

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

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6  
7 VOLUME II

8  
9 Fairbanks, Alaska  
10 November 7, 2013  
11 10:00 a.m.

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13  
14 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

15  
16 Jack Reakoff, Chairman  
17 Timothy Gervais  
18 Donald Honea  
19 Pollock Simon

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23  
24 Regional Council Coordinator, Melinda Burke

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 11/7/2013)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning. We're going to bring the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting back to order. And so we had a time sensitive call in from Polly Wheeler. Time certain, correction. And so we're going to go to Polly's discussion or report.

Go ahead, Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Again this is Polly Wheeler. I'm sorry for not being there in person. I'm backed up on a bunch of things, so I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you all by phone.

I just wanted -- you probably have heard, but I wanted to let people know from me what's going on with Refuges here in Alaska specifically with regard to Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. We have made the decision to move the headquarters of that refuge to Galena, so rather than be complexed with Koyukuk/Nowitna and then Innoko, it will be operated from Galena. We're going to be closing the headquarters in McGrath.

We currently have seven Staff members there. We will over the course of the next year or two be finding positions for those Staff members that want them at other refuges. And we will be kind of moving the equipment, getting the -- transferring the real estate to those parties that want it, moving the real property elsewhere or potentially leaving it in McGrath and moving the Staff.

The decision wasn't made lightly. It was -- we're faced with about 20 percent budget cuts since 2010 in the Refuge System here in Alaska. We've lost about 26 positions thus far. In the next year we're needing to find another \$2 million in positions. We eliminated our Planning Division, our Engineering Program is being cut by 36 percent. And so this is another in a series of pretty unfortunate decisions, but with sequestration and everything else, we're sort of left with starting to make drastic cuts, and this

1 would be one of them.

2

3                   The Chief of Refuges and I went out to  
4 McGrath in the middle of September, met with the Staff  
5 to let them know. We met with a couple of community  
6 leaders. We offered to go back out. I was going to  
7 meet with the city council, but they didn't have a  
8 quorum, and then when they did meet, it was, of course,  
9 during when we were in the government shut down.

10

11                   We've heard right -- we let the  
12 Congressional Delegation know at the time. I also let  
13 Lyman Hoffman and Dave Guttenburg, who are the senator  
14 and representative for that area in Alaska know. We've  
15 subsequently heard the first and second chiefs of  
16 McGrath Tribe, and Tanana Chiefs, and Doyon And, of  
17 course, they're upset about the decision, and  
18 understandably so. So we'll probably have meetings  
19 with them -- or we will have meetings with them down  
20 the road. We're sort of trying to work that out right  
21 now. They're actually not interested in meeting with  
22 me or Mitch. They want to meet with Geoff Haskett and  
23 so we're trying to figure out how we can arrange that.

24

25                   But I just wanted to let the RAC know,  
26 just because there -- you know, we hope -- there's  
27 going to be changes. You know, we're managing the  
28 Refuge out of Galena. It's a little bit easier to get  
29 to from Galena, just it's a longer distance, but it  
30 doesn't involve a mountain range.

31

32                   So that's a good thing.

33

34                   But we're going to be working out the  
35 details in terms of outreach to particularly Grayling,  
36 Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross as well as obviously  
37 McGrath. There are going to be some changes,  
38 obviously, but we're trying to make these decisions in  
39 light of sort of the least damage I guess to how we  
40 manage the Refuge. And we will -- you know, we'll keep  
41 people posted as we move forward, but I just wanted to  
42 let people know, and let people know, too, that this is  
43 a really, really touch decision, but with the budgets  
44 that we face, you know, we're going to have to make  
45 more tough decisions probably, but hopefully this will  
46 be the most dramatic one, but I can't promise that  
47 there won't be others down the road, particularly like  
48 if Defense is -- if Congress decides that Defense is  
49 exempt from the Sequester, then there will be more  
50 impacts on domestic programs. And it's really

1 unfortunate, but, you know, the American public seems  
2 to want smaller government, and I guess this is what  
3 smaller government looks like.

4  
5 I'm open to questions, Mr. Chair, but I  
6 just wanted you to hear it I guess from me before --  
7 I'm sure you probably heard it in other areas. There's  
8 a lot of chatter out there, but I just wanted you to  
9 hear it from me.

10  
11 Mr. Chair.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Polly.

14  
15 Comments from the Council or questions  
16 from the Council to Polly's presentation.

17  
18 Don.

19  
20 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21  
22 Polly, I just had I guess a couple  
23 questions. Maybe I guess mainly what effect would that  
24 have in the McGrath area, specifically I guess what  
25 programs would be cut? I don't know where along, how  
26 far along or what the work program, the management  
27 program is. And is that maybe aerial surveys? What  
28 specific areas would you guys be kind of having to  
29 curtail.

30  
31 Thank you.

32  
33 DR. WHEELER: Thank you, Don and Mr.  
34 Chair.

35  
36 You know, we're actually working on a  
37 transition plan right now. And the transition plan has  
38 two elements. One is how to deal with the actual  
39 mechanics of closing down the headquarters in McGrath,  
40 moving -- you know, moving the real property and the  
41 real estate out, distributing Staff across the Refuge  
42 System. So there's that aspect of it.

43  
44 There's also looking at priorities of  
45 Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuges and priorities of Innoko  
46 Refuge, and how we address the highest priorities in  
47 light of the budget realities that we're facing. So I  
48 can't really speak to what the real impacts are going  
49 to be on which specific programs, because we're still  
50 working that out.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Council member  
2 comments. Pollock, any comments.

3

4 MR. SIMON: No.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment is that  
7 the Western Interior Regional Council had considerable  
8 dialogue with the Innoko Staff for several years trying  
9 to get moose management, collaring projects, various --  
10 we wanted to get a handle on what the moose population  
11 was of the Innoko Refuge. And so finally with Bo Sloan  
12 and Jerry Hill we got collars out. We got stuff going  
13 on. We got winter hunts that are administered.

14

15 And I'm very concerned about taking key  
16 Staff from Innoko and displacing them to other areas  
17 where they would not be nearly as valuable to the  
18 Refuge System as to keep them on to maintain the  
19 biological integrity of the Innoko Refuge. And I'm  
20 also concerned that stressing the Galena Staff to try  
21 and administer too large of an area with too small of  
22 Staff. And so that would be my main concern.

23

24 I would be -- you know, shutting down  
25 McGrath, I would prefer not to see that, but if it does  
26 happen, I would like to see key Staff, Jerry Hill and  
27 various people that -- at least a couple people that  
28 have got a handle on what's going on biologically over  
29 there on Innoko brought over to Galena lateral. If  
30 you're going to move them some other place, what's the  
31 difference is the way I look at it. The positions are  
32 there in the system. They might as well move to where  
33 they're the most benefit to the Refuge System.

34

35 That would be my comment, Polly.

36

37 DR. WHEELER: Yeah. No, I hear you,  
38 Jack. You know, the cuts that we are experiencing now  
39 are unprecedented, and like I said, we're down 20  
40 percent in our budget in the Refuge System since 2010.  
41 So that's a 20 percent cut in five years -- or four  
42 years. And we're doing triage right now. And, you  
43 know, unless and until budgets improve, that's what  
44 we're going to be doing. And you're going to see cuts  
45 to stuff that you want. I can almost guarantee it,  
46 because we can't do everything that we've been doing  
47 with 20 percent less budget.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But doesn't it make  
50 sense if you're going to move those positions from

1 McGrath, they're going to be on the payroll somewhere,  
2 and it's going to cost approximately the same amount of  
3 money to move them some place. Why not move key  
4 positions to Galena and station them there, and then  
5 they won't be going to some other refuge position in  
6 Alaska.

7

8 DR. WHEELER: All right.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's the way I  
11 look at it. And so I.....

12

13 DR. WHEELER: Yeah. So I appreciate  
14 that, and I hear that. Right now I can't make any  
15 promises as to where those positions are going to be  
16 because we've been holding some vacancies at other  
17 refuges open so there's holes in other refuges that  
18 need to be filled. And so it's really just -- it's  
19 plugging the highest priority holes at this point in  
20 time. But I do hear you as far as the gap at Innoko,  
21 and then the pressure, the additional pressure on  
22 Koyukuk/Nowitna.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You know, Innoko's a  
25 4 million acre refuge, and so I would like you to  
26 convey that.

27

28 Does the Council with my line of  
29 discussion here, trying to maintain some Staff members  
30 if they are going to be moved, move them to Galena.  
31 I'd like to poll the Council.

32

33 Don.

34

35 MR. HONEA: Yeah. I certainly do. I  
36 mean, I just -- it's just kind of a sad fact, and once  
37 those positions are vacated and that, the likelihood of  
38 it coming back. And I can see your reasoning there,  
39 and I certainly agree with it.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

42

43 Pollock.

44

45 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I agree.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock agrees.

48

49 Tim.

50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I agree, Jack. I  
2 thought that some of the Innoko Staff would just move  
3 over to Galena.

4  
5 What is going to be the personnel  
6 movement, Polly? Is it determined yet?

7  
8 DR. WHEELER: No.

9  
10 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, if those  
11 employees would like to stay working with Innoko, as a  
12 Council member, I'd like them to be able to continue to  
13 work with Innoko projects that are in place and try to  
14 maintain the monitoring and research programs that are  
15 going on there.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim.

18  
19 Can you convey for the Council to  
20 Director Haskett the concerns of this Council, or  
21 should we write a letter to Director Haskett, Polly?

22  
23 DR. WHEELER: Whatever your preference  
24 is, Mr. Chair. I can certainly get the transcript from  
25 the court reporter as needed, but it's pretty clear to  
26 me your concern is particularly over the moose  
27 population studies and moose harvest, subsistence  
28 hunting opportunity, and key Staff, key knowledgeable  
29 Staff. You want to make sure that that expertise is  
30 carried over to Koyukuk/Nowitna.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I would --  
33 it's primarily -- there's a whole bunch of projects  
34 that they do there, you know. The white front goose  
35 projects and various thing that Koyukuk will have to  
36 take over, and I would prefer to see those -- the  
37 biological Staff lateralled to the Koyukuk Refuge  
38 complex, the expanding complex. That there is  
39 biological mandates in the enabling legislation for the  
40 Refuge, and so I feel that to accommodate the  
41 Congressional mandates, that those Staff are going to  
42 be still on the payroll, and they should be benefitting  
43 the Refuge System.

44  
45 And also I would like to add this  
46 concern to our annual report to the Federal Subsistence  
47 Board, so they know what we are dealing with the  
48 sequestration cuts. If other agencies, National Park  
49 Service and BLM also has these types of consideration,  
50 that they will -- hopefully the Federal Subsistence

1 Board members which are the directors would take into  
2 mind what kind of institutional knowledge would be  
3 lost. And so I would like to add that to the annual  
4 report.

5  
6 DR. WHEELER: I think it would be --  
7 Mr. Chair. I think it would be a good idea to write a  
8 letter, because I think that it's helpful to have an  
9 administrative record of those concerns rather than  
10 have me relay them. I mean, I'm happy to relay them,  
11 and I will.

12  
13 I guess I just feel like, you know,  
14 people need to understand that sequestration, and you  
15 guys all know this, but I mean, there is real and  
16 serious impacts. And you can't cut an agency or a  
17 health service or anything else by 20 percent in that  
18 short a period of time and not see real impacts on the  
19 ground. And I feel like in rural Alaska you're going  
20 to see a disproportionate impacts. And, you know, if  
21 we don't make this decision and cut Innoko, then we're  
22 going to be -- or, you know, and move the headquarters  
23 of Innoko to Galena, then there's going to be other  
24 decisions that are made that are probably equally  
25 draconian.

26  
27 And it's not that we want to make these  
28 decisions. It's just that with Congress and  
29 sequestration, we have to make these decisions.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I understand  
32 the quandary that Refuges is in, but they also -- you  
33 know, it makes sense to me, those Staff are going to be  
34 moved. The cost incurred to move them somewhere, and  
35 they're on the payroll, so I don't see where that is  
36 going to be such an economic burden, since they're  
37 already there, going some place. And so they should be  
38 going where they are most needed. So at least a couple  
39 of those, or one or two of those positions, I would --  
40 that's what I'm advocating for.

41  
42 And the Chair will entertain a motion  
43 from the Council.

44  
45 MS. HERNANDEZ: You don't have a  
46 quorum.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh. How are we  
49 going to write a letter?

50

1 MS. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair. What I can  
2 do is I'll add this to the running list of annual  
3 report items. I will get the language from this  
4 discussion and from Polly's presentation. I will start  
5 to compose a letter, and when we have a teleconference  
6 later this month, I will provide you a copy, and we can  
7 go over it then.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Is it  
10 agreeable with the Council that are in attendance to  
11 transmit a letter in this regards to the Refuge -- or  
12 the Director of Fish and Wildlife, Geoff Haskett? Is  
13 that agreeable to the Council.

14  
15 (Council nods affirmatively)

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got affirmative on  
18 that, and that will be drafted for our teleconference  
19 meeting to be transmitted.

20  
21 I forgot where I was at. Thank you,  
22 Melinda.

23  
24 Tim.

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. Mr. Chair.  
27 Thanks.

28  
29 I'd also like to make sure that the  
30 letter that we draft, other than the monitoring and the  
31 research programs, that we stress the importance that  
32 existing Staff members that have the knowledge of the  
33 user group issues in those communities, GASH  
34 communities and stuff, and so there definitely should  
35 be some continuity in the Staff that's still  
36 administering the Refuge.

37  
38 I'm hoping that what the Service is  
39 trying to do is just, you know, get some cost savings  
40 by only have one office, but not necessarily like  
41 reduce the staffing at that Refuge by a huge amount.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, but going to  
44 zero, the -- where I'm coming from, Polly, is the  
45 continuity that the Innoko has built especially in the  
46 recent years with the State area biologist and the BLM  
47 and the people, the subsistence users of that area.  
48 That has huge value to this Council. And so I feel  
49 that, you know, this letter should reflect that.

50

1 And so you're right, Tim.  
2  
3 I think we've covered that issued.  
4 Should we have any -- does TCC want to comment on that  
5 Orville.  
6  
7 MR. HUNTINGTON: I could comment, but I  
8 don't know what their comments were.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I want to get  
11 any other public comments at that.  
12  
13 So do you have anything else for us,  
14 Polly.  
15  
16 DR. WHEELER: I don't.  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm sorry that  
19 you're the bearer of bad news. I appreciate what you  
20 must feel with that. And I don't think, you know, the  
21 government shutdown, and Congress is sort of  
22 disconnected from what all these affects to the public  
23 are, and to the resources of this great nation. And so  
24 I'm -- but your position has to build ulcers from it.  
25 And the Staff, the Refuge Staff.  
26  
27 So thank you.  
28  
29 DR. WHEELER: Yeah. Thank you. Thanks  
30 for the opportunity to talk to you guys. I appreciate  
31 it.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Melinda.  
34  
35 MS. HERNANDEZ: And I heard someone  
36 else beep in. Is that you, Mr. Rivard.  
37  
38 MR. RIVARD: Yes, but you can just call  
39 me Don.  
40  
41 MS. HERNANDEZ: Don. Awesome. Anybody  
42 else on the line besides Polly and Don.  
43  
44 DR. WHEELER: Melinda and Mr. Chair.  
45 I'm going to get off, because I need to go to another  
46 meeting, but again thanks for the opportunity to speak  
47 and -- yeah, thanks for the opportunity.  
48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Always welcome to  
50 our meetings, Polly.

1 DR. WHEELER: Hopefully I'll get there.  
2  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So moving on.....  
5  
6 DR. WHEELER: Take care.  
7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we're.....  
11  
12 MS. HERNANDEZ: Let's go to Jeremy with  
13 Nowitna.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again?  
16  
17 MS. HERNANDEZ: Jeremy with Nowitna.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Oh, yeah.  
20  
21 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
22 Council members. My name is Jeremy Havener. I'm the  
23 subsistence coordinator at Koyukuk/Nowitna National  
24 Wildlife Refuge.  
25  
26 And my reports going to be pretty  
27 quick, and I apologize for not having any material here  
28 for you.  
29  
30 Since our last RAC meeting in Galena,  
31 it's been kind of a blur all summer. I'm sure most of  
32 you have heard about the recent flood that we had there.  
33 And we basically have been allocating all our resources  
34 to recovering from that flood.  
35  
36 We did have some biological surveys go  
37 on this summer, and I have our supervisory wildlife  
38 biologist Brad Scotten here. He'll update you on that.  
39  
40  
41 What I wanted to report on though, was  
42 we just finished up the 2013 Nowitna check station.  
43 And I know Don and others have some interest in those  
44 numbers, so I'll go through those real quick, and then  
45 I'll have Brad come up here.  
46  
47 For the 2013 season we had 106 hunters  
48 registered at the check station, which was up from last  
49 year by about 20. There were 31 moose harvested during  
50 the State season, and only 1 black bear.

1                   Then we opened up the Federal season  
2 that goes from September 26th through October 1st.  
3 There were a total of 10 permits issued, and 5 moose  
4 harvested, which is actually the highest amount that  
5 has been harvested since this opened in 2007.

6  
7                   Also this year, because of the flood,  
8 there was a wildlife special action request. I think  
9 it was for GMU.....

10  
11                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let me back you up  
12 there. Is the 5 moose included in the 31 or is  
13 that.....

14  
15                   MR. HAVENER: No, is an extra  
16 additional five moose.

17  
18                   And because of that special action  
19 request they opened up an extension in GMU 21D on  
20 Federal lands and we had 11 permits for that, and 2  
21 moose were harvested on that hunt as well.

22  
23                   And that's what I had to report from  
24 the subsistence things at the Refuge.

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And do you want to  
27 give us the numbers for the winter hunt at Huslia.

28  
29                   MR. HAVENER: I did not prepare that.  
30 I thought I mentioned at the last RAC meeting in  
31 Galena, but I think it was roughly around five moose  
32 were harvested for that hunt.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

35  
36                   MR. HAVENER: And I can actually get  
37 you that information if you'd like. When I get back I  
38 can shoot you an email.

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure. I want the  
41 Council to be -- bring it back to our memory on.

42  
43                   MR. HAVENER: Yeah.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You know, we have  
46 various Federal hunts, and so one of the Federal hunts  
47 is the Huslia winter hunt, which has been having about  
48 five to -- four to six moose harvest for a 10 moose  
49 quota.

50

1 MR. HAVENER: Yeah.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And are those --  
4 those are mostly -- those were bulls.  
5  
6 MR. HAVENER: Yep. It was -- it's  
7 actually a bulls-only hunt. And it's been moved to  
8 April. It usually went on in March, but because we  
9 wanted it to be a bulls-only, we moved it month ahead  
10 into April.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. And are  
13 there more permits issued on that from Huslia? I want  
14 to find out about the acceptability of that one.  
15  
16 MR. HAVENER: Yeah, it's been about the  
17 same for the last couple years.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And it's about 10,  
20 15 permits.  
21  
22 MR. HAVENER: Yeah. It's roughly right  
23 in there. And then I think we actually had one from  
24 Hughes this year, too. I know the year before we  
25 didn't have any permits issued there, because there's  
26 an abundant amount of caribou in the area.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Okay. Any  
29 questions from the Council on Jeremy's report.  
30  
31 Go ahead, Tim.  
32  
33 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
34  
35 Jeremy, so in regards to what Polly's  
36 communicating with us this morning, is there -- do you  
37 know how many Staff from Innoko are going to be coming  
38 to Galena or how -- are you just have people in Galena  
39 that only deal with Innoko and how -- what's the new  
40 set up going to be between who's going to taking care  
41 of what refuges.  
42  
43 MR. HAVENER: Yeah. Thanks, Tim.  
44 That's a very good question. Right know we know as  
45 much as Polly does. So I really have nothing to  
46 comment on that at this time.  
47  
48 MR. GERVAIS: And then another question  
49 I had is are you showing any increase in permitting for  
50 trapping permits on any of the refuges.

1 MR. HAVENER: Maybe Brad might have  
2 some more information on that. I'm unaware of with the  
3 permits that you're talking about.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, there's --  
6 the Nowitna Refuge allows, they call it a subsistence  
7 trapping permit. I don't know based on that language  
8 that it's a subsistence activity, but it's also  
9 commercial activity. And I don't know how or why they  
10 designate it as a subsistence trapping of commercial  
11 activity, but I just was figuring with the increase in  
12 fur prices there's going to be some increased interest  
13 in harvesting there, or any of the refuges anyway.

14  
15 MR. HAVENER: Okay. Yeah, I'm not  
16 aware of any trapping permits that we issue out of the  
17 Koyukuk/Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge.

18  
19 Any other questions.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

22  
23 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24  
25 I don't have any questions. Maybe a  
26 comment. It's kind of interesting about the special  
27 moose hunt that was issued for the -- that -- I believe  
28 Jenny put in the proposal, but that only two moose were  
29 taken. You know, I hope that the people of Galena were  
30 able to satisfy -- I mean, maybe they had taken some.  
31 It seems like because of this spring there was really  
32 high water. It was after the actual ice went out, the  
33 water level was really so high that a lot of lakes got  
34 filled up with water, so basically where you'd see from  
35 between Ruby and the Nowitna/Koyukuk -- I mean, the  
36 Kokrines area or something, there wasn't very many  
37 moose sighted. I mean, they were back in the lakes.  
38 The lakes were full of water. And it's kind of, you  
39 know, surprising that the number of -- you know, the  
40 number of moose. I guess it's -- to me. Is that a  
41 stable number that we can rely on every year? Is that  
42 up or down? And I'm just wondering, maybe Brad could  
43 answer that, whether you're going to do the aerial wolf  
44 survey and moose survey, and when does that start?

45  
46 Thanks.

47  
48 MR. HAVENER: Yep. Yeah, I can leave  
49 that for Brad. He'll know more information regarding  
50 that.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.  
2  
3 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Jack.  
4  
5 Jeremy, have you been keeping track of  
6 these black bear numbers for a while that -- it's kind  
7 of surprising me that out of the 106 hunters that they  
8 can only harvest one black bear and that's it.  
9  
10 MR. HAVENER: Yeah, that's something we  
11 check. When the hunters are checking out, we're  
12 looking to see what they've got, you know, wolves and  
13 black bears, and grizzly bears as well. And, yeah,  
14 it's been pretty low for -- I've been there for three  
15 years now, and it's usually about one or two black  
16 bears that come out with the moose that are being  
17 checked out.  
18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: All right. Thank you.  
20  
21 MR. HAVENER: Yep.  
22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions  
24 for Jeremy.  
25  
26 So, thanks, Jeremy. We'll have Brad  
27 come up.  
28  
29 MR. HAVENER: Yep. Thank you.  
30  
31 MR. SCOTTEN: Mr. Chairman. Members of  
32 the Council. I'm Brad Scotten.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Got to stop you  
35 right there. Do you have a baby?  
36  
37 MR. SCOTTEN: No.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not yet.  
40  
41 MR. SCOTTEN: Still waiting.  
42  
43 (Laughter)  
44  
45 MR. SCOTTEN: Most of you know me. I'm  
46 Brad Scotten, the supervisor of wildlife biologists a  
47 Koyukuk/Nowitna. And as always it's a pleasure to be  
48 here, and good to be able to interact with the Council.  
49  
50

1                   As you probably all remember in vivid  
2 detail, I gave a presentation, a thorough presentation  
3 at the April meeting in Galena with a PowerPoint  
4 presentation and all that. And I'll try to continually  
5 do that, you know, once a year at one of the main  
6 meetings in villages.

7  
8                   I didn't prepare anything specifically  
9 for this meeting, but I think I can address some of the  
10 questions and just give you a brief overview.

11  
12                   As Jeremy alluded to, we had a real  
13 interested summer, and a lot of us spent a lot of time  
14 doing things like sheetrocking and working insulation  
15 and driving boats, and things we don't normally do.  
16 And I have to -- I guess I want to on the record real  
17 quickly just say the response has been impressive by  
18 the Staff that we have on the ground in Galena, and the  
19 support from the Regional office. Honestly, we were  
20 concerned when we were as impacted as we were that  
21 there might be, as Polly stated, maybe some draconian  
22 cuts to us given what we were going to go through. But  
23 they supported us. We've rebuilt everything that we  
24 needed to rebuild.

25  
26                   And we actually did manage to pull off  
27 about half of our projects that we normally do in the  
28 summer. So we spent a lot of time doing other things,  
29 but we actually continued to do our jobs, or tried to,  
30 as biologists and subsistence biologists, and we  
31 managed to get a few projects down. So I'll cover some  
32 of those real quickly, and then answer some of the  
33 questions.

34  
35                   We did finish surveys in the spring for  
36 moose the day before the flood waters started backing  
37 up in Galena. We actually got to watch the ice jam  
38 form, and watched the water rise from the air. And the  
39 twinning rates in the Galena area have been very  
40 consistent the last several years, right around 38  
41 percent, which is real good, indicating a pretty  
42 healthy population in terms of productivity.

43  
44                   There was a lot of anecdotal concern,  
45 because of the high water levels above Bishop Rock that  
46 we might have lost a lot of those moose calves just to  
47 the cold water, and, you know, calves being in the  
48 water for a long time and drowning and hypothermia.

49  
50                   We haven't done surveys yet, fall

1 surveys. I would be doing them right now if it weren't  
2 for a lack of snow and a baby schedule that I'm trying  
3 to adhere to. But as soon as we get snow conditions,  
4 we'll start our November surveys, and we plan on flying  
5 the full gamut of our normal surveys in November on  
6 Koyukuk/Nowitna, and northern Innoko. So we'll fly all  
7 of our trend units and get that calf/cow ratio data.

8  
9 Anecdotally, we're seeing, because we  
10 did do some flying, a lot of calves still alive and  
11 well in the Galena area and even right along the river  
12 corridor. You know, the animals are incredibly  
13 resilient and find a way to survive when they can. So  
14 I don't think we've lost a whole crop of calves near  
15 Galena. The survey data will tell us for sure in  
16 Bishop Rock and Pilot Mountain and those will be some  
17 kind of fun data to look at when we get them.

18  
19 So we're planning on those surveys.

20  
21 We did get goose production surveys  
22 done, and swan surveys. Some of our radio tracking  
23 flights did occur.

24  
25 Jack mentioned earlier, everybody knows  
26 it was a late spring in Interior Alaska. We definitely  
27 saw later onset of nesting for most of the birds.  
28 Despite that, good production looked really good for  
29 white-fronted geese. We had another banner year for  
30 white-fronted goose goslings. And so it was later, but  
31 it was still successful, and they look good.

32  
33 Swans nested later. Their cygnets  
34 looked really small in August, and the brood sizes were  
35 smaller. And we didn't think they had a chance, but  
36 because we had such a late, prolonged fall, they  
37 actually did fairly well, those cygnets. A lot of them  
38 lived, because there was open water until October 31st,  
39 which I've never seen.

40  
41 So those are some bright spots in some  
42 of the biological data.

43  
44 I'm trying to remember some of the  
45 questions to go back to, and remind me if I'm missing a  
46 couple.

47  
48 Mr. Gervais asked about increase in  
49 trapping activity and permits. I think what you're  
50 maybe referencing or alluding to is there was a cabin

1 permit transfer on the Nowitna Refuge to a new trapper  
2 that bought out one of the old pre-ANILCA cabins and is  
3 going to be trapping on the Nowitna.

4  
5 But trapping is regulated just under  
6 State regulations, so there's no special permits for  
7 trapping on the Refuges, nor do we really attempt to  
8 keep track of who's active in, you know, a regimented  
9 way. We sort of anecdotally know. And there's  
10 definitely increased interest, and I expect to see  
11 maybe a little more activity even from within the  
12 villages of people working trap lines that haven't been  
13 active in the last several years, because fur prices  
14 have increased. I don't really anticipate any  
15 biological problems from that given, you know, we've  
16 got healthy fur populations almost everywhere, and  
17 really a light harvest compared to what it used to be  
18 20 years ago.

19  
20 But I can -- you know, if you have  
21 questions specifically about parts of the Nowitna or  
22 around Ruby, I can maybe address those.

23  
24 What else am I missing that somebody  
25 had asked something else that Jeremy referenced.

26  
27 MR. HAVENER: Don wanted to know about  
28 the moose numbers.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you know, we  
31 plan on doing the trend areas at the lower Nowitna.  
32 That population has been stable and healthy for years.  
33 I don't anticipate a dramatic change there on the  
34 Nowitna. And we don't survey the Ruby Slough area  
35 downriver, but that's -- we have surveyed it in the  
36 past. It's stable at a moderate density. It's around  
37 two moose per square mile, which is an order of  
38 magnitude greater than some of the -- you know, some of  
39 the low density areas up around Allakaket, and even  
40 down on the Innoko where Jerry's talking about.

41  
42 We do have plans to help Innoko this  
43 fall again with their -- a couple of days of moose  
44 surveys down in 21A, so we'll continue to work with  
45 them.

46  
47 And as Polly -- I think I missed the  
48 very beginning of Polly's things, but there -- our  
49 Refuge manager, Kenton Moos is in Anchorage right now  
50 meeting with leadership there to develop a transition

1 plan, which involves staffing and money and things like  
2 that. And we really don't know anything more than you  
3 know at this point. You just have to recognize that  
4 they're looking at the big picture, and a lot of folks  
5 share the concerns about that transition. And  
6 certainly McGrath is in a touch situation there. And  
7 we'll just see what decisions get made.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don's got a question  
10 for you. Don.

11

12 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Brad, I have a  
13 question I guess. It's really kind of hard for us with  
14 so many members not even being able to make a quorum  
15 when we're discussing, you know, the closure over there  
16 of the McGrath and their programs and stuff without  
17 having the Walkers, without having the comment from  
18 GASH or whatever that's, you know -- whether they are  
19 -- their comments on that particular, so that comes  
20 back to the -- I wa -- some of the proposals are  
21 affecting Koyukuk River, and open up different areas  
22 and it's kind of nice to have Jenny and Eleanor here to  
23 get their comments, and see what Middle Yukon is, to  
24 see what the Koyukuk Advisory or the moose hunting  
25 committees or something, to have those when we have our  
26 proposals come up.

27

28 And, you know, it just came to me when  
29 I was asking about the numbers, you know, I don't know  
30 if you have the numbers in front of you for the Koyukuk  
31 River, what the take was, but as I mentioned yesterday,  
32 it seemed like there wa an exceptionally large number  
33 of hunters this year, and it seems like there was a lot  
34 of bulls taken, kind of younger bulls. And we're  
35 talking about the Dalby and we're talking about --  
36 you know, it seemed like their success rate was really  
37 high, and I'm just wondering if you had the numbers,  
38 any kind of numbers on what that particular hunt was  
39 like.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MR. SCOTTEN: I can comment. I don't  
44 have the specific numbers in front of me. We haven't  
45 gotten the check station numbers from the Koyukuk from  
46 the State. That's a State-operated check station.

47

48 Anecdotally, I can tell you that Glenn  
49 Stout told me it was pretty much average. An average  
50 number of hunters and an average harvest. There was no

1 spike in harvest or increase really in the over-all  
2 take on the Koyukuk River this year. So probably about  
3 the same number of hunters took the same number of  
4 moose. on the river. And as a -- and our population is  
5 generally pretty healthy.

6  
7 I am excited to do surveys this fall,  
8 because last fall, and I presented this at the spring  
9 RAC meeting, you may recall, we had good snow  
10 conditions in the southern half of our survey areas,  
11 and good snow, and we got really pretty good results  
12 from our surveys.

13  
14 The northern trend units, Three Days  
15 Slough and around Huslia and those northern areas had  
16 very low snow in the fall. And that affects our  
17 sightability during moose surveys, and it also affects  
18 how moose move around. And I think they just weren't  
19 on some of their winter ranges when we flew the  
20 surveys. So our counts were low last fall around  
21 Huslia and some of those places. And the ratio data  
22 was probably pretty solid, but the numbers were lower,  
23 which kind of makes us a little concerned, but the snow  
24 conditions were real poor, and we'd like to have good  
25 snow conditions this year so we can get a pretty good  
26 trend count in that area and find out -- make sure that  
27 population's still healthy, and at least stable,  
28 because we do have these winter hunts like Jack  
29 mentioned around Huslia where there's a small allowable  
30 harvest there when the population's doing well. But if  
31 that population is not doing well, if it's in decline,  
32 there may be some concerns about whether or not to  
33 continue that hunt. So we want to get our surveys in  
34 this fall.

35  
36 The other point of clarification I did  
37 want to make, Jeremy gave the numbers for the Federal  
38 extension until October 1st or 2nd this year, that  
39 season, and there was two reported harvested moose from  
40 that additional hunt. Well, concurrently there was a  
41 State extension as well, and a lot of folks hunted  
42 under just the State registration permit on State and  
43 Native lands, and they did not get a Federal permit.  
44 So there's going to be additional harvest reported  
45 there, but that goes through the State system, and we  
46 don't have those data yet. So just based on what I saw  
47 in Galena, there's quite a few more than two moose that  
48 were harvested in that additional season. And I know  
49 folks from Kaltag and Nulato and Koyukuk all took  
50 advantage of that season, because it was all of 21D for

1 the State. So I think the season extension was helpful  
2 to a lot of folks there.

3

4 And again to just go back to what Jack  
5 said early in the meeting, everybody saw a late fall.  
6 You know, across the board, talking to hunters and  
7 guides and everybody, the onset of the rut was a little  
8 bit later. Moose activity was later. There was a lot  
9 of water and a lot of flooded lakes. There's places  
10 around Galena that normally were grass lakes, you could  
11 walk around in and drive around in, that are still four  
12 feet deep. There's no grass. There's going to be a  
13 lot of spruce trees dying in those meadows. The lakes  
14 were completely submerged and still are. It really  
15 changed a lot in the wetland regime, you know, right  
16 around that area upstream from Bishop Rock.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My question,  
19 you did a lot of flying around this fall. What did  
20 that do to the beaver? Did that flood a lot of beaver  
21 out and kill a lot of kits?

22

23 MR. SCOTTEN: In that flood plain,  
24 certainly, there were beavers displaced. Their lodges  
25 were completely inundated and submerged for weeks. So  
26 I would anticipate, you know, they're an aquatic  
27 animal, I'm sure none of the adults or teenagers had  
28 any problems surviving, but they may not have raised  
29 very many litters of kits in that flooded area, which  
30 is a pretty substantial area. We didn't get fly any  
31 fall beaver surveys partly due to budget cuts and the  
32 furlough. We normally fly them in October, and none of  
33 us were working in October. And that's one of those  
34 surveys that we do when we have the money and the time  
35 on a rotating schedule, and, you know, frankly because  
36 of sequestration and all that, we're looking at cuts,  
37 and some things are definitely going to give.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42

43 Brad, was there any species that  
44 benefitted from the flood with better habitat?

45

46 MR. SCOTTEN: Well, I'm sure, Mr.  
47 Gervais, all things in nature, there's a counter-  
48 balancing effect of things. And it's changed -- it's  
49 going to change the wetland dynamics around there I  
50 think. That country's prone to flood. It's flooded

1 historically. You listen to the oldtimers in that  
2 area, you used to be able to canoe from lake to lake,  
3 and through sloughs every spring. It was just wetter.  
4 And it's kind of -- there's been a drying phase. And  
5 this may have changed that back a little bit, you know.  
6 The lakes drew down over the summer a little bit, but  
7 not as much as I thought they would. There's low  
8 basins retained water. It may end up being better for  
9 some duck species.

10

11 We noticed a lot of fish fry in  
12 different lakes where we'd never noticed them before.  
13 A lot of those were whitefish. Some of them we might  
14 have identified as burbot. I'm not a fisheries  
15 biologist, but we did check some of those things out.

16

17 So we saw things like, you know, there  
18 were no grebes nesting in the lakes around Galena,  
19 which is unheard of. There's always grebes there, and  
20 it's just I guess because where they normally build  
21 nests were flooded and they went somewhere else, you  
22 know. Birds can vote with their wings and go somewhere  
23 else. And I'm sure things will kind of slowly return  
24 to what we would consider normal, but it's a dynamic.  
25 Some things are going to benefit and some are going to  
26 suffer little bit in the short term. But, you know,  
27 it will be interesting. I'd like to be able to  
28 continue the monitoring that we have been doing.

29

30 I mean, even our breeding bird surveys,  
31 which is a motorized route where we stop every half a  
32 mile and listen for bird songs, and then enumerate  
33 those birds. Even that was affected by the flood,  
34 because the habitat along the road outside of Galena is  
35 just flattened. The willows and the alders are  
36 literally, you know, stripped away, and some of that  
37 bird -- you know, passerine bird habitat is changed.  
38 And our counts reflected that a little bit this year.  
39 We saw differences. Savannah sparrows weren't nesting.  
40 There's no Savannahs in Galena right now, except at the  
41 airport.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What about grouse?  
44 They must have taken a real beating on nesting.

45

46 MR. SCOTTEN: There were grouse on the  
47 roads in Galena as there always are in the fall, you  
48 know, picking gravel, but whether there's more of less,  
49 I couldn't say for sure.

50

1                   But people asked a lot about voles and  
2 furbearers and what not, and, you know, until we get  
3 some snow on the ground and see tracks and kind of get  
4 out there a little more in the winter, we won't know on  
5 some of that. But it's more -- I think a flood in a  
6 lot of ways in a place that evolved with floods, it's  
7 more devastating to the people than it is to the  
8 critters. You know, I tell people all the time, these  
9 animals are resilient and tough, and tougher than us,  
10 and they're probably doing well, and hopefully we can  
11 kind of keep tabs on it with the Staff and the budgets  
12 that we do have.

13

14                   MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

15

16                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don asked what  
17 Ella's cabin check station numbers were, and I --  
18 Koyukuk River Advisory Committee me here in Fairbanks  
19 on October 5th, and Glenn Stout gave us the data from  
20 the check station. The normal numbers, recent numbers  
21 have been around 380 hunters have been going through  
22 there. This year they had 430 hunters. They had --  
23 that was up about 50 hunters. And then there was 130  
24 moose was sort of the normal; this year they had 170  
25 moose. He was, you know, anecdotally was saying that  
26 there was less wind than normal. There's lots of  
27 clouds. Moose seem to move more in the daytime was one  
28 of the reasons he gave for, you know, the incidence of  
29 encounter was up. And so there were four black bears  
30 and three wolves taken through the check station also.  
31 And so that was basically the Ella's cabin report that  
32 he gave us.

33

34                   MR. SCOTTEN: Well, thanks for that. I  
35 haven't even seen those data yet, so I appreciate the  
36 update.

37

38                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. So it was  
39 up a little bit, and the success rate was up a little  
40 bit. And his perception was that once -- you know,  
41 once you got into the middle of September, it was  
42 cloudy a lot, dark at night. Moose were moving a  
43 little more in the daytime, and so people -- and it was  
44 not so windy, so they could -- they were calling moose  
45 from further distances, you know, because of the lack  
46 of wind and noise. And so that seemed to be his  
47 impressions of talking to all these hunters.

48

49                   So any other questions for Brad.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I do.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 I guess, Brad, that -- well, earlier  
8 you mentioned the twinning rates of calves or  
9 whatever. And, you know, maybe they weren't able to  
10 survive in that particular. But do you guys do those  
11 twinning rates throughout the Koyukuk and Nowitna  
12 Refuges both? And when will you be able to see the  
13 results from that to let us know the mortality rate or  
14 whatever?

15

16 And incidently I guess when we're  
17 talking about some of the proposals, I'm trying to find  
18 the numbers, trying to -- I'm looking at some of the  
19 proposals like opening up certain areas, because  
20 there's -- I was reading one of the proposals for the  
21 Koyukuk River, and that's why -- I don't know the area  
22 very well, that's why it's good to have local reps  
23 testifying on these -- on that particular area. But I  
24 was just thinking, hey, just because a hunter didn't  
25 see anybody up there for two or three years or  
26 something, maybe that's a prime breeding area. Maybe  
27 that's justification to leave them alone.

28

29 But anyway I'm just getting back to  
30 that question there about the mortality rate or the  
31 twinning.

32

33 MR. SCOTTEN: Mr. Honea, we will fly  
34 surveys in November, and some of them are right in that  
35 flooded area. So by the end of -- the middle of  
36 December we'll have calf/cow ratios that will give us a  
37 pretty good idea of whether there was a significant  
38 impact to this cohort of calves born this spring right  
39 there around Galena. You know, the floods certainly  
40 didn't -- won't impact the Lower Nowitna or the Huslia  
41 with Three-Day Slough or Dolby areas at all. So any  
42 changes we see there in calf/cow ratios were a result  
43 of something else. And in that area around Galena, if  
44 we do see changes, it may have been a result of that  
45 flood, or probably would have been as a result of the  
46 flood. So we should have that preliminary data in  
47 December, which I can share with you, and certainly in  
48 the spring meeting we'll provide a detailed overview of  
49 that.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Thank you.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions.  
4  
5 (No comments)  
6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none,  
8 thanks, Brad.  
9  
10 MR. SCOTTEN: Thank you.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hope you have a baby  
13 pretty soon.  
14  
15 MR. SCOTTEN: I do, too.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Imminently. So,  
18 Melinda, should we go to a break.  
19  
20 MS. HERNANDEZ: Sure.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so we can take a  
23 10-minute break. And I would like to get any public  
24 comments, and then I want to do BLM after those public  
25 comments. So if any of the public has anything to say,  
26 Stanley, Orville, Sam, I would like to get those next  
27 when we come back on.  
28  
29 (Off record)  
30  
31 (On record)  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to  
34 come back on. Don.  
35  
36 MR. RIVARD: I'm here, Mr. Chair.  
37  
38 MS. HERNANDEZ: Is there anyone else  
39 who's on the teleconference besides Don Rivard.  
40  
41 Thanks, Don.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to  
44 come back on here. And I wanted to have some public  
45 comments.  
46  
47 Stanley, did you want to have something  
48 to say to the Council.  
49  
50 MR. NED: Yes. (Indiscernible - away

1 from microphones)

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: State your name for  
6 the recorder.

7

8 MR. NED: Yeah. My name is Stanley  
9 Ned. I'm from Allakaket, but now currently living in  
10 Fairbanks for the time being, but my intention is going  
11 back to Allakaket again.

12

13 But some of the problems that I've been  
14 seeing is that the fish is beginning to get smaller and  
15 smaller. And we're getting concerned about it. You  
16 know, the kings, for example, there's no more eight-  
17 year-olds. And I think two or three years ago there  
18 were about two percent seven-year-olds. So I know  
19 that's gone. So I think that it's going to be a  
20 problem later for us.

21

22 And the other thing I was concerned  
23 about is that, you know, the Department of Fish and  
24 Game, they're doing a hell of a good job trying to  
25 manage it with our help, but that's -- there's bigger  
26 problem that's out in the oceans. And I think it's  
27 international, because there are so many people fishing  
28 now, the technology has improved so much that they're  
29 able to catch a hell of a lot of fish, like maybe five-  
30 mile nets or longer. And I think that's the real  
31 problem. It's not -- you know, we could throw all the  
32 blame on the Department of Fish and Game and all that  
33 shit, but I think they're doing one hell of a job, but  
34 it's an international problem.

35

36 And the other concern I had is that  
37 some of the programs that they're having now on TV.  
38 This is totally a different thing, but it bothers me.  
39 For example, I had some friends down on the coast that  
40 called me and saying that there's a program called  
41 Yukon Men. And it's blaming the people down on the  
42 coast. They're saying that the reason they're having  
43 the problem here in Yukon Men is that the people on the  
44 coast are catching all the fish, so the people in  
45 Tanana are starving or whatever, you know. And I think  
46 they just want dram in there. So I keep telling them  
47 that, but they don't like the way the program is  
48 pointing fingers at another group, you know. That's  
49 another concern that I have with them. And I talked to  
50 some of the people on that program, and they're saying

1 they just want drama in there.

2

3                   And I'd also like to thank Department  
4 of Fish and Game for their program that they had around  
5 Allakaket of predator control. And I think that did a  
6 good job in there, but I think if they did it one more  
7 year, one more year, you know, take out more wolves,  
8 that would really help, because the wolves will bounce  
9 right back. There's no problem in there. And when  
10 they were doing the predator control, you know, the  
11 wolves all went into the Federal land, so they couldn't  
12 get all the wolves in there, you know. But I think if  
13 they did it again, that would really help the people  
14 around our region, around Allakaket.

15

16                   And I know that there's more local  
17 hunters and non-local hunters that are beginning to  
18 come into our neck of the woods.

19

20                   And I like the way that the Department  
21 of Fish and Game break up that Unit 24 into A, B, and  
22 C, because, you know, when they're doing their studies,  
23 for example, they did it in high density area, and then  
24 extrapolated it out, making it look like there's a hell  
25 of a lot of moose in that area even there's not. So I  
26 think I like the way that they broke it down so they  
27 don't extrapolate it too much into a low density area.  
28 So I'd like to thank them for that.

29

30                   But that's all I have.

31

32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Stanley.

33

34                   Any comments.

35

36                   Tim.

37

38                   MR. GERVAIS: Stanley, can you stand by  
39 here for a minute?

40

41                   Thanks for your comments. It's really  
42 important for us to hear what you guys are seeing in  
43 your various regions and stuff. When you're not seeing  
44 those larger aged class on the king salmon, that's a  
45 really bad trend to have. And the bulk of what you're  
46 -- the two or three things you're mentioning with the  
47 high sea drift netting and then increase in technology,  
48 and then we're not getting good cooperation from the  
49 North Pacific Council, which regulates the harvest in  
50 the EEZ or the Federal portion of the ocean.

1                   And we've been working on these issues  
2 for quite a while with this Council, and we're trying  
3 to figure out -- we know we need to improve what we're  
4 doing to help get the salmon back. And we had -- North  
5 Pacific Council made a concession on reducing the  
6 regulation of bycatch. It was that Amendment 91 that  
7 we were talking about yesterday. But the way that  
8 amendment came out, it's kind of not as effective it  
9 was just kind of a conservation measure, and what they  
10 really needed to do is put a rebuilding plan in place,  
11 and it didn't happen because of lobbying from the  
12 pollock industry.

13  
14                   We're still as a Council, we're  
15 exploring what we can do, but two things that you can  
16 do, or Allakaket Tribe can do that would help out. And  
17 I think I'd like to see like more communication or more  
18 -- a louder voice coming like out of AFN or similar  
19 type organization, because that's really -- that's like  
20 one of the strongest voices in Alaska that the  
21 rulemakers will pay attention to.

22  
23                   And then as I was talking to David  
24 Jenkins yesterday about, there's a lot of stuff that  
25 these -- the Federal Subsistence Board and this Council  
26 can't communicate because there's regulations that have  
27 to do with the Hatch Act, but Allakaket Tribe, they  
28 have more power being a Federally-recognized tribe.  
29 And you guys have issues with what you're seeing with  
30 salmon, then please communicate that to North Pacific  
31 Council and to COD, Department of Commerce, and  
32 Department of Interior I believe. But anyways, you --  
33 because of the way Obama's dealing with the Federal  
34 tribes, you guys are actually in one of the most  
35 powerful positions to communicate problems you're  
36 having with the way that these Federal fisheries are  
37 being managed.

38  
39                   But keep communicating with us as a  
40 Council on what you're seeing, and we're going to keep  
41 trying to get this king salmon issue resolved. And we  
42 appreciate any efforts that you take personally or as a  
43 tribal member.

44  
45                   Thanks.

46  
47                   MR. NED: Yeah. Thank you. Yeah, we  
48 -- I think the tribe in Allakaket and the Koyukuk River  
49 are really concerned about the fish, you know. And I  
50 know that they're making some kind of move on it, but

1 I'm not in Allakaket right now, so I don't know what  
2 the Council itself is doing as far as proposing or  
3 writing letters to the different entities, government  
4 entities.

5  
6 But I have one more thing. I attended  
7 the Koyukuk River Advisory Council meeting. I think it  
8 was last month?

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: October 5th.

11  
12 MR. NED: Yeah. But I had a concern on  
13 there, too. There was a proposal written by -- written  
14 up by one of the guides here in Fairbanks that had to  
15 do with bear baiting and the black bear baiting  
16 station. Should a grizzly bear or a brown bear come  
17 into that bear baiting station, they can shoot it and  
18 let it rot in there. And I didn't like the proposal,  
19 because it's chipping away at our tradition and our  
20 cultural, and I don't believe in doing anything like  
21 that. We have a lot of respect for the animals.

22  
23 And that's my concern.

24  
25 I'd fight it at the Board level, too.

26  
27 Thank you.

28  
29 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other questions or  
32 comments on Stanley's comment?

33  
34 (No comments)

35  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Thanks,  
38 Stanley.

39  
40 Anybody else. Orville.

41  
42 MR. HUNTINGTON: Orville Huntington for  
43 the record from Tanana Chiefs Conference.

44  
45 I can't speak to the comments for the  
46 move of the Innoko Refuge, because I don't know what  
47 the comments are. Usually when they come out with  
48 legal comments from TCC, I won't comment on them,  
49 because I have to go by whatever they say.

50

1                   But I can comment on a couple of  
2 things. There was obviously a lot of concern about  
3 fish. At the Board of Fish we were able to create some  
4 incentives for the pollock fleet and not, you know,  
5 have such a high bycatch of Chinook salmon.

6  
7                   At the Area M meeting is where we  
8 started to do it. We got agreement from the pollock  
9 fleet, from the Alaska side, to start doing more  
10 restrictions on their Chinook salmon bycatch. And then  
11 this last meeting a couple weeks ago, there was a joint  
12 Board of Fish/Board of Game meeting.

13  
14                   After that meeting, we had what was  
15 called a peacod meeting, which is kind of like around  
16 Kodiak, Pacific cod. Actually that fishery also has  
17 some bycatch, not a lot, but they were also -- you  
18 know, we reached agreement that to help the local  
19 fisherman, we actually created a fishery closer to  
20 shore that would have less impact. That takes away  
21 from the larger commercial fleet. So they were not  
22 happy about it. They had a lot of lawyers and  
23 representatives there like they always do. But those  
24 are small wins in a big battle. Whenever you go  
25 against large corporate industry, you really don't have  
26 much leverage.

27  
28                   It's fortunate for us that the Board of  
29 Fish has at least for the most part really long-term  
30 interest of not just Chinook salmon, but all salmon in  
31 the State of Alaska.

32  
33                   And so we have another meeting coming  
34 up in I think it's early December. And this is all  
35 part of the public record. You could just go to the  
36 Alaska Board of Game website and the Board of Fish  
37 website and you could see those public -- the public  
38 record is in there on what actions were taken to reduce  
39 bycatch.

40  
41                   On our part, the State part, it's  
42 really cut and clean. You know, on the Council part,  
43 the Federal Council, that's really industry driven, so  
44 they have a lot harder time to make reductions, but  
45 they've been -- their last meeting I think was one of  
46 the few times that they actually took it into really  
47 consideration on how to go about the concern of salmon.  
48 So there's steps being taken in the right direction,  
49 but they're kind of just like little steps at a time.  
50 It's not going to be a big jump, because there's too

1 much money involved.

2

3 I guess as far -- I have something  
4 about AFN. AFN, they're an organization of corporate  
5 interests. The tribal interests didn't come about  
6 until the last few years, like the past -- I think  
7 since I've been on the board. I may have to step off  
8 of there, because it's such a political board.

9

10 But you're right, you know, I think the  
11 corporate and the village interests sometimes are  
12 clouded, because there was a proposal -- or not a  
13 proposal. We don't do proposals. We do resolutions.  
14 There was a resolution drafted to create Intertribal  
15 Fish Commission. That was supported by about, you  
16 know, 90 percent of all the tribes. The 10 percent is  
17 obviously in that Area M area where there's some little  
18 bycatch going on. It's not there, actually they're not  
19 the problem. It's farther out. But there was some  
20 claim that we would infringe upon their tribal rights.

21

22 But when I was at the Board of Fish  
23 meeting and Board of Game and then right after that I  
24 went to sea cod, that I actually spoke with a lot of  
25 those tribal members from the Aleutian Chain, and they  
26 were in agreement with the Interior tribes and the  
27 coastal tribes that a fish commission was a good idea,  
28 and they wanted tribal representation. So the only  
29 thing I can guess is that maybe it was -- there's some  
30 confusion on the matter between corporate and tribal.  
31 I guess I may have to go to the Board meeting to find  
32 out what was the matter with the resolution.

33

34 So that's the AFN side. There are  
35 things being done.

36

37 I can't remember. The other thing had  
38 to do with ANILCA refuges. I spoke with Ray Collins.  
39 Ray told me that it creates a lot of local employment  
40 when they have that operation in McGrath. It creates  
41 local employment for the people. There's that  
42 provision in ANILCA. He was really concerned that when  
43 you build a big Federal structure inside a big building  
44 somewhere else, you're not really doing the resources  
45 any good. I will let him comment on his own at the  
46 next Board meeting and in his letter. All I said was,  
47 you know, you have to write a letter to your Board and  
48 express your concerns.

49

50 My concern is always that every time

1 you consolidate things, your priorities change. And so  
2 that means for the priorities, whatever they were in  
3 McGrath, they're not going to be the same as they are  
4 in Galena. I mean, any climate scientist will tell you  
5 what happened in Galena is going to keep happening.

6  
7 I mean, you know, I'm on the National  
8 Science Foundation board, and we couldn't even function  
9 because of the government shut down. We couldn't even  
10 make decisions. We couldn't have a meeting. So a lot  
11 of -- I think one whole year of Antarctic research went  
12 out the window.

13  
14 But all these climate impacts are huge,  
15 and the simple biology just in the field, doing old  
16 biology, isn't doing us any good. I mean, if you look  
17 at the problems Stan just mentioned about bears. I  
18 mean, those are really sacred beliefs, you know.  
19 That's why we set up that predator management program  
20 at Allakaket with the State along with the village  
21 corporation, the regional corporation, Doyon, and the  
22 tribes, so we could do those things in a way that we're  
23 respectful. You know, that the customs of, you know,  
24 Pollock's people, that's the way they have always done  
25 it, and Stan. So I understand that, you know, you do  
26 things in a certain way. When you go outside of that,  
27 then you're violating those very much stronger laws  
28 that are made by Native American people. And that's  
29 wrong.

30  
31 So I would hope somebody would  
32 articulate that at the Board level. I can't advocate.  
33 As a Board of Fish member, I can only take the best  
34 information at hand and make a decision.

35  
36 But one of the things about climate is  
37 we no longer are going to have longer, colder springs.  
38 Obviously you can look outside and see the longer fall.  
39 It's been there for the past decade now. We predicted  
40 that I think 24 years ago. The models started showing  
41 that. Well, we're at that level where the models are  
42 being blown out of the water, but some of them are  
43 still accurate.

44  
45 The biggest problem for subsistence  
46 users is the change in dynamics of the fish and game,  
47 the fish and wildlife that are out there. I mean, it  
48 doesn't take a nuclear scientist to figure out what  
49 happened, why we had so many big bears come in. It was  
50 just simple. A hunter told me, it wasn't no scientist.

1 It wasn't nobody at Washington, D.C. But what  
2 happened, and I won't say the A word, because I don't  
3 believe that. Our cultures was here far before  
4 anything was written down. Our culture doesn't have to  
5 be defended by some word that says it's a story. You  
6 know, our culture is what it is. You know, it's based  
7 on fact. You know, facts in our heart's window, what's  
8 true and what's not true.

9  
10 And so when you have these long falls,  
11 long springs, you have no walrus, no seals washing up  
12 on shore like they used to along the coast. It's true  
13 those big animals used to come out, you know, they're  
14 between us and the coast. so they always went the other  
15 way. You know, big nice rotten carcasses they could  
16 digest easily. Fresh returns of fish coming in, but  
17 the rivers are frozen. I mean, in fact the Huslia  
18 River, we have a water temperature meter up there, and  
19 it froze right to the bottom in the Bayauk (ph) Creek.

20  
21 So you have these animals waking up and  
22 these warm winds blowing in from Interior. Of course,  
23 those bears are going to come towards us. You know,  
24 they're going to go toward food. They're not going to  
25 go out on the coast, because there's nothing there for  
26 them to eat now. So were going to have these problems  
27 that come up, but we're going to have to learn how to  
28 adapt to them. And, you know, we as local people,  
29 we've seen these things. We've heard these things.  
30 You know, they're in our -- you could call it a  
31 philosophy, but it's a prophecy. We have prophecy  
32 about two winters, two summers, and what -- all those  
33 things that go wrong.

34  
35 And so you can't look at small things  
36 and think you know the whole picture, because you  
37 don't. Even I realize that. You know, as a scientist  
38 I know very little. Even as a traditional person I  
39 know very little, but what little we know we should  
40 share and try to make the best decisions.

41  
42 Those are my short comments.

43  
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Orville.

47  
48 Questions or comments from the Council.

49  
50 Tim.

1 MR. GERVAIS: Thanks for your  
2 testimony, Orville. I've heard a lot of positive  
3 comments on your performance on Board of Fish from a  
4 lot of fishermen around the State. So thanks for  
5 putting in a lot of time and good consideration  
6 regarding that.

7  
8 Could you inform us when the Board of  
9 Fish is deliberating controversial fishing policy, is  
10 it -- is the Board of Fish action, is it all the voting  
11 of individual members, or do you guys meet and develop  
12 a strategy that the Board's going to move in as a  
13 whole? I'm just trying to figure out, like do you get  
14 very much direction from the Governor or from  
15 Commissioner Campbell, or is it all just coming through  
16 the own individual Board of Fish members.

17  
18 MR. HUNTINGTON: Actually the ones that  
19 had the biggest influence on the Board of Fish and  
20 Board of Game are the Advisory Committees. So the  
21 Koyukuk River Advisory Committee has a lot of authority  
22 they don't realize they have, because they give us what  
23 we need to know, and the science provides the rest.  
24 The same thing for fisheries. Yukon Middle -- what  
25 they call that, where Mickey's the chair? Yukon Middle  
26 River Advisory Committee. We just created some new  
27 ones farther down river, so I know the terminology's a  
28 little mixed up.

29  
30 But at the Board level, collectively we  
31 make decisions as a Board, but on the Fisheries Board  
32 anyway, we're more -- we want to discuss more with the  
33 users. I mean, these people pay a lot of money to come  
34 to these Board meetings. You know, a lot of them, you  
35 know, just don't even have a job, and they're just  
36 trying to get by for winter on unemployment. So at the  
37 Board level we listen to what the scientists tell us,  
38 what the Staff tell us. And then they give us the best  
39 information they have for us to make the decision.  
40 Then we deliberate.

41  
42 But as a Board we can't deliberate --  
43 not more than three of us can be in one place at any  
44 one time, only when we're sitting around a table,  
45 because then it looks like we control the Board, and  
46 that's not the intent of the Board. The Board is  
47 supposed to be an open process. Everyone sits in a  
48 different place. And we all make decisions  
49 individually. And while we're deliberating, we express  
50 what our thoughts are on that proposal. And we don't

1 say until near the end of deliberation whether we  
2 support it.

3  
4                   And most time, if it's controversial,  
5 the Chair will ask to step down. And when we step  
6 down, that allows us to interact with the public and  
7 tweak the proposals to where it will work for -- you  
8 know, as best as it can work. Not all these proposals  
9 can work as good as we'd want to. Some don't work at  
10 all.

11  
12                   And then once we get it to where we  
13 think we can get can get an agreement, and the public  
14 is fairly happy with it, then we reconvene, and then we  
15 deliberate some more with the new information.  
16 Sometimes we'll put up a new proposal with whatever was  
17 written up during the break. And usually those  
18 sometimes the best proposals that come out., because  
19 it's a combination of local interests and a little bit  
20 of the -- well, industry, because of commercial  
21 fishing. There's commercial fishing, sport fishing and  
22 -- well, I'm the only subsistence user, but we're all  
23 subsistence users by State definition.

24  
25                   So that's the was we come with our  
26 decision on the Board of Fish. I can't speak to the  
27 Board of Game, it's a similar process, but I'm not  
28 sure. When we had the joint meeting, they did things a  
29 certain way, and the Board of Fish did things a certain  
30 way.

31  
32                   And the Board of Fish is a commercial  
33 entity. You know, there's a lot of commercial  
34 activities that occur, whether they're recreational or  
35 commercial fishing.

36  
37                   There's been a huge conservation effort  
38 because of Chinook. So we're all working together. I  
39 have a couple meetings with a couple senators coming up  
40 to try to resolve some of those issues. But they call  
41 me when they want to meet and talk, and they do that to  
42 all the Board members. They treat us all the same, and  
43 we treat everyone the same.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

46  
47                   MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Orville. Do  
48 you know whether -- what the current status of Yukon  
49 River king salmon is? Is it a stock of management  
50 concern or a stock of yield concern.

1 MR. HUNTINGTON: Right now it's a stock  
2 of -- it can't get any stricter. We can't restrict  
3 people any more than we have, it's that bad.

4  
5 When you start talking about making  
6 hatcheries to cure a problem, your problem is very bad.  
7 That's as bad as it can get. Most time hatcheries  
8 don't work. There is a hatchery up in Canada right now  
9 at the bridge. I've seen how it works on the Yukon  
10 River. It should put a lot of fish back in; it  
11 doesn't.

12  
13 It's just that I think we're at that  
14 point of use, such high use, and, you know, even though  
15 the bycatch is being taking care of how, it's still  
16 just too much for that species of fish. Even if you  
17 put in hatcheries, I don't see it rebounding. It's  
18 only going to take less use, you know, more  
19 conservation.

20  
21 You know, we've gone from, what, we  
22 have big nets at first, then we went to seven and a  
23 half. We got everybody seven and a half through a  
24 disaster declaration of seven-and-a-half-inch mesh,  
25 And then they came in with six-inch mesh which is even  
26 more restrictive that no one has now. So we have a lot  
27 of people, like myself, that can't fish in the summer  
28 for Chinook.

29  
30 And not only that, it impacts our other  
31 species like sheefish. We use that same net to catch  
32 sheefish, and we're not allowed to use it. So now all  
33 these sheefish when we're there, we can't -- we don't  
34 have access to them. And these are in Federal waters.  
35 So I would think you guys would be more concerned with  
36 those, because on the Yukon that's largely State, and  
37 then you have international waters.

38  
39 The Yukon Panel is going to meet here,  
40 I just talked to one of the fisheries biologist, and  
41 they're going to meet here in the spring. And that's  
42 the joint Yukon/Alaska working group that -- I don't  
43 know if Stan Ned's still on there, but there's members  
44 from Alaska on that panel. And really, if you can make  
45 it, I would really hope you guys would go. It's a good  
46 meeting.

47  
48 In addition to that, we're going to  
49 host an international Chinook salmon summit in spring.  
50 And that will be in Fairbanks, too. We're still

1 working out the logistics on it. It's a cooperative  
2 effort between Canada, Tanana Chiefs and YRDFA. The  
3 Yukon River Drainage deputy director is here. He can  
4 answer those questions I hope. And some other  
5 partners. I think Bering Sea Fisheries Association may  
6 be.

7

8 Those are the two where you can work on  
9 fisheries.

10

11 There's also, as Jack knows, there's  
12 the spring Board of Game work session. If you have  
13 Board of Game conservation issues, that's where you  
14 want to bring those up, and address those proposals.  
15 And maybe the State will take that step-down approach.  
16 They're a pretty good board really, if you get to know  
17 them. You know, you could ask them if they do step  
18 down, to go up and tweak the proposal to your liking.  
19 Don't leave it the way it is, because then it won't --  
20 you know, it won't do you any good. I mean, Jack knows  
21 that. He's testified to several boards. And I'm glad  
22 you guys are taking an interest to do the same thing,  
23 because it's critical you guys voice your concerns, you  
24 know, at those levels. And we need you guys in there.

25

26 You're the advocates. It's not me.  
27 I'm just a scientist.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

30

31 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Orville.

32

33 Hey, I kind of -- I guess it takes guts  
34 to sit on that State Board of Fish. I mean, you know,  
35 we have like concerns, but we're just -- pretty much we  
36 reach consensus. We have our own concerns and stuff.  
37 And I'm actually glad you're here, because, you know,  
38 we bring up different things. It's always been kind of  
39 a puzzle to me, you know, when -- how does this work.  
40 I mean, you know, is the State -- when a proposal or  
41 something comes up before you guys, does it have more  
42 clout if it's submitted by YRDFA, TCC, joint, you know,  
43 because Tim mentioned to Stanley about, hey, you guys  
44 have some clout as a Native organized tribe to submit  
45 resolutions, but it's always been kind of a mystery to  
46 me whether it's before the State Board of Game or Board  
47 of Fisheries to have them more -- to see something  
48 passed. Does it have more clout to all get together as  
49 like Ruby AC, or Middle Yukon, or something, or just  
50 put our concerns in with Western Interior or -- you

1 know what I'm driving at?

2

3

MR. HUNTINGTON: Uh-huh.

4

5

MR. HONEA: Because I think collectively, you know, the whole thing. I mean, if I had a concern, if I had something, should I just put in as Ruby AC or get the backing of Western Interior or YRDFA or -- I guess what I'm asking is how does the Board come up with their decisions and stuff like that? I mean, is it -- because like when TCC and Kuskokwim River merged and wanted to work jointly on fish issues, you know, and I expressed this when we had our meeting with TCC about a year ago, or this spring, about, you know -- I guess what I'm saying is, you know, what is protocol? What is more going to catch their eye? We just collectively all submit proposals for the same thing?

19

20

MR. HUNTINGTON: That's a good question. As a Board member, we really rely heavily on the local ACs. So if Ruby AC supported or proposed a proposal, we would really take a good hard look at it, because you guys have all the local interests in mind. And if you got other ACs that are adjoining, you know, on either side of you, like Middle Yukon, or Tanana/Rampart, if you had them all in one, you know, supporting the same thing, it has a heavy influence on our decisions. It doesn't mean that we'll vote that way, because we'll always vote conservation mostly. You know, the bottom line is conservation, but then the second would be, you know, who gets to use what, and what's the most fair way to allocate that use. So Ruby AC has a huge amount of influence on Board activity.

35

36

I can't speak to the Federal Board. That would be somebody in here could speak to that. I can only say on the State side, like Koyukuk River AC, Ruby AC, Middle Yukon. Those ACs have a huge influence on our decisions. Most times, they're the ones out there, so they're the ones that see what's going on. You know, I live in Huslia. You know, I can't always see it. So I rely on Ruby AC or, you know, Middle Yukon AC to tell me what they see. And then, you know, I can usually judge what's true and what's not, you know, I was raised in a way that I can do that.

47

48

I hope that answers your question. It is the AC that has the biggest impact on how we look at proposals. And then it's always the Department's going

50

1 go give us it, whether we agree with them or not is up  
2 to us as Board members.

3

4 MR. HONEA: Okay. So, yeah, just  
5 taking one proposal, if I had an idea, if Ruby  
6 submitted it, we would want to maybe include -- call up  
7 Middle Yukon or the Koyukuk Advisory Committee and say,  
8 hey, would you like to go on board with this? Because  
9 I know in the past maybe Tanana, Manley, whatever, they  
10 had some -- and this became kind of -- we really didn't  
11 do it. We really didn't respond. And I think it was  
12 to do with net sizes and stuff like that. And so they  
13 just added our name to it and we -- you know, no one  
14 really took the step and say, well, we don't agree with  
15 that. And so we were added onto it. But I guess what  
16 I'm saying is I guess protocol or whatever, if we  
17 wanted more clout to it, we submitted something, I'd  
18 call up middle Yukon or I'd call up Koyukuk, or Jack  
19 and say, hey, would you like to be added on. I mean,  
20 is that -- I guess maybe that's.....

21

22 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah, That's exactly  
23 what you need to do. It should always come from the  
24 local AC, but when the other ACs support, it really  
25 carries a lot of weight in any discussions, because you  
26 have a lot of people in that region looking at it then.

27

28

29 And I remember that one you talked, net  
30 mesh restrictions, because at TCC we can't advocate --  
31 well, I can't. They can, but I can't. So it was hard  
32 for me to say -- they're going to have net  
33 restrictions. It's going to be six-inch, because  
34 that's not what we said. At the Board level, we gave  
35 that option that they could go either way, because if  
36 people are going to be able to catch sheefish, we  
37 wanted them a way to catch it. And so that's why it  
38 was left open. It was not to confuse the matter.

39

40 It really got clouded. I've had an AFN  
41 board member tell me that TCC dropped the ball on it.  
42 But actually what happened was just -- you know, we  
43 could only say so much, and you can make regulations  
44 that say only so much. You can't just leave it wide  
45 open, you know, for that net mesh restriction. I don't  
46 see it going away right away. It's just we're stuck in  
47 it. We're stuck in conservation mode and we can't move  
48 away from it until those Chinooks are coming back.

49

50 And I just told you that Huslia River

1 froze to the bottom, so those are not good things to  
2 happen to our salmon, you know. I mean, we had a good  
3 return of Chinook salmon, and we don't know what we'll  
4 get back in six years.

5  
6 MR. HONEA: Can I just.....

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

9  
10 MR. HONEA: Okay. Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
11 Chair.

12  
13 Just one last comment. And I'm  
14 actually glad that you brought it up yourself, too.  
15 But I mentioned yesterday, and I'm not happy with the  
16 State for maybe not working with YRDFA, TCC, or  
17 something to impose on us the net restriction a week or  
18 two prior to the king seasons. And, you know, maybe if  
19 the State -- I don't know if we're going to hear from  
20 them or not, but like you said, I mean, if we were all  
21 issued six-and-a-half or seven-inch, and then all of a  
22 sudden a week or something before the actual -- we  
23 don't have time to get ready. I mean, we don't have  
24 the resources. We're stuck with the six-and-a-half-  
25 inch mesh and it might be dropped to five. And so  
26 that's really a concern.

27  
28 And the only other concern is, you know  
29 -- and I guess I don't know why I'm bringing this to  
30 you, but, you know, the -- I don't know if we're going  
31 to hear from the State, is in the falltime maybe during  
32 hunting season, we like to put in a net. We like to go  
33 to fish camp and maybe bag a moose there if we could,  
34 but we also like to take whatever late season chums  
35 there is. And by the time that they make it open to --  
36 because I work during the week a little bit, not a  
37 whole lot of hours, but I get the weekends off. And  
38 those you have to have our net out. And by the time  
39 that they make it 24/7, it's so doggone cold, and this  
40 is -- and this is a concern for elders in Ruby there.  
41 They want to be able to put a fish net in, but by the  
42 time that it's 24/7, it's so doggone cold it bothers  
43 them. They can't do it.

44  
45 But anyway I appreciate your comments,  
46 Orville. Than, you.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Orville.

49  
50 MR. HUNTINGTON: One more thing I

1 forgot to mention was the Migratory Bird Treaty  
2 Council. We renewed our agreement with Fish and  
3 Wildlife Service, and the only problem we're having  
4 that I know of in the village, I'm getting a lot of  
5 comments on, is they don't want people selling  
6 migratory birds for cash. It's just too risky. We're  
7 just coming back from conservation concerns we had a  
8 while ago. You know, the TCC region took it upon  
9 itself to reduce their catch of migratory birds to  
10 enhance the white front population.

11  
12                   And I've heard from different hunters  
13 along the Yukon that they really want the Migratory  
14 Bird Council to look at making sure that there's no  
15 sale of migratory birds. It's just too risky right  
16 now. And I don't know if people are doing it or not, I  
17 really can't say, but they're claiming that it's  
18 starting. And so, you know, that's something that  
19 we'll look at at the Migratory Bird Council level.

20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I didn't  
22 know that happened.

23  
24                   Any other comments or questions.

25  
26                   (No comments)

27  
28  
29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
30 all the information you gave us, Orville. That's very  
31 good for this Council to hear. It's all on the record.

32  
33                   But I do understand what Don's saying,  
34 you know, it's your firm opinion as a State Board of  
35 Fish member that six-inch is here to stay for a while,  
36 and the agencies need to signal that to the subsistence  
37 users that it's going to be pretty much a given that  
38 that's going to be in place, Orville.

39  
40                   MR. HUNTINGTON: I can't officially say  
41 that, but I wouldn't be surprised maybe 99 percent of  
42 the time that it will be in place until Chinooks start  
43 coming back.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's the way  
46 I see it. I don't think that that's going to going  
47 away, and I think that YRDFA and the U.S. Fish and  
48 Wildlife and State fisheries should signal that long in  
49 the winter, you know, this is most likely going to  
50 happen. You're going to have to tool up for this. The

1 seven-and-half is shelved until further notice unless  
2 something huge comes in, so if I was living on the  
3 Yukon, I would have a six-inch net; I know that.

4

5 Thank you, Orville.

6

7 Any other public comments.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock.

13

14 MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 I just wanted to comment on what  
17 Stanley and Orville said about bear bait. And on the  
18 Koyukuk River we eat the black bears, not necessarily  
19 grizzly bears. And we don't have beavers on Allakaket  
20 or on 24B. We don't have (indiscernible) as Greely, so  
21 for years we have been -- the Koyukuk Advisory  
22 Committee has been opposed to bear baiting. Of course,  
23 the elders has told us, if you leave food out to the  
24 animals, then they have a tendency to come into the  
25 village and start looking into trash barrels. But  
26 anywhere we're going to have baking (ph) gas in our  
27 home. But we have a strong belief and respect for  
28 bears like Orville and Stanley mentioned. There's so  
29 many black bear than -- immediately and the guys gets  
30 together and cook some pots of the meat that's supposed  
31 to be eaten outdoors and not necessarily in the cabin.  
32 So we still do that in Koyukuk River area. As soon as  
33 we get black bear, we have goat and have bear party.  
34 We don't -- we were trained as scouts and this gives  
35 back, too, which we don't -- it's not for sale or  
36 anything. Nothing in our Koyukuk culture, so hearing  
37 Stanley and Orville, that's one of our regional staples  
38 for sure.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that  
41 comment, Pollock. And this Council has been opposed to  
42 customary trade of bear parts and those reasons are  
43 always good to have back on the record.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 And so, Melinda.

48

49 MS. HERNANDEZ: Do you want to go with

50 BLM.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we should go  
2 with BLM now. I want to -- Tim Hammond is sitting in  
3 the back of the room here, and the BLM is going through  
4 a Resource management planning, and so Tim's going to  
5 give us an overview of that.

6  
7 And we had a meeting in Wiseman on  
8 October 31, and there was some that would affect the  
9 subsistence use and users there. And so I wanted the  
10 BLM to attend this meeting, and for this Council to  
11 understand what certain aspects may affect subsistence.

12  
13 Go ahead, Tim.

14  
15 MR. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman. Members of  
16 the Council. Tim Hammond, assistant field manager for  
17 BLM Central Yukon Field Office.

18  
19 I'm happy to discuss the planning issue  
20 right now. I just want to clarify, do you want our  
21 general agency report now, or is that later in the  
22 agenda, or do you want both.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We might as well.  
25 Let's do it now since you're here, you might as well.

26  
27 MS. HERNANDEZ: It would be on the  
28 right-hand side of your blue folder, Innoko in the blue  
29 folder, Council.

30  
31 MR. HAMMOND: Okay. I just want to  
32 point out the faces this Council's used to seeing from  
33 BLM have completely changed, turned over with the  
34 exception of me. So I just want to point out we've got  
35 -- you mentioned yesterday a pilot ranger, Seth  
36 McMillan, came to us from the Park Service. He's going  
37 to try to stop in here either today or tomorrow so  
38 folks will get a chance to meet him. Jennifer McMillan  
39 is our knew ecologist. Erin Julianus, who as Mike  
40 Spindler mentioned, we were lucky enough to steal from  
41 his shop, is our new wildlife biologist.

42  
43 I'm going to ask Erin to give our  
44 general agency report. I've got some written materials  
45 here addressing the specific issues I know you'd like  
46 to discuss that I'll pass around for the Council. And  
47 after Erin's report I'll be happy to answer whatever  
48 questions and discuss those as much as you want if  
49 that's agreeable to you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That sounds great.

2

3 MS JULIANUS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.  
4 Chairman and members of the Council. This is my first  
5 RAC meeting, so I've been looking forward to it for a  
6 while.

7

8 Like Tim said, my name is Erin Julianus  
9 and I'm representing the Central Yukon Field Office.

10

11 The BLM administrative units that  
12 overlap the Western Interior region are the Central  
13 Yukon Field Office and the Anchorage Field Office.  
14 Like I said, this will be a report for the Central  
15 Yukon.

16

17 First off, planning. Tim will go into  
18 this in further detail, but just as an overview, as  
19 many of you know, BLM will be starting development of a  
20 resource management plan with an associated  
21 environmental impact statement, EIS, for the Central  
22 Yukon planning area in the coming months. When  
23 finalized, the plan will provide future direction for  
24 approximately 16 million acres of BLM-administered  
25 public land in central and northern Alaska, including  
26 the Dalton Highway Corridor, BLM-managed lands in the  
27 Central Yukon River watershed, the western Nulato  
28 Hills, and the Central Arctic Management Area  
29 Wilderness Study Area.

30

31 We will be holding public meetings in  
32 the region to get public comment on issues in the  
33 planning area. As meetings are scheduled, we will  
34 publicize them through the BLM website and local media.  
35 If you would like to be on the mailing list, please  
36 provide your name and address to Jeanie Cole, and her  
37 contact information is provided in the report.

38

39 For education and outreach, in 2013 the  
40 BLM produced and distributed a retail version of the  
41 film, Arctic Visions and Voices: A Journey through  
42 Northern Alaska. This film depicts the people,  
43 spectacular landscapes and natural and cultural history  
44 with a focus on the Dalton Highway. A copy of this  
45 award-winning film can be purchased from our partners,  
46 the Alaska Geographic Association, the Alaska Public  
47 Lands Information Centers in Fairbanks and Anchorage or  
48 the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center in Coldfoot.

49

50 The BLM initiated a partnership with

1 First Alaskans Institute in Anchorage to hire an  
2 Alaska Native youth intern for the 2013 summer season.  
3 Christy Andy fulfilled an eight-week internship in  
4 visitor services at the AIVC. The BLM has obligated  
5 funding to support another intern in 2014.

6

7 For fisheries, in 2013 the Central  
8 Field Office fisheries Staff will continue its effort  
9 to document reference characteristics and functional  
10 status of placer-mined streams within the Dalton  
11 Highway corridor. Placer mining within the corridor  
12 continues to be one of the primary impacting agents  
13 with respect to aquatic, riparian, and water resources.  
14 Since gold prices remain at or near an all-time high,  
15 the number of requests received by the Central Yukon  
16 Field Office to authorize new or modified mining plans  
17 will remain a major workload for the Central Yukon  
18 Field Office Staff for the foreseeable future.

19

20 As part of authorizing mining plans, it  
21 is BLM's responsibility to ensure that fish habitat is  
22 rehabilitated and Federal and State water quality  
23 standards are maintained as part of 43 CFR 3809  
24 standards. Attainment of these performance standards  
25 is dependent on the complex interaction of chemical,  
26 biological, and physical processes. This project  
27 proposes to document some of the basic components  
28 involved in this interaction, thereby providing a solid  
29 foundation for evaluating mining plans of operations,  
30 establishing reclamation performance standards, and  
31 monitoring the outcome of current and future proposals.  
32 To date work has been completed on Nugget Creek and  
33 Gold Creek. As many as 24 other streams along the  
34 Dalton Highway Corridor are candidates for this  
35 project.

36

37 Also for fisheries, an in-stream flow  
38 reservation is being completed for the Tozitna River  
39 and will be submitted to the Alaska Department of  
40 Natural Resources in the next months. The proposed  
41 reservation is based on 10 years of flow data and will  
42 help ensure that the high quality salmon habitat found  
43 within the Tozitna River is maintained.

44

45 For sand and gravel, there is still an  
46 increased interest in gravel sales along the Dalton  
47 Highway from the Yukon River northward. And there have  
48 been several inquiries by private contractors for  
49 gravel from existing pits, as well as exploration and  
50 expansion by the Alaska DOT.

1 ADOT is working with UAF on a frozen  
2 debris lobe that is moving toward the Dalton Highway at  
3 about Milepost 219. The eventual outcome of the  
4 studies will ADOT determine what should be done for the  
5 protection of the highway.

6  
7 The reauthorization for the ADOT  
8 mineral material pits is ongoing. Several have been  
9 reauthorized. Several are closing. And there have  
10 been some requests for additional its. Fieldwork for  
11 the environmental documents has been conducted this  
12 field season and will continue into next summer's field  
13 season.

14  
15 For realty actions, TERRA-Kotzebue,  
16 this project will encompass five communications site  
17 towers to be installed by Unicom/GCI with three sites  
18 being on the Central Yukon Field Office lands and the  
19 remaining of these two sites will be on Anchorage Field  
20 Office lands. And this right-of-way is being worked on  
21 by Tom Sparks out of our Nome office. And this is  
22 Phase III of a four-phase project. And BLM is  
23 reviewing the EA for this project.

24  
25 For recreation, permitting, the BLM has  
26 17 special recreation permits that expired by the end  
27 of the calendar in 2012. And of these 17 expired  
28 permits 11 permit holders have submitted paperwork to  
29 review their permits and to operate on BLM-managed  
30 lands in 2013 and beyond. In addition, one permittee  
31 has requested an amendment to his permit, and six  
32 applications have been received from new operators. Of  
33 the six new applicants, three are tour operators, two  
34 are hunting guides, and one is an air transporter.  
35 Overall this is a combination of 45 permits or  
36 applications for permits on file in the Central Yukon  
37 Field Office. Three of these current permits are for  
38 air transporters. of the 45 files, 58 percent are for  
39 commercial hunting guides.

40  
41 Commercial tour operators continue to  
42 utilize BLM-managed roadside facilities along the  
43 Dalton Highway, as well as the AIVC in Coldfoot. The  
44 BLM and partner agencies made over 20,000 visitor  
45 contacts at Dalton Highway recreation sites, and  
46 delivered 100 evening interpretive programs at the  
47 AIVC. The 2013 recreation use recording year witnessed  
48 a 12.2 percent increase in visitor usage of the  
49 previous year. And this was largely due to increased  
50 monitoring of the Arctic Circle by BLM volunteers.

1 BLM received funding from the Alaska  
2 Federal Lands Access Program to provide access for foot  
3 travelers from Coldfoot Camp at Dalton Highway Milepost  
4 176 to the nearby AIVC and local trails. This plan  
5 includes an interpretive trail, highway crosswalk, and  
6 safety/visitor center signage. Expected completion is  
7 in 2014.

8  
9 For terrestrial ecology and wildlife,  
10 wildlife activities. Currently the BLM, Alaska  
11 Department of Fish and Game, Kanuti National Wildlife  
12 Refuge and Gates of the Arctic National Park have  
13 completed a radio-telemetry study of moose in Unit 24A  
14 and B. And Mike Spindler, the Refuge manager touched  
15 on this a little bit yesterday. BLM and its  
16 cooperators have been radio-tracking 20 moose in the  
17 northern part of the study area monthly or as weather  
18 has allowed. And the BLM is contributing to the data  
19 analysis for this study. A report will be forthcoming.

20  
21 The University of Idaho, under a  
22 cooperative agreement with the BLM and with support of  
23 the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge and Fish and Game,  
24 has finalized a report which presents an analysis of  
25 caribou location data for the Hodzana Caribou and Ray  
26 Mountain Caribou Herds. Results suggest that these two  
27 herds are spatially distinct from one another.

28  
29 The BLM conducted an aerial telemetry-  
30 based population survey of the Hodzana Caribou Herd in  
31 July 2012. Preliminary analyses suggest the calf count  
32 was lower than prior years.

33  
34 The BLM will provide financial and  
35 personnel support to ADF&G in their November survey of  
36 moose in Unit 24A and B within the vicinity of Kanuti  
37 Refuge. And it does sound like this is going to start  
38 on Monday. So that's good.

39  
40 The BLM conducted an aerial Dall sheep  
41 survey in selected areas in the vicinity of the Dalton  
42 in 2013. This was a continuation of a collaborative  
43 effort between the BLM and ADF&G, ongoing since 2000.  
44 Preliminary results suggest that full-curl ram counts  
45 were similar to those reported in 2012; however the  
46 lamb counts were considerably lower than in previous  
47 years. Low lamb counts were similarly observed in  
48 other surveyed areas in Alaska. And summary data for  
49 this is available as a handout.

50

1 BLM continues to contribute to the  
2 monitoring of collared caribou in the Western Arctic  
3 Caribou Herd in cooperation with the Department of Fish  
4 and Game, Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife.  
5 Additionally, BLM biologists contributed to the annual  
6 collaring effort for the herd at Onion Portage this  
7 year.

8  
9 For ecology, the most recent round of  
10 Western Arctic Caribou Herd winter habitat monitoring  
11 has been completed as of this July 2013. And habitat  
12 monitoring will occur again approximately every five  
13 years. Data analysis and reporting will be  
14 forthcoming. In addition the BLM is working towards a  
15 Western Arctic Herd caribou habitat management plan,  
16 and scoping was conducted in the winter of 2013.

17  
18 For the Dalton Highway Invasive Plant  
19 Strategy, we have nearly completed an environmental  
20 analysis of a proposed invasive plant management  
21 strategy for the Dalton Highway. The strategy includes  
22 the possible application of herbicides. An analysis  
23 included an ANILCA .810 analysis of potential impacts  
24 to subsistence resources. The document was made  
25 available for public review and comment last winter.  
26 BLM is currently developing a template for future  
27 cooperative weed management area which will help  
28 involve interested parties, agency and public, in weed  
29 strategy development and action.

30  
31 A large-scale inventory of dominant  
32 roadside weeds along the Dalton Highway in the Central  
33 Yukon area was completed in summer of 2013. And this  
34 inventory will serve as a baseline for future continued  
35 monitoring and the detection in weed infestations along  
36 the corridor.

37  
38 Several rapid ecological assessments,  
39 or REAs, are ongoing. REAs provide the BLM with  
40 information about current and projected resource  
41 condition, which is used to prepare land use plans,  
42 especially the upcoming Central Yukon resource  
43 management plan, and in NEPA analyses. One REA, which  
44 overlaps the Central Yukon planning area, has recently  
45 been completed. This is the Seward Peninsula/Nulato  
46 Hills/Kotzebue Sound Lowlands REA. Two others are  
47 ongoing. The Yukon Lowlands/ Kuskokwim Mountains-Lime  
48 Hills rapid ecological assessment is in progress. And  
49 the Central Yukon REA is being initiated this fall.  
50 This REA includes the western Brooks Range and the

1 Dalton Corridor. Participation in the REA process is  
2 encouraged by all interested parties.

3  
4 And for the last section, Tim mentioned  
5 that we had hired a new ranger for law enforcement,  
6 Seth McMillan. And he assumed duties in January of  
7 2013, and looks forward to patrolling a large portion  
8 of BLM-managed lands in Interior Alaska.

9  
10 So that is it with the report, and if  
11 you guys did have questions, either Tim or I could  
12 answer them.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So does the Council  
15 have any questions on the BLM's report.

16  
17 Tim.

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20  
21 Erin, that's for your report What is  
22 that water reservation on the Tozitna, what is that?

23  
24 MS. JULIANUS: Tim is.....

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: What does that mean?  
27 What does that entail?

28  
29 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, you might be able  
30 to.

31  
32 MR. HAMMOND: Excuse me. The Federal  
33 Government, and Alaska is one of the few states that  
34 allow this, can apply for basically a water right to  
35 maintain a minimum water flow in streams needed for  
36 fish habitat. And one thing BLM does, and I believe  
37 Fish and Wildlife does on the refuges as well, is  
38 collect the information to document what is the normal  
39 flow in those streams, and what's the minimum needed  
40 for fisheries production, and apply to the State of  
41 Alaska for a water right to maintain that so that if in  
42 the future there are competing water rights, that will  
43 be established, the need for fisheries habitat as a  
44 right to retaining that stream.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So you guys just  
47 -- you just locked out that water flow, because you  
48 considered that a significant fish producing stream?

49  
50 MR. HAMMOND: Correct. The Tozitna

1 drainage is identified as a -- currently identified as  
2 an area of critical environmental concern, which is a  
3 designation BLM's required to consider under FLIPMA.  
4 And it's because of the salmon production there. So  
5 the intent here is to maintain the minimum amount of  
6 water necessary for salmon production in the event that  
7 in the future there are competing water demands from  
8 that water shed.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Under that line of  
13 questioning, there are -- in the Jim River area there's  
14 significant salmon spawning habitat there, and then  
15 there's whitefish spawning that occur in the South  
16 Fork, right underneath the South Fork Bridge and in  
17 that stretch of river there. Is there consideration  
18 for these stream flow reservations for those drainages  
19 also, or is -- the Tozitna drainage has possible mining  
20 occurrence above that is the reason you're doing that?  
21 Or do you want to explain that a little closer.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MR. HAMMOND: The Jim River also has an  
26 ACEC and a FITE (ph) on it. I don't know, but I  
27 suspect we've already gone through the process of  
28 applying for a water rights application there to  
29 maintain minimum flow there.

30

31 On the South Fork I know we're  
32 currently collecting data. We're not at the point yet  
33 where we can submit a water rights application.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there's  
36 getting to be more and more miners that come to the  
37 South Fork drainage, and they've got all kinds of stuff  
38 parked. I never used to see all that stuff parked  
39 there at the bridge. And that whole stretch has fall  
40 whitefish spawning habitat in it, and so I would like  
41 BLM's staff to understand that that is a specific  
42 spawning area. There's round whitefish and some other  
43 whitefish species that are spawning there. And so this  
44 dredging activity that miner do in the South Fork in  
45 particular because of the fine gold there should be not  
46 allowed during the spawning time for whitefish, you  
47 know, which is late in September and October.

48

49 MR. HAMMOND: Yeah. We restrict  
50 activity in the South Fork during spawning periods.

1 And in addition Fish and Game does as well. So  
2 portions of that, it doesn't go all the way up to the  
3 bridge, but there is a navigability determination on  
4 that, so part of that is State managed in the water  
5 channel, but Fish and Game and we work together on that  
6 with all those miners to make sure that during spawning  
7 times activity's out of the water.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are those chum -- or  
10 those salmon spawning times identified or whitefish  
11 spawning times?

12  
13 MR. HAMMOND: I don't know. I'd have  
14 to check on that. It's after July 15th I believe.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And on.

17  
18 MR. HAMMOND: And on.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Everything's  
21 fine. Okay.

22  
23 Tim.

24  
25 MR. GERVAIS: Is it possible to get a  
26 copy or a summary of these -- this University of Idaho  
27 study on the Ray Mountain and Hodzana herd populations?

28  
29 MS. JULIANUS: Yes. Uh-huh. We'll  
30 provide one for the Council probably.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Several years ago at  
33 one of the Regional Council meetings we were getting a  
34 presentation about the Ray Mountain caribou and their  
35 telemetry, and it never showed that they went near the  
36 Dalton Highway, and I told them there's caribou that  
37 live significantly in the Hodzana Mountains. And so  
38 Tim Craig was the biologist and started actually going  
39 over there and putting some collars. Well, come to  
40 find out there's another herd over there that everybody  
41 assumed was part of the Ray Mountain herd, but they're  
42 a distinct population. And so they have the same  
43 lifeway as the Ray Mountain herd. They're fairly  
44 diffuse throughout those hills, were actually --  
45 they're a large caribou. They're much larger than the  
46 Arctic caribou, about 100 pounds heavier, like you  
47 would see in the Wolf Mountain herd and those herds in  
48 the Kokrines and Ray Mountains. So they're -- have a  
49 less harvest limit. There's only one caribou allowed  
50 to be harvested down there, whereas the Arctic caribou

1 have five caribou harvest. And so that's why there's  
2 this tracking because they are distinct herds compared  
3 to the migratory Arctic population. Those are more or  
4 less resident herds. They don't hardly go anywhere.  
5 They just move around a little bit. They don't really  
6 move that much.

7

8 I just want to explain that to the  
9 Council. You were asking about those herds.

10

11 MS. JULIANUS: And correct me if I'm  
12 wrong, but that report was kind of borne out of that  
13 original work.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Yes. Any  
16 other questions on the BLM. Don.

17

18 MR. HONEA: Thank you. Thank you,  
19 Jack.

20

21 Erin or Tim -- Erin, right?

22

23 MS. JULIANUS: Uh-huh.

24

25 MR. HONEA: Okay. Hey, I mean I was  
26 just -- you know, you covered a lot of stuff here, and  
27 I guess ever since I've been on this Council, and maybe  
28 it's kind of on the back burner or something nowadays,  
29 but -- and I thought the bison project thing, you know,  
30 if it's sequestration or whatever that's -- there's a  
31 loss of interest. I mean, what happened to that  
32 program? I mean, I believe it fell under BLM; am I  
33 correct, or could you comment on that.

34

35 MR. HAMMOND: You're referring to the  
36 wood bison introduction project?

37

38 MR. HONEA: Right.

39

40 MR. HAMMOND: That's a state Fish and  
41 Game project. Fish and Wildlife I know is working very  
42 closely with them. I don't know where of any BLM lands  
43 that were proposed for introduction. And we really  
44 haven't taken a position one way or the other on it,  
45 but it's largely Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife,  
46 so I'm sure some of the other Fish and Wildlife folks  
47 here can address that much better than we can.

48

49 MR. HONEA: Okay. I guess, Mr. Chair,  
50 because I was reading I guess a year ago or something

1 Randy Rogers I believe maybe that was -- he used to  
2 present, give us a presentation on that particular  
3 thing, and it seems to have been on the back burner. I  
4 mean, you know, it was -- I even mentioned Ruby as a  
5 possible place. they already had four places picked  
6 out. And I guess if it's not yours to say, I mean, I  
7 just.....

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don. Innoko was  
10 giving us some overview of that yesterday. And so  
11 Shageluk corp lands were slated for the introduction  
12 site. There was a whole long process of getting them  
13 listed as a non-essential population so that they would  
14 not impede any kind of mining and all that. And that's  
15 under the 10j ruling that finally occurred. And so I  
16 asked yesterday when they would be introduced, and my  
17 recollection is poor, but it was in the next couple of  
18 years, you know. So in 2014 or 15 or something like  
19 that. They've got them down in Girdwood. They were  
20 sitting on those things, and so they want to get rid of  
21 them, get them out on the field. Those wood bison.

22  
23 So this Council has been supportive of  
24 that.

25  
26 And then we had a presentation on the  
27 wood bison in our March meeting in Galena last.

28  
29 MS. HERNANDEZ: Rita St. Louis.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Rita St. Louis,  
32 right. She took over Randy -- Randy Rogers retired,  
33 and had some illness problems and so forth.

34  
35 So anyways imminently they should be  
36 introducing the wood bison into the Shageluk area.  
37 Those wood bison may move into the Innoko Refuge.  
38 That's where they most likely are going to expand out  
39 into.

40  
41 And so that's the status of the wood  
42 bison there. And it has really nothing to do with BLM.

43  
44 So any other questions of the BLM.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to go over  
50 the issue that floated up with the resource management

1 plan. And so do you want to give the overview of the  
2 resource management plan, and then this selection  
3 issue.

4

5 MR. HAMMOND: Sure. Great. The BLM is  
6 beginning the process of producing a new resource  
7 management plan for the Central Yukon and Utility  
8 Corridor area. One of the handouts I gave has a  
9 general introduction to that, and has a map on the back  
10 of the planning area. We're doing scoping meetings in  
11 most of the villages in the planning area as well as  
12 Fairbanks and Anchorage. I can give you dates for  
13 that, but there's also I believe the website link on  
14 here where you can find the schedule. Yeah, it's the  
15 very last line on the back page. And that schedule is  
16 evolving, because things happen, and villages want to  
17 change their meeting date or whatever, so I could you  
18 the information today, and it would be inaccurate  
19 tomorrow. But if you're interested, most of the  
20 villages in the planning area are having meetings.

21

22 And I don't want to take your time here  
23 rehashing what's going to go on in those scoping  
24 meetings. But the point is we're looking for public  
25 input at this point. So we want to hear your concerns  
26 about the management of BLM lands out there.

27

28 Some of the issues that have come up,  
29 and we know are going to be issues, and that have come  
30 in some of the recent meetings do have some very direct  
31 ties to subsistence concerns. And of those which Jack  
32 is talking about is that in your other handout here  
33 about top filed lands in the utility corridor or the  
34 Dalton Highway Corridor, that has been closed to  
35 selection by the State of Alaska since the utility  
36 corridor was established. One of the things we're  
37 required to do through the planning process is review  
38 all of the withdrawn lands and make recommendations  
39 about whether those withdrawals should be changed.

40

41 ANILCA allowed the State to file what's  
42 called top filings or applications for future  
43 selections on lands that weren't available to select in  
44 case they became available in the future. If that  
45 withdrawal is changed through our planning process,  
46 then those top filed lands in the corridor would become  
47 valid State selections. Unless there's some technical  
48 hiccup with a particular piece of land, those could  
49 become State-owned lands in the future. State-owned  
50 lands obviously aren't available for use under Federal

1 subsistence regulations, so that's a major concern to  
2 the folks in the Wiseman/Coldfoot area.

3  
4 That's pretty much the gist of that  
5 issue. It's possible those lands will become State-  
6 managed lands through this planning process. So again  
7 we're at the point where we ant to hear your concerns  
8 and preferences for how BLM land is managed. But I'm  
9 sure Jack would like to.....

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to  
12 speak to that issue. I would liked to have that other  
13 map that showed the green zone, the selection around  
14 Wiseman.

15  
16 MR. HAMMOND: A can get a copy of it  
17 here for you this afternoon.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The top filed map  
20 that you have before you here, we'll work off of that  
21 one. And basically the land from -- there's a blue  
22 area just above Coldfoot. That's the State developed  
23 node. And all the rest of the lands that you see in  
24 yellow are the BLM lands.

25  
26 The State has selected an area that  
27 would entail everything to the north of that blue line,  
28 to that perpendicular jag that goes over above Wiseman,  
29 completely around Wiseman. And so that does, in your  
30 packet on the left side, you'll see my letter in  
31 response that I wrote on November 1. And the Councils  
32 have to understand what impacts the subsistence uses  
33 and users would occur within this region, so I wanted  
34 this issue to be brought before this Council. This  
35 would have huge impacts to subsistence users in  
36 Wiseman.

37  
38 I'll read my letter to the BLM and the  
39 reasons why they should not modify the public order for  
40 the State of Alaska. It's a request from the State of  
41 Alaska. They don't have to do anything for the State  
42 of Alaska. It's a request.

43  
44 Go ahead, Tim.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Let me, I'd like to  
47 interrupt before you read your letter. So what's going  
48 to be the criteria where the BLM drops these lands or  
49 allows the State to move forward with their selection?  
50

1 MR. HAMMOND: There is no set set of  
2 criteria. It's going to be what do we hear from the  
3 public about what's going to be the best management of  
4 these lands. We have boundaries we have to work in.  
5 We can't change laws. We do have to comply with  
6 ANILCA, and recognize subsistence uses. And through  
7 our planning process we're required to come up with a  
8 range of possible alternatives to analyze. It's very  
9 likely one of those alternatives will include making a  
10 recommendation to make this a -- open this for State  
11 selection. It's very likely that another alternative  
12 will include keeping it closed. So the input we hear  
13 from the public as well as a formal analysis of the  
14 potential impacts on resources, socio/economic uses,  
15 including subsistence, is going to be what makes that  
16 decision, but there's not a list of criteria that will  
17 go through to say it's good or bad.

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then I just  
20 wanted to clarify when either ANILCA or whenever they  
21 were starting the pipeline corridor, it was determined  
22 that the BLM was going to manage the pipeline corridor  
23 is how it originally came under your jurisdiction.

24  
25 MR. HAMMOND: On the back of here  
26 there's sort of a summary of the timeline. In 1958  
27 when the Statehood Act passed, it gave the State the  
28 right to select certain acreage of lands, and some  
29 lands were not available for selection.

30  
31 In 1971 when they were looking at  
32 building the pipeline, Congress -- or the Public Land  
33 Order 5150 withdrew the potential pipeline corridor and  
34 said the State can't select lands in this corridor.

35  
36 In 1980 when ANILCA passed, they said  
37 the State can select lands that aren't available for  
38 selection with what they called top filings or future  
39 application selection, so that if those lands become  
40 available for selection in the future, that top filing  
41 will automatically become a selection with out the  
42 State having to do anything else.

43  
44 There was a cut-off date established in  
45 he Statehood Act of 25 year. ANILCA extended that by  
46 10 years. So they had to have these top filings in  
47 place by 1993.

48  
49 The crosshatched area on the map that's  
50 inside the boundary area, I know it's difficult to read

1 at this scale, but there's a boundary of Public Land  
2 Order 5150, and then the crosshatched area in side  
3 there is what the State has top filed. The double  
4 crosshatching is their highest priority, if it becomes  
5 available to them. The single crosshatching is their  
6 second highest priority or lower priorities. So it's  
7 not an all or nothing deal. It would be -- some of  
8 these lands could become State lands, some could be  
9 retained in Federal ownership.

10

11 But to answer your question, Public  
12 Land Order 5150 in 1971 is when this became unavailable  
13 for State selection, but it was Federal land prior to  
14 that since statehood.

15

16 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you have to  
19 understand that the State is 25 percent over-selected  
20 already. They've already filed way more than they're  
21 allowed, and so now they want to -- they're requesting  
22 -- that's what this is, is a request to modify the  
23 Public Land Order 5150 that was -- these lands were  
24 withdrawn by the Secretary of Interior 10 days after  
25 ANCSA was passed. Ten days after Alaska Native Claims  
26 Settlement Act was passed, the Secretary of Interior  
27 withdrew these from selection by the State of Native  
28 corporations. And there was a court case for Wisenak  
29 Native Corporation, and that request was denied, for a  
30 7500-acre Native withdrawal, by a Federal court,  
31 because they were withdrawn from Native corporation  
32 selection and State selection. And so the courts have  
33 upheld that Public Order 5150 withdrawal.

34

35 And when Congress passed -- what's not  
36 on the timeline is the 1973 TransAlaska Pipeline Act,  
37 which also enforced that withdrawal. Congress withdrew  
38 that whole land corridor for the Transalaska Pipeline.

39

40 And so I'm very concerned about this,  
41 because this would have almost cut my throat as far as  
42 subsistence. And so I want to read into the record  
43 this letter that I drafted. I spent a lot of time  
44 researching laws, applicable laws and so forth. And I  
45 want the Council to understand what this effect would  
46 have on our community if the BLM chose to allow the  
47 State to select lands there.

48

49 And so I'm writing to the Central Yukon  
50 Field Office. And start with, I want to express my

1 appreciation for the BLM Fairbanks district manager  
2 Steve Hartmann, and Shelly Jacobson, field manager for  
3 the Central Yukon Field Office and Staff for presenting  
4 the scoping process development for the Central Yukon  
5 resource management plan in Wiseman on October 31 of  
6 2013.  
7 These communities of Wiseman and Coldfoot have long  
8 resided in the Middle Fork Koyukuk River valley, long  
9 before the pipeline, long before there was any oil  
10 discoveries. I want to enforce that part of it And  
11 relied heavily on subsistence resources of the  
12 surrounding areas. Therefore, nearly every person --  
13 look at how many people we've got at this meeting. We  
14 go to a community, there was a lot of people at that  
15 meeting Everybody was concerned about this resource  
16 management plan. Nearly every person turned out to  
17 hear the presentation on the new RMP. Many comments  
18 were made on various aspects, gravel extraction and all  
19 kinds of stuff, of land use planning, but by far the  
20 largest concern was the State of Alaska's request for  
21 modification of Public Land Order 5150 to allow more  
22 Federal BLM land to be conveyed to the State,  
23 especially the ones surrounding this community.

24  
25 I, as well as the whole community that  
26 was present at the meeting am adamantly opposed to any  
27 further modification of the current Public Land Order  
28 5150 to allow State selection of Federal public lands  
29 in the existing utility corridor. My reasons are: the  
30 legality, the detriment to the communities here, and it  
31 is not in the best interest of the people of America.  
32 And I list them one through seven.

33  
34 1. On December 27th, 1971 the  
35 Secretary of Interior withdrew the transportation and  
36 utility corridor from, and I'm quoting, all forms of  
37 appropriation under the public land laws except for  
38 location for metalliferous minerals, gold mining, under  
39 the mining laws with Public Land Order 5150. The  
40 Trans-Alaska Pipeline Act of 1973 adopted and affirmed  
41 that action.

42  
43 Number 2. Opening the Public Land  
44 Order 5150 and conveying more land to the State of  
45 Alaska would be in violation of the Federal Land Policy  
46 and Management Act of 1976, and I quote from the  
47 statute. The statute is Section 102(a). The Congress  
48 declares that it is the policy of the United States  
49 that (1) the public lands be retained in Federal  
50 ownership, unless as a result of the land use planning

1 procedure provided in this Act, it is determined that  
2 disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national  
3 interest. It is not in the national interest to allow  
4 the State of Alaska selection of any the lands in the  
5 utility corridor. The lands the State has proposed for  
6 selections are choice oil and gas, or gold mineral  
7 worth eventually billions of dollars to the nation.

8  
9                   3. Under the 1980 ANILCA Section  
10 .906(a)(2), Extension of Selection Period. In the  
11 furtherance and confirmation of the State of Alaska's  
12 entitlement to certain public lands in Alaska, of 6(b)  
13 of the Alaska Statehood Act is amended by substituting  
14 35 years for 25 years. The State's request for  
15 additional lands, especially reserved and appropriated  
16 lands after 1993, is not proper or valid. And I feel  
17 that they top filed, but after 1993, they can't keep  
18 reevaluating where they want these lands. I don't feel  
19 that that's legal under ANILCA.

20  
21                   4. Finding the State's request for  
22 modification of Public Law 5150 to be invalid, an  
23 ANILCA Title VIII Section .810 analysis would needed to  
24 adhere -- would need to be adhered to, except for  
25 Section .810(3)(C)(c), which does not allow the  
26 impedance of State land selections or Native selection.  
27 Well, that's not applicable to the 5150 area, the  
28 Dalton Highway Corridor, with diligence paid to the  
29 extreme detriments to the communities of Wiseman and  
30 Coldfoot.

31  
32                   5. The lands the State has selected  
33 around Wiseman typically are where a large percentage  
34 of moose, some Dall sheep, and some years many caribou,  
35 along with many of the grouse and waterfowl, as well as  
36 a very large percentage of fuel wood. Access to these  
37 resources is on the Nolan, Hammond, and Wiseman roads  
38 with highway vehicles in the dry season and with  
39 snowmobile in winter.

40  
41                   Number 6. Wiseman is one of 10 -- and  
42 I should correct that, it's actually one of 11 resident  
43 zone communities that have customary and traditional  
44 use eligibility inside the Gates of the Arctic National  
45 Park. The only winter access to traditional areas to  
46 the west is with snowmobile through the Wiseman valley  
47 or up the Hammond River drainage. In dry season,  
48 highway vehicles are used to get as close as possible  
49 to the Nolan and Hammond River roads. If these area  
50 were State land, it would preclude access to

1 traditional hunting and trapping areas inside the Gates  
2 of the Arctic National Park, under State regulations.

3  
4                   Number 7. State regulations in the  
5 Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, five miles  
6 from each side of the road, currently do not allow the  
7 use of motorized vehicles except for licensed highway  
8 vehicles within one-quarter mile of the Dalton Highway,  
9 with boats, or aircraft. Large and small game hunting  
10 is closed except for the use of bow and arrow. State  
11 regulations, if these were switched to State lands,  
12 State regulations would preclude use of snowmobile for  
13 subsistence use and would preclude transporting any  
14 hunter, game, or gear with a highway vehicle no further  
15 than one-quarter mile from the Dalton Highway. Wiseman  
16 Village is three miles from the Dalton. Wiseman would  
17 effectively be isolated from Park or other Federal land  
18 access by Title VIII, Section .811 customary use of  
19 snowmobile, or even licensed highway vehicles to our  
20 homes with game resources. Even if they're State  
21 lands, I still can't even get home. If I go and shoot  
22 something on the Federal lands away that are our  
23 Federal lands, I still wouldn't be able to get home  
24 under current regulations. These are very serious  
25 things.

26  
27                   The loss of the ability to harvest  
28 subsistence resources with customary and traditional  
29 methods adjacent to the communities on the Federal  
30 lands would place an extremely great hardship on the  
31 local residents. I have written this addendum to my  
32 oral comments to clarify how the State's request, and I  
33 stress this is a request, would affect the national  
34 interest and the physical and social welfare of Wiseman  
35 and Coldfoot's subsistence users.

36  
37                   And I wanted the Council to be aware of  
38 this issue. It is an extremely serious issue for our  
39 community. And if I had quorum, I would ask that the  
40 Council transmit a letter of support for this letter.

41  
42                   Did you have a comment, Tim.

43  
44                   MR. HAMMOND: If I could just make an  
45 additional -- skipped over a pretty important point  
46 here that's in my head, but never said it out loud.

47  
48                   In 2006 the State came to BLM and  
49 identified three areas they were really interested in  
50 the corridor, and that's the map that Jack mentioned

1 that I'll get a copy of here this afternoon. Their  
2 highest priority at that time was the area around  
3 Wiseman. Their second highest priority was the Yukon  
4 crossing area. And their third highest priority was up  
5 by Tulik Lake.

6  
7 In April of 2012 the Governor wrote a  
8 letter to the Secretary of Interior and requested that  
9 the entire PLO 5150 be opened to State selections, but  
10 also said that if that's not an option, then the area  
11 highlighted in green on the southern of this map would  
12 be their highest priority at that time.

13  
14 The Secretary's response to the  
15 Governor was will consider this, but we want it to go  
16 through a public process, so it's going to be  
17 considered in this planning process, not just a  
18 Secretarial response to the letter from the Governor.  
19 So this will be considered in this plan, and it's  
20 almost certain that one alternative will consider be  
21 these lands available. But input from the public,  
22 particularly how this is going to affect subsistence,  
23 and if there are portions of this area that are more  
24 important, not that any of them are unimportant, but if  
25 there's certain areas that are more critical to protect  
26 for subsistence reasons, is going to be very helpful  
27 information to us as we move through the process.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

30  
31 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Jack.

32  
33 What's driving the State's selection,  
34 is it for mineral rights or recreation, or what's their  
35 interest?

36  
37 MR. HAMMOND: They haven't given us  
38 list. The general issues they've mentioned are mineral  
39 potential and development potential. I know there's  
40 interest in commercial development at Yukon crossing.  
41 Wiseman is heavily mineralized. There's lots of gold  
42 mines around there. The Tulik Lake area is a research  
43 station for the university right now. There's plenty  
44 of interest in sand and gravel up there, but, you know,  
45 I can't say on any particular piece of land what the  
46 State wants to do with it, but in general that seems to  
47 be their interests.

48  
49 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's my impression  
2 that the State of Alaska is interested in  
3 cherry-picking all the prime -- the U.S. Geological  
4 Survey did a hydrocarbon analysis down the Dalton  
5 Highway Corridor back in the early 90. They changed  
6 all their maps on the North Slope after that point. In  
7 fact, that was in the first RMP. They had little  
8 stickers, and they changed it from low hydrocarbon  
9 potential against the Brooks range all the way to  
10 Galbraith Lake, the outer coastal plain was high  
11 hydrocarbon. They changed it to high hydrocarbon  
12 potential from Galbraith Lake, just inside the  
13 mountains all the way out to the Arctic Coastal Plain  
14 and beyond. The front edge of the Brooks Range is high  
15 oil and gas potential. The southern edge of the Dalton  
16 Highway Corridor is all coal and gas reserves. That's  
17 why Doyon wants to go into Steven's Village. And so I  
18 would like to stress that the Federal Lands Policy and  
19 Management Act requires the BLM specifically to protect  
20 the national interest. It says that the public lands  
21 shall be retained in Federal ownership unless it's  
22 found in the best interest of the nation that they  
23 should be sold or given away. Well, this isn't in the  
24 best national interest to give away billions of dollars  
25 of resource to the State of Alaska that's already 25  
26 percent over-selected. And of huge detriment,  
27 especially the area around Wiseman. And the 2006  
28 selection is past the 1993 ANILCA allowance as far as  
29 I'm concerned. They can't prioritize anything. They  
30 selected the whole corridor, but they can't do any more  
31 selecting after 1993. And so that's the current  
32 prioritization, I refute it legally. It's not legal  
33 for them to do that under ANILCA.

34  
35                   Do you have a comment to that.

36  
37                   MR. HAMMOND: I just wanted -- you made  
38 the clarification I was going to make, that that wasn't  
39 a selection, that was a statement of a priority in  
40 2006.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But they don't --  
43 after 1993, they can't do anything like that. ANILCA  
44 gave them a 35-year period after the Statehood Act was  
45 passed.

46  
47                   So anyways, I would like for our next  
48 meeting, which is a teleconference, I would like a --  
49 if it be agreeable to the Council to send a letter of  
50 support for this, for my letter here that's being

1 transmitted to the BLM. And on this RMP scoping  
2 process.

3

4 Tim.

5

6 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, that sounds  
7 appropriate for what we're trying to represent here,  
8 the subsistence users. There's no chance of even  
9 getting a quorum tomorrow?

10

11 MS. HERNANDEZ: (Shakes head  
12 negatively)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The scoping process  
15 is open through January 17th, and so if we can develop  
16 a quorum at some point in the future, we have to go  
17 through a lot of business, and so we would have plenty  
18 of time to get our comment in to endorse this letter or  
19 this position and get that onto the record with BLM.

20

21 Don.

22

23 MR. HONEA: Jack. I have no problem  
24 with making even though, you know, we're not doing an  
25 action item, by consensus, I have no problems with  
26 maybe preliminarily drafting a letter to that affect.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. It's  
29 okay, Pollock?

30

31 MR. SIMON: Okay.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll put that on  
34 the agenda for our conference meeting.

35

36 And I appreciate you coming to the  
37 wildlife meeting and the Subsistence Resource  
38 Commission meeting with this. But this scoping process  
39 is going to have affects on other BLM interests, but  
40 this cuts quick to my quick here with close to home,  
41 and so that's why. I apologize for being impassioned  
42 on this, my reading of the letter.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MR. HAMMOND: If I could just add that  
47 this planning process is about a five-year process, so  
48 like I said, we're right at the beginning right now.  
49 These decisions likely won't be made until about 2107.  
50 There will be lots of meetings and public notices and

1 stuff, and plenty of opportunities to comment.

2

3 Jack mentioned January 17th is the end  
4 of the scoping period. That's true, but that doesn't  
5 mean we're not going to consider input that we get  
6 after that. January 17th, that means it's guaranteed  
7 to get into our initial scoping report, but if people  
8 have concerns or realize something's going to affect  
9 them after that, we still want to hear it, and it's  
10 going to carry weight just as much as if it came in on  
11 January 16th.

12

13 If I also could, the other two handouts  
14 I gave you, I don't see a need to spend time discussing  
15 them unless you want to, but they're updates to  
16 information that this Council has asked us for in the  
17 past. Sheep harvest information, and guiding permits  
18 areas in the Dalton Highway Corridor. I'm happy to  
19 answer questions about them, but they're really just  
20 updates to information you've seen in the past, or  
21 requested in the past.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate this.  
24 I've been trying to get the harvest of Dall sheep by  
25 the communities up there in 24A, vary inside the  
26 corridor with use of sheep inside the park. There's  
27 typically a harvest of between four to seven, eight  
28 sheep annually. And so that -- but as you can see, in  
29 2012 -- 2011, '12, '13, as I've been saying, the  
30 harvest on the harvest report for the Dalton Highway  
31 Corridor area has been declining. And that's because  
32 of the encounter rate with legal animals. And so that  
33 will be in our Federal proposal, and why I've submitted  
34 a Federal proposal to change the horn requirement.

35

36 The number of -- when we had the  
37 scoping meeting in Wiseman, I told the district  
38 manager, Steve Hartmann, that there's been a concern  
39 from the Regional Advisory Council on the BLM not  
40 having guide use areas. And a meeting in 2004 in  
41 Wiseman, the regional director, Henry Vason, came to  
42 Wiseman, and he told -- I brought that issue up at that  
43 -- the BLM has, what do you call it, Resource Advisory  
44 Committee or Counsel?

45

46 MR. HAMMOND: Committee.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Committee. They  
49 actually have a -- it's a 15-member committee and they  
50 had a meeting in Wiseman, and I brought this guide area

1 issue up. And Henry Vason said the State was going to  
2 be working on that issue, but if that selection process  
3 failed, that they would initiate those in the RMPs.  
4 Well, there's an RMP coming up for that area, and we  
5 have - I feel that -- you know, I don't have anything  
6 against guiding, but I don't feel that all he guides  
7 should be hunting on top of each other and killing off  
8 all the game. So I feel that the BLM needs to continue  
9 -- I encouraged Steve Hartmann, district manager for  
10 the Fairbanks office, to continue to develop a guide  
11 process.

12  
13 I do have problems with the current  
14 U.S. Fish and Wildlife process. They allow the sale of  
15 the permit. It's a selection process for the highest  
16 qualified guide, but then they allow the sale. Well,  
17 that almost negates the whole process, because somebody  
18 that's highly qualified can sell it to somebody who is  
19 not so highly qualified. I don't feel that that should  
20 be that way, but I do feel that the free-for-all that  
21 we've seen in the Central Brooks Range, and it's  
22 highlighted statewide that the free-for-all for guiding  
23 for Dall sheep in the Central Brooks Range, basically  
24 from the Dalton Highway Corridor and east, is one of  
25 the driving forces for the State development of a guide  
26 selection process that ended up not being funded by the  
27 Legislature, and most likely will not be funded,  
28 because the Legislature is working in reserve accounts  
29 right now. And so pipeline revenues are falling.  
30 That's not going to happen. And so I keep encouraging  
31 the BLM to adhere to what previous regional directors  
32 have said, that the RMPs will consider and develop  
33 guide use areas, especially in problem areas like this,  
34 the Central Brooks Range. So I wanted to comment about  
35 this scoping process and the guide use area.

36  
37 And I appreciate bringing these  
38 additional data, too. That's always requested by the  
39 Council.

40  
41 Any other comments from the Council on  
42 the BLM.

43  
44 Tim.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. From looking at  
47 the guide map, are these guides -- how are they  
48 accessing these hunt areas? Apparently, you know, this  
49 one guy's got to be airplane, but what about these guys  
50 right on the corridor region.

1 MR. HAMMOND: I know Jonas Stewart uses  
2 an aircraft, and we've limited him to only one  
3 aircraft. Now, as you said, some of the folks farther  
4 out to use aircraft. I don't know if Stan Parkerson  
5 flies or not. Jack may know if he's run into him.  
6 Eric Sallita (ph) also uses an aircraft and on the  
7 ground.

8  
9 One other thing about this map, that  
10 it's a confusing map. It's difficult to present all  
11 this accurately, because not all of these guides guide  
12 for sheep. You know, Charles Brady only guides bear  
13 hunters, for example. But if you leave that off, folks  
14 know there's a guide in that area and point out that  
15 there's an error. So it's difficult -- sheep are the  
16 issue driving, you know, why folks want to see this  
17 information, but there's guides out there other than  
18 sheep guides that are shown on this map as well. As we  
19 tried in each of the boxes to say which -- you know,  
20 how many of each type of hunter that guide was  
21 permitted to take with him out there.

22  
23 MR. GERVAIS: And is that -- that's the  
24 whole reason why this is a problematic area, Jack, is  
25 it's the only road access to good sheep country? Or  
26 what -- sheep country or what.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, there's these  
29 guides keep showing up, but they never want to spend  
30 any money to fly out away from the road. They want to  
31 hunt right on the shoulder of the road. It's cheaper.  
32 They want to charge 20,000 bucks, 18,000 bucks and get  
33 the same price for somebody going way into the Arctic  
34 Refuge with a Refuge permit, and so they make huge  
35 money, because their cost is low, and so they pound the  
36 tar out of the local to the road.

37  
38 I don't like this, this map shows 13D  
39 and E and I don't like those areas being allowed to be  
40 guided in, because those are right behind the Wiseman  
41 community, or right on top of where we're -- you know,  
42 under subsistence people -- economy of time, effort,  
43 and expense. Most of the animals that people try to  
44 catch around Wiseman are closest to home. And so that  
45 area right behind Wiseman is one of the areas where we  
46 do quite a bit of hunting.

47  
48 In fact, I thought about it at the  
49 scoping meeting the other day. This is actually a  
50 critical -- it's an area of critical concern this

1 Wiseman valley. Dall sheep cross that routinely into  
2 the Midnight Dome, so from one block, 13E to 13D,  
3 there's a lambing area there. There's a mineral lick.  
4 And so I would -- I'm going to submit an area of  
5 critical concern to the BLM of that Midnight Dome.  
6 It's a sheep crossing area and it is a lower range, it  
7 has south exposure, and sheep would consider it more  
8 critical than the mountain area the sheep lamb there.  
9 I would consider it more critical than the Poss  
10 Mountain area. It's more critical, because it has a  
11 crossing there. The sheep have to go across there.

12  
13 So anyways these -- all of these -- I  
14 do am happy that the BLM has drawn out these guide use  
15 areas. I'm not refuting that. But I don't want guide  
16 areas to be right close to the community like that  
17 either, because like I'm saying, sheep cross there all  
18 the time. If some guide's got a permit, he's going to  
19 hunt right with us on areas that we utilize routinely.  
20 And so, yes, that is the reason why there are these  
21 guide use areas on this map, Tim. And everything  
22 basically from the Dalton Highway Corridor to the  
23 Arctic Refuge boundary is intensively guided.

24  
25 There's some guides have been trying to  
26 book as many as 25 Dall sheep hunters. And here's  
27 multiples that hunt in Unit 25A and 24A. That's  
28 because it's all State lands, so it's just amazing  
29 amount of hunting pressure there. And it has a fairly  
30 significant impact on the sheep population, and  
31 especially resident hunters. You know, I'm a rural  
32 resident hunter, but there's a lot of resident hunters  
33 that go from the road, and they're competing with  
34 guides and with the aircraft. And the guides have got  
35 Super Cubs and they get paid a lot of money, and they  
36 find every last sheep. And the sheep, if they screw  
37 up, those sheep can't get away from them. They go and  
38 fly again. They find them again. Basically those  
39 sheep can't get away from those guides with Super Cubs.  
40 And they have a very high success rate.

41  
42 Other comments.

43  
44 Tim.

45  
46 MR. HAMMOND: Just a couple of comments  
47 I'd like to make, and I know this isn't a complete  
48 solution by any means, but the green area here where  
49 Jonas Stewart in permitted, he used to be permitted to  
50 hunt right up to the park boundary. Due to comments

1 from the Wiseman community, he's now restricted to  
2 guiding sheep hunters east of the highway. So that's  
3 one things we've done short term to try and accommodate  
4 some of the conflict with subsistence uses there.

5  
6 Your comments about getting this into  
7 the plan, that's the place that we can really make a  
8 difference. If we, you know, get detailed comments  
9 about what would be workable solutions that would  
10 minimize the impact on subsistence hunters. That's  
11 where we can put it into place and make it last for 20  
12 years.

13  
14 Another thing I wanted to point out is  
15 on the back of here there's a chart that shows you how  
16 many hunters of each type each of these guides  
17 requested. And then the number of hunters they  
18 actually took is on the top chart, although it's  
19 organized kind of strangely. The blue bar is how many  
20 hunters they took versus how many they requested. We  
21 did not authorize any sheep hunter to take as many  
22 clients as they requested in the Dalton this year. Or  
23 last year I guess. We don't have the post use reports  
24 in from the 2013 season yet, so this is 2012 data.

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: So the request is just  
27 what was asked for, it's not what -- it's not what you  
28 permitted.

29  
30 MR. HAMMOND: Correct. Correct.

31  
32 MR. GERVAIS: And then is the blue on  
33 top what you permitted or that's just the amount.....

34  
35 MR. HAMMOND: That's what they actually  
36 reported that they took, which was less than what they  
37 were permitted in each case.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These numbers are  
40 vastly reduces from what, was it in 2010, Stewart was  
41 requesting nine sheep on the BLM lands, in and out of  
42 the corridor. And so the BLM has been -- I'm  
43 encouraged that the BLM was responsive to our concerns  
44 about that being too much opportunity, and reduced the  
45 numbers. And basically Stewart's eating himself out of  
46 house and home there. He's going way east now. He  
47 can't find hardly any legal sheep any more. He's going  
48 way east.

49  
50 So I'm very happy with the response

1 that BLM -- when guides start putting in for lots of  
2 areas in the Dalton Highway Corridor and adjacent to  
3 the Dalton Highway Corridor, the BLM was very  
4 responsive and worked towards their ANILCA mandate for  
5 healthy populations, and they started to reduce the  
6 number of guided hunters, which have the highest  
7 success rate by far on Dall sheep. And so they  
8 started to reduce the numbers and work with the guides  
9 to reduce these impacts to the resource, and so I --  
10 they were far more responsive than the Board of Game.  
11 The Board of Game had proposals to limit guided hunters  
12 in the Dalton Highway Corridor, and they failed the  
13 proposal. So they're far less proactive with this  
14 issue. And it's well known at the Central Brooks Range  
15 as an issue area.

16

17 So any other comments there, Tim.

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: No.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments  
22 from the Council.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we're about  
28 lunch time then, Melinda. And how long should we  
29 break?

30

31 MS. HERNANDEZ: The restaurant  
32 unfortunately isn't open here during lunch time so I  
33 think we should allow for an hour and a half so folks  
34 have time to go grab some lunch and have plenty of  
35 time to get back. So I would suggest we reconvene at  
36 2:30 and begin with the -- under new business Items G  
37 through J, the fisheries issues. We've got some folks  
38 who wanted to go ahead and get that done this  
39 afternoon. And I don't want to deviate too much from  
40 our already unorthodox agenda here.

41

42 So that would be my suggestion.

43

44 Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, that  
47 sounds good. So we'll break until 2:30.

48

49 MS. HERNANDEZ: And can we get a check  
50 on who's on the line with us, please.

1 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard still here.  
2  
3 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thanks, Don. Anyone  
4 else call in and join us this morning.  
5  
6 MR. BERG: Yeah, Melinda, this is Jerry  
7 Berg.  
8  
9 MS. HERNANDEZ: Hi, Jerry. All right.  
10 Gentlemen, we'll be back on at 2:30 this afternoon.  
11  
12 MR. BERG: Sounds good.  
13  
14 MR. RIVARD: 10-4.  
15  
16 (Off record)  
17  
18 (On record)  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to bring  
21 the meeting back to order.  
22  
23 (Pause)  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The RAC members are  
26 seated. We have people on the phone, and so we'd like  
27 to find out who's on there.  
28  
29 MS. BURKE: Yep, Mr. Chair, we've got  
30 Eric Newland from ADF&G. We've got Don Rivard from the  
31 Office of Subsistence Management. And we also have Dan  
32 Gillikin from KNA.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Welcome  
35 teleconference guests. And so we're going to give --  
36 we're going to get presentation of the Yukon River  
37 Salmon run for this summer and fall, go right ahead  
38 gentlemen, state your name for the record.  
39  
40 MR. MASCHMANN: I'm Gerald Maschmann.  
41 I'm with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fairbanks  
42 subsistence fisheries branch. I assist Fred Bue, who's  
43 the Federal manager with Federal management on the  
44 Yukon River and he sends his regrets, he had a prior  
45 annual leave set to see his elderly father so he  
46 couldn't be here today so he sent me up here.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.  
49  
50 MR. MASCHMANN: The 2013 Yukon River

1 season was pretty challenging and I handed out -- it's  
2 in your book but I handed out an updated version of the  
3 season summary. I didn't make very many changes, I  
4 just updated the fall season commercial fishing totals  
5 and corrected a few typos. So Melinda handed an  
6 updated one out that's dated November 4th.

7

8 MS. BURKE: It's on the right-hand side  
9 of the blue folder.

10

11 MR. MASCHMANN: It's fairly detailed  
12 and I've tried to summarize it but it was a complicated  
13 season so I tried not to cut too much of it out because  
14 I want everyone to be informed of what went on this  
15 year.

16

17 So I'll go ahead and start.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, please do.

20

21 MR. MASCHMANN: The 2013 chinook salmon  
22 run was projected to range from poor to below average.  
23 Summer and fall chum salmon runs were projected to be  
24 average to above average and coho salmon was expected  
25 to be average.

26

27 Because chinook salmon have performed  
28 below expectations in recent years there had been a  
29 great deal of public involvement this past winter with  
30 the Federal Subsistence Board, the Alaska State Board  
31 of Fisheries, during their regulatory meetings; the  
32 three Yukon River RACs, numerous State Advisory  
33 Committees; US/Canada Joint Technical Committee; the  
34 Yukon River Panel and YRDFA all met to share  
35 information and receive input on conservation  
36 approaches. Key conservation approaches included:

37

38 1. The windows fishing schedule would  
39 begin early on May 30th at the mouth  
40 and progress up river based on fish  
41 swimming speed to help spread the  
42 harvest.

43

44 2. From the beginning gillnets would  
45 be restricted to a mesh size no larger  
46 than six inches to protect female and  
47 large chinook salmon while providing  
48 opportunity to harvest abundant summer  
49 chum.

50

1                   3. The first pulse of chinook salmon  
2                   would be protected by closing at least  
3                   one subsistence fishing period.

4  
5                   4. The commercial summer chum salmon  
6                   season would be managed conservatively  
7                   with no commercial sale of incidentally  
8                   caught chinook salmon.

9  
10                   In-season run strength assessment of  
11 chinook and summer chum salmon was primarily based on  
12 the lower river test fisheries at Emmonak, the Yukon  
13 River sonar near Pilot Station and subsistence  
14 fishermen catch reports. The regulatory windows  
15 subsistence salmon fishing schedule was initiated on  
16 May 30th in the coastal district and District 1 with  
17 gillnets restricted to no larger than six inch mesh  
18 size to coincide with the arrival of early chinook  
19 salmon. However, due to the late breakup the windows  
20 schedule was delayed one period while mesh restriction  
21 continued to allow harvest of non-salmon species. The  
22 delayed schedule with restricted gillnets was then  
23 implemented chronologically up river as the run  
24 progressed. The southern portion of the coastal  
25 district, which included Hooper Bay, Chevak and Scammon  
26 Bay as well as the Innoko River and Koyukuk River all  
27 had their subsistence gillnet fishing gear restricted  
28 to six inch or smaller mesh size during the entire  
29 summer season.

30  
31                   Initially one subsistence salmon  
32 fishing period was cancelled in District 1 and the  
33 northern portion of the coastal district beginning on  
34 June 20th, and then that was applied chronologically in  
35 each district or subdistrict as the pulse migrated up  
36 river.

37  
38                   Unfortunately the chinook salmon run  
39 did not build much in strength, while the overlapping  
40 summer chum salmon run came in well above average. All  
41 four pulses of chinook salmon were protected by  
42 subsistence fishing closures. Brief subsistence  
43 fishing opportunities were provided in between the  
44 pulses of chinook salmon with the use of six inch or  
45 smaller gillnets when and where summer chum salmon were  
46 abundant. During these subsistence openings use of  
47 fishwheels was allowed with the stipulations that all  
48 chinook salmon were to be released unharmed. Areas  
49 that normally have few summer chum salmon available  
50 received less fishing time and most of their fishing

1 effort would have been -- as most of their fishing  
2 effort would have been focused on the weak chinook  
3 salmon stock. Subsistence gillnets were restricted to  
4 six inches or smaller mesh size in the Innoko and  
5 Koyukuk Rivers but no fishing closures were imposed  
6 because few chinook salmon use those tributaries.

7  
8                   Despite these management actions the  
9 estimated US/Canada border passage of 30,000 chinook  
10 salmon was well below the interim management escapement  
11 goal range of 42,500 to 55,000 with no surplus  
12 available for the Canadian harvest share as stipulated  
13 by the Yukon River Salmon Agreement.

14  
15                   New commercial fishing gear options  
16 intended to allow for additional summer chum directed  
17 fishing opportunity while allowing for the release of  
18 incidentally caught chinook salmon were implemented  
19 this season.

20  
21                   Commercial dipnet and beach seine gear  
22 was employed during most of the summer season when  
23 chinook salmon could not have been avoided with  
24 traditional gillnet gear. Later in the summer season  
25 new 5.5 gillnet gear was operated in special harvest  
26 areas and during specific times to harvest abundant  
27 chum and avoid concentrations of chinook salmon.  
28 Further up river special commercial periods were only  
29 opened for fishwheel gear to target summer chum salmon  
30 with the requirement to immediately release all chinook  
31 salmon alive. All chinook salmon caught in dipnets,  
32 beach seines and fishwheels were released while those  
33 caught in gillnets could not be sold but could be kept  
34 for subsistence use.

35  
36                   Preliminary commercial harvest from the  
37 summer season fishery is approximately 485,000 summer  
38 chum salmon, while 1,125 chinook salmon were caught and  
39 released and 389 chinook salmon were caught but not  
40 sold and taken home for subsistence purposes.

41  
42                   That's a summary of the summer season  
43 and I'll move into the fall season.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Maybe I'll have you  
46 stop there for questions.

47  
48                   MR. MASCHMANN: Okay.

49  
50                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Council

1 members have questions on the summer season.

2

3

Tim.

4

5

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Jack. Gerald.

6

7

That last paragraph on Page 2, you're  
8 talking about areas that normally have fewer chum  
9 salmon available received less fishing time, what are  
10 those areas?

11

12

MR. MASCHMANN: For example, 5D. 5D  
13 really doesn't get much summer chum, they get mostly  
14 chinook salmon, at least in the summer season so there  
15 really wasn't an opportunity for the managers to  
16 provide a chum fishery -- a subsistence chum fishery  
17 for them because really mostly what's going by is  
18 chinook. So they did not get as much subsistence  
19 fishing opportunity as some of the lower districts.

20

21

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then what  
22 districts are using the beach seine gear and dipnets.

23

24

MR. MASCHMANN: It's Districts 1 and 2.

25

26

It was for their -- it was the first  
27 year of experimenting with new gear for commercial  
28 fishing to perhaps allow them to fish for the abundant  
29 summer chum while avoiding and being able to throw back  
30 chinook salmon unharmed.

31

32

MR. GERVAIS: And how did those various  
33 gear types work?

34

35

MR. MASCHMANN: From the managers'  
36 perspective and from what we heard of the fishermen,  
37 the dipnets worked really well. They did not have much  
38 luck with the beach seines and that could have been  
39 because of we had particularly high water this year and  
40 a little bit more debris and they didn't catch too many  
41 fish with the beach seines but they did catch quite a  
42 few with the dipnets.

43

44

MR. GERVAIS: And was 1 and 2 using the  
45 fishwheels too or is that more like Kaltag?

46

47

MR. MASCHMANN: No, that would have  
48 been -- yeah, the Kaltag area was using fishwheels.

49

50

MR. GERVAIS: And what's the special --

1 what's special about them, just they have a live box  
2 instead of or are they padded or.....

3

4 MR. MASCHMANN: I believe the  
5 fishwheels in Kaltag, they had to be manned at all  
6 times so if a chinook was caught in the wheel they  
7 would have to release it immediately.

8

9 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then I thought  
10 we were -- the gillnet restriction was six inch and  
11 here you're stating it's 5.5, what's.....

12

13 MR. MASCHMANN: That was an  
14 experimental commercial gear. So for the -- when we  
15 thought that the chinook had gone by and there was an  
16 opportunity to use gillnet gear to catch summer chum  
17 but avoid the chinook they wanted to try 5.5 to see how  
18 that might work with avoiding the chinook and so that  
19 came later in the season they -- when we thought the  
20 chinook were by we went ahead and allowed a 5.5 inch  
21 gillnet commercial fishery.

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: And did you and the  
24 fishermen think it worked very well?

25

26 MR. MASCHMANN: I don't know if Eric  
27 Newland is on line, if he can answer that, I think it  
28 did. I think it really did avoid quite a few of the  
29 chinook, afterall we only had 389 chinook salmon caught  
30 and kept for subsistence in that commercial fishery so.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a  
33 comment on that Eric.

34

35 MR. NEWLAND: Yeah, hello, this is Eric  
36 Newland with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
37 here in Anchorage and thanks, Gerald and thank you  
38 Chair and Mr. Gervais for the opportunity to speak.

39

40 As far as the dipnet commercial  
41 fishery, it was new. That gear type was successful in  
42 targeting summer chum salmon while allowing for the  
43 release of incidentally caught king salmon, and it  
44 allowed basically for all that period of time that  
45 normally would have been closed trying to protect the  
46 king salmon and not allowing a summer chum fishery we  
47 were actually open with these gear types.

48

49 So through the season I think we had  
50 somewhere around 20-some periods, 22 periods of dipnet

1 fishing in Y2, about 18 periods in Y1 and in general it  
2 was about 190,000 summer chum salmon that were  
3 harvested using those gear types.

4  
5 Now, looking back at the last couple of  
6 years we had to delay our commercial fishing with  
7 gillnets to try to get summer chum salmon, the abundant  
8 summer chum salmon and we've been getting somewhere  
9 around, a little over 200,000 summer chum salmon and  
10 that's kind of when we're fishing on the end of the run  
11 and so this gear type allowed us to open commercial  
12 fishing quite a bit earlier, more towards the kind of  
13 traditional quarter point of the summer chum salmon run  
14 while still providing that protection to kings while  
15 requiring the fishermen to release those king salmon  
16 that were incidentally caught. And like Gerald said  
17 there was about 1,000 of those that they incidentally  
18 caught and then released and then later in the season  
19 when we kind of transitioned into the gillnet gear we  
20 did it kind of step-wise. We decided that we would  
21 start first with the 5.5 and we would only be fishing  
22 in a certain part of the river that we thought that  
23 kings were no longer entering. Typically the kings  
24 first start entering the river in the south mouth and  
25 then they kind of transition and then the run starts  
26 shifting and enters more in the middle mouth and the  
27 north mouth so at the time when the south mouth is  
28 starting to see a decrease in the entrance that's when  
29 we start fishing with our gillnet gear later in the  
30 season.

31  
32 So some of those are some of the  
33 tactics we used.

34  
35 Like I said earlier the summer chum  
36 season, commercial season went pretty well and that new  
37 gear type did allow us to start earlier and in the past  
38 like in 2011 we caught and basically the harvest of  
39 king salmon in those commercial fisheries for summer  
40 chum was about 4,000 and that was in 2000, and then in  
41 about 2000 -- or excuse me, 2011 that was about 4000,  
42 and then in 2012 about 2,500 and this year there was  
43 about 400 so we're doing a better job of trying to  
44 reduce the amount of incidental harvest of king salmon  
45 and this year was a pretty good year for the summer  
46 chum salmon harvest with the highest harvest since 1989  
47 in the lower river so it was quite a successful season  
48 for the commercial fishing season, but like -- what  
49 most of what Gerald was talking about was the  
50 subsistence fishery and what was going on with the king

1 salmon and a lot of closure, you know, that's our big  
2 tool on the Yukon. I know we talk a lot about gear  
3 when we're talking about commercial here, summer chum,  
4 but when we're talking about king salmon and trying to  
5 protect those king salmon we're talking about these  
6 post closures, we're talking about time closures, we're  
7 talking about strictly closing the windows of  
8 opportunity and reducing to not very much time and  
9 Gerald was referring to 5D and how much time that they  
10 saw. Well, in the last couple years they haven't seen  
11 much time at all fishing-wise. I believe in our season  
12 summary we have a table that presented from the time  
13 that the first -- the first pulse closure was enacted  
14 in 5D to the time when all restrictions were closed,  
15 they only had 90 -- they had 96 percent of their normal  
16 fishing time reduced. So only four percent of that  
17 time, it basically means that they had about a month  
18 closed. So a lot of closure around those kings this  
19 year and unfortunately it just wasn't a very strong  
20 run. We don't anticipate that subsistence harvest to  
21 be very high.

22

23 I know in the earlier comments I heard  
24 Mr. Gervais say that he thought that the folks there in  
25 Ruby were, you know, at 30 percent or lower on their  
26 harvest, I think that's pretty safe to say that most  
27 folks on the river are 30 percent or lower. And so we  
28 won't know what the subsistence harvest did until  
29 probably pretty close to the end of January and that  
30 would be kind of our first preliminary estimates. But  
31 if it was anything like last year, last year we did  
32 quite a bit of the same kind of management, in 2012,  
33 and we had a harvest of somewhere around 30,000, so I'm  
34 -- if I was to be a betting man I would say that we're  
35 at least below that, so somewhere between the 20 and  
36 30,000. But like I said we won't have that harvest  
37 information until later.

38

39 It was a tough year.

40

41 We do want to extend thanks to  
42 everybody on the river. We had a lot of enforcement  
43 folks out on the river and making sure things were  
44 happening that we were hoping that were happening, as  
45 far as complying with the regulations and it sure  
46 seems like for the most part things were. So that's a  
47 good thing. It's good to hear people are understanding  
48 why we're doing things as far as trying to protect  
49 these kings.

50

1                   There was one other thing I did want to  
2 mention, too, I know Mr. -- I think it was Mr. Honea  
3 was speaking yesterday about six inch and that he was  
4 concerned that there wasn't enough information ahead of  
5 time, that people weren't aware of the six inch  
6 restriction and for sure that's probably one of the  
7 biggest reactions we heard out of people on the river  
8 this year, that they were unprepared for the kind of  
9 the subsistence gear restrictions to start off the  
10 season with the six inch gear restriction in place and  
11 people thought it was a new thing, more so in the upper  
12 river where we haven't done this a whole lot. This is  
13 a tactic we have used quite a bit in the lower river,  
14 where we've restricted gear to six inch and really try  
15 to put people on summer chum. The idea is, you know,  
16 giving people some opportunity on the chum. Like  
17 Gerald said, most of the opportunity that were given is  
18 just thee brief periods of time in between larger  
19 groups of king salmon so that's what we were trying to  
20 do with the six inch. It's not necessarily to provide  
21 opportunity on king salmon, it was trying to provide  
22 opportunity if and when and where it is possible with  
23 summer chum.

24  
25                   And I think the biggest thing that we  
26 wished we could have done this year was get out and  
27 talk with people about that kind of tactic earlier. In  
28 the past, about four years, we've had this preseason  
29 planning meeting that's been facilitated through YRDFA,  
30 where we get people all along the river together, we  
31 have a meeting, we talk about things, about what we  
32 might be doing, get some input from people on the river  
33 and we talk about how things might go. And I think  
34 because we didn't have that meeting this year, in 2013,  
35 I think we really felt like we lacked it when it came  
36 time to come up with these kind of plans and that six  
37 inch restriction all along the river was a new thing,  
38 and I think that was definitely one of those kind of --  
39 we are hearing the feedback, we heard it throughout the  
40 season, we understand it wasn't the -- you know, the  
41 easiest thing for people to hear, especially those  
42 people who didn't already have the gear. So when  
43 they're getting the information they might not have had  
44 the time to necessarily respond and buy gear and be  
45 ready. But it does look like this meeting, the  
46 preseason planning meeting will be happening this next  
47 year so hopefully those are some of the things that we  
48 could talk about and how we want to use gear and if and  
49 -- there's some areas people don't even want to try  
50 with that gear and maybe it's not necessary to try to

1 provide opportunity in areas where summer chum maybe  
2 not be the quality for people food and that's not what  
3 they want to do.

4  
5 But more than likely we'll be looking  
6 at a lot of the same kind of tactics we have been in  
7 past years, you know, moving into 2014.

8  
9 So, you know, it's -- we're not looking  
10 at anything new here as far as revelations of what we  
11 can and can't do, I mean we've pretty much cranked the  
12 time down as much as possible. It really is mostly  
13 about how do we provide some limited opportunity to  
14 harvest chum salmon. And right now those summer chum  
15 salmon runs are doing well so that is one good thing,  
16 and hopefully things stay the same and it'll be a good  
17 run next year too with summer chums.

18  
19 I guess that's about it. I know Jeff  
20 Estensen has a few things about the fall season but  
21 maybe he'll follow Gerald.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, thanks, Eric.

24  
25 I am encouraged by the reduced bycatch  
26 of chinook salmon and the catch and release techniques  
27 used with the dipnet and the wheel fishing and the 389  
28 mortality in the commercial fishery is a significant  
29 difference from what was previously occurring.

30  
31 I had one question on the dipnetting,  
32 can they use leads to concentrate fish or is there  
33 regulations on how they can dipnet and what's the size  
34 of those dipnets. I mean you could put out a lead and  
35 concentrate a lot of fish in one spot and dip that up,  
36 is that how they do that.

37  
38 MR. MASCHMANN: Well, we went out and  
39 watched them and a lot of folks had different  
40 techniques. I don't recall them using a lead and maybe  
41 Eric can talk about that but I believe the dipnets have  
42 to be five feet or less in diameter from the widest  
43 point. If it's a D-shaped net the widest point can be  
44 five feet or less or if it's circular it's five feet in  
45 diameter. And I think the maximum number of dipnets  
46 per license was, I think, two. So if a fisherman has a  
47 license they can have two dipnets, them and a crew  
48 member. And we saw folks -- some folks would just  
49 drift and they would start at the back of the boat and  
50 dip the net and walk the net forward and other folks

1 would anchor off in an eddy and they would scoop the  
2 eddy and there were just -- you know, everyone would  
3 find a technique that worked for them, but I don't  
4 recall anyone using a lead.

5  
6 Eric, can you clarify that.

7  
8 MR. NEWLAND: Yeah, sure. Again, this  
9 is Eric Newland, Department of Fish and Game.

10  
11 Yeah, that's correct. For the most  
12 part people were using the shallow banks and doing a  
13 lot of drifting and close to the shore. And like  
14 Gerald said before, that the river was high and so that  
15 beach seine gear was hard to use and most people did  
16 just jump into using the more affordable new gear type  
17 in the fishery with a dipnet and they fished the banks.  
18 Some people did fish eddies. I didn't see any leads.  
19 I don't believe leads are legal at this time.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

22  
23 MR. NEWLAND: But kind of a side note  
24 is that they are looking -- the Board is taking up an  
25 ACR this spring that'll be looking at the size and the  
26 kind of dimensions of the dipnet with the -- there was  
27 a proposal brought before them to maybe make a dipnet  
28 that's more, I guess, feasible to the environment of  
29 the Lower Yukon. So it's still being developed. It  
30 was successful this year and I think we were all kind  
31 of surprised by how well it did happen. I know that a  
32 lot of fishermen were definitely were.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I just  
35 wanted to know how that was prosecuted.

36  
37 And so any other questions.

38  
39 Tim.

40  
41 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, you got a harvest  
42 of 485,000 summer chum, is that mostly Y1, Y2, Kaltag  
43 and the Rapids?

44  
45 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, it's mostly Y1  
46 with some in the Kaltag fishery. And I don't recall  
47 what we had for -- Eric, was there a 5A, B and C  
48 fishery -- summer fishery this year, I don't think so.

49  
50 MR. NEWLAND: Again, this is Eric

1 Newland with Department of Fish and Game.

2

3 So to kind of break it down, and I'll  
4 keep it real general.

5

6 About 380,000 summer chum salmon were  
7 caught in the Lower Yukon and so about 180 of that was  
8 through dipnets and then the rest was through the  
9 various gillnet styles. And then about 100,000 were  
10 caught in Kaltag through that wheel only fishery. And  
11 maybe like about 6,000 summer chum were caught in  
12 District 6.

13

14 For the summer season we didn't have  
15 any commercial fishing going on in District 5. I think  
16 Jeff did during the fall season, though, so.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. I  
19 think we've covered the summer season pretty good and  
20 so we'll move into the fall.

21

22 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay.

23

24 The fall season began in the lower  
25 river on July 16th with the expectation of a run size  
26 greater than 800,000 fall chum, enough to provide for  
27 escapement objectives, a normal subsistence fishery as  
28 well as a surplus for commercial harvest.

29

30 Subsistence salmon fishing reverted to  
31 the standard schedule of seven days per week in  
32 Districts 1, 2 and 3 with closures 12 hours before,  
33 during and 12 hours after announced commercial fishing  
34 periods. Since little or no commercial fishing effort  
35 was anticipated in District 4, and subdistricts 5A, B  
36 and C, these sections of river began their fall season  
37 on a five day per week schedule as specified in  
38 regulation. Subdistrict 5D returned to the normal  
39 seven days per week schedule. And District 6 continued  
40 on its standard two, 42 hour periods per week  
41 regulatory schedule. Near the end of the season  
42 subsistence fishing in District A and 5A, B and C was  
43 relaxed to seven days per week.

44

45 Commercial fishing was initiated in the  
46 lower river at the start of the fall season to take  
47 advantage of the overlap in the summer chum salmon run  
48 and the anticipated strong fall chum salmon run just  
49 beginning or in-river migration. Through the front  
50 half of the fall season chum salmon entered the river

1 in above average run strength. During the second half  
2 of the season two large pulses of fall chum salmon  
3 entered the river and the run projection increased to a  
4 total run size between 900,000 and a million fish.  
5 Meanwhile the overlapping coho salmon run appeared to  
6 be developing below average. The commercial harvest of  
7 coho salmon remained at the upper end of the acceptable  
8 level to provide for necessary escapement needs and  
9 normal subsistence harvest levels.

10

11 In the lower river the fall commercial  
12 salmon fishing season closed by regulation on September  
13 1st, without extension as stipulated in the Yukon River  
14 Coho Salmon Management Plan because of the low coho  
15 salmon abundance.

16

17 Commercial fishing ended in  
18 subdistricts 5A, 5B, and 5C on October 6th and ended in  
19 District 6 on September 30th.

20

21 The combined fall season commercial  
22 harvest through October 7th was approximately 238,000  
23 fall chum and 66,000 coho salmon. The fall chum salmon  
24 harvest is currently the third highest since 1995 and  
25 the coho salmon harvest is the fourth highest since  
26 1995.

27

28 Completed fall chum escapement projects  
29 ended above acreage with escapement goals being met or  
30 exceeded. The Eagle Sonar ended with 200,000 fall chum  
31 salmon passing the sonar. This is enough to meet  
32 border escapement goals including harvest sharing  
33 agreements with Canada.

34

35 Escapement monitoring within the Tanana  
36 Drainage will continue through November but indications  
37 at this time are that all fall chum salmon escapements  
38 are expected to end within or above most escapement  
39 objectives for the 2013 season and coho salmon may end  
40 near the low end of the Delta Clearwater escapement  
41 goal, which is the only established goal in the  
42 drainage for coho salmon.

43

44 Subsistence salmon harvest information  
45 collected in-season indicated that most fishermen did  
46 not meet their chinook salmon subsistence harvest  
47 goals. Generally fishermen reported a lack of fishing  
48 opportunity, having to fish later into the season or  
49 having to shift their fishing efforts to other species.  
50 Even with implementation of exceptionally conservative

1 management actions that restricted both the chinook  
2 salmon subsistence harvest and the targeted summer chum  
3 salmon commercial fishery, less than half the Alaskan  
4 escapement objectives were attained and the US/Canada  
5 Treaty agreement was not met.

6

7                   It is well recognized that the Yukon  
8 River fishing community is heavily relied upon for  
9 assistance in conserving the chinook salmon. To  
10 sustain this important resource fishermen incurred a  
11 significant hardship through reduced harvest. Given  
12 the trend in chinook salmon runs in recent years, we  
13 will be working with fishermen and interested parties  
14 this winter to develop conservative rebuilding  
15 strategies with the primary goal to provide for  
16 escapement needs and subsistence uses during low years  
17 while looking for ways to accommodate other fishing  
18 opportunities. Any ideas you could provide would be  
19 greatly appreciated by the managers.

20

21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,  
22 Gerald. Any questions on the fall season.

23

24

25                   (No comments)

26

27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments.

28

29                   Pollock.

30

31                   MR. SIMON: Thanks, Jack, Mr. Chair. I  
32 earlier talked about the net size since the chinook  
33 salmon crash at first in Allakaket, some years back we  
34 had 7.5 inch mesh and then a new regulation restricted  
35 us to six inch so we surrendered the 7.5 and worked out  
36 with Tanana Chiefs received six inch so at present time  
37 on Koyukuk River and Allakaket we're using six inch but  
38 it's a hardship if the new regulations reduce to  
39 smaller size, some families don't have the resource to  
40 purchase smaller nets but I, myself, I have more than  
41 one net because I have a dog team and I have smaller  
42 sheefish and whitefish net so if fishing is restricted  
43 six inch or smaller mesh, I have smaller mesh, but not  
44 everybody.

45

46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I asked Board of  
47 Fish member Huntington when he was commenting to this  
48 Council earlier what the likelihood of using six inch  
49 this next season would be and he said around 98 percent  
50 likelihood; would the Department agree with that and

1 should that -- in the preseason planning, should that  
2 be widely disseminated that the likelihood of using,  
3 during the main summer season gear sizes larger than  
4 six inches highly unlikely and that people should  
5 retool and there's disaster funding -- I feel that  
6 disaster funding should go towards management  
7 strategies that protect the chinook salmon and that's  
8 -- I'm very happy -- I commend the Department for  
9 conservation of chinook salmon in the commercial  
10 fisheries, but I do feel that the public needs to be  
11 prepared for using six inch gear and that entities need  
12 to possibly provide six inch net so that subsistence  
13 can adapt to these new regulations as the commercial  
14 fishery is.

15

16                   You have comment on that.

17

18                   MR. MASCHMANN: Mr. Chairman. This is  
19 Gerald with Fish and Wildlife. I hate to get ahead  
20 because as managers we manage the run as they come in  
21 and so we've been burned before when we've said, yeah,  
22 it's likely to do that and then the run changes and  
23 then we get burned and so as managers we manage the run  
24 as it comes in and if it -- you know the run comes in  
25 better than we anticipated it coming in then that could  
26 change so we do ask the fishermen who are -- like  
27 yourselves, who are informed, to -- can make those  
28 judgments to talk with each other and share  
29 information.

30

31                   MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair. For the  
32 record, Jeff Estensen, Alaska Department of Fish and  
33 Game, fall season manager for the Yukon. And, you  
34 know, as we've kind of been saying, and, Eric, I don't  
35 know if you want to address this but I could just say  
36 real quick, you know, not having the YRDFA preseason  
37 meeting was not helpful last year and that's a big  
38 meeting that we go to preseason where we discuss these  
39 things and the idea is to get input from the fishermen,  
40 but also to give people a head's up on what to expect.  
41 And like Gerald said, you know, we can't enter the  
42 season next year with, you know, guaranteeing this is  
43 what we're going to do but, you know, it's a  
44 possibility that we would have to go with the six inch  
45 again and certainly by having the YRDFA meeting this  
46 year the idea, as we've learned this year, the  
47 Department and the Fish and Wildlife Service, that we  
48 got to get the word out to folks and we intend to do  
49 that this year.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that,  
2 thank you.

3  
4 I perceive that many fishers were not  
5 aware, you know, they don't keep their hand that far on  
6 the pulse of what's actually going on and this caught  
7 them off guard. And I think public service  
8 announcements, tribal consultation on the Federal side  
9 to inform them of the likelihood of using larger than  
10 six inch gear I -- I don't want to go by percentage but  
11 highly unlikely as the performance of chinook in  
12 Western Alaska and throughout Alaska is declining. So I  
13 appreciate the YRDFA meetings and that gets more word  
14 out, but there has to be a little more proactive  
15 dissemination of knowledge.

16  
17 Tim.

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20  
21 I thought that the TransBoundary  
22 escapement goal was around 45,000 is it really around  
23 55,000 when you were saying in closing that.....

24  
25 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, that's.....

26  
27 MR. GERVAIS: .....escapement was only  
28 about half.

29  
30 MR. MASCHMANN: Yes. The border  
31 passage goal into Canada for 2013 was negotiated to be  
32 in the range of 42,500 to 55,000 plus a harvest sharing  
33 amount which is anywhere from five to 10,000 on top of  
34 that and we only passed 30,000 over the border this  
35 year so we were under.

36  
37 MR. GERVAIS: So did the Canadians do  
38 any kind of harvesting?

39  
40 MR. MASCHMANN: The Canadians, without  
41 speaking for them, are pretty conservative as it is so  
42 they did not harvest very many, no. I don't know their  
43 exact harvest numbers but they -- they're pretty  
44 conservative with their fishing and I don't think they  
45 harvested very much.

46  
47 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, I certainly  
48 appreciate you guys coming up with these different gear  
49 types to try to give fishing opportunity to the people  
50 for the chum salmon and protecting the king. That's

1 really good performance to lower the in-river bycatch  
2 by that amount.

3

4                   But due to this continue trend of not  
5 meeting our escapement goal, are you guys, as managers,  
6 or Commissioner Campbell, interested in going back to  
7 the North Pacific Council and say, hey, we've taken  
8 really significant steps to try to increase chinook  
9 production and we're still not meeting our escapement  
10 goals, or the TransBoundary goals, can we do something  
11 more restrictive in the Federal waters, other than  
12 Amendment 91. Do you guys have some comments on the  
13 management in the Federal waters, not the Federal  
14 river, but the ocean?

15

16                   MR. MASCHMANN: Chairman Reakoff.  
17 Councilman Gervais. This is Gerald with Fish and  
18 Wildlife. I wish I could be the manager in the Bering  
19 Sea but I'm not and, you know, Fish and Wildlife has  
20 their representative on that Council and that's I think  
21 the best our agency can do, and I believe Fish and Game  
22 also has a representative, too. As it's been discussed  
23 it's a very big powerful group of people and a very  
24 high dollar fishery and the best that, you know, myself  
25 and Fred and Eric and Jeff can do is manage what comes  
26 back and that's what we're trying to do.

27

28                   MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Yeah, you're  
29 right, the Fish and Game does have probably the most  
30 influential member on the Committee, or Council, and  
31 when that Amendment 91 was drafted, he made the motion  
32 and the motion was for the bycatch limit to be three  
33 times the average, was around 90,000 kings, so it got  
34 negotiated down to a more reasonable level but I would  
35 hope that Commissioner Campbell would be interested in  
36 further restricting what's going on out there to try to  
37 give some relief to the salmon populations.

38

39                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any questions --  
40 did you have any other comments there, Jeff, on the  
41 fall season.

42

43                   MR. ESTENSEN: Yeah, Mr. Chair, if I  
44 may.

45

46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

47

48                   MR. ESTENSEN: Again, Jeff Estensen,  
49 Fish and Game.

50

1 I just wanted to add regarding the fall  
2 season that, you know, things have been going really  
3 well for the fall season for the fall chum for -- this  
4 is -- last year was the third year we've seen very good  
5 runs. We've been able to meet our escapement goals  
6 and, you know, subsistence needs have been met. We  
7 haven't had to take any restrictions. You know, and as  
8 we've been doing the last few years, in light of the  
9 king situation we've been suggesting to subsistence  
10 fishermen that they look at other species such as fall  
11 chum, summer chum, what not.

12  
13 Just as an FYI, you know, prior to the  
14 2012 season the average subsistence harvest was about  
15 80,000 fish, what we saw in 2012 was about -- a  
16 subsistence harvest of about 97,000 fish, so it  
17 actually went up. And I anticipate -- right now we're  
18 still kind of getting information back from our pulse  
19 season surveys and permits but I expect, and in talking  
20 with fishermen along the river as I have that that  
21 actual number will be even higher than this year.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jeff, is that  
24 combined fall chum and coho?

25  
26 MR. ESTENSEN: That's just fall chum.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Just fall chum.

29  
30 MR. ESTENSEN: Just fall chum. Coho  
31 has been holding pretty steady right around 15 to  
32 20,000.

33  
34 And just, you know, kind of looking  
35 ahead a little bit, you know, I don't know how long  
36 that the fall chum runs will maintain the way they are  
37 right now. We've gone through cycles in the last 20  
38 years, we've had, you know, years of high abundance at  
39 the turn of the decade -- low abundance at the turn of  
40 the decade and then high abundances in the middle of  
41 the decade. Just kind of looking ahead a little bit,  
42 very preliminary, it looks like we could have another  
43 good year in 2014 as well, so that's good.

44  
45 So I just wanted to point that out,  
46 that it looks like folks are shifting their harvest a  
47 little bit, or taking more fall chum and that's good  
48 and we strongly encourage that and it's good to see  
49 that.

50

1                   It's good to see that, you know, at  
2 least a bright spot in the Yukon and it's called the  
3 fall season and that's good.

4  
5                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I would  
6 -- if I was a fisher on the Yukon I would forget about  
7 fishing in the summer, I'd grow my garden or something  
8 and then I'd fish heavy on the fall season and get a  
9 freezer and get ready for it because I don't see where  
10 the chinook thing is going to turn around any time soon  
11 so just sitting around twiddling your thumbs hoping to  
12 catch kings is like wasting time. It's better to  
13 concentrate on the fall season.

14  
15                   Don.

16  
17                   MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
18 have a question and I don't really who to pose that to.  
19

20  
21                   I mean in the fall chum, you know, the  
22 Koyukuk River is pretty much opened seven days a week  
23 and I'm sitting in 4B or 4C and I'm -- you know, like I  
24 mentioned this morning or yesterday, if I -- you know,  
25 during the hunting season sitting in the fish camp, I  
26 want to throw in my net but it's -- I'm just wondering  
27 do we have to put it in a proposal to change the laws  
28 for it to be open. I mean what justifies the fact that  
29 we have to wait darn near until the ice is running or  
30 something before that thing is open for the weekends.  
31 I mean you put your net in Sunday and take it out  
32 Friday and, hey, I only have the weekends off, I mean  
33 and it -- and that's discouraging even for the elders  
34 that's in our villages that says, gee, by the time they  
35 open it up and I want to fish the water's too cold. So  
36 maybe -- and that's one thing.

37  
38                   Another thing I'm thinking, okay, we  
39 have all these net restrictions and, you know, what  
40 about the fishwheel parts, the people that own  
41 fishwheels, most -- there's a lot of people that just  
42 don't have the capacity, they don't have the money to  
43 -- or the knowledge to make a fishwheel, and, you know,  
44 you say well down at the Kaltag one that's monitored  
45 but what -- is that the case along the whole corridor.

46  
47                   Thank you.

48  
49                   MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair. Jeff  
50 Estensen, Fish and Game.

1                   A little bit in that question, I think  
2 the first part was, you're in District 4B, you say, B  
3 and C.

4  
5                   MR. HONEA: (Nods affirmatively)

6  
7                   MR. ESTENSEN: So you're talking about  
8 the subsistence schedule that you were on and not being  
9 open on the weekends when people have the opportunity  
10 to go fishing. You know we're kind of regulated by  
11 when the subsistence openings occur, you know, whether  
12 the commercial fishing is going on or not. You know,  
13 in the past we have liberalized the schedule to seven  
14 days a week, depending on where we're at. I'm not sure  
15 -- I believe we went to seven days a week in District 4  
16 at some point. I'd have to look back and see, or maybe  
17 we didn't, I can't remember.

18  
19                   MR. MASCHMANN: It was late in the  
20 season.

21  
22                   MR. ESTENSEN: What's that?

23  
24                   MR. MASCHMANN: It was late in the  
25 season.

26  
27                   MR. ESTENSEN: It was later in the  
28 season, correct.

29  
30                   MR. HONEA: Okay. Well, yeah, I guess  
31 my point is, actually, you did, but by the time that we  
32 got there, you know, it's really getting cold and it's  
33 -- and we're talking about a minimal take of fish,  
34 maybe 10 fish at the most, I mean for myself.

35  
36                   MR. ESTENSEN: Yeah, and I'm talking  
37 exclusively about the fall season right now that, you  
38 know, when we have these years of large runs, you know,  
39 and we're pretty sure that things are going to shape up  
40 the way they are we can certainly -- we have in the  
41 past so we could certainly look at doing it again to  
42 try to give -- you know, and this is a good point  
43 because, you know, we're asking people to try to shift  
44 their harvest to fall chum, we should probably be  
45 giving every opportunity to do that especially when  
46 we're fairly certain of the run size that we're going  
47 to have. So maybe that's something that we ought to  
48 look at doing, you know, that's a very good point and  
49 I'll certainly make note of that. And I've discussed  
50 this a little bit about when we go to seven days a

1 week, as the season progresses and maybe we could do it  
2 a little bit earlier so.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Especially since  
5 there's no commercial fishery in 4B and C and so you  
6 don't have -- and are there any permits up there at all  
7 and is there -- the reality is, that's not a conflict,  
8 you know, the closure revolving around commercial  
9 harvest is not applicable. Those areas that don't have  
10 commercial harvest should go to a seven day schedule,  
11 people can fish when they want to, they're not going to  
12 keep fishing, they're just going to catch a few fish  
13 and pull in the gear. So I feel that the Department  
14 needs to evaluate the burden of conservation. When  
15 there's a commercial fishery down below them and then  
16 these people are sitting on closures because of that  
17 commercial fishery, I feel that -- I think the  
18 Department needs to reevaluate how that's prosecuted,  
19 the subsistence fishery is prosecuted.

20  
21 Any further comments.

22  
23 Pollock.

24  
25 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Jack. I have  
26 not -- I don't have a question but I have some  
27 comments.

28  
29 First, chums -- the chum salmon run was  
30 good. But, again, there wasn't hardly any king salmon,  
31 I only caught two small kings. And I'll go back a  
32 little bit, a few years ago, I caught some kings that  
33 were three and a half, almost four feet, I don't see  
34 those, you know. But not too long ago I caught 30 king  
35 salmon, I thought that was good, I put some in my  
36 freezer and stripped some of them, but now thinking  
37 catching 30 that's not hurting the king salmon stock,  
38 we in-river villages are restricted or cut off from  
39 taking king salmon. Sometimes although it's no fault  
40 of ours, but we understand we have to abide by the law.  
41 It's like the chinook salmon is overfished some place,  
42 not the in-rivers, we don't take that much king salmon.  
43 I heard more recently there was a lot of bycatch thrown  
44 back in the river, not the river, in the sea, and it's  
45 hard to understand while we in-river villages are  
46 shortage of fish and yet there's a lot of bycatch fish  
47 thrown back to the sea.

48  
49 Thank you, Jack.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

2

3 I think we covered the post-season  
4 fairly well. We have lots of other issues.

5

6 Gerald.

7

8 MR. MASCHMANN: I just want to follow  
9 up with Donald's -- he mentioned something about the  
10 fishwheel being monitored in 4A and that was during the  
11 summer season commercial fishery so the wheel was  
12 operating as a commercial catch device so it was --  
13 that was why it was being monitored. So that whenever  
14 a king salmon would be caught in the wheel they'd have  
15 to throw it back so there was no live box, because we  
16 don't think a live box is good for the salmon, so  
17 whenever a king was seen in the wheel it would have to  
18 be immediately netted and thrown in.

19

20 MR. HONEA: Okay. I guess maybe I'm  
21 kind of opening up something here.

22

23 But I'm actually talking about, you  
24 know, we're restricted, us people that reduced the nets  
25 and stuff, what about the people that have fishwheels,  
26 they're unrestricted. A fishwheel could catch 100  
27 kings in a night for -- if I had a set net here I'd  
28 catch maybe two or three if I'm lucky. So there's  
29 actually no -- I feel as if because we have a net we're  
30 being, you know, there's a disparity there that -- is  
31 it -- there's no restrictions on it, right, is that  
32 what I'm saying?

33

34 MR. MASCHMANN: Well, the wheels were  
35 restricted in time similar to the net and we -- again,  
36 we couldn't monitor the fishwheels but we asked  
37 fishermen to -- who ran wheels -- subsistence fishermen  
38 who ran wheels to throw their king salmon back into the  
39 water. Now, whether they did that or not that's up to  
40 them. It was brought up in-season on the YRDFA  
41 teleconference that some folks, particularly in your  
42 area, who fish with nets thought that the fishwheel  
43 fishermen may have had an advantage that they could  
44 catch more king salmon than they could with the six  
45 inch net.

46

47 MR. HONEA: So it's just by good faith.

48

49 MR. MASCHMANN: Last year for 2013 it  
50 was and if you can provide any advice on how to handle

1 that for 2014 that's what we're looking for, is how do  
2 we make it fair for everyone and I'm not sure how to do  
3 that yet.

4  
5 MR. HONEA: State response. Same.

6  
7 MR. ESTENSEN: Eric, you on board with  
8 this, are you listening?

9  
10 MR. NEWLAND: Yes, good afternoon, this  
11 is Eric Newland with Fish and Game. I can provide a  
12 little information regarding on how the restrictions  
13 went with fishwheels and that.

14  
15 As far as when we're implementing a six  
16 inch gear restriction that means at the same time in  
17 areas that wheels are legal gear types, that means that  
18 we also have to require specific accommodations for  
19 those as well, and that means when we say we're going  
20 to six inch with gillnets, that at the same time wheels  
21 have to be either manned or a live box has to be in  
22 place. So that's the deal.

23  
24 So in the upper river districts, in  
25 Districts 4, 5 and 6 where wheels are legal gear types  
26 for subsistence that's the regulations. When we put  
27 the six inch in place, people who were using a wheel  
28 either have to be manning that wheel and releasing  
29 those kings or have to have a live box on there that  
30 then they have to regularly check and release those  
31 kings.

32  
33 And that is what happened this year.

34  
35 The one thing that we did, we probably  
36 spent more time trying to get the information out about  
37 six inch because it is the most used -- the most used  
38 gear type is gillnet gear throughout the river, is the  
39 number 1 type of gear.

40  
41 But it's like Jeff said we're going to  
42 spend a little more time this winter coming up at that  
43 YRDFA planning meeting, we're going to talk mostly, I  
44 imagine about how we're going to deal with chum and  
45 these gear types and trying to provide opportunity for  
46 chum. Because more than likely, I know you asked  
47 earlier about whether we'd be looking at six inch or  
48 not, it really is when we're talking about chum. So  
49 it's not to provide opportunity for kings, it's the  
50 opportunity for -- the limited opportunity is just to

1 provide some opportunity for chum. So if people want  
2 chum in their area then we'll work with people to  
3 figure out when and where we should be using that six  
4 inch. If people really don't want a lot of opportunity  
5 with six inch then it's probably going to just be  
6 closed if it's going to be a poor run.

7

8 So I'll leave it at that.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, that sounds  
11 good. And so we're going to move on. And so we have  
12 -- appreciate -- I commend both agencies for the  
13 conservation of chinook salmon, working with what we  
14 had to work with and so I'm very satisfied with that  
15 bycatch level of chinook in the commercial fishery and  
16 everybody's concerned about the chinook run especially  
17 into Canada. But I think that this YRDFA meeting,  
18 coming up this winter, preseason planning, is going to  
19 be a big deal for helping people adjust. The lower  
20 river's already adjusting, already dipnetting and stuff  
21 and so the up river people have to adjust too, that's  
22 just the way it's going to be.

23

24 So we need to move on.

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: Jack.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: What's the likelihood  
31 since we're having this TransBoundary escapement  
32 trouble that either the Canadians or you guys, as  
33 managers, are going to decide that there's not going to  
34 be any subsistence harvest on kings and you're just  
35 going to let everything go up the river. I mean what's  
36 going to -- you must be thinking about that, what's  
37 going to be the break point where you go to that  
38 management strategy?

39

40 MR. MASCHMANN: I think -- Chairman  
41 Reakoff, Councilman Gervais, this is a public process  
42 and that's up to the public. It's you, as the public,  
43 tell us when the break point is and that goes through  
44 the Board of Fish and the Federal Subsistence Board.  
45 We just do the best we can with the regulations we can  
46 and try and get fish on the escapement grounds and  
47 provide opportunity when we can. But it's up to you to  
48 tell us when the break point is and then to put forth  
49 proposals and try and get everyone on the river to  
50 agree to it.

1 MR. GERVAIS: So there's no specific  
2 triggers in the TransBoundary Salmon Agreement that  
3 requires fishing a stock, subsistence fishing of stock.

4  
5 MR. MASCHMANN: No. The Yukon River  
6 Panel, which is the group that meets, the Canadians and  
7 the US, they meet and they negotiate this border  
8 passage but then it's up to each country to manage  
9 their fishery the way they want to manage it. So the  
10 panel really can't tell the US managers how to manage  
11 it, it's up to the US managers and the US process to  
12 decide how to manage and so that's a public process  
13 which you're a part of. You got to tell us when it's  
14 time to not fish at all.

15  
16 And I think that's, as Eric said,  
17 that's really in a way what we did this year is we  
18 closed chinook fishing but we provided opportunity with  
19 six inch gear and fishwheel on those summer chum, and  
20 that's what that was, that was to provide opportunity  
21 on the summer chum. And we think we did a pretty good  
22 job of limiting the harvest of chinook but, you know,  
23 they still get caught, they get caught in six inch mesh  
24 and they'll get caught in a fishwheel and some  
25 fishermen, most fishermen on the Yukon, I think, are  
26 honest but there's always those few that aren't and  
27 some fish got harvested. So you got to tell us when  
28 it's time to just not fish at all but that's a public  
29 process and I encourage folks to participate.

30  
31 MR. GERVAIS: Right.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've covered  
34 this fishery enough we need to move on.

35  
36 Melinda.

37  
38 MS. BURKE: Let's do a quick check on  
39 the phone while Wayne Jenkins -- we're going to leave  
40 all the fish stuff together and have YRDFA come up now.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure.

43  
44 MS. BURKE: Eric. I've got Eric from  
45 ADF&G, Dan from KNA and Don from OSM. Do we have any  
46 other new callers on the line, please.

47  
48 MR. BERG: Yeah, Melinda, this is Jerry  
49 Berg here.

50

1 MS. BURKE: Hey Jerry. Anybody else.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome Jerry.

4

5 So go ahead, Wayne.

6

7 MR. JENKINS: Chairman Reakoff,  
8 Councilmen. Thank you very much. My name is Wayne  
9 Jenkins. I do have more fish stuff for you. I am the  
10 new Deputy Director with Yukon River Drainage Fisheries  
11 Association also known as YRDFA. Some of you are  
12 longstanding YRDFA members, even board members. I'd  
13 like to thank all of you for the work that you do on  
14 behalf of the salmon resource.

15

16 You may be familiar with some of the  
17 YRDFA programs that are funded by the Fisheries  
18 Resource Monitoring Program. These include our in-  
19 season management teleconferences and in-season chinook  
20 salmon harvest interviewer program. I'd like to give  
21 you an update on this program from the 2013 fishing  
22 season that is run by Catherine Moncrieff. She is our  
23 anthropologist. Following this I'll give you an update  
24 on salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery  
25 that our senior fisheries advisor Becca Robbins-  
26 Gisclair runs for YRDFA.

27

28 Hopefully you have handouts, I have two  
29 for you today. One is a summary from the in-season  
30 management teleconferences and in-season chinook  
31 harvest program.

32

33 MS. BURKE: Right side of the blue  
34 folders, there's some YRDFA documents.

35

36 MR. JENKINS: And also a salmon bycatch  
37 update.

38

39 In-season management teleconferences.

40

41 This year YRDFA held 14 in-season  
42 management teleconferences every Tuesday in June, July  
43 and August. The calls followed an agenda each week  
44 opening with subsistence fishing reports, hearing from  
45 State and Federal fisheries managers on their fishery  
46 assessments and management strategies. Hearing from  
47 the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada and  
48 Yukon fisheries in the Canadian headwaters. These  
49 teleconferences were funded through the Fisheries  
50 Resource Monitoring Program and the Yukon River Panel.

1                   The important issues addressed this  
2 season during the teleconferences included the low  
3 Yukon River chinook salmon runs and the conservative  
4 management strategies used in-season, also salmon  
5 bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery and the  
6 Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization. In-river chinook  
7 salmon fisheries were managed conservatively this year  
8 as you just heard. This was a major discussion point  
9 each week; how the run was coming in, when pulse  
10 closures would take place, and what gear restrictions  
11 were in place.

12  
13                   Fishers were concerned about the  
14 restriction of six inch gear as many people did not  
15 have it and did not have the time or the money to  
16 purchase it. Fishers also wanted to harvest king  
17 salmon because it's so important to them in their  
18 diets, and there was a lot of discussion around this.  
19 People in different districts requested additional time  
20 so that they could get king salmon for food and  
21 fishwheel fishermen also asked about relief for dog  
22 food because they usually catch incidental fish for  
23 their dogs while the wheels are turning, and this year  
24 the wheels did not turn much due to closures. Others  
25 were concerned about how the information is shared from  
26 the teleconferences and YRDFA assured the public that  
27 the concerns raised on the calls would be shared with  
28 the funding and management agencies supporting the  
29 calls and the Yukon River Panel during the  
30 communications committee report.

31  
32                   On the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we also  
33 learned that the Act Reauthorization process, this Act  
34 governs the North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
35 and management of off-shore fisheries. Senator Begich  
36 holds an important committee seat with responsibility  
37 for reauthorizing this Act. Priorities which the  
38 Alaska Native communities are working on this round of  
39 reauthorization include increasing representation on  
40 the Council, providing authority for bycatch fines and  
41 requiring bycatch reductions.

42  
43                   The issue of salmon bycatch on the  
44 teleconferences. The purpose of the in-season salmon  
45 management calls is to talk about in-river fisheries  
46 management but over the years people have asked a lot  
47 of questions and made a lot of comments on the issue of  
48 salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea. In order to address  
49 the needs to discuss this important issue we dedicated  
50 two calls, one at the beginning, the first call, and

1 towards the end of the season in August where we  
2 dedicated half of our teleconference time to talking  
3 about salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery.  
4 We had two guest speakers Diana Stram, Staff for North  
5 Pacific Fishery Management Council and Nichole Kimball,  
6 Staff in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's  
7 Commissioner's office who serves as the Commissioner's  
8 alternate on the Council to discuss this important  
9 issue impacting Western and Interior Alaska salmon  
10 stocks.

11

12 Here's the salmon bycatch update.

13

14 These are the current salmon bycatch  
15 numbers of the Bering Sea up to August 26th. Chinook  
16 salmon 12,938, that is an increase of 1,595 over 2012.  
17 Chum salmon bycatch was 124,914 as of October 26th,  
18 this is an increase of 102,637 over 2012. Pollock  
19 fishing generally finishes by late October and early  
20 November.

21

22 We have new genetic information for  
23 2010 and 2011 which is much more reliable because the  
24 entire fleet is now required to have at least 100  
25 percent observer coverage. There's also a better  
26 sampling plan in place. The results from 2010 and 2011  
27 showed that 73 percent of the chinook salmon caught as  
28 bycatch were of Western Alaska origin, Bristol Bay,  
29 Kuskokwim, the entire Yukon River and Norton Sound.  
30 Chum salmon bycatch is a much lower proportion of  
31 Western Alaskan stocks, 25 percent in 2011, and 21  
32 percent in 2012.

33

34 The North Pacific Fisheries Council met  
35 at the beginning of October and discussed both chinook  
36 and chum salmon bycatch. The pollock industry was  
37 united in calling for the Council to take no action at  
38 that time on chinook salmon bycatch while Western  
39 Alaskans were asking for the Council to reduce the  
40 bycatch further. The Commissioner of Alaska Department  
41 of Fish and Game put forward an action which the  
42 Council supported unanimously which ignored the request  
43 of the pollock fishery and looks at ways to reduce  
44 bycatch further. The Council is looking at methods to  
45 reduce fishing during times of historically high  
46 bycatch, October, ways to reduce bycatch of boats with  
47 consistently high bycatch, and how to continue to drive  
48 bycatch lower even when the fleet is well under the  
49 cap. One of the options includes changing the timing  
50 for accounting for bycatch by starting mid-year,

1 instead of January 1st. The effect of this would be to  
2 put the high value roe fishery, which occurs at the  
3 beginning of the calendar year at the end of the  
4 bycatch year creating very high incentives to keep  
5 bycatch low throughout the season so as not to  
6 jeopardize the highest value fishing season effectively  
7 lowering the cap. The Council indicated they are  
8 looking at regulatory changes to address these as well  
9 as changes to industry incentive plans for some, which  
10 indicates they are taking the need to reduce bycatch  
11 seriously. The Council received a discussion paper  
12 which looks at all these changes at the April 2014  
13 Council meeting in Anchorage and will move forward from  
14 there. Regulatory changes typically take at least a  
15 year or two to move through the Council process.

16  
17 The Council is also in the process of  
18 looking at chum salmon bycatch reduction. The process  
19 of addressing chum salmon bycatch is taking much longer  
20 than anticipated because of the challenge of addressing  
21 chum salmon bycatch without inadvertently increasing  
22 chinook salmon bycatch.

23  
24 YR DFA continues to support bycatch  
25 reduction measures, which reduce both chinook and chum  
26 salmon bycatch.

27  
28 You can see there's more information in  
29 the separate handout for more details.

30  
31 I'm happy to take any questions or  
32 comments from you on bycatch and pass them on to Becca  
33 Robbins-Gisclair if you have any at this time.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments.

36  
37 Tim.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Wayne, do you know  
40 what percentage of the pollock trawl fleets using  
41 excluder devices?

42  
43 MR. JENKINS: I do not, sir, I'll try  
44 to find out for you.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other comments.

49  
50 Tim.

1 MR. GERVAIS: Chairman Reakoff. I'd  
2 like to make a motion that we transmit a letter to Eric  
3 Olson who is the Chair of the North Pacific Council and  
4 a similar or identical letter to Commissioner Campbell  
5 discussing this information we got today on our 2013  
6 salmon overview and explain that we still haven't seen  
7 any sign of recovery on this chinook stock and that we  
8 need to continue to focus on some meaningful change in  
9 what's going on in the exclusive economic zone.

10

11 Can we do anything without a.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can do that.  
14 I'll poll the Council, the Western Interior Regional  
15 Council to see if they're agreeable to formulate a  
16 letter to the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
17 Council Chair and Cora Campbell, Commissioner of Fish  
18 and Game to continue to reduce bycatch of chinook  
19 salmon because of the lack of performance on the  
20 Western Alaska stock, something to that effect.

21

22 MR. GERVAIS: And also with that I'd  
23 like to incorporate some of the comment that Stan had  
24 this morning where he's not seeing hardly any seven  
25 year old fish and six year old fish and my personal  
26 opinion on that is because it's just -- because those  
27 fish are out there for that many more years and they  
28 just have that much higher incident of being -- you got  
29 a certain percent are being caught in a trawl net every  
30 year and if they're out there for six or seven years  
31 there's just more likelihood that they're getting  
32 caught up. So I would like the North Pacific Council  
33 to reduce that fishery in months, they can fish that A  
34 Season, that high value roe season and then maybe a  
35 couple months after that. I think now they're -- I  
36 think they're fishing nine months a year, 24/7, and  
37 here people in our village, you know, they're fishing  
38 two or four days a year and why should the trawl fleet  
39 be out there for nine months around the clock.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do think that some  
42 of the accounting method going from -- when did they  
43 want to switch the accounting method for bycatch from  
44 January 1 to what date?

45

46 MR. JENKINS: It wasn't stated when  
47 that would take effect.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But changing the  
50 accounting date to shift the fleet's concern for the

1 high dollar roe fishery in January, and so changing  
2 that accounting date would be one methodology. You  
3 have to give economic incentives to the fishery so they  
4 themselves want to reduce that bycatch. They don't  
5 care if it's suremi but they'll really get concerned if  
6 it's roe. So there are ways that are being explored  
7 and we should be encouraging those methodologies from  
8 this Council. And so I would like you, Tim, work with  
9 Melinda on formation of that letter that we will review  
10 and adopt when we have quorum.

11

12 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any other  
15 questions or comments.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Jack.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. Yeah,  
22 Wayne, I had a question here, you gave us some figures,  
23 12,938 for king salmon, I believe, was that escapement  
24 into Canada, what was those numbers, and there was a  
25 chum number, too.

26

27 MR. JENKINS: The 12,938 figure, that's  
28 Bering Sea pollock bycatch.

29

30 MR. HONEA: That was the total bycatch?

31

32 MR. JENKINS: Yes.

33

34 MR. HONEA: That they reported?

35

36 MR. JENKINS: Yes, up until October  
37 26th.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Okay. So I mean that's a  
40 pretty low number. I mean it seems like a low number  
41 but I'm just -- so that run's up actually into  
42 February, March, something, by the time the whole thing  
43 is counted.

44

45 MR. JENKINS: The information I have  
46 here says that it finishes by late October, early  
47 November.

48

49 MR. HONEA: Okay. I don't know it just  
50 seems like a low number to report when we're asking, I

1 think we wanted it down somewhere about 40,000 or below  
2 or something and it seems -- doesn't it seem awful low  
3 to you, 12,000.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right now they have  
6 100 percent observer coverage, don't they have  
7 video.....

8  
9 MR. JENKINS: They're using a lot of  
10 different techniques.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....video  
13 monitoring also. The North Pacific Fisheries  
14 Management Council's required additional observation of  
15 the bycatch and so then they're also taking genetic  
16 samples and so they're getting more definition to what  
17 that bycatch is. So of the 12,938, 73 percent of those  
18 are Western Alaska stocks and the Yukon is only a  
19 component of that. And so we want bycatch reduced, but  
20 the reality is that production, ocean production is  
21 lagging, that's a major portion of why we're not  
22 getting fish, you can't just lay this all on the trawl  
23 fishery. There's some performance problems. There's  
24 some previous escapement problems. You know, large  
25 mesh gear use, those kinds of things, previous  
26 management affected productivity of the streams. We  
27 want reduced bycatch and we want the North Pacific  
28 Fisheries Management Council to work on that issue but  
29 until we start to get better performance out of these  
30 runs, everybody's going to have to take some cuts and  
31 so that's just the way it's going to have to be.

32  
33 And so.....

34  
35 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair, this is Don  
36 Rivard.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

39  
40 MR. RIVARD: I've printed off the  
41 latest annual mortality from the Bering Sea Aleutian  
42 Island groundfish fisheries and the figure that Wayne  
43 gave was for 2012, and the figure for 2013 is almost  
44 14,000 as of the 22nd of October.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we're getting  
47 a disparent number here because the -- it's reporting  
48 in this YRDFA paper that 2013 is 12,938 and so you  
49 have.....

50

1 MR. RIVARD: I'm looking right at my  
2 list here I just printed off yesterday and that's the  
3 exact figure for what was all of 2012. 2013 is almost  
4 14,000 fish to date.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, that's a  
7 misprint then. What do you have 13,000-something?  
8  
9 MR. RIVARD: 13,984 as of October 22nd.  
10 It's about a thousand fish more than last year, there's  
11 still some time to go.  
12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Don.  
14  
15 MR. JENKINS: My apologies to the  
16 Council.  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, no problem.  
19  
20 MR. GERVAIS: No problem.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further comments  
23 or questions.  
24  
25  
26 (No comments)  
27  
28 MR. JENKINS: Shall I continue.  
29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Please do.  
31  
32 MR. JENKINS: So YRDFA has an in-season  
33 subsistence project that we do with US Fish and  
34 Wildlife.  
35  
36 During the chinook fishing season YRDFA  
37 hires.....  
38  
39 MR. NEWLAND: Hello, you still on?  
40  
41 MS. BURKE: Yes, who's on the line,  
42 please.  
43  
44 (Teleconference interference)  
45  
46 MS. BURKE: If everybody on the line  
47 could please mute yourself, if you're not at an office  
48 phone, you can push star six.  
49  
50 MR. NEWLAND: Hello.

1 MS. BURKE: Yes, can you hear me.  
2  
3 MR. NEWLAND: I can hear you.  
4  
5 MS. BURKE: Okay.  
6  
7 MR. RIVARD: Okay, who's this?  
8  
9 MR. NEWLAND: This is Eric Newland with  
10 Fish and Game.  
11  
12 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Eric, apparently  
13 we're not attached to the meeting anymore.  
14  
15 MS. BURKE: Don. Don.  
16  
17 MR. NEWLAND: Oh, we got dropped.  
18  
19 MS. BURKE: No, Eric, Don.....  
20  
21 MR. RIVARD: I'm going to hang up and  
22 call back.  
23  
24 (Laughter)  
25  
26 MR. NEWLAND: All right, good-bye.  
27  
28 MS. BURKE: Don, can you hear me.  
29  
30 MR. NEWLAND: Hey.  
31  
32 MS. BURKE: Don.  
33  
34 MR. RIVARD: Yes.  
35  
36 MS. BURKE: Can you hear me, you both  
37 are still on the line, we're hearing you here in the  
38 meeting.  
39  
40 MR. RIVARD: Okay.  
41  
42 MS. BURKE: Okay.  
43  
44 MR. RIVARD: Okay, we just couldn't  
45 hear anybody all of a sudden.  
46  
47 MS. BURKE: Just mute yourself, okay,  
48 that's okay, no problem. Go ahead, Wayne.  
49  
50 (Laughter)

1 MR. JENKINS: During the chinook  
2 fishing season YRDFA hires a person in 10 villages  
3 along the Yukon River to conduct interviews and  
4 includes the villages of Alakanuk, Marshall, Russian  
5 Mission, Holy Cross, Huslia, Kaltag, Galena, Nun'am,  
6 Ft. Yukon and Eagle.

7  
8 The interviewers collect information  
9 measuring the progress of fishermen towards meeting  
10 their subsistence harvest goals for chinook salmon.  
11 Learning about fishing conditions, and also the quality  
12 of the subsistence catch. In 2013 126 households were  
13 interviewed in 372 interviews as the chinook salmon  
14 swam through their villages. There's one community,  
15 Huslia, where we were not successful in finding a local  
16 hire and this resulted in a lack of data in 2013.

17  
18 As we all know this was a challenging  
19 year for chinook salmon fishers with low salmon numbers  
20 and pulse closures. Many communities reported very low  
21 progress towards harvest completion, zero to two  
22 percent. The communities that reported the highest  
23 chinook salmon harvest completion were Alakanuk at  
24 merely 34 percent, Ft. Yukon at 34 percent and Kaltag  
25 at 45 percent. So while there's a range of some  
26 villages that harvested more fish than others, all of  
27 the participating villages and fishermen surveyed were  
28 at less than half their desired completion. This year  
29 a new question on harvest survey asked fishers if they  
30 planned to reduce their chinook harvest and if so what  
31 species would they use to replace chinook. Surveyors  
32 were able to gather information about fishers  
33 conservation efforts and replacement species in half of  
34 these communities. The survey shows that summer or  
35 fall chum salmon was the species selected most often as  
36 replacement for the subsistence harvest in these  
37 communities.

38  
39 Customary trade of salmon in the Upper  
40 Yukon.

41  
42 YRDFA has developed a new project in  
43 partnership with the Alaska Department of Fish and  
44 Game, Subsistence Division. We're very happy to  
45 receive a fund recommendation on our Fisheries Resource  
46 Monitoring Program proposal customary trade of salmon  
47 in the Upper Yukon. This is a project that will be  
48 conducted by Catherine Moncrieff, YRDFA's  
49 anthropologist in partnership with Caroline Brown and  
50 David Coster of Alaska Department of Game, Subsistence

1 Division. This project will be an interview and survey  
2 base study to document historic and contemporary  
3 practices of customary trade in Upper Yukon River  
4 communities with particular attention to understanding  
5 the nature and scope of customary trade and its role in  
6 the larger continuum of exchange practices.

7

8 We appreciate your continued support of  
9 our projects. We are hopeful this project will be  
10 supported by the RACs and the Federal Subsistence Board  
11 as it comes before them for review and action.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

14

15 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, very much.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're very  
18 supportive of YRDFA's various projects but as the  
19 funding continues to decline I'm not sure that that can  
20 be held at the levels and so -- as we've been hearing.

21

22 Any questions on that presentation.

23

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was surprised by  
28 Ft. Yukon being in the top part of, you know, catching  
29 34 percent of their needs when some communities were  
30 like one percent, and how did that happen. They must  
31 have had an opening right when the fish were going by  
32 or something. So something -- I was surprised by that.

33

34 Any other questions by the Council for  
35 YRDFA.

36

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Wayne.

41

42 MR. JENKINS: Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate your  
45 presence here and hope we have a good tenure with your  
46 presence at YRDFA.

47

48

49 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, very much.

50

50 MS. BURKE: Have we had anybody new

1 join us on the line, I've got Eric, Dan, Don and Jerry  
2 on my list.

3

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 MS. BURKE: Okay, Don, you're up next  
8 and I've got the materials that you provided for the  
9 Council members here that I'm handing out now.

10

11 MR. RIVARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can  
12 everybody hear me okay.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can.

15

16 MR. RIVARD: Okay. This is Don Rivard  
17 with the Office of Subsistence Management. Kind of as  
18 an oversight on your agenda you didn't get a summary of  
19 what happened on the Kuskokwim and I don't know if you  
20 want a quick kind of overview on that or not from 2013.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was personally  
23 wondering about that one and so I would like a briefing  
24 on that.

25

26 MR. RIVARD: Okay, I'll start off with  
27 that.

28

29 The escapement for chinook salmon on  
30 the Kuskokwim looks like it's the lowest on record for  
31 2013. As you may remember in 2012, fishing for chinook  
32 salmon was highly restricted all season which caused  
33 some protest fisheries. In 2013 there was a new  
34 escapement goal that went to the -- the lowest range on  
35 that was 65,000 and so there wasn't -- this is  
36 basically my opinion, there wasn't as much concern  
37 about making that escapement goal as maybe the year  
38 before when they were shooting for 127,000 as their  
39 escapement goal. So as a result of that there was less  
40 restrictions put on this year for chinook salmon. Most  
41 of it was restricted to six inch nets but as far as  
42 shutting down the river there was very little bit of  
43 that if any. Somebody else may remember some of the  
44 days, I don't know, but it resulted in -- it sounds  
45 like a lot of people met their needs in the lower  
46 river. The upper river was problematic. And, again,  
47 it resulted in -- these preliminary results are showing  
48 the lowest escapement on record.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What was that

1 escapement, do you have a figure for that?

2

3 MR. RIVARD: No, I don't think they  
4 have the numbers out yet. Dan Gillikin may have some  
5 idea, but I don't know, I haven't seen any numbers per  
6 se, but that's what they're projecting, it's probably  
7 the lowest on record.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

10

11 MR. RIVARD: So there's a Kuskokwim  
12 River Salmon Working Group that advises both the  
13 Federal and State government all season long and  
14 they've been expressing quite a lot of concern about  
15 this and they're going to have several meetings.  
16 They've got a couple working group sessions scheduled  
17 for this month, in November, and then the full working  
18 group is going to get together on the 17th of December.  
19 Ray Collins is part of that group, he's a voting  
20 member, from your Council, and, so, you know, Ray  
21 could've probably given you some more information but  
22 he's not attending your meeting this week.

23

24 So that's quite a quick report.  
25 There's a lot of concern. There's already talk about  
26 starting the season next year, you know, with the river  
27 possibly closed to chinook salmon fishing until they  
28 can see the strength of the run and then be able to  
29 open it up.

30

31 So that's basically it in a nutshell,  
32 Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. How  
35 did I know that reducing the escapement goal was going  
36 to be disastrous for the Kuskokwim chinook run. How  
37 did I know that. It's like they were going in that  
38 direction, we didn't fish too much last year so we're  
39 going to pound the tar out of them, that is not the way  
40 to recover a chinook run. The Upper Kuskokwim has had  
41 very poor returns in recent years. I'm very annoyed  
42 with that one that escapement has gone into the toilet  
43 in the upper drainage. I do not like to see that. I  
44 feel that that's counter productive and so the planning  
45 group and the Department not having period restrictions  
46 is very annoying.

47

48 Go ahead.

49

50 MR. HARPER: Mr. Chairman. Ken Harper

1 with the Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office.

2

3 Our office with the US Fish and  
4 Wildlife Service, our preliminary estimate for  
5 escapements is between 29 and 32,000 for the total  
6 river escapement for the Kuskokwim. Now, that hasn't  
7 been confirmed with ADF&G so that's our side of the  
8 equation.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 MR. GERVAIS: What's the goal.

13

14 MR. HARPER: The goal was 65 -- the  
15 minimum was 65,000 so we're not quite at half.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So there's quite a  
18 discrepancy in how the subsistence needs on the Yukon,  
19 the highest are 34 percent on the Yukon River, and the  
20 Lower Kuskokwim [sic] is meeting their subsistence  
21 needs entirely and so at the disastrous less than half  
22 of the escapement goal is met, that is completely  
23 unacceptable, and I feel that this Council should  
24 transmit a letter to the working group that is going to  
25 meet in December and tell them to that effect and  
26 direct our Member Collins to address that issue. There  
27 needs to be real management for chinook on the  
28 Kuskokwim River this coming season, we can't keep doing  
29 this. We can't change -- we can't deficit spend this  
30 run into the toilet. Reducing escapement goals, I  
31 felt, was going to be in the wrong direction and sure  
32 enough it gives the managers the ability to throw the  
33 escapements right out the window and so I don't want to  
34 see that happen again. We're responsible for two major  
35 chinook drainages in this region, parts of them, the  
36 Yukon River is one, the Kuskokwim is the other. And so  
37 I would like this Council to transmit a letter to that  
38 working group with our distinct displeasure with not  
39 meeting escapement needs on the Kuskokwim River this  
40 year and direct our member to have -- to enforce that  
41 at that meeting.

42

43 Would the Council be in favor of that  
44 letter.

45

46 Tim.

47

48 MR. GERVAIS: Is it appropriate for us  
49 to recommend that they move up that escapement goal  
50 from that 65,000 back to the original or at least up to

1 80,000?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that was the  
4 Board of Fish process, that would have to be another  
5 proposal and so that would be like not possible, but we  
6 want them to adhere to the escapement goal that they  
7 have currently and we may entertain the idea of  
8 submitting a proposal for restoring that escapement  
9 goal.

10

11 Tim.

12

13 MR. GERVAIS: I can't remember how this  
14 escapement goal got lowered, was that always in the  
15 range and they just decided that was what they were  
16 going to shoot for or how -- I don't think it happened  
17 through a proposal that it got lowered, not through the  
18 Board of Fish.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it was, yeah.

21

22 MR. GERVAIS: It was.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It was a process  
25 that they went through last winter and they -- the  
26 Department decided that, heck, we're not going to make  
27 these escapement needs and everybody's protest fishing,  
28 let's just lower the escapement goal, and so then give  
29 six inch gear but no time restrictions. Well, I caught  
30 900 20 millimeter chinook salmon in five and an 1/8th  
31 inch sockeye gear collecting samples and you can catch  
32 large chinook in small mesh gear and so if you have no  
33 restriction of time you're going to do bad things to  
34 the fishery. And so I'm not real happy with that.

35

36 And so I feel that this Council needs  
37 to transmit a letter, is that agreeable to the present  
38 membership.....

39

40 MR. HONEA: Yes.

41

42 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....to be  
45 formulated.

46

47 MR. SIMON: (Nods affirmatively)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you have further  
50 comments.

1 MR. HARPER: (Shakes head negatively)  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So go ahead, Don.  
4  
5 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Mr. Chair. Just so  
6 you know that the lower escapement goal that the State  
7 came up with, they had been working on it a couple  
8 years prior to implementing it, and so it wasn't as a  
9 result of the protest fisheries in 2012.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, wouldn't that  
12 be one of their driving factors is.....  
13  
14 MR. RIVARD: Well, it's a range, I  
15 believe the range -- the escapement goal range for the  
16 Kuskokwim now is 65,000 to 120,000. And prior to that  
17 escapements on the Kuskokwim were averaging around  
18 120,000 or so. So their upper range is about what the  
19 recent average has been.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.  
22  
23 MR. RIVARD: I think it's a good idea  
24 if your Council wants to voice their concerns and  
25 recommendations and have Ray present that, that would  
26 be real appropriate.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel that that's  
29 very appropriate for this Council since we have a  
30 member on that working group.  
31  
32 And so thanks for bearing the bad news,  
33 Don, and we'll continue with your portion.  
34  
35 (Laughter)  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.  
38  
39 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Mr. Chair. This is  
40 talking about the draft 2014 Fisheries Resource  
41 Monitoring Plan, and I don't know how much you want me  
42 to get into this seeing that it's an action item for  
43 your Council but you can't act on it without a quorum.  
44 So I could just walk you through some real basic stuff  
45 and then wait until you have your, I guess it's going  
46 to be a teleconference of the Council in the near  
47 future, and kind of give a fuller presentation. I'll  
48 walk you some of these projects if you want, whatever  
49 your desire is I'm willing to do. One of the things  
50 for sure I want to do is go over what's in the

1 supplemental material that's in a blue folder that  
2 Melinda has distributed to you, it's got a yellow label  
3 that says 2014 FRMP Projects, Kuskokwim Region. So at  
4 a minimum I just want to go through that.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, this one, okay,  
7 we're looking at that one and it has the various  
8 projects and has a yellow highlight.

9  
10 MR. RIVARD: If you still can hear me,  
11 I cannot hear you for some reason.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Our mics are on  
14 here, can you hear me? Hum. Salena.

15  
16 REPORTER: Everything's on on our end.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We might have to  
19 communicate with him with text.

20  
21 (Laughter)

22  
23 MS. BURKE: I'm texting him now.

24  
25 MR. RIVARD: Okay, I'm back, I can hear  
26 you guys again.

27  
28 (Laughter)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're hearing  
31 you, you're blanking out on us, but we always can hear  
32 you.

33  
34 MR. RIVARD: Well, what's happening is  
35 I put my phone on mute after I speak and then sometimes  
36 that takes away being able to hear you for some reason.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, don't do that  
39 while you're presenting.

40  
41 (Laughter)

42  
43 MR. RIVARD: Okay.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, so we have the  
46 Technical Review Committee prioritization of proposals  
47 projects and go ahead and give us a brief overview  
48 because we're going to be reviewing these when we have  
49 full body on our teleconference.

50

1 MR. RIVARD: Okay. The Draft  
2 Monitoring Plan starts in your book on Page 185 and  
3 basically it's just some historical information and  
4 talking about the project evaluation process. Some of  
5 the stuff that many of you Council members are familiar  
6 with.

7  
8 I will point out on Page 188 there's a  
9 Table 1 there that just shows for the entire state the  
10 number of investigation plans that were received for  
11 funding consideration and the number of recommended for  
12 funding by the Technical Review Committee. So that  
13 kind of gives you an overview.

14  
15 And then the last page, 189, the last  
16 paragraph it says the 2014 Draft Monitoring Plan  
17 recommended by the Technical Review Committee would  
18 provide 21 percent of the funding to Alaska Native  
19 Organizations, 29 percent to State agencies, 43 percent  
20 to Federal agencies, and seven percent to non-  
21 government agencies. So just kind of a breakdown of  
22 where the money's going.

23  
24 I should also point out that on the  
25 bottom of Page 188 the proposed cost of funding all 56  
26 projects submitted would be \$6.6 million. The 40  
27 investigation plans recommended by the Technical Review  
28 Committee have a total cost of \$4.8 million. In making  
29 its recommendations the committee weigh the importance  
30 of funding new projects in 2014 with the knowledge that  
31 the next request for proposals will be issued in 2016.

32  
33 So that's just kind of a general  
34 overview.

35  
36 And then on Page 190, it starts with  
37 the Yukon region overview and you'll see at the top of  
38 Page 190 it lists the information needs and the issues.  
39 The priority information needs your Council helped  
40 formulate some of those.

41  
42 And then the projects on the next page,  
43 191. recommended for funding in the Yukon region are  
44 the ones that are listed in the middle of the page.  
45 There's a slight difference on Project 14-208 the  
46 Koyukuk River chum salmon radio telemetry, that project  
47 -- the amounts of money you see there are just for year  
48 one funding. And that is increased to \$125,000 because  
49 the principle investigator responded to the Technical  
50 Review Committee recommendation to also include a

1 population estimate objective in there study which they  
2 have now gone ahead and done, they put that in their  
3 investigation plan, so that's going to cost another  
4 \$18,000 for year one. So the total recommended for  
5 funding for the Yukon region comes out to about  
6 934,000. And if you look up on the top of Page 191,  
7 available funds, the last sentence of that first  
8 paragraph, it says for 2014 a little over a \$1 million  
9 will be available for funding new projects in the Yukon  
10 region. So you can see the recommendations for funding  
11 is a little bit less than that. And that's a  
12 guideline, a little over \$1 million, that's what we  
13 think will be available.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And what happens to  
16 the excess funds?

17  
18 MR. RIVARD: Well, the excess funds --  
19 the reason I'm pointing this out is because we're going  
20 to get into the Kuskokwim next and you'll see there's  
21 about \$100,000.....

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

24  
25 MR. RIVARD: .....that may get shifted  
26 over to the Kuskokwim.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, 140,000.

29  
30 MR. RIVARD: Yes, about that, yeah.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

33  
34 MR. RIVARD: Because both the Yukon and  
35 the Kuskokwim regions have the same amount of money as  
36 a guideline.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

39  
40 MR. RIVARD: So that's the Yukon.

41  
42 The following pages give a brief  
43 summary of the different projects, both the ones for  
44 funding and the ones not recommended for funding, and I  
45 think we could wait maybe until your full Council's in  
46 there and we could maybe get more into that if you so  
47 choose.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, that would be  
50 best to have the full Council.

1 MR. RIVARD: Okay.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got an email from  
4 Ray and I'll insert the comment he had from that email  
5 when we get to the Kuskokwim.  
6  
7 MR. RIVARD: Okay.  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But I would like to  
10 have all of our Council members present when we review  
11 these in a little finer detail.  
12  
13 MR. RIVARD: Very good, Mr. Chair.  
14  
15 I'll move to the Kuskokwim region  
16 overview, that starts on Page 224 in your book.  
17  
18 Again, on the top of the page are the  
19 issues and information needs for the Kuskokwim region  
20 and, again, your Council was asked what they thought  
21 were their priority information needs and you helped  
22 developed this list.  
23  
24 Again, if you look on the top of Page  
25 225 it gives the same kind of a statement there, the  
26 last sentence before recommendations for funding, it  
27 says: For 2014 approximately \$1,073,000 would be  
28 available for funding new projects in the Kuskokwim  
29 region.  
30  
31 Okay, so the ones that -- the projects  
32 that were recommended for funding, there were 14  
33 investigation plans received for the Kuskokwim and the  
34 Technical Review Committee recommended funding 11 of  
35 them and that's in the middle of Page 225.  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.  
38  
39 MR. RIVARD: You see that the total  
40 adds up to over \$1.5 dollars.  
41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I see that.  
43  
44 MR. RIVARD: Okay. So that possible  
45 \$140,000 from the Yukon could be shifted over to be  
46 utilized in the Kuskokwim, but that still falls quite  
47 short.  
48  
49 Now, what I want to do, with those  
50 numbers in mind, as you go to the blue folder that was

1 provided to you by Melinda.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

4

5 MR. RIVARD: When you open that up, and  
6 it should be on the left side is a table that I put  
7 together, basically a Technical Review Committee  
8 prioritization of proposed projects.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm looking at that  
11 one.

12

13 MR. RIVARD: Okay, does everybody have  
14 that.

15

16 (Council nods affirmatively)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

19

20 MR. RIVARD: If you look at the bottom  
21 you'll see the funding guideline of \$1,073,000 in  
22 yellow, highlighted.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

25

26 MR. RIVARD: Okay. So that's coming  
27 from your book there, you just saw that number, and so  
28 this is actually the prioritization that the Technical  
29 Review Committee put together. The list you see on  
30 Page 225 in your book was done numerically, by project  
31 number, it wasn't done by prioritization.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

34

35 MR. RIVARD: So I've given you what the  
36 Technical Review Committee actually -- how they  
37 actually prioritized these projects.

38

39 And so there's a gap between 302 and  
40 354 and there's a highlight of \$1,160,000 plus, and  
41 that basically comes closest to the \$1,073,000 plus  
42 about the \$140,000 that comes from the Yukon.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

45

46 MR. RIVARD: Okay. And then the other  
47 ones in the middle there with also a recommendation of  
48 funding, I've just got those separated out where the  
49 \$1.5-plus comes from and then at the bottom are the  
50 three projects that had a recommendation from the

1 Technical Review Committee of do not fund and they add  
2 up to almost another half a million dollars. This is  
3 just for the first year for funding.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And this is.....

6  
7 MR. RIVARD: So all together for the 14  
8 projects.....

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say Don.

11  
12 REPORTER: Don, hold on, hold on.

13  
14 MR. RIVARD: Yes.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks Salena.

17  
18 Don, this is where I want to insert the  
19 email from Ray was concerned that the Takotna River  
20 Weir was not being funded and is there another agency  
21 that would fund that weir or this project is dropped  
22 permanently.

23  
24 MR. RIVARD: I was going to get to  
25 that.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

28  
29 MR. RIVARD: So I just wanted to point  
30 out the numbers game that we're dealing with.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

33  
34 MR. RIVARD: And then the other  
35 materials that are in your folder there, you have  
36 another -- there's been a request to fund, basically an  
37 appeal on both the Tuluksak and to some extent the  
38 Takotna River, to put that into a fund recommendation.  
39 And so it starts with a letter that was sent from Tom  
40 Doolittle, he sent -- he was the acting Refuge Manager  
41 at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge this past  
42 summer and that's in your book on page, I'm getting to  
43 it here, it's actually on Page 271, there's a letter  
44 from Tom Doolittle to Eugene Peltola, who's now our  
45 Assistant Regional Director here for the Office of  
46 Subsistence Management, and Mr. Doolittle also sent a  
47 letter to both your Council and the Yukon Kuskokwim-  
48 Delta Council basically stating the same -- basically  
49 the same thing about the importance of the Tuluksak  
50 Weir to the Refuge and that they would like to see that

1 continue to be funded. And then in your packet, it  
2 should be on the left-hand side are a number of support  
3 letters in favor of funding the Tuluksak River Weir  
4 Project, and on the right side is Mr. Peltola's  
5 response to Mr. Doolittle's letter that you have in  
6 your Council book, as well as terms of reference for  
7 the Technical Review Committee, which Mr. Peltola's  
8 letter mentions and that were included in his letter to  
9 Mr. Doolittle. So I wanted to give you the history of  
10 all that. There's been several letters of support to  
11 fund the Tuluksak Weir, and as Ray pointed out, the  
12 Takotna Weir. Now, you have Mr. Harper there and he  
13 probably will speak on this a little bit more.

14

15                   But basically Ray is the only one that  
16 has also asked that the Takotna River Weir also be  
17 funded. I talked to the Alaska Department of Fish and  
18 Game, the folks that have been running that weir for  
19 the past several years with funding from our office and  
20 they have informed me, they're not making the effort  
21 that Mr. Harper is making for appealing the do not fund  
22 recommendation by the Technical Review Committee, and  
23 they told me that the weir will not run in 2014 but  
24 they will be seeking other means of funding and it's  
25 possible that it could be operated again in some  
26 fashion in 2015.

27

28                   So that's what I have.

29

30                   When you have your full Council  
31 together, if you decide as a Council that you want to  
32 see the Tuluksak River Weir and possibly the Takotna  
33 River Weir put back into the -- your recommendation  
34 would be to fund it, then what I would like to see your  
35 Council do, and this is totally up to you, is to help  
36 us come together with another -- your version of the  
37 prioritization list that you have in front of you,  
38 because as you can see you got about twice as much  
39 projects for funding than we do have funding for the  
40 Kuskokwim. So these other two weirs that are right now  
41 recommended for not funding to get put back into a  
42 funding situation, we need help on prioritizing these  
43 other projects. So this could take awhile. This is  
44 kind of unprecedented in the 15 plus years that I've  
45 been here. Most of the time your Council as well as  
46 others have basically been able to just go with what  
47 the Technical Review Committee recommends but this is  
48 also sort of, you know, the new situation now where we  
49 have less funding and possibly less funding in the  
50 future so this may become more of the norm of your

1 Council and other Councils helping us to come to a  
2 prioritization of proposed projects.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Gene.

7

8 MR. PELTOLA: Yes, Mr. Chair. Gene  
9 Peltola, OSM.

10

11 I'd like to elaborate on just a little  
12 bit more than what has been previously stated.

13

14 Historically Regional Advisory Councils  
15 have been more or less rubber-stamping the TRC  
16 recommendations, that has not necessarily been the norm  
17 this cycle. It was very evident that the Southeast  
18 Regional Advisory Council meeting I attended down in  
19 Ketchikan, at that particular meeting they felt very  
20 strongly about a project which was not recommended to  
21 be funded by the TRC be funded, so therefore they come  
22 up with their own prioritization list. That definitely  
23 may become more of an action taken by Advisory Councils  
24 in the future because of the budgetary environment  
25 we're in.

26

27 But when Mr. Rivard was referring to  
28 help us prioritize, understanding that if we bump one  
29 or two projects up, that there could be one or two that  
30 are going to fall out.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

33

34 MR. PELTOLA: And as the process goes,  
35 the TRC has a certain composition, they make their  
36 recommendations to fund, not fund, it goes to the  
37 Regional Advisory Councils, then the Federal  
38 Subsistence Board takes all those into account and then  
39 it comes on to my desk for final signature to allocate  
40 the funds.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I understand  
43 that some of the above projects would have to be cut if  
44 we incorporated the Takotna or Tuluksak Weirs. And so  
45 we'd have to sit around and think about moving these  
46 numbers around, but I would like to have the full body,  
47 and especially Ray involved in this. He feels very  
48 strongly about this Takotna River Weir, and it's a  
49 little bit grey as to whether the funding would be  
50 provided by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,

1 we'd lose data for this year, and with the under  
2 performance of the chinook run on the Kuskokwim River  
3 I'm inclined to bump those forward and bump sheefish  
4 and broad whitefish research down. That would be -- or  
5 something like that.

6

7 But we need to have the full Council to  
8 deliberate those figures and so forth and so I would  
9 like Staff to work.....

10

11 (Teleconference interference)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....up some options  
14 for reprioritization eliminating freshwater stocks over  
15 and funding of those two weir projects to come out with  
16 an evaluation that the Council can easily look at, two  
17 or three different options.

18

19 Go ahead, Tim.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
22 I'd like to ask Don if there is some specific reason in  
23 the Technical Review Committee that those, the Takotna  
24 and the Tuluksak Weir projects were designated as do  
25 not fund.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

28

29 MR. RIVARD: Through the Chair. Tim.  
30 Two years ago the Technical Review Committee made a  
31 commitment when they were going through the 2012  
32 evaluation projects that they would look at all the  
33 weirs on the Kuskokwim River as a whole and look at it  
34 from a strategic point of view, and some of the  
35 projects that were up in 2012 for renewing funding --  
36 usually these get funded for four years, they put them  
37 on a two year funding cycle so that all the weirs would  
38 come up at the same time for renewing of funding so  
39 that they could look at them all at once and make some  
40 decisions on were they all strategically as important  
41 as the others and so that's what they did this year.  
42 Our Staff played a role in doing some preliminary  
43 analysis and that was presented to the Technical Review  
44 Committee but it was their call on this as to whether  
45 to fund or not fund any particular project and, again,  
46 it's their recommendation, it's not the final word and  
47 as Gene Peltola just pointed out, this is going to go  
48 in front of all the affected Councils and in this case  
49 it'll be the Yukon Kuskokwim-Delta Council will also  
50 see this and then their recommendations will go in

1 front of the Federal Subsistence Board this spring and  
2 the Federal Subsistence Board will make their own  
3 recommendations and then Mr. Peltola has the final say  
4 because he's the official that signs off on approving  
5 these projects for funding.

6

7                   So it's still in the process.

8

9                   I think that there's a couple of  
10 factors involved and I don't think the Technical Review  
11 Committee was saying these projects are not important,  
12 they are important, they provide some information, it  
13 comes down to some -- these are my words, not anybody  
14 else's, but kind of bang for the buck, and both of  
15 these Tuluksak and Takotna Weirs are not counting any  
16 fish relative to the other ones, especially chinook  
17 salmon, they're both systems are -- systems that could  
18 maybe classified as recovering systems, they both have  
19 been impacted in the past by human activity, different  
20 types of impacts, but both by human activity, much more  
21 so than any of the other stream systems that have weir  
22 projects on them and so maybe there's the thought of in  
23 order for those streams to improve there may need to be  
24 some kind of restoration that's done, but this program  
25 does not fund restoration activities.

26

27                   So those are just some of the factors  
28 that are involved. I hope that answers your question.

29

30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so they would --  
31 the Technical Review Committee feels that instead of a  
32 weir project those systems could have aerial  
33 overflights or some other way of monitoring escapement?

34

35                   MR. RIVARD: No, they didn't get into  
36 that. It's just that I -- I think if those systems --  
37 those systems have been consistently lower than the  
38 other ones, there doesn't -- without -- this is me  
39 talking more than anything, without some other type of  
40 action those systems may continue to be lower  
41 producers.

42

43                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

44

45                   MR. RIVARD: So it's just -- it's  
46 getting to the point where, as you see the number of  
47 projects that were submitted on the Kuskokwim this  
48 year, 14, and the number of priority information needs  
49 that we have listed, that -- and even though these two  
50 fall into the salmon monitoring priority information

1 need, at some point, you know, if we're going to try to  
2 fund some of these other activities we don't  
3 necessarily have all the funding that we need for all  
4 the salmon monitoring projects. So it's a call that  
5 way as well.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. I see the  
8 budget constraints but I do feel that Ray should be  
9 here and we should evaluate this issue with his  
10 presence and full Council.

11

12 So any other comments.

13

14 MR. RIVARD: And, Mr. Chair, that's  
15 your Council's role, to help guide this program as  
16 well, and you can help us with prioritizing the  
17 priority information needs.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: As I was stating  
20 just a few minutes ago, that I would like some  
21 alternate -- or alternatives that would meet the  
22 budgetary constraint that we would be able to look at  
23 expeditiously with Ray's input and the Council and that  
24 way we can select for -- this would be Alternative A, B  
25 would be eliminating the broad whitefish and sheefish  
26 studies and so that the Council can wrestle with  
27 whether one or both of these weirs need to be funded  
28 with what we're looking at on escapement on the  
29 Kuskokwim River because there's very little other up  
30 river data collected for escapement and so the upper  
31 drainages seems to be lacking on escapement  
32 enumeration.

33

34 MR. RIVARD: And, Mr. Chair, it's maybe  
35 one of the benefits of having time between your meeting  
36 this week and then meeting at some point by  
37 teleconference, is your Council members will have a  
38 chance to really look this stuff over and be able to  
39 have some time to thoughtfully go through and put  
40 together your own prioritization list.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. I will look at  
43 this a little more closely and sleep on it a little  
44 bit.

45

46 MR. RIVARD: Excuse me for interrupting  
47 but I'm not hearing you again.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, did you mute.

50

1 (Laughter)  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me now.  
4  
5 (Laughter)  
6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Don's blanked out  
8 there.  
9  
10 (Laughter)  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any comments from  
13 the Council.  
14  
15 MR. HONEA: No, just in the way of  
16 comments I would completely agree. I feel that without  
17 input from both of our Kuskokwim River delegates that I  
18 would agree with what you're saying.  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like  
21 Fisheries Staff at OSM to develop at least two or three  
22 alternates for the Council to review to prioritize this  
23 slightly differently than the Technical Review  
24 Committee.  
25  
26 And so any other -- anything else for  
27 us, Don, can you hear me?  
28  
29 MR. RIVARD: Yes, I can hear you. I  
30 don't have anything else, Mr. Chair. Thank you.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right,  
33 Don, well, appreciate all your input there, thank you.  
34  
35 And so did you have anything else to  
36 say there, Ken. You want to state your name for the  
37 record.  
38  
39 MR. HARPER: This is Ken Harper with  
40 the Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office, US Fish and  
41 Wildlife Service.  
42  
43 No, there was a letter written by a  
44 Doug Molyneaux that may be in your packet, he suggested  
45 a different type of allocation of funding and then I  
46 believe there's a letter also from Kuskokwim Native  
47 Association on the importance of these smaller systems  
48 that sometimes act as the canary in the coal mine, that  
49 you see an impact on those systems before you will from  
50 the larger more productive systems that you have. So

1 that's part of the importance of having those smaller  
2 systems monitored.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I actually  
7 live in the upper drainage of the Koyukuk and I see  
8 collapse like on the Jim River of chinook escapement  
9 when in this Henshaw Weir is showing significantly  
10 lower numbers, so the upper drainage is the canary in  
11 the coal mine and so that's why I'm a little more  
12 leaning towards funding of the Takotna and Tuluksak  
13 Weirs.

14

15 So, thank you.

16

17 And so, Melinda.

18

19 MS. BURKE: Don, did you want to go  
20 ahead and cover the Partners really quickly.

21

22 MR. RIVARD: Yes, I do have that  
23 information it should be real quick here.

24

25 (Pause)

26

27 MR. RIVARD: I'm just trying to see if  
28 there's anything in your book. I guess, yes, there is,  
29 on Page.....

30

31 MS. BURKE: 273.

32

33 MR. RIVARD: .....273. Okay, I would  
34 just like to point out a few highlights of the program.

35

36 The program has been utilized over the  
37 years, the past 10 years or so to broaden and  
38 strengthen partnerships with rural communities that  
39 will facilitate improved dialogue between the partners,  
40 Regional Advisory Councils, the Office of Subsistence  
41 Management, Federal and State resource managers and  
42 subsistence users. Tribal and rural organizations can  
43 apply for funding, which supports the employment of a  
44 fisheries science, social scientist, biologist or an  
45 educator and these are our partners. This is a  
46 competitive grant funded program through the Office of  
47 Subsistence Management. The funding cycle is up to  
48 four years it can be funded. The next call for  
49 proposals for the Partners For Fisheries Monitoring  
50 Program will be in late 2014, so a little over a year

1 from now, probably in November or December of next year  
2 with proposals from the partners being due April and  
3 May of 2015, with funding started in January of 2016.

4  
5                   The partners role is to live in the  
6 community that receives funding so that they are on the  
7 ground as a resource to local subsistence users. They  
8 also serve as an investigator on Fisheries Resource  
9 Monitoring Projects that are funded through our office.  
10 They work with local youth and provide opportunities  
11 for youth to become involved with fisheries research  
12 through high school, summer camps and college  
13 internships. They work as liaisons to bridge the gap  
14 between local subsistence users and the regulatory  
15 agencies. They provide timely information to local  
16 communities about fisheries regulations and research.  
17 And they help provide information to the Office of  
18 Subsistence Management about local concerns regarding  
19 fisheries.

20  
21                   So, again, the next call for proposals  
22 for the Partners For Fisheries Monitoring Program will  
23 be about a year from now, Mr. Chair. And that was just  
24 an update, wanted to keep you aware of what's going on  
25 and we'll probably have -- probably about this time  
26 next year we'll address this again with your Council.

27  
28                   Thank you.

29  
30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
31 Don. Any questions from the Council members present.

32  
33                   Don.

34  
35                   MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.

36  
37                   Don, is this like for tribal entities  
38 without having to go through like TCC or KNA or  
39 something like that to subscribe to?

40  
41                   MR. RIVARD: I believe they would have  
42 the opportunity to do so as well. Right now, if you  
43 look on Page 274 of your Council book you'll see our  
44 current partners and the organizations they're with.  
45 And it's tended to be with, you know, kind of the more  
46 regional tribal organizations such as TCC and KNA, but  
47 I don't think it precludes another organization such as  
48 what you're saying to apply for these funds.

49  
50                   Thank you.

1 MR. HONEA: Okay.  
2  
3 MR. RIVARD: I can make sure of that  
4 and get back with you but I'm pretty sure they're  
5 eligible to apply as well.  
6  
7 MR. HONEA: Okay. I guess I mean if a  
8 village or a region or something was interested in  
9 initiating this into their village or whatever, they  
10 would go through their appropriate region, like we're  
11 sitting in TCC, is that -- instead of submitting it as  
12 a tribal organization, or village?  
13  
14 MR. RIVARD: Well, I think it would  
15 probably depend on where you want that person to be  
16 located. If it's -- to help with one of your local  
17 organizations then that organization should reply, if  
18 it's going to be somebody that's going to be ended up  
19 in Fairbanks with TCC they already have -- they have  
20 been doing and participating in this program for  
21 several years. So it sounds like you're talking about  
22 having somebody maybe right there in Ruby, and if that  
23 were the case, you know, you'd make your proposal  
24 through that tribal organization, for example.  
25  
26 MR. HONEA: That is correct. I  
27 appreciate that input and I'm going to be looking into  
28 this. Anything that we can do to subsidize our economy  
29 or create local employment. Thank you, though.  
30  
31 MR. RIVARD: Okay, thank you.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
34 comments, Partners For Fisheries Monitoring Program.  
35  
36  
37 (No comments)  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sounds good.  
40  
41 Melinda.  
42  
43 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. I suggest we go  
44 ahead and just get through one more item before we do  
45 our two hour break. To remind everyone, tonight is the  
46 hearing regarding the rural determination review  
47 process. It's going to take place in this room, this  
48 evening, from 7:00 to 9:00 so we want to give everybody  
49 a chance to stretch your legs and get some dinner  
50 before we come back. It will be the Council's

1 opportunity to -- you don't have to convene as a  
2 Council this evening, this will be your opportunity to  
3 come and listen to the information that Mr. Jenkins  
4 that will be providing and provide your own input from  
5 your community or as yourself as an individual, if  
6 you'd like.

7

8                   Since we're going to be losing Mr.  
9 Peltola in the morning and also Mr. Jenkins, and with  
10 us having to start a little bit later, I think we  
11 should go ahead and do the OSM Agency Report and let  
12 Gene come up here and introduce himself as well.

13

14                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, that's a -- I  
15 have to apologize to Mr. Peltola that I did not  
16 introduce him to the Council, but we got wound right  
17 into business right away and somehow we missed you  
18 there. But introduce your background and your position  
19 because the Council doesn't have face to face with the  
20 OSM and the Regional Office so as the Chair would, so  
21 go ahead, Gene.

22

23                   MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
24 Good afternoon Members. My name's Gene Peltola, Jr.  
25 And as of August 26th I'm the new Assistant Regional  
26 Director for the Office of Subsistence Management.

27

28                   I am a Tlingit Indian and a Yup'ik  
29 Eskimo, born and raised in Bethel, Alaska. Up until  
30 this August I was the Refuge manager of Yukon Delta  
31 National Wildlife Refuge headquartered in Bethel. I'm  
32 in my 30th year of service with the Fish and Wildlife  
33 Service. I'm a graduate of the University of Alaska-  
34 Fairbanks in the Wildlife Program, and most recently  
35 completed the Harvard JFK School's Executive Education  
36 Series. And the thing I didn't realize until I moved  
37 to Anchorage is that I am now a formerly Federally-  
38 qualified user.

39

40                   But throughout my career, I started off  
41 in 1984 at Yukon-Delta as a biological technician.  
42 Then I did two different stints up out of Kotzebue, one  
43 as a wildlife biologist pilot for the Selawik Refuge,  
44 and 28 months in as the Refuge Manager there, I've held  
45 the assistant manger positions at Yukon-Delta, and  
46 Yukon Flats. I held a Federal law enforcement  
47 commission for about nine years and also at the same  
48 time I had a Department of Public Safety Commission.  
49 In the law enforcement realm the position I held was  
50 called a Northern Zone Officer, I was very appreciative

1 of the Service of giving me a SuperCub and paid me to  
2 fly it and paid for the gas and they gave me access to  
3 a .185, a Beaver and a .206. My area of patrol was the  
4 Yukon River north. And so I used to patrol from the  
5 far northeast corner of Arctic Refuge through Kotzebue,  
6 and get occasionally down to Dillingham, Kodiak Refuge  
7 and then in the law enforcement capacity I was also a  
8 firearms instructor and then a field training officer,  
9 and when training new Refuge officer, specifically  
10 those were pilots.

11

12 So that's a little bit about myself.

13

14 Oh, and I forgot, more importantly  
15 about my career, I have three children, Eugene, III 16;  
16 Trevor Joseph 14; and Kaley Ray Peltola, which is 12.

17

18 So I'm before you now to talk about our  
19 budget situation and our Staffing situation.

20

21 OSM is feeling the effects of  
22 sequestration like every other government program.  
23 Last year we took about a seven percent hit. This year  
24 we're told to prepare for just under a six percent hit.  
25 In addition to we have to account for a two percent,  
26 more or less inflation hit to salaries, which we do not  
27 get any additional funding for. So everything holds  
28 true OSM will be facing a \$600,000 to possibly \$800,000  
29 reduction in our realized FY'14 budget.

30

31 How does that affect the job that we do  
32 at OSM.

33

34 Well, currently on our organizational  
35 chart we have 11 vacancies, of which I have  
36 authorization to fill three of those. One being a  
37 fisheries biologist/biometrician, another is a lead  
38 with regard to our Fisheries Division, and the last  
39 position we have authorization to fill is our outreach  
40 position, who deals with outreach with the communities,  
41 in addition to that position is responsible for  
42 preparing the books before you for the RAC meetings and  
43 the regulation booklets that come out with regard to  
44 the fisheries and wildlife cycle. So at this time,  
45 three of our 11 vacancies will hopefully be filled in  
46 the next six to nine months. The others will most  
47 likely remain vacant in order to absorb the budgetary  
48 reductions by still being able to provide -- maintain a  
49 minimal staffing level and provide for the  
50 responsibilities put upon the program.

1 Any questions about budget or staffing  
2 at this time.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What is the total  
5 budget for OSM then?

6  
7 MR. PELTOLA: Last year we were about  
8 \$10.5 million. That includes money that we divvy back  
9 to other Fish and Wildlife Service programs, to the  
10 State of Alaska, to the Native organizations, and such  
11 through FRMP and some other programs we have, including  
12 the travel we provide for all the RAC meetings.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on the  
15 budget from the Council.

16  
17  
18 (No comments)

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Continue.

21  
22 MR. PELTOLA: Okay. And that was a  
23 brief description of the budget situation we're in and  
24 it's in your booklet, it starts on Page 298 if you want  
25 to take a more in-depth look at it. I just ran through  
26 verbally a quick summary of it.

27  
28 Now, you know, for the staffing update.  
29 As mentioned, myself, I came on board in August as the  
30 new Assistant Regional Director. We have Jeff Brooks  
31 who came to us as a social scientist in the  
32 Anthropology Division. He previously worked for the  
33 National Wildlife Refuge System, our Refuge Division  
34 here within Region 7 in Alaska. Derek Hildreth, our  
35 new permitting specialist. He came over from the  
36 Anchorage Field Office for the Fish and Wildlife  
37 Service in the fisheries out of Anchorage. We had  
38 Helen Armstrong, which was the OSM lead anthropologist,  
39 she departed due to retirement. And I should mention  
40 that Fish and Wildlife Service region-wide took a big  
41 hit this time last year with a lot of departures with  
42 people taking retirement options.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

45  
46 MR. PELTOLA: And Steve Fried, who was  
47 our lead with the Fisheries Division, he also retired,  
48 I believe, end of June, just prior to my arrival. And  
49 then we have Andrea who filled the outreach position,  
50 which I mentioned we're trying to recruit for, she went

1 over to our External Affairs Division in the Regional  
2 Office in Anchorage. And we had one other, who is it  
3 -- was it Trent.....

4

5 MR. LIEBICH: Yes.

6

7 MR. PELTOLA: .....yeah, and we also  
8 have another -- sorry about that, wrong side, another  
9 new employee since the last time you met, so I'd like  
10 Trent to introduce himself.

11

12 MR. LIEBICH: Good afternoon.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good afternoon.

15

16 MR. LIEBICH: I'm Trent Liebich, I'm a  
17 fish biologist with Office of Subsistence. And I have  
18 been in and out of Alaska for about 13 years. I was  
19 born and raised in Wisconsin. I spent several years in  
20 the midwest. I have a biology degree in fisheries from  
21 Wisconsin and then I have a Master's degree from  
22 Minnesota also in fisheries and spent about seven years  
23 working in Maine on Atlantic salmon issues and then I  
24 moved to Alaska in 2010 permanently to the Alaska  
25 Peninsula and worked at Izembek Wildlife Refuge as an  
26 aquatic ecologist and then moved into Anchorage just  
27 recently. And I have an eight month old baby girl,  
28 so.....

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Congratulations.

31

32 MR. LIEBICH: .....I'm very proud of  
33 that.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so you would be  
36 taking Mr. Fried's position then, is that.....

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 MR. LIEBICH: I wish.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

45

46 MR. LIEBICH: A little young for that.

47

48 No, I came into subsistence filling one  
49 of the fish biologist's vacancies. I initially started  
50 working in the Kodiak/Aleutians region and now I'm

1 going to hopefully be spending more time working on the  
2 Yukon, which is why I'm here today but, you know, Don  
3 Rivard has been presenting so far with his much more  
4 knowledge of the region than myself.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's my  
7 impression that Dr. Fried was the lead fishery's  
8 biologist, is that one of the positions that's going to  
9 be open to be filled.

10  
11 MR. LIEBICH: Yep.

12  
13 MR. PELTOLA: (Nods affirmatively)

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I just want  
16 to be clear on that.

17  
18 MR. LIEBICH: Yeah.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you want to state  
21 your name again.

22  
23 MR. LIEBICH: Trent Liebich.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

26  
27 MR. LIEBICH: Thank you.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. And look  
30 forward to working with you on the salmon issues and  
31 fishery issues, thank you.

32  
33 MR. LIEBICH: The same.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got a comment,  
36 Tim.

37  
38 MR. GERVAIS: (Shakes head negatively)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead,  
41 Gene.

42  
43 MR. PELTOLA: Yes, Mr. Chair. I'd like  
44 to make one other comment with regard to our vacancies.

45  
46 When we have vacancies it's not as easy  
47 as one may think to fill those positions. Right now  
48 we're quote/unquote under a more or less a hiring  
49 freeze, even if it has not been labeled that, and so we  
50 have to justify filling a position and once we do that,

1 you know, and you have to understand that as we heard  
2 Dr. Wheeler mention earlier this morning, we're all --  
3 all the Fish and Wildlife Service and all the other  
4 Bureau programs are feeling the effects of  
5 sequestration.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

8

9 MR. PELTOLA: And so when we have a  
10 vacancy we try to fill it with an individual from a  
11 different program, which their job and their home  
12 division may be in jeopardy due to budget cuts.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

15

16 MR. PELTOLA: .....if we can  
17 accommodate filling the position via that route then we  
18 look within the region, and then if we are authorized  
19 to do so then we can look outside the region. So  
20 there's a few steps we have to take in order to get to  
21 filling those positions.

22

23 I just wanted to let this Regional  
24 Advisory Council know and every other one is that we  
25 are doing the best we can in order to justify  
26 backfilling those positions, especially when we feel  
27 that there may be a situation where we may not be able  
28 to provide the services expected of our Program, and we  
29 have been fighting very hard to fill those.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that.  
32 And I do feel that, you know, there's various Refuges  
33 that have very qualified Staff that are going to be  
34 freed up and so I would like to have those -- I prefer  
35 to have people that have experience in Alaska. It's  
36 always time consuming from this position, from this  
37 seat, from the Council's, the Advisory Committees, the  
38 SRCs, to have to bring someone up to speed and it's  
39 just way easier to take people that are on the ground  
40 and move them into another spot in Alaska, and so I  
41 appreciate that process that you're going through.

42

43 Any other questions or comments from  
44 the Council.

45

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, thank  
50 you, Gene, for that.

1 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you all for the  
2 opportunity.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I'm glad you're  
5 on board.  
6  
7 (Laughter)  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Melinda.  
10  
11 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. I think looking  
12 at what we have left, I think that's a good spot to  
13 break for the evening. Reminder again to everyone the  
14 rural hearing will start in this room at 7:00 p.m.  
15 David Jenkins will be providing an overview, there will  
16 be a PowerPoint presentation and I do know that there  
17 are some tribal entities who plan on calling in and  
18 making comments and this Council has gone on the record  
19 with extensive comments regarding the rural issue in  
20 this region. So hopeful you folks can join us and  
21 there are some communities who plan on calling in.  
22 I've heard from Galena, and there's also some entities  
23 from the Eastern Interior region as well who plan on  
24 calling in. There won't be a hearing in conjunction  
25 with Eastern. Since the meetings are within a couple  
26 weeks of each other it just made sense to combine  
27 those here so the Council coordinator has been doing  
28 outreach, both Eva and myself, so we hope for a good  
29 turnout and we'll convene back at 7:00 o'clock after we  
30 have the adjournment from our Chair.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have the  
33 Council's previous positions on rural determination?  
34  
35 MS. BURKE: I don't have anything  
36 printed out but I do have some comments that are -- and  
37 I can print those during the break to kind of remind  
38 the Council where -- how you've gone on the record.  
39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like the  
41 Council to have those in hand to refresh our memory and  
42 I look forward to making comments on the rural  
43 determination process.  
44  
45 And so do we have to pick up everything  
46 we have here, or just leave it.  
47  
48 MS. BURKE: No, actually, please,  
49 Council members go ahead and take your materials with  
50 you. This evening we'll just kind of leave it bare

1 bones and we'll unfortunately have to tear down again,  
2 so go ahead and take your materials back to your room  
3 and we will go through the same set up process in the  
4 morning.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we'll recess  
7 until what time in the morning.

8  
9 MS. BURKE: In the morning we'll start  
10 up at 10:00 a.m., again.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 10:00 a.m.

13  
14 MS. BURKE: That's when the room's  
15 available.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, the breakfast  
18 thing, okay.

19  
20 Okay, recess until 10:00 a.m., for the  
21 RAC meeting, and until 7:00 p.m., for the rural  
22 determination hearing.

23  
24 (Off record)

25  
26 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

