include cows. Previous, the Central Arctic Caribou
28 Herd in 26B there was no hunting of cow caribou until
29 October 1, which everybody in Anaktuvuk and people that
30 know anything about caribou migrations know that you do
31 not bother the lead cows, cows lead migrations. When I
32 commented to the Board of Game that there was a
33 proposal before the Board to open the season for cow
34 caribou on September 1, which August late August and
35 September is when most of the sporthunters are there, I
36 felt that opening the caribou season for cow caribou
37 was going to have a huge effect on deflecting caribou
38 migrations. The Board of Game, during deliberations,
39 entertained an alternate proposal that was not visited
40 by the public and they actually opened the season for
41 cow caribou on July 1. And so now sporthunters have
42 opportunity to deflect cow caribou migrations
43 throughout the entire migratory period from August
44 through September and October.

45

46 What happened on the Dalton Highway,
47 the cow caribou come near the road, well, they didn't
48 used to get bothered but now they are. They get
49 swarmed. And so the lead cows, the ones who lay down
50 the trails, they get harassed off and they've deflected

1 those caribou way over to the east and now there s very
2 few caribou that have actually crossed the Dalton
3 Highway since 2010, mainly because the cow caribou get
4 harassed and deflected off to the east, they get shot
5 up, they re not going to come back and so they keep
6 going further and further east.

7
8 The Central Arctic Herd aggregates
9 towards the Arctic Refuge. They used to cross the
10 Dalton Highway and filter through Anaktuvuk Pass.
11 There s been very few caribou that have done that since
12 2010 and it s primarily because the Board thought that
13 they were increasing opportunity for the sporthunters
14 on the Dalton Highway but in reality they allowed the
15 sportshunters to chase the caribou away and now they re
16 having less opportunity. So TEK, they did not listen
17 to TEK and it bit them in the butt, and it s biting us
18 in the butt. I don t have any caribou around where I
19 live at all because the caribou don t the lead cows
20 don t come to where I live. There s very few Western
21 Arctic Caribou that have filtered over towards Bettles
22 but just a small little bunch but I don t consider that
23 adequate to support subsistence needs.

24
25 So the reality is this road hunting
26 issue will have high effects if they open these road
27 corridors to sporthunters. There will be huge effects
28 on caribou s migratory patterns.

29
30 We re back on task here though.

31
32 The annual report, I don t have
33 anything additional to add to this just the caveat
34 under No. 2 that this is in regarding all roads, the
35 three main roads that the State is contemplating would
36 have huge affect and I would like to signal to the
37 Federal Subsistence Board that there would be, this
38 Council may have to take regulatory action through
39 proposals to the Federal Board to eliminate non-
40 subsistence users if there became conflicts in the
41 future. So we don't live forever and I want the
42 Western Interior Council to, in the future, to be aware
43 that this was a concern at this time.

44
45 Any other comments on the three annual
46 report topics.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If not, then we can

1 entertain a motion to adopt these topics.

2

3 MR. SIMON: So moved.

4

5 MR. J. WALKER: Second.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded
8 to adopt the annual report with the slight insertion on
9 the three roads.

10

11 Any further discussion.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 MR. R. WALKER: Question.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
18 Those in favor of the annual report before us, signify
19 by saying aye.

20

21 IN UNISON: Aye.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same
24 sign.

25

26 (No opposing votes)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks. Melinda.

29

30 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. I stand
31 corrected, we did have the future meeting dates here on
32 the agenda, I just overlooked it. So we're going to do
33 this a little bit early. We usually don't do it until
34 the very end of the meeting but Northwest Arctic is
35 meeting this week up in Kotzebue as well so we want to
36 relay to them what dates you folks have chosen.

37

38 So if the Council will turn to Page 36
39 and 37, I have some updates to give you as far as the
40 winter 2014 and what dates are not available to the
41 Council anymore. The only week that is out of the
42 question for the Council to meet for the winter 2014
43 window is the week of February 11th, there's already
44 two meetings scheduled that week. Other than that the
45 rest of the weeks are open. But let's back up just a
46 little bit and if we'd like to go ahead and reconfirm
47 our fall 2013, and then we'll go ahead and take up
48 winter 2014.

49

50 Mr. Chair.

1
2 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Melinda. At
3 our Holy Cross meeting we discussed our next meeting to
4 be held in Fairbanks, it was the wishes of the Council
5 at that time to have that meeting on October 6th and
6 7th -- or correction 8th and 9th in Fairbanks. Is the
7 Council still good with the meeting at Fairbanks.
8 Pollock felt that we should be meeting in rural places,
9 but several Council members made valid reasons for
10 having a meeting in Fairbanks. Is the Council still in
11 favor of having a meeting in Fairbanks October 8th and
12 9th.

13
14 MR. HONEA: I'm good with that.

15
16 MR. R. WALKER: What dates.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: October 8 and 9 in
19 Fairbanks, it'd be on Page 36.

20
21 The Council's good with that.

22
23 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

24
25 MR. R. WALKER: Yes.

26
27 (Council nods affirmatively)

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock not good
30 with that.

31
32 MR. COLLINS: Yes.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray, you're good
35 with October 8th and 9th in Fairbanks.

36
37 MR. COLLINS: Yes.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The majority
40 of the Council is in favor of that date and place.

41
42 Now, we're open for discussion on the
43 winter 2014 meeting, the week of February 11th is
44 eliminated. So which one of these weeks would the
45 Council prefer that would be a non-conflict with your
46 schedules, and the place also.

47
48 MS. PELKOLA: Where are we?

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on Page 37,

1 the week of February 11th is eliminated because two
2 Councils are already meeting those. So our window, we
3 have an opportunity between the week of February 18th
4 through March 18th and which week would the Council
5 prefer.

6

7 MR. SIMON: First week.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Um.

10

11 MR. SIMON: First week.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: February 18th.

14

15 MR. SIMON: No, the week before.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we can't have
18 that one.

19

20 MR. SIMON: Oh, okay.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That one's
23 eliminated because there's two Councils that are going
24 to have meetings that week and they don't have enough
25 Staff to facilitate.

26

27 MR. J. WALKER: What's the location.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, let's deal
30 with the dates first, or we could go location, it
31 doesn't matter. Do you have a preferred location,
32 James.

33

34 MR. J. WALKER: No, I don't, Jack. I
35 was just wondering about the location.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're going to
38 talk about that.

39

40 MR. COLLINS: Week of February 24th,
41 somewhere in there, later in February is better to
42 travel. Those earlier ones we have travel problems.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I prefer
45 late February through March because the temperatures
46 moderate and it's just a heck of a lot longer daylight
47 and you get into mid-winter the low light, you get poor
48 -- you can have -- mid-February I've seen lots of times
49 45, 50 below zero. I prefer March meeting calendars,
50 you know, like the week of the 4th, the week of the

1 11th, those would be fine with me. All these March
2 dates are fine.

3
4 Is there any kind of dog races or
5 anything that would be conflicting with anybody's
6 schedule.

7
8 MR. COLLINS: Well, the Iditarod's
9 going through McGrath this week while I'm gone. It
10 always goes through there on the -- it takes off the
11 1st and gets over there by about Wednesday -- Tuesday,
12 Wednesday.

13
14 MS. PELKOLA: I think it comes through
15 here next winter.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We most likely won't
18 be here at Galena this next winter meeting.

19
20 So how about something like March 11th,
21 the week of March 11th, and so our meeting places
22 are.....

23
24 MR. R. WALKER: The Iditarod, it goes
25 through here next year.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right, but we're
28 not.....

29
30 MR. R. WALKER: And we usually travel
31 always then.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But we're not going
34 to be in Galena that meeting.

35
36 MR. R. WALKER: Okay. Yeah.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Because we're having
39 this meeting here. Our next meeting, theoretically
40 would be in Aniak, theoretically, or a place where we
41 can make a valid reason to go there.

42
43 MR. HONEA: Jack.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

46
47 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I believe
48 we -- I mean if we get too far into March TCC is going
49 to be starting maybe next Monday or Tuesday, so I would
50 be more inclined, myself, maybe the end of February or

1 first of March.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So the week
4 of the 4th is good.
5
6 MR. HONEA: Yes.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And what
9 about Aniak. Aniak would be our next -- we have
10 meeting hubs in McGrath, which we've had McGrath, now
11 we've done Galena, we're going to have Fairbanks next
12 fall, theoretically our next meeting would be in Aniak,
13 and how does the Council feel about Aniak.
14
15 MR. HONEA: Well, Mr. Chair, I thought
16 it was either McGrath or Aniak. I think we haven't had
17 a meeting in -- is there -- is that an option.
18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we had our
20 meeting last spring in McGrath, and then we had Holy
21 Cross this last fall, and so now we're going to
22 Fairbanks this coming fall, and so theoretically our
23 next option would be Aniak unless we have a valid
24 reason to go to another community that has a hot issue.
25
26 MR. J. WALKER: Mr. Chair.
27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.
29
30 MR. J. WALKER: Could we just leave
31 that date pending, marked as Aniak, depending on
32 another location.
33
34 MS. HERNANDEZ: That would be fine,
35 Jack.
36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be good.
38
39 MS. HERNANDEZ: That would be great.
40 We can send -- so I'm going to go ahead and send word
41 that we're going to be choosing the first week of
42 March?
43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.
45
46 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do we want to do travel
47 day Monday.
48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
50

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: Meet 4th and 5th.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.
4
5 MS. HERNANDEZ: And travel home
6 Thursday.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.
9
10 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Preliminary.
13
14 MS. HERNANDEZ: No problem.
15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Aniak.
17
18 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So the Council
19 has reconfirmed the October 8th and 9th meeting
20 Fairbanks, fall 2013, winter 2014 I have down March 4th
21 and 5th, and location to be determined.
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
24
25 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay.
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Sounds good
28 to the Council.
29
30 (Council nods affirmatively)
31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock. Ray.
33
34 MR. COLLINS: Well, I'd prefer later in
35 that week. Like right now we're.....
36
37 REPORTER: Ray. Ray.
38
39 MR. COLLINS:having.....
40
41 REPORTER: Ray, mic.
42
43 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Right now in
44 McGrath they're having dinner on Tuesday night over
45 there for people that come into town at the museum and
46 we've got the first mushers coming through at the
47 beginning of the week, later in the week it slows down
48 so I hate to be gone during that time because of local
49 things going on. So I don't know, if there's any way
50 we could move up the meeting on Thursday/Friday or

1 something like that.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we got travel
4 problems with our air carriers, they won't even fly on
5 the weekend for me.

6

7 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so that's -- if
10 you feel strongly about that, that week, we could go to
11 the week of February -- have the meeting February 25
12 and 26, the week before, would you feel more
13 comfortable with that one?

14

15 MR. COLLINS: I would, yeah, but I
16 don't know about others.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is the Council fine
19 with the week of 25 and 26. Ray has real problems with
20 the first week in March.

21

22 Pollock.

23

24 MR. SIMON: Like I thought I said
25 earlier, we don't go too late into March since -- I'm
26 down here this week and I got to go home and take off
27 again for North America, it isn't enough time to stay
28 at home and do my chores.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

31

32 MR. SIMON: So if we do this one in
33 February it would be good for me. They have the YRDFA
34 annual meeting, too, in February, so we're in conflict
35 with that.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Go ahead,
38 Don.

39

40 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I guess I kind of
41 missed that, are we talking about February 26th and
42 27th?

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 25 and 26, travel on
45 Monday the 24th.

46

47 MR. HONEA: I have no problem with
48 that.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll switch up

1 to that week since Ray is getting heartburn about
2 Iditarod the first week of March.

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, Ray.

7
8 (Laughter)

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Pollock is better
11 with that also. So the Council has gotten pretty
12 defined on 25 and 26 of February and probably Aniak but
13 open.

14
15 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay, sounds good.
16 I'll send word up to the Northwest Arctic meeting that
17 the Council has chosen the weeks of February 25th and
18 26th for winter 2014.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: Jenny, do we want to
23 get a lunch update.

24
25 MS. PELKOLA: I think the lunch is
26 here.

27
28 (Laughter)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Since our lunch has
31 arrived we should break for one hour until 12:30.

32
33 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's got to heat
34 up first.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, it's got to heat
37 up.

38
39 MS. PELKOLA: Oh.

40
41 (Laughter)

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

44
45 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do we want to go ahead
46 and let Vince go first and then we'll go to lunch.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can go with
49 Vince. Yeah, Vince. I guess our lunch has still got
50 to heat up so we're going to put you on the hot seat

1 and let you heat up also.

2

3 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, Warden.

4

5 (Laughter)

6

7 MR. MATHEWS: I apologize for being
8 asleep at the wheel there but I cover three Regional
9 Advisory Councils so I was trying to see if those dates
10 conflicted so it doesn't matter at this point but
11 that's why I was doing that.

12

13 So I'll introduce myself, Vince
14 Mathews, subsistence coordinator for Kanuti, Yukon
15 Flats and Arctic. And before Mike covers -- Mike
16 Spindler will introduce himself, but before he covers
17 that, I have a general question I always ask you guys;
18 are these summaries, or this summary effective for you,
19 if you have any suggestions on how to improve that,
20 please let us know now or elsewhere, because in this
21 particular situation the biologist for Kanuti did quite
22 a bit of effort to get this together and that's -- you
23 all know him as Tim, so, with that, I'll turn it over
24 to Mike. We're going to kind of tag team on this.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike.

27

28 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Chair and
29 Council members. Mike Spindler again for the Kanuti
30 Refuge report.

31

32 There was not enough snow last fall to
33 do moose surveys so we have no moose survey data to
34 report on for you. However, I could call your
35 attention to Page 21 in your meeting book. That is the
36 best summary of moose population status for the Kanuti
37 area that we have and that was for this closure review
38 and that was provided to OSM by our biologist, Tim. So
39 if you have any questions about moose status, that's
40 the best page to refer to.

41

42 Generally population is stable at a low
43 density, as we've already discussed. Since 2008,
44 Kanuti Refuge, Gates of the Arctic Park, Fish and Game
45 and BLM have cooperated on a region-wide moose radio
46 telemetry study. That study's wrapping up. We had
47 probably over 100 collars out between north of where
48 Jack is at Wiseman, as far up as Suqipak (ph) Mountain
49 on the Dalton, up the NorthFork of the Koyukuk, almost
50 to the Gates and then south all the way down to almost

1 Indian Mountain, so pretty much covering most of Unit
2 24A and 24B. There was, I believe, about 20 GPS
3 collars and the remainder conventional. In the first
4 week of April Fish and Game and the Park Service will
5 be out there removing the GPS collars. The study is
6 going to be over with. And in the Park Service lands
7 they'll be removing the conventional collars also so
8 there will be no more collars out on the Park lands.
9 We have chosen to leave the collars on at Kanuti and on
10 the BLM lands mainly so that the State can gather
11 twinning data because they go back every late May and
12 find the cows and then look for twinning calves to get
13 the twin percentages. And we will try and maintain
14 contact with those moose as long as we can. But the
15 write up phase of that study is going to begin this
16 summer.

17
18 The question came up earlier at the
19 Council meeting about the condition of the habitat for
20 moose and we cooperated with Alaska Fish and Game in
21 2007 to do a unit-wide assessment of browse and this
22 was in preparation for the State's efforts to do
23 intensive management in the area. And that was a quick
24 broadbush look at browse and it's in excellent
25 condition. Browse utilization in that area is really
26 low, which is reflective of the low moose density and
27 low moose population. That's something that's prudent
28 to look at whenever you talk about possibly raising the
29 moose population, you want to make sure the browse is
30 available and the carrying capacity is there in the
31 habitat.

32
33 A question came up during our moose
34 telemetry study and also with the difficulties that
35 Allakaket has had in getting enough moose, that perhaps
36 moose are changing their use of habitats, instead of
37 focusing along the riparian areas, that they were more
38 utilizing recent burns that are away from the rivers.
39 And so we initiated a study with a graduate at the
40 University of Alaska to look at the moose use of
41 different aged burns on Kanuti. That study started
42 last August. It will utilize all the collar data that
43 we have, plus it will look out at the browse density
44 and availability in different age burns and in non-
45 burned areas. And Erin Gulianis (ph) is a graduate
46 student, she is going to be out there again for the
47 last two weeks of March and first week of April this
48 year, and it's a two year study.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike. I was

1 wondering if anybody's really looked at -- I've seen
2 moose use the first summer after a burn, there's a huge
3 amount of regrowth from the root systems of birch and
4 willow, and I've seen moose move into those recent
5 burns and use those heavily in the summertime, and I
6 was wondering if anybody ever looks at that
7 utilization. That has tremendous amount of trophic
8 increase. And so moose seem to really target those new
9 burns for summer use. This strictly is winter
10 utilization, the study.

11
12 MR. SPINDLER: Well, actually she's
13 doing it twice. She's doing it in August and she's
14 doing it in March, so she's doing it twice, for two
15 years. So the August reading will look at what was
16 available, what was browsed up to that point in late
17 August.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But she's targeting
20 any burn, recent or various.....

21
22 MR. SPINDLER: Uh-huh.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:age classes?

25
26 MR. SPINDLER: Yeah, all ages.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay.

29
30 MR. SPINDLER: Yeah, Kanuti is one of
31 the most burned over Refuges in the state, it's about
32 three-quarters burned and we have lots of different age
33 burns that she's targeting.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see. Yeah,
36 that'll answer the question.

37
38 MR. SPINDLER: Plus the collar -- once
39 we delve into the GPS collar data that will show us
40 also. But anecdotally, yeah, you do see moose moving
41 into the burns, but then what was done -- a study by
42 Meyer, and a few other people about 15 years ago,
43 showed that in that area burns that are between 10 and
44 30 years old seem to be ideal for winter moose habitat.
45 IT takes 10 years for it to get high enough to get out
46 of the snow and be enough quantity and then after 30
47 years it grows too tall and it's not available to the
48 moose anymore.

49
50 I'll call your attention to some of the

1 other biological work being done.

2

3 We're doing a vegetation classification
4 survey on several Interior Alaska Refuges. That's
5 being done by our regional inventory and monitoring
6 program. They have chosen Kanuti to use as one of
7 their Interior Refuges for sampling, we're going to be
8 cooperating with them. And that's just to look at some
9 of the areas that we don't get to usually by boat or
10 float plane, it'll be helicopter accessed, and mainly
11 looking at vegetation patterns.

12

13 As you may have heard us report on in
14 the past, the invasive weed problem on the Dalton
15 Highway is something that we're keeping a close eye on.
16 There's two species of invasive weeds, white sweet
17 clover and bird vetch that do have the potential to
18 alter wildlife habitat. I've seen it in other parts of
19 the state where wildlife habitat has been altered by
20 those two weeds. And we are working very closely with
21 cooperators to keep the river crossings that cross the
22 Dalton Highway and then go on to Kanuti Refuge, keep
23 those areas weed-free. So the last week of June and
24 then also the last week of July we have crews go out
25 there and spend, basically a week on their hands and
26 knees, weeding. This is up until the time that BLM
27 might have put all the policy things, requirements in
28 place to actually use herbicides for control, and
29 that's fairly controversial. They're involved in an
30 environmental assessment and public comment at this
31 time for that. I think right now what we're doing with
32 the weeds is we're putting our finger in the dike, kind
33 of just keeping them from spreading on to the Refuge,
34 however, I have to emphasize with all this talk of
35 additional roads to resources, this is a significant
36 problem. And in addition to the concerns that the
37 Council has for caribou and that I have for caribou,
38 when you start building these long roads that transects
39 migration paths you can see that it could disrupt
40 caribou migration, but also just remember along with
41 those roads go all kinds of invasive weeds and other
42 environmental concerns.

43

44 Kanuti, when I started working at
45 Kanuti in 2005 we had one road we were concerned about
46 and that was the Dalton Highway on the east. With this
47 road potentially from Prospect towards Bettles and then
48 towards Ambler we have a road on the north, very likely
49 to happen in the next 10 years, Allakaket has asked
50 permission for converting a winter snowmobile trail

1 from Bettles to Allakaket to a winter transport road
2 for fuel and large construction materials. We're
3 looking at that now and working with the tribe on that
4 issue, but that would mean access road on our west
5 side. And then also in the Ray Mountains, south of
6 Kanuti Refuge is Holinata Creek, it's BLM lands now but
7 currently being looked at very closely by the State of
8 Alaska for a potential RayerEarth Element Mine (ph),
9 it's close enough to the Dalton Highway that accesses,
10 that it's going to be fairly feasible, economically,
11 should they find a promising prospect. So in the span
12 of my short seven years being manager at Kanuti Refuge,
13 I've gone from having concern about one road, to having
14 concern about the entire Refuge being surrounded by
15 roads and to that end I've been involved with a lot of
16 interAgency discussion on corridor protection, wildlife
17 corridor protection and this caribou and road issue is
18 something that I'll be paying very close attention to.

19

20 We're halfway through a water measuring
21 project where every major tributary coming into Kanuti
22 Refuge was gaged with hydrological gages for water
23 quality and quantity and this is to establish baseline
24 flow levels to file for Federal Reserved water rights
25 in the future with the State of Alaska. We're halfway
26 through that project, we found some pretty interesting
27 things. One of the gages is going to be permanently
28 maintained by Fish and Wildlife Service after the six
29 year study is done, and that's the gage at Old Bettles,
30 which is available realtime so you can go on the
31 internet and look at river stage all year long for that
32 one.

33

34 And then, finally, just want to
35 highlight the cooperation that we've had with Tanana
36 Chiefs, on helping them out with the Henshaw Creek Fish
37 Weir and Alyssa later will report on that, but that's a
38 really good example of cooperation between Fish and
39 Wildlife Service and NGOs to get high quality
40 escapement data. And last year we had a record run up
41 Henshaw Creek, about a quarter of a million chum went
42 up there. And when you look at the creek and see the
43 size of it, it's pretty amazing that it supports that
44 many. So, again, that's one of my concerns with all
45 this talk about roads, is that this Road to Resources
46 will go right across the headwaters of Henshaw Creek,
47 and the road from Bettles to Ambler will go right
48 across Henshaw Creek right near where the major
49 spawning area is. So the resource agencies are going
50 to have to pay very close attention to how those

1 projects are implemented.

2

3 I'm going to have Vince talk about a
4 few of the harvest related things and then I'll
5 probably close out with some of the environmental and
6 education and outreach stuff that we've been doing.

7

8 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. Basically I wanted
9 to give you an update on the Federal Subsistence moose
10 hunting. Many of you have been involved in the
11 complexity of Unit 24B regulations. To be honest it
12 still remains quite complex and we're working with the
13 State to reduce that complexity on permits, closure
14 areas, et cetera, et cetera.

15

16 So with that we have one movement
17 forward. In the communities of Allakaket and Alatna,
18 up until recently they had to go to two different
19 vendors, one to get a Federal permit, and go to the
20 State vendor to get the State permit and a hunting
21 license. We now have it just one stop shopping and
22 that's with Mr. Bergman in Allakaket. So that's a step
23 forward. Recent actions by the Federal Board reduced
24 the amount of permits to the south for the winter hunt
25 but we still have a very complex situation. We have a
26 good working relationship with the State on these
27 permits trying to make sure that they do get issued but
28 it is complex for the area.

29

30 I won't go through the seasons there,
31 the closure review went through the seasons. I
32 appreciate OSM with that colored map, it did clear up a
33 lot. Some of you who have been involved earlier it was
34 with hash marks and et cetera and it was really
35 difficult to follow. So we do have that going on.

36

37 Right now we have four outstanding
38 permits for the winter hunt -- I mean not the winter
39 hunt, the fall hunt near Bettles. We're starting a
40 program of three steps, and that falls on my shoulders.
41 Hunters that get the permits get a reminder letter in-
42 season, hey, you got a permit, don't forget to submit,
43 and then 15 days after the season ends, they go, hey,
44 you got a permit where is your harvest report, and then
45 the third step is I give them a phone call, and then
46 after that it's a good chance they may not be issued a
47 permit.

48

49 Now, let me explain why we're doing all
50 that. It's not to get people in trouble. These are

1 hunts that were established either for biological or
2 management reasons and that's why those permits are
3 needed, so the manager, if it's delegated to the Refuge
4 manager or whoever's managing it, has the most current
5 data.

6
7 So you notice that Jack said earlier on
8 one of the hunts, I think Allakaket area, you said that
9 it used to be, I think 15 days to be a successful
10 harvest, and then he said it was 21 days. Why do I
11 bring that up. I think a lot of people do not report
12 their harvest because they didn't get a moose, we need
13 to know that. We need to know they didn't get a moose
14 and they hunted 30 days, two days, four days. Without
15 that data we don't have the gage of harvest as well as
16 participation. So in your communities, please
17 encourage people to reply. If they have concerns about
18 a call, whatever agency it is about reporting, and find
19 out more about it. But the data is critical especially
20 when you go before the Board.

21
22 In full respect to Ron Sam, I think
23 those who were on the Board, or Council I should say,
24 remember his strong speech that he would not go back
25 before the Board of Game with the data in the Upper
26 Koyukuk because he could not defend it, that you need
27 to report and you need to participate. Every time I
28 enter the data into the database I remember Ron
29 standing up, I think it was in Galena here, making that
30 speech. But it is true, without that data the managers
31 are managing in the dark, and it's your dark situation.

32
33 But anyways that's where that's at.

34
35 Working groups.

36
37 Basically part of my duties is to go to
38 the Advisory Committees, so I cover the Koyukuk River,
39 the North Slope Advisory Committee and the Yukon Flats
40 Advisory Committee. So that just gives you an idea of
41 that. I hope to attend the next meeting of the Koyukuk
42 River one, on the 23rd and 24th.

43
44 Part of my duties, and as well as
45 others, is to monitor the fishery proposals, so I do
46 work with the Refuge managers in keeping them informed
47 on fishery proposals. This is both Board of Fisheries
48 and Federal Subsistence Board but then OSM covers that,
49 so I don't need to repeat reports on that. But if you
50 do need to know more about it from maybe a Refuge

1 perspective, give me a call on it.

2

3 And then also I am on the harvest
4 survey committee for the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-
5 Management Council, you don't have a standing there but
6 you can comment on their actions. And so when those
7 things proceed, it'd probably be Tanana Chiefs who will
8 be speaking to you on those actions because they
9 represent your area, and that would be Randy Mayo, as
10 your representative. He's the current chief of Stevens
11 Village. But one that is going through that has high
12 attention is the eligibility guidelines for allowing a
13 village council to allow residents that are not in the
14 close hunting area to come in and hunt ducks. That is
15 pending and hopefully there'll be some direction given
16 on that.

17

18 That's all I have for mine.

19

20 And, again, I want to emphasize if
21 these reports need to be different, please share with
22 us because it is a report from us and if it doesn't
23 work for you we need to know how to make it better.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks Vince. I
26 like this format that Kanuti's developed, sort of
27 bullet points, what the various projects are and I
28 really enjoy reading these. I feel that it's a good
29 format, and so I would give it an A on your report
30 card.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Chair, thanks. And
35 if I could just conclude, we do other outreach and I
36 just want to call your attention to what we're doing
37 there in the village.

38

39 After this meeting I'm going up to
40 Allakaket and a couple other of my Staff members are
41 going to be doing an outreach event, and that's for the
42 village where we have scientific posters available and
43 we just visit with people about the different projects
44 in a little more detail than what I've just described
45 here, and then question and answer, and then our
46 education people spend a whole day in the school doing
47 wildlife activities.

48

49 And then finally in cooperation with
50 Tanana Chiefs and a number of other partners, once the

1 salmon run at Henshaw Creek has wound down we have a
2 science camp there and it's just a phenomenal
3 environment for inspiring high school level kids and
4 middle level kids to be interested in science and in
5 resources and in fisheries. Because fish are right
6 there spawning and going up to the weir. They can
7 stand on the weir and count the fish as they go through
8 and help the biologists sample the fish and learn a lot
9 about fish biology but also resources and sciences and
10 some of the challenges that we face in these resources.

11

12 So those are our outreach activities.

13

14 And then the final thing is the Refuge
15 did start a Facebook page, so any of those that do
16 Facebook you can keep up with what Kanuti's doing on
17 their Facebook page.

18

19 But as long as I have your feedback on
20 this is a good format to report on we'll continue in
21 the future, and if you have any questions our contact
22 is at the bottom of the report and it's on Pages 38
23 through 41 in your book.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council
26 have questions or comments.

27

28 Ray.

29

30 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. In the telemetry
31 project there where you were monitoring moose, you
32 mentioned mortality, were you specifically looking at
33 calf mortality and identifying what the causes of that
34 were, was that part of the study, like collars on
35 calves or something. Because I know when we had to do
36 that in the McGrath area and they found out about 60
37 percent of them were being killed by bears during that
38 first couple years, of course during the rest of the
39 year, you know, wolves they'd play a more major role,
40 especially in the winter when the bears were
41 hibernating, but was that part of your study, looking
42 at what the actual causes of mortality was.

43

44 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Collins, through Mr.
45 Chair.

46

47 They did not do a good calf mortality
48 study there. A very good calf mortality study was done
49 here out of Galena and extending up towards Huslia so
50 it was felt at the time that the results of that study

1 could be extrapolated northward. They did, like I
2 said, just collar short yearlings, and the two measures
3 they're really trying to look at is, you know, how easy
4 it is for hunters to get moose, so they're doing that
5 through the harvest surveys, and the other measure is
6 the recruitment, which is the way you're going to build
7 the population. So those are the two things they're
8 looking at the closest.

9

10 It gives us -- on the non-wolf removal
11 side of the experiment, it gives us some good baseline,
12 and then for the State where they're trying to evaluate
13 the effectiveness of the intensive management, it gives
14 them a good effects reading -- of what the effects
15 were.

16

17 Now, I'll just say anecdotally, I spent
18 15 years flying out of here in Galena doing a lot of
19 different kind of wildlife surveys and I've spent seven
20 years flying out of Bettles and Allakaket doing
21 wildlife surveys up there, I don't see the numbers of
22 black bears in that part of the Koyukuk drainage that I
23 do down here and so I would say if you're going to
24 extrapolate the results of the survey from here, the
25 calf mortality study from here northward, the effect is
26 probably less, if I was to speculate, just based on
27 the, you know, amount of flying I've done looking at
28 the ground for surveys, in the summertime, where we
29 normally see a handful of bears on a day worth of
30 flying, you don't see that up there. There is bear
31 predation for sure, clearly there is. But I would say,
32 anecdotally, it's probably less. And then plus there
33 were the Hu'lani reasons for not -- the State not
34 wanting to deal with bears.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One question. Do
37 you fly the Henshaw and the SouthFork looking at those
38 brown bear numbers at all or there's significant large
39 brown bears that hunt moose calves and adult moose.

40

41 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Chair. Yes we do
42 look at that and we take anecdotal notice, but there's
43 no real organized survey. To do a more organized and
44 statistically rigorous way, there is a way of doing an
45 aerial survey, it helps to be able to collar every bear
46 in a certain area and we don't have the funding to do
47 that. There's another alternative where they put out
48 the bait stations and get DNA samples from hair from
49 the bears and they can extrapolate population levels
50 again, but those are very expensive. So I'd say what

1 we're restricted to now, is just anecdotal
2 observations. And our budget outlook is not very good,
3 we're dealing with a five percent cut this year and
4 likely future cuts again.

5
6 And I see far fewer agency people than
7 used to be at these meetings and that's a direct
8 reflection of the travel restrictions that we're facing
9 and also our ability to do fieldwork is going to be cut
10 back. It's just the political times that we're in.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

13
14 MR. SPINDLER: We're going to keep on
15 trying to do the best we can and focus on the most
16 important things, as best as we can.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
19 from the Council.

20
21 Pollock.

22
23 MR. SIMON: I just have some comments
24 about that moose.

25
26 In recent years we find that moose have
27 about an inch fat on the rump, before we used to see
28 about two inches of fat on the rump. I don't know if
29 that's due to -- the moose is up in the hills in the
30 burned areas eating shrubs or whatever comes out of
31 fire after there was a fire versus the willows -- the
32 river willows. You used to see a lot of moose on the
33 rivers -- better nutrition, I guess maybe because
34 during that time the moose was much fatter.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

37
38 You had a comment, Don.

39
40 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I guess I -- not so
41 much a question as a comment.

42
43 I think that I, personally, have heard
44 a lot about the Henshaw Creek project and I think
45 that's, to me, I mean if TCC or whoever is doing that,
46 these studies, I think that they should -- if you have
47 a quarter of a million chum going into one creek, one
48 tributary on the Koyukuk, that's a major player, and
49 I'd just like to -- is there a sonar or something
50 that's -- how do you know how much fish is going up

1 there?

2

3 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Honea, through
4 the Chair.

5

6 I am not a fish biologist I work
7 closely with them, and maybe this would be best
8 reserved for Alyssa Frothingham when she gives her
9 report. But when I mentioned that number of fish that
10 was a record that we observed this summer. There have
11 been large numbers of chum going up there before, it's
12 not extremely consistent, it's up and down. But it's
13 certainly a valuable resource that I, as a Refuge
14 manager, want to make sure I do everything to protect
15 it from whatever threats we see coming down the road in
16 the future because that spawning stock, as you know, is
17 going to be really important for creating future
18 generations of fish. It's counted by a weir, where
19 they actually swim through a weir and a box and count
20 them there, there's no sonar.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Pollock.

23

24 MR. SIMON: Yeah, moose season opened
25 in the Federal lands and Refuge during winter, bulls
26 only, but there's a catch, there's cooperation lands
27 and private inholdings, checkerboard square so if you
28 follow that little bull moose like I did one time and
29 it crossed over into private lands, I can't shoot it
30 there, I have to shoo it back to Federal lands somehow,
31 it hampered my hunting. And I was just wondering if
32 you could change the laws, the State manages on private
33 land and cooperation lands and the Feds manage on their
34 own lands, so we have dual management. If we had
35 Federal regulations on -- if they could manage on
36 private lands and stuff it would be much easier for us.
37 Because if the season opens, subsistence season opens,
38 and that moose standing on my allotment I can't shoot
39 it unless it's on private land, so we need to -- I
40 don't know, it's kind of mixed up here.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The law is changed
43 and I'll have Mike explain that.

44

45 Go ahead, Mike.

46

47 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Simon, through Mr.
48 Chair.

49

50 That specific problem has been fixed.

1 When we had the Federal only winter bull moose hunts
2 that was a very difficult problem, the land boundaries.
3 There is now a State season, December 15 to April 15,
4 so that is on all State and Native lands and there is a
5 parallel Federal season, December 15 to April 15. I
6 appreciate your frustration with how complex it is with
7 dual management. I think many of us in the room would
8 like to see single management again. But I think your
9 point is well taken, it's complicated, which is more
10 priorities possibly can occur on the Federal lands than
11 the State lands, but there's the whole jurisdiction
12 thing with median high water and ordinary high water
13 levels that even where you think it's Federal land, if
14 it's a moose, it's likely to be in a flood plane, which
15 is in State jurisdiction within Federal land so it's
16 still very complicated and I appreciate your
17 frustration.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But to explain,
20 currently if you get a permit from your license vendor,
21 from Henshaw Creek downriver, it doesn't matter if it's
22 right in your backyard on your private property you can
23 shoot it, if it's a bull from December 15th to April
24 15th, you can shoot it anywhere now. And so that's a
25 regulation that we've had since 2010, December 15th
26 2010. I think that maybe the word's not gotten out,
27 you know, that there is a regulatory change and so the
28 reality is it doesn't matter where the moose stands you
29 can kill a bull anywhere. In your wood yard. It
30 doesn't matter if it's on the State or Federal land,
31 standing in the middle of the river, on the ice, you
32 can shoot it, but you got to have the permit. It's a
33 real long season. It has to be an antlered bull, but
34 -- so there's opportunity to hunt bull moose in Huslia.
35 They had a bulls only hunt April 5 to April 15, they
36 killed four bull moose there and those people that
37 needed that meat were real happy to get those bulls.
38 This year the moose are going to be really fat. The
39 bulls this year are going to be really in good shape in
40 April. And so the State of Alaska would like -- has no
41 opposition to maintaining that hunt so I would like to
42 -- further on in the meeting we'll address submitting a
43 Federal proposal. It has to be two proposals. But I
44 am encouraged that the State of Alaska has no
45 opposition to that winter hunt.

46
47 So I wanted to clarify that.

48
49 You had a comment, Vince.
50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. The December 15th
2 parallel, but working with the State we tell the
3 residents of Allakaket and Alatna to get both the State
4 permit and the Federal permit. The State's
5 interpretation, the last I know, is that the Federal
6 permit -- excuse me -- that you need to have the
7 Federal permit for the Federal lands. And recent
8 Federal Subsistence Board action made that a single
9 permit, August 25th through October 1, and then the
10 December one, so just get both permits and then when
11 you report, figure out where you hunted. So there is
12 still a complexity in these permits and that's where
13 having the permits available at Steven Bergman's
14 eliminates going to two places. So we're still working
15 on that. I'm not saying the State's submitting a
16 proposal, but if they parallel their season -- well, of
17 course, then it'd be open to all.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

20

21 MR. MATHEWS: So there's still some
22 complexity with the fall season, Pollock, so your
23 concern is somewhat valid with the fall season. The
24 winter season it's not, other than it's best to have
25 those two permits.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There is no State
28 season extending from September 25th, so September 26th
29 through the 1st of October there is a Federal lands
30 only, and there is a complexity there. But as far as
31 the winter hunt, it's just one -- it's a fairly large
32 area around Allakaket and Alatna.

33

34 So we've covered these issues as far as
35 we can go. And so I smell this lunch heating up now.

36

37 (Laughter)

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I wanted to
40 welcome, I see some other people coming into the back
41 of the room there. I see Rita. You want to introduce
42 yourself, Rita.

43

44 MS. ST. LOUIS: Thank you. Yes, I'm
45 Rita St. Louis from the Board of Game. (No microphone)

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome. And then
48 we have, you want to introduce yourself.

49

50 MR. WOOLINGTON: I'm Jim Woolington,

1 with Department of Fish and Game, from Dillingham.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome Jim. And so
4 -- and then we have.....
5
6 MS. HERNANDEZ: We want to check in
7 with the phone. So far this morning I have Dan Sharp
8 calling in, LaDonn and Mike from KNA, I've got Marcy
9 Okada, Eric Newland, Trevor Fox, Fred Bue, Jennifer
10 Yuhas, Darryl Vent, Dave Mills, and Travis Olson. If I
11 haven't called your name and you have yet to speak
12 today, please, let us know that you're on the line.
13
14 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard.
15
16 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thanks, Don. Anyone
17 else brand new to the call today.
18
19 (No comments)
20
21 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so we'll
24 take a break and when we come back from lunch in an
25 hour, we'll jump back to the -- we -- go ahead.
26
27 MS. HERNANDEZ: I think after lunch
28 we're going to jump out of order just a little bit,
29 LaDonn, are you still there on the line.
30
31 MS. ROBBINS: Yeah, Melinda, I'm still
32 here.
33
34 MS. HERNANDEZ: I think after lunch
35 we're going to go ahead and have you and Alyssa go
36 ahead and take up your agenda, you know, just for
37 scheduling and I know you're going to have to leave us
38 here tomorrow and we just want to make sure we've got
39 plenty of time.
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.
42
43 MS. HERNANDEZ: So why don't we go
44 ahead and take that up right after lunch, we're going
45 to hear from TCC and KNA, at 1:00 o'clock everybody.
46
47 MS. ROBBINS; All right, thank you.
48
49 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thanks, guys.
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, thank
2 you.
3
4 MS. HERNANDEZ: We're going to go ahead
5 and just put everybody on mute and we'll talk to you
6 guys again at 1:00.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lunch, back at 1:00.
9
10 (Off record)
11
12 (On record)
13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've got TCC and
15 then we got KNA on the phone also, Melinda.
16
17 MS. HERNANDEZ: (Nods affirmatively)
18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Cool. So the
20 Western Interior's back from lunch and we're going to
21 have Alyssa Frothingham for TCC give us discussion, go
22 ahead.
23
24 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Sure. Hi, my name's
25 Alyssa Frothingham. I work for the Tanana Chiefs
26 Conference as their Partners fisheries biologist.
27
28 I just wanted to go over a couple of
29 things. I did have a PowerPoint prepared but my
30 harddrive didn't want to cooperate with me so I
31 apologize about that. So if you have data specific
32 questions I might be able to get back to you all at a
33 later time if that's okay.
34
35 (Council nods affirmatively)
36
37 MS. FROTHINGHAM: So TCC, we recently
38 hosted a fish summit February 19th through the 21st in
39 Fairbanks to discuss issues relating to the decline of
40 chinook salmon. We invited Fish and Game and US Fish
41 and Wildlife Service, YRDFA was also present, as well
42 as AVCP. Over 50 tribal members met.
43
44 Some common themes were the need to
45 conserve salmon and how people should actually go about
46 doing that. Fishing experiences, or lack thereof, from
47 2012 were shared from members up and down the river.
48 Some expressed concern over the six inch mesh
49 restriction because they felt they were capturing more
50 king salmon in these nets than with the 7.5 inch mesh.

1 Also many people had problems with Fish and Game
2 communication last summer. People often did not know
3 when fishing openings were or what gear to actually use
4 and when they did find out it was too late and the
5 openings were too short to actually go fishing.

6
7 Tim Andrews, who is the natural and
8 cultural resource director from AVCP, he attended the
9 meeting and presented on, what someone alluded to
10 earlier, I think possibly, Don, about the InterTribal
11 Fish Commission that's being proposed. TCC and AVCP
12 are considering getting together among other tribal
13 groups, to form some sort of commission to play a
14 bigger role in the resource management. And this is
15 all proposed, I don't have any specific details, but I
16 can see where that could come to confusion on some
17 people's end and I'm still kind of in the dark as to
18 what actually will transpire soon. But that has been
19 proposed. TCC is very interested and poses the
20 question, what's next, when it comes to this tribal
21 fish commission.

22
23 So out of the TCC fish summit, some
24 outcomes. No solid outcomes as far as resolutions go
25 but we did have Gerald Albert and Julia Roberts-Hyslop
26 from Koyukuk and Tanana, they put together a
27 proclamation that will be presented at the TCC
28 Convention next week. In summation, this proclamation
29 would like:

- 30
31 1. The pollock fishery to be held
32 accountable for the bycatch.
33
34 2. To work better, TCC, to work better
35 with agencies such as Fish and Game and Fish and
36 Wildlife Service to find answers for the decline of
37 chinook salmon.

38
39 And members also expressed interest in
40 testifying at the North Pacific Council meetings, as
41 well as dates for these meetings. So one of our next
42 steps is actually to work with, hopefully with Doyon in
43 securing some sort of funding for people to actually
44 fly out and testify at these meetings. So we're hoping
45 to increase awareness and get more information out to
46 our members.

47
48 So as far as the Henshaw Creek Weir
49 goes, I did print out a flier and it's on the back
50 table, I'm not sure if any of you guys had seen it, but

1 it does include numbers. I guess Melinda is checking
2 it out. It includes numbers from this summer as well
3 as summer's past, of chinook and chum escapement for
4 the project. This is our final year of funding from
5 OSM, but we do plan on reapplying for the FRMP call for
6 2014. I'm also trying to get a lot more local interest
7 in Henshaw and Mike Spindler mentioned their outreach
8 project in Allakaket Thursday and Friday of this week,
9 and I hope to -- I will be going, and I'm hoping to get
10 some interest in employment opportunities in Allakaket,
11 Alatna because we do have job openings out at Henshaw
12 Creek Weir.

13

14 So let's see as far as counts go, if
15 you look at the sheet, we had 292,882 chum pass through
16 the weir, and 922,000 chinook salmon passed through the
17 weir. And we were in operation from June 24th to
18 August 4th. We didn't actually see any salmon until
19 about, I think, July 7th, this year.

20

21 And then science camp, we're hoping to
22 have that again this summer. Kanuti Refuge has taken
23 the lead on the project.

24

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can I.....

25

MS. FROTHINGHAM: Go ahead.

26

27

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:back you up.

28

29

MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah, absolutely.

30

31

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When were the

32

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1 think about two weeks to get up to us, so, yeah.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Yeah, that's
4 an interesting thing. I have always -- that's what
5 Benedict Jones, a past Council member here, always
6 said, that the Koyukuk stocks were primarily first
7 pulse chinook and so I'm glad that it's being
8 documented.
9
10 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.
13 Continue.
14
15 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Sure.
16
17
18 MR. J. WALKER: Jack, I got a
19 question.....
20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, James.
22
23 MR. J. WALKER:for her if you
24 don't mind.
25
26 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yes.
27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.
29
30 MR. J. WALKER: When you take these
31 samples are you getting an idea of age and weight of
32 the escapement of the fish?
33
34 MS. FROTHINGHAM: We don't take weight,
35 but we do collect three scales from each chinook salmon
36 and it is sent to Fish and Game and I do have that
37 information on my broken harddrive.
38
39 (Laughter)
40
41 MS. FROTHINGHAM: But, yeah, we do get
42 ages from those as well, so, no weight though.
43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another question I
45 have is the last two years have been utilizing 7.5 inch
46 mesh, did you see larger chinook salmon -- even though
47 you had lower numbers, did you see larger fish than the
48 previous years of 2010 -- '08 through '10?
49
50 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Well, visually we did

1 fish, gosh in the 1,000 millimeter range last year but
2 not this year. I think our biggest was maybe 975 or
3 around there. So it's hard to say. I do think that we
4 have been seeing bigger ones but on the other hand we
5 have been seeing a lot smaller ones, almost the size
6 of, you know, grayling or so, which was, I thought,
7 extremely unusual. So it goes both ways.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you were seeing
10 lots of jacks.....

11
12 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Uh-huh.

13 (Affirmative)

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:what's
16 considered true jacks?

17
18 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One ocean fish.

21
22 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah. A lot smaller
23 than I would consider a jack.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

26
27 MS. FROTHINGHAM: So, yeah.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you see a
30 disproportionately high number of those?

31
32 MS. FROTHINGHAM: No.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hum.

35
36 MS. FROTHINGHAM: No, just a few, but I
37 hadn't seen some that small and that was this past
38 summer.

39
40 Let's see as far as science camp goes,
41 so like I said, Kanuti's going to be -- the people to
42 put it on, we'll be hosting it. Pollock Simon has been
43 one of our elders along with his wife, to teach some
44 local and traditional knowledge. This year we're
45 hoping to add hopefully climate change curriculum;
46 that's been of interest to some people. We'll also be
47 working with Susan Paskvan with the Yukon/Koyukuk
48 School District, and she's done language lessons as
49 well and that was a big hit last summer.

50

1 And then this past fall I think I
2 mentioned this at my last update, we did an Alatna
3 River sheefish collection project, and we had intended
4 on collecting about 200 sheefish from the Alatna River,
5 we ended up only collecting two, due to high water. We
6 made two separate trips. So we were able to secure
7 funding again for this upcoming fall to collect 198
8 plus sheefish to establish some sort of genetic
9 baseline for that Alatna River sheefish population.

10

11 TCC is also in the planning stages with
12 AVCP to put together a survey to gage the assistance
13 needed of fishermen along the river from the changes of
14 -- of gear changes to see if people are actually able
15 to fish, if they have fishing nets, you know, if people
16 need fishing nets and what can we do. So working with
17 the lower group, AVCP, we're hoping to get some
18 funding, but we need to get some sort of information
19 firsthand, so hopefully this survey will do that.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question on that.
22 Is TCC going to be able to prepare to -- if people
23 don't have nets, provide six inch or smaller mesh for
24 this coming season?

25

26 MS. FROTHINGHAM: No.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

29

30 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Nope.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks.

33

34 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Okay. I'll leave it
35 at that.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

38

39 MS. FROTHINGHAM: And then we also,
40 possibly with the Kanuti Refuge, if funding, pending
41 funding, we're hoping to do a collection of chinook
42 salmon on the Southfork to collect some genetics from
43 that stock, which has been notoriously difficult. So
44 whether funding is available, that may happen as well,
45 hopefully with some of our Henshaw crew.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Where would you
48 collect those samples on the Southfork, below the Jim
49 River?

50

1 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Possibly. It's also
2 up in the air, but the Jim River is the desired
3 location.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've been collecting
6 genetic samples for ADF&G on the Jim River for the last
7 three seasons, and I haven't -- this last season I
8 couldn't find a chinook salmon.

9
10 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Hum.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They're a second
13 pulse fish, they don't even arrive until around August
14 5th, would be the earliest that I can even find chinook
15 on the Jim River itself. There are stocks on the
16 Southfork, the mainstem below the Jim River that I
17 don't have access to. So have you delineated where
18 you're going to collect?

19
20 MS. FROTHINGHAM: No. And this was all
21 preliminary. I had sent in a proposal and it was
22 denied because it wasn't, well, it wasn't a Canadian
23 origin fish, which is understandable, but we -- yeah,
24 we haven't looked into it too much, so this is, again,
25 up in the air.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

28
29 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah, and I had heard
30 that you had attempted to collect genetics but had also
31 faced some difficulties.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

34
35 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah. And then the
36 wildlife and parks department is made up of myself and
37 Orville Huntington at TCC and just an update on
38 Orville. He is a member of the Board of Fish Board --
39 Board of Fish Board, so he's been busy with meetings
40 and, yeah, that's about it.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does any Council
43 members have questions for TCC.

44
45 Go ahead, Ray.

46
47 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I was curious, you
48 commented in there that some were saying that the six
49 inch mesh caught more king salmon, can you expand on
50 that, what was their understanding?

1 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Sure. Yeah, we had a
2 member who had just mentioned that they wanted to see
3 more studies actually done on the six inch in
4 comparison to 7.5 inch mesh because in their past
5 experiences they've caught more king salmon with a
6 smaller mesh net, and that's as far as they really
7 described. But Fish and Game was at the meeting and
8 they heard this and they've always said that in their
9 nets they catch a significant amount of chum in
10 comparison to chinook, but this man had a different
11 viewpoint.

12
13 MR. COLLINS: Well, part of the reason
14 for going to smaller is that you do catch those smaller
15 kings that pass through those bigger nets.

16
17 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Right.

18
19 MR. COLLINS: And it's better to
20 utilize those, they don't contribute as much to
21 spawning as the big kings.

22
23 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Right.

24
25 MR. COLLINS: So if they catch smaller,
26 can meet their needs with the smaller ones they're
27 better off.

28
29 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Right.

30
31 MR. COLLINS: So that was my comment.
32 I'm wondering if they understand that, you know,
33 that.....

34
35 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Right.

36
37 MR. COLLINS:it's better to catch
38 those smaller kings. yeah.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When the State did
41 the selectivity study on the Lower Yukon they used 6.5,
42 7 and 7.5 inch net and the highest catch rate was with
43 7.5 and the catch rate dropped at 6.5.

44
45 MR. COLLINS: Uh-huh.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so it had to do
48 with, you know, there's an optimum size so that's why
49 the Board of Fish adopted the 7.5 as the optimum
50 because that caught what was basically present. And

1 so, yeah, if there was -- as Alyssa's showing, a high
2 number of jacks this year, yeah, they probably would
3 have caught more relevance of small jack kings in that
4 small mesh gear.

5
6 And any other questions on TCC's
7 presentation.

8
9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No pretty pictures
13 for us, too bad your harddrive's fried.

14
15 (Laughter)

16
17 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Yeah, I know, thanks.

18
19 (Laughter)

20
21 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. What we can
22 do is I can get that PowerPoint and I can print it out
23 and we can put it in snail mail and email to the
24 Council as well.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

27
28 MS. FROTHINGHAM: Great.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, you don't have
31 access to it at all then.

32
33 MS. FROTHINGHAM: No, I tried.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, bummer. All
36 right. I saw Sidney Huntington come in over here, and
37 Sidney's a much revered person here in Galena.

38
39 You got something to say to us Sidney.

40
41 Sidney.

42
43 MR. MATHEWS: He was wondering if you
44 have anything to say to the Council.

45
46 MR. HUNTINGTON: Well, sure.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Come up to the mic
49 there. Sidney's always got something to say.

50

1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've never seen
4 Sidney not say anything.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: You know I can't
9 reply if you ask me a question because I won't be able
10 to hear you. But I do have something that I could
11 bring up, and I'm not prepared to but I will it anyway.

12

13 Fish and wildlife business has been
14 going on for quite a while now. First under the
15 Federal government, and then State and
16 environmentalists. And really you can't manage the
17 resources under all those circumstances that there is.
18 I just picked up this piece of paper right now called
19 Wood Bison News, that's a great thing to be able to
20 bring resources into the country, or back into the
21 country where they come from, but you can't manage it,
22 there's no use. You can bring them back and manage
23 them, and welfare, all the -- that's part of the
24 resource and the people who claim to be subsistence
25 users, which there's very few of anymore.

26

27 In managing wildlife, I was on the
28 Board of Game for 20 years. We fought a lot of hard
29 battles for what we got. I spent eight days
30 contradicting the Board of Game because I wanted to
31 start the controlled use area in the Paradise,
32 controlled use area in the lower part of the Yukon,
33 eight days and finally they gave up with me, I was the
34 only Indian on the Board, the only one that really
35 represented the people of Alaska. And they said we're
36 going to give up because what passes in here, and you
37 won't be there the next year and we'll vote it out, but
38 it's been there for 40 years now and it's doing good,
39 taking all the way from 150 to 300 moose on the Koyukuk
40 Controlled Use Area. And right now one of the biggest
41 most moose in the country is right down there in the
42 Paradise Controlled Area, so those things are common
43 sense. They're taking moose right -- moose out of the
44 Koyukuk Controlled Use, took 60 moose out, finally they
45 got tired of it, and the next thing they do is they
46 took an airplane up and down there on pontoons, fixed
47 that up and -- and then Donald Stickman was -- they
48 landed in the lake on the big long lake in ThreeDay
49 Slough and landing, the water was oozing up through the
50 top of the pontoons and Donald said, hey, there there's

1 something wrong, go now, there's no (indiscernible) the
2 plane to take off. So that was the background of what
3 I was saying. We either enforce the law or else we're
4 going to lose people, because people going to be
5 (indiscernible) and that's what could have been done.

6
7 All we asked for is controlled use area
8 to the point where you, or anybody else could go in
9 there under the same circumstances as I do, and that's
10 what it is doing now.

11
12 How many years now they've been trying
13 to break that controlled use area. Hunters, of course,
14 have planes (indiscernible). But I was talking with a
15 fellow this last fall about how much damage you guys
16 might guess -- that they -- but another good thing if
17 we could all get moose, yes, and that's when I made the
18 -- we made the law, that they just have a guide took
19 out a bunch of hunters and hunted, bring back the moose
20 meat first then bring the horns. Well, I haven't
21 killed a moose for over 50 years, but I get my moose
22 every year because the guides bring it back in.

23
24 So use your common sense, you know,
25 when you bring this wood bison in, how much does
26 anybody know about what predator will do or who the
27 predator will be. Right now we're blaming the moose,
28 the wolves for a lot of things and we had a lot of
29 crime in that respect but many, many stories about the
30 damage that was done historically by wolves on the
31 Kobuk, where they told me and things like that, there's
32 a lot of things that we don't know.

33
34 Years ago I was up in the Hog River and
35 Ronny Sheldon came over to visit me but I told him I
36 got to go down and get some dog feed tomorrow, I had 10
37 dogs, no, he said, we'll go out the lake here a little
38 ways, up the river here a little ways, he said Clear
39 Creek is a big grayling stream, lots of pike around
40 here, I told him, hell, there's no water nowhere, I
41 know why, so we went up there the next day and dropped
42 a little hole in it, he pulled out 50 pike because they
43 know, the real subsistence users, people on the Koyukuk
44 didn't know that, they did because that's how they
45 historically used to live, subsistence users. Right
46 now you don't have no subsistence users. The culture
47 has changed, to what, the new nation of the Federal
48 government. 1,400,000 people on welfare in America,
49 ruined the country. And we're going out there and
50 trying to manage and maintain a wildlife resource. In

1 1929 they took a census on the Koyukuk and low and
2 behold there was less than 31,000 Eskimo Indians in
3 Alaska, now you have 100,000 Native people in Alaska,
4 over 20,000 right in Anchorage alone. There's no way
5 that this country can supply as food to all those
6 people, or Indians in Alaska. They couldn't do it in
7 the early days because the country is not adapted to
8 that. We can only raise so much game, because only so
9 much game could feed off of the (indiscernible) that
10 grow up in the country but we can't feed them, and we
11 keep harvesting, and overharvesting or not harvesting
12 at all and some of the resource is gone. There's no
13 minks no more, that's how we used to live, there's very
14 few muskrats, if any, anymore, that's how we lived.
15 They've eaten themselves out of house and home so
16 there's nothing there for them no more. It's changed.
17 We had a change of (indiscernible) the resources before
18 the people. How do you do through the media, the
19 Federal government and the State of Alaska, I don't
20 know, they contradict one another. They're claiming
21 that we overharvested the fish, sure we overharvested
22 the fish. Years ago, 1920, I was down in Anvik, I'm a
23 kid, five years old and I used to help those Indians
24 put the dog salmon, thousands and thousands of fish on
25 the rack, a little island across the river, just white
26 with sun-dried dog salmon, king salmon were across
27 (indiscernible) Bay, they'd bury them and dig them up
28 in the winter and eat them, raw, nobody fishes dog
29 salmon no more, why should you fish dog salmon when you
30 can live on welfare stamps and potato chips; they don't
31 need that no more. King salmon were very, very few
32 harvested them. Lena Paul had the first fish net down
33 there in Bishop Mountain, made by two balls and king
34 salmon net, number 12 net, and less than 50 feet long,
35 that was the first king salmon net and she was a young
36 girl then. And then they started harvesting a few, not
37 many. My wife's father and mother stayed across
38 Koyukuk while they're drifting and getting all kinds of
39 fish, they spent a whole summer there and all they got
40 was 100 pound gunnysack full of back bones and fish,
41 that's all the king salmon they caught. So people say
42 how they used to have them, they didn't, they didn't
43 have the materials or know how. Along come the big old
44 fish nets, pretty soon we're not deep enough, one net
45 put down there below Koyukuk 300 feet long, 30 feet
46 deep, they had to cut the nets in half in order to save
47 the boat from sinking so many king salmon.

48

49 We abused ourselves what there was, now
50 there's no more big king salmon, little bitty ones

1 coming up, that's all we're going to get for a long
2 time. There's no way that the king salmon could supply
3 the demand for subsistence and other users. But they
4 don't care. Greed is what they -- right now they're
5 trying to destroy Bristol Bay by putting in a gold
6 mine, foreigners putting in a gold mine to destroy one
7 of the largest, most profitable fish streams in the
8 world, and that will be destroyed when they put it in.
9 Who will feed those people or give them jobs after
10 that's gone. It's up to us to make those laws and
11 regulations to stop that stuff. That's your job.
12 Because we'll lose, we'll lose. The way of life will
13 change, we use less of it but we know more now how to
14 maintain it and keep the resources we have with just a
15 little common sense. The people that makes the most
16 money off of fish and wildlife and the people that
17 contradict good management resources and sometimes
18 they're contradicting predator control, they make
19 millions off of it. While people are barely keeping
20 their heads above water to go out there and try to
21 manage the resource.

22

23 I can keep talking all day but I'm
24 going to stop and let you get back to your meeting.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks a lot Sidney.

29

30 (Applause)

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When Sidney walks in
33 the room we stop the meeting to hear comments.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sidney's always got
38 a long-term perspective and lots of good things to say
39 and so this Council always has an open ear to hear what
40 Sidney, and the local people have to say here.

41

42 Appreciate your comments Sidney.

43

44 So we're down to KNA on the phone
45 there. You there, Mike or.....

46

47 MS. HERNANDEZ: LaDonn.

48

49 MS. ROBBINS: Yeah, I'm still here.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It's time for
2 your presentation, go ahead.

3
4 MS. ROBBINS: Yeah, sorry, I don't have
5 any pretty pictures either. I did get a handout to
6 Melinda and I think she was going to print it off so
7 you guys have it there in front of you.

8
9 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yellow folder,
10 righthand side, folks, the KNA, it should be the last
11 document righthand side, and there's copies on the
12 public table as well.

13
14 (Pause)

15
16 MS. HERNANDEZ: All right, go ahead,
17 LaDonn.

18
19 MS. ROBBINS: Thanks. So I'm not going
20 to go through everything on here because you guys can
21 read it for yourselves and a lot of it what Mike
22 touched on at the fall meeting. Very similar. I just
23 want to go over what we have coming up for this next
24 year.

25
26 And so far the biggest new thing that
27 we have is Mike Talhauser, this is his last week
28 working for KNA. So we're real excited for him, he got
29 a position with Fish and Game, working as the assistant
30 area manager for Prince William Sound sportfisheries.
31 So we're excited about that. And we have a new
32 director, we haven't announced it yet, but as soon as
33 we do I'll get an email sent to all of you so you know
34 it's going to be but he won't be starting until May.
35 So if anybody has any questions of KNA in the next few
36 months they can contact me.

37
38 So I guess last year we had George and
39 the Tatlawiksuk River weirs and those operated
40 successfully and we hope to -- we will have them
41 operating again this year, we hope the high water
42 levels -- water aren't too high this next year so that
43 things go as planned.

44
45 We've already started preplanning with
46 Fish and Game and we're going to start looking to hire
47 technicians starting in mid-April. So if anyone's
48 looking for summer work we'll be hiring for that mid-
49 April to mid-May. And those operations will begin
50 again June 15th and they'll last until the end of

1 September.

2

3 And this next year we'll also have the
4 Salmon River Weir operating up above the Salmon River
5 above Aniak, the Aniak River. We're also hiring for
6 that position.

7

8 And then our bering cisco project, we
9 will be putting out tags again this year. Last year we
10 weren't able to get very many tags out around the Aniak
11 area, mid-river area, so we're hoping to get more tags
12 out in this area this year, and the same amount
13 hopefully up near Nikolai again.

14

15 We're also planning on doing a habitat
16 survey starting up in Rhone and doing a float trip down
17 to Nikolai from Rhone and doing habitat survey along
18 the way to get an idea of where those bering cisco are
19 spawning and what it looks like up there for them and
20 we have that going on, hopefully late September, early
21 October is what we're looking at now but not for sure
22 yet.

23

24 And then we will be having our high
25 school internship program again this next year. Last
26 year we had 20 students that applied, and only 14 were
27 able to come because as you guys know the summertime it
28 gets pretty busy, things start to pick up for the kids
29 or they get summer jobs so we have a few people that
30 can't come. But last year was a good success and we
31 had a great intern coordinator and we're looking
32 forward to another successful year. But if any of you
33 know any high school students, 14 to 19 that might be
34 interested in our internship, take a look at the
35 website, I have the link there or you guys can send me
36 an email, my information is at the end of this handout.

37

38 And then our college internship, I'm
39 going to be putting out a call for people to start
40 applying in mid-March so in a few weeks here and that's
41 going to close April 19th, so I'm looking for two or
42 three college interns for this next year. And I've
43 already started planning some of the things for them
44 and we'll get them out on the weir projects and
45 telemetry projects again this year. And last year it
46 worked out really well, we actually had four college
47 interns and they did an excellent job and I think a few
48 of them might be returning this next year.

49

50 And then fisheries science in the

1 schools, I've still been working with the curriculum
2 director on getting our curriculum up to par and
3 getting it posted on the website so that people have
4 better access to it. That's one of our big things this
5 winter is trying to get more up on the website so
6 people can see what's going on and have access to our
7 curriculum as far as the school stuff goes.

8
9 And the salmon incubation project, the
10 salmon tanks, those have been going really, really
11 well. There's four operating, two in Kalskag -- or one
12 in Kalskag, one in Lower Kalskag, one in Crooked Creek
13 and one in Sleetmute, and the eggs have hatched and the
14 kids have been watching them and have gotten a few
15 pictures of the kids with the salmon eggs and the small
16 fish. So it's been really good and the teachers have
17 really been able to use the tanks to enhance their
18 lesson.

19
20 And then I guess the last thing I kind
21 of have here is our post-season subsistence surveys
22 were completed successfully for Aniak and now the data
23 is being put in for those and analyzed and we should
24 get it back -- we should be getting the results within
25 the next few months for those.

26
27 I think that's all I have.

28
29 Does anybody have any questions.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council
32 members have questions for KNA's presentation.

33
34
35 (No comments)

36
37 MR. TALHAUSER: Mr. Chair. Mike
38 Talhauser.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hi Mike.

41
42 MR. TALHAUSER: Yeah, I just kind of
43 wanted to in my last week here, just to thank you guys.
44 I don't know if it was -- it was about six years ago or
45 so but my first day on the job was actually at the
46 Western Interior meeting in Galena and so it's kind of
47 fitting that my last week is in there, and I wish I
48 could have made it down, but, anyway, I just wanted to
49 thank you guys for being such a thoughtful group and
50 for all the work and time you guys put into this and,

1 you know, I've really gotten a lot out of working with
2 this Council specifically and I think it's taught me a
3 lot about what our job's supposed to be out here.

4

5 So I just wanted to thank you guys.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate all your
8 hard work that you've done with KNA and really
9 developed a lot of different, very beneficial programs
10 partnering with the various agencies, and I hope that
11 you were instrumental in the hiring process for the new
12 director also, and I wish you well in your new position
13 with ADF&G.

14

15 James Walker had a.....

16

17 MR. J. WALKER: No, Ray answered it.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Ray's answered
20 the question.

21

22 MR. J. WALKER: Yes.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other
25 questions or comments from the Council on KNA's
26 projects.

27

28 Don, go ahead.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Am I
31 speaking to Mike, who am I speaking to?

32

33 MS. ROBBINS: Yes, we're both here.

34

35 MR. HONEA: Okay. Okay, I guess at our
36 -- either Mike or LaDonn, at our Holy Cross meeting I
37 had expressed an interest in some studies to do with
38 like particularly in our region about, I believe it was
39 pike studies or something. And so I think Karen -- I'm
40 kind of drawing a blank as to her last name, but about
41 a week ago she sent me an email about that and I was
42 just wondering. Because this is not a KNA region and,
43 you know, we are with TCC, so I was just wondering if
44 there was still an application or whatever to put in to
45 do some of these studies on a local basis and maybe,
46 Mike, you know what I'm talking about, or maybe not,
47 but this was brought up at our Holy Cross meeting.

48

49 Thank you.

50

1 MR. TALHAUSER: Yeah, through the
2 Chair. I do recall that and I think that one, that's
3 when we sort of talked about the fact that it is, as
4 far as I know, TCC's sort of jurisdiction with projects
5 and things like that and it might be logistically
6 easier for them to do a project on the Yukon. It would
7 be -- unless -- and there are, I guess instances, where
8 we've worked in the TCC area but it's usually on the
9 Kuskokwim, like the bering cisco project in Nikolai is
10 actually more in the TCC area but it's logistically a
11 lot easier for us to get to so maybe Alyssa could talk
12 to that a little bit. And, if, for some reason it is
13 one of those things where we could help out, we do
14 provide, you know, technical assistance to villages
15 that want more information or want help putting
16 together a proposal, so if it's something that TCC
17 can't work on or that we could do kind of
18 collaboratively because I know the pike issue is
19 something that deals with residents from our area so it
20 wouldn't be too far-fetched. But it's something --
21 maybe you could talk to Alyssa about and then followup
22 with LaDonn, too, if it would entail something with us
23 and we'd be glad to at least help with say a proposal.
24 And right now they're still accepting, I think, FRMP
25 proposals, until the middle of March.

26

27 MS. ROBBINS: Beginning of April.

28

29 MR. TALHAUSER: Oh, beginning of April.
30 And so that's something that, yeah, maybe while you've
31 got Alyssa there in the room, bend her ear and she can
32 follow up with LaDonn, and if it's something that we
33 can put together that'd be great. Because it is
34 obviously something that there's mixed feelings on and
35 involves a lot of different stakeholders.

36

37 So does that answer your question?

38

39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, it kind of did. But
40 I would like to know without having to go through the
41 channels of TCC, maybe they're busy on other projects
42 or something, that we can, as a village, or whatever,
43 just submit to the funding source to fill out an
44 application for this.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What would you
47 like.....

48

49 MR. TALHAUSER: Yeah, and maybe someone
50 at your -- at the TC, the traditional council there,

1 can send Alyssa and LaDonn some sort of email talking
2 about what they want to investigate and what they, at
3 least, in general terms. like what they want to look
4 into and then that's something that LaDonn could look
5 into what kind of study you would do in a situation
6 like that. You know, it depends if you're trying to
7 find out where they're going, I think they actually did
8 some radio telemetry work on the pike sort of in the
9 area, but it's something she could read up on some old
10 papers on that and maybe try to help put together a
11 proposal that would be more attractive to OSM.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you requesting
14 information for pike fisheries in the GASH area, is
15 that specific, or are you talking about all the way up
16 the Yukon on pike fisheries?

17
18 MR. HONEA: Well, Mr. Chair, actually
19 at our meeting they suggested funding and I said I
20 would be interested that on a local scenario, right in
21 the village of Ruby, so that. So I guess I could just
22 go ahead and with the information I have on my -- to go
23 ahead and do it at that.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question for the
26 Council is, do you have concerns about the pike
27 numbers, too many, not enough around Ruby, or what's
28 your concerns? I'm missing something here.

29
30 MR. HONEA: Okay. Well.....

31
32 MR. TALHAUSER: Mr. Chair. What.....

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don's going to
35 comment and then I'll take the call -- go ahead, Don.

36
37 MR. HONEA: Well, actually I have no
38 concern with this, all I'm doing -- every time we do
39 that, if there's funding out there, I'm just trying to
40 employment for my village and for every other village
41 that wants it. If there's funding for that particular
42 study then, hey, just like the weir, or Henshaw, or
43 anything where they have funding.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

46
47 MR. HONEA: I say let's go out and try
48 to secure that, and that's all.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

1 MR. HONEA: So I'm just going to do
2 that on a personal basis.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see. The person
5 on the call there, was that you, Mike.

6
7 MR. TALHAUSER: Yeah. The one thing I
8 do recall coming up at the meeting in Holy Cross is
9 actually the issue, and I think -- I can't remember
10 exactly where the Council landed, I think they went --
11 they supported a proposal to limit pike right in the
12 Piamuit area and so kind of in the, you know, Holy
13 Cross, and that sort of area, but there was a specific
14 area where people did a lot of pike fishing right in
15 front of Piamuit, the village of Piamuit, you know,
16 right across the divide here between the Kuskokwim and
17 the Yukon, and that was sort of a concern of folks from
18 18 or anywhere really on the Kuskokwim that are going
19 over and participating in the winter moose hunt that
20 they have there, and then stopping in and catching
21 quite a few pike and leaving with, you know, a sled
22 loads of pike, and so I think I remember the Council
23 supporting that. I don't know how that ended up at the
24 Board, but I think that's kind of what the context was
25 at that meeting and it's something that if -- I would
26 say if that's the concern, because I remember there
27 also being a woman that came out at public testimony
28 and mentioned something about she was concerned that
29 there were too many pike, and so, you know, there could
30 be something that one of the villages around there
31 could maybe hire some technicians to head down to the
32 area where people are fishing and do some sort of krill
33 survey or something like that just to get an idea of
34 what sort of -- how many fish are actually getting
35 pulled out of there.

36
37 But other than that, yeah, that's just
38 kind of my memory of it.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mike. The
41 Board of Fish and Federal Subsistence Board failed
42 those pike bag limit restrictions. And so that's been
43 voiced at this meeting earlier, Robert Walker was
44 voicing concerns about the sled loads of fish going
45 out.

46
47 I do think that it would be worthwhile
48 for TCC and AVCP to develop a dialogue about the
49 conflict on this area. So I would like TCC to work
50 with AVCP and KNA to develop more of a -- what the

1 baseline biology is and so at our next meeting in the
2 fall, I would like to have further dialogue on this
3 issue.

4

5 Melinda, you got a comment.

6

7 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Mr. Chair, and
8 Don Honea. We are taking up the FRMP funding
9 opportunity a little later on today so what you folks
10 were discussing in Holy Cross, we're still -- we do
11 still have that on the agenda for later on in the
12 meeting. You're going to have your fisheries biologist
13 Mr. Don Rivard on the line, and we can also have Karen
14 on there as well.

15

16 I did see that email come through, Don,
17 but it was so frantic before I left I really didn't
18 have time to read it so we can definitely retouch this
19 issue when it comes up later on in the agenda. We'll
20 make sure all parties are present, and hopefully LaDonn
21 and maybe if Alyssa's still going to be here we can
22 discuss this further when FRMP comes up in the agenda
23 later on.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we'll be
26 talking about those resource monitoring issues a little
27 bit later also.

28

29 So at this point does anybody else have
30 questions for KNA.

31

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I appreciate your
36 on line there, Mike and LaDonn, and look forward to
37 working with the new director in the future.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 MS. ROBBINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42

43 MR. TALHAUSER: Mr. Chair, thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll continue on
46 in the agenda here. We went -- is there any more -- we
47 don't have any more on those on line comments, we're
48 going to go back to the agenda. We covered Kanuti
49 National Wildlife Refuge and so is Innoko on line. I
50 show Innoko as next on the list.

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do we have anyone from
2 Innoko on the teleconference line at this time?

3

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. We did hear
8 -- originally, a few weeks out, Bo Sloan was supposed
9 to join us, and he was unable to come and we thought
10 that Jerry and another person were coming, they also
11 cancelled travel today but we'll definitely find out if
12 someone can get on the line at some point and provide
13 that presentation.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I got some
16 questions on the winter moose hunt down there that
17 occurred in 21E. So you can give them a call and we'll
18 take them up a little bit later in our agenda so we'll
19 put them on hold.

20

21 So we're at Koyukuk/Nowitna. So we're
22 in Galena, so we'll have Koyukuk/Nowitna come on up.

23

24 MR. MOOS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
25 the record my name's Kenton Moos I'm the Refuge manager
26 here in Galena. And along with me I got actually quite
27 a number of Staff. But before I turn it over to them
28 for some briefings, Brad's got a pretty extensive and
29 comprehensive summary of our biological program, and
30 then Jeremy's got some things to share as well.

31

32 But before I get to that I know one
33 topic that often comes up is our March moose hunts.

34

35 This year, again, just real briefly,
36 there's three areas that we consider for our March
37 moose hunt, this year all three we are not allowing a
38 March moose hunt, that's in 21B, the Nowitna, 21D as in
39 David for basically up river here from Galena and
40 north, and then 24D, which is up between Huslia and
41 Hughes. In the past few years we have not allowed any
42 harvest, winter harvest in 21D or B. We have in 24D.
43 As Brad is going to share with you, our trend counts
44 this past year, we did not have favorable weather,
45 however, we did continue with them, and we do have some
46 concerns. Last year we did as well so we did not allow
47 a March hunt, but we did open up a bulls only hunt in
48 April. This year I anticipate doing the same in April.
49 I'm going to be talking with representatives from
50 Huslia, Hughes, Jack obviously is the representative

1 for the RAC as well as the Koyukuk River AC, and then I
2 also -- Brad and Boomer have just completed some
3 further surveys up there just to see how things are
4 going.

5
6 So if anybody has any questions
7 regarding that I'm here for that, otherwise I'm going
8 to turn it over to them so they have more time for
9 their presentations.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,
12 Kenton.

13
14 Go ahead, Brad.

15
16 (Pause - setting up)

17
18 MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman. Members of
19 the Council. Members of the Public. For the record,
20 my name is Brad Scotton. I'm the lead wildlife
21 biologist here at Koyukuk/Nowitna, Northern Innoko
22 National Wildlife Refuge.

23
24 And I'd like to say first -- I guess
25 I'll back up just a little bit to Innoko Refuge because
26 their biologist, Jerry Hill, called me this morning,
27 and asked me to provide a little bit of information to
28 you and if you still want to get him on the line later
29 that would probably work. He did want to express his
30 remorse, I guess, over not being able to get here.
31 They had weather issues with flying over in the 185,
32 weren't able to get here to do an update and he and Bo
33 Sloan, the Refuge manager, had planned on coming.

34
35 He wanted me to let you know, this is
36 hot off the press, is Bo Sloan accepted a position at
37 Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. So he's going to be
38 moving from McGrath to Kodiak this spring. So they'll
39 be on the hunt for different management for McGrath.
40 Jerry Hill is now officially their lead biologist down
41 there and he's been working very hard to get a more
42 active biological program. And to that end, in your
43 packet, I believe, he did put in a written report that
44 shows the fall moose surveys that they conducted on the
45 Refuge down there, and the results from that, which
46 were fairly encouraging with decent calf/cow ratios and
47 similar numbers to the previous year. They also
48 planned a moose population estimate, a GSPE estimate
49 Refuge wide for this spring. And I can tell you, since
50 we helped them with it, that they completed that last

1 week, so for the first time ever they're going to have
2 a population estimate for the Refuge and pretty solid
3 moose data to talk to you folks about when you're
4 deliberating on proposals or things. I can't -- the
5 results aren't in, they just finished it, but I can
6 tell you it was completed and everybody's pretty happy
7 about that.

8

9 So that's really all I have. I can't
10 talk about their hunt or any of their other things.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

13

14 MR. SCOTTON: But.....

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I would like
17 to get back with Jerry -- get him on the phone or
18 something, and we want -- I would like to know what
19 this winter moose hunt, whether they executed the new
20 C&T south of the Piamuit Slough and whether they took
21 the eight moose, and that kind of thing. So if he can
22 get back on the phone with you, if you're going to be
23 speaking for Innoko then -- oh, Merben.

24

25 MR. CEBRIAN: Mr. Chair. Yeah, I got a
26 phone call from Jerry so I can update you on that.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We might as
29 well do that now -- let's do that now since you're
30 going to speak for Innoko also.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Word of mouth. And
35 so we want to cover -- if we're going to touch on
36 Innoko, their stuff is -- their presentation is on Page
37 42 of our packet here, but I did want to know about
38 that winter hunt and how that was accomplished.

39

40 Go ahead, Merben.

41

42

43 MR. CEBRIAN: Mr. Chair. For the
44 record, my name is Merben Cebrian, wildlife biologist
45 BLM.

46

47 According to Jerry, there were 13
48 permits issued for the Piamuit Slough area. Three were
49 harvested, three bulls. 33 permits were issued in the
50 GASH area and three harvests; one male, one female, and

1 one unknown as of this time. They don't anticipate a
2 significant increase of harvests from today. And a
3 more accurate report will be provided in the fall
4 meeting.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

7

8 MR. CEBRIAN: Those were the numbers
9 that I got this morning.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, well, that's
12 very interesting because this is the first year that
13 the winter hunt has been executed with the new
14 customary and traditional use area and I'm actually a
15 little bit surprised at the low number of participation
16 from Aniak, Chuathbaluk, upper and lower Kalskag, and
17 only three -- and they harvested three bulls, you said?

18

19 MR. CEBRIAN: Yes. And the BLM went
20 down to issue permits in Aniak. I think Mike Talhauser
21 has the rest of the permits for those who want more
22 permits until the closure, which is on the 15th.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh, okay, good.
25 Thanks a lot Merben, that's the numbers I wanted to
26 have.

27

28 And so I guess the Council can look
29 over Innoko's presentation here, written presentation,
30 and if you have any additional questions we can take
31 those up and transmit back to Innoko on any further
32 questions. But we're on Koyukuk/Nowitna, and Brad was
33 just kind of filling in for Innoko.

34

35 Go ahead, Brad.

36

37 MR. SCOTTON: Okay. Well, I did offer
38 to fill in so I could take all of his time as well.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 MR. SCOTTON: But I always plan these
43 presentations because there's different levels of
44 interest and different topics in any given year
45 depending on proposals that are before you and where
46 the meeting's being held. I do like to take the
47 opportunity to give a little bit of a local update for
48 the people that are interested in our particular area
49 but I fully realize that folks from McGrath and Holy
50 Cross may not be as interested so if I get too long-

1 winded, have me move on and I'll -- and if there's more
2 specific questions -- I'm going to give more of an
3 overview and then if there's more in-depth things I do
4 have additional slides, so I can talk about it. But I
5 don't want to take a ton of time, and I do really
6 appreciate the opportunity to be here earlier in the
7 meeting. Sometimes our Refuge presentations are right
8 at the end and everybody's kind of ready to get on the
9 flights home and I think this is a little better for
10 purposes of discussion so I do appreciate that.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

13

14 MR. SCOTTON: Just so everybody knows I
15 am just one -- our biological staff, is one of the
16 programs that's at the Refuge, and every Refuge has
17 multiple programs including subsistence management,
18 which Jeremy, who you've dealt with, is kind of in
19 charge of, and he may give you a brief update on a few
20 things they did with hunter education and things. We
21 also have an outreach and education program and a fire
22 management program. I'm only going to talk about
23 number 1 here.

24

25 And along those lines I'll show my bias
26 a little bit in terms of what I think you want to hear.
27 We have an active inventory monitoring program that
28 covers multiple species over all three of our Refuges
29 in the complex, everything from moose to passerine
30 birds and water fowl and water quality and habitat and
31 a new fisheries program we have going. This talk will
32 be heavy on moose and then we'll probably talk about
33 moose some more and then maybe some moose.....

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 MR. SCOTTON:and then at one
38 point I do mention caribou and beaver and some other
39 things, but if you're interested in some of these other
40 surveys I have that data as well but I won't do -- I
41 can carry on for at least an hour so I won't do that to
42 you today.

43

44 The colors on this projector are really
45 interesting and not what I planned, but where's Don,
46 Mr. Honea. I started with Nowitna this time because
47 people have talked to me in the past that I tend to put
48 that later in the program or not talk about it as much
49 so I put them up front, and I'll cover more of this
50 later, but this is an example of a GSPE survey, of a

1 large scale population estimate for moose and this
2 covers all of Unit 21B, it was done a few years ago, I
3 think 2008 on the Nowitna to produce an estimate. And
4 that is a periodic check on the overall population and
5 what we're doing.

6

7 And in the middle of that you see a
8 high density block of units, which, again, is the same
9 one seen on the right there, and that is the Lower
10 Nowitna River corridor where we do trend surveys. And
11 I'll talk about trend surveys more in the talk later.
12 But that's an area that we survey every single year and
13 it's divided up into these square blocks and we count
14 those every year. And then on the left here are the
15 data that come out of that.

16

17 So this is data from 2001 through 2012,
18 and this line is adult cow moose that are counted in
19 this trend count area, which is roughly 40 units. And
20 what I want you to focus on is that line. And it
21 essentially shows you that for the last 10 years we've
22 counted the moose in that area every year and that
23 adult cow population is pretty stable, and it's been
24 that way for quite awhile. The overall population on
25 the Nowitna is stab -- we think it's stable at a
26 relatively low density. This happens to be the highest
27 density part of it on the lower river and where most of
28 the hunting occurs, that's where we focus our counts.
29 And what we saw this year was a bull/cow ratio of 29
30 per 100, which is right in there near 30 where the
31 management objective is. A yearling bull/cow ratio of
32 8 per 100, which indicates pretty good recruitment into
33 the adult population so we were happy with that.
34 Calf/cow ratio there was 21 per 100 this fall, which is
35 a little lower than average but still not too bad. And
36 just as an example this bottom graph, the blue line is
37 the calf/cow ratio in each of the years we've surveyed
38 it. And if you look at this number, in 2001 we had 20
39 per 100, which is kind of low but not terrible. 2009
40 it was like six per 100, it was the worst year ever.
41 So you see these -- the data really show these periodic
42 bad years, essentially in recruitment. And, you know,
43 this year is the last point on the line there, around
44 20, and kind of in the average range, not great but not
45 poor.

46

47 So the combination of these two surveys
48 and the kind of data we get every year is really what
49 we focus on to sort of keep a check on the moose
50 population. So that's sort of what's going on on the

1 lower Nowitna right now, and I don't know if Mr. Honea,
2 you have any specific questions now or I'll just carry
3 on into some other topics.

4
5

6 (No comments)

7
8

9 MR. SCOTTON: Okay, great. A little
10 bit more on the Nowitna. This is the harvest data,
11 which, by all rights Jeremy should probably be showing
12 you, but it comes from the checkstation on the Nowi.
13 The top line is the number of moose hunters, and I
14 realize it's hard to read the numbers, but over the
15 years all the way back to '88, so there's over 20 years
16 of data here, until now, we've sort of seen a periodic
17 changing in numbers but a general declining trend in
18 hunter numbers going to the Nowitna through the
19 checkstation, and the lower line is the harvest, which,
20 you know, high years we saw 56 moose come through the
21 checkstation, and low years, I think this last year was
22 one of the lowest, 28 harvested. But that's partly a
23 reflection of the number of hunters that show up, so 82
24 hunters took 26 moose.

25

26 So that's the most recent data from the
27 Nowitna.

28

29 Okay. I changed things up and I'll
30 switch away from moose, specifically right now, and
31 I've talked about this at other meetings in the past
32 and it's been kind of a recent topic, it came up at AC
33 meetings, about winter severity and how we looked at
34 that or how we measure it. And everybody knows we have
35 weather stations at villages, but a few years ago, we
36 installed some snow marker stations on the Refuge in
37 moose habitat, specifically to look once a month at
38 snow depth over winter range so we'd get, not just
39 qualitative data, of, oh, it seemed like a really
40 severe winter to actual measurements of snow depths out
41 there in the field, and we do those 1st of December,
42 1st of January, the 1st of every month basically until
43 the 1st of May, and it gives us an indication. So we
44 have 12 of those. here's three on the Kaiyuh in the
45 lower left, five on the Koyukuk, and three over on the
46 Nowitna, and those are spread out there. I just put
47 map to show you. That's physically what they look
48 like. They can be seen from an airplane, fly over low
49 and slow and you look at the snow depth against those
50 colored panels, which are black and orange, and you
51 write down where the snow is relative to the positions

1 there, and that data is shared with the statewide
2 database, they do these all over the state.

3

4 So that's what it is.

5

6 And here's just a quick and dirty look
7 since we started this in the winter of '04/05, snow
8 depths that you'll see here. And I think I put a magic
9 line in here. 30 inches has sort of traditionally been
10 used as a snow depth where at least calf moose start to
11 suffer a little bit, their bellies are dragging and not
12 doing as well. That would be generally considered a
13 severe winter. Since we started this, '04/05 turned
14 out to be one of the most severe winters overall, but
15 we didn't have all the markers out that year. And then
16 in '08/09 we had another year with higher than average
17 snow, and then last year, of course, everybody knows,
18 it's still fresh in our minds, a deep snow winter.
19 That's one way to depict this data.

20

21 And I'm going to go into a little --
22 this is another way to show it and each Refuge has its
23 own line here. But the same pattern shows up. High
24 snow in '04/05, high snow in '08/09, high snow last
25 year. This year obviously is looking milder.

26

27 So, yet a third way to depict this,
28 and, you know, we can -- I've never beat snow to death
29 but I'm going to try to do it today, I guess, just
30 because I've gotten a lot of questions on it lately,
31 this gives you a little different feel for it and each
32 line represents a year and the circle -- oh, I got to
33 put the crazy line on here, there's 30 inches,
34 everything above that line, there's three lines above
35 it, and it's those same three years, well, the average
36 snow depth tells you one thing. That's what the
37 average was over the course of all the readings over
38 the whole winter. Well, this one gives you timing as
39 well.

40

41 So here's the 1st of December
42 measurement here on this line. You come over here,
43 here's the 1st of January. In these two years, we were
44 above 30 inches on the 1st of January, and we stayed
45 above 30 inches all winter long. This one with the
46 circles is last year. We were above 35 inches average
47 all the way through April, so we had four months there
48 of deep snow, pretty consistently over the entire
49 Refuge complex. So that gives you, not just an
50 average, but a duration of that severe condition.

1 So anyway these are the kind of data
2 we're trying to gather and I think it is helping us
3 piece together what's going on, to some extent, with
4 the moose population.

5
6 So it all ties back to moose, which I
7 think a lot of the, you know, subsistence people are
8 interested in for sure. And this doesn't show up on
9 the screen as well as I'd like it to, but, here we go
10 again. The top line, or the blue line here is the
11 calf/cow ratio that we observe in the fall, the whiter,
12 hard to see line, is that winter snow depth again, so
13 here we are in '04/05 the deep snow winter, that next
14 fall, in '05 we had overall calf/cow ratio of 25 per
15 100, so an inverse relationship is what we're
16 observing. The other severe winter here was this one,
17 and the calf/cow ratio, overall, was 15 per 100
18 following that severe winter. Okay. Last year was
19 another severe winter, not as severe, it's up here --
20 well, actually it shows to be a little more severe than
21 '08/09 on this graph, and the calf/cow ratio was lower.
22 Not as dramatically, but the relationship is holding
23 true between the severe winter pattern and then that
24 subsequent fall calf/cow ratio being lower.

25
26 And I'm not going to sit here and say,
27 you know, winter weather is the only factor influencing
28 moose, we know it's not. We know predation and top
29 down predator type issues are also a significant
30 factor. But the bottom up factors, as they call them,
31 the habitat conditions and the weather also affect
32 moose. And it's the combination of those two that
33 really impact our moose population, so you have to know
34 something about both of them to really understand
35 what's going on.

36
37 And I think -- we'll get into a little
38 more depth on some of the moose data, per se, and
39 there's a really interesting thing we saw this year
40 that I'll talk about a little later.

41
42 Any questions on that right now that
43 just jump out.

44
45 Anybody.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have one question.
48 The snow comes in different consistencies. In some
49 years the snow is real wet and it pulls the brush down
50 and actually buries it in the deep snow years and then

1 the biomass above the snow is actually vastly reduced,
2 over some years where it comes as real dry snow and
3 there's a biomass that stays above the snowline. Have
4 you looked at that aspect, as far as biomass above
5 snow?
6

7 MR. SCOTTON: I have not. The State
8 DNR tracks this snow marker data, and they actually
9 request that we land periodically and take snow density
10 measurements, which would get at exactly what you're
11 interested in, water quantity and density of the snow
12 and they're looking at it from a run-off standpoint.
13 It takes a lot of time during the shortest daylight,
14 times of the year, and we just don't do those
15 measurements. I'm sure it's a factor, but we haven't
16 looked at it specifically related to moose, but I'm
17 sure it does have an impact.
18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would suggest that
20 if you took a photo of the deep snow years then you
21 could basically enumerate biomass above snow compared
22 -- and there's a variation.
23

24 In our area a lot of the browses from
25 three feet and down and so when we get deep snow year
26 it pushes all the brush down and the biomass goes way
27 down and so that is a huge affect on the moose
28 population in some areas. So it'd be -- I would just
29 suggest taking photos of the snow markers when you're
30 at apex to kind of get a cursory of how much biomass is
31 actually above the snow as part of your study.
32

33 MR. SCOTTON: No, that's an interesting
34 idea.
35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.
37

38 MR. SCOTTON: Carrying you right along.
39 I'm going to talk in general -- again, because some
40 people are really familiar with the type of data we
41 collect and some people not so much, this is going to
42 be a big overview and I put this up because it shows
43 the three Refuges, Nowitna on the lower right, Kaiyuh
44 on the lower left and then Koyukuk to the north. And
45 the colors don't show up perfectly but I've got little
46 magic numbers that come flying in and these are the
47 GSPE census so that different colors, that's actually
48 yellow up in the upper corner, was the Hogatza River
49 drainage. And in partnership with the State in 2007 we
50 surveyed 5,000 square miles of moose habitat to produce

1 an estimate for that area. We don't survey it very
2 often, but to get an idea of what's going on up in the
3 country. And I think the State's actually using some
4 of that data now in their 24B intensive management plan
5 and stuff.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

8

9 MR. SCOTTON: So I'm just showing the
10 country that we've covered using the bigger population
11 estimate technique that we use.

12

13 Nowitna we surveyed in '08, it was
14 previously done in '01 before that.

15

16 The Huslia River corner up in the
17 northwest hadn't been surveyed since 1987 and we went
18 back and flew that in 2010, including that little strip
19 on the Kaiyuh Hills there up the Kateel and the Gisasa
20 west of the Refuge a little bit.

21

22 And then of course the Koyukuk there in
23 the middle, this section from Huslia all the way down
24 to Kaltag we've done three times, '02, '04 and 2011.

25

26 And then the circles that just flew in
27 outline the trend areas that we try to fly every single
28 year to get that calf/cow ratio data and the bull/cow
29 ratio data that we usually present at these meetings.

30

31 So we have an annual smaller survey
32 area where we're really focusing on the ratio data and
33 then these larger pop estimates to give us numbers,
34 statistically relevant, defensible numbers in terms of
35 population.

36

37 And like I mentioned, just when I
38 started this, the Innoko Refuge which would be in that
39 gap -- well, you can actually see the edge of the
40 Refuge down here in the corner, they did complete
41 another GSPE down here this year, so we're really
42 covering a big chunk of this region now with these
43 surveys and this technique. And for any one of these
44 we can provide all kinds of details for anybody that's
45 interested.

46

47 So I alluded earlier to this year being
48 really interesting. And Jack and I have talked about
49 it, and I've talked with some other members of the
50 public, a lot of people did not fly moose surveys this

1 year, including Kanuti Refuge, because they had really
2 poor snow conditions in that area, and the State didn't
3 fly surveys in a lot of places because of really poor
4 conditions. And what we found was, we did get some
5 snow here locally in Galena and to the south and
6 southwest and on the Nowitna, and we drew a line on our
7 map here, across the center, where essentially north of
8 that line, we had poor snow conditions in these trend
9 areas that we normally try to fly and the ones right
10 here around Galena and down river and over on the
11 Nowitna, we actually had okay conditions. We had six
12 or seven inches of fresh snow and good light. And we
13 ended up surveying the whole thing. We did it all, we
14 waited until we knew we weren't going to get any snow
15 to do the northern units, but we wanted to get some
16 data for that so at least we had the chance to
17 interpret it and get some idea of what was going on,
18 even if we -- we knew the counts would probably be off,
19 simply because sightability was lower with poor snow
20 conditions and distribution of the moose tends to be
21 different when there's not as much snow on the ground.

22
23 So we did the surveys. That line was a
24 demarcation. The line is not in this next particular
25 graph. But the interesting thing that we got out of
26 it, was these northern units where there was lower
27 snow, we observed far less calves this year, a really
28 low calf/cow ratio of only 12 calves per 100 cows,
29 which puts this -- this was the last poor year after
30 the deep snow winter of '08/09, when we overall had 15
31 calves per 100, that's really the worst since '01 that
32 we've seen on the Refuge complex. Well, this northern
33 area was similar to that. But in contrast, we had 38
34 calves per 100 in these southern areas. And this is
35 the first time since I've been here, where we actually
36 had a disparate number, a really different condition
37 with productivity in the north and in the south trend
38 units.

39
40 And we were concerned because the
41 conditions weren't as good but that shouldn't affect
42 the ratios as much. I Mean this is a dramatic
43 difference. And we were concerned enough that we
44 actually went back up there in February, just two weeks
45 ago, and we resurveyed the Huslia trend count area to
46 see, now that there's adequate snow there and good
47 conditions on the ground, we surveyed it again and we
48 got 12 calves per 100 cows again. So no change.

49
50 So I think, at least in our minds,

1 we've kind of confirmed that things were not as good to
2 the north with productivity and/or survival.

3

4 Overall, you know, the bull/cow ratio
5 on the whole Refuge is 28 per 100, which is real near
6 the management objective, that's great. The yearling
7 bull ratio overall was seven per 100, and that varied
8 depending on which part, but that's not bad for
9 recruitment. And the overall calf/cow ratio, it
10 averages out to 24. Well, that doesn't sound too bad
11 but it's lower in the north and better in these
12 southern areas.

13

14 So that's the general synopsis of what
15 we got for moose surveys on these Refuges.

16

17 And this line, just like in the Nowitna
18 line, this is the -- the trend area's all combined so
19 that's 1,000 square miles, 181 units, this is what the
20 adult cow population has looked like since we've been
21 doing this since 2001 consistently, really stable
22 looking cow numbers. Little tweaks up and down
23 annually but, really, just within the variation of what
24 you'd expect. And then this year there's a little dip
25 here at the end, lower cow numbers. Well, we really
26 attribute that to the poor snow, poor sightability,
27 possibly some different distributions. So we're not
28 real excited about that number.

29

30 Next year we're hoping for good
31 conditions everywhere, obviously, and we'll be keeping
32 an eye on that. Because with the low productivity to
33 the north, it does cause us a little bit of concern,
34 but as I was telling Jack -- or Mr. Reakoff, one poor
35 year of productivity is not such a big deal, we can
36 recover from that. But if you start stringing two or
37 three together then things don't look as good.

38

39 So this is just more of my talking.
40 I've really summarized everything I wanted to say about
41 the moose and I won't read this to you, and I'll keep
42 moving, because I realize I'm a little long-winded.

43

44 Twinning rates. People frequently ask
45 about it, and twinning rates, I tell people, it's
46 something that we use in a way as a surrogate for the
47 habitat. It tells you -- by measuring twinning rates
48 in the spring, it gives you an indication of how the
49 adult body condition is. How the body condition of
50 cows is out there. And the higher the twinning rate,

1 generally the better nutritional status of those moose.

2

3 And up in the Upper Koyukuk, around
4 Nowitna they're seeing 50, 60 percent twinning rates,
5 low density moose, each moose is in really good
6 condition, they have a lot of twins. Down here we have
7 much higher densities of moose, they don't have as many
8 twins, but it can vary suddenly from area to area. And
9 in places with really high densities and poor
10 nutritional condition around Fairbanks they have
11 twinning rates less than five percent.

12

13 So we do measure those every spring.

14

15 And I'll just show you the general
16 areas we survey for twins on the Refuge complex every
17 spring and then plot the data. And the different
18 colored lines show you that the -- the blue line is the
19 area around Galena area, locally and southwest of
20 Galena, we're seeing 38 to 42 percent twins annually,
21 pretty consistently, and this one year we had it over
22 50 percent.

23

24 Okay.

25

26 This yellow line is up around Huslia,
27 so further north, kind of midway between and then out
28 towards Bettles, we're seeing consistently 20 to 28
29 percent twins. Well, that difference tells us a little
30 bit about the nutritional status of that population and
31 about it's overall productivity.

32

33 The line in the middle is ThreeDay
34 Slough, and it has the longest data set, all the way
35 back to 1990 where it started high, it went through a
36 period where it got really low here in the late '90s.
37 We had bad conditions, Refuge-wide, with real poor
38 productivity years, '98, '99 and 2000 and then things
39 got better. But ThreeDay Slough, it bounces around
40 more, and in some years it's been as high as 35 percent
41 but it probably averages around 30 percent in that high
42 density population.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will point out
45 that those declining twin rates were also in
46 conjunction with low bull/cow ratios. You know, we
47 didn't go into the Koyukuk Moose Management Plan until
48 1999 and once we got the moose management plan and
49 started rebuilding our bull/cow ratios, we started to
50 see better, healthier calf recruitments and so forth.

1 That's one factor that was.....

2

3 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, there's probably a
4 number of factors that go into that. And the reason
5 that a lot of our GSPE data or that trend unit data
6 starts in 2001, that's the year we consistently started
7 using that technique every year in the same way, in the
8 same places, with the same airplanes.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

11

12 MR. SCOTTON: So it's kind of why a lot
13 of our data stopped. We do have other types of data
14 that go back further into this time zone.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

17

18 MR. SCOTTON: I'll switch to caribou
19 real quickly.

20

21 People periodically ask what's going on
22 with the Galena Mountain Caribou Herd, it's a tiny
23 caribou herd that winters on the Refuge here just north
24 of Galena and summers kind of over in the Cochran Hills
25 north of Ruby. Going back to '91 it was thought to be
26 as high as 500 animals. '08 we were down around 125 to
27 150, depending on which biologist you asked in our
28 office. We maintain radio collars and track them every
29 month but that herd's gotten so small, completely
30 closed the hunting season, we keep track to see what
31 it's going to do. Because, frankly, if you look on a
32 statewide basis these small herds, people stop studying
33 them because it's hard financially to keep active
34 collars on them and monitor them when they're in such
35 small sizes. We tend to focus on the big herds and
36 from a biological perspective, this herd's really
37 interesting, so we do continue work on that in
38 cooperation with Fish and Game and with BLM to some
39 extent.

40

41 So these bars represent the numbers
42 observed all the way back to 1978 in that herd, and you
43 can see the high there of over 300 observations in some
44 summers. And then recent data down here, you know, is
45 we're using the -- the max observed last winter when we
46 had deep snow and they really aggregated in one place
47 we counted 187 so we feel pretty confident that that's
48 -- that we're down to a herd of, you know, less than
49 200 caribou.

50

1 And they're another one of these herds,
2 they have excellent body condition, they're great big
3 calves, larger than just about any other caribou in the
4 state body-wise in the fall, the ones that survive, but
5 it's a survival issue. They can't -- not enough young
6 grow up and get recruited to really cause a decline and
7 it's probably going to be in this chronic state unless
8 something dramatic changes, for a long time.

9
10 And this just depicts ranges of the
11 caribou -- these are all winter locations north of
12 Galena.

13
14 And then over here in the mountains are
15 where the caribou spend most of their time during the
16 summer and during calving.

17
18 I'll switch entirely to a whole 'nother
19 species here.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to go back on
22 the caribou.

23
24 MR. SCOTTON: Sure.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you find any
27 caribou north of Huslia this year, the Western Arctic
28 Herd up there?

29
30 MR. SCOTTON: We haven't yet. Last
31 winter we observed a lot of caribou on Wheeler Creek
32 and north of Huslia. We actually had some down around
33 the Sand Dunes and just west of the Koyukuk River, so
34 the Western Arctic Herd really swung further south,
35 even with that deep snow. And we had more of them on
36 the Refuge last year than we do this year. I haven't
37 seen really any on the Refuge yet this year.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

40
41 MR. SCOTTON: So really the only
42 caribou wintering on the Refuge are Galena Mountain
43 Caribou right now.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

46
47 MR. SCOTTON: And we do have
48 provisions, if enough Western Arctic Caribou come down
49 and on to the Refuge we can open a winter hunting
50 season for them, but that hasn't happened since like

1 1991 or something like that.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Okay.

4

5 MR. SCOTTON: Just to change things up
6 and I'll keep this kind of quick.

7

8 I put beaver surveys on here simply
9 because it's something we do periodically and it's been
10 done for 25 years. Furbearers are kind of on a lot of
11 people's minds right now. And we have continued
12 gathering data that I think Mike Spindler was probably
13 one of the people that set up this survey, and, this,
14 again, just shows the Refuge complex and these trend
15 units we call them, they're townships, these are much
16 bigger than the moose units, they're six miles by six
17 miles, and we don't fly them all every year because it
18 would cost too much money, but we periodically will fly
19 everything on the Koyukuk Refuge and then a couple
20 years later we'll fly everything on the Kaiyuh, and
21 then a couple years later we'll fly everything on the
22 Nowitna just to keep an eye on this other species that
23 uses willows and alters their habitat much like moose
24 do.

25

26 They're really a factor in the
27 environment.

28

29 They change the aquatic conditions.
30 They change riparian areas. They're a habitat
31 modifier, just like moose are.

32

33 And this doesn't show up real well but
34 all the black dots inside that square are an active
35 beaver cache. And in this one township on the Kaiyuh,
36 we've sort of watched the population more or less
37 explode over the last several years. There's 206
38 caches inside one township. And I put this up there
39 kind of as a gee whiz, you know, as a biologist this
40 stuff is really cool. But when you do a little bit of
41 the math and you look at it, assuming five beavers per
42 cache, which you can pick on that number, it might be
43 four, it might be seven, there's over 1,000 beavers in
44 that one township. Or assuming 35 pounds apiece,
45 35,000 pounds of biomass rodent out there gnawing on
46 willows and birches and changing the landscape.

47

48 And I guess it's just one of those, it
49 is gee whiz, but it's also -- people talk about moose
50 all the time and what's out there on the landscape, but

1 this is a furbearer that used to be harvested
2 traditionally, extensively, is not utilized nearly as
3 much today. It was a food source and a fur source. We
4 still monitor it because I think changes, long-term
5 changes over time are what the Refuges are here for and
6 kind of not just a this year perspective or a five year
7 perspective, it's a 10 or a 20 or a 40 or a 50 year
8 perspective and we'd like to keep gathering these types
9 of data over the long-term to see how things change.

10

11 When this got started in the late '80s,
12 early '90s, people thought trapping was going to be
13 super important and a major impact on furbearers and it
14 was at the time, and that's really changed today and it
15 may change again 20 years from now, I don't know. But
16 from an ecological standpoint these surveys are really
17 interesting to us and something we do, you know,
18 locally get data on and talk about.

19

20 So just depicting the data, I'll point
21 out Kaiyuh, on the bottom left, '91 in all those
22 townships we survey we saw 300 caches that were active
23 that fall. We fly these in October right at freeze-up.
24 A little dip in '93, and then from '05, 2010 and then
25 2012, this is what we saw going on with that beaver
26 population.

27

28 Koyukuk's also seen a fairly dramatic
29 increase since the early '90s.

30

31 And Nowitna maybe not as dramatic but
32 still a real high density beaver population and lots of
33 rodents out there.

34

35 And, I threw this on at the end because
36 at AC meetings, and almost any meeting I go to, besides
37 moose, people ask about wolves. And I tell people it's
38 pretty rare that we do a formalized wolf survey because
39 they're expensive and logistically difficult, you have
40 to have perfect conditions and a lot of airplanes and
41 what not. But we do keep track of incidental sightings
42 of wolves with all the flying we do and I try to sort
43 of keep track on a map of what we see for wolf numbers.
44 And the grey dots just represent a pack that we may
45 have seen once or twice, or five times over the course
46 of a winter. By keeping track of colors and numbers,
47 we can sort of sort out and make our best guesstimate
48 of which ones are individual packs.

49

50 And the reason I've kind of done this

1 is, is just because people talk about wolves and we
2 know they're an impact on moose, but I kind of like --
3 once you get enough data, and in this particular year
4 we had a lot of observations so it was easier to do,
5 get these average pack sizes, and we also get the
6 extremes. There's always some packs of two and three.
7 But, you know, I frequently go to meetings and hear
8 stories of 16 wolves here, and 20 wolves over there and
9 these really large packs that are really having a big
10 impact and I try to be -- I don't discount that that
11 occurs sometimes, but it's not very common. In all the
12 years I've been flying these surveys it's pretty rare
13 to see a pack of more than 14 or 15, really rare, in
14 fact. I know it does occur. And I know traditionally
15 it's occurred. But, you know, we typically see average
16 pack sizes of around seven. But I think that pack size
17 can change, depending on their own recruitment of pups
18 in the spring to fall. If they have a good year
19 raising pups and there's a lot of small prey where they
20 can raise those young ones, they make it to fall, and,
21 you know, larger packs do have a greater degree of
22 impact on moose.

23
24 And I went and just looked at the data
25 from two winters ago and the largest pack I saw
26 anywhere within 100 miles of Galena was 10.

27
28 So it does vary from year to year but
29 that's just sort of what we have in terms of wolves.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have any --
32 it's been a long time since there's been radio
33 telemetry on wolves in this area, Osborne had some
34 collars on wolves, has the Refuge had collared wolves
35 for awhile?

36
37 MR. SCOTTON: No, I think the last
38 study was in conjunction with Fish and Game when Mike
39 Spindler was here and Tim Osborne in the early '90s is
40 the last they had a study.

41
42 And, you know, in my experience, where
43 there were packs then there are still packs today.
44 Where there's high densities of moose, you'll find a
45 high density of wolves and wolf packs that are -- or
46 just with smaller territories right in there
47 overlapping those like ThreeDay Slough, it's right --
48 right in this area right here, you know, in this
49 particular year I had four to -- between the lower
50 Kateel and Roundabout Mountain I had five packs of

1 wolves that were using that relatively small area, but
2 it's an area that probably has a couple thousand moose
3 in it.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's interesting.
6 I have heard stories of like 28 wolves and 22 wolves in
7 this Koyukuk.

8
9 MR. SCOTTON: We saw 19 wolves on the
10 lower Nowitna a few winters ago all at one time
11 together in one day. And when we went back later and
12 actually tracked packs in that area, I found a pack of
13 10 and a pack of nine that were about five miles apart
14 on the same day. Odds are, you know, it was the same
15 pack that had kind of split up. You know, my theory
16 is, they get to large sizes, they become a little bit
17 unstable because there's battles over who's going to be
18 in charge and, you know, if 19 wolves kill a moose it's
19 not enough to feed 19 so there's going to be some
20 fights there.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

23
24 MR. SCOTTON: And it seems like
25 statewide, from what I've read in the literature and
26 other biologists that I've worked with, seven to 10
27 wolves is kind of a standard pack size with
28 occasionally these, you know, 12 and 14 is not
29 irregular at all. And the earlier in the fall, the
30 larger the size, as the winter goes on they get
31 whittled down, some of them die, some of them get
32 killed by moose, trappers take some, and then by spring
33 the average pack size is probably a fair bit smaller
34 typically.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

37
38 MR. SCOTTON: Because as they've
39 discovered like in Denali Park and other places, where
40 there's no trapping or hunting, wolves still suffer 30
41 percent mortality just about every year from fighting
42 and all the things they go through so.

43
44 So that's it, I just put a picture at
45 the end. I have a whole bunch more data but I'm just
46 guessing that that was it for most people.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does the
49 Council have any questions.

50

1 of assume for general population dynamics thinking,
2 that each one of those circles, each one of those
3 represents a pack of wolves, that group of wolves is
4 going to kill one moose on average, or the equivalent
5 of a moose every week all winter long.

6
7 So they're -- you know that kill rate
8 doesn't change dramatically.

9
10 I think in the spring there may be some
11 evidence that if moose are in a weakened state and
12 they're, you know, nutritionally right at the edge,
13 their fat reserves have worn out, it's more easy for
14 them to make a kill and maybe their kill rate increases
15 slightly because they can, because it's easy, to
16 something more than one moose a week on average.
17 Statistically it doesn't always work out that way, but
18 there may be a little higher kill rate and they're more
19 visible because it's springtime.

20
21 And the other thing is the snow is no
22 longer accumulating. The snow pack is shrinking, you
23 got melting, those dark hides and those gut piles and
24 what not actually melt out of the snow and that may be
25 a moose -- some of those old kills may have been killed
26 in December, in January and February and have been
27 buried all winter but then they start to melt out and
28 then the bears go dig them up and the scavengers dig
29 them up, and they become more visible. Because I see
30 it flying around. You know you fly over these islands
31 and there's two or three kills on the same island, a
32 lot of them are not fresh, I don't think, they're from
33 earlier in the winter but they're now visible. So it
34 becomes more noticeable and of a real concern.

35
36 So I think I might have answered some
37 of your question anyway.

38

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray.

41

42 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. When we had heavy
43 winter die-offs, the interesting thing was we would see
44 late in the spring, we would see all those moose yarded
45 up and it looked like there was quite a few, a lot of
46 them die after the snow melts, they're starving and so
47 on, they seem to die even after the snow goes because
48 there's no food and they're so weak or something and
49 then they're not there the next fall, so it.....

50

1 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, in.....

2

3 MR. COLLINS:isn't always the
4 wolf kills in a bad winter, it's just a die-off.

5

6 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah. Mr. Collins,
7 through the Chair, again. I think you're correct in
8 that.

9

10 And in locations where we have radio
11 collared data that's periodically observed, where it's
12 -- it's frequently thought that April is actually the
13 worse month on moose because it's kind of -- even after
14 the snow is melting and it's easier for them to get
15 around, they've been losing body -- if it's a severe
16 winter they're losing body condition, they're losing
17 fat, and they lose their rump fat, and their back fat
18 and their internal gut fat first, and then they
19 actually -- if it gets bad enough they start pulling
20 fat out of their bone marrow, so their bones actually
21 lose fat and condition, and that's when they get into a
22 real weakened state. And if they get below a certain
23 point they can't recover. So they may be the walking
24 dead and they'll die later on.

25

26 That's reasonably rare, but in a severe
27 winter in McGrath is known for -- especially in the
28 past, some really deep snow winters in some years, and
29 we put that magic line up there of 30 inches, that's
30 not a super severe winter, that's the point when it
31 starts to affect the smallest moose first, the calves,
32 and as it gets deeper then it'll have more and more
33 impact on the adult cows. And generally adult cows are
34 the most robust strongest moose out there. They're in
35 the best condition. They have the most fat. So they
36 can withstand quite a bit. And, I mean, even up in the
37 Bettles country they get some winters of four or five
38 feet of snow on the ground sometimes and they can do
39 remarkably well for awhile. But if they go in in bad
40 condition, they can have a real bad winter like you
41 said, and some of them will die after the winter --
42 after the winter is essentially over, and even after it
43 starts to green up.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny.

46

47 MS. PELKOLA: Brad. Do you notice the
48 difference, like a cow or a calf, which one takes the
49 hardest hit on the snow density?

50

1 MR. SCOTTON: Calves tend to be the
2 first -- the most vulnerable to a severe winter.
3 They're the most vulnerable to predation by wolves
4 because the snow slows them down and they're smaller
5 and weaker and the mother really plays a big factor in
6 defending the calves, even in their first winter
7 against wolves. But they tend to be the most likely
8 and that's why their first winter, between six months
9 and 12 months, and even their second winter, before
10 they're full grown, they're a yearling, those are the
11 most vulnerable to both the severe winter conditions
12 and to predation. So biologists, when they're
13 modeling, tend to think, if we can get these calves
14 through the first two years, they become an adult and
15 they're really hardy and they do really well from age
16 classes two to eight or 10. And, I think, in part,
17 like in 24B, what they're trying to do right now with
18 the predator control program, is reduce that mortality
19 on those calves during the winter, their first winter.
20 And second winter, recruit those into the adult
21 population, and then they'll start having calves of
22 their own and increasing the density of moose.

23
24 So that program is really focused on
25 the calf and yearling mortality.

26
27 When we collared moose in this area we
28 saw survival rates on first year calves, six months to
29 12 months of 60 to 70 percent survival through that
30 winter. The next year they had about 80 percent
31 survival, which is pretty good. But then when they're
32 an adult, once they're two years old and older, it's
33 like 96 percent, on average. They have a really high
34 survival rate once they achieve full size.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other questions.

37
38 Robert.

39
40 MR. HONEA: Yes -- no, go ahead.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.

43
44 MR. R. WALKER: Brad. Out of all the
45 wolf packs here, have you found any with that natural
46 lice or that doesn't take affect on them?

47
48 MR. SCOTTON: I'm sorry, was the
49 question about lice?

50

1 MR. R. WALKER: Yes. Do they -- wolves
2 do they.....

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You want to speak
5 closer to the mic there, Robert.

6
7 MR. R. WALKER: Back in 1975 we shot a
8 whole pack down by Blackburn and all 16 of them had no
9 more hair, they were just completely eaten up by lice,
10 I mean is that normal or is that abnormal?

11
12 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, Mr. Walker, through
13 the Chair, again.

14
15 It's a timely topic because it came up
16 again last year. And we've worked with the Statewide
17 veterinarian for the Department of Fish and Game, and
18 they've really struggled with the louse issue because
19 it started on the Kenai, it's a dog louse, actually,
20 that causes them to scratch and lose hair and it spread
21 north into places off the Kenai and it got up in the
22 Tok area and it's been documented around Fairbanks.
23 To-date it has not yet been found or clearly documented
24 in this part of the state. But we do see patterns of
25 hair loss that look very similar to the dog louse
26 epidemic, where they're losing hair. Their guard hairs
27 are missing, they just have a wooly under fur on their
28 sides and maybe a mohawk down their back, but they
29 still have kind of a full mane with their -- their high
30 quality is extremely poor. And we saw a number of
31 those wolves in the Galena area like that last year,
32 more than had ever been noticed before. We saw them
33 during surveys, you could see them from the airplane
34 that they're not right and then the ones that got
35 trapped. We sent several samples to the State-wide
36 veterinarian in Fairbanks, she did full necropsies
37 with, you know, checking out skin lesions and
38 everything else and she said this is not louse, it is
39 not the dog louse. It's a condition, that she calls
40 follicular dysplasia, which is just a fancy way of
41 saying, their hair's falling out. Their guard hairs.
42 The follicle has something wrong with it. She thinks
43 it's a hormone caused issue, and the hair just falls
44 out.

45
46 She's studying it, wants more
47 information. It's severe at times. And she thinks it
48 might be stress related. Last year was a deep snow
49 winter, whether or not that played in we don't know.
50

1 But so far that dog louse has not been
2 documented in this area.

3
4 But, again, back in the old days --
5 there's been concerns with Iditarod dogs coming
6 through, and, in especially that down river area,
7 Blackburn you've talked about, they go right through
8 there, it's possible that it's been in there in the
9 past and then worked its way out of the population.
10 But if you see it, the best thing you can do is get a
11 hold of one of the agency folks, it doesn't matter if
12 it's Fish and Game or Fish and Wildlife Service, or
13 whoever, and try to get that wolf, or that hide to
14 Fairbanks and she really wants to get her hands on them
15 so she can necropsy them and try to figure out what's
16 going on. Because it's -- not only is it a predator on
17 moose, it's a valuable furbearer to a lot of people and
18 it's a concern from a population standpoint.

19
20 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, that's
21 interesting, too, because in our area we got something
22 like 32 wolves last year and like only 12 of them were
23 worth selling because a lot of them just didn't have
24 any hair.

25
26 MR. SCOTTON: So you saw the same
27 thing.....

28
29 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah.

30
31 MR. SCOTTON:we saw in this area
32 last year.

33
34 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah. Kind of like
35 some old guy going bald or something, it's kind of
36 weird.

37
38
39 (Laughter)

40
41 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, it's a bad deal to
42 see them in that kind of condition, too.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: On that sample, can
45 she just -- you know I caught one of those last year,
46 that didn't have any hair, but I don't want to throw
47 the wolf away, I got \$100 for that wolf, so can she
48 just take a little tiny sample of the affected area.

49
50 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah. Mr. Chairman. She

1 did say that she would take any kind of skin sample
2 from an affected area, she preferred it as close to the
3 spine as you could get it, along the back, in the
4 affected area. So a lot of times if they have a mohawk
5 with long hair, go just over to the side and she said
6 if you just cut a dart out of there, you can sew up the
7 whole and give her that little piece, and under the
8 microscope she can tell you if it's lice or that
9 follicular dysplasia.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I caught
12 four wolves last year and one of them was -- she was so
13 bald, I mean just short, even the tail, half the tail,
14 it didn't have any hair on it. And the mate that
15 stayed with her, he had beautiful hair. And I thought,
16 if it's lice is he resistant to it, well, I didn't know
17 about this follicular dysplasia stuff, so -- she must
18 have had that also, the dysplasia, not lice.

19

20 That's an interesting thing.

21

22 Any other questions of Koyukuk.

23

24 MR. HONEA: I have a question.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

27

28 MR. HONEA: I had a quick question, you
29 had a graph up here of where those particular packs
30 were, how recent were they and, you know, maybe the
31 ability for them to stay in one spot. I mean if I
32 could have a map of that at some point.

33

34 MR. SCOTTON: Sure.

35

36 MR. HONEA: On the Nowitna.

37

38 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, Mr. Honea, through
39 the Chair.

40

41 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

42

43 MR. SCOTTON: That particular map was a
44 few years old. They try to produce one every year.
45 But their territories are relatively stable and
46 consistent and I could produce something that would
47 probably help you out a little bit. But there's always
48 a large pack in the lower Nowitna in that dense moose
49 area. There's another one in Deep Creek, just, you
50 know, that area to the south of the river, just west --

1 or east of Ruby, up the Sulatna, there's always another
2 pack. So they're fairly consistent. And we did
3 actually do a comprehensive wolf survey there back in
4 '06, I want to say, so six years ago. And it had
5 previously been done in 1992 and, interestingly enough,
6 the results were almost identical in terms of the
7 locations and numbers of wolves.

8
9 The Nowitna Refuge, at that time, we
10 estimated there were, I think, 68 wolves, in 11 packs,
11 or 12 packs on the Nowitna Refuge in '92 and again in
12 2006. So we didn't see a lot of change.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

15
16 MR. J. WALKER: Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: James.

19
20 MR. J. WALKER: Just a comment on that
21 one picture you pulled up there of the 35 pounds of
22 rodent going through that area there.

23
24 MR. SCOTTON: Uh-huh.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Turn on your mic
27 there, James.

28
29 MR. J. WALKER: In that display there,
30 that 35 pounds of rodents going through that area, I
31 imagine there's a lot of change in the geography and
32 vegetation after a certain time period.

33
34 MR. SCOTTON: Yeah, Mr. Walker, through
35 the Chair. The Kaiyuh is an interesting place and I'm,
36 you know, a relatively new resident here over the last
37 10 years. In talking to elders and locals in this area
38 that have used that country consistently, they're
39 uniformly adamant that that country has changed a lot
40 in terms of its hydrological features, and everybody
41 agrees it's kind of -- they think it's drying. It's
42 not as wet as it used to be. It's not consistently as
43 inundated in the spring.

44
45 The Kaiyuh's interesting because as the
46 Yukon rises, the Kaiyuh Flats actually rises as well,
47 the water table in there because it's connected. It
48 takes a long time for water to filter in and then a
49 long time for it to filter back out. But it's kind of
50 a bathtub that fills up slowly and drains slowly. And

1 I think it has changed over the years.

2

3 And some of the historical accounts,
4 talking to Harold Esmailka at Ruby, he grew up in that
5 country and his parents trapped out there and his, in
6 visiting with him, said, the first time his mother had
7 ever seen a beaver -- we were just talking about it
8 this morning, was somewhere in the neighborhood of
9 1938. Before that it was all musk -- she was muskrat
10 trapping and she caught it accidently and didn't know
11 what it was.

12

13 So things have changed.

14

15 I think there were beavers in the
16 country and I'm sure Sidney could probably tell us a
17 lot about that stuff if we could get the question
18 across to him, but things have undoubtedly changed.

19

20 And as you know, down river, I mean
21 I've been in enough of these meetings to know that
22 beavers are a relative newcomer down there in high
23 densities where they're really sort of changing things
24 a lot.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have another
27 question, Robert.

28

29 MR. R. WALKER: Just one, Brad. At the
30 time when we were hunting down around Blackburn and
31 Eagle Island and Eagle Slide, Honeymoon Slough, a lot
32 of the wolves that we wounded, we'd leave them because
33 it was getting dark, and in the morning we'd come back
34 and pick them up, the other wolves would eat them up, I
35 mean just as fast as they could find them.

36

37 MR. SCOTTON: That is a -- I don't know
38 much about the hunting aspect of it, but, certainly
39 when wolves are hungry they won't hesitate to eat a
40 member of their own pack. I've had it happen, seen it
41 happen. Other trappers talk about catching them in
42 their traps and the rest of the pack finishes them off
43 and there's nothing there but a leg when they come
44 around. So, you know, it might depend on their
45 nutritional status, but it also might depend on the
46 dominant status of that wolf that got caught.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's one of the
49 very first things I saw when I was five years old, my
50 dad caught an alpha male of a big pack on the John

1 River and the rest of those wolves ate every last scrap
2 but the foot. So, yeah, if you're a beta male and your
3 alpha gets caught in a trap, that's your big chance.

4
5 (Laughter)

6
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've covered the
9 biology pretty good, thanks a lot Brad.

10
11 And so you got some information for us
12 there, Jeremy.

13
14 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
15 Council members. My name is Jeremy Havener and I'm the
16 subsistence coordinator here in Galena. And I was just
17 going to do a couple updates on our outreach program.

18
19 But before I do that, I know at the
20 last RAC meeting I updated some new Staff members, but
21 they're here today and I'd like to just point them out
22 real quick. And first of all is Myra Harris, she's our
23 new RIT, and she just took on the clerk duties as well,
24 so she's a full-time employee there, and a great
25 attribute to our office. Thanks, Myra.

26
27 And then also we hired a new habitat
28 biologist and she's got a lot of things to bring to the
29 table for our office, her name is Amy Rockhill. She's
30 been here about a year now I believe.

31
32 But real quickly, one thing I wanted to
33 update on was our hunter's ed program that we've
34 started up here. We just put on a program at the
35 school with Jenny's son-in-law, Mr. Fenamore, and we
36 had 18 kids and we taught them hunter safety, water
37 safety, survival skills and some wildlife management,
38 and we passed 18 kids through it and it turned out
39 really successful and they're excited to do it again.

40
41 So if you guys know anybody that's
42 interested in wanting to put on a hunter safety course,
43 you could contact us and maybe we could schedule
44 something and put something together.

45
46 Also one thing that we just completed
47 doing up in Huslia, we were working with Susan
48 Georgette from Selawik National Wildlife Refuge, and we
49 went up and interviewed elders on the hot spring use.
50 And what she was doing was comparing elders input from

1 Shungnak as well as Huslia, so we gathered a bunch of
2 information and she's going to put together a report,
3 and once that comes out I'd be more than happy to share
4 here at one of these meetings.

5
6 And then finally, the Gisasa River
7 Weir, will be a go again this year and the Refuge is
8 going to be fully supporting it and maybe Jeremy has
9 some updates on that as he could offer.

10
11 But that's a wrap up on what I have to
12 share, so, thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jeremy.
15 Does anybody have any questions.

16
17 MS. HERNANDEZ: I just want to say
18 thanks to Jeremy for all the hard work. I've been
19 bugging him solid for a good little while now and he's
20 been really great at being flexible and adjusting to
21 all of our various requests. So, thanks, Jersey, it's
22 always good to have a contact in town to do all the leg
23 work, so, thank you, so much.

24
25 MR. HAVENER: No problem, thank you.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that.
28 And so time for a break, I think, and so we'll be off
29 for about 15 minutes.

30
31 (Off record)

32
33 (On record)

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to
36 come back on the record again.

37
38 (Pause)

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny's got an
41 announcement.

42
43 MS. PELKOLA: Oh, okay, tonight at 7:15
44 there's going to be a concert, and it's put on by Billy
45 Paragrín, and he's doing this, it's like a suicide
46 awareness, and I think his group is called, Carry the
47 Cure. And also I'll tell you where my house is, if you
48 all know where the school is, on that road, you just
49 take that first right and my house is the first left.
50 I think my house is grey.

1 (Laughter)
2
3 (Off record comments regarding dinner)
4
5 MS. PELKOLA: I have to open the
6 concert so we have to be done by 7:15.
7
8 MR. R. WALKER: I make a motion to
9 adjourn.
10
11 (Laughter)
12
13 MS. HERNANDEZ: 5:00 o'clock. We're
14 going to be adjourning at 5:00 o'clock and heading over
15 to Jenny's house.
16
17 MR. R. WALKER; What about banker's
18 hours.
19
20 (Laughter)
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those are the
23 announcements. And so next on the agenda is the
24 Mulchatna Caribou Herd. And so Jim's going to give his
25 presentation, so, go ahead, Jim.
26
27 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I'm Jim
28 Woolington with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
29 I'm the area biologist down in Dillingham, that's Game
30 Management Unit 17. The Mulchatna Herd has always been
31 managed out of the Dillingham office -- or the
32 Dillingham office has had the lead management on
33 Mulchatna. Some of you might remember me, I was the
34 area biologist here in Galena after Tim Osborne left
35 back in the 1990s and after being here I then moved
36 down to Dillingham and have been there ever since.
37
38 I'm here to present some information
39 that I've put together for Mulchatna Caribou, and if
40 you have questions or whatever, just feel free.
41
42 We've got a number of things going on
43 with Mulchatna Caribou, and basically the management
44 and research projects, most of it is based on radio
45 collaring, putting out collars on 10.5 month old
46 females, VHS collars on 10/5 females. We also put out
47 satellite collars on adult females. A few years ago
48 one of our researchers started a collaring project on
49 bulls and then the last two summers -- or last springs
50 we've had a calf mortality project going on.

1 Every May during calving season,
2 starting about the 15th, 18th of May we do calving
3 surveys to -- I look at all the radioed adult females
4 and see what sort of pregnancy rates we have and then
5 I'm also able to relate it to -- since we collar -- put
6 the collars on at 10.5 months old we're able to get an
7 idea of age of first reproduction and also productivity
8 in the different age classes.

9
10 Each year we try to do a photo census
11 like we do on all the rest of the herds in the state
12 during the post -- or the -- yeah, the post-calving
13 aggregations, when they aggregate because of insects
14 and then in the fall do a fall composition survey.
15 It's right at say during the rut when they're all
16 aggregated together and get bull/cow ratios and
17 calf/cow ratios.

18
19 Harvest reporting, it's the -- up until
20 this next season the caribou hunting for Mulchatna
21 Caribou have been mostly by -- on the general hunt out
22 of King Salmon there's a registration hunt, but our
23 harvesting monitoring has been from the harvest cards.
24 Subsistence Division has done a few household surveys
25 for additional information.

26
27 Health assessment. During the capture
28 operations we do take blood samples and things like
29 that. A few years ago there was a -- we collected some
30 carcasses and Kimberly Beckman, our veterinarian in
31 Fairbanks did some looking at that.

32
33 And, as I said, one of the researchers
34 in Palmer, which is where our regional office is based,
35 is looking -- is in the process of looking at bull
36 distribution and mortality.

37
38 Agencies that cooperate on this work is
39 the Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife
40 Service, there's two Refuges involved, the Togiak
41 National Wildlife Refuge and the Yukon Delta National
42 Wildlife Refuge, National Park Service and Lake Clark
43 National Park and Preserve and Bureau of Land
44 Management, their field office out of Anchorage.

45
46 Most of our work is done on the basis
47 of putting radio collars on them and most of the
48 collars were put on, and this is a 10.5 month old
49 female. That way, we put them on known age, put them
50 on before they get to be a year old, that way we know

1 the age of the animal as we track it through the years
2 and able to tell, you know, what age class the females
3 are having.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you drugging
6 them or net-gunning those?

7
8 MR. WOOLINGTON: We're darting down
9 there. Net-gunning, look -- you can see the conditions
10 we're typically dealing with, not full snow cover, and
11 we have good success with darting them. The season
12 closes March 15th, we go out there the first week of
13 April so there's no hunting going on after -- when
14 we're darting them. And we have real good success down
15 there with using darts.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that an average
18 size female calf?

19
20 MR. WOOLINGTON: She was. But I think
21 it's kind of foreshortened. I think she looks larger
22 than she actually was, just the way she's standing and
23 the way the picture was taken. But in say the -- oh,
24 10 years ago, they were 100 to 110 pounds, and now
25 they're 120 or better. So that's one of the things
26 that, you know, we're looking at also. So we have
27 seen.....

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Because she looks
30 pretty big.

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 MR. WOOLINGTON: Looks pretty happy. I
35 don't know how we managed to get a picture when she
36 looked like she was laughing.

37
38 This is, in general terms, kind of the
39 range of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. These are
40 actually the units that we -- how we divide it up and
41 the different surveys, the Togiak Refuge takes care of
42 that one, this one is done out of Bethel, either Fish
43 and Game or Fish and Wildlife out of Bethel.
44 Dillingham office always takes care of this one, Lake
45 Clark this one, King Salmon this one. This one,
46 whoever can get to it. It's actually -- the range --
47 the area they presently use hardly ever get north of
48 the Stony River. I've never seen them north of the
49 Kuskokwim through this area. In one year, 1996, winter
50 1996, they did go up into the McGrath area, they were

1 up there but we've never seen them move up there after
2 that, so that was just a one shot deal. But mostly
3 it's -- they range from the Alaska Range over on the
4 eastern side all the way to Bethel, very seldom, if
5 ever, get across on the west side of the Kuskokwim
6 River. So Aniak is probably a bit out of their normal
7 range. They get occasionally over here by Whitefish
8 Lake but it's kind of -- and they calve a little bit in
9 here in 19A, and -- but hardly any use here in 19B. So
10 most of their range is actually in, say, the lower half
11 of this chart here.

12

13 It's called the Mulchatna Caribou Herd
14 because that's where it was first kind of found, in the
15 headwaters of the Mulchatna, and that's traditionally
16 where they calve is where we give them the name. Work
17 first started on this herd in the early to mid-1970s.
18 Some survey work -- a few surveys to try and find them.
19 It was a very small herd at that time. You know, maybe
20 seven to 10,000, that sort of thing. And then as the
21 herd grew through time then range and -- increased and
22 we also started seeing changes in the calving areas.

23

24 Currently this is pretty much what we
25 see. The herd is kind of split into two different
26 components and we have two major calving areas. One up
27 here by Lime Village and Tundra Lake. We refer to this
28 as the Tundra Lake or northern calving area, and they
29 are the eastern caribou, and then this here in sort of
30 the middle Nushagak, we refer to this as the southern
31 or Kemuk Mountain calving area. In the last couple of
32 years we've started seeing some radio collared cows
33 stay there in May and having calves in the headwaters
34 of the Kisaralik and -- yeah, Kisaralik and Kwethluk
35 River up in this area.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is there a common
38 habitat to those calving areas, like large tussock
39 flat?

40

41 MR. WOOLINGTON: No. Because this, the
42 southern area is pretty much all open and -- a big open
43 area. The northern area, about the northern half of it
44 is spruce. They're calving in spruce. And then it
45 starts opening up over here. This is highlands, up in
46 the hills, pretty much on the hillside, there's some
47 pretty significant mountains out in this area. No
48 rhyme or -- typical caribou, no rhyme or reason as to
49 what's going on.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Arctic caribou they
2 calve, you know, when the snow is regressing and the
3 tussock is blossoming with high protein food flushing
4 in front of them and I was just wondering if that.....
5
6 MR. WOOLINGTON: Uh, well.....
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:you know, could
9 be south facing slope melt.....
10
11 MR. WOOLINGTON: Well.....
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:that specific
14 calving time.
15
16 MR. WOOLINGTON:this is so flat
17 that, if anything, there's maybe a little bit of an
18 east facing slope but it's real flat. This is pretty
19 flat up in this country, too. This is just -- any --
20 you know hillside any direction so it's, you know, six
21 to one, half a dozen to the other.
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just wanted
24 to.....
25
26 MR. WOOLINGTON: So I don't -- I think
27 part of this is we get real heavy snow depth through
28 here, especially -- we saw more calving out here last
29 year and it may have been a result of just the heavy
30 snow through here and they just didn't come -- they
31 weren't able to get back through.
32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see, okay.
34
35 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah. Since we've
36 been looking at numbers in the Mulchatna since the
37 early 1970s, it grew rapidly through the 1980s, we got
38 a peak estimate about 200,000 in summer of 1996 when we
39 do the photo estimates and then it rapidly -- it
40 dropped off about as fast as it increased. So it did
41 the typical caribou increase, peak and decrease that we
42 see in the other herds.
43
44 I have not been able to get a photo
45 census done since summer 2008. We get out there every
46 summer and try, spend many thousands of dollars flying
47 or trying to fly but mostly it's raining. We've had
48 cold, wet summers down there and they don't -- they --
49 you need dry, calm weather for them to aggregate, to
50 get out on the gravel areas, the ridgetops or the snow

1 fields to get away from the insect harassment. We just
2 don't have that kind of weather down there anymore. It
3 rains all summer. We've got, you know, two days that
4 we tried to get out, did some flying, took some photos
5 but it's still kind of inconclusive because basically
6 the caribou were scattered from the Alaska Range to
7 almost Bethel and -- during the summertime, rather than
8 -- and these -- just scattered groups all over, rather
9 than grouping up well so that we can take photos.

10

11 And this is what we're talking about.
12 This is a post-calving aggregation of caribou. They
13 move together, generally considered because of insect
14 harassment, bot flies, mosquitos, warble flies that are
15 hatching out then and really harassing them. Sometimes
16 you'll see them up on the snow fields and they're just
17 shaking and dancing, and if you look close you'll see
18 they have their heads right down into the snow and
19 that's to keep the nose bot flies from shooting the
20 larva up into their noses. And so that's their
21 strategy to avoid insects, is to, mass up together.
22 This is what we're not seeing anymore, for the
23 Mulchatna Caribou.

24

25 Back in the days when we were able to
26 get photo censuses done, this is how we did it. We'd
27 have aircraft with cameras mounted on them, and we fly
28 transects over the caribou, take photos, and I don't
29 know if that shows up, whether it's the angle that you
30 can see, these little squares, each one of these
31 squares is a shot. There's a square around each one of
32 these numbers. So we fly transects over the groups of
33 caribou and take photo shots. And then there's new
34 methods being used now, but the old method was black
35 and white film, and using the mark one eyeball and a
36 magnifying glass to count caribou, thousands of
37 caribou, sometimes, and dozens of caribou sometimes on
38 the different photos. The Department is looking at
39 digital photos up north, folks working with the Western
40 Arctic and Central Arctic and Teshekpuk Herd are and --
41 and working out of the Fairbanks office there, they're
42 develop -- they're working on trying to use digital
43 cameras and that seems -- it's probably what we're
44 going to have to go to and seems to be working for
45 those folks, I think -- I haven't talked to them lately
46 but, you know, that's got a lot of promise and we'll
47 have to go that way because it's getting harder and
48 harder to, one, find film, and two, find a lab that'll
49 process film. It's an ancient technology and is
50 rapidly going away.

1 During the fall, we go out with a
2 helicopter and do the fall composition surveys where
3 we're looking at calf/cow ratios and bull/cow ratios,
4 the number of calves per 100 cows, number of bulls per
5 100 cows. Go in with a helicopter and count them, you
6 know, cow/calf, cow/calf, bull, cow/calf, and come up
7 with the numbers.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you do these
10 composition surveys throughout the whole range or just
11 specific areas?

12

13 MR. WOOLINGTON: We go to where the
14 caribou are at.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: uh-huh.

17

18 MR. WOOLINGTON: And that's one of the
19 reasons -- again, one of the reasons why we put radio
20 collars on them, satellite collars as well as VHF
21 collars, because they're not at the same place every
22 year during that time and so we're able -- that's --
23 that's one of the reasons we put collars on is that so
24 we can go there to where the caribou are at at -- you
25 know at the time we need to do the surveys, whether
26 it's the fall comp count, calving surveys, that sort of
27 thing.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But you do east and
30 west and.....

31

32 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yes.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:so.....

35

36 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, in fact, this
37 shows in the center, the green diamonds, that's the
38 combined east and west and, you know, these are the
39 Western caribou, the ones that were in the southern
40 calving area, this last year, it was about 37 calves
41 per 100 cows. The eastern caribou, about 23 calves per
42 100 cows, averaged, I think it was either 28 or 29.

43

44 MR. J. WALKER: Jack.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, James.

47

48 MR. J. WALKER: In regards to the herd
49 and the Whitefish Lake area below Aniak, has that herd
50 crossed up over the Kuskokwim into Kalskag and over to

1 the other side towards.....

2

3 MR. WOOLINGTON: Not that.....

4

5 MR. J. WALKER:towards.....

6

7 MR. WOOLINGTON: Not that I'm aware of.
8 You know that one excursion up to McGrath, and I don't
9 know how wide that was, whether, you know, they got up
10 there to McGrath and how far west of the Kuskokwim they
11 might have gone at that time, that was in '96. I was
12 actually helping Jack Whitman with some moose surveys
13 when they were there, but distribution on them that
14 year, I don't know. Since then have never seen any --
15 like on the north side of the Kuskokwim, at least in
16 the last 15 years that I've been there.

17

18 MR. J. WALKER: Just one more off the
19 wall question. There was a couple muskox up above
20 Aniak there and I was just wondering if there's any
21 status on that, if you're.....

22

23 MR. WOOLINGTON: That's completely.....

24

25 MR. J. WALKER:aware of it.

26

27 MR. WOOLINGTON:out of my area.
28 I'm in 17, that's -- I don't even know what unit that
29 would be. I could tell you, I suppose, it looks like
30 21E, that would be out of McGrath, I believe.

31

32 So this is for the bull/cow ratio, same
33 thing, number of bulls per 100 cows, monitoring that
34 during the fall comp counts. We've seen slow uptick of
35 bull/cow ratio from the lows in the mid-2000s and we've
36 got some interesting theories on what we were looking
37 at there.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And is the
40 composition of the bulls changing or are you getting
41 more older bulls in the composition, then do you
42 classify bulls?

43

44 MR. WOOLINGTON: Well, when I'm doing
45 that, you do it -- I've got -- I do it with a tally
46 counter, small bull, medium bull, large bull. And the
47 difference between a small bull and a medium bull can
48 be real subjective. And the difference between a
49 medium bull and a large bull can be subjective. But a
50 large bull, a big large -- big mature trophy bull, you

1 know, so -- so as far as looking at those actual
2 numbers, yeah, if there's some -- a little bit of fuzz
3 involved in that, but I would say in general terms we
4 have been seeing an increase in larger bulls in the
5 last few years.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Since the
8 restrictions on harvest, bag limits and so forth have
9 been reduced, you're starting to see older.....

10
11 MR. WOOLINGTON: I -- we're seeing.....

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:bulls in
14 the.....

15
16 MR. WOOLINGTON:it but that has
17 -- the harvest had nothing to do with it.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean there was a
20 tremendous harvest back in the early 2000s, you know,
21 late '90s and 2000s, phenomenal harvest on large bulls
22 and.....

23
24 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, there was also
25 -- well, there were 200,000 caribou out there, too, and
26 -- and, you know, reported harvest, totals of four or
27 5,000, now how many additional harve -- unreported, I
28 don't know, and not all of that were bulls.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hum. Will you get
31 into harvest later on in.....

32
33 MR. WOOLINGTON: In some but I'll also
34 get into.....

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:your
37 presentation?

38
39 MR. WOOLINGTON:looking at age
40 structure and bull/cow ratios and some of the things
41 that were going on.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

44
45 MR. WOOLINGTON: One of the things --
46 and also I said, when we were able to put collars on
47 the 10.5 month old females and were able to track them
48 through the collars, we had pretty good luck with the
49 collars, we'd buy them, they're rated for 36 months but
50 commonly have six or eight -- I've got some that are

1 still working after 10 years, so we're able to follow
2 them. Some of the satellite collared ones, we -- we go
3 out and recollar. But the last -- one of the things
4 that -- and this came out of the Fairbanks office, Rod
5 Borche, looking at condition of your herd, you can tell
6 a lot about the condition of what's going on in what
7 your three year old females are doing as far as the
8 percentage of female -- three year old females that are
9 having calves, and we've seen -- these are our three
10 year old here and so we've seen an uptick in those.
11 And so -- so looking at -- so things are looking pretty
12 good as far as we're seeing -- in general terms what
13 we're seeing is an increase in productivity of the
14 younger age class females. That's, you know, the best
15 way to put the general, to use the term.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that correlated
18 to the weight of the short yearlings, their weights are
19 increasing and so their productivity increases?

20

21 MR. WOOLINGTON: I think that has a lot
22 to do with it, it probably is then further related to
23 food supply. Whether it's the summer food going into
24 the fall or whether it's over winter food, I don't know
25 the answer to that one. But I think we've seen
26 improvements in both.

27

28 When we had 2,000 -- or 200,000 caribou
29 out on the range, that was the worst thing that ever
30 happened to that caribou herd. The areas where they
31 wintered, they -- while it was still large, they did
32 winter in, you know, heavily used areas that they had
33 traditionally used. The area north of Iliamna Lake was
34 basically turned into a big gravel pad, there were no
35 lichens there anymore, and that's when we started
36 seeing lower productivity and that's when we saw the
37 herd starting to decline.

38

39 So as far as, you know, we -- as I said
40 earlier we've seen increased weights, improved weights
41 in the 10.5 month old females when we're collaring
42 them, well, if they go into their first year heavier
43 then through the summer, if they've got a good summer
44 with good food, they're going to be in very good
45 condition for going into the fall.

46

47 Now, with these caribou, I've only --
48 I've only seen one or two calves produced by two year
49 olds, and that -- which make up a really high
50 proportion of your population, just because the -- the

1 age pyramid, or whatever you want to call it. But then
2 if they're in -- you know if they go into the fall,
3 into the winter in good shape as a two year old, then
4 hopefully if they've got good conditions, they're just
5 -- basically what we're looking at, you know, we're
6 growing bigger bulls, we're growing bigger calves,
7 we're growing -- we've got the three year olds having
8 calves at a -- at a pretty significant rate.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So three year old
11 cows are basically 60 to 70 percent pregnancy rates?

12

13 MR. WOOLINGTON: That's what we're
14 seeing now, yes.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

17

18 MR. WOOLINGTON: So this kind of shows
19 what we know about what the numbers did, you know,
20 started out in 1970s, a very low number, up in the
21 headwaters of the Mulchatna, gradually increased, rapid
22 increase through the '80s and '90s, peaked in the mid-
23 1990s, 1996/1997, somewhere in there, and then declined
24 fairly rapidly. Like I said the last estimate we got
25 during the summer, is summer 2008, between 30 and
26 40,000 caribou. It's -- you know, I don't have a
27 number for now. All the parameters we're looking at
28 look good but I just can't come up with a number.

29

30 So what caused these changes in
31 population, lots of questions there. Disease. In fall
32 of 1998 we had a big outbreak of foot rot, that's a
33 fusi-form bacteria that -- it's the same bacteria that
34 cattle get in the feed lots, walking through their
35 waste and everything and they develop sores, it
36 cripples them up and probably -- we saw lots of dead
37 caribou that fall, we saw lots of limping caribou. I
38 suspect it had a big influence on breeding that fall
39 and also overwinter survival. The next -- the
40 following fall, which would have been after the calves
41 that were carried that winter, we had about the lowest
42 calf/cow ratio ever recorded.

43

44 Predation. We've certainly got lots of
45 predation going on out there, wolf and bear predation.

46

47 Density dependent food limitations, as
48 I mentioned, you know, the population got bigger and
49 they were using a lot of the same area until they
50 finally started expanding. And so there were more and

1 more caribou using the same area and probably had some
2 influences on their food supply.

3
4 Age structure effects. I'll go into
5 that a little bit later. But basically what was
6 happening, we were having very large cohorts, that's
7 the number of calves born in any particular year and so
8 that led to the big increase in population and then we
9 started seeing poor calf productivity. So as each year
10 went by, then we had those -- the animals that were
11 born during those big calf years, they got older and
12 older and had some interesting effects on what we were
13 seeing.

14
15 Harvest. Harvest -- I've got some
16 information, it really declined as the population went
17 down.

18
19 Climate. Probably that's -- that
20 drives everything. We're always talking about climate
21 but I think it's probably all of the above that were
22 working together. I'd really like to know what allowed
23 the herd to increase so rapidly. That's something
24 we'll never know, but it increased to something like 17
25 percent a year, which is, you know, how that happens,
26 you know, I don't -- I don't know. I don't understand
27 how it could have happened, but we had a lot of caribou
28 out there.

29
30 As I said this is kind of a graph
31 showing the population numbers.

32
33 Using the surveys that we did have for
34 photo census and the population number counts and the
35 fall composition surveys and the calving information
36 that we had, we did some modeling and filled in the
37 blanks on the years that we didn't have population
38 information, just sort of smoothed the curve, just
39 because when -- when you're doing modeling you have to
40 be careful that, you know, this is -- this is -- you
41 know this is made up but we do it so that we can look
42 at different inputs that we do know, different numbers
43 that we know and see how different things fit into what
44 we predict might have been out there. And so using the
45 composition counts and what we had for the population
46 counts, we put in some -- modeled some calf/cow -- or
47 some percentages of -- or not actually -- this is --
48 this would be the number of bulls, number of calves and
49 number of cows that were in the population. Again,
50 this was modeling it.

1 And then based on the population model,
2 the known fall -- summer survey population estimates
3 and the known calf/cow ratios, bull/cow ratios, we're
4 able to take a look at what it looked like in the fall,
5 the number of caribou that were out there in the
6 population. And then some years we had 35, 36,000
7 calves going in -- yeah, into -- on to the winter --
8 they were in the population going into the wintertime,
9 some huge cohorts of calves and that's -- again, that's
10 the ones that survive through the summer, that's the
11 ones that'd be in the fall. And then as I said this
12 was the fall of 1999 following the outbreak of foot rot
13 in the fall of 19 -- there's August of 1998 when we saw
14 the foot rot, this is October of 1999, we were, you
15 know, very, very low observed calf/cow ratio, and just
16 a dismal calf crop that year, calf survival or calf --
17 whether they were born and died, whether they just
18 weren't born -- you know, whether the cows didn't
19 conceive that fall, didn't have calves, we don't know
20 that, but there were -- there was a very, very poor
21 calf/cow ratio that year.

22
23 So these are -- you know, these are the
24 number of calves that were going into -- that were in
25 the population going into those winters.

26
27 Further modeling it, and here's what
28 we, you know, the -- what I showed before as far as
29 kind of -- and this is the number of cows, this is only
30 for cows. And this is kind of what you would expect
31 for -- and this would be in 1998 back when the
32 population was still, you know, 50, 60,000 caribou
33 before it really started increasing, and this is what
34 you would expect to see in sort of a normal age
35 distribution. Here's the number that were in the
36 fall, you know, one and a half years old, and two and a
37 half years old, all the way out to 10.5 years old, 11.5
38 years. By age 11 or 12, the cows are -- they're gone.
39 That's as long as they live.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. They
42 produce.....

43
44 MR. WOOLINGTON: The other thing
45 to.....

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:through 10
48 years old?

49
50 MR. WOOLINGTON: Excuse me?

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do they produce
2 calves through 10 years old?

3
4 MR. WOOLINGTON: It's -- they probably
5 are producing calves in the older age classes but
6 probably at a lower rate. I think that's a real --
7 probably really variable from herd to herd on that one
8 and I couldn't tell you on this one because by the time
9 they're 10 years old we don't have many -- 10 or 11
10 years old we don't have many collars still out there.

11
12
13 MR. COLLINS: Have they considered what
14 they're going to do if they start increasing again? It
15 looks to me like in those high productive years they
16 could have had a yearround season with no limits for
17 subsistence, at least, there would have been no reason
18 for having bag limits or seasons, would there, in that
19 time, because any reduction wouldn't it have helped
20 stabilize it?

21
22 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, in hindsight if
23 they could have predicted that it was going to do that,
24 that probably would have been a good idea. Of course
25 it's -- you know, you're looking at these numbers after
26 they happened and seeing what's going on.

27
28 MR. COLLINS: Right.

29
30 MR. WOOLINGTON: But the season was,
31 what, August 10 to April 15th, bag limit of 5 and
32 caribou hunting in the summer out there probably
33 wouldn't be all that, you know, it's pretty warm down
34 there during the summertime and everybody's fishing
35 anyhow.

36
37 But the other thing to keep in mind, by
38 six or seven the bulls are dead, that's about as long
39 as they live. So this is just the cows. By six or
40 seven, any bulls that would have been born in the same
41 cohorts, in the same year that these cows were born in,
42 by age six or seven, they're out of the picture.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So maximum age is
45 seven years old for bulls?

46
47 MR. WOOLINGTON: Maximum age probably
48 referring to -- you know, you could probably find one
49 individual that's going to live longer than average but
50 by six or seven, your bulls are gone.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hum.

2

3 MR. WOOLINGTON: So there might be a
4 few that hang on longer than that, but they're probably
5 in pretty tough shape.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

8

9 MR. WOOLINGTON: When the herd, this is
10 in '93, so this is when the herd -- the herd is really
11 cooking along, really increasing rapidly and so we've
12 got kind of the same age structure, it's just bigger,
13 you know, 180,000, you know, you're -- it's just a
14 bigger population. Still we have kind of what we call
15 the normal age distribution, what -- we're going in
16 there we were still seeing probably normal -- normal
17 calf productivity. By 1996, when it peaked, we're
18 starting to see a drop in the younger age classes. We
19 started having some lower calf/cow ratios in the fall
20 and poor -- poorer calf -- whether it was poorer calf
21 crops, or poorer survival, we don't know, but in the
22 fall there were fewer -- we were seeing fewer calves in
23 the fall.

24

25 And so here in the -- you know, three
26 and four -- the four year olds, still quite a lot of
27 them, but the ones coming up in the next few years are
28 reduced.

29

30 And, again, by 1999 when we're dropping
31 down off the peak we're seeing this really strange age
32 structure in here.

33

34 And then as we're coming down here
35 further down, a big part of the population is tied up
36 in the older age classes and then see the numbers are
37 actually dropping down too.

38

39 By 2006, when we're down to about
40 47,000 caribou, very few caribou -- very few cows,
41 which are, you know, the ones that have the calves are
42 in these younger age classes in the more productive age
43 classes. In fact, there's a couple real poor calf
44 years that we see -- had few numbers. But we did have
45 -- we were still seeing quite a few of the remainders
46 from those large cohorts from -- from these real
47 productive years. So we've got a fair amount of the
48 population tied up in the older cows. And, again, the
49 bulls that were born, same year, as these nine year old
50 cows, they're long gone.

1 2008, again, the same thing. Big part
2 of the population is tied up in the older age classes.

3
4 We've seen an improvement of that. We
5 haven't modeled it much further. And -- but we are
6 seeing some improved -- like I said, we've got
7 increased -- the last few years we've got pretty good
8 calf/cow ratios so we've got some good calf crops
9 coming off and we've got some good productivity of
10 calves, good numbers of calves going into the fall into
11 the population.

12
13 Summary. It's probably a really --
14 kind of a -- we're referring it to a complex regional
15 cause of decline. Nearby on the Nushagak Peninsula
16 Herd, it's southwest of Dillingham, there was a caribou
17 herd introduced on the Nushagak Caribou -- or into the
18 Nushagak Peninsula 1987, 143 caribou were brought over
19 from south of King Salmon, the North Alaska Peninsula
20 Herd, and so we have a known number. And these -- this
21 Nushagak Peninsula, just so that we can see it here on
22 the same scale, because the shape of the curve is what
23 we're interested in here, it's 100 so, you know, it
24 wasn't the same size as the Mulchatna, what we saw --
25 you know in a nearby area, we saw the same thing. We
26 saw, you know, rapid increase, peak in the mid to late
27 1990s, 1997 -- '96, '97, '98, same as the Mulchatna and
28 then decline, and then subsequently we've seen it
29 decline to about a little over -- a little under -- it
30 was about 500 and current numbers there, the Nushagak
31 has -- it's about 900 now so it's increased. But
32 basically this is kind of the -- this is exactly the
33 curve you see for an introduced species of anything.
34 Plants. Fish. Bugs. Anything. And that's exactly
35 what the Mulchatna Caribou Herd did, too, which is
36 curious but I don't know what the significance of it
37 is.

38
39 (Laughter)

40
41 MR. WOOLINGTON: But that's -- so
42 anyhow, what we were seeing was a rapid increase and
43 rapid decline of another caribou herd nearby at the
44 same time.

45
46 We saw -- what we're -- we also feel
47 that the age structure was really.....

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Jim.....
50

1 MR. WOOLINGTON:affecting the
2 decline.
3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:backing up to
5 that. Was the harvest -- I know there was very high
6 harvest in those peak years also, was that harvest
7 shifted to this Nushagak Peninsula Herd also?
8
9 MR. WOOLINGTON: No. The -- there's --
10 well, the Nushagak Peninsula is hunted only by Federal
11 subsistence permit. At the peak there were, you know,
12 I don't think there were even 100 caribou reported
13 taken during the peak numbers when the hunting was
14 going on in the Nushagak.
15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
17
18 MR. WOOLINGTON: As it declined -- when
19 it got down to the lowest I think there were a -- there
20 was a year or two with no permits issued and then there
21 were five, and now we're iss -- they're issuing 100 to
22 150 permits now.
23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
25
26 MR. WOOLINGTON: And I forget the
27 number of caribou they're shooting for.
28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hum.
30
31 MR. WOOLINGTON: No, the -- the numbers
32 involved just wouldn't have made any difference.
33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. That's the
35 question, go ahead, Robert.
36
37 MR. R. WALKER; I have a question.
38
39 MR. WOOLINGTON: So anyway.....
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Just a second, yes,
42 Robert, go ahead.
43
44 MR. R. WALKER: During those peak
45 years, what was the weather, was it warm, was there a
46 lot of moisture, was there a lot have to do with
47 vegetation, less bugs to harass them or what?
48
49 MR. WOOLINGTON: That's a really good
50 question because what we saw the summer of '98 was --

1 it was relatively wet, and warm and no bugs, and calm.
2 How -- how we had no bugs I don't know, but it -- it
3 basically -- basically the caribou were down, they
4 didn't go up into the -- to get out of the brush and
5 stuff all summer long. I think that's probably how
6 they -- that's my theory on how the foot rot got to
7 them, because they stayed wet all summer long, and even
8 though when it's wet like that there's a lot of food
9 growth. So what's going on, and like I said we've been
10 trying to get a photo census done since -- our last one
11 is 2000 -- summer 2008, it just rains all summer long.
12 And, well, we -- you know, when it rains it grows food.
13

14 MR. R. WALKER: James asked a question
15 a while ago if.....

16
17 REPORTER: Robert. Robert. Mic.
18

19 MR. R. WALKER:the caribou ever
20 crossed the Kuskokwim River. '97, '98 and '99 they
21 came pretty close to Holy Cross, they were past
22 Kalskag, people were running into them and shooting
23 them right and left because there was no limit. So it
24 is kind of ironic when you go into these communities
25 they have caribou antlers hanging on their houses that,
26 you know, are supposed to not be there, which they did
27 cross over into the -- almost to the Yukon River.
28

29 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I think -- how
30 far down as the Western Arctic come, there were a few
31 years it got pretty -- down pretty -- quite, you know,
32 south, whether it's down into that area or not I don't
33 know, but there's been some strange movements in the
34 past by Western Arctic Caribou too.
35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, the Western
37 Arctic Herd came down fairly low but just one or two
38 years in the mid-90s, they were down quite a ways to
39 the south.
40

41 MR. R. WALKER; That's right. The
42 Western Arctic Caribou Herd did come down to Anvik like
43 in '99 or '98 or '97, in those three years they were
44 all down behind Grayling, people were shooting them
45 right practically back in town in Grayling, I mean.....
46

47 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah.

48
49 MR. R. WALKER:they were coming
50 right through the Yukon.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, they were real
2 heavy.....

3
4 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:on the Seward
7 Peninsula, they took away a lot of reindeer those years
8 and there was a lot of -- that was -- the Western Herd
9 now has been staying far to the north of that.

10
11 So continue.

12
13 MR. WOOLINGTON: One of the things
14 we've been looking at also when we did that modeling
15 was taking a look at that age structure and I think
16 that might have had some influences. Because of what
17 was in the age structure of the females, like I said
18 earlier, when you have a big part of the population was
19 tied up in the older age class females. So we're going
20 to have -- these are not going to be the prime calf
21 producers, and the prime calf producers in the younger
22 age classes, the four, five, six year olds, and through
23 there -- which are normally make up a big proportion of
24 your population when, you know -- you know, when I
25 showed the earlier graphs where you have higher numbers
26 in the earlier age structures as -- as they get older
27 you have fewer in that each age structure -- age class,
28 and so that, we think, was also influencing calf
29 productivity, where we were seeing lower calf/cow
30 ratios. We had a lot of cows out there and -- but
31 fewer calves being produced.

32
33 We also -- there was -- for a few years
34 we -- well, we saw a decline, a continued decline in
35 the bull/cow ratio but then -- but we were -- like I
36 mentioned earlier, by age six or seven, the bulls from
37 those cohorts when those large age classes, they were
38 gone. So what we were looking at with the bull/cow
39 ratio information is we were out there counting the
40 cows, the older aged cows, but the bulls that had been
41 born during those same cohorts, they were no longer
42 there. And so we were -- and at that -- those times we
43 were seeing the lower bull/cow ratios. Since we've
44 been seeing better calf/cow ratios and seeing increased
45 productivity, increased calf size and -- and also the
46 three year olds, higher proportion of three year olds
47 producing calves, we're also starting to see an
48 increase in the bull/cow ratio and also we're starting
49 to see some nice large bulls out there again, too.

50

1 So probably the -- the most important
2 thing on what was driving that bull/cow ratio down was
3 we were counting old cows and there -- you know, the
4 bulls weren't there.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

7
8 MR. WOOLINGTON: Not that they -- I
9 don't -- they didn't get shot. There was a lot of
10 harvest going on in the, you know, late '90s and early
11 2000s but what was also happening is there were a lot
12 big -- the skewed age structure of more cows being out
13 there in those age -- in those older age classes.

14
15 So -- and what we have seen is seeing
16 an uptick in the bulls. And we kind of split it --
17 because conveniently we can count the eastern ones and
18 the western ones and they stay apart, but also not
19 ready to call them two herds yet, probably it won't
20 happen, but we are -- we are seeing an increase in the
21 overall bull/cow ratio.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you get crossover
24 between those two herds, are the bulls jumping back and
25 forth?

26
27 MR. WOOLINGTON: I'll cover that a
28 little later.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

31
32 MR. WOOLINGTON: I've got some charts
33 and stuff to show that.

34
35 Well, here -- here we go.

36
37 Okay, this is a satellite cow that we
38 started -- Andy Aderman with the Togiak Refuge is
39 pretty much the lead on this project. In -- in spring
40 2005 we started putting out satellite collars on adult
41 females and here is one -- one of them. We had a big
42 group of caribou that wintered in the Togiak River
43 Valley, so we got the collars on in March, and then in
44 May 2005 -- March 2005 we got the collars on, May 2005
45 she calved in the southern calving area, the Kemuk
46 calving area, and then she wintered over in the west --
47 western area, over here is Bethel, this is Unit -- GMU
48 18 over here, south of the Kuskokwim River, then again
49 she -- in the -- this is kind of on the northern edge
50 of the southern calving area up here by the confluence

1 of the Nowakuk and Nushagak River, and then post-
2 calving aggregation was over here, north Iliamna Lake,
3 and then she wintered over here on the eastern side in
4 the winter of 2006, 2007, and then in May of 2007 she
5 went up here and calved in the northern area. And then
6 up here in the -- over in the headwaters of the
7 ElutisPak (ph) and King Salmon River, during the post-
8 calving aggregation and then for whatever reason, we --
9 we lost the collar -- the collar quit functioning over
10 here on the north -- north of Lake Clark, over in this
11 area.

12
13 So basically two different calving
14 areas. Two different wintering areas for this one cow.
15 This was in 2005 to 2007.

16
17 A little later one, same thing, we're
18 collaring them in the same places and what we saw was
19 the ones that calved here in the northern area,
20 wintered in the eastern area, and the ones that calved
21 in the southern area are moving over and calving -- or
22 wintering in the western area. And for a number of
23 years then we didn't see any mixing.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have any
26 bulls collared in this?

27
28 MR. WOOLINGTON: They kind of followed
29 this same thing. There were -- we didn't have as many
30 bulls -- and we didn't have satellite collars on the
31 bulls, just VHF collars. We did see some moving around
32 but it's -- it's not -- it's not real clear-cut.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

35
36 MR. WOOLINGTON: So -- so this is what
37 we were seeing for a few years, just absolutely no
38 mixing. And these are satellite collars, but we saw
39 the same thing in all the VHF collars also. This is,
40 you know, up here in Lime Village, Tundra Lake, here's
41 -- this would be Whitefish Lake so Aniak would be up in
42 this area here.

43
44 And this is kind of what we're seeing
45 now. I showed this earlier.

46
47 This is what the eastern caribou, they
48 calve up in here, and then this is the western caribou,
49 they calve here and then a few of them are calving here
50 and then last year we started seeing some mixing again.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
2
3 MR. WOOLINGTON: So we've had caribou
4 that wintered down in here, were here during May, and
5 then wintered out here this last winter.
6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
8
9 MR. WOOLINGTON: So they're being
10 caribou.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.
13
14 MR. WOOLINGTON: Don't ever try to say
15 that you know what caribou are doing or that you can
16 predict what they're going to do because as soon as you
17 do it, they'll prove you wrong.
18
19 Here's some numbers on reported
20 harvest.
21
22 We really only have reported harvest
23 numbers from 1999. Prior to that the Department didn't
24 send out reminder letters to people getting the harvest
25 cards and stuff. So did see a decline in total number
26 of hunters, as well as reported harvest through time.
27 As the population declined we also saw a decline in
28 number of hunters and decline in reporting harvest.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When were
31 restrictions put in place, in 2006?
32
33 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah. There were some
34 changes in here.
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Bag limits were
37 reduced?
38
39 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yes. Yeah. Looking
40 at the reported harvest, though, there really weren't
41 that many people reporting taking five caribou. It was
42 -- now that said, the -- we probably -- you know, we
43 probably get better reporting over on the east side
44 than over on the west side. More villages over on the
45 west side that don't have access to harvest vendors and
46 that sort of -- traditionally -- they're -- they're
47 doing better now because there's some registration
48 moose hunts and that sort of thing over there so -- so
49 they're issuing lots of permits and people are starting
50 to pick up harvest -- harvest cards and that sort of

1 thing over -- over on the west.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

4

5 MR. WOOLINGTON: The other thing is
6 during this time, up until about 2001 we didn't have a
7 regular season over in 18, it was only opened when
8 caribou went over there, and they didn't go over into
9 18 every year.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

12

13 MR. WOOLINGTON: So starting about 2000
14 we went ahead -- and rather than EO the season, we
15 just, you know, some of them are going over there every
16 year, we're just going to have a season over in 18, if
17 the caribou aren't there, well, there's no hunting
18 going on. So -- yeah, there has -- have been some
19 changes in regulation, seasons and bag limits.

20

21 In 2007 is when we changed -- the Board
22 of Game changed the bag limit from three down to two,
23 of which only one of them could be a bull, and only one
24 caribou prior to January 31st. It -- the non-resident
25 season went to just two weeks in September, and that
26 same year closed same day airborne of caribou in 9B,
27 and 17B and C. And now the same day airborne was only
28 opened after January. There was only a late winter
29 hunt over there in that area. The 2009 meeting closed
30 caribou hunting throughout the range of the Mulchatna
31 for non-residents. In 2011 created the Mulchatna Herd
32 Predation Management Area, basically a wolf control
33 area through -- it's about 30,000 square miles on the
34 eastern -- kind of the eastern side, including the
35 southern calving area of the Mulchatna range. And then
36 a year ago, March 2012, the Board added 19A and B,
37 which would include the northern calving area into the
38 Mulchatna Predation Management Area. Now, keep in
39 mind, 19A actually was also -- was already in a wolf
40 control area, but that was for moose, but just to make
41 it a little cleaner we -- we -- so that we could
42 continue -- in case anything happened with the other
43 19A programs, we included it in the Mulchatna program.

44

45 This is the area on the middle Nushagak
46 River where we do have an active wolf control program
47 going on. Koliganek, right here, Dillingham is off to
48 the southwest, Ekwok, New Stuyahok, here's the
49 Mulchatna River, everything within this boundary we --
50 it's on -- on March 2012 opened up and we ran through

1 the end of April. This year we opened it up February
2 1st for aerial wolf control.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And those are with
5 aircraft teams, like they have SuperCubs with a gunner
6 and pilot teams and they're certified with permits, or
7 are you doing the control?

8

9 MR. WOOLINGTON: No, this is public
10 permitted control.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

13

14 MR. WOOLINGTON: The Department -- on
15 this one we're not going out and doing it. And it's
16 specifically on the calving grounds, and it's basically
17 the same guys that have been involved in 16B and 19,
18 the same pilots, same gunners, they -- and -- going
19 down into GMU 9 also.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

22

23 MR. WOOLINGTON: We -- along with that
24 predator -- or wolf control program we started a
25 caribou calf mortality project, where we're going out
26 putting collars on newborn caribou calves. The first
27 year we put a -- it was mostly in the southern calving
28 area, the Kemuk Mountain calving area. We got a few in
29 May 2011 in the Tundra Lake calving area. We hoped to
30 have split them about 50/50 but because of weather and
31 logistics, we just weren't able to get back up there
32 and do it so we decided we're going to put them all in
33 the area where we can actually work.

34

35 Survival to birth changed from 73
36 percent to 92 percent in the southern calving area.
37 Not only did we -- in this last -- this last May, we
38 didn't have any documented calves killed by wolves, we
39 didn't even see any wolves on the calving grounds, on
40 the southern calving grounds.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does that Tundra
43 Lake area got a lot of brown bear predation?

44

45 MR. WOOLINGTON: What we were seeing
46 mostly the predation on the calves, brown and black
47 bears. I think there was one wolverine and maybe an
48 eagle and that sort of thing.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

1 MR. WOOLINGTON: But as far as the
2 predation loss it was mostly by bears up in that
3 country.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

6
7 MR. WOOLINGTON: This shows -- again,
8 this is the wolf control area. In the winter of
9 2011/2012 -- regulatory year 2011 we had 74 wolves
10 reported taken within the control area, only 11 by the
11 aircraft teams. Most of them are taken by the
12 villagers from Ekwok, Koliganek and New Stuyahok which
13 is right here. A few of them are taken -- a few of
14 them out here were taken by folks from Dillingham.

15
16 The map like this for 2012 -- or 2011
17 looked almost exactly like this. A little bit change
18 in the distribution of where these -- these -- this
19 thing that looks like a little goat, well, that's
20 supposed to be a caribou calf, that was a location of
21 putting a radio collar on a newborn caribou calf, we
22 had -- in 20 -- in May 2011 we had -- actually had some
23 calving going on down in here. 2012 we had more
24 calving going on up north but that's also where quite a
25 few wolves were taken, right through here.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do you feel that
28 there was full extrapolation within the control area, you
29 didn't see a wolf in there?

30
31 MR. WOOLINGTON: Not full extrapolation
32 because basically by the end of April is about as --
33 you know, that's when the wolf control -- the aerial
34 wolf control program ended, and that's -- by the end of
35 April it's pretty much the limit of when guys can get
36 out. They got out a little bit in April, but we lose
37 the traveling condition then so it kind of goes away.
38 Consequently wolves from the surrounding area could wor
39 -- could move in. So we wanted to run it as long as --
40 late as feasibly possible to try and keep -- you know,
41 knock down the wolves as much as possible in the
42 calving area, but recognizing that, you know, we're
43 always going to have some movement. But May 2012, like
44 I said we did not see any wolves during the calf
45 collaring project.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What's your peak
48 calving dates for those two areas?

49
50 MR. WOOLINGTON: Off the top of my head

1 I'd say this was about the 23rd to the 25th or 26th,
2 and the northern part is a couple days earlier?
3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Of May?
5
6 MR. WOOLINGTON: Excuse me?
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Of May?
9
10 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yes, of May.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those northern
13 caribou are calving in June, you know, they're calving
14 the 7th of June through the 2nd of.....
15
16 MR. WOOLINGTON: In the.....
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In the Arctic
19 population.
20
21 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah. Yeah.
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Continue.
24
25 MR. WOOLINGTON: Well, it's interesting
26 because on the northern -- the northern ones, it's --
27 you know, I fly the May survey, it's obvious that, you
28 know, spring is -- is -- you know we got green stuff up
29 in the northern calving area, spring is further along
30 in the northern calving area than down here on the
31 southern calving area at the same time. So typically
32 we see calving up there and come down and find just a
33 few calves down here, and then in a couple days they
34 start dropping.
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have you ever
37 correlated tussock bloom to the peak calving date?
38 That's a huge trophic thing for Arctic caribou is the
39 tussock blossom.
40
41 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I haven't. I
42 haven't -- I -- I don't do vegetation work. But there
43 is -- there's a larger, sort of southwest caribou
44 research project going on and it includes the Mulchatna
45 Herd and the Peninsula Herds and the Nushagak and --
46 where they're looking at spring green up and the
47 phenology of that. It's done -- Bill Collins with our
48 office is working with the University and they're doing
49 some, you know, snow depth and snow persistence and
50 green up and looking at different -- different factors,

1 but I'm not involved in any of that.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would suggest that
4 they get ahold of a lot of that data that they did up
5 at the Arctic Refuge, where they actually delineated
6 this snow melt and correlation to tussock blossom. The
7 tussock blossom is a huge driving force of protein for
8 those cow caribou so that has a huge bearing on when
9 caribou want to -- when they calve, you know.

10

11 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I'd say -- yeah,
12 I'm sure we could see the tussock blossoming -- you
13 know -- you're talking about the white blooms, or the
14 flowers?

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the flower.
17 When it -- it's.....

18

19 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, okay.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:only there for
22 one day.

23

24 MR. WOOLINGTON: Okay.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: As soon as the snow
27 melts off it blossoms and that's what the caribou --
28 the cow caribou are pigging out on that stuff because
29 it's high protein. And so I -- you know, that's a big
30 factor on where caribou calve, especially in the Arctic
31 is where -- where there's high tussock blossom. We've
32 had fire, like in the Kanuti area and these Ray
33 Mountain and Hodzana Caribou went specifically to the
34 burn because right after the burn the tussock blossom
35 heavily and the caribou were just right out in the
36 burns eating that tussock. So a lot of people discount
37 tussock as a food source for caribou, but people are
38 way too zoned in on lichen, where as the Teshekpuk Herd
39 has hardly any lichen and it primarily eats tussock
40 sedge, so that's a big factor. Talking about
41 caribou.....

42

43 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:in the
46 Mulchatna.

47

48 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

1 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I know, like the
2 South Peninsula Herd, they don't have lichens down in
3 that country or Unimak Island.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

6
7 MR. WOOLINGTON: They're eating sedges
8 and grasses and forbes and all that other stuff.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Uh-huh.

11
12 MR. WOOLINGTON: And so consequently
13 after two years of pretty healthy wolf harvest -- or
14 wolf take in the southern calving area, this is kind of
15 what we've seen for the calf/cow ratios. It's about 37
16 calves per 100 cows for the western caribou, these
17 here, and where they -- where we did the wolf control,
18 so I guess, you know, put the numbers together, it
19 looks -- and we're -- and this is basically the same
20 thing that we saw down on the Southern Peninsula Herd
21 when we did -- the Department did wolf control
22 specifically on the calving grounds on there, just a
23 dramatic increase, probably even more dramatic, they
24 went from two calves per 100 cows to 37. So down --
25 down in that area. We weren't near that bad, but -- so
26 we're seeing, you know -- that's what we saw for
27 calf/cow ratios.

28
29 This last year -- or last -- well, I
30 guess it was February 2013, just last month, the Board
31 of Game, we submit a proposal to change hunting for
32 Mulchatna Caribou throughout the range from the general
33 harvest card where you get the five caribou cards and
34 kind of the orangeish card to a registration hunt
35 because we just weren't getting -- people that were
36 getting the cards weren't returning them. We didn't
37 know whether they were hunting or not. But in the --
38 about -- in 2010 we had about a little over 2,000
39 harvest cards issued to people that reside within the
40 range of the Mulchatna Herd. About 47 percent of those
41 were turned in. So a lot of them that were getting the
42 harvest cards were not sending in -- or a lot of them
43 that were getting -- yeah, a lot of them who were
44 getting the harvest cards were not turning in the
45 harvest reports. So in Southwest Alaska we've got a
46 number of other registration hunts. Over in 18 they've
47 got a big registration moose hunt, issued like 1,600
48 permits. We've had registration moose hunts in 17
49 since the early 1980s and people are used to using
50 them. I think it was real confusing to issue these --

1 issue folks caribou harvest card with five harvest
2 tickets when the bag limit was two and with the
3 registration hunt they can get it at the same vendors
4 they're getting their licenses and the same places they
5 were getting the card -- the harvest cards. We're also
6 going to start working with the councils as well as
7 these -- the permits will be available on line but --
8 but it'll have two harvest cards and it'll also have
9 specific information regarding season dates, bag
10 limits. When you get that then you'll get that
11 information, which wasn't issued with the general
12 harvest card. People were getting those and it's just
13 like, you know, why -- why -- the bag limit must be
14 five if you're giving me five harvest cards. So -- so
15 anyhow the Board of Game changed that this spring so
16 we'll see how that works.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm encouraged to
19 hear that.

20

21 MR. WOOLINGTON: In closing, one of the
22 things that I -- the message that I really try to let
23 people know is initially the Mulchatna Herd was a very
24 small herd with a limited distribution and utilization.
25 In the late '70s, you know, there were few of them, and
26 they were up in the headwaters of the Mulchatna.

27

28 The folks from Dillingham didn't hunt
29 them, they went down south of King Salmon. Folks from
30 Kenai and Soldotna were the ones who were hunting
31 Mulchatna Caribou, maybe from Port Alsworth flying
32 north up into them. But it grew rapidly into a large
33 herd and also the -- as it grew rapidly it increased in
34 distribution as well as use.

35

36 It was a large herd for really a
37 relatively short time.

38

39 And it also decreased rapidly.

40

41 But when it decreased it's still using
42 the same, you know, same widespread distribution and
43 also the same users that were using them when it was a
44 very large herd. So it's still going to the same
45 places and the same people that were hunting them when
46 there was a large number of them are still wanting to
47 hunt them, even though there's fewer of them.

48

49 It segregated into two groups. They
50 used two different wintering areas. They're three

1 distinct calving areas.

2

3 Presently little mixing between groups,
4 but we're starting -- may be starting to see a little
5 bit of mixing, whether that's going to continue, we
6 don't know.

7

8 We're also seeing an increased
9 percentage of younger aged females that are having
10 calves.

11

12 Increased size of the 10.5 month old
13 female calves.

14

15 We've got an aerial wolf control
16 program on the calving area for the western caribou.

17

18 We have the potential for doing it on
19 the eastern area but we're using that as kind of a
20 control. Not doing it yet. Although part of it is in
21 a wolf control area.

22

23 We're seeing improving calf/cow and
24 bull/cow ratios.

25

26 So all of those, a number of different
27 factors are really looking positive, but we still can't
28 get a summer count and that's what everybody wants. We
29 try every summer and we'll continue to try or the folks
30 that are going to be working on it will continue to
31 try, but we just can't, for a number of factors,
32 haven't been able to get it.

33

34 So the wolf control area, it will
35 continue in the calving area. Those go for at least
36 five years.

37

38 This May we're going to have another
39 calf mortality project in the calving areas.

40

41 The telemetry and annual surveys and
42 harvest monitoring are all going to continue.

43

44 And that's what I have for Mulchatna
45 Caribou.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was a very
48 enlightening presentation Jim. I really appreciate you
49 bringing that to the Council.

50

1 I did have a question on harvest. What
2 is your calculation for wound loss when you had
3 intensive hunting, you know, when you have intensive
4 hunting with caribou, caribou have a high incidental
5 harvest mortality factor, and so most managers have a
6 calculated wound loss rate, or a mortality factor, so
7 do you have -- what do you use for.....

8
9 MR. WOOLINGTON: No, I don't have one
10 and I don't figure it in. I don't know how you even
11 come up with that number. I recognize that it's there,
12 some people say it's as high as 25, 30 or more percent,
13 and that may well be valid, but how you put a number on
14 that that you can actually, you know, pass the red face
15 test, I don't know.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I know Osborne did
18 one here on the Koyukuk back, just before you showed
19 up, and he had about 15 percent wound loss, that was by
20 asking the hunters checking through Ella on moose. I
21 thought that was pretty high. But the -- you know,
22 when you increase bag limit for caribou, that's what I
23 cautioned the Board of Game, when they increased the
24 bag limit, then you encourage hunters to try to fill
25 that out of the same herd. So here you start shooting
26 at 150 yards and these caribou are running away and so
27 you get pass through shots, you get wound -- you get a
28 way higher wound loss rates the higher the bag limit so
29 there's this exponential increase in wound loss rate.
30 And so what your presentation shows me is that when the
31 cohorts started to go down, it would behoove the
32 Department to start to protect bulls, and I'm a big
33 advocate of maintaining bull/cow ratios for healthy
34 breeding. I've seen too many places where the bull/cow
35 ratios on moose and caribou have gotten so low that
36 you're basically shifting all the breeding on to
37 younger bulls in the population, which stresses those.
38 I don't feel you get the same kind of recruitment off a
39 young bull breeding as you do off of older bulls
40 because cows don't accept them as easily and so you've
41 harassed these -- these bulls wear themselves out.

42
43 I'm very encouraged by the data that
44 you presented, that the Mulchatna Herd, I feel, is
45 stabilizing. I feel, as you probably do, that the cold
46 summers are really beneficial to them as far as
47 harassment, they don't -- we get really good fat
48 caribou when we come off of really cooler summers in
49 the Arctic and so I'm.....

50

1 MR. WOOLINGTON: Uh-huh.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:encouraged that
4 your summers will actually be beneficial to the
5 caribou. You don't see hoof rot, but you're seeing
6 healthy -- I'm positive you're going to start to see
7 good healthy recruitments. And so I'm real encouraged
8 by what the Mulchatna Herd -- this Council was
9 completely in the dark as to what was going on about
10 what was happening with Mulchatna. We know bad things
11 happened. I wanted this Council to be aware of what is
12 the current data and I really appreciate you coming to
13 make this presentation.

14

15 Does the Council have any questions for
16 Jim on Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

17

18 MR. R. WALKER: Could you state your
19 name for the record.

20

21 (No comment)

22

23 MR. R. WALKER: Your name, first and
24 last name.

25

26 MR. WOOLINGTON: Jim Woolington from
27 Fish and Game from Dillingham.

28

29 REPORTER: Jim, mic.

30

31 MR. WOOLINGTON: Jim Woolington,
32 Department of Fish and Game in Dillingham.

33

34 REPORTER: Thanks.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm also
37 encouraged by the Board of Game putting the
38 registration hunt. I have huge problems with the
39 State's registration hunts, because people can hunt an
40 area and they may or may not actually reported that
41 they hunted there, they might hunt three different
42 areas in Alaska, urban hunters go all over the place.
43 If they go to Mulchatna to hunt and don't get a
44 caribou, they might end up hunting in Unit 13 or some
45 other unit, they might hunt in the Arctic and then kill
46 caribou there. You don't actually get how many hunters
47 -- they might have shot at caribou and wounded caribou
48 and didn't get one and bring one home and then went and
49 hunted somewhere's else so you don't get the same kind
50 of harvest reporting from the general hunts that you do

1 from a registration, where, did you hunt there, did you
2 take any caribou, you get a lot cleaner data and I'm
3 real happy that the Department submitted that proposal
4 and that you have a registration to track this.

5
6 I feel the Mulchatna Herd had historic
7 use far to the north of the Kuskokwim River. I used to
8 fish in Bristol Bay, there's major caribou trails
9 etched in the tops of the mountains going way to the
10 north of Aniak. And it doesn't take a rocket scientist
11 to see that there were hundreds of thousands of caribou
12 that used to use those hills historically that have
13 not, did not get to, for various reasons, hoof rot,
14 various factors, limited the herd. I feel that the
15 herd will expand and utilize -- if you look at the
16 lichen resource to the north of the Kuskokwim River,
17 those hills going north of McGrath, there's major
18 caribou feed to the north. And so that herd has the
19 possibility to expand and utilize that if things line
20 up.

21
22 I'm an advocate for maintaining good
23 bull/cow ratios on populations so that we can have
24 sustained yield to the harvest. And so high
25 populations of caribou feed more people. And so I'm an
26 advocate for the subsistence users of this region and I
27 feel that there may have been mistakes, not of
28 curtailment of bull harvest early enough that
29 exacerbated some of the issues, other issues that were
30 going on. I'm not blaming it all on overharvest, but I
31 do feel that overharvest of bulls during the decline
32 was probably not the best thing to be doing, especially
33 the older age class bulls and maintaining harvest by
34 non-residents targeting large bulls through 2009, was
35 probably the last thing that should have been
36 happening. Because they target trophy bulls. And with
37 the low bull/cow ratios, that was probably not the best
38 thing to be doing.

39
40 You had a comment there, Ray.

41
42 MR. COLLINS: Well, it's interesting in
43 there to see the marked difference between the age of
44 the bulls and the cows. It must mean that the rut
45 activity by the bulls is harder on them than calving is
46 on the cows or something. The difference in the age
47 span there was really marked, different.

48
49 MR. WOOLINGTON: I think that's
50 probably one of the factors. I don't -- I don't know

1 what they all might be but, you know, there's -- I
2 think there's lots of different species that have
3 different age spans between males and females.

4

5 MR. COLLINS: I was in McGrath when
6 they came up there and we were hoping that they were
7 going to come back because there was good food around
8 the area there, as you said, there in the north the
9 local caribou haven't used -- they've never grown very
10 much and they're not using all that area.

11

12 But one of the interesting things is
13 that they were able to go through timber to go from
14 feeding area to feeding area, it was like they were
15 picking up on some of those old historic trails.
16 Somehow they knew to go through some of those trees to
17 come out to an area to feed. Because on the ground you
18 would not see anything there, but they were moving up
19 towards Telida, going through timber and so on and then
20 they'd come out to the open areas again, so there must
21 have been some old trails that gave them some clues or
22 something.

23

24 MR. WOOLINGTON: Yeah, I think there's
25 a lot going on with caribou that we don't know, and
26 will never know. I'm always amazed that they can just
27 shift from an area they're using, you know, be miles
28 and miles away from an area that goes snow free and
29 just, boom, go right over to it.

30

31 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

32

33 MR. WOOLINGTON: Whether they smell it
34 or not, I don't know. but one of the things that you
35 mentioned, you know, the area of habitat that looks
36 suitable north of the Kuskokwim, one of the places that
37 I've always thought it was curious is east of the Aniak
38 River. I've never located any caribou in those hills
39 to the east of the Aniak River. I've flown over there
40 a number of times going from Point A to Point B, or
41 whatever, no caribou trails in there, or not that you
42 can -- not like what you see in other areas so, you
43 know, it's not like there was historical use in that
44 area. Looking at it you can't tell it's any different
45 from any other area. They use the area to the west of
46 the Aniak River, but I've never seen any -- never
47 located any of them east of the Aniak River and, you
48 know, north of the lake system and in through that
49 area. Why they don't use that, don't have a clue.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You ought to take a
2 ride through the Kuskokwim Mountains all the way up --
3 go all the way up to Ruby and those guys in Ruby, long
4 ago they used to have like thousands and thousands of
5 caribou swim across the Yukon River there at Ruby.
6 Those caribou were coming out of the south, wintering
7 in the Cochrine Mountains to the north and migrating
8 back to the south again. It's my impression those were
9 Mulchatna Caribou, or what we would call now Mulchatna
10 Caribou, they were some kind of southwest Alaska
11 caribou herd that was huge that utilized almost half of
12 Alaska in a migratory pattern. You can see these giant
13 trails all over the ridges going all the way up there
14 to Ruby.

15
16 And so it's my impression that Alaska's
17 being under utilized by the caribou herds of Alaska,
18 the large herds because they never are allowed to get
19 to the point where -- I hear that, oh, my gosh, they're
20 going to start migrating, you know, the Central Herd's
21 starting to migrate more, that's a positive thing, that
22 feeds more people, that spreads their use over a vast,
23 more bigger area, and gives more people opportunity to
24 harvest. I don't think that that's a bad thing, if
25 they have habitat to go to. If they have lichen
26 resources to go to, like the Mulchatna to the north or
27 the Central Arctic Caribou to the south into areas that
28 they haven't utilized for 50 years or 100 years. And
29 so I feel that large caribou herds are beneficial to
30 people in general and we need to get a little finer
31 tune on managing caribou as far as you have an
32 understanding of age class and structure, I think that
33 in the future that the Mulchatna Herd could be managed
34 to where it wouldn't have -- caribou have bad things
35 happen to them. They get icing events. Icing is a big
36 deal, it ices over their food. They get deep snow
37 years, that stresses them out, and you get dips. And
38 so you have to have -- you get over this -- the
39 Mulchatna's graph, once it gets higher than 30, 40,000
40 then it can outstrip its predation factors where you're
41 arbitrarily doing that with wolf control. But once
42 they outstrip their predation factors, they can expand,
43 and they'll move. And so I think that the Mulchatna
44 has potential to return back to 200,000 and I don't
45 feel that that's a bad thing because people were
46 utilizing those to a greater degree. And so I would
47 like to see Mulchatna Caribou managed for good bull/cow
48 ratios in the future.

49
50 Yeah, it's a tough bullet to bite if

1 you've got hunting guides sitting on the Board of Game
2 wanting to hunt large bull caribou on Mulchatna when
3 you don't have bulls to give, but that's what needs to
4 be done.

5
6 And so I'm encouraged with current
7 management of the Mulchatna Herd, and I think this
8 Council needed to hear this discussion, and I
9 appreciate you coming all the way up here to Galena,
10 Jim.

11
12 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. Hopefully,
13 they're still on the line. Bo, are you still there.

14
15 MR. HILL: Hey, Melinda, this is Jerry.
16 Bo is on another line at the moment.

17
18 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

19
20 MR. HILL: But I can speak.

21
22 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do you want him to go
23 ahead.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, let me.....

26
27 MR. HILL: Mr. Chair. Council members.
28 This is Jerry Hill, wildlife biologist with the Innoko
29 National Wildlife Refuge in McGrath.

30
31 Mr. Chair. Brad Scotton was supposed
32 to give an update on our.....

33
34 MS. HERNANDEZ: Jerry.

35
36 MR. HILL:moose survey.....

37
38 REPORTER: Jerry. Jerry, wait a
39 minute.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hey, wait a minute,
42 Jerry.

43
44 MS. HERNANDEZ: Sorry. It was my
45 mistake.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you have one
48 more slide you were wanting to show there or you're
49 done?

50

1 MR. WOOLINGTON: Done.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,
4 Jerry.
5
6 REPORTER: Okay, Jerry, go ahead.
7
8 MR. HILL: Okay. Sorry about that.
9
10 REPORTER: No problem.
11
12 MR. HILL: Yeah, this is Jerry up in
13 McGrath, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to -- I talked to
14 Brad Scotton earlier, he was going to give an update on
15 our moose survey that we just completed last week. I
16 don't know if he was able to do that or not. I wasn't
17 in on that part of the call, I think Brad was already
18 too far in his presentation.
19
20 But, anyway, we did accomplish our
21 first GSPE moose survey on the Refuge last week. It
22 was a cooperative effort between the Innoko Refuge and
23 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Nowitna Refuge.
24 We were able to do a survey area relatively small in
25 size, we did enough blocks where we think we'll get
26 good confidence intervals with the survey area centered
27 in the middle of the Refuge in Unit 21A which is going
28 to benefit Fish and Game as well as the Refuge in the
29 future. At this point it's too early, we haven't done
30 any of the analysis of the data, so it's just an
31 announcement that we did complete that. And I will
32 provide those data in writing for the fall meeting of
33 the WIRAC and hopefully be present to present that in
34 person as well wherever the next meeting's going to be
35 held.
36
37 And I don't know if Brad touched on it
38 or not but he also said he might mention the
39 composition survey, the trend count areas that actually
40 the Koyukuk Nowitna Staff completed for us in November
41 of 2012. It was an ongoing project. Brad and his
42 Staff helped develop this trend count area in 2011 and
43 this is our second year of actually flying that survey.
44 And Brad and his Staff, they flew all the trend count
45 blocks from that previously established survey and
46 actually flew some other areas to try to figure out if
47 we could fine tune that. And it worked out pretty
48 well, I think. I think the data we collected is going
49 to be beneficial and probably keep that trend count
50 area kind of the way it's been established, maybe

1 adding a block and dropping a couple.

2

3 But for the composition data on the
4 Refuge in Unit 21A, the moose observed was very similar
5 of the one -- 165 in 2011, and 163 in 2012. The
6 bull/cow ratio and the calf/cow ratios are still very
7 high, but they did drop. Bull/cow ratios were 82 per
8 100 cows in 2011. The bull/cow ratio for 2012 dropped
9 to 71 per 100 cows. Calf per cow went from 48 per 100
10 cows in 2011 and in 2012 it dropped to 33 per 100.
11 Obviously this is just two years of data collected, so
12 I don't think we can infer much into that at this
13 point.

14

15 But, anyway, the numbers.....

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Jerry.

18

19 MR. HILL:are still high.....

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Jerry.

22

23 MR. HILL:and I don't see any
24 reason to be alarmed.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Jerry.

27

28 REPORTER: Jerry, wait a second.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Jerry.

31

32 MR. HILL: Yeah.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was wondering if
35 you -- what was 21A's snow depth last winter, would
36 that correlate to the reduced calf survival and
37 bull/cow ratio?

38

39 MR. HILL: Jack, I think that probably
40 could. I don't know if Brad said in his presentation,
41 I didn't really heard of what he presented on the
42 Koyukuk Refuge, unfortunately last year with no pilot
43 for the Refuge we weren't able to conduct any snow
44 stake surveys so I don't actually have that data to
45 compare. But we obviously know it was a very high snow
46 depth year. And the one this is the percentage of cows
47 with calves that we noted in 2012 similar to 2011, was
48 the twinning rates, or actually the number of twins
49 observed, was lower. So that probably just brings down
50 the ratio. But, I would anticipate, yeah, the stress

1 put on the cows by that heavy snow year probably did
2 have an influence on the calf/cow ratios that we did
3 observe this past fall.

4
5 But I guess speaking to the snow stake
6 surveys, we are flying them again this winter, and I
7 think we have nine survey stakes out on the Refuge and
8 I think two of them are out of operation. So with that
9 we're going to plan on actually redeploying new snow
10 stakes close to the old snow stake locations that are
11 down and try to get an accurate representative sample
12 of the data that we can. And we're going to place
13 these new snow stakes in areas where we can access them
14 by float plane to do any maintenance. So that data set
15 will be ongoing and we're going to try and get the new
16 data to match as close as we could to the old snow
17 stakes that we are going to lose. And, I know Brad
18 said they didn't do any of that snow, or the density of
19 the snow samples to determine water density of the
20 snow, but we are collecting one snow sample at our
21 field camp, which is fairly well centrally located in
22 the Refuge and particularly in Unit 21A.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Now, when.....

25
26 MR. HILL: So in the future we'll
27 definitely -- once we.....

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jerry.

30
31 MR. HILL:get more data.....

32
33 (Laughter)

34
35 MR. HILL:on the trend count area
36 we can help, you know, continue.....

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What I was.....

39
40 MR. HILL:gathering that.....

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Jerry.

43
44 MR. HILL:survey data.....

45
46 REPORTER: Jerry, hold up.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Jerry.

49
50 MR. HILL: Yep.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So one thing I was
2 -- what I was talking about was not snow water content
3 so much as the type of snow that comes during deep snow
4 years has various consistencies and it has the
5 propensity to lay the biomass down, the brush gets
6 pushed down underneath the snow, which is not
7 accessible to the moose and what I was talking about
8 with Brad, was actually taking photos of your snow
9 stakes so that in the deep snow years you can get,
10 basically a calculation of biomass that's available to
11 the moose. I think that would be a very pertinent
12 thing to do in the future, as far as what's available
13 to the moose in a deep snow year.

14

15 Do you copy that?

16

17 MR. HILL: I missed that part, Mr.
18 Chair. That would be valuable and I'll take that into
19 consideration. And I do know, I think Brad mentioned,
20 that, the density is more related to the DNR and the
21 fire folks wanting that information for spring run off
22 and what not. But I had that same thought during the
23 GSPE because a lot of the areas we consider low density
24 blocks on the Refuge this year, probably had really low
25 willow brush that would have been covered in those
26 areas last year, and maybe the moose that we saw in
27 those blocks this year wouldn't have been there. So I
28 think photograph evidence of our snow stakes and the
29 forage around it would probably be a beneficial thing
30 to do.

31

32 I'll look into doing that and we're
33 going to get that up and running and hopefully a full
34 set of nine snow stakes, and maybe we can incorporate
35 that with our new survey.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

38

39 Continue.

40

41 MR. HILL: So with the twinning -- or
42 with the composition survey, that looks promising and
43 something we can complete every year and like I say, I
44 think we got that survey area set. And the only other
45 consideration we do is putting another one over on the
46 Yukon side, in Unit 21D, but with limiting budgets and
47 aircraft availability we'll have to make that decision
48 whether it's worthwhile doing it or not.

49

50 So, anyway, hopefully this data set is

1 ongoing and a longterm data set that we'll have to
2 present to the WIRAC in future meetings, like, you
3 know, with Brad's data set, there, I think it's 10 or
4 12 years ongoing at this point.

5
6 So, with that, the other moose-related
7 topic I have here is Unit 21E Federal winter moose
8 hunt. And, of course, this is the third year of this
9 new hunt format, where we extended the season and, you
10 know, had the harvest ceiling and all that set. This
11 was the first year where it was implemented with the
12 new Zone 1 and Zone 2 or what we commonly refer to as
13 the Piamuit Zone and the Northern Zone. And it was a
14 lot of work that went into this between the BLM, the
15 Innoko Refuge, Fish and Wildlife Service as a whole,
16 OSM and Alaska Department of Fish and Game to get the
17 hunt areas designated, which, obviously we did that in
18 previous WIRAC meetings and, you know, we did a lot of
19 education work through public notices and village
20 meetings on the new allocation of eight moose through
21 that Zone 1, or the Piamuit Zone, and obviously the
22 overall ceiling of 40 moose for the entire unit.

23
24 And, BLM, took the bull by the horns
25 and issued all the permits for that Aniak, Chuathbaluk
26 and Kalskag area villages. The Innoko Refuge issued
27 permits for the other remaining four GASH villages.

28
29 It's the first year for the Aniak,
30 Chuathbaluk, Kalskags, we issued 15 permits between the
31 four villages. I think most of those are out of Aniak.
32 Issuance for the GASH villages was down quite a bit.
33 2011 we had 48 registered permits. 2012 we had 46.
34 This year it dropped to 32 registered permits. And we
35 didn't have really good harvest reporting data to go
36 off of with Fish and Game as far as the harvest for the
37 fall hunt of 2012, but I think that's just an issue of
38 not getting processed, maybe through Fairbanks, yet.
39 But the input we got from the local -- or the residents
40 of the four GASH villages is that they had a very
41 successful fall hunt in 2012. So that may have
42 something to do with the lower interest in receiving a
43 permit.

44
45 And as far as the harvest goes, to-
46 date, as of.....

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Jerry.

49
50 MR. HILL:today.....

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Jerry. Jerry.

2

3 REPORTER: Jerry.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Jerry. Hello,
6 say, Jerry, I just wanted to back you up just a little
7 bit.

8

9 MR. HILL: No problem.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Households that
12 harvested moose they would be ineligible, have you
13 calculated how many eligible households, that would be
14 a significant -- if people were successful then there
15 would be a significant reduction in the number of
16 households, correct?

17

18 MR. HILL: That is correct, Mr. Chair.
19 And, you know, that -- we do -- every time we issue
20 these permits we do have a number of people coming in
21 that request a permit but they actually are living in a
22 household that harvested a moose in the fall so with a
23 high success rate in the fall overall, I think that
24 distributes a lot of those moose through a greater
25 percentage of the household. So I think that had more
26 to do with the low issuance than anything else. You
27 know it's been -- if you look at the issuance per
28 village that has remained steady over three years,
29 where Grayling's been the village with the greatest
30 amount of participants, followed by Shageluk and then
31 Holy Cross and Anvik are, you know, they kind of go
32 back and forth on that.

33

34 Yeah, I think the restriction to moose
35 that was not successful -- or a household that was not
36 successful in harvesting a moose in the fall had a lot
37 to do with that. So I think any kind of good hunt
38 success in the fall hunt is really going to influence
39 the issuance in that respect.

40

41 So, with that, we've had, to-date,
42 we've had three harvested moose out of the Piamuit
43 Zone, or Zone 1, and all three of those moose were
44 bulls and then we've got our fourth reported harvest
45 out of the GASH villages, two of them out of Grayling,
46 one out of Shageluk and one out of Holy Cross. And one
47 is still an unknown sex, and two of those are males and
48 one's a female. So our harvest rate, the Piamuit Zone,
49 and it might change a little bit but as far as previous
50 years -- compared to the previous years is kind of on

1 par with what we've had. We've end up with -- off the
2 top of my head, I think we had seven the first year and
3 we're up to actually nine reported from last year,
4 which I did discover a couple unreported moose
5 following the last WIRAC meeting that I did add to
6 those totals.

7

8 So got -- basically we're a little over
9 halfway through the hunt season and with only seven
10 reported harvested for the entire unit we could just
11 probably assume that it's going to run the full length
12 of the hunt and we'll close it on the 15th of March.

13

14 And I will have a summary of this typed
15 up and submitted for the fall WIRAC meeting, and,
16 obviously I'll try to be there in person to present the
17 final results of the hunt.

18

19 So is there any questions on the hunt.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I probably will have
22 questions of Merben for the BLM portion for that Aniak
23 issuance.

24

25 Does the RAC have any questions on the
26 winter hunt for Jerry.

27

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Go ahead,
32 Jerry. Go ahead, Jerry.

33

34 MR. HILL: Okay, well, the one thing
35 I'll say on Bruce Seppe's behalf, he was the one
36 issuing the permits and Merben came in after Bruce --
37 after Bruce issued the permits, but he said there was a
38 lot of enthusiasm in the Aniak crowd when he was
39 issuing permits, they were very open to that hunt and
40 had a lot of positive feedback from that group, how
41 appreciative they were of it. Anyway, it was very
42 positive feedback on that side, I'll just throw that in
43 there.

44

45 So with that, the only other moose-
46 related thing I'd have to report on is our moose
47 collaring project which is ongoing, and that is
48 scheduled to end in the spring of 2014. So hopefully
49 at that point we'll be able to really analyze that data
50 set and bring the final results to the WIRAC here next

1 year.

2

3 Talking about possibly redeploying some
4 of those collars, those moose collars from 21E into
5 21A, now that we are doing composition surveys and the
6 GSPE surveys and trying to accomplish twinning surveys
7 if we can get some collars up there once the 21E
8 project ends, and maybe it'll help us figure out what's
9 going on in 21A a little bit better. But that's in the
10 future.

11

12 And we're ongoing with our trying to
13 get out in the villages and doing environmental
14 education. We have a law enforcement officer here at
15 the Refuge now, he's been to a couple of villages
16 around McGrath and talked to students about wildlife
17 law enforcement and just Fish and Wildlife Service and
18 Refuge issues overall. Very well received. He's had a
19 great experience, and the students have been very
20 interactive. We got kind of weathered out in the GASH
21 side, we were trying to make it to a few villages out
22 there to do some outreach types of things,
23 unfortunately that hasn't happened.

24

25 We did accomplish a furbearer
26 management and trapping workshop in Holy Cross, that
27 went over very well. Primarily participants from the
28 school. But we were able to implement our third
29 offering of that so we'll try and do that in Grayling
30 this coming fall, that'll be all four villages.

31

32 And one of our wildlife biologists her
33 eon Staff is still working with the Bureau of Land
34 Management on some of the bigger environmental
35 education projects, such as Adopt-A-Moose. With
36 sequestration and budgets and everything the way it is,
37 it's going to be a challenge implementing some of this
38 stuff, but those discussions are still ongoing.

39

40 And, with that, we're going to do our
41 best to get to the villages and do, even if it's one
42 hour visits with the students, just to get some of the
43 professional biologists out in the villages to talk to
44 the students. And, hopefully, Fish and Game might jump
45 in on that here and there as they can.

46

47 With that, I'll just close with the
48 personnel changes here at the Refuge.

49

50 It's been announced that Steve Kovac,

1 our former senior biologist moved on this past
2 November, I announced that in October at the WIRAC
3 meeting in Holy Cross. I have since assumed that role
4 at the Refuge so I'm now the senior
5 biologist/supervisor biologist here at Innoko Refuge.

6
7 And the only other change that we have
8 is our Refuge Manager, Bo Sloan, has accepted the
9 Refuge manager job at the Kodiak Refuge. And I believe
10 Bo's slated to start that position early May at some
11 point, I'm not sure of the exact date, but Bo will be
12 moving on.

13
14 And, with that, that's all that I have.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jerry. And
17 so you have a Refuge pilot now?

18
19 MR. HILL: Yes, Mr. Chair. Ken
20 Richardson is back flying. He is carded on skis and
21 wheels right now for both our Cub and our
22 (indiscernible) so we have full access to whatever we
23 need to do, and we do have our law enforcement pilot on
24 Staff, who is currently only carded to fly our Bush hog
25 on floats, but he's working towards getting a card for
26 our SuperCub and the other plane as well. So once he
27 gets carded we'll actually have two pilots on Staff,
28 which will make accomplishing some of these projects
29 much easier in the future.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I'm glad to
32 hear you got a pilot with the travel restrictions that
33 have just been put recently in place, so I'm glad to
34 hear that.

35
36 MR. HILL: Yeah. The Koyukuk/Nowitna
37 Refuge still does a lot of help for us, especially on
38 the biology side flying a lot of these surveys, so it's
39 good to have that cooperative relationship with the
40 Refuge up out of Galena. They really help us out in
41 that end.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I appreciate
44 that also.

45
46 Any other questions of Innoko.

47
48
49 (No comments)
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jerry.
2 Appreciate your presentation and tell Bo we're very
3 unhappy that he's leaving. We really appreciated the
4 good work that he did there at Innoko, and so I'm --
5 it's Kodiak's gain and our loss, but I'm glad that
6 you're going to be there and I'm hoping for another
7 good Refuge manager for Innoko in the future.
8
9 Thank you.
10
11 MR. HILL: Yes, as do we, Jack. And I
12 apologize for not being there today, the weather
13 forecast didn't look very promising for us so I'm glad
14 I had a chance to do the presentation over the
15 teleconference, and, again, thank you.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
18
19 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thanks for your
20 patience, Jerry. Thanks for staying on.
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Melinda, we're
23 at 10 minutes to 5:00.
24
25 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. I believe
26 we can cover one more item very quickly. I was able,
27 in December, to attend my first meeting of the Western
28 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group. While I was there I
29 heard a presentation from the Brooks Range Council by
30 Mr. John.....
31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gaedeke.
33
34 MS. HERNANDEZ:Gaedeke.
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
37
38 MS. HERNANDEZ: He went up and spoke
39 about some of the concerns that they had about road
40 development in the Interior, and I wanted to get him in
41 touch with our Council because I felt like we shared a
42 lot of the same concerns. Jack and I were able to hold
43 a short call with him to get them -- get to know each
44 other a little bit, and he was wanting to call in, but
45 I know he was going to be out of town, and it was going
46 to be questionable whether he'd be on the line or not.
47 But I just wanted to pass out his information and it
48 sounds like he might try to have a little bit more
49 interaction with us in the future.
50

1 It's a fairly new Council and, Jack,
2 did you want to share anything about that short call we
3 were able to have.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This John Gaedeke,
6 his family has a piece of land up near the Alatna
7 River, and so there's -- the people of the Upper
8 Koyukuk and the Brooks Range area have grave concerns
9 about the Ambler Road being built over into the Kobuk,
10 and what that will do for access of additional hunting
11 pressure on the Western Arctic Herd, and other
12 resources. These roads will cross the Alatna River,
13 there's sheefish populations in the Alatna and the
14 Kobuk River that are basically highly valued and used
15 by the people of the Koyukuk and the Kobuk River.

16
17 There's a lot of resources that could
18 be affected.

19
20 These roads, like the Dalton Highway,
21 there was huge concerns when the Dalton Highway was
22 going to be built and the State Legislature closed the
23 Dalton Highway area, five miles on each side of the
24 road to the use of firearms and all-terrain vehicles.
25 That has been the saving grace of the resources from
26 the Dalton Highway and Arctic populations. Caribou and
27 highways don't do real well, just watch the Fortymile
28 Herd, when they get near the Steese Highway, the
29 Department of Fish and Game was terrified to have an
30 opening on them because they know they'll annihilate
31 them.

32
33 There has been no discussion on the
34 Ambler Road, the Nome Road, and the Umiat Road, what
35 they call the Foothills Road, of any kind of methods
36 and means restrictions in statute. The Board of Game
37 will crumble under political pressure to the inundation
38 of urban hunters, and I've seen it many, many times. I
39 would be very concerned if they built the roads without
40 any statutory closure to methods and means. The Brooks
41 Range Council is formed, basically by many people that
42 are concerned about this road to Ambler, and the other
43 roads, in periphery, and, so the Council should be
44 aware -- I wanted this Council to be aware that there's
45 other organizations working with local users to
46 highlight some of the concerns that would -- and the
47 affects of road access. And so I would encourage the
48 Council to read the Brooks Range Council's, basically
49 off their website.

50

1 In the future this Council, for this
2 meeting, I wanted this Council to be aware of some of
3 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd issues, and these road
4 access issues, because caribou were actually a fairly
5 large used resource by people of the lower and upper
6 portion of the region and so this Council has to keep
7 this caribou management and so forth in our mentality
8 because we have to be proactive in maintaining the
9 subsistence uses of those resources. And so I wanted
10 to dedicate a little bit of time to these caribou
11 issues and these road issues.

12

13 MR. R. WALKER: Jack.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.

16

17 MR. R. WALKER: Do we have access to
18 all these meetings that they're having, the State, to
19 put these roads in here. That would be my first
20 question.

21

22 My second question is, is that, are
23 they giving that information out to the public where
24 these roads are going.

25

26 And, third, where are they going to get
27 the funding from.

28

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Governor has put
31 these up as high priority -- this Governor, especially,
32 has prioritized these immediately upon election, the
33 Nome Road, the Ambler Road, the Road to Umiat, which
34 they call -- these are called Roads to Resources.

35

36 Well, if I look -- the bottom line is,
37 two years ago, three years ago, I looked at the Alaska
38 Outdoor Council website and the Alaska Outdoor Council
39 website, their mandate was for more road access for
40 wildlife for hunting and fishing access. This Governor
41 is responding to that. If you go to the Governor's
42 website you can look at, like February, January of last
43 year, he has a banquet with the Alaska Outdoor Council,
44 and he's talking about these road access issues, wink,
45 wink, it's Road to Resources. These roads to these
46 resources are not particularly economically viable oil
47 and gas or mineral extraction, they are roads to
48 hunting and fishing resources. It's a response to the
49 Alaska Outdoor Council. You don't ship minerals away
50 from the Brooks Range all the way through the Interior

1 of Alaska, all the way to southern Alaska, you ship
2 minerals to the coast, just like they do at Red Dog.
3 It's a 66 mile road, they stockpile the mineral and
4 then they ship it away on barges.

5
6 Whether this Council has access to the
7 State Legislature who's funding that, no, this Council
8 is under the constraints of what they call the Hatch
9 Act and we cannot contact the Governor's office, the
10 Legislature, we cannot have anything say on these
11 roads. That is very frustrating to me because the
12 people of our region are going to be highly affected by
13 these. We do have access to the Federal Subsistence
14 Board, and we're expressing that in our annual report,
15 these concerns with these roads and what the economic
16 -- socio-economic impacts as the Western Arctic Caribou
17 Working Group very adroitly articulated in their letter
18 to the Governor.

19
20 And so the Legislature is funding these
21 roads. The Road to Umiat was -- for this fiscal year
22 was funded with \$10 million. I think the Ambler Road
23 was also funded at the same level.

24
25 There's huge money being spent on these
26 roads, not a little money, lots of money.

27
28 And so when the Legislature continues
29 to fund the feasibility of these roads, I'm getting
30 more and more concerned, especially when the Governor
31 is responding to the AOC in his banquet. So I'm
32 getting real concerned that this would basically --
33 what happens is local people's use of caribou is usurp
34 by thousands of hunters and then the reallocation of
35 those resources go away from people and, you know,
36 there's communities like Anaktuvuk Pass where they
37 average two to three caribou per person per capita,
38 that's what people eat there, is caribou. If it drops
39 to one caribou bag limit people are -- we already have
40 huge economic impacts from the high cost of living in
41 rural Alaska, and so these resources being taken away
42 from rural communities by non-rural road access will
43 have huge socio-economic impacts, and so that's why I
44 wanted that included in our annual report.

45
46 Any further discussion by the Council.

47
48 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock.

1 MR. SIMON: I just wanted to make some
2 comments about the roads too.

3
4 I had a lot of experience from the
5 construction of the road, pipeline, I worked, myself,
6 on the pipeline, four years and made all kinds of
7 money, so did my relatives from the village. It was a
8 lot of money. Nobody's seen that much money before.

9
10 You know it was -- and some of my
11 relatives wouldn't -- I was fortunate they -- we worked
12 nine weeks and then two weeks off and they'd come back
13 to Fairbanks and blow their check and then after two
14 weeks they'd go back to work again, it happened for
15 four years. And some of my peoples in Allakaket
16 weren't very unfortunate, there were some peoples that
17 committed suicide or stuff like that and it was
18 something like a boom and bust.

19
20 And I stand on record to oppose the
21 roads all my life and this is my personal comments, not
22 necessarily for speaking for this Board, but, my own
23 personal thought is that, you know, after the
24 construction we get high wages during the construction,
25 after that we would return to our village and start all
26 over again. Maybe better off, or not much better than
27 when we went to work. You know some of us might have
28 bought two Sno-Gos, what I don't usually need, but for
29 the road that's coming up, peoples are told that they
30 get groceries and gas cheaper and some of our villages
31 peoples are starting to believe that, that the road
32 will help. But then you have to know, we have to
33 sacrifice some of our way of life for that cheaper oil
34 and cheaper groceries. As we all know, that the roads
35 is put in with public money and it will be opened to
36 the public later and it will be peoples coming up the
37 road seeking hunting and trapping areas or just taking
38 a ride and sometimes we'll find these peoples hunting
39 and trapping alongside us and that -- in Allakaket
40 that's already a limited resource, we can't compete
41 with peoples that come up the road and hunt alongside
42 us. That is a concern to me. The lifestyle will
43 change because the road, the proposed road to Ambler
44 would go through the headwaters of Alatna and it's just
45 a few miles north of Allakaket, and that's -- that has
46 all of us very concerned.

47
48 I go to meetings over in Kotzebue and
49 that area, and peoples talk about -- voice their
50 concerns about the road that's proposed.

1 To this day, I haven't heard anyone
2 say, any villagers say, go ahead, put the road in. I
3 want to oppose the road system. Of course, that is my
4 personal feeling.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

9
10 So, Melinda.

11
12 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. Yeah,
13 hopefully John will be able to call in sometime in the
14 future, if not tomorrow, but just in case he wasn't
15 able to be on the line while we were still on caribou,
16 I wanted to be sure to bring up his name and his
17 Council.

18
19 So I think we're going to get ready to
20 adjourn here, it's getting near 5:00 o'clock.

21
22 Merben, did you have something.

23
24 MR. CEBRIAN: Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Merben, you got a
27 quick one there.

28
29
30 MR. CEBRIAN: Mr. Chair. Merben
31 Cebrian, wildlife biologist, BLM.

32
33 While we're on the subject of roads, I
34 just wanted to let the Council know that as part of my
35 duty, is to write a subsistence analysis for projects
36 under ANILCA, Section .810.

37
38 Last year I wrote the ANILCA .810
39 analysis for the ASAP Pipeline, the Alaska StandAlone
40 Pipeline and as part of the duties that I had to do was
41 to go to different villages, affected villages to
42 conduct a subsistence hearing. And the villages I went
43 to, in part, Anaktuvuk Pass, Allakaket, Alatna,
44 Bettles, Evansville, Wiseman, there were other
45 villages, and I would -- if you would like, Mr. Chair,
46 I can give you a synopsis of what the comments were
47 that were associated with the Road to Umiat.

48
49 That's all I want to say.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to.....
2
3 REPORTER: Jack, mic.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, thanks, Salena.
6 I would like to hear those comments at your
7 presentation tomorrow. Can I have that then or.....
8
9 MR. CEBRIAN: I don't have the
10 specifics. I would like to be more specific than just
11 general memory.
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
14
15 MR. CEBRIAN: Because these comments
16 are oral.
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So when
19 would you like to present those?
20
21 MR. CEBRIAN: I can give you that -- if
22 you want it before the next meeting I can give you that
23 before the next meeting in writing.
24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.
26
27 MR. CEBRIAN: But I can certainly make
28 a presentation at the next meeting if you want.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: At the next meeting,
31 that would be great.
32
33 MR. CEBRIAN: Yes, sir.
34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that.
36
37 MR. CEBRIAN: Yep.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate you
40 bringing that forward also.
41
42 MR. CEBRIAN: Yes, sir.
43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray.
45
46 MR. COLLINS: Question for Merben.
47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Merben.
49
50 MR. COLLINS: Merben. Will you be

1 commenting on the proposal for the gasline for Donlin
2 Creek because that goes through BLM land, too, the one
3 through Rainy Pass from Cook Inlet over?

4

5 MR. CEBRIAN: Yes, sir. Through the
6 Chair. Part of my report -- I'm new to the Anchorage
7 Field Office.

8

9 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

10

11 MR. CEBRIAN: I'm just there for a week
12 now, we moved to Anchorage two weeks ago. But I have a
13 short presentation later on that will cover the Donlin
14 Mine.

15

16 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

17

18 MR. CEBRIAN: And, yes, indeed, it's in
19 the scoping process right now.

20

21 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

22

23 MR. CEBRIAN: But BLM will fully
24 participate with the EIS for that.

25

26 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

27

28 MR. CEBRIAN: Yes, sir. I think I
29 might be ending up writing the Section .810 for that as
30 well, but we'll see.

31

32 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. I just wanted to
33 alert the Council to that because hopefully that will
34 not become a road. We're told that it will not become
35 a road, but it has the potential of use by fourwheelers
36 and other kinds of things to provide an access that
37 they don't have right now through the Alaska Range to
38 the Kuskokwim.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

41

42 MR. COLLINS: And, again, I'd like to
43 go on the record as noting that the Kuskokwim River is
44 the large -- the last large river in North America that
45 is not accessible by road. It doesn't have the problem
46 with corridor interruption from the headwaters to the
47 -- and that'll change if a road comes in.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

50

1 MR. COLLINS: Like all the other roads
2 have been impacted. So some -- what do I want to say,
3 we need to give some value to that, of trying to keep
4 the Kuskokwim roadless, I think, so we don't have some
5 of these problems.
6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, thanks a lot,
8 Merben.
9
10 Melinda.
11
12 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay, thanks everybody.
13
14 It's 5:00 o'clock. We're going to get
15 ready to adjourn, so let me just let everybody know
16 what the plan is.
17
18
19 We're going to be shuttling over to
20 Jenny's. We're going to have dinner in about a half an
21 hour. And then it sounds like everybody's invited, if
22 they would like to attend, the concert a little bit
23 later tonight as well. And so we'll start shuttling to
24 Jenny's.
25
26 And I'm going to defer to our host, if
27 she'd like to start at 8:30 or 9:00 tomorrow.
28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think 9:00 o'clock
30 would probably be a good time to start.
31
32 MS. PELKOLA: That sounds good.
33
34 MR. R. WALKER: So motion to adjourn.
35
36 (Laughter)
37
38 MS. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So 9:00 o'clock.
39 It sounds like we're going to go ahead and start up
40 again tomorrow.
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think 9:00 o'clock
43 would be best then we can break a lot earlier in the
44 afternoon.
45
46 MR. COLLINS: Can we leave our things
47 on the table here?
48
49 MS. HERNANDEZ: Yes, I have the key to
50 the building and you can leave whatever you'd like.

1 And, Mr. Chair, if you'd like a motion to adjourn, go
2 ahead and.....

3

4 MR. R. WALKER: I make a motion to
5 adjourn until tomorrow.....

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A motion to recess.

8

9 MR. R. WALKER:at 10:00 a.m.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A motion to recess.

12

13 REPORTER: Recess.

14

15 MR. R. WALKER: Recess until 10:00
16 a.m., tomorrow.

17

18 REPORTER: 9:00.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, recess until
23 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

24

25 (Laughter)

26

27 (Off record)

28

29 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of March 2013.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 9/16/14