

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6  
7 VOLUME II

8  
9 McGrath, Alaska  
10 October 29, 2014  
11 8:30 a.m.

12  
13  
14 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

15  
16 Jack Reakoff, Chairman  
17 Ray Collins  
18 Timothy Gervais  
19 Don Honea  
20 Jenny Pelkola  
21 Eleanor Yatlin

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26 Regional Council Coordinator, Melinda Burke

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(McGrath, Alaska - 10/29/2014)

(On record)

MS. BURKE: Who's joined us this morning?

MS. INGLES: Good morning. It's Palma Ingles from OSM.

MS. BURKE: Hey, Palma, good morning. I'm just going to give everybody a second to get some coffee and get sat down. To accommodate some schedules and just to kind of move along in a good order for the rest of our agenda items, we're going to have Carl Johnson, Division Chief for the Council Coordinators, call in here. He's in Dillingham at the Bristol Bay meeting. He's going to be calling in and join us in just a second. We're going to go ahead and cover the things that you see on Page 2 of the agenda.

Carl will be covering the recommended changes to the nominations appointment process and the two items that you see after that, then we'll move on to Mr. Spindler and perhaps do an overview of the FRMP and Partners. Maybe we'll do that this morning as well before we jump into the rest of the agency reports. I know we also have the extra item that we had added yesterday to discuss Dall sheep and caribou populations.

Carl, have you called in yet?

(No comments)

MS. BURKE: All right. Just one sec.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to call this meeting to order. Carl Johnson was going to call in, but something is going on there. Mike Spindler has to fly back to Fairbanks, so I'll have Kanuti give their report at this time. If Carl comes back.....

MS. BURKE: He's on now.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, he is online.

1 Are you there, Carl?

2

3 MR. JOHNSON: I am indeed, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We were  
6 waiting for you to call in. We almost started on with  
7 something else here, but go right ahead. We'll be on  
8 Page 181 of the meeting book and you're going to give  
9 us an overview on the nomination and appointment  
10 process. Go right ahead.

11

12 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 Good morning, Council members and people there in  
14 McGrath. My name is Carl Johnson. I'm the Council  
15 Coordination Division Chief here at OSM and what that  
16 means normally is that I'm involved in making sure that  
17 your meetings are well-planned and executed, but one of  
18 the things that I do throughout the entire year is  
19 marshal through the nominations and appointment  
20 process.

21

22 We currently have 109 seats in all the  
23 10 Regional Councils for people in the local  
24 communities to serve on their Regional Advisory  
25 Council. Every year approximately one-third of those  
26 seats are up appointment and reappointment. We go  
27 through a process that starts in the fall accepting  
28 nominees and applications and then that goes to the  
29 winter meeting cycle. After that time a series of  
30 InterAgency nomination panels are appointed to  
31 interview applicants and their references and then to  
32 make recommendations to the InterAgency Staff  
33 Committee, which in turn makes its recommendation to  
34 the Federal Subsistence Board.

35

36 The Board meets typically in the summer  
37 and makes its recommendations, which are then forwarded  
38 to the Secretary of Interior in the fall. Typically  
39 the appointment letters are supposed to be issued in  
40 December of each year. This process takes around 14 to  
41 15 months.

42

43 As you'll note, Council members, as you  
44 know all too well, this process has had some problems  
45 in recent years. Particularly that those appointment  
46 letters have not been issuing in December. In fact,  
47 the first letters haven't issued until mid-January and  
48 the last letters not issued until early May.

49

50 A few other problems that we've

1 encountered in recent years in your briefing there is  
2 over the last 10 years we've had a steady decline in  
3 the number of applications, approximately 30 percent  
4 reduction. We have a process right now where sometimes  
5 the public is confused because right now we're  
6 accepting new applications and we still haven't yet  
7 heard about the appointment status of the applicants  
8 from the previous year. So people get confused about  
9 the overlap. They might hear on the radio or see in  
10 the local paper that we're seeking applications for  
11 Regional Advisory Councils and they didn't hear  
12 anything about what happened last year, so they get  
13 discouraged.

14  
15 Another problem with our current system  
16 that's also been a factor is that we do not have a  
17 system right now of appointing alternates. What we do  
18 right now is the Federal Subsistence Board submits  
19 names for people to be appointed to the Secretary of  
20 Interior. The Board also identifies people who could  
21 serve as alternates. Those individuals, along with the  
22 nominees, are vetted and have their background check  
23 conducted, but they are never notified unless there is  
24 an unexpected vacancy on the Council. So they, like  
25 other people, will receive a letter saying they have  
26 not been appointed to the Council and they may lose  
27 interest and move on to something else or maybe try  
28 again next year.

29  
30 So what we have done is we have come up  
31 with a series of recommendations that hopefully will  
32 address many of these things. Primarily there are three  
33 recommendations that I would like to receive input from  
34 the Council on.

35  
36 The first one is should we change our  
37 appointment term from three years to four years. And  
38 should we keep the annual appointment process or should  
39 we do it every two years and switch to a biennial  
40 cycle.

41  
42 Now I'm not going to go over every  
43 single advantages and disadvantages that are identified  
44 in your briefing, but I will highlight some of the  
45 things that I felt a four-year appointment term will  
46 address. First of all, one of the explanations we've  
47 been provided as to why there have been significant  
48 delays in appointments in recent years is that while  
49 D.C. is processing all our applicants, they're also  
50 processing applicants of dozens of other advisory

1 committees from other Federal agencies throughout the  
2 United States at the same time.

3

4                   If we could find some way to reduce the  
5 number of names that are submitted, that might help the  
6 process we completed more quickly. So if we're doing  
7 four-year terms, that means only one-quarter of the  
8 Council is up for appointment every year as opposed to  
9 one-third of the Council.

10

11                   Additionally, in a time of decreasing  
12 applications, if we're seeking to fill fewer seats, we  
13 will therefore be better able to have enough  
14 applications to not only fill seats, but also hopefully  
15 identify alternates.

16

17                   The next issue we're seeking your  
18 guidance on is whether or not we should have formal  
19 alternates to the Councils. Again, right now we don't  
20 notify someone if they've been identified as an  
21 alternate. The vision here would be that they would  
22 actually receive a letter from the Secretary of the  
23 Interior identifying them as an alternate to the  
24 Council. The vision would be that they would receive  
25 reading materials just like the regular Council members  
26 so that they can be up to date with the issues the  
27 Councils are addressing.

28

29                   They will also be available to fill a  
30 vacancy that's temporarily vacant. For example, a  
31 Council member can't make it because of health reasons  
32 or some other conflict in the schedule. That alternate  
33 could step in to attend and ensure that the Council has  
34 a quorum and have people there to conduct business.

35

36                   The third and final issue that we're  
37 asking for your input on relates to actually this  
38 Council's recommendation that a carryover term be  
39 provided in the Council's charter, which would provide  
40 in the event an appointment is not issued at the end of  
41 the Council member's term. That member would still  
42 remain a fully appointed member of the Council until a  
43 new appointment letter is issued for that seat. In  
44 that case, for example, if there was a delay of three,  
45 four or five months, the Council member whose term was  
46 expiring would still remain on the Council to  
47 participate in the winter meeting cycle.

48

49                   Now to quickly highlight these, I'll  
50 discuss what we have to do to implement them. To

1 change from a three-year to four-year term, we have to  
2 both amend the charters and change the Secretarial  
3 regulations. Your charter is up for renewal next year,  
4 so it will be convenient timing to change from a three  
5 to a four-year appointment. Additionally, the  
6 regulation change is a very administrative change that  
7 would anticipate no public input and I'm told that that  
8 could also be implemented rather quickly.

9  
10 Secondly the appointments of alternates  
11 will require neither a charter or a regulatory change.  
12 It would just be that we would provide a letter to the  
13 Secretary's office actually appointing the alternate.  
14 I've recommended a charter change just to create a  
15 clarifying relationship for that alternate, but it's  
16 not something that would be required. Finally, as  
17 noted, the carryover terms would also have to be a  
18 change in the charter.

19  
20 Now there's a last issue that is  
21 identified as something to enhance Council  
22 participation and that is increasing youth  
23 participation in Councils. Many Councils have  
24 identified it as an issue of concern. What I've  
25 provided in your briefing is a layout of how that can  
26 potentially happen. Under the Federal Advisory  
27 Committee Act, which governs all the Council's  
28 business, there is not currently a definition of  
29 membership that would accommodate a youth member or a  
30 youth seat, but there's nothing that would prevent a  
31 less formal relationship being created to provide for  
32 greater youth involvement.

33  
34 This is something that really would  
35 have to be done on a region-by-region basis in order to  
36 provide for an opportunity that makes sense to that  
37 Council and makes sense to the communities in that  
38 region. That was something that your Council  
39 coordinator would work on in connection with the  
40 Council and probably using local tribal governments and  
41 regional non-profit associations, like TCC or BBNA.

42  
43 So that is my primary briefing and I'm  
44 happy to answer any questions the Council may have.

45  
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Carl. Does  
49 the Council have any question on Carl's presentation on  
50 the various problems that OSM and the Council members

1 themselves have had in this reappointment process.  
2 Ray.

3  
4 MR. COLLINS: Carl, this is Ray  
5 Collins. Do you have any statistics on how many are  
6 applying for second terms? Is that fairly usual for  
7 the people who are on there to continue on there or is  
8 there a lot of turnover every time?

9  
10 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, thank you. Through  
11 the Chair, excellent question. There's a very high  
12 turnover rate. I just know from processing the  
13 applications and going through this process in the last  
14 three years I would say that the re-application rate  
15 exceeds 75 percent across the board. Some Councils are  
16 higher than that, but I would say on average it would  
17 exceed 75 percent.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

20  
21 Ray.

22  
23 MR. COLLINS: I have a follow up to  
24 that. I'm wondering. I've been on 21 years right now,  
25 so I've been reappointed, but I was fortunate when I  
26 worked for the University that was part of my job  
27 description, was public service, so I was free to do  
28 that. Now I'm retired, so I have income. But members  
29 who serve pay a pretty high price because there's  
30 usually four days at least involved in every meeting  
31 and that means they have to give up work or take leave  
32 or other kinds of things. We get per diem, but the per  
33 diem is just basic costs for meals and so on there.

34  
35 I think you really need to consider  
36 compensation of some kind, either raise the per diem  
37 rate to a flat rate or something. I'm on the school  
38 board as well and we have meeting fees. At least for  
39 the time we're meeting we get some compensation. I  
40 wonder if that would change your turnover because  
41 people really have to think about that. We're giving  
42 up subsistence opportunities, taking leave from work,  
43 passing over opportunities for jobs, so on. So there's  
44 really a cost involved to the individual to serve on  
45 these and that's not addressed by any of this.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl.

48  
49 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir. Mr. Chair,  
50 thank you very much. Ray, I have heard that many

1 times. It's definitely an underlying issue regarding  
2 recruitment of new Council members. Unfortunately, it  
3 is something well beyond our control. In fact, to use  
4 a phrase that doesn't bode well these days, it would  
5 take an Act of Congress.

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Isn't it under the  
10 FACA regulations that we can't be compensated, Carl?

11

12 MR. JOHNSON: That is correct, Mr.  
13 Chair. The status of Council members in our current  
14 system is strictly as volunteers and there are a lot of  
15 different aspects as a result of that whether impacted  
16 and that is the options of whether or not we can  
17 provide any kind of compensation to start with. Then  
18 also adjusting the per diem rates themselves are also a  
19 separate issue also out of our control.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I like all the  
22 work you've done here putting out all these various --  
23 the problems and then the pros and cons and the four-  
24 year annual and four-year biennial. I would like your  
25 opinion, because you've gone through this so much, what  
26 would be the best advantage to cure the problem that we  
27 have. What would be your opinion on a four-year annual  
28 or four-year biennial?

29

30 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If  
31 we're talking purely about the systematic problems, I  
32 would say most likely the four-year annual would  
33 address them better because, for me, from an  
34 administrative standpoint, there are strong advantages  
35 for a four-year biennial because we're only having to  
36 do this nominations process every two years. It cuts  
37 our public outreach expenses in half. It also reduces  
38 the time stress on agency Staff who serve on the  
39 InterAgency Nominations Panel, so they only have to do  
40 this every two years.

41

42 However, as a result, every time -- if  
43 we went to a four-year biennial cycle, every time we're  
44 submitting names to D.C., we would actually increase  
45 the number of names we're submitting. Instead of right  
46 now it's one-third of the Councils, we're receiving  
47 roughly 40 to 45 names each year. We would instead be  
48 seeking to reappoint or appoint 50 percent of the  
49 Council seats. In that case, we would be submitting  
50 somewhere between 65 and 70 names for consideration

1 every appointment cycle. So this would dramatically  
2 increase the administrative burden on the D.C. side.  
3 It would make it easier for us in the program, but it  
4 would increase the burden on the D.C. side and thus far  
5 that's where the problem has been.

6  
7 So going to a four-year annual and  
8 staying on the same annual cycle we're on now would  
9 keep things the same as they are for us and actually  
10 require fewer names to process will then for sure make  
11 it easier on D.C. regarding the number of names that  
12 they have to consider for their vetting process.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Exactly. It sounds  
15 like a correct analysis. Thank you. The next one on  
16 formally appointed alternates, my question is how many  
17 alternates per Council? Some Councils vary in size, so  
18 it would be one to two alternates?

19  
20 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, Mr. Chair. Ideally  
21 it would be a minimum of one alternate for a 10-member  
22 Council and two alternates for a 13-member Council.  
23 However many members or names that we have available as  
24 alternates is greatly dependent upon the number of  
25 applications we receive. Typically, we've got some  
26 regions that have consistently strong, high application  
27 rates, like the Southeast and the Y-K Delta, whereas  
28 specifically the northern regions, including yours,  
29 have in recent years seen declining numbers in  
30 applications. So we're going to have to really double  
31 our efforts on recruitment and public outreach in order  
32 to increase the number of applications so that we  
33 actually can have enough means to be available in the  
34 pool for appointing alternates.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it's my  
37 opinion that as an applicant there should be two boxes  
38 on the application that say your primary focus would  
39 like to be a seated Regional Council member or you  
40 would consider being an alternate. I think the person  
41 should know what they're applying for. The burden of  
42 being -- I think being an alternate would actually be  
43 harder because you're not at the meeting, you have no  
44 clue what actually is going on. You're reading  
45 minutes. It's worse than being on a teleconference.  
46 So the person should be aware that -- I'm interested in  
47 this Council process, but I would prefer to be an  
48 alternate because you're never going to be fully  
49 engaged. So I think the application should state  
50 whether you would prefer to be a Regional Council

1 member or an alternate to the Council.

2

3 Go ahead, Carl.

4

5 MR. JOHNSON: That's definitely an  
6 interesting idea, Mr. Chair. The way we identify  
7 alternates now, just for the Council's benefit, is the  
8 InterAgency Nominations Panel, when they conduct their  
9 interviews, they meet as a panel to discuss all the  
10 applicants. The Federal Subsistence Board has  
11 identified five categories that they are doing rating  
12 and ranks on and it's based on that ranking system  
13 where they identify the first, second, third ranks,  
14 subsistence use applicants and so on for the  
15 commercial/sport use applicants. It's based on that.  
16 It's whoever falls -- if we have four seats to fill and  
17 we have seven ranked applicants, the top four ranks are  
18 assigned to available seats and the next ones are then  
19 identified as alternates.

20

21 So what we're looking to do is fill the  
22 Council seats with individuals who are the highest  
23 qualified and then that's how we then identify the  
24 alternates based on -- you know, we didn't have enough  
25 seats for them. They would be great applicants, but we  
26 don't have enough seats for them.

27

28 I'll definitely think about your  
29 checking of boxes, an alternate idea for the form.  
30 Unfortunately, that again involves a government and  
31 bureaucratic process. The forms we use have to be  
32 approved by OMB on a three-year cycle and I think  
33 they're up for renewal on those forms in 2015. So that  
34 timing might work, but I'll definitely consider that as  
35 a possibility.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another option would  
38 be once the applicants are scored, then a person scores  
39 low on the application list, they're notified that  
40 you're scoring in an alternate category, would you like  
41 to be an alternate. You know, if you're the person  
42 making application, you're sitting there in the dark.  
43 You have no clue what's actually going on. You don't  
44 know if you're ever going to be reappointed again. You  
45 have no idea what's going on.

46

47 So if a person is scoring in an  
48 alternate -- you have the primary seats to be filled.  
49 If the person scoring in an alternate category, they  
50 should be contacted and say you're scoring in a

1 category that you could be an alternate, we have an  
2 open seat for that. Something that the person knows  
3 what they're getting into.

4

5 All of a sudden you're appointed as an  
6 alternate. I didn't want to be an alternate. We're  
7 volunteers. We have no -- we have expectations when we  
8 make these applications, so I think there should be a  
9 process to inform the person that they scored for an  
10 alternate application, do you want to take that. I  
11 personally don't want to be going into the blind of  
12 what I'm applying for.

13

14 What do you think about that?

15

16 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
17 can see the appeal of that. Unfortunately right now  
18 the process really is confidential and no one outside  
19 of the Nominations Panel or the ISC or the Federal  
20 Subsistence Board is allowed to be informed as to how  
21 people are rated or ranked in the decision process.  
22 And I think that if somebody were to receive an  
23 appointment letter appointing them as an alternate and  
24 they desired to not serve as an alternate, if that was  
25 the only option, they certainly can contact us and  
26 decline the appointment, just like we now have people  
27 contact us and decline their appointment as an actual  
28 member of the Council. So that does happen. In each  
29 case we then just roll to the next available person  
30 identified as an alternate.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I understand  
33 that.

34

35 Ray.

36

37 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. This is Ray  
38 again. I think if you go through the records it would  
39 be an interesting statistic to see how many meetings  
40 take place where there's at least one member absent. I  
41 would think that alternate might end up attending every  
42 meeting because they would be filling in for any of the  
43 members that are missing. I know in our previous  
44 meetings there's usually always been at least one  
45 person missing. So actually they would be as active as  
46 any of the other members probably.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good  
49 possibility. Good point, Ray.

50

1 Eleanor.

2

3 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, Mr. Chair.....

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl, Eleanor is  
6 going to make a comment. Go ahead, Eleanor.

7

8 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, sure.

9

10 MS. YATLIN: This is Eleanor Yatlin. I  
11 wanted to ask about the youth in the schools. I like  
12 the idea that they really could educate the children to  
13 know that they could become either a youth delegate or  
14 get interested anyway, you know, show some -- and bring  
15 this to the school so in the future maybe they could be  
16 Council members. At least they'd be educated in the  
17 fact that there's an option to get involved with the  
18 Federal Subsistence Board. I just wondered what -- I  
19 was reading this and it said, what, it takes an Act of  
20 Congress, you said, just to change that? Because I  
21 really like the idea of having youth involved.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Carl.

24

25 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you, Mr.  
26 Chair. Through the Chair, Eleanor, there are  
27 definitely a lot of ways where youth could be involved  
28 that would not require an Act of Congress and I'm  
29 really pleased to be where we're at right now regarding  
30 staffing because we're in the process of hiring two new  
31 Council coordinators. We have a new subsistence  
32 outreach coordinator, who is our public affairs person.  
33 With a fully staffed division, one of the things I  
34 really envision us doing moving forward is increasing  
35 our outreach as part of Council business.

36

37 And I have a lot of ideas and I know  
38 some of my Council coordinators also have a lot of  
39 ideas on what we can do to engage schools, engage the  
40 tribes, engage regional associations on devising ways  
41 for youth to get involved in a formal either mentorship  
42 process or some kind of apprenticeship process or  
43 having a floating youth seat where the youth are  
44 invited to sit at the table. It's a different person  
45 depending on which village you're meeting in. So, for  
46 example, you'd have somebody be the designated person  
47 from McGrath so that when you met in McGrath that youth  
48 person could sit there, or if you're meeting in Holy  
49 Cross or Aniak or wherever else.

50

1                   So there are a lot of different ideas  
2 and I'm really excited to engage the Councils and all  
3 the different parties in coming up with some ways where  
4 this could work.

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Eleanor.

7  
8                   MS. YATLIN: This is Eleanor again.  
9 The reason why I bring that up is, you know, in  
10 regional school board we have a youth sitting on as  
11 representation. Out of that, in all of these years  
12 that I've been on the regional school board, we have  
13 two -- I think right now two members that are adults  
14 right now, but they were youth representation when they  
15 were going to high school, so that's why I like the  
16 idea of having youth involved. Because in the future  
17 we need to -- they will have to step up and say we will  
18 take the leadership role here and know what's going on  
19 in the Refuge.

20  
21                   This is a good form of communication  
22 and outreach for the people that live in the village.  
23 As it is, we don't have any correspondence, you know,  
24 between the Refuges and the tribal, you know, like  
25 government-to-government relationship. If we reach out  
26 to the schools, you know, maybe they learn. And then  
27 if we have an involvement with the tribal government,  
28 that would be great too, you know. There's  
29 correspondence there. So that's why I would really  
30 push this youth.

31  
32                   Thank you.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Eleanor. I  
35 think a youth seat is very beneficial to build interest  
36 in the Regional Council even if all of the schools have  
37 decided on a youth person designee, they still learn  
38 about the process and it's a big deal to just learn how  
39 the process actually works, so it's actually teaching  
40 how the subsistence program actually works. So I'm  
41 very much in favor of the youth seat idea.

42  
43                   I wanted to talk about -- you know,  
44 I've submitted seven applications that I have to refill  
45 out each application every time, so this gets a little  
46 old. It's the same information. It's the same person.  
47 All you need to know is are you still a rural resident  
48 in the region and are you willing to serve on the  
49 Council. So this redundant application is kind of a  
50 problem. Sitting down and spending a whole bunch of

1 time filling out the same information over and over and  
2 over now for seven times, I'm getting a little tired of  
3 that. I would like to see that process changed. I  
4 feel that we should be able to call in, email in and  
5 say I want to apply again, I'm still a resident of this  
6 community, I'm within the region. So why do we have to  
7 keep doing redundant applications?

8

9 Carl.

10

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12 You know what, I do know what the institutional history  
13 is behind why we have sitting Council members using the  
14 same application form as people who are new applicants.  
15 I can see possibly devising a form just for  
16 reappointment, but I can tell you that when it comes to  
17 the stage in conducting the interviews, pretty much  
18 everybody would get the same questions whether they're  
19 a new applicant or a sitting Council member because,  
20 one, in that stage of the game we treat everybody  
21 equally and objectively, so the interviewing panel  
22 members need to approach a sitting Council member with  
23 the same questions as a new applicant.

24

25 Really, it's through those interviews  
26 that we get the most information anyway. We'll accept  
27 a very minimally filled out application even for a new  
28 applicant as long as it's got their contact information  
29 and a signature because in reality people possess  
30 different skills in different technology available to  
31 complete applications, so we don't weigh the  
32 applications very heavily in this process. It's really  
33 the interviews that drive it.

34

35 So I'm making a note and I'm going to  
36 do some research and see if we can devise a simpler  
37 application for reappointment for a sitting Council  
38 member because, Mr. Chair, you are certainly not the  
39 only Council member who has expressed this. In many  
40 instances, we simply do reapply Council members with an  
41 email confirming their desire to seek reappointment and  
42 using the past application and so on.

43

44 A lot of cases that is, you know,  
45 because of timing and the deadline and all that, but  
46 there's also a deference in value of not having to have  
47 a Council member filling in all of that information.  
48 As long as there's really nothing -- anything new, they  
49 are not participating in any significantly new number  
50 of panels or have a change where they live or anything

1 like that.

2

3 That's something I'll definitely look  
4 into, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
7 that. I have no problem with the interview, you know,  
8 the call interview. That's not the problem. The  
9 problem is the reapplication. So shortening the form  
10 or just allowing us to fill in same as previous  
11 application in each category, something that shortens  
12 this up for the applicants. The appointed members  
13 reapplying shouldn't have to go through all that amount  
14 of -- you know, we have plenty to do already. We don't  
15 need to be doing redundant stuff. We're not government  
16 employees. We need to shorten this process up a little  
17 bit.

18

19 I wanted to talk about this D.C.  
20 problem. I would like Region 7 to have somebody in  
21 Washington, D.C. at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as  
22 their walk-through person. You're going down there to  
23 the White House and you're going to work each one of  
24 these applications through, just like Bill Knauer, who  
25 used to be at OSM, did many moons ago. I guess there  
26 was a chain that was broken somewhere along the way.  
27 But we need to have that process back in place.

28

29 I don't feel that it's cost prohibitive  
30 to send somebody from Region 7 all the way down to  
31 Washington, D.C. to do that when we've got a whole  
32 warehouse -- I've seen the buildings down there in  
33 Washington, D.C. of U.S. Fish and Wildlife and we've  
34 got a whole bunch of staff down there that can do this.  
35 They're all politically motivated. That's why they  
36 want to be in D.C. anyway, so let them work through the  
37 White House process.

38

39 So what's wrong with doing that, Carl?

40

41 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. I don't know  
42 really if that would resolve our problem because the  
43 problem isn't whether or not the paperwork is moving  
44 efficiently through the offices. The road block is in  
45 one specific office, what's called the White House  
46 liaison to the Secretary of the Interior. It is there  
47 where we have encountered the problems in recent years.

48

49

50 For reasons beyond my knowledge,

1 there's only one person in the entire Secretary of the  
2 Interior's office that is authorized to conduct the  
3 background checks. Pat Pourchot is not authorized,  
4 nobody in the senate is authorized. No other staff in  
5 D.C. are authorized. So you have one person that is  
6 doing the background checks for not only all the  
7 Councils, but all other FACA committees in the United  
8 States who also have pending appointments at the same  
9 time.

10

11 And not only that there's just one  
12 person doing it, but they follow standards to which we  
13 are not privy. When they make decisions to give a  
14 green light or a red light on a particular applicant,  
15 Pat Pourchot is specifically told that he can't know  
16 the reasons why somebody is rejected from vetting.

17

18 This is something we definitely do work  
19 with. It's probably the most intense probably in the  
20 process from my end at least and that Pat Pourchot and  
21 I work quite well together to help the White House  
22 liaison resolve any questions there are, but sometimes  
23 there are individuals who do not pass vetting and it's  
24 for reasons that we're never notified.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Clarify again. You  
27 say there's only one person in the White House or one  
28 person in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife that do these  
29 background checks?

30

31 MR. JOHNSON: Well, it's actually under  
32 the Secretary's office, the Secretary of the Interior.  
33 Fish and Wildlife Service, it's involvement in the D.C.  
34 end, from what I understand, is a lot of the normal  
35 kind of administrative in its capacity than actually  
36 getting signatures. The section that is involved in  
37 conducting the background checks, which is where the  
38 hold-ups have been in recent years, has actually been  
39 in the Secretary's office.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Secretary of  
42 Interior.

43

44 MR. JOHNSON: That is correct.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, then let's  
47 just get another person. What's the problem here?  
48 Let's just get another person that's authorized to do  
49 that. I want Region 7 to demand that they get another  
50 person because if someone gets sick or goes to Iraq or

1 all these various reasons why this person disappears,  
2 we need an alternate. We're getting an alternate on  
3 the Council here, so let's get an alternate for making  
4 these applications go through. Let's think outside this  
5 little box. Let's get three people down there that are  
6 authorized to do it. It can't be that hard.

7

8 I know Patty Ross at Park Service was  
9 authorized to do -- get into clearances to look at  
10 certain satellite pictures that were sensitive  
11 information. I know Park Service people that can get  
12 through some of this red tape and I think that Region 7  
13 needs to start leveraging to get more people that are  
14 approved to do these background checks so that we can  
15 accelerate this process. This bottleneck at this  
16 person has got to stop. That's the problem.

17

18 I heard it at the Federal Board meeting  
19 Pat Pourchot saying that we need to fix the problem.  
20 We just get more staff that are able to do that. It  
21 can't be that hard. We've got plenty of people down  
22 there that can do that. What's wrong with doing that,  
23 Carl?

24

25 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. I don't see  
26 anything wrong with doing that, but we are talking  
27 about a world that is very foreign to me and that is  
28 how things work in D.C. I will certainly pass on your  
29 suggestion that Region 7 advocate more strongly for  
30 greater staffing in that area. I just don't know what  
31 will result from that, but we'll certainly press  
32 forward.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're not going to  
35 just stop there. We're going to write a letter to  
36 Geoff Haskett and demand that Region 7, the Director of  
37 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife in Alaska, work with the  
38 U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Interior Department to  
39 get three persons to work these background checks to  
40 accelerate this nomination process because we're in a  
41 bind here. We need to not keep beating around the  
42 bush.

43

44 He's got to like step up to the plate.  
45 That's what he gets paid big bucks to do and he's got  
46 to step up to the plate and ask for three appointing or  
47 background check clearance people to accelerate this  
48 process. This is what the big problem is. It will  
49 probably alleviate the need to change any of our  
50 charter stuff, but we've got to ask. It doesn't hurt

1 to ask and I don't think that we need to keep beating  
2 around the bush. This is a problem and we need to fix  
3 it.

4

5 So I think that Region 7 is the one to  
6 do it. Pat Pourchot can ask for it too, but he should  
7 work with Pat Pourchot on this issue. This needs to  
8 change. So I want this transmitted also, this letter  
9 to all 10 Regional Councils, that this is the problem,  
10 this is the bottleneck in Washington, D.C. and this is  
11 how to fix it. This is how to get the problem fixed.  
12 If the person gets sick or they go on vacation or they  
13 go to Iraq or whatever the problem is, we can't stop  
14 the process. OSM doesn't stop if somebody walks out --  
15 the leadership walks out of the office. Things have to  
16 keep moving. So this has got to stop.

17

18 So I would like this letter written to  
19 Geoff Haskett and cc'd to Pat Pourchot. Is the Council  
20 agreeable to that?

21

22 (Council nods affirmatively)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see affirmative  
25 from the Council. You've got a comment, Ray.

26

27 MR. COLLINS: Yes. I like the -- this  
28 is Ray Collins again. I like the idea of simplifying  
29 the reapplication process and you could simply ask on  
30 there if anything has changed, but one thing you'd  
31 probably want to do is ask the individual to list their  
32 references because the person doing the calling changes  
33 each time and they may need to talk to those people.  
34 Some of the references may have passed away or there  
35 may be somebody else you've become more familiar with.  
36 So include on that simplified, if you go that route,  
37 that they re-list their -- who they want called as  
38 references.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good point,  
41 Ray.

42

43 Other comments on this.

44

45 Don.

46

47 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
48 Carl, this is board member Don Honea. I guess I'm a  
49 little confused in the three different scenarios that  
50 you have over here. I really like the idea of the

1 alternate that Ray had pointed out. I mean you look at  
2 our position this morning here. We're missing I think  
3 four board members and I think that exactly would fill  
4 that obligation.

5  
6 Other than that, the carryover term,  
7 and I'm kind of -- the reason I say I'm kind of in  
8 question here is what exactly are you questioning us to  
9 give an option here? Because the carryover term, I'll  
10 have to disagree with the disadvantage on there because  
11 I, myself, had to miss the Aniak meeting last year and  
12 I don't think that's going to clash with any particular  
13 appointee to the board. When I actually missed that  
14 meeting, it was months later until I was told, so I was  
15 kind of resigned to the fact that, hey, maybe I'm not  
16 on the board anymore. It was months later, so I have  
17 to disagree with that disadvantage on there.

18  
19 In view of time, I guess what I'm  
20 asking for is -- because I like -- I mean if we have  
21 the option here, I like the four-year cycle, I like  
22 actually all of them, but I especially like the  
23 carryover term because, like the Chairman had  
24 mentioned, we are serving basically at the whim of the  
25 weather or whatever. I mean some of us have jobs where  
26 we have to take off and we have to -- we're at the whim  
27 of the weather or whatever. So I like the carryover  
28 terms and that's my position.

29  
30 Thank you.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. I  
33 appreciate those. One of the issues of the carryover  
34 that's not analyzed here is that the -- like my seat  
35 comes up on December 2nd. I'm out. I'm the Chair.  
36 The Federal Subsistence Board is meeting in January.  
37 If I was carried over, I could attend the meeting.  
38 Guess what? Ray and I are going to fall out of  
39 standing and Jenny is going to have to go to the  
40 Federal Subsistence Board because we have a bottleneck  
41 of various problems. So the carryover actually is  
42 advantageous to the Regional Council leadership because  
43 they can at least complete the business of the Council  
44 in the interim. So that's another advantage to the  
45 carryover.

46  
47 I think we've beaten this horse to  
48 death and we need to move on in this agenda. I  
49 appreciate all your work on this, Carl. I see you did  
50 a whole bunch of work on it.

1 I really appreciate that.

2

3 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
4 Just a quick closing comment to sort of respond to  
5 Don's question there. None of these options are  
6 mutually exclusive. I actually see all three of them  
7 working together to resolve overlapping issues. So as  
8 a comprehensive piece, they, I think, strengthen how we  
9 do our nominations and appointments.

10

11 I just want to confirm what I'm hearing  
12 from the Council regarding your position on these  
13 issues. That is I hear support for alternate  
14 appointments, I hear support certainly for carryover  
15 terms and I think I heard support for going from  
16 three-year to four-year appointments, but I wanted to  
17 confirm that, Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm in favor of a  
20 four-year annual cycle myself.

21

22 Are Council members agreeable to that?

23

24 (Council nods affirmatively)

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see affirmative on  
27 that, Carl.

28

29 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you, Mr.  
30 Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Carl.  
33 Appreciate that.

34

35 Melinda.

36

37 MR. JOHNSON: My pleasure.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to go to  
40 Mike Spindler now, report.

41

42 MS. BURKE: Carl, before you hang up,  
43 will you quickly go over the all-Chair meeting  
44 discussion.

45

46 MR. JOHNSON: Certainly. So this issue  
47 was raised at the joint Southeast/Southcentral Council  
48 meeting earlier this year in the winter cycle and it  
49 was noted that the Chairs used to meet in connection  
50 with the Federal Subsistence Board meeting, but they

1 don't anymore, so they asked why. We did a little  
2 research on that and basically there's no prohibition  
3 to the Chairs meeting and having a private meeting.  
4 It's just the subject of the conversation is what would  
5 be prohibited for a private meeting. If they wanted to  
6 have a meeting amongst themselves, it couldn't cover  
7 anything that would be before the Federal Subsistence  
8 Board where they might come up with an agreement or a  
9 comprehensive plan in addressing proposed regulations.

10

11                   So anything that would involve the  
12 public process couldn't be discussed at a private  
13 Chairs meeting, but they could discuss a variety of  
14 issues that are of mutual concern. For example, the  
15 nominations and appointments or other administrative  
16 acts or aspects or travel, vouchers being paid in a  
17 timely manner. Things like that I could see being a  
18 topic of a private Chairs meeting that does not involve  
19 any of the public regulatory process.

20

21                   The other option that was suggested to  
22 avoid that the Chairs could meet at the end of the  
23 Federal Subsistence Board meeting and could talk about  
24 pretty much anything they want because there wouldn't  
25 be -- they wouldn't be influencing the public process  
26 because that process would have already been completed  
27 at the conclusion of the Board meeting.

28

29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Carl.

30

31                   Any questions about that.

32

33                   (No comments)

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel that a Chairs  
36 meeting before the Federal Subsistence Board meeting is  
37 beneficial to basically go over common issues with  
38 administration and et cetera, so I think that's a  
39 beneficial aspect. The Park Service has a chairs  
40 meeting with the chairs of the Subsistence Resource  
41 Commissions and that's always been a beneficial aspect  
42 of the Park Service Commission. Informational  
43 knowledge building. It's hard to think just inside  
44 your own box. It's better to think statewide on some  
45 of these issues.

46

47                   So thank you, Carl.

48

49                   MR. JOHNSON: You're welcome, Mr.

50 Chair. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to move  
2 to -- okay, Melinda.

3  
4 MS. BURKE: Just one small item in line  
5 with this subject matter that we'd like some feedback  
6 from the Councils on. There's been a discussion of  
7 having an all-Council meeting in the winter of 2016,  
8 which would mean we would have a big facility, such as  
9 the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage or somewhere else in  
10 Fairbanks to have all 10 of the Councils coming in at  
11 the same time.

12  
13 So instead of having all of our  
14 regional meetings, we'd have all of the Councils come  
15 in. We'd have some joint sessions, we'd have some  
16 break-out sessions so that the Councils could go and  
17 handle regional-specific business and perhaps also  
18 incorporate some different training and interactions  
19 with Federal, State, Park -- I mean basically everybody  
20 who usually goes out to the meetings would be meeting  
21 in one central location.

22  
23 I know we've had tri-Council meetings,  
24 we've had joint Council meetings, so we're throwing  
25 this idea out there to see what the Councils think  
26 about that possibility.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would the Council  
29 consider having a meeting of that size?

30  
31 (Interruption on conference call)

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody's line is  
34 still open on the call. Can you push \*6 to mute.  
35 Nobody's listening to the call. So what does the  
36 Council think about all 10 Councils meeting together.  
37 Don.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, I think  
40 that would be -- I think that's kind of an excellent  
41 idea just to find out what each specific area and maybe  
42 we could kind of mutually work on issues to find out --  
43 you know, we vary so much from Northwest to Arctic to  
44 Southeast. I think it's a great idea if we can maybe  
45 work with any particular group, whether it's Ahtna or  
46 whatever they call themselves, and define like  
47 concerns.

48  
49 Thank you.  
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments.

2

3 Jenny.

4

5 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah. This is Council  
6 member Jenny Pelkola. I also think that's a good idea  
7 because a lot of times we support each other's whatever  
8 work that we want to get through. To meet these people  
9 face to face I think would be a very good idea and to  
10 have workshops and whatever, a little more training. I  
11 think that's a good idea.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Like the customary  
14 and traditional use determination process, that would  
15 actually be very beneficial to have all of the Councils  
16 sit down at the same table and talk about customary and  
17 traditional use determination process so that Southeast  
18 can think outside the box with the other nine regions.  
19 So I think that that would be one subject. There's  
20 certain subject matter that affects all the Councils,  
21 so I think it would be beneficial for the Federal  
22 Subsistence Management Program.

23

24 Thank you. Okay, Mike, we're going to  
25 move you up here because I know you're under  
26 flight.....

27

28 MS. BURKE: Just real quick while Mike  
29 is getting seated I wanted to do a quick check-in with  
30 the phone. We've heard a lot of beeps. So far here on  
31 my paper I've got Kumi, Dan and Marcy Okada. Can the  
32 other folks who have called in just quickly push \*6 and  
33 unmute yourself for a second to introduce yourself,  
34 please.

35

36 MS. INGLES: Palma Ingles, OSM.

37

38 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard, OSM.

39

40 MS. YUHAS: Jennifer Yuhas, State of  
41 Alaska.

42

43 MS. MONCRIEFF: Catherine Moncrieff,  
44 Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association.

45

46 MS. FEYEREISEN: Lisa Feyereisen, Crow  
47 Village. Fish Management Working group and Central  
48 Kuskokwim AC.

49

50 MR. HAVENER: Jeremy Havener, Fish and

1 Wildlife Service.

2

3 MS. BURKE: Good morning.

4

5 MS. GARCIA: Sabrina Garcia, Alaska  
6 Department of Fish and Game.

7

8 MR. JOLY: Kyle Joly, National Park  
9 Service.

10

11 MS. BURKE: Okay. Thanks everybody.  
12 Welcome to the meeting.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So go ahead, Mike.

15

16 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Chair, and  
17 fellow Council members. Thank you for being flexible  
18 on the schedule. I have to get an airplane back to  
19 Fairbanks tonight. We're getting ready for the moose  
20 survey if there's sufficient snow. It's a new engine  
21 on the airplane. I have to break it in properly. This  
22 is in preparation for doing some of the scientific work  
23 that you guys rely on in your decisions.

24

25 Getting to the moose season, if you  
26 would turn to your packets, the Kanuti beaver, the  
27 handout with the Kanuti beaver. That's kind of an  
28 outline of what I'll go through today. We had a  
29 successful moose season. One of the highlights I think  
30 is that we were able to renegotiate a contract with the  
31 village tribe of Allakaket to provide a local liaison  
32 person. They selected Steven Bergman as the liaison  
33 who does work for the tribe, but does liaison work for  
34 Kanuti Refuge and for the Federal Subsistence Program.

35

36 Mr. Bergman is very effective at  
37 educating the hunters on the very complex regulations  
38 and land status issues. He takes about a half hour to  
39 go through each hunter when they get their Federal  
40 subsistence permit and they also get their State  
41 permits from him as well. Puts everything in a Ziploc  
42 bag along with a map showing the land status and  
43 they're all prepared.

44

45 I've done quite a bit of law  
46 enforcement up there on the Kanuti. This year I had  
47 three patrols. I have no encountered anyone from the  
48 village who got their permits from Steven where there's  
49 any compliance issues whatsoever, so that's a real good  
50 success story. I'm happy to have Steven helping us out.

1                   In Bettles and Evansville we have one  
2 of our employees issuing the permits there, so we have  
3 people onsite at Bettles, Evansville and Allakaket  
4 issuing the Federal subsistence permits. That works  
5 really well.

6  
7                   Compliance on -- there's two permits  
8 they issue and 95 hunting days were in the below  
9 Henshaw Creek permit area and they had really good  
10 compliance with that. A hundred percent of the hunters  
11 turned in their permits on that with four moose hunted  
12 during the extended Federal seasons. Then above  
13 Henshaw, a little poorer compliance, 82 percent  
14 compliance with that and one bull moose harvested.

15  
16                   As I mentioned, we had three patrols.  
17 We did have some issues with non-local hunters. In one  
18 case, an airstrip was cleared illegally on the Refuge  
19 and we're pursuing that case. It's under investigation.  
20 Later on Vince will probably be talking to you perhaps  
21 offline but in preparation for next March's meeting in  
22 an effort to simplify the permit and harvest reporting  
23 requirements for moose in Unit 24. That's an ongoing  
24 issue and it requires quite a bit of coordination with  
25 Alaska Department of Fish and Game as well.

26  
27                   If you would turn to the graph on Page  
28 3, moose population estimate for Kanuti Refuge. This  
29 data is almost a year old, but I would like to  
30 highlight that it was a very high quality census of  
31 moose in 2013. If you look at the triangle, that's the  
32 population estimate and then the little line going  
33 above and below the triangle is the error bar or the  
34 precision. So we can conclude from looking at that  
35 that there's no significant difference between 2011 and  
36 2013 because the error bars overlap, but if you look at  
37 the overall trend between 2010 and 2013, we can conclude  
38 that it went down from approximately 1,000 moose in  
39 2010 to 550 in 2013, which is a decline that does  
40 concern us.

41  
42                   One of the reasons we're putting quite  
43 a bit of effort into this fall's moose survey it's  
44 going to be cooperative with BLM, Fish and Game and  
45 Park Service as well as Fish and Wildlife all  
46 contributing. It's going to be all of Unit 24 that we  
47 can survey. We're going to be doing a stratification  
48 flight over that whole area to try and tighten up the  
49 error bars on that. So that would give us a better  
50 reading as to whether that 2013 number is something

1 that should be continuing to concern us or not.

2

3 We're hopeful that we'll have  
4 sufficient snow conditions. Right now it does not look  
5 promising, at least for starting. We had scheduled to  
6 start next Monday on the 3rd of November, but there's  
7 not enough snow to do that, so we're all waiting for  
8 more snow to arrive.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me, Mike. Is  
11 there still some radio collars that are transmitting so  
12 you can estimate an error by missed moose?

13

14 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Chair, there  
15 are sufficient radio collars out there. Although  
16 because the choice this year was to go for a larger  
17 area than we normally survey, we will not be doing --  
18 that's called a sightability trial. We have done that  
19 in the past with our collared moose and have had pretty  
20 good sightability.

21

22 In one case, we did it one year and it  
23 was less than 5 percent error. The other year it was  
24 closer to 20 percent error. So in the range of 5 to 20  
25 percent is what our error is on that. So that's number  
26 of moose missed during the survey, 5 to 20 percent. We  
27 will not be doing that this fall because the effort  
28 will be focusing on trying to get as much done in all  
29 of Unit 24B as we can get done, 24A and B.

30

31 My next topic I was going to talk about  
32 the moose radiotelemetry study and I did hear that Kyle  
33 Joly is on the line. Kyle is the lead person on this  
34 cooperative study for writing up the results. Those  
35 were collars that were started to be put out in 2008.  
36 Those last few collars were transmitting up through  
37 2013, and so we called that study done and he is in the  
38 process of writing up the results of that. It's a team  
39 effort.

40

41 When I mentioned there are other  
42 collars out there, that's Alaska Department of Fish and  
43 Game working on their intensive management, so they're  
44 using Kanuti Refuge as a non-treatment area as a  
45 reference and then the area north and west of Allakaket  
46 on the tribal lands and on the State lands is there  
47 experimental treatment area. So you have the non-  
48 treatment area is the Refuge using it as a reference to  
49 look at survival and abundance and hunter success and  
50 then looking at the area north and west of the Refuge

1 where.....

2

3 (Interruption on conference call)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.

6

7 MS. BURKE: Can you please push \*6, the  
8 female voice that's speaking and leaving somebody.....

9

10 (Interruption on conference call)

11

12 MS. BURKE: Hi. Could the female voice  
13 who was just leaving someone a voicemail push \*6 to  
14 mute yourself, please.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So continue, Mike.  
17 I saw them taking off from Coldfoot. It looked like  
18 Fish and Game was going to go collar moose calves.

19

20 MR. SPINDLER: Yes. They're deploying  
21 more collars and that's aimed at looking at mainly  
22 survival. They're collaring what would be calves born  
23 in May. They also have a fair number of other collars  
24 out there from previous efforts. There would be enough  
25 to do sightability, but, again, a priority decision was  
26 made to focus on a larger area this year. We're all  
27 hopeful we'll get the snow cover that we need.

28

29 Moose browse study. Erin Julianus,  
30 sitting behind me here, used to be our employee. She  
31 started a master's project. She's wrapping that up.  
32 The field work is completed on the moose browse study  
33 on Kanuti and that was looking at the effects of fire  
34 succession on moose browse availability. If you have  
35 any detailed questions about that, you could ask her  
36 those questions during a break, I suppose, but we're  
37 looking forward to her presenting the results of her  
38 master's work in the future.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike, I would like  
41 the Council to receive the telemetry report on the  
42 distances that the moose traveled. This Council was a  
43 driving force of trying to get that telemetry project  
44 for moose movement and so now that the report is being  
45 written I would like the Council to see the report and  
46 see what -- for our information, not that it's just  
47 filed away somewhere. I would like that submitted to  
48 the Council.

49

50 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Chair, that's

1 certainly possible. There's a draft scientific paper  
2 being reviewed right now. If you did have some  
3 immediate questions with Kyle on the line, I would  
4 suggest perhaps you ask them.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't need it  
7 right this minute.....

8  
9 MR. SPINDLER: Okay.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....but when it's  
12 finally completed, all reviewed and all that I would  
13 like the Council to see that.

14  
15 MR. SPINDLER: Yeah, that's in progress  
16 and I think it is entirely doable that within the next  
17 six months there should be something that would be  
18 available to you guys.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure. That's great.

21  
22 MR. SPINDLER: I'm not going to cover  
23 everything on this. Yes, Mr. Collins and Mr. Chair.

24  
25 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. Do you have a  
26 feeling -- I mean to decline about -- cut in half in  
27 three years seems that there's something going on  
28 there. Do you have a feeling what it is? Is it a  
29 recruitment problem? And what's your twinning rates?  
30 That's some indica -- have you looked at that to see  
31 what the health of the herd is? Was the cows healthy  
32 or whether it's predation?

33  
34 MR. SPINDLER: Twinning rates -- Mr.  
35 Chair and Mr. Collins and the remainder of the Council,  
36 the twinning rates, when they do that survey in May at  
37 calving, those twinning rates are good, indicating the  
38 herd is productive.

39  
40 I could call your attention to Table 1  
41 on the second page of our report. One of the indices  
42 you can look at there is yearling bulls per 100 cows.  
43 That's kind of a surrogate for recruitment to the herd.  
44 You will see that the highest we ever saw was 20 in  
45 2005 and 13 in 2007 and 14 in 2008. You can see it has  
46 declined since then to lower numbers.

47  
48 Rule of thumb is above 10 is good,  
49 below 10 is not good, so we might be seeing the results  
50 of that year 2010 when it was 7. I would not want to

1 speculate beyond that, but that is the number that we  
2 usually look at.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The '08-'09 winter  
5 was real deep snow and that was real hard on the moose.  
6 We lost a whole bunch of moose in the upper drainage  
7 and then there's a lag after a deep snow year like that  
8 that cows don't produce real well, so that's what that  
9 lag is showing, the 7 yearlings.

10

11 But one thing I wanted to bring out was  
12 I killed a yearling, I thought it was a two-year old  
13 moose, this fall. When I cut it, I was like that thing  
14 is narrow and it was way larger than a normal yearling  
15 bull. It had palms like this big and 34 inches or  
16 something. Very healthy. I wouldn't even mention it.  
17 When I cut the bones, the bones come apart, which  
18 indicate that's a yearling. A yearling's bones aren't  
19 -- the growth plates aren't seated. I wouldn't even  
20 mention it, but three people in our community killed  
21 those kind of moose. Everybody was like I thought it  
22 was a two-year-old. It was like they're way bigger.

23

24 So I'm cautioning when you do your  
25 yearling analysis that some of these yearlings are  
26 really large this year, so you're going to have to pay  
27 close attention to what the moose actually is. We're  
28 mistaking them for two-year-olds and they're yearlings.  
29 They grew real well just the way the spring was, the  
30 cool summer. There was something that happened with  
31 these. And most of the adult moose were very fat this  
32 fall.

33

34 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Chair. I'd like to  
35 have a conversation with you on the side about that in  
36 preparation for our survey this fall then.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. I wanted to  
39 bring that out to the managers that in this next survey  
40 your -- but your yearling bull component is a big deal  
41 in the analysis, so I wanted to bring that out to the  
42 managers at this meeting.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 Continue.

47

48 MR. SPINDLER: I won't cover everything  
49 in the outline in the interest of time, but the browse  
50 study is something that's worth pursuing if you want to

1 have a side conversation with Erin because she is here.

2

3                   One other highlight is on Page 4. We  
4 did a 10-year comparison in the burns. We had  
5 significant burns in 2004, so our former biologist Lisa  
6 Saperstein is now a regional fire ecologist. She  
7 returned to Kanuti this past summer and we did bird  
8 abundance and composition and vegetation abundance and  
9 composition on the 2004 burns 10 years later. So she's  
10 in the process of writing up that study.

11

12                   There was some very good fire severity  
13 information and mapping during the '04 and '05 burns,  
14 so what we want to do is look at with different areas  
15 of severity what we're seeing in terms of plant  
16 succession. The studies to date have shown that 10  
17 years to 30 years post burn produce the most ideal  
18 moose browse conditions in our region, so we should be  
19 looking at that a little bit more closely to see that  
20 10-year increment.

21

22                   You're all aware of the extreme high  
23 water this summer. Of course, that caused the  
24 cancellation of the Henshaw weir installation. That's  
25 the salmon monitoring project that's done mainly by  
26 Tanana Chiefs with the support of OSM. That, of  
27 course, caused us to cancel our science camp at Henshaw  
28 Creek as well. We were very disappointed in that.

29

30                   Something that we'll probably require  
31 some of the Council's attention in the future is the  
32 Ambler Road. The agencies are anticipating a right-of-  
33 way filing imminently from AIDEA. We have seen drafts  
34 of that right-of-way filing. Once that filing takes  
35 place, the EIS process begins. The Corps of Engineers  
36 is the lead agency on that. Fish and Wildlife Service  
37 is a cooperating agency as is BLM and Park Service.  
38 We've had some agency team meetings to look at how we  
39 would proceed in requiring the content of the EIS.

40

41                   One of the things that I would urge the  
42 Council to kind of keep their eye on is that AIDEA's  
43 position is that this is an EIS for only a road between  
44 the Dalton Highway and the Ambler Mining District, but  
45 I think we need to look beyond that. This was brought  
46 out at the Allakaket Tribal Summit this summer. The  
47 mine development EIS is a separate process that will be  
48 five or ten years later than the road EIS. Beyond that  
49 is another EIS that would discuss how they will extract  
50 the low-grade ore once the high-grade ore is gone from

1 those mine sites.

2

3 So you're looking at a 30-year overall  
4 process.

5

6 I just think that as part of this EIS  
7 process we are required to look at chronic and long-  
8 lasting impacts. So what that means is that you're  
9 looking at the impacts of a 200-mile road, you're  
10 looking at the impacts of mine development and you're  
11 looking at impacts of how you're going to deal with the  
12 lower-grade ores once the high-grade ores are gone from  
13 that. We would urge that EIS for the initial road  
14 project in terms of public interest and declaration of  
15 overall possible impacts to just look at a broader  
16 result of that whole project, not just the road project  
17 in itself.

18

19 So I wanted to call your attention to  
20 that process starting up. There will be scoping and  
21 that will be your opportunity once scoping begins to  
22 weigh in on that project.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a very  
25 concerning project. What the broader impact would be  
26 is -- I do not believe that the road will be  
27 permanently closed. I think that the road will be  
28 conveyed to the State of Alaska because the maintenance  
29 costs are going to be excessive. Once it's submitted  
30 to the State of Alaska, if they put one mile of high-  
31 float on that road with Federal highway funds, then the  
32 road is open.

33

34 Once the road is open, then there's no  
35 all-terrain vehicle restriction or firearm restriction  
36 like the Dalton Highway has and you've just opened the  
37 whole south slope of the Brooks Range to ATV use and  
38 snowmachine use and all of the hunters with all of  
39 those boats. Look at how many boats go into the  
40 Ivashak River; jet boats, air boats. I mean there was  
41 massive amounts of boats pulled up the Dalton Highway.

42

43

44 This road has a way wider impact and  
45 that analysis, the EIS, should analyze the far-reaching  
46 impacts of all-terrain vehicle use, firearm use near  
47 the road and there's no preclusion from the 400 truck  
48 drivers a day. I don't know how many truck drivers  
49 hunt from the Dalton Highway. They see a caribou, they  
50 jump out with their bow and arrow and start shooting at

1 it. What precludes these 400 truck drivers a day from  
2 hunting from the road either and with snowmachines and  
3 whatever.

4

5                   So the bottom line is there's a broad  
6 impact that not only just the environmental impact of  
7 copper sulfate dust falling into all the rivers and the  
8 major spawning grounds of sheefish on the Alatna and  
9 the Kobuk River, but also the massive amount of hunting  
10 pressure that will be exerted against that road.

11

12                   I don't believe that the road will be  
13 closed because I was there when they built the Dalton  
14 Highway, the Haul Road, and they said, oh, this road is  
15 always going to be closed, there's no money involved.  
16 Well, guess what, it was only three years later and  
17 they were opening the Haul Road after the State of  
18 Alaska got it. Well, I don't believe it.

19

20                   So the bottom line is the EIS has to  
21 reflect the broad-reaching impacts of all the massive  
22 amount of hunting pressure that's going to come to that  
23 area. That's what Allakaket is afraid of. We don't  
24 believe for one second that the road will remain  
25 closed. I don't believe it will be closed for over a  
26 couple years maybe, at the longest, but that doesn't  
27 preclude the 400 truck drivers a year from doing stuff  
28 to that country already.

29

30                   So I wanted to insert that into this on  
31 the record and I want -- this Council should be very  
32 aware that this has a huge -- could have a huge impact  
33 and I would like this Council, when the EIS comes out,  
34 to transmit those kinds of comments to the process.

35

36                   Thank you, Mike.

37

38                   Continue.

39

40                   MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Chair and fellow  
41 Council members. I would urge you to be highly engaged  
42 when scoping starts. As a courtesy to the Council,  
43 when I'm aware of that scoping period, I will certainly  
44 let you guys know. Right now AIDEA is saying that this  
45 road's most similar analog to it is the Red Dog Road  
46 going from the Red Dog Mine to the port site where it  
47 is a mining only industrial access road. So that is  
48 their position. I would urge you to make those  
49 comments known and your concerns known when scoping  
50 begins and I'll certainly assist in letting you know

1 when that period is.

2

3                   Moving on and kind of related to what  
4 we're talking about is our water resources project. We  
5 are in our final year of six years of monitoring in-  
6 stream flow and water quality and quantity to the major  
7 tributaries going into Kanuti. One of our concerns, of  
8 course, with a project of this magnitude, like the  
9 Ambler Road, is water quality. So the cooperators have  
10 been looking very carefully at that and we feel like we  
11 have a good baseline, not a high excellent quality, but  
12 a good baseline of in-stream flow and water quality on  
13 the major tributaries coming into Kanuti.

14

15                   That is also related to another scoping  
16 period and environmental project that BLM is  
17 undertaking now and that's their Central Yukon Resource  
18 Management Plan. Since BLM is here, I won't go into  
19 any details on that, but I will say that Kanuti did  
20 nominate some areas of critical environmental concern  
21 to protect watersheds upstream of Kanuti, as did also  
22 the Allakaket Tribe nominate some areas of critical  
23 environmental concern.

24

25                   That would be one thing that I would  
26 urge the Council to follow and weigh in on because of  
27 your interest in fisheries and the relationship of  
28 water quantity and quality to spawning success of  
29 anadromous fish and resident fish.

30

31                   With that, sir, that is the end of my  
32 report. I just would like to mention that we have had  
33 quite a bit of staff changes at Kanuti and we were down  
34 at one point to only four people who are Kanuti only  
35 and not shared with other Refuges. We're building back  
36 up and replacing those positions. With budget climates  
37 the way they've been, there's been quite a bit of  
38 pressure towards downsizing.

39

40                   We feel like we're able to -- Kanuti  
41 has the right size staff and put them in the right  
42 places. So we have two people, excellent people, in  
43 Bettles and we have one person in Coldfoot and likely  
44 to have another here in the next six months. So with  
45 two in Coldfoot and two in Bettles and one liaison  
46 contractor in Allakaket I feel like we've got a  
47 reasonable presence in the field given the financial  
48 constraints that we're under.

49

50                   If there's any questions, I'd entertain

1 them at this time.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council  
4 have questions for Kanuti's presentation.

5

6 Go ahead, Don.

7

8 MR. HONEA: Mike, I was just wondering,  
9 maybe I guess a few years ago they did have like a  
10 predator control initiated on the Kanuti. I mean if I  
11 was sitting in Allakaket or something, I'd be kind of  
12 alarmed by these numbers. I mean I don't know how  
13 accurate the numbers are or something, but it seems  
14 like your moose population from back in the early '90s  
15 or something has taken a drastic -- you know, just  
16 talking to somebody and Yukon Flats used to have a  
17 really healthy population and recently somebody flew  
18 over there and they haven't seen a moose track and sign  
19 for a long time, so I'm kind of concerned about the  
20 population up there. What do you think is the biggest  
21 decline? Did that predator control -- I don't see any  
22 report of it.

23

24 Maybe it was a few years back.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Honea, through the  
29 Chair. That area of predator control is aimed  
30 primarily at taking wolves on Native lands and State  
31 lands around Allakaket and north and west of Allakaket.  
32 They do not do that on Kanuti because we're under  
33 different management mandate and that's natural  
34 diversity. It's an opportunity to use as a laboratory  
35 where the Kanuti Refuge is the area that's not  
36 receiving that treatment of predator control, wolf  
37 removal.

38

39 So after five years of that project,  
40 we're just now done with year one, the State is just  
41 done with year one, we're cooperating with the State to  
42 get the baseline data for the non-treatment area.  
43 That's the non-control area and that's the Refuge. So  
44 after four more years we'll be able to evaluate that  
45 question. This is only the first year, so I don't  
46 think we have enough information to be able to answer  
47 that question now, Mr. Honea.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll speak to that  
50 moose population blip down that, the big blip coming

1 off of '92 or so, was the -- the '92-'93 winter we had  
2 seven and a half feet of snow. There was eight and a  
3 half feet in the John River and it killed half our  
4 moose. Half the moose were dead. Then the fecundity  
5 dropped dramatically behind the -- then they started  
6 recovering.

7  
8 The biologists that live in Fairbanks  
9 don't pay too much attention to snowfalls. In  
10 Fairbanks, they don't seem to realize that the snow  
11 depths in the south slope of the Brooks Range in that  
12 area up the Koyukuk is way different than in Fairbanks.  
13 The Tanana country hasn't had snow for 22 years.

14  
15 So we've had these varying deep snow  
16 years, we've had an increasing brown bear population  
17 and the brown bears kill moose. They've got some huge  
18 brown bears on the Kanuti Flats and they kill adult  
19 bull moose. They kill adult moose and they lost  
20 multiple adult moose in the collaring project, but I  
21 don't know that you could document how many were killed  
22 by brown bear.

23  
24 So there's various factors that keep  
25 coming up, but these deep snow years keep pushing these  
26 moose down. That's what we keep getting these four and  
27 five feet of snow. Allakaket had five feet of snow in  
28 '08-'09 and that was real, real hard on the moose. So  
29 it reduces productivity and we've got a static bear  
30 problem and they keep eating all the calves. One of  
31 the major problems is snow and bear predation.

32  
33 Wolves is another factor, but I don't  
34 consider wolves as a major factor on the Kanuti. It's  
35 the snow and the bear predation factors. They've got  
36 big black bears down there too. So that's why it keeps  
37 jig-jagging like that. So the control area around  
38 Allakaket is going to help somewhat. I don't think  
39 it's going to overall fix the whole issue there.

40  
41 Thanks, Mike. I just wanted to  
42 interpolate that for Don. That was his question, why  
43 this moose population is going down. Ray.

44  
45 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair, Mike. The  
46 issue you raised about the truck drivers hunting, that  
47 would be easily solved if somewhere in the scoping  
48 there you ask the employer to forbid that. Donald did  
49 that. Anybody that's working at Donlin will not be  
50 able to subsistence hunt while they're employed. The

1 same thing could be done on that, but it has to be  
2 asked at some of the scoping meetings and then they  
3 could build it in to their plan for getting approval.  
4 At the appropriate place, that issue would need to be  
5 brought up.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The problem is that  
8 most of those truckers are not -- they're going to be  
9 under a contract. They're not working for the mine,  
10 they're working under a contract. They're going to be  
11 Big State or some trucking outfit, Carlisle or  
12 somebody. They're just truckers. They're residents of  
13 Alaska and they can do kind of whatever they want to.  
14 So that's kind of the big -- that's an issue that  
15 nobody really wants to talk about.

16  
17 I keep bringing it up.

18  
19 The all-terrain vehicle closure and the  
20 firearm closure on the Dalton Highway is the only way  
21 we can control the Board of Game. The Board of Game  
22 will throw it wide open. They'll go 100 miles away  
23 from the Haul Road on the North Slope if they could use  
24 four-wheelers and snow machines period. They would  
25 wipe the caribou out on the North Slope. That's an  
26 open country. It's nothing even like hunting in the  
27 Nelchina and the Forty Mile where they closed the  
28 season in two days.

29  
30 I mean these populations up there are  
31 in the Arctic. Look at the late spring last year  
32 killed massive amounts of Dall sheep and caribou  
33 because just the spring. They're on the edge of  
34 surviving there. This is a tough country. You can't  
35 throw it wide open to hundreds and hundreds of hunters.

36  
37 So there's no discussion about a  
38 closure on this road to Ambler. There's no discussion  
39 about ATV and firearm closure on that road. The State  
40 doesn't want to go there because they want that road  
41 open. That tells me they want that road open. I don't  
42 believe that the road will be closed.

43  
44 The employers in Ambler might close it  
45 to their workers, but that doesn't mean these truckers  
46 are going to be closed at all. So I'm very concerned  
47 about that road.

48  
49 Any other questions on the Kanuti  
50 presentation.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
4 Mike.

5

6 Oh, Don.

7

8 MR. HONEA: Just one last question. I  
9 guess on the Kanuti do you have a drawing permit and is  
10 that -- well maybe I'm opening up a whole different  
11 thing here. I mean on the Nowitna or the Koyukuk or  
12 something there's a drawing thing issued and I was just  
13 wondering if it's the call of the State manager,  
14 whoever does that, or do you work in conjunction with  
15 that or how does that work on your particular Refuge?

16

17 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Honea through  
18 the Chair. There is not a drawing permit like lower  
19 down on the Koyukuk, but there are registration permit  
20 hunts. So those registration permits are available  
21 through the licensed vendor at Allakaket who is our  
22 liaison also and he gives the Federal permits as well  
23 as the State permits. I would urge you that if you are  
24 interested in a drawing permit type of situation that  
25 you do that through the State process, the Koyukuk  
26 River Advisory Committee. That is something that  
27 perhaps you could have that dialog through the Chair at  
28 the Koyukuk Advisory Committee at their next meeting.

29

30 I don't think there's a moose  
31 conservation concern right now looking at density of  
32 moose and the hunting patterns that do exist. There is  
33 a Kanuti controlled use area which protects the local  
34 Federally qualified users because two-thirds of Kanuti  
35 Refuge is within the Kanuti controlled use area and  
36 that's open only to Federally qualified users. The  
37 only areas that are not part of that controlled use  
38 area are the extreme eastern part of the Refuge.

39

40 So if you look at the drainages and the  
41 tributaries, those areas are beyond practical boat  
42 travel from the villages. You get shallow water and  
43 distance and everything. So that controlled use area  
44 does a really good job of separating the local hunters  
45 from the non-local hunters and I would urge the Council  
46 to pay very close attention to any proposals on the  
47 State side that would look at that controlled use area  
48 because that I think is doing a very good job right  
49 now. There are proposals that come up every few years  
50 to remove that on the State side.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mike.  
2 Thanks so much for your presentation. I really  
3 appreciate all the work Kanuti is doing. I mean there's  
4 just a tremendous amount of work being done on Kanuti  
5 for such a small Refuge. I really appreciate what  
6 you're doing there.

7  
8 MR. SPINDLER: And Mr. Chair, I'd  
9 welcome a side conversation about snow because we do  
10 some snow monitoring too, but I don't want to take up  
11 more of your time on that.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks.

14  
15 Melinda.

16  
17 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. We do have some  
18 Park Service employees who are on the phone and ready  
19 to discuss the new business agenda item that we added  
20 in yesterday, which is the Dall sheep population. So  
21 if we'd like to move into that discussion. We've got  
22 Kumi on the line, we've got -- is it Kyle?

23  
24 (Interruption on conference call)

25  
26 MS. BURKE: Remind folks please, if  
27 you're not Kumi, Kyle or Marcy, please push \*6 to mute  
28 yourselves and I'm going to be handing out your handout  
29 right now, Kumi, if you'd like to -- I'm not sure who's  
30 going to go ahead and start the discussion.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kumi, Kyle and  
33 Marcy, I would like the Western Interior Regional  
34 Council to be apprised of the recent population  
35 declines of Dall sheep and caribou and there's going to  
36 be the need for -- there were management restrictions,  
37 et cetera, so I would like this Council to be aware of  
38 those issues. So, Kumi, would you like to give an  
39 overview. I've got your 2014 sheep survey distance and  
40 sampling paper in front of us.

41  
42 Go ahead.

43  
44 MS. RATTENBURY: Thank you for having  
45 us on the agenda today. I sent a PowerPoint to Melinda  
46 yesterday and I'm not sure if that's what you're  
47 looking at right now.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It lists Dall sheep,  
50 lamb and ewe in the top left corner.

1 MS. RATTENBURY: Okay. So I work for  
2 the Arctic Network with the National Park Service and  
3 this past summer we conducted distance sampling surveys  
4 for Dall sheep across the western Brooks Range and also  
5 a portion of the Central Brooks Range. We did that in  
6 conjunction with a number of biologists from different  
7 agencies.

8  
9 One thing I just want to say here and I  
10 apologize there's not an opening slide that explains  
11 distance sampling, but the area that we are trying to  
12 monitor Dall sheep in, which is all the purple stuff on  
13 the left, the gray stuff in the center and all the blue  
14 stuff west of the Haul Road, that's approximately the  
15 size -- two times the size of the state of New Jersey.

16  
17  
18 So to get an abundance estimate, to get  
19 an idea for compositions, we went to distance sampling.  
20 The way we do that is fly contour transects of lines,  
21 random elevations on mountains and looking for sheep on  
22 the uphill side and then using some population modeling  
23 to get our estimate. With that we end up flying  
24 somewhere between 11 and 18 percent of the available  
25 habitat of the full survey area, but that allows us to  
26 cover a larger area to get an estimate.

27  
28 So that's a bit different from the  
29 minimum count or the census methods that are done in a  
30 lot of other parts of the state that are focused on  
31 survey areas and are looking at composition data  
32 particularly for different ram classes. I just want to  
33 clarify that because the data that you're seeing comes  
34 from that and you'll see confidence intervals on  
35 different things in it. It's from different survey  
36 methods and I'll get to that when I get down to talking  
37 about the area around Wiseman.

38  
39 The first slide shows what we saw at  
40 Noatak National Preserve. Basically the total  
41 abundance is down 70-80 percent since the last time  
42 surveys were done across this large area in 2011.  
43 We're now able to pull off surveys the last two  
44 summers. They were planned for 2013 and couldn't get  
45 them done because of weather and that was for a small  
46 portion of that total range.

47  
48 I can't tell if there's a lot of  
49 feedback, but hopefully you guys are hearing me.  
50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We hear you just  
2 fine, Kumi. Go ahead.

3  
4                   MS. RATTENBURY: Okay. Great. So the  
5 decline was larger in the DeLongs, and that's the  
6 Noatak River, than it was in the (indiscernible) of the  
7 Noatak River, but still overall 70 percent and 80  
8 percent on the north side. All age classes were  
9 affected. Primarily there's a big drop in the number of  
10 lambs, 2 to 3 per 100 ewe-like, which means the number  
11 born and the number that survived until the July survey  
12 is very low.

13  
14                   People who fly a lot spend a lot of  
15 time (indiscernible) going on for the past couple  
16 years. So that, in conjunction with these surveys,  
17 resulted in the State passing an emergency order to  
18 close all hunts in 23 and 26A and then on the Federal  
19 side the Park Service requested the Federal Subsistence  
20 Board to close the Federal hunts in 23 and 26A west.

21  
22                   So skipping over to the eastern Brooks  
23 Range we worked with the BLM Yukon Field Office and  
24 that was from the Arctic Refuge, pilot from the Arctic  
25 Refuge, to survey that full area. We'd intended to do  
26 the gray, but due to weather didn't get the entire area  
27 done. This was six aircraft.

28  
29                   We also had an Alaska Native Science  
30 and Engineering Program intern from Kotzebue, who was  
31 in the Pathways Program. She just graduated high  
32 school and just entered school at UAF and she's in the  
33 ANSEP program and was with us on that survey.

34  
35                   We did surveying on the Itkillik River  
36 valley area, which is between Anaktuvuk and Galbraith  
37 Lake and between Anaktuvuk and the Haul Road in  
38 northeastern Gates where that black circle is. Every  
39 year, using the same method since 2009, between 2009  
40 and 2012, numbers were pretty stable. Between 17-1,800  
41 and then we had a drop of 50 percent last summer and  
42 then another 25 percent drop this past summer in 2014,  
43 so it was a total 62 percent down since 2012.

44  
45                   We probably only see that decline in  
46 the number of ewe-like sheep, which includes yearlings  
47 and small lambs and then again low productivity or  
48 number of lambs born and surviving until July. This  
49 year was 12 lambs per ewe-like, which is also low. Not  
50 as low as in 2013, but basically that means for the

1 past two years there's going to be very few sheep  
2 recruited into the breeding population the next couple  
3 years compared to the average. Again, State hunts were  
4 closed in 26A east during that time for the season.

5  
6 For the next slide it shows kind of the  
7 trend for two reference areas but have been surveyed  
8 quite a bit by the Park Service in connection with the  
9 Fish and Game. There were minimum counts done in the  
10 western Baird Mountains and that's the area north of  
11 Kotzebue, south of the Noatak River on the left of the  
12 map at the top and the gray bars relate to that. So  
13 that's the minimum count that's been corrected with a  
14 sightability model that they developed in the late  
15 '90s, early 2000s.

16  
17 What you can see from that is the  
18 population was kind of like at its higher range and  
19 then dropped off dramatically in the early '90s and due  
20 to that hunts were closed in the area until '97 and  
21 then, when they opened back up again, it's only been a  
22 Federal hunt since that time. So we're seeing a drop  
23 off again this year.

24  
25 The Itkillik area northeast has been  
26 surveyed less frequently, but you've got some counts  
27 from '83, '96 and 2005 in there. The '96 was a double  
28 count survey done by Fish and Game and Park Service.  
29 That was at the time the population was starting to  
30 recover, so it looked like it came back up again and in  
31 2000s, but it's dropped off again in the last couple  
32 years.

33  
34 So that's kind of what's been going on  
35 in the long term, what we know long term for those two  
36 areas. Now I'll go to the third slide, the last slide,  
37 to talk about the Wiseman area, which is in 24A and  
38 25A. We did a distance sampling survey including this  
39 area and we got an estimate specifically for these two  
40 units, 1A and 1B, which are from the Haul Road out to  
41 Chandler Lake.

42  
43 I'm just reporting the Park Service,  
44 Fish and Wildlife results here. So you see the  
45 estimates of the 95 percent confidence interval showing  
46 a total of over 1,400 sheep, 846 ewe-like, 66 lambs,  
47 503 less than full curl, 37 full curl rams, then the 8  
48 lambs per ewe-like at the bottom there.

49  
50 What we see here that this isn't very

1 different from the 2002 to 2012 count average, but  
2 there's a different survey method and those counts  
3 weren't corrected for sightability, whereas the  
4 distance sampling that we do does, so it's very hard to  
5 compare those. The other thing too is Fish and Game  
6 also had done a minimum count or a survey in that same  
7 area this summer, so their numbers are different from  
8 ours, but it's hard to compare those again because the  
9 methods differ and we can't compare what our  
10 sightability is.

11  
12                   There's no doubt that the number of  
13 lambs born surviving this year, able to be recruited,  
14 is low for both the distance sampling surveys that we  
15 did and for counts that have been done there. It's  
16 lower than the average.

17  
18                   So that's probably the main point to  
19 bring up with you is that here are results. They're  
20 not readily comparable with what some counts have been,  
21 so it's hard to see the decline there, but definitely  
22 lamb numbers are down no matter how you survey the  
23 area.

24  
25                   So that's pretty much it. I can take  
26 any questions now.

27  
28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council have  
29 any questions on this sheep data that Kumi's presented.

30  
31                   (No comments)

32  
33                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that was  
34 fairly thorough, Kumi. Appreciate that.

35  
36                   MS. RATTENBURY: There was one other  
37 thing I just wanted to say. While we were flying  
38 around what we saw was more typically what we had seen  
39 in Gates and the western Baird Mountains than in the  
40 kind of central DeLongs in years past when there were  
41 more sheep. That's where we started seeing sheep. Out  
42 west it really is almost like a desert. It's pretty  
43 bleak. So I just wanted to bring that up. I know that  
44 the numbers are down in that area and our numbers can't  
45 really be compared to look at that directly.

46  
47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One thing that I  
48 would like to insert is that after the 2013 late spring  
49 I saw very few yearlings. There were virtually no  
50 lambs last year and this year there's very few lambs

1 again. So really there's three age classes, from lambs  
2 to three years old, that are totally lacking and that's  
3 what my concern is, that we have this complete blank in  
4 recruitment.

5  
6                   You're counting lambs in the summer.  
7 There's still lambs going to be killed by eagles before  
8 they leave. Eagles kill lambs. In the outmigration of  
9 eagles in mid-September, the eagles cross over the  
10 Brooks Range and they search those hills thoroughly as  
11 they're moving to the south. So there are lambs that  
12 are in the survey that are not actually there right  
13 this minute.

14  
15                   So the reality is the recruitments have  
16 been very, very low. We're looking at a full  
17 extirpation of sheep from the Dalton Highway to the  
18 east. You know, these rams that you counted in the  
19 survey, that's in the summertime before the hunt  
20 occurs, so those rams are not there either. So we just  
21 basically keep culling off all the rams off the top.  
22 We're coming to in four years a cliff where we're not  
23 going to have any rams. We're not going to have a  
24 breeding population of rams because the hunting  
25 pressure continues to take them off the top and we  
26 don't know what's going to happen next year.

27  
28                   So we're going to have a three-year  
29 blank and the rams we have right now have to be  
30 conserved for that three-year period and that's what  
31 the problem is going to be. I want the managers to  
32 start thinking of strategies to protect the remaining  
33 rams as it goes through that three-year blank. We  
34 can't just keep killing them all off the top because  
35 we're going to run out of rams. We're going to come to  
36 a point where we're not going to have hardly any rams  
37 to breed to ewes, the remaining ewes.

38  
39                   So that's what the strategy has to be  
40 and I want sheep management biologists like yourself, I  
41 want the BLM, I want the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and I  
42 want the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to think  
43 about what the strategy is of how we're going to  
44 protect the remaining rams as we go through that trough  
45 of three years.

46  
47                   So I wanted to get that on the record.

48  
49                   Thank you. I appreciate that data.

50

1 I see no Council comments on that.

2

3 Kyle, are you going to give us a  
4 caribou report? We've got bleak problems with caribou  
5 also. Are you there, Kyle?

6

7 MR. JOLY: Yes, I am, Mr. Chairman.  
8 Thank you for having me. I'm Kyle Joly. I'm a  
9 wildlife biologist with Gates of the Arctic National  
10 Park. I'll just run through quickly a little bit on  
11 the Western Arctic Herd. The population crashed back  
12 in the mid '70s, dropping to 75,000 animals and  
13 increased steadily since that time until about 2003  
14 when the herd topped out at 490,000 caribou. Since  
15 that time the herd has declined. The most recent  
16 estimate is from 2013 by Alaska Department of Fish and  
17 Game at 235,000 animals. So less than half the size of  
18 its peak.

19

20 Looking at that decade-long decline,  
21 the average has been about 7 percent of the population  
22 per year. The decline has increased in the last couple  
23 years and it's closer to 15 percent decline. If you  
24 start tracking that population decline out, depending  
25 on which average you use, the more recent or the  
26 decade-long average, the current population could be  
27 under 200,000 animals already as of our current data.  
28 The last census was in July of 2013.

29

30 So a couple things that I would like  
31 the Council to think about is there is a Western Arctic  
32 Herd Management Plan. We're going to be dropping from  
33 a more liberal harvest to a lower level, a more  
34 conservative level of harvest in the plan.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say, Kyle, you're  
37 really starting to break up. Are you on a cell phone?

38

39 MR. JOLY: No, I'm on a landline.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Are you  
42 stretching the cord too far?

43

44 MR. JOLY: I don't know what's going  
45 on.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You're  
48 clearing up a lot. Go ahead.

49

50 MR. JOLY: Okay. Did you catch any of

1 that?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That last part where  
4 you were going into the management plan.

5

6 MR. JOLY: Yeah. So the management  
7 plan at 235,000 animals we would drop into the orange  
8 or conservative level. What I would like you to think  
9 about is that given that that population is accelerated  
10 in decline, do we need to think about moving into the  
11 preservative or yellow level of management, which is a  
12 population below 200,000 caribou.

13

14 There's rather differences in  
15 management. Under the conservative or 235,000 level,  
16 there would be only voluntary restrictions on cow  
17 harvest by residents, whereas if we moved into the  
18 yellow or preservative level where we think that  
19 there's less than 200,000 caribou, there would be  
20 actual restrictions on cow harvest by residents.

21

22 What I'd like the Council to deliberate  
23 on is whether or not the time is right for restrictions  
24 on the Federal side. I assume that there's going to be  
25 some restrictions on the State side as well.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The herd is  
28 documented at 235,000. There's no feeling that the  
29 herd by Jim Dau or the State on whether the herd  
30 recruitment is adequate to sustain that 235,000 by the  
31 Onion Portage passage and what kind of calf/cow ratios  
32 they had?

33

34 MR. JOLY: I haven't seen this year's  
35 cow/calf ratio data yet. This year was a much easier  
36 year than say from two, three years ago. The springs  
37 were much more difficult then. We actually had a  
38 really early spring out in western Alaska. The caribou  
39 migrated about three weeks early up to the calving  
40 grounds. So there is some hope that the decline will  
41 not accelerate, but at this point there's no indication  
42 that it's going to reverse course.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's my feeling,  
45 my personal feeling, that the sheep lambs, the very few  
46 that are there, are real large and very healthy. The  
47 moose I saw were very large and very healthy. I would  
48 assume that the fecundity of caribou cows this year is  
49 going to be higher than its been because that rainy  
50 summer is very advantageous to caribou. No heat, no

1 insects and lots of flowers. The pollinating went on  
2 and on and on for flowers. I've never seen flowers  
3 pollinating for six weeks beyond their normal date. So  
4 that's a big deal for those caribou. I think the  
5 fecundity is going to actually turn around. I don't  
6 think it's all as bleak. So I don't know that we need  
7 to go into preservative when we don't know that this  
8 caribou herd has actually hit the yellow yet.

9

10 I do want -- this Council has a seat on  
11 the Western Arctic Caribou Working Group and I would  
12 like Pollock Simon, who unfortunately wasn't here, I  
13 would like him to go with a directive from this Council  
14 that we are concerned about the Western Arctic Caribou  
15 Herd and we would like to enforce that there needs to  
16 be conservation of adult cows at this time to start to  
17 get this herd stabilized and turn around. We do have a  
18 seat on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group.

19

20 Continue, Kyle. I'm just inserting  
21 that right now. Your question was do we think we need  
22 to go to preservative. My personal feeling is I'm not  
23 sure if we're there yet and I don't know that it's that  
24 bleak. That's why I was trying to find out if they got  
25 some fat indices from the Onion Portage on cows and  
26 that would have been very important information. That  
27 has a big effect on the fecundity of caribou, how fat  
28 they are in the fall time.

29

30 So I don't know that we're at  
31 preservative, but I do feel that we're in conservative  
32 and I would like our member from this Council to bring  
33 that to the -- so make a note of that to transmit to  
34 Pollock with paper that he needs to bring that before  
35 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group.

36

37 So continue on with your presentation,  
38 Kyle.

39

40 MR. JOLY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
41 Yeah, I was at Onion Portage this year. The timing of  
42 the event was unfortunate. We just caught the tail end  
43 of the vanguard of the migration and then the migration  
44 basically turned off. We actually had numerous days in  
45 a row where we had no caribou crossing. The animals  
46 that did cross were in very good condition. They  
47 appeared very fat. We kind of had the timing in  
48 between the vanguard and we left before the bulk of the  
49 herd came through several days after we left. So we  
50 actually saw probably the fewest amount of caribou that

1 we've ever seen at Onion Portage, but just a few days  
2 after the operation pulled out there was thousands of  
3 caribou coming across.

4  
5 But the animals we did see were quite  
6 healthy.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you get an idea  
9 of what the cow/calf ratio was from the animals you  
10 saw?

11  
12 MR. JOLY: Well, I wouldn't want to  
13 speculate. It was incredibly few animals that we saw.  
14 You know, just a few groups could have really biased  
15 the percentage of animals that had calves. The animals  
16 that we were seeing lots of them did have calves and  
17 some of the calves -- it was quite variable on the calf  
18 weights. We had some real small ones and we had a  
19 couple real large ones. A couple 120-pounders.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Continue.

22  
23 MR. JOLY: I guess the last thing that  
24 I wanted to suggest is it would be good to hear your  
25 ideas from the Council if you have any suggestions on  
26 changes to Federal regulations regarding caribou  
27 hunting in the Western Arctic Herd. It's just the time  
28 to have some modest tightening of regulations. I know  
29 back in the '70s the big complaint was that it went  
30 from really liberal hunting to one bull per household  
31 in a rather dramatic move and people are still upset  
32 about that and I was just wondering if there was some  
33 kind of tiered approach that the Council could  
34 recommend that we don't have that kind of similar  
35 scenario play out.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if you're  
38 asking for management opinions, it's my management  
39 opinion that I see this bull/cow ratio going down near  
40 the 40 bull per 100 cow management objective. I feel  
41 that bulls, large bulls, should not be taken in October  
42 at all because you can't eat them and there's no reason  
43 to be shooting any of them anyway. So I would like to  
44 see the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group look  
45 at the feeling of the management group about  
46 eliminating harvest of large bulls in October through  
47 the middle of November.

48  
49 They're real skinny when they come out  
50 of rut and they're not real good to eat. There's

1 really no reason for anybody to be shooting, sport  
2 hunters or anybody to be shooting bull caribou in  
3 October at all when we're approaching the management  
4 objective. Those bulls should be conserved for the  
5 period of time between -- basically they're good after  
6 the middle of February all the way until the end of  
7 September. In October they go over a cliff and you  
8 can't eat them, so nobody should be shooting those.

9  
10 There should be no drop-off hunters  
11 killing bull caribou into October, so large bulls  
12 should be in conservation. That's one management thing  
13 that I see that needs to occur for Western Arctic,  
14 Teshekpuk and possibly Central Arctic. I feel that  
15 conservation of adult cows needs to occur, but I want  
16 that working group to talk about that.

17  
18 Yeah, in 1975 we went from no closed  
19 season, no limit. You could sell them and you could  
20 use them for dog feed and then we went to one bull.  
21 Emergency closure with one bull limit. Yeah, that was  
22 a real bummer. So we need to start talking about some  
23 of these management objectives.

24  
25 Melinda is taking notes of what I'm  
26 saying here to give to Pollock. Any other Council  
27 member suggestions on how to reduce the impact to the  
28 declining caribou herd. Eleanor.

29  
30 MS. YATLIN: This is Eleanor. I had a  
31 question on Arctic Caribou Herd. Do they go all the  
32 way over to Selawik National Wildlife Refuge, that's  
33 where they go? The reason why I ask is I think it is  
34 Kobuk -- either Kobuk or Shungnak. It was on the news  
35 about this Arctic Herd and the decline. The same  
36 question I'm saying, it seems like the same scenario  
37 was being played out in that news release saying why.  
38 Then it got me to thinking, if it declined that much  
39 from -- I was looking at it from 2003 to 2013, wouldn't  
40 -- you know, we know these herds move. Wouldn't it go  
41 to preservative? Because we don't have results for  
42 this year. That's just my question. I mean, you know,  
43 I'm just trying to clarify here.

44  
45 Thank you.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The primary  
48 harvesters are subsistence users and I think the  
49 statistics that I saw for harvest of the Western Arctic  
50 Caribou Herd was 14,000, was the factor that the Board

1 of Game was wrestling with. What I disliked about the  
2 Board of Game process that they included the Teshekpuk  
3 amounts necessary for subsistence in with the Western  
4 Arctic Herd, so they're mixing two different herds  
5 together and still using 14,000. It's the same number.  
6 So Teshekpuk should have had its own amounts necessary,  
7 but they included it with -- but there's a lot of  
8 subsistence use.

9  
10 So the working group is like all of the  
11 villages of the whole NANA region including the Koyukuk  
12 River Advisory Committee, the Western Interior Regional  
13 Council. All of these voices come to this meeting in  
14 December. What we're throwing out as management  
15 suggestions to the working group and that's why I feel  
16 that these suggestions that we're making need to go  
17 forward with Pollock. He has to have something in his  
18 hand. This is what the Western Interior Regional  
19 Council suggestions are, you know, we need to eliminate  
20 large bull harvest in October.

21  
22 Any bladed bull. Any bull with a  
23 shovel needs to be protected. If it's got a shovel,  
24 you can't shoot it in October period. You can kill  
25 little bulls. You can kill a yearling bull. Yeah, you  
26 can get those. People kill those. But you can't kill  
27 a bladed bull. They call it the shovel. Write that in  
28 there, the shovel thing. So those large bulls need to  
29 be protected.

30  
31 You've got any other suggestions,  
32 Eleanor?

33  
34 MS. YATLIN: No, just one more  
35 question. Does the Western Arctic Herd go to Anaktuvuk  
36 Pass -- go through Anaktuvuk Pass?

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Western  
39 Arctic Herd -- on the first page it's got all these  
40 dots, a whole bunch of dots there. Those are all radio  
41 collars. They go to the Huslia Flats, they go through  
42 Anaktuvuk.

43  
44 MS. YATLIN: Yeah, I see that.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When I was a kid --  
47 what's not on this map is there used to hundred of  
48 thousands of the Western Arctic Herd used to come down  
49 the John River and the North Fork right by us. The  
50 main herd traveled down into the Hodzana Mountains to

1 the north of the Yukon Flats and went all the way to  
2 the Porcupine River. Hundreds of thousands of caribou  
3 used to be in what they called the Finger Mountain  
4 country on the Haul Road. There was lots of caribou.

5  
6 So they shifted range in 1973 in  
7 coincidence with the crash. The crashing in 1973 and  
8 they shifted way west. They haven't come back into our  
9 country for decades now. I expect them to do that  
10 sometime. So that's the same caribou you're getting on  
11 the Huslia Flats are the Western Arctic Caribou.

12  
13 Any other management suggestions to the  
14 Western Arctic Caribou Working Group.

15  
16 Don.

17  
18 MR. HONEA: Well, not knowing well  
19 enough about what the work Pollock -- I guess we kind  
20 of sorely miss any report of what they're doing, but I  
21 certainly am in favor of any kind of measurements or  
22 something such as you mentioned of taking bulls too  
23 late in the season and any other measurements that the  
24 RAC here can help with I'm certainly in favor. I just  
25 kind of miss Pollock's presence on this and a report to  
26 us, so I will leave that in your hand's, sir.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These are  
29 suggestions that -- you know, I want to be highly  
30 reliant on the Western Arctic Caribou Working Group to  
31 develop -- and I want them to think about different  
32 aspects, so we're making suggestions to them.

33  
34 Did you have anything else you wanted  
35 to give us? I wanted to make one more point before we  
36 go on. I want the Council to be aware that Anaktuvuk  
37 Pass -- my friends in Anaktuvuk Pass, which are  
38 actually in our region. They're in the head of the  
39 John River. My friends in Anaktuvuk Pass have not  
40 gotten any caribou this fall. They're crying the blues  
41 in Anaktuvuk Pass because zero caribou have come  
42 through there.

43  
44 Someone got a hold of a telemetry map  
45 for caribou migration this fall and put it on the page  
46 on FaceBook and I saw it and it's graphic. In 2010, I  
47 sat before the Board of Game and they were going to go  
48 from an October 1 cow caribou harvest date and they  
49 were moving it to September 1. Well, I was telling  
50 them that you're going to allow sport hunters in 26B to

1 shoot cow caribou when they're aggregating and  
2 migrating and you're going to deflect caribou  
3 migrations. Oh, no, these are all -- Southcentral  
4 board members, they know all about Arctic Caribou.  
5 Yeah, right, you don't know anything about Arctic  
6 Caribou.

7

8 Well, they opened the season on July 1  
9 with an illegal proposal. The Department submitted a  
10 proposal during deliberation of the Board in 2010 March  
11 and in deliberation they went from a September 1 cow  
12 caribou season to July 1 for cows. They gave them all  
13 of August. So sure enough, that's exactly what I said.  
14 When the Central Herd calves near Prudhoe Bay, it moves  
15 over to the Arctic Refuge and then it wants to come  
16 back on a long diagonal and move into the Itkillik and  
17 Anaktuvuk River drainages. The Central Herd used to  
18 winter in the north edge of the Brooks Range and into  
19 the -- and come over into Anaktuvuk Pass.

20

21 Well, the telemetry map shows that they  
22 started to come over and from 2010 the lead cows -- and  
23 cows lead migrations -- the lead cows get shot up big  
24 time by all these air boats and jet boats on the  
25 Ivashak River and they drove them way east over towards  
26 Arctic Village. The telemetry shows it. It shows a  
27 curve. So I've commented back to the people at  
28 Anaktuvuk Pass and said look at the map. Why aren't  
29 you getting any caribou? Because you can see that  
30 they're getting driven away from the Haul Road and it's  
31 been happening since 2010.

32

33 Killing cow caribou and migration on  
34 the North Slope by massive amounts of sport hunters has  
35 highly affected the people in Anaktuvuk Pass. Another  
36 management thing that the working group should be  
37 thinking about is sport hunters killing lead cows with  
38 large bag limits. They give them a five caribou limit.  
39 They've got lots of caribou to kill, these sport  
40 hunters. They think, oh, here comes a whole bunch of  
41 cows, I'll shoot one of those for camp meat. You just  
42 shot the leader. What people don't understand is  
43 there's dominant cows that lead migrations. It's a big  
44 deal.

45

46 So Anaktuvuk Pass is crying the blues  
47 right this minute because they don't have any caribou  
48 because the Central Herd is now way over in the east  
49 fork of the Chandalar, Your Creek, and the middle fork  
50 of the Chandalar, 100 miles to the east of me. I

1 hardly ever see a Central Arctic Caribou. Very, very  
2 few show up in late winter towards our country.

3

4 I think the working group should  
5 consider that aspect, hunting cow caribou when  
6 aggregated and migrating. The Native people over in  
7 Anaktuvuk and over in the Kobuk know to let the caribou  
8 go through. The sport hunters don't know that. So the  
9 Department should actually close it until the cows have  
10 moved through so they lay down a trail, but the  
11 Department is not going to spend that amount of money  
12 on it.

13

14 That's an aspect that the Western  
15 Arctic Caribou Working Group should think about, is how  
16 caribou migrations are deflected away from communities  
17 that rely on them by massive amounts of sport hunters.  
18 That would be another one of my comments.

19

20 So did you have any additional?

21

22 I really like your slide presentation  
23 here, Kyle.

24

25 Do you have any additional you would  
26 like to insert to the Council?

27

28 MR. JOLY: Yes, if I may, Mr. Chairman.  
29 I just want to answer the Council question about the  
30 range of the Western Arctic Herd. It spans from  
31 Unalakleet up to almost Barrow from the Chukchi Sea all  
32 the way to the Haul Road. So the herd ranges over  
33 about a third of the state.

34

35 I also wanted to inform the Council  
36 that I'm trying to wrap up survey results from one of  
37 the largest ever poop studies, fecal pellet studies out  
38 in the Northwest Alaska. Data coming back, it's  
39 amazing what you can get out of this besides diet.  
40 We're also able to tell just from the poop samples  
41 which ones are males, which are females and we're also  
42 able to tell from the females whether they're pregnant  
43 or not. When I was analyzing that data, I was able to  
44 determine some bull/cow ratios, which were 62 bulls per  
45 100 cows and I was also able to determine pregnancy  
46 rates, which were 82 percent of the cows, which is a  
47 little low than you'd hope, but it's about what you'd  
48 expect for a declining herd.

49

50 Before I open myself to questions on

1 that study, I would just -- getting back to ideas for  
2 the Western Arctic Herd Working Group to consider your  
3 thoughts on -- would the Council be supportive of any  
4 kind of changes, reductions in bag limits or setting  
5 quotas within bag limits on the number of cows?  
6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it depends on  
8 when the caribou migrate as to the propensity of the  
9 subsistence hunters whether they're going to shoot  
10 bulls or cows. So if they're migrating after October  
11 1, then most hunters are going to want to kill cows  
12 because they need meat. So they're going to kill cows.  
13 They're not going to shoot bulls. But if they come  
14 before -- if the caribou come in the middle of  
15 September, then bulls are preferred. They're big,  
16 they're fat, they're good eating.  
17

18 So I would like the working group to  
19 wrestle with that issue. I'm sure that the reduction  
20 in the amount of cow harvest -- I avoid cow harvest.  
21 We've had Teshekpuk Caribou coming around from the  
22 Northwest and Teshekpuk has been going down, so I avoid  
23 cow harvest.  
24

25 But I think the working group needs to  
26 wrestle with that one. I do not want to make  
27 recommendations at this time. I would suggest that in  
28 preservative that they refrain from shooting large cows  
29 especially that have calves, but I don't think that at  
30 this time I would like to go there from the Western  
31 Interior Regional Council.  
32

33 What does the Council feel about that.  
34

35 Council comments.  
36

37 (No comments)  
38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. Any  
40 additional, Kyle.  
41

42 MR. JOLY: That's all I have. Caribou,  
43 I would answer the question that you posed to Mike, but  
44 I'll definitely be willing to show up at your next  
45 meeting and present results from the 2008 to 2013 moose  
46 collaring project.  
47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. We'll have the  
49 meeting in Fairbanks this next spring and so you can  
50 cross the street and come over and see us.

1 MR. JOLY: That makes it easy. I'm the  
2 daddy daycare for my two little ones, so I couldn't  
3 make it to the meeting. I apologize for that. I'll  
4 also be able to give you an update on our bear  
5 collaring project, which is related to the Ambler Road.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
8 that. So I've covered the Dall sheep and caribou  
9 issue. Is Marcy there? Should I give Marcy a chance to  
10 give her presentation real quick, Marcy?

11  
12 MS. OKADA: Hi, Mr. Chair. Council  
13 members. I'm still online. I believe Melinda has a  
14 handout for you.

15  
16 MS. BURKE: Blue folder, right-hand  
17 side in the very back.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're having a hard  
20 time finding your presentation, Marcy. What's the  
21 title of it?

22  
23 MS. OKADA: At the top of the handout  
24 there's a Park Service letterhead and it says National  
25 Park Service update.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, this first one  
28 here? No, no.

29  
30 MS. BURKE: I'm going to go grab a  
31 stack. I think there's some on the table. Go ahead,  
32 Marcy. Sorry, I thought it was in there.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: She's going to grab  
35 some from the back of the room. Somehow it got dropped  
36 out from this blue folder we've got. You can start  
37 your presentation. We'll have it in a couple seconds.  
38 Go ahead.

39  
40 MS. OKADA: Okay. So on this update  
41 there has been information already shared on caribou  
42 and Dall sheep. Also the Ambler Mining District right-  
43 of-way. Kyle had already alluded to that Park Service  
44 and USGS have deployed 30 GPS collars on grizzly  
45 bears.....

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

48  
49 MS. OKADA: .....along the proposed  
50 corridor to the Ambler Mining District. So information

1 collected through these GPS collars would show  
2 information on movement, diets and health of these  
3 animals prior to development occurring in this region.

4  
5 As far as fire season went this past  
6 season. There were no fires that occurred within the  
7 boundaries of Gates of the Arctic. It was a low fire  
8 season in that area. Park Service, Gates of the Arctic  
9 National Park Subsistence Resource Commission met in  
10 April in Bettles. The primary topic for these  
11 meetings, the way it's been going for the last four  
12 meetings I would say, was there's been a lot of  
13 discussion on the road to Ambler Mining District and  
14 how it will affect the subsistence way of life for many  
15 of our resident zoned communities for Gates of the  
16 Arctic. Our next SRC meeting will be held in Fairbanks  
17 on November 12th.

18  
19 Mike Spindler had also mentioned we are  
20 expecting a right-of-way application before the end of  
21 this year from AIDEA to go ahead and put a road through  
22 the southern preserve unit of Gates of the Arctic  
23 National Park and Preserve.

24  
25 That's pretty much it in a nutshell.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
28 much, Marcy. Is there any questions for Gates of the  
29 Arctic. Marcy is a subsistence coordinator for Gates  
30 of the Arctic. I wanted to add that Gates of the  
31 Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission has had a change  
32 in chair, so Louie Commack from Ambler is the current  
33 chair of the Gates of the Arctic. Pollock was the  
34 previous chair. Louie is very concerned about the  
35 Ambler Road, so the Gates of the Arctic SRC is very  
36 engaged with the Ambler Road because it crosses right  
37 through that lower area of the Park Preserve. So the  
38 routing of the road and those kinds of issues and the  
39 impacts is what the Subsistence Resource Commission is  
40 concerned with. I'm still the vice chair of the Gates  
41 SRC.

42  
43 Any other questions, comments.

44  
45 (No comments)

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none.  
48 Thanks so much, Marcy. It's probably time for a break.

49  
50 MS. OKADA: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll take about  
2 a 15-minute break. We'll be back here at about 10 or  
3 15 after 11:00.

4  
5 (Off record)

6  
7 (On record)

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've got 18  
10 after.

11  
12 Go ahead, Melinda.

13  
14 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. We do have  
15 Council member Tim Gervais on the line for a little bit  
16 this morning and I think that we should go ahead and  
17 take care of the one other for sure action item that we  
18 need voting on while we have Tim on the line, which is  
19 out future meeting dates. I'd like all the Council  
20 members to turn to Page 215 and 216 and grab a pen.  
21 I'm going to give you the -- we're the second to last  
22 Council to meet this round, so there have been some  
23 weeks that are not going to be available to us. We  
24 keep it to two meetings a week maximum to not spread  
25 ourselves too thin with all the Staff.

26  
27 So we're looking at winter 2015. We  
28 went ahead and we've got a planned at least a half a  
29 day session with the Eastern Interior Council. That's  
30 on Page 215 here. So when we vote we'll reconfirm that  
31 date if the Council wishes to keep it the same. And  
32 then for the next Page 216, mark out the week of  
33 October 5th. There are already two Councils meeting  
34 that week so it is not available to us. Northwest  
35 Arctic and YK Delta have both chosen that week so it's  
36 out for us and the only other week that is not  
37 available is the week of October 26th and the rest of  
38 the window is fair game.

39  
40 Mr. Chair.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the March meeting  
43 dates of March 3rd and 4th are good for me. We picked  
44 these at our last meeting. Is the Council still good  
45 with those dates? How does it look for you, Tim?

46  
47 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, can you hear me  
48 okay, Jack?

49  
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I can hear you

1 now. Are those dates good for you, March 3rd and 4th?

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Yea they're fine.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Everybody  
6 looks affirmative on that one, Melinda. The week of  
7 the of 5th of October is out. So either week of the  
8 week of October 12 -- somebody is rattling a lot of  
9 papers there. Do you want to mute your phone or stop  
10 rapping your papers, eating chips or whatever it is you  
11 may be doing there.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So October 12th and  
16 the week of October 19th are both okay with me. How  
17 does the Council feel.

18

19 MS. YUHAS: Mr. Chairman?

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

22

23 MS. YUHAS: Just to point out to the  
24 Council, a lot of the Councils didn't realize they were  
25 scheduling their October meeting during the AFN this  
26 year. The week of the 19th will be the week of AFN  
27 next year.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we want to  
30 avoid that. So the week of the 12th, 13, 14, is that is  
31 a good date for the Council members here? Eleanor's  
32 not going to be there. How about you, Tim?

33

34 MR. GERVAIS: That week is good or the  
35 week after the AFN.

36

37 MS. BURKE: Yeah, that week is not  
38 available, Tim. There's already two Councils meeting  
39 that week, so it looks like if the Council is leaning  
40 towards the week of October 12, it seems like that  
41 would work well for most here in the room.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 13 and 14 is good  
44 and I'm thinking Galena. I'm not happy with the meeting  
45 room in Aniak and the attendance there. We're going to  
46 probably have proposals, we're going to be in a game  
47 cycle. I think we're going to have proposals around  
48 that Central Unit 21 area. Two different proposals  
49 that I'm aware of. And so I think Galena would be good  
50 and they've reconstructed Galena dramatically this year

1 and by the next fall it should be plenty -- the  
2 accommodations should be good. Anybody have any  
3 comments on the Galena meeting spot? Jenny.

4  
5 MS. PELKOLA: Oh, I was just worried  
6 about I don't know if we'll quite be ready, but we may  
7 be, but we should pick an alternate just in case.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What's the community  
10 hall looking like these days, is it still tore up?

11  
12 MS. PELKOLA: Well, right now it's not  
13 really being used. I mean some groups use it, but our  
14 tribal council is going to take it over, that's the  
15 plan, and we're going to renovate it, so I don't know.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you might be  
18 rebuilding it. Okay, we'll use it as a primary. I  
19 want to state for the record I'm unhappy with the  
20 meeting spot in Aniak. The acoustics there -- the  
21 primary focus of this Council is for public comment and  
22 when the public can't hear what you're saying because  
23 the room is reverberating out of this huge echoing gym-  
24 type building, that's counterproductive for this  
25 Councils work. The problem with Aniak they don't have  
26 any alternates and Melinda is in a quandary about where  
27 else we may be able to meet there.

28  
29 So I'm not real happy with Aniak right  
30 now and we don't get good attendance as much. So  
31 Chuathbaluk or Upper Kalskag or some other community in  
32 Aniak might be a good meeting spot. So a cost analysis  
33 for in a community near there because I don't think the  
34 Kuskokwim problems for king, chinook salmon is going to  
35 go away on the Kuskokwim either. So we could go down  
36 to.....

37  
38 MR. COLLINS: What about Nulato, is  
39 that a possibility or not?

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have met in  
42 Nulato before.

43  
44 MR. COLLINS: I mean we don't have a  
45 representative from there now and they do have hunting  
46 issues around there.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That might be a real  
49 good idea, Ray, because Nulato is up on a hill. Yeah,  
50 we've met there before. Yeah, that might be our second

1 alternate. That's a great idea. So Galena as a primary  
2 and Nulato as a secondary. A little harder to get into  
3 Nulato because the runway is on a hill and those,  
4 Anvik, Nulato, Ruby, those places could not be good in  
5 the fall meeting and so that's one of the downsides of  
6 that place. I know Kaltag's field is on the valley  
7 floor. What do you think about Kaltag, Jenny?

8  
9 MS. PELKOLA: I think they have the  
10 facilities down there to host a meeting.

11  
12 MR. HONEA: I would also vote for  
13 Kaltag.

14  
15 MR. COLLINS: Yeah we've never met  
16 there.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I think Kaltag  
19 as a secondary because of the access in the fall time  
20 we get lots of fog and I just am gun shy of Ruby and  
21 Anvik and places like that.

22  
23 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

26  
27 MS. BURKE: My mistake, Mr. Chair. I  
28 forgot to pencil in one of the Councils that met last  
29 week. They also have the 13th and 15th, so my  
30 apologies to the Council for not getting that written  
31 down soon enough. It's on a sticky, but not here on my  
32 -- so it looks like the week of the 12th there's  
33 already two Councils that are meeting that week. I  
34 can't remember the last time that there were three  
35 Councils during one week, but it looks like that is out  
36 as well.

37  
38 Southeast and Seward Pen.

39  
40 My apologies, Council.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've got seasons  
43 that go into the end of September, first of October. I  
44 don't really like that week.

45  
46 MR. HONEA: What about October 6th  
47 through the 9th?

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's already taken  
50 up.

1 MS. BURKE: The week of the 5th, 12th,  
2 and the 26th already have two Councils meeting.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What about the  
5 November windows week is out.  
6  
7 MS. BURKE: Yes, the week of November  
8 2nd is still open. Just North slope is scheduled to  
9 meet in Kaktovik and I don't coordinate that Council,  
10 so I would be available that week as well.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: November 3 and 4.  
13  
14 MS. PELKOLA: Sounds good.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The weather is  
17 usually better too.  
18  
19 MR. COLLINS: The school board  
20 convention is on the 4th. I'm leaving next week to go  
21 to the convention.  
22  
23 MS. BURKE: Where is that usually held,  
24 Ray?  
25  
26 MR. COLLINS: Anchorage.  
27  
28 MS. BURKE: I might be able to try to  
29 accommodate travel if there was a portion where Ray  
30 needed to leave a little bit early, if we're okay with  
31 the quorum, we might be able to handle a lot of the  
32 business on day one and if Ray needed to scoot out, I  
33 could try to do some creative travel.  
34  
35 MR. COLLINS: If we could travel on  
36 Sunday and meet Monday and Tuesday or something.  
37  
38 MS. BURKE: That would be fine with me.  
39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That can be  
41 challenging for air carriers and where I'm at. So 3rd  
42 and 4th. Can you get one day in there, Ray?  
43  
44 MR. COLLINS: Well, I'll see. It's kind  
45 of piling it up. I'd really prefer to meet earlier.  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.  
47  
48 MR. GERVAIS: Jack what if we traveled  
49 the morning of the 2nd and started the meeting in the  
50 afternoon of the 2nd, try to get more stuff done before

1 Ray has to.....  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Can you do  
4 that, Ray?  
5  
6 MR. COLLINS: Well, it depend on where  
7 I'm at. If I'm in Kaltag, then I don't know how -- the  
8 transportation out of there may take -- you know, there  
9 may be one flight a day or something like that, so it  
10 makes it awkward to try to get to Anchorage.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.  
13  
14 MR. COLLINS: I don't know if you go to  
15 Galena and then I suppose into town, but it may be two  
16 days travel. I know that happened once for the Nulato  
17 meeting. I missed that. I was working at the  
18 University then. It would take me two days. I had to  
19 go to Fairbanks one day and then go down the river the  
20 next day or something like that just to get there.  
21 Although what we've done with these charters now, that  
22 would be fine, but if I wasn't leaving the same time as  
23 the others, I think it would be very awkward to get out  
24 of those.  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that Era  
27 goes in there, the infamous Era, goes into Kaltag at  
28 least once a day from Galena and so they would go back  
29 up to Fairbanks and then you can jump on the Alaskan  
30 Airlines and go right down to Anchorage.  
31  
32 MR. HONEA: And some days it's right.  
33  
34 MR. SEMAKEN: Excuse me. Era comes  
35 through twice a day to Kaltag.  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay, twice a  
38 day.  
39  
40 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes. And Wright's comes  
41 in once a day on weekdays.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who is speaking?  
44  
45 MR. SEMAKEN: Goodwin Semaken.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay. And how  
48 about having a meeting in your community. Are you in  
49 Kaltag?  
50

1 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes sir, sounds great.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so we are  
4 thinking about having a meeting there And so you are  
5 listening to that.  
6  
7 MS. YATLIN: I just wondered if he was  
8 on the tribal council.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you on the  
11 tribal council?  
12  
13 MR. SEMAKEN: No, no. Just a  
14 subsistence user.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. We've never  
17 had a meeting there in Kaltag and I think that there's  
18 some moose issues in the Kaiyuh and we may need to make  
19 a season change and I would like to have a meeting at  
20 your community if that's fine with you.  
21  
22 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, sure, that sounds  
23 good. I was concerned about the Kaiyuh issue as well,  
24 so it would be good to have it here.  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you think that  
27 there's enough places for people to stay there?  
28  
29 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, there's a fire hall  
30 and then there's the school. They have places down  
31 there. How many people are you expecting?  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There might be like  
34 twenty-some people maybe.  
35  
36 MR. SEMAKEN: Oh, okay. Yeah, just  
37 give us a heads up notice and we'll figure it out.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that sounds  
40 great. Thanks so much for being on the line there. So  
41 we'll put down preliminary travel on the November 2nd,  
42 start the meeting after arrival and go through some  
43 business. If you've got to leave early, Ray, we'll  
44 probably clean up a lot of the action items.  
45  
46 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I could probably  
47 make that work. Well, you'll actually be leaving on  
48 the 4th then?  
49  
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Possibly, yeah.

1 MR. COLLINS: The charter goes back to  
2 Anchorage on the 4th. That would work for me too and I  
3 wouldn't have to have special traveling.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. So I think we  
6 can work it out. So the week of November 2nd, Kaltag,  
7 sounds good. So that's it for that. Oh, a motion to  
8 adopt that meeting cycle. We have Tim on the line.  
9 The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the place of  
10 meeting in Kaltag the week of November 2nd. So a  
11 motion.

12 MS. YATLIN: So moved.

13 MR. COLLINS: Second.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded.  
16 Those in favor of that meeting place and date signify  
17 by saying aye.

18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same  
21 sign.

22 (No opposing votes)

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that sounds  
24 great. So we have the Regional Director of the Park  
25 Service and then we have U.S. Fish and Wildlife and  
26 both of them have a proposed rule or are in scoping for  
27 a proposed rule that have similarities. So I would  
28 like to have them come to the table with appropriate  
29 staff.

30 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair.

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Melinda.

32 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. My suggestion  
33 would be to -- we still have a couple of items here  
34 under the new business and one that we had lingering  
35 from yesterday. My suggestion would be to go ahead and  
36 cover the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program item  
37 and then revisit the little homework we had thinking  
38 about Partners and possibly covering the BLM agency  
39 report and then I think that would really clear way for  
40 the afternoon for you to have plenty of time for this  
41 other discussion which we anticipate being a little  
42 lengthy.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So you  
2 probably have a little better feel for that than I do.  
3 So that sounds great.

4  
5 We'll go with that.

6  
7 Come on up.

8  
9 Go ahead, Trent.

10  
11 MR. LIEBICH: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
12 Members of the Council. For the record, I'm Trent  
13 Liebich. I would with the Office of Subsistence  
14 Management as a fisheries biologist. So I'm going to  
15 cover the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. We  
16 have a short briefing on Page 81 in your books and then  
17 starting on Page 84 there is a draft of the priority  
18 information needs where we'll have an upcoming call for  
19 proposals. So I'm going to talk through that a little  
20 big and we'll take a look at some of the priority  
21 information needs for both the funding regions that are  
22 covered by this Council and I'll explain all this as I  
23 go.

24  
25 So the Fishery Resource Monitoring  
26 Program I think most of you are very familiar with it,  
27 but for anyone who is not, it was established in 1999  
28 under Title VIII of ANILCA and it's run through the  
29 Office of Substance Management and it's a competitive  
30 funding source for studies on subsistence fisheries  
31 that are intended to expand the understanding of  
32 subsistence harvest, traditional knowledge of  
33 subsistence resources, and the populations of  
34 subsistence fish.

35  
36 So we break these into kind of three  
37 funding categories that we call harvest monitoring,  
38 traditional ecological knowledge, and stock status and  
39 trends. And gathering this information in an attempt  
40 to improve the ability to manage subsistence fisheries  
41 in a way that insures continued opportunity for  
42 sustainable sustenance use by rural Alaskans on Federal  
43 public lands.

44  
45 As I mentioned, there are two funding  
46 regions covered by this Council. We have the State of  
47 Alaska for subsistence is broken into ten Regional  
48 Advisory Councils, but the Resource Monitoring Program  
49 is only six funding regions. So for your Council you  
50 have the Yukon region, which includes the Yukon-

1 Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council, the Western  
2 Interior Regional Advisory Council, and the Eastern  
3 Interior Regional Advisory Council, SO that's one  
4 funding region that we're going to talk about.

5  
6 And the second funding region is the  
7 Kuskokwim, which involves the Western Interior Regional  
8 Advisory Council and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional  
9 Advisory Council. So those are two of the six funding  
10 regions that we are going to discuss today. And every  
11 two years the Office of Subsistence Management  
12 announces this notice of funding opportunity that's  
13 asking for investigation plans for projects that will  
14 provide information to help regulate Federal  
15 subsistence fisheries in Alaska.

16  
17 This notice of funding opportunity is  
18 what we call the announcement to let everybody know  
19 that we want them to submit investigation plans for the  
20 fisheries monitoring and research. The investigation  
21 plans are just descriptions of what and how the  
22 investigator plans to conduct the research, what we are  
23 going to do with the project and what we would be  
24 funding.

25  
26 Before we make that announcement, we're  
27 going through this process that we're working through  
28 right now, and we try and rely on the Regional Advisory  
29 Councils, the State and Federal land managers and  
30 others experts in the areas to tell us what fishery  
31 information is needed to manage the Federal subsistence  
32 fisheries. So we're going to go through the actual  
33 priority information needs in a couple of minutes.

34  
35 So we put that call for proposals out  
36 and then we get the investigation plans back and once  
37 they are submitted there's a review process that goes  
38 through a Technical Review Committee and that's made up  
39 of fisheries experts from the five Federal agencies as  
40 well as the Department of Fish and Game. They review  
41 the investigation plans to make sure they are  
42 technically sound and if the projects are technically  
43 sound, then they go back to the Regional Advisory  
44 Councils where we find out which projects have the  
45 highest importance within your regions.

46  
47 Finally all that goes through the  
48 InterAgency Staff Committee and then the Staff  
49 Committee is made up of staff that represents the  
50 Federal Subsistence Board. All that information is

1 taken forward to the Federal Subsistence Board where  
2 the final decisions are made on what projects should  
3 receive funding based on the funding levels. Then the  
4 Office of Subsistence Management ultimately uses the  
5 Board recommendation to make the final funding  
6 decisions.

7  
8                   So funding is ranged around four  
9 million up to almost eight million in past years. The  
10 last funding cycle we were right around four million  
11 and then this next cycle I don't think that there is a  
12 final dollar value available yet, but I think that  
13 there's just kind of a rough ballpark estimate that's  
14 going to be right around \$4 million again, so similar  
15 to what the last funding cycle was.

16  
17                   So if you want to turn to Page 87 in  
18 your Council books, we'll start to discuss the Yukon  
19 region priority information needs on 87 and then on  
20 Page 89 is the Kuskokwim, but I think we should discuss  
21 them separately, so we'll start with the Yukon. And I'm  
22 just going to read through this list and let you guys  
23 know where we're at. If you see anything missing or  
24 have any other needs or changes in the wording, we'd be  
25 happy to try to work through that now and this is  
26 what's being set up to make that call for proposals.  
27 So we're nearing the end of the time frame for  
28 opportunity to make changes.

29  
30                   So I'll just read through these. So  
31 the first priority information need in the Yukon is  
32 reliable estimates of salmon species escapements and  
33 these are example of projects such as weirs, sonars, or  
34 mark recapture projects.

35  
36                   A second need is the geographic  
37 distribution of salmon and whitefish species and we  
38 specifically listed locations such as the Nulato River,  
39 the Salmon fork of the Black River, the Porcupine  
40 River, and the Chandalar River.

41  
42                   The third is an indexing method for  
43 estimating species specific whitefish harvest on an  
44 annual basis for the Yukon drainage. And it goes  
45 further to say that researches should explore and  
46 evaluate an approach where subregional clusters of  
47 community harvest can be evaluated for regular  
48 surveying with results being extrapolated to the rest  
49 of the cluster contributing to drainage-wide harvest  
50 estimates.

1                   The next is methods for including  
2 quality of escapement measures. Examples such as  
3 potential egg deposition, size and sex composition of  
4 spawners or spawning habitat utilization. So including  
5 those qualities of escapement measures in establishing  
6 chinook salmon spawning goals and determining the  
7 reproductive potential and genetic diversity of  
8 spawning escapements.

9  
10                   Another priority information need is a  
11 review of escapement data collection methods throughout  
12 the Yukon drainage to ensure the test fisheries are  
13 accurately accounting for size distribution and  
14 abundance of fishes. An example that came up in  
15 discussion is the issue of smaller chinook and if they  
16 are being counted accurately.

17  
18                   Next one is harvest and spawning  
19 escapement level changes through time in relation to  
20 changes in gillnet construction and use for chinook  
21 salmon subsistence harvest in the mainstem Yukon River.  
22 And some examples of that might be set versus drift  
23 fishing or changes in mesh size.

24  
25                   The next is Bering cisco population  
26 assessment and monitoring. The last is the burbot  
27 population assessment in lakes known to support  
28 subsistence fisheries, and the burbot is also I think  
29 locally referred to as lush by a lot of people just to  
30 be clear. So that's the Yukon.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to discuss  
33 the Yukon. And so I have some issues. I think that  
34 all of these are warranted issues but I've said to the  
35 State in-season managers the Lower River Yukon test  
36 fish are using 8-inch gear is only analyzing, and  
37 that's a long dataset so they don't want to get away  
38 from it, but it's not actually what's present. We know  
39 that seven and a half harvest at optimum, so it's  
40 selecting for large fish.

41  
42                   The mortality with large mesh gear on  
43 adult female king salmon is high. So I've said to the  
44 managers two years ago the Lower River test fishery  
45 needs to go away from using 8-inch gear because it's  
46 selecting for large female fish and we don't have any  
47 female chinook salmon to give away. They're literally  
48 killing king salmon.

49  
50                   I had one professional biologist

1 analyze it and it could be -- approximately five to ten  
2 percent of the larger chinook salmon females could  
3 actually be harvested in the setnet test fishery. It's  
4 actually a significant number of chinook salmon are  
5 being killed there, so they need to go away from that.

6  
7

8                   The JTC, the InterAgency Staff  
9 Committee has to get that through their head and they  
10 have to reevaluate what that impact to the chinook  
11 salmon is and they need to move towards using the  
12 appropriate gear size, which was through the long Board  
13 of Fish and Federal Subsistence Board process and  
14 recognize that seven and a half inch next was the  
15 optimum gear size for analyzing what the run  
16 composition is.

17

18                   Another thing that is lacking on this  
19 list, and I'll say it every year until I see it on this  
20 list, is there is no incidental harvest mortality  
21 indice for drop-out salmon from gillnet. I'll say it  
22 over and over and over until I see it on this list.  
23 The managers are assuming and making a huge leap of  
24 faith with no scientific basis, none, that that 6-inch  
25 gear chinook salmon hit it and bounce off of it and  
26 swim off happily up the river to their spawning  
27 grounds. No, it kills them. There's a whole bunch of  
28 salmon that -- it pinches their gill plates shut, they  
29 exhaust their oxygen and they die in the gear and then  
30 they fall out of the net and they are not retrieved, so  
31 they're not in the harvest data.

32

33                   What I want is OSM to work with the JTC  
34 and the InterAgency Staff Committee to develop --  
35 design a study with Didson sonar and I've drawn  
36 schematics of how to design gillnets with drop-out  
37 baskets on the lead line and I've submitted those to  
38 OSM. George has got them. I've submitted these things  
39 to Fred Bue. I sat down with a piece of typing paper  
40 and drew it all out for you. All you have to do is  
41 come up with an indice so that the managers are not  
42 assuming that every king salmon that hits a 6-inch  
43 directed chum fishery is bouncing off the net and  
44 swimming happily up to their spawning grounds.

45

46                   The State and the Federal government  
47 are absolutely derelict in not having an incidental  
48 harvest mortality indice, period. There are hundreds of  
49 thousands of sockeye salmon washed up on the beach in  
50 Bristol Bay every year that fall out of the net,

1 hundreds of thousands. This is not a little deal, this  
2 is a giant deal.

3  
4                   So you're fishing an inch and half  
5 smaller net and you're killing a whole bunch of king  
6 salmon and we don't have king salmon to give.  
7 Everybody wants to -- okay, the king salmon run is kind  
8 of getting there, let's fish 6-inch net. Well, we  
9 don't have an indice for how many kings we're actually  
10 killing. We harvested, so many came back into the  
11 subsistence fishery, but we have no idea what's  
12 floating down the river.

13  
14                   And all of those Lower River Yukon guys  
15 will tell you that they are afraid of 6-inch gear for  
16 directed. When there was a 6-inch proposal for maximum  
17 gear size on the Yukon River, the Lower River guys were  
18 like we can't fish 6-inch gear for king salmon harvest,  
19 you'll lose all the fish. So the Lower River guys, all  
20 of them will tell you that in the directed chum fishery  
21 they drop all kinds of kings.

22  
23                   This is an informational need. This is  
24 a big informational need. I've said it for years, why  
25 isn't it on the list. I'm saying why isn't that on  
26 this list. How many years have I said this? Since  
27 you've been here, Melinda. I say this all the time, I  
28 don't see it on the list. I want to see it on this  
29 list.

30  
31                   This is not a little deal. I want you  
32 working with the State, I want you to develop an indice  
33 and it can be done. You can use a Didson sonar, you  
34 can use a drop-out net like I designed for you and you  
35 can implement it and you can get an investigator to do  
36 it and you need to do it sooner than later because  
37 every year you're killing a whole bunch of kings with  
38 6-inch gear and assuming that they swam up the river.  
39 That's a leap of faith. That's not science. And  
40 ANILCA Title VIII says you're supposed to use Fish and  
41 Wildlife management using recognized scientific  
42 principals.

43  
44                   Nothing against your, Trent. I'm just  
45 saying it into the record. I want this to be firm on  
46 the record for an informational priority. This is  
47 priority one up here at the top of the list. One.  
48 This is not a little deal. This is like far far ahead  
49 of burbot indices. This is way out there in front of  
50 everything. This is a big question and the Board of

1 Fish needs to be aware of this. I would like this  
2 Council -- are you still on the phone there, Tim?

3

4 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I am.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like this  
7 Council to transmit a letter to the Board of Fish that  
8 this is a very serious concern, this drop-out mortality  
9 indice that has been absolutely lacking. I've said over  
10 and over in various meetings. So the InterAgency Staff  
11 Committee and the JTC need to submit proposals for a  
12 study to develop an indice for incidental harvest  
13 mortality for chinook salmon using 6-inch net on the  
14 Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. It's a simultaneous issue.

15

16

17 The Chair will entertain a motion to  
18 transmit a letter to the Board of Fish requesting that  
19 study to be developed.

20

21 MR. HONEA: I so move.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a second?

24

25 MS. YATLIN: Second.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded.  
28 Any further discussion. I think I made my point.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those in favor of  
33 transmitting that letter to the Board of Fish and to  
34 the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
35 Geoff Haskett signify by saying aye.

36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

40

41 (No opposing votes)

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like that  
44 incidental mortality factor drawn to the top of this  
45 informational need for the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

46

47 That's my position.

48

49 Is that the position of the Council?

50

1 IN UNISON: Yes.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Now we'll  
4 cover the Kuskokwim.  
5  
6 We already got one on the top of the  
7 list.  
8  
9 Continue with the Kuskokwim.  
10  
11 MR. LIEBICH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So  
12 I'll read through the priority information needs for  
13 the Kuskokwim and I'll do the same. I'll just read  
14 through them bullet by bullet. Feel free to stop me  
15 along the way if you'd like.  
16  
17 So the first is reliable estimates of  
18 chinook, chum, sockeye and coho salmon escapement. And  
19 again examples such as weir, sonar, mark recapture.  
20  
21 The second methods for including of  
22 quality of escapement measures in establishing chinook  
23 salmon spawning goals and determining the reproduction  
24 potential and genetic diversity of spawning  
25 escapements. Same examples as the Yukon, potential egg  
26 deposition, sex and size composition of spawners and  
27 spawning habitat utilization.  
28  
29 The next priority information need,  
30 estimate the size and growth of the sport fishery over  
31 the next 30 years.  
32  
33 The next is an understanding of the  
34 meaning and significance of sharing in the context of  
35 social, cultural and economic life of people in the  
36 Lower Kuskokwim area.  
37  
38 The next is impacts of the sport  
39 fishery on cultural values and social systems.  
40  
41 The next is local knowledge of  
42 whitefish species to supplement information from  
43 previous research in Central Kuskokwim River Drainage  
44 communities. And there's some examples of groups of  
45 communities that might include Kalskag and Lower  
46 Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk or Red Devil, Sleetmute and  
47 Stony River. A similar priority information need is  
48 local knowledge of whitefish species to supplement  
49 information of previous research in Lower Kuskokwim  
50 River Drainage communities. So the previous was

1 Central Kuskokwim. This one is now Lower Kuskokwim.  
2 Groups of communities might include Kwethluk, Akiachak,  
3 Tuluksak, Chefornak, Kipnuk, Kongiganak and  
4 Kwigillingok.

5  
6 The last is an indexing method for  
7 estimating species specific whitefish harvest on an  
8 annual basis for the Kuskokwim Drainage. And it goes  
9 further to say that researchers should explore and  
10 evaluate an approach where subregional clusters of  
11 community harvest can be evaluated for regular  
12 surveying with results being extrapolated to the rest  
13 of the cluster contributing to drainage-wide harvest  
14 estimates.

15  
16 Those are all the priority information  
17 needs currently presented for the Kuskokwim.

18  
19 Thank you.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And the addition of  
22 this drop-out mortality. So all of those are very  
23 valid needs for information. I'm not saying that these  
24 are not valid needs for information, but I do feel that  
25 there is a priority here. And so does the Council feel  
26 comfortable with these priority needs. Ray.

27  
28 MR. COLLINS: Well, from working on the  
29 working group over there the decisions we have make  
30 each year are which step, like in rebuilding the kings.  
31 I don't know if we have an accurate measure on how the  
32 various things we've chosen -- for instance, we did  
33 rolling closures and we found out what happens with the  
34 rolling closures down there was that people fished  
35 harder during the open season, that it didn't change.  
36 We were hoping it would shift the catch of kings until  
37 later and it didn't because if there was an earlier  
38 opening, they just fished harder and so we dropped that  
39 method.

40  
41 Now we've had a total closure on the  
42 early. It used to be open up into June. They could  
43 use anything they wanted. And we think that it was  
44 really hitting the ones going for the headwaters  
45 because of the first in the river, but the weir wasn't  
46 funded in Takotna this year, so we had no accurate  
47 measure to compare what the escapement was to previous  
48 years over there. So that's one there.

49  
50 And then we've talked about the

1 drifting now of catch and release. Even the 4-inch  
2 nets now, some down there have found a way of catching  
3 kings in the 4-inch nets too by the way they hang and  
4 taking out lead lines, various things. Subsistence  
5 users are very creative in getting what they need. We  
6 need a measurement to know which of these tools are  
7 most affective and some way of looking at that and  
8 evaluating what we've done.

9

10 For instance now they wanted to open  
11 the commercial, but because kings were closed all up  
12 the river we convinced them to hold off on any  
13 commercial harvest of silvers down there because they  
14 needed those silvers upriver for subsistence, but I  
15 don't know if we've got an accurate measure of what  
16 people caught. We know that the Lower River meets  
17 their subsistence needs, but how many actually shifted  
18 to other species and which other ones were the most  
19 important for them.

20

21 So some way of getting at that whole  
22 issue of how our actions are really impacting the use  
23 by the users because we think -- I mean we've got  
24 silvers up at McGrath now, more than we had before,  
25 partly because they had that closure. Usually as soon  
26 as the kings are by they open up and have a commercial  
27 on silvers down there. Well right over here somebody  
28 caught about 30 silvers in one set and that's kind of  
29 unprecedented for up here. But that replaced what they  
30 would have gotten with kings.

31

32 I think we need to be, as we're using  
33 these various things on the river or the live box where  
34 they can release kings on the Yukon, we're using these  
35 methods, but we don't know what's the impact and what's  
36 the most effective tools we can use in trying to  
37 rebuild. So some way of getting at that whole issue of  
38 what worked and what didn't work. I think that would  
39 be a high priority when we are in the rebuilding phase.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's exactly  
42 right, Ray. Those are very valid points.

43

44 Go ahead, Trent.

45

46 MR. LIEBICH: Yeah, I just want to  
47 clarify. It sounded kind of like potentially two  
48 separate issues there; one assessing the effectiveness  
49 of the different types of tools on the harvest  
50 efficiency or the effectiveness of user's ability to

1 harvest a targeted species and you also mentioned a  
2 point on switching from one resource to another if  
3 there's closures.

4

5 MR. COLLINS: Right. What are people  
6 doing to meet their needs and which of those are the  
7 best.

8

9 MR. LIEBICH: Okay. So you would like  
10 to kind of see that as two separate issues. They are  
11 very related but separate so maybe we'll try to work  
12 that into two.

13

14 MR. COLLINS: And maybe some of you  
15 have thoughts on that too, but I know that's what we're  
16 wrestling with as a working group on the river. We  
17 have to decide okay what are we going to do this year,  
18 what are we going to implement, how are we going to  
19 start the seasons and so on. And we're not always  
20 getting all the information back. It was a real mistake  
21 to drop the weir on the Takotna, which was the only  
22 measure up here of accurate numbers.

23

24 We're talking about putting one in on  
25 the Salmon River, which would give them better run, but  
26 they would have to start all over in terms of building  
27 comparison. But that's a river that is used by people  
28 from Nikolai and at the same time they sell more big  
29 salmon up there than they did previously, but that's  
30 kind of anecdotal unless they are actually through the  
31 weir finding out what the sex and age and that's kind  
32 of tied to that productivity. We know that the bigger  
33 ones have the better survival, larger eggs and so on.  
34 But what is happening actually in the escapement that  
35 has to do with the quality of the escapement. All of  
36 those things we should be looking at right now since  
37 we're trying to rebuild.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, those are very  
40 valid points I think for informational needs, methods  
41 of restriction and effectiveness and meeting the escape  
42 needs is kind of a big deal. And so the managers need  
43 to know what methods are the most effective on meeting  
44 the escapement needs and putting quality stocks back on  
45 the spawning grounds. We need to move back towards  
46 quality stocks. Unmolested passage to the spawning  
47 grounds.

48

49 I really appreciate all those comments,  
50 Ray.

1 Any other comments from Council  
2 members?  
3  
4 (No comments)  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that's it,  
7 Trent.  
8  
9 MR. LIEBICH: Thank you for your time.  
10  
11 MS. FEYEREISEN: Excuse me, Chairman.  
12  
13 This is Lisa Feyereisen.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead,  
16 Lisa.  
17  
18 MS. FEYEREISEN: Yeah, I just wanted to  
19 pony up with what Ray was talking about. When we're  
20 looking at this list of priorities, the bottom list is  
21 talking about indexing methods for estimating species  
22 specific whitefish harvest. One of the big things that  
23 we struggled with on the working group this summer was  
24 how different management tools, like Ray was saying,  
25 affected different species.  
26  
27 We had over three hundred setnets in  
28 the Bethel area, 4-inch nets and they learned how to  
29 set those nets so that they could catch kings, but  
30 there also was a significant amount of whitefish  
31 harvest that we don't know the number of because of  
32 those nets. And so I think one of the priorities that  
33 we struggle with is managers decisions and how they  
34 affect different species. Like if we put in fishwheels  
35 with live wheels, how is that going to affect chum  
36 harvest versus chinook.  
37  
38 We are very focused on chinook, but we  
39 don't want to destroy the quality of our other  
40 subsistence harvests while we're managing for the  
41 increase in conservation of chinook. And I don't know  
42 how to get to that because it's such a huge global  
43 thing, but we really really struggled with that.  
44  
45 For instance for silvers, like Ray  
46 said, we fought hard to keep this commercial chum  
47 salmon down so that we could get silvers, but the  
48 species I don't think is addressed in this. How  
49 management decisions on (phone dropout) and I don't  
50 know how to address it, but it's a big frustration we

1 have.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that last  
4 couple sentences broke off there, Lisa. If you could  
5 restate those.

6

7 MS. FEYEREISEN: Okay, I'll try it  
8 better. Bad phone service in Aniak. Anyway, how  
9 management decisions on one species directly impacts  
10 the quality of escapement on other species and the  
11 potential for subsistence harvest on alternative  
12 species for subsistence. For instance, when they  
13 opened it downriver to chum fishing, we had no  
14 indication of what was going on with Middle River chum  
15 fishing because we don't have anything besides the weir  
16 that estimates it. We don't have current in-season  
17 subsistence harvest. We don't have any in-season  
18 subsistence harvest data for whitefish.

19

20 So with those setnets down in Bethel we  
21 had no idea how many whitefish were pulled out of the  
22 system and we don't know if we disseminated that  
23 species because we were conserving chinook. We're  
24 really struggling with the interplay on how adaptable  
25 our culture, but if we can't get one species for  
26 subsistence, we might be overfishing other alternative  
27 species and how to regulate for that. I don't know how  
28 we could bet that information, but it is definitely one  
29 of our hugest areas of focus in the Middle and Upper  
30 River.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
33 those comments, Lisa. The OSM can take these back and  
34 analyze these statements and develop the need for this  
35 information. What one management regime affects others  
36 species and then the harvest reductions of that same  
37 species in other parts of the drainage would be a major  
38 part of that.

39

40 Thanks so much.

41

42 Do you have any other comments, Lisa?

43

44 MS. FEYEREISEN: No, we're good.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
47 Thanks for being on the line there. So I think that  
48 covers it, Trent.

49

50 Melinda would like us to think about

1 this Partners Program. She had this handout sheet  
2 yesterday, the little bullet sheet. We discussed  
3 broadening the aspect of the Partners Program, not only  
4 focused on fisheries issues but also on wildlife and  
5 other wild renewable resources like timber, et cetera.

6

7 Is there any specific things that the  
8 Council would like to see incorporating Partners into  
9 developing information flow to the regional Councils?

10

(No comments)

11

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment would be  
14 I do think that we need to move us into all three types  
15 of resource; fishery, wildlife, and other wild  
16 renewable resources, plant material, etc. There may be  
17 needs to partner on that information. The nuts and  
18 bolts, those occur occasionally in our meetings, so I  
19 think that when we have an issue arise we should have  
20 the ability to use partners to gather information. So  
21 I don't know that I want to sit down and come up with  
22 all the various scenarios. I just think that the  
23 Partners Program should incorporate the ability to  
24 gather information from fish, wildlife, and other wild  
25 renewable resources as ANILCA states.

26

Any comments from the Council.

27

28

Go ahead, Don.

29

30

31 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. In  
32 commenting, I guess I would like this whether it's in  
33 the form of -- I don't know how you guys actually work  
34 with organizations, but like I said, I sit on the TCC  
35 Migratory Bird Council and it's kind of frustrating not  
36 to have representation from every region on there. We  
37 have trouble getting a quorum and I think a lot of the  
38 things that can be brought to the villages to be made  
39 aware of and I kind of wish that -- I don't know how  
40 you go about working with organizations such as TCC or  
41 anything and not to move out of fisheries completely,  
42 but to give us that option.

43

44 I would like to throw in a pitch for  
45 the Migratory Bird Council.

46

Thank you.

47

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Migratory Bird

50 program is a separate entity from OSM, so that's not

1 something that we can partner with this Regional  
2 Council/Federal Subsistence Board process. But you  
3 are speaking to wildlife and other things and so I  
4 appreciate your comment, Don.

5  
6 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. Well I  
7 guess taking this out of context not to include the  
8 Migratory Council itself, but to delve into migratory  
9 birds.

10  
11 Thank you.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

14  
15 MR. LIEBICH: Thank you for all your  
16 comments. I've taken notes here and I know we also have  
17 the transcripts off the record, so we'll do our best to  
18 try to summarize those and include them both in the  
19 Resource Monitoring Program and also into the Partners  
20 Program, so I appreciate all your help.

21  
22 Thank you.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Trent.

25  
26 And so Melinda.

27  
28 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. It's about six  
29 minutes after noon so I'll leave it up to the Council  
30 if we want to go ahead and break for lunch. I see  
31 about six or so items left in our agenda and one or two  
32 that we're going to combine as you've requested. So  
33 I'll leave it up to the Council. If we'd like to do  
34 the BLM update, I don't think it was going to take too  
35 terribly long, but if the Council is ready to break for  
36 lunch I think we'd be fine as well.

37  
38 So I'll leave it up to you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let's do BLM before  
41 lunch here.

42  
43 Welcome to the mic there, Erin.

44  
45 MS. JULIANUS: Yes, thank you, Mr.  
46 Chair and members of the Council. For the record, my  
47 name is Erin Julianus. I'm a wildlife biologist with  
48 the BLM Central Yukon Field Office and today I'll be  
49 giving actually two reports. I'll be giving the  
50 Anchorage Field Office report as well as the Central

1 Yukon Field Office Report. Bruce Seppi, many of you may  
2 know him as the wildlife biologist for the BLM  
3 Anchorage Field Office and he is in actually a big land  
4 use plan work shop this week, so he was regrettably  
5 unable to attend.

6  
7                   So what I want to do with his report  
8 just so I don't miss anything and have everything on  
9 the record for the Anchorage Field Office, I'm just  
10 going to read through his report and then I'll go onto  
11 the Central Yukon Field Office report with the approval  
12 of the Council.

13  
14                   So Bruce is currently the acting  
15 subsistence biologist and the only subsistence  
16 biologist for BLM in the Anchorage Field Office. Many  
17 of you may know Merben Cebrian. Merben has taken a  
18 position in the Lower 48 and has left Alaska, so Bruce  
19 is covering his position and also Merben's position,  
20 but I believe that position is expected to be filled  
21 permanently early next year.

22  
23                   Anchorage Field Office like the Central  
24 Yukon Field Office is revising their land use plans, so  
25 they are working on the BSWI plan as it's known, the  
26 Bering Sea Western Interior plan and they have been  
27 working on it and they are continuing to work on it.  
28 Public scoping for the BSWI plan has been completed and  
29 they are expecting a draft EIS of the plan in about a  
30 year. Just so you know the BLM planning boundaries  
31 extend into the Interior and include the Kuskokwim  
32 watershed and the lower portion of the Yukon River  
33 watershed within the Western Interior Council region.  
34 Many of you have attended their scoping meetings  
35 associated with that plan. It also extends north to  
36 include the Nulato hills.

37  
38                   Right now the work shop that he's at  
39 right now is the workshop that kicks off the  
40 development of alternatives for that plan. BLM is in  
41 the process of adjusting its management boundaries,  
42 which affects the Anchorage Field Office and the  
43 Central Yukon Field Office. One change includes the  
44 addition of BLM lands in the Northwest Arctic region  
45 from the Central Yukon Office in Fairbanks to the  
46 Anchorage Field Office. So basically us at the Central  
47 Yukon, you know, we up until last year attended the  
48 Northwest Arctic RAC meetings and we're going to be  
49 pulling out of that region and Anchorage will be the  
50 BLM representative for there.

1                   So the boundary change is in the final  
2 stages of Washington office review and is expected to  
3 officially be approved sometime in the next couple of  
4 months as of the end of last fiscal year. That was  
5 kind of when we began transferring projects associated  
6 with fisheries work in the Squirrel River and a lot of  
7 our Western Arctic Caribou Herd obligations.  
8

9                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me. You'd  
10 pull your LE officer off the Squirrel River also in the  
11 Central Yukon?  
12

13                   MS. JULIANUS: They did patrols this  
14 year and I believe next year it will be out of the  
15 Anchorage Field Office.  
16

17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
18

19                   MS. JULIANUS: The Anchorage Field  
20 Office is reviewing the environmental consequences  
21 section of the draft EIS for the Donlin Gold pipeline.  
22 We heard the report of that yesterday but it sounds  
23 like staff has a period of time, about a month, to  
24 review and submit comments on this draft and I know  
25 that EIS is taking up a lot of Bruce's time.  
26

27                   BLM staff. Bruce and Cara Staab, our  
28 wildlife lead in the Anchorage Field Office, attended  
29 the wood bison reintroduction meeting in Anchorage at  
30 the end of September. We heard about that from the  
31 State yesterday. A Wood bison management planning team  
32 has been organized. I believe Bruce is on that. Its  
33 members consist of landowners and agencies and other  
34 interested parties. The state touched on this, but a  
35 management plan is being developed and before the  
36 animals are released they do expect that that plan to  
37 be finalized.  
38

39                   BLM is planning to assist Fish and Game  
40 with a moose survey in unit 21E in February and March.  
41 They do their moose GSPE's in the spring. Bruce is  
42 planning on providing aircraft and acting as an  
43 observer in providing fuel for that survey. I believe  
44 they participate in the annually.  
45

46                   The last bullet item for the Anchorage  
47 Field Office. BLM will be issuing permits for the  
48 Federal winter moose hunt in Unit 21E in early  
49 February. Permits will likely be available for  
50 residents of Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross, as

1 well as Aniak and Russian Mission. The winter moose  
2 hunt starts on February 15th and is open to any  
3 household that did not get a moose in the fall hunt and  
4 Bruce has his contact information here if you need to  
5 follow up with that.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Weren't those  
8 permits previously issued by Innoko?

9

10 MS. JULIANUS: I'm not sure. I don't  
11 know.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm surprised  
14 that BLM is issuing the permits because Innoko used to  
15 issue the permits.

16

17 Okay. I'll ask Kenton when he gets  
18 back.

19

20 MS. JULIANUS: And, you know, Bruce  
21 just wanted me to emphasize that certainly if you or  
22 the Council has any questions to contact him directly  
23 and his contact information is on that report.

24

25 So for the Central Yukon Field Office  
26 report to the Council it is kind of a lengthy report.  
27 I don't want to go over each and every bullet on this  
28 report. Certainly if you have questions you can  
29 interrupt at any time. I did want to touch on planning,  
30 where we're at in the planning process. Like I said,  
31 the BSWI plan and the Central Yukon plan are kind of  
32 ongoing at the same time. We're both going through  
33 this arduous process.

34

35 Currently staff, including myself, are  
36 writing and revising what's called the analysis of the  
37 management situation or the AMS and it describes the  
38 current resources trends and policies in the planning  
39 area that are ongoing and the AMS is essentially going  
40 to form the no action alternative for the EIS. So  
41 staff are busy with that and I think at least a draft  
42 should be available after the first of the year.

43

44 For the Central Yukon plan public  
45 scoping has been completed and a draft scoping report  
46 is being reviewed internally right now. It should also  
47 be available in early 2015. We had our alternatives  
48 workshop just last week, which kind of kick starts that  
49 alternative development phase of the plan based on  
50 internal and external scoping. That should available

1 in 2015 as well. Jeanie Cole is our planning lead in  
2 the Central Yukon Field Office. Her contact  
3 information is listed here.

4  
5 Just a couple more things about the  
6 planning process. I personally have been really  
7 encouraged by a lot of the dialogue that is occurring  
8 as a result of this process. It's new to me and I know  
9 it's new to a lot of other folks that are working on  
10 the plan and so I really appreciate that. I was on the  
11 panel that reviewed and summarized the scoping comments  
12 and from those comments it was neat to see. I'm really  
13 aware of what issues are developing out of that plan,  
14 so that's good. We've had really participation from  
15 particularly the Fish and Wildlife service in the  
16 planning process. They are a partner.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just wanted to  
19 state for the record that one of my main concerns in  
20 the scoping process was the conveyance of top file  
21 lands to the State of Alaska in the Dalton Highway  
22 corridor. The Dalton Highway corridor was withdrawn  
23 from selection by State and Native organizations in  
24 1971 by the Secretary of Interior. The State of Alaska  
25 is 20 percent over-selected and the State is wanting to  
26 select lands around our community. This would be  
27 extremely detrimental to our subsistence use. We would  
28 not be able to access our -- we're a residence zoned  
29 community. We would not be able to access the Gates of  
30 the Arctic National Park because there's a snowmachine  
31 restriction, an all-terrain vehicle restriction. If we  
32 are under State regulations, we can't use a snowmachine  
33 to transport hunters, game parts or gear.

34  
35 I am very concerned about the Bureau of  
36 Land Management entertaining -- when there was a court  
37 case Wisenak Native Corporation tried to select 7,000  
38 acres around Wiseman and was denied by a Federal judge  
39 that they could not because there was a withdraw from  
40 State and Native corporations selection. I do not feel  
41 that the State of Alaska has any business selecting any  
42 lands in the Dalton Highway corridor if the Native  
43 corporations could not.

44  
45 They should look at that court case  
46 seriously and so I want that on the record. I  
47 transmitted my reasons in opposition in the scoping  
48 process and will continue to transmit my rejection of  
49 that option to the State of Alaska. The State of  
50 Alaska has 20 percent over-selection. They are not

1 allowed to select lands there. There's no reason for  
2 the BLM to convey any lands in the Dalton Highway  
3 corridor under FLPMA regulations, under court cases  
4 that have been leveraged, there's no reason for that.

5  
6 I want this Council to be aware that  
7 I'm going to be tracking this RMP process especially on  
8 that issue and the impacts to subsistence and other  
9 resources. I just wanted that to be on the record. So  
10 you are aware of that, but I wanted that to be on the  
11 record.

12  
13 Thank you, continue.

14  
15 MS. JULIANUS: Yes, Mr. Chair. It was  
16 evident from not just your comment but also the other  
17 scoping comments that I read that the two biggest  
18 issues that are going to come in the plan is access and  
19 the State selection. One final thought on that I just  
20 encourage the Council members and the public, you know,  
21 to continue to be involved and engaged. If there's  
22 confusion about the planning process itself, don't let  
23 that stop you. You know, call Jeanie or call me and  
24 we'll get you an answer because it is daunting.

25  
26 Let's see. The other thing for  
27 planning that I did want to bring up was the boundary  
28 change. On the back of the Central Yukon Field Office  
29 report I attached a quickly drafted map of the boundary  
30 change between the Anchorage Field Office and the  
31 Central Yukon Field Office and so you can see it really  
32 just affects our involvement and the Northwest Arctic  
33 RAC and the Western Interior won't be affected as much.  
34 Hopefully that map is helpful with delineating those  
35 boundary changes.

36  
37 I do think that in fiscal year 2015  
38 because we aren't going to be doing as much associated  
39 with the Squirrel River and work out of Kotzebue you  
40 know we will have more opportunities and a little bit  
41 more money I think to invest in activities and survey  
42 work in Unit 21 and areas around Galena, so I am  
43 looking forward to that.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will insert a  
46 comment there. The one LE ranger that the BLM has has  
47 been distracted with going to the Squirrel River. We  
48 have the Dalton Highway with thousands of hunters  
49 coming through there. So I am encouraged that the  
50 Squirrel River is being given to another LE district so

1 that that will free that ranger up to deal with some of  
2 the major amounts of issues we have off of the Dalton  
3 highway.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MS. JULIANUS: For education and  
8 outreach you can read various updates about the Arctic  
9 InterAgency Visitor's Center in Coldfoot, but I did  
10 want to point out that staff do regularly update the  
11 Dalton Highway website and included it in this there is  
12 a page on tips for Dalton Highway hunters, which  
13 focuses on safety and hunting ethics.

14

15 Our education person did want me to  
16 point out to the Council that the BLM plans to hire a  
17 student intern through the Student Conservation  
18 Association to work for the summer as a visitor service  
19 person at the Arctic InterAgency Visitor's Center in  
20 Coldfoot next summer and she encourages rural students  
21 which are currently enrolled in college or recent  
22 college graduates to apply.

23

24 For recreation the BLM as 24 special  
25 recreation permits or SRP's that operate in the Western  
26 Interior RAC region. Of these 24 permits, 13 SRP  
27 holders are commercial hunting guides and seven of  
28 these guides operate on or near the Dalton Highway  
29 corridor with sheep hunting being one of their primary  
30 focuses. Post-use reports for this year are not in yet.  
31 We have data from past years of course on this, but I  
32 think that they are due after the first of the year.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: At that point I want  
35 to express my displeasure with the increasing number of  
36 hunting guides on the Dalton Highway corridor. It was  
37 two in 2010. It's seven in 2014. I've told the BLM  
38 the sheep population cannot support increasing  
39 commercial activity. There's a hunting guide that has  
40 bought property in Wiseman. He flew 300 percent more  
41 flights. His Super Cubs were flying continuously every  
42 day. This is getting out of control.

43

44 The BLM should not continue. What  
45 happened to the guide capacity process that the BLM was  
46 reviewing a couple of years ago. This Council was  
47 commenting on that. There's a capacity. There's no  
48 capacity for additional sheep permits. The Central  
49 Yukon issuing more permits for guides to hunt Dall  
50 sheep on the BLM lands and the Dalton Highway corridor

1 where there's a limited resource cannot continue. I  
2 want that to be conveyed back to the Central Yukon  
3 Office that there should be a reduction in permits, not  
4 an expansion of permits.

5  
6 Thank you, continue.

7  
8 MS. JULIANUS: Okay. For mining we  
9 touched on the Amber Road a little bit with the Fish  
10 and wildlife and Park Service updates, but exploration  
11 in the area is certainly continuing. We don't  
12 officially have the application from AIDEA yet, but  
13 everyone is kind of anticipating that workload of  
14 course. We continue to have various permits issued and  
15 request for permits for mineral material pits On the  
16 Dalton Highway. Gravel is always in high demand.  
17 Several of the pits have been reauthorized. Several  
18 are closing and there have been requests for additional  
19 pits.

20  
21 For wildlife a lot of this.....

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to stop you  
24 right there. I just viewed the ASAP environmental  
25 impact statement and there were a whole bunch of gravel  
26 pits designed right next to Wiseman across the river,  
27 right next to the village, all around us. I mean  
28 completely surrounding us. And I felt -- and I  
29 transmitted that to the BLM. Did you see that comment?  
30 It was a PDF.

31  
32 MS. JULIANUS: Yes, it was distributed.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so the  
35 BLM could not continue to give expanding amounts of  
36 mineral extraction, gravel extraction, right next to  
37 our community. There's trillions of yards of material  
38 up and down the Middle Fork and Dietrich River. I was  
39 appalled at some of the locations that the Department  
40 of Transportation had designed in conjunction with the  
41 Department of Natural Resources of the Alaska Instate  
42 Pipeline all around our community. I wanted to have  
43 that on the record. Some of these projects are going  
44 to highly affect our community and I gave alternate  
45 suggestions and so I want the BLM to listen to this EIS  
46 process.

47  
48 Thank you.

49  
50 MS. JULIANUS: For wildlife, many of

1 these topics have been touched on by Fish and Wildlife  
2 and the Park Service. For moose, the BLM did  
3 participate and does participate in the annual Unit 24B  
4 moose GSPE survey. I did include a couple copies of  
5 the report that Fish and Wildlife and the Department of  
6 Fish and Game put out so I think that you should have  
7 copies of that report last year.

8

9 Like Mike Spindler said, we are going  
10 to be doing an intensive moose survey this year. BLM  
11 is going to be contributing personnel and fuel towards  
12 that effort. We're going to be participating in both  
13 the Kanuti moose survey, which includes the Refuge and  
14 lands around Allakaket. We'll also be acting as  
15 observers in planes for the Park Service and Gates of  
16 the Arctic. Like Mike said, we are all patiently  
17 waiting on snow.

18

19 We did participate in the moose radio  
20 telemetry study. All four agencies were involved in  
21 that. The BLM consistently provided funds and  
22 personnel to support this and are reviewing -- we're  
23 not the lead on those reports, but we are reviewing  
24 them as they are available.

25

26 For the Western Arctic Caribou Herd the  
27 BLM continues to contribute to monitoring of collared  
28 caribou in the Western Arctic Caribou Herd and this is  
29 of course ongoing and has multiple partners. The BLM  
30 significantly contributes to the WACH Working Group on  
31 an annual basis. This year both BLM biologists in the  
32 Central Yukon Field Office participated in the annual  
33 collaring effort for the herd at Onion Portage and the  
34 BLM also funded twelve students from Unalakleet and  
35 Nome to get on the river and participate in that  
36 project as well and it was really cool.

37

38 Personally it was really neat to be a  
39 part of those kids' experience on the river. You know,  
40 when we caught caribou, it was neat to see them come  
41 alive and really benefit from that project. Actually a  
42 lot of the Nome kids were young enough that they didn't  
43 really remember caribou being in that area, so it was  
44 neat. They kept calling them reindeer. It was cute.  
45 So the BLM has also secured funding for the students to  
46 attend the annual working group meeting in December, so  
47 they are going to be able to share their experience and  
48 give a presentation to the working group which will be  
49 cool.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Will this boundary  
2 change with the Central Yukon affect your participation  
3 in this caribou collaring for Western Arctic?

4  
5 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, I don't know how  
6 it's going to work out exactly this year. As far as  
7 the working group is concerned, the Central Yukon has  
8 really taken the lead and has had the biggest presence  
9 at the annual meeting. I think as far as the  
10 organization and the logistics associated with the  
11 meeting, that's going to go to Anchorage, but we'll  
12 still -- you know, we have lands that are still in the  
13 winter range, so we'll continue to be a part of the  
14 meeting and field work.

15  
16 Let's see. For sheep, Kumi did a good  
17 job touching on a lot of the biology associated with  
18 the sheep, so I won't reiterate that, but we did  
19 participate in the interagency efforts this year to  
20 track sheep abundance and composition in the Central  
21 Brooks Range. Excluding our outreach efforts at Onion  
22 Portage, this was by far the project that we invested  
23 the most money in from the wildlife program in the  
24 Central Yukon Field Office this year.

25  
26 The BLM, the Central Yukon Field Office  
27 as well as members of the State office plan to attend  
28 several upcoming Fish and Game meetings related to  
29 sheep population dynamics. There's two meetings  
30 scheduled in November. One in Anchorage and one in  
31 Fairbanks. Jennifer McMillan, our ecologist, will be  
32 attending the one in Fairbanks. I think it's the 21st  
33 maybe. Then Cara Staab, wildlife lead in Anchorage,  
34 will be attending the Anchorage meeting.

35  
36 The only other thing that I did want to  
37 talk a little bit about as far as wildlife is that the  
38 BLM is developing a database with the purpose of  
39 tracking hunting harvest and commercial guide activity  
40 in the region. We do know it's a big problem  
41 specifically in the Central Brooks Range and it's  
42 something that we're working hard on. I think much of  
43 the permitting that we do in the Central Yukon Field  
44 Office is for activities that are impacting very  
45 specific areas and resources. A mine is going in here  
46 and we know that we have to pay attention to the water  
47 quality downstream of that mine.

48  
49 So when we're doing our permitting and  
50 our NEPA-associated permitting work, we have a little

1 spacial understanding of the total effect of when we  
2 permit a hunting guide to camp on BLM lands and take  
3 two sheep on BLM lands, he may be taking more than two  
4 sheep off BLM lands. I think it's a deficiency that we  
5 are seeking to remedy in order to approve our 810  
6 analyses, but it requires substantial motivation  
7 because it's hard to track a lot of that harvest data.

8

9 I will say, with that, that part of it  
10 is timely reporting by the subsistence users and I  
11 really appreciated this year everybody in Coldfoot and  
12 Wiseman, with the exception of I think one person got  
13 all their harvest reports in on time, so that made my  
14 job easier.

15

16 Just to touch on a couple things with  
17 our ecology work. The Dalton Highway invasive plant  
18 strategy, which has been ongoing, of course. The  
19 record of decision for the EA of our proposed invasive  
20 plant management strategy for the Dalton Highway was  
21 signed in fall 2013, so we are operating under that  
22 now. This does include the possible application of  
23 herbicides and experimental treatments are being  
24 planned for summer of 2015, so next summer.

25

26 The BLM is currently working towards  
27 developing a template for future cooperative  
28 interagency group, which will involve interested  
29 parties and the agencies associated with the Dalton  
30 Highway.

31

32 REAs, rapid ecological assessments, are  
33 ongoing, which are tools that the BLM is supposed to be  
34 using for their land use planning process. Two REAs  
35 with areas that overlap the Central Yukon planning area  
36 have been completed. There's one for the Seward  
37 Peninsula and around Kotzebue and the Yukon Lowlands  
38 Kuskokwim Mountains REA has been completed. The  
39 Central Yukon REA, which makes up the bulk of our  
40 planning area, is ongoing.  
41 Data is published and available publicly on the  
42 website. I haven't played with it too much, but I  
43 think it's fairly assessable.

44

45 For fisheries, I'll let you read most  
46 of the fisheries update here, but of course most of our  
47 fisheries work focuses on evaluating mining-related  
48 impact to fish habitat, so we have four fisheries  
49 biologists in the Central Yukon Field Office, and most  
50 of their time and field work is dominated by that.

1 Data collected each summer provides a solid foundation  
2 for the evaluation of mining plans of operation,  
3 establishing reclamation performance standards and  
4 monitoring the outcome of current and future proposals.

5  
6 So, with that, I think I'll conclude my  
7 report for the Central Yukon Field Office and take any  
8 questions the Council may have.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got a comment,  
11 Ray.

12  
13 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I'd  
14 like to go back to the issue on guiding permits. Let  
15 me give a little background. The State used to have  
16 guide areas that they assigned and when that program  
17 was in effect, the guides took care of their area  
18 because they wanted to stay in it. When they removed  
19 that, then any guide could move in to any area there,  
20 so there was no incentive to make sure that the  
21 population was healthy. The only tool we have now to  
22 implement is the Federal lands, which you can limit the  
23 number of guides.

24  
25 So I would think that that process  
26 needs to be reevaluated so that they come in, whether  
27 you decide to give them or not, to decide whether it  
28 could sustain that level of hunting and what is their  
29 hunting plan and evaluate the hunting plan to see if  
30 they're really trying to take care of the area and are  
31 concerned about population and not issue any permits  
32 that overlap where they have an exclusive area in there  
33 because then there's incentive to take care of it.

34  
35 You can do that on the Federal, but the  
36 State can't right now unless they change the law, so I  
37 think it's critical that you really work on that  
38 process and make sure that the guides that are given  
39 permits are going to treat the resource in the area  
40 respectfully and that they are free from competition  
41 from just anybody moving in.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a  
44 comment, Erin.

45  
46 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, noted for sure.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've tried to get  
49 the Central Yukon to only issue areas that each guide  
50 can hunt in, but with seven guides it would have to be

1 overlapping and that's a big problem. My impression  
2 is, from previous presentations by BLM, that the guides  
3 who do have the BLM permits that are not reporting. In  
4 2012, Tim Hammond came to an SRC meeting and said a  
5 particular guide had not taken any sheep. I said I  
6 know he killed one. I saw him shoot it and it's on his  
7 website and it's right here and I drew a map where that  
8 sheep was at.

9

10 So I don't believe that they're  
11 actually reporting all the sheep they're taking on the  
12 BLM land either. Who's going to check them. You don't  
13 have rangers in the Squirrel River or somewhere. So I  
14 think that the take is much higher than actually being  
15 reported because it's counterproductive for them to  
16 report harvests. They want to displace that harvest to  
17 the State land areas. Sheep don't have big ranges.  
18 You can get the data from the Park Service on what  
19 sheep movements are. You wipe them out in one place,  
20 you've wiped them out.

21

22 Thanks for bringing that up, Ray.

23

24 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Just in regard a  
25 little bit more, I think they ought to have an  
26 exclusive area. That's the only way to regulate it and  
27 not have overlapping areas. The other thing is you can  
28 get the reporting thing and if there's not accurate  
29 reporting, it will not be renewed.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, you've got to  
32 prove that they're not reporting sheep.

33

34 MR. COLLINS: I know you'd have to  
35 prove it, but at least if the understanding is that if  
36 they're not reporting, it will not be renewed if they  
37 found an error, you know. That's clear in the permit  
38 that that will be required.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that's in  
41 the permit, but it's a \$15,000 bonus to kill the sheep.  
42 That's what they get for the sheep. They'll do  
43 everything. I'm telling you, they're hunting on the  
44 Native corp lands. They're hunting on Doyon land and  
45 they're pounding the Doyon land because there's nobody  
46 to enforce it. So the bottom line is the BLM gives  
47 them the permit. Well, that gives them the ability to  
48 be near the Doyon lands.

49

50 So there's some real problems with all

1 these hunting guides all competing heavily on the State  
2 and BLM lands, wiping out all the sheep. Well, they  
3 have incentive, economic incentive, to go wherever they  
4 have to go to get these sheep and they're doing it and  
5 there's nobody there to really stop them. The  
6 enforcement was like, well, you know, we're off in here  
7 and we're off there.

8

9 I'm getting a little frustrated with  
10 the number of guides going up. Seven guides for sheep.  
11 The Dalton Highway corridor is a small place. You  
12 can't have seven guides hunting for sheep in that small  
13 of an area. You've heard that before, so I'm just  
14 getting it on the record.

15

16 I think we're finished with your part.  
17 I do appreciate all the work that BLM did on the sheep  
18 survey. I really appreciate that. I'm not faulting  
19 BLM on stuff. I just feel that we have to have  
20 comments to incorporate into the process.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a  
23 comment, Don.

24

25 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. Yeah, I  
26 guess I had a comment or question. You covered a  
27 pretty big area and I don't know if you're comfortable  
28 in answering any questions on the Innoko Refuge. I  
29 didn't know that they had a winter hunt and I was just  
30 wondering the history a bit and maybe that would be  
31 better to pose that to somebody else.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kenton Moos is going  
34 to be back at some point and we'll talk to him about  
35 how the BLM got shifted into issuing the permits.

36

37 MS. JULIANUS: I would defer to him  
38 definitely or talk to Bruce.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Melinda.

41

42 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair, I think we're  
43 ready for lunch. I gave the caf a heads up that there  
44 would be some folks coming down. We do have a vehicle  
45 here if we want to run folks.

46

47 However long you'd like to break for,  
48 Mr. Chair.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's 12:45. I do

1 want to get this proposed rule issue on the docket  
2 right away. So if we're back at 1:45, one hour for  
3 lunch.

4

5 (Off record)

6

7 (On record)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll have -- the  
10 Park Service is further on in the process, so I'll have  
11 the Park Service present their presentation. After  
12 we've completed that, we're going to go to the U.S.  
13 Fish and Wildlife Service. They're in a pre-scoping  
14 process of a similar thing, but we want to  
15 differentiate what those may be. So go ahead, Mary.  
16 You're going to be the presenter.

17

18 MS. MCBURNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
19 Council members. For the record, my name is Mary  
20 McBurney. I'm the subsistence program lead for the  
21 National Park Service. With me today is our regional  
22 director Bert Frost, who is joining us specifically to  
23 be available to answer your questions regarding the  
24 proposed rule.

25

26 Before we get started what I'd like to  
27 do is to orient you a little bit to where this proposed  
28 rule or proposed regulations would apply. So if you  
29 take a look at your nice big Region 6 map -- do you  
30 have a copy, Don?

31

32 MR. HONEA: I sure do. Thank you.

33

34 MS. MCBURNEY: Okay. The areas that we  
35 would be looking at in the Western Interior region  
36 would be that part of the southern portion of Denali  
37 National Preserve that's kind of on the far east border  
38 of the Western Interior region, a portion of the  
39 northern part of Denali National Preserve and to the  
40 south the portion of Lake Clark National Preserve. If  
41 you go all the way up toward Gates of the Arctic in  
42 24C, there's a small piece of the Gates of the Arctic  
43 National Preserve. So those areas are in kind of a  
44 light purple color.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see those.

47

48 MS. MCBURNEY: Is everybody able to  
49 locate those?

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Council follows.  
2 Go ahead.

3  
4 MS. MCBURNEY: Right now the National  
5 Park Service is moving forward with proposed  
6 regulations on certain takings of wildlife by hunters  
7 participating in some State general hunts in National  
8 Preserves. Specifically for this region those Preserve  
9 areas on the map.

10  
11 These regulations would not restrict  
12 Federal subsistence hunting on Park Service managed  
13 lands but we felt that it was important to bring it to  
14 the RACs for a heads-up on the issue, which is why  
15 we're here today. The proposed regulations package is  
16 open right now for a 90-day public review period and  
17 that continues through December 3rd. We're conducting  
18 a series of public hearings beginning earlier this  
19 month as well as formal consultations with the State,  
20 tribes and ANCSA corporations.

21  
22 The proposed rule basically covers five  
23 general areas. The first involves certain sport  
24 hunting practices on National Preserves that are  
25 inconsistent with National Park Service legal mandates  
26 and policy. Specifically those include hunting black  
27 bears, including sows with cubs with artificial light  
28 at den sites, harvesting brown bears over bait, and  
29 taking wolves and coyotes, including pups, during the  
30 denning season. The Park Service is also asking for  
31 comments on whether two practices that are currently  
32 allowed on National Preserves, namely black bear  
33 baiting and the use of dogs to hunt black bears, should  
34 also be prohibited.

35  
36 The second area covered by the proposed  
37 rule involves formalizing in regulation that activities  
38 that intentionally reduce the numbers of native species  
39 for the purpose of increasing the numbers of harvested  
40 species would not be allowed on Park Service managed  
41 lands.

42  
43 Next, the proposed rule would adopt  
44 State regulations that prohibit the intentional  
45 obstruction or hindering of people that are actively  
46 engaged in legal hunting or trapping activities.

47  
48 The fourth area proposes several  
49 updates to the current Park Service procedures for  
50 implementing closures or restrictions in National

1 Parks, Preserves, and Monuments. These updates include  
2 adding the internet and other electronic media to the  
3 list of methods that the Park Service can use to  
4 provide public notice and engage the public.

5  
6 It also involves simplifying the  
7 closure procedure, so that rather than three categories  
8 of closures, currently there's emergency, temporary,  
9 and permanent, that there would actually be simplified  
10 to two categories, emergency and non-emergency.  
11 Emergency closures and restrictions would not exceed 60  
12 days, which is consistent with the Federal Subsistence  
13 Program, what is currently on the books there. So we  
14 would be compliant or consistent with current Federal  
15 subsistence practices. Those emergency closures would  
16 be effective upon publication on the Park website.

17  
18 Non-emergency closures or restrictions  
19 or the termination or relaxation of existing closures  
20 or restrictions could be of any duration and would not  
21 require going through the regulatory process, as is  
22 under the current regulatory regime that we have.  
23 There's now going to be three criteria that need to be  
24 met if a non-emergency closure needs to be worked  
25 through the regulatory process.

26  
27 If a Park Service action would result  
28 in a significant impact to a public use pattern of an  
29 area, that would be one criteria that would trigger a  
30 regulatory rulemaking process. If it adversely affects  
31 the area's natural, aesthetic, scenic or cultural  
32 values, that would be a second criteria that would  
33 trigger rulemaking. Or if it would require a long-term  
34 or significant modification in the resource management  
35 objectives of the area, that would also trigger a  
36 rulemaking process.

37  
38 If a non-emergency closure does not  
39 meet these criteria, it will take effect after  
40 consultation with the State and after the public has  
41 had an opportunity to comment on any proposed closure  
42 or restriction.

43  
44 Finally, the proposed rule would allow  
45 the use of native fish species or their parts to be  
46 used as bait for fishing in Alaska. This is to  
47 recognize the widespread practice of using salmon eggs  
48 and other fish parts as bait for both sport and  
49 subsistence fishing. This Alaska-specific provision  
50 would replace the current nationwide Park Service

1 regulation that prohibits the use of native fish or  
2 their parts for bait.

3

4 That essentially is an overview of what  
5 is included in this proposed rule. As I mentioned  
6 before, it is open for public comment right now through  
7 December 3rd. The Park Service has a schedule of  
8 opportunities for people to comment. There are a  
9 number of in-person hearings. There was a hearing in  
10 Bettles on October 22nd. Let's see. For folks in the  
11 Port Alsworth area, they will have an opportunity to  
12 have an in-person hearing on November 18th.

13

14 On October 27th there's going to be a  
15 tribal consultation specifically on this proposed rule.  
16 So letters have gone out to the tribes and any tribe  
17 that would like to engage with the National Park  
18 Service can do so on October 27th and call in to a toll  
19 free number between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., so there  
20 will be a two-hour time period where consultation will  
21 be taking place.

22

23 MR. FROST: That was two days ago.

24

25 MS. MCBURNEY: Oh, it was two days ago.  
26 Goodness.

27

28 (Laughter)

29

30 MS. MCBURNEY: I have fallen into a  
31 time warp. But that brings up another point. If any  
32 tribe would like to have consultation with the National  
33 Park Service and missed that opportunity from two days  
34 ago, we would definitely be happy to get together with  
35 tribal members and talk about the proposed rule, take  
36 comments and answer any questions.

37

38 So, with that, Mr. Chair, that  
39 concludes my presentation and brief overview. We'll  
40 just pass the microphone down the table.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I do want to  
43 recognize Bert Frost. He's the new Regional Director  
44 for the National Park Service. He will be one of the  
45 Federal Subsistence Board members and will be reviewing  
46 our proposals, so it's always good for the Council to  
47 meet a director of any of the land managing agencies  
48 and the BIA.

49

50 Did you have any comments, Bert?

1 MR. FROST: Well, maybe just let me  
2 tell you a little bit about myself. I'm the new guy on  
3 the block. I've only been here in the state since the  
4 first of October. I'm new to Alaska. I've always  
5 wanted to come to Alaska, but my wife would never let  
6 me, but I finally convinced her that this was where we  
7 need to be, so we're in the process of moving up here.  
8 She's not here yet. We're still trying to sell our  
9 house back in Maryland.

10  
11 I look forward to working with you  
12 folks. In my previous job -- I just came out of our  
13 headquarters office in Washington, D.C. I was the  
14 Associate Director for Natural Resources and Science.  
15 So I worked really closely with all the State Fish and  
16 Game agencies across the country in that job and it was  
17 one of the more enjoyable aspects of my job.

18  
19 I had a lot of really obnoxious parts  
20 of my job, but that was one of the more better parts,  
21 to go to those meetings and to work through the  
22 wildlife issues that often, on their face, seemed like  
23 we're in conflict with other entities, but in fact  
24 there's a lot of common ground there. You've just got  
25 to be able to have the open and frank conversations and  
26 work through the issues.

27  
28 I look forward to working with this  
29 committee and the other committees that deal with Park  
30 Service lands and I look forward to having the  
31 conversations.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Bert. I'm  
34 on the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource  
35 Commission, which also deals directly with the Park  
36 Service. Ray here is on the Denali Subsistence  
37 Resource Commission. So we'll have thorough  
38 involvement with the Park Service. I appreciate you  
39 coming to our meeting.

40  
41 I would like to have U.S. Fish and  
42 Wildlife give an overview of their pre-scoping process  
43 and I also am going to give the State opportunity on  
44 the line here to comment after the presentations  
45 because I want opportunity for all stakeholders to be  
46 able to give the Council their point of view. I feel  
47 that that's fair.

48  
49 Tracey, do you want to introduce  
50 yourself and familiarize the Council on your position.

1 Some Council members might not recall.

2

3 MS. MCDONNELL: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Chairman. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of  
5 the Council. My name is Tracey McDonnell and I'm a  
6 Refuge Supervisor for the Fish and Wildlife Service. I  
7 work in our regional office in Anchorage and I  
8 supervise about half of the Refuges and managers around  
9 the state. With me today is Kanuti Refuge Manager Mike  
10 Spindler and Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko Refuge Manager  
11 Kenton Moos.

12

13 Before I get started I wanted to refer  
14 back to the map that we looked at previously just to  
15 recognize that we have quite a bit more land base  
16 within your area. We're kind of in this pink/salmon  
17 color, so you can see Innoko, Nowitna and Koyukuk and  
18 part of Kanuti are all within your area.

19

20 My colleagues and I from the regional  
21 office have been traveling around to the various RAC  
22 meetings the last several weeks in order to provide  
23 more information regarding our proposal, so I do thank  
24 you for the opportunity to speak before the Council.

25

26 I'd also like to recognize the cultural  
27 sensitivities with women talking about big animals and  
28 want to be sensitive to that, so if there are any  
29 specific questions after my presentation regarding  
30 them, I will defer to the managers sitting with me.

31

32 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is  
33 considering regulatory changes that would clarify  
34 allowable practices for the take of wildlife, some  
35 public uses and closures and restrictions on National  
36 Wildlife Refuge lands. We will continue to recognize  
37 subsistence uses of fish and wildlife and other  
38 renewable resources as priority uses on refuges in  
39 Alaska. These proposed regulatory changes would not  
40 change Federal subsistence regulations or restrict  
41 taking of fish or wildlife for subsistence uses under  
42 Federal subsistence regulations.

43

44 Our goal is to manage Refuges in Alaska  
45 in line and consistent with our mandates to conserve  
46 fish, wildlife and habitats in their natural diversity  
47 and to ensure that biological integrity and biological  
48 diversity are maintained on Refuges in Alaska.

49

50 One of the purposes of this proposal

1 was to clarify what we can and cannot do on Refuges  
2 with regard to predator control in an effort to clear  
3 up confusion and conflicts between Federal and State  
4 mandates. These proposed regulatory changes would  
5 prohibit activities involving predator reduction that  
6 alter or manipulate natural ecosystems or processes to  
7 artificially increase or decrease populations of  
8 wildlife just to provide more hunting or other wildlife  
9 dependent recreational opportunities on Refuges in  
10 Alaska.

11  
12                   The proposed regulatory changes would  
13 only restrict some methods and means for hunting and  
14 trapping under State regulations on Refuges in Alaska.  
15 Many customary and traditional methods and means would  
16 still be allowed under Federal subsistence regulations  
17 in certain game management units, such as the take of  
18 swimming caribou, the use of snowmachines to position  
19 game or the take over bait or from dens. Again, this  
20 proposed regulation does not change or supersede any  
21 Federal subsistence regulations for hunting or trapping  
22 on Refuges in Alaska.

23  
24                   Other purposes of this proposal include  
25 revisions for procedures for closures and non-  
26 commercial gathering of natural resources, such as  
27 fruits, berries, mushrooms, firewood and other plant  
28 material on Refuges in Alaska. That was previously  
29 only allowed for rural residents.

30  
31                   We are still relatively early in the  
32 process and have not released our draft proposal yet.  
33 We are here today to listen to you and to gather input.  
34 Again, these proposed changes would not apply to  
35 Federal subsistence regulations and are not intended to  
36 negatively affect Federally qualified subsistence  
37 users. If they do, please tell us so that we can work  
38 to resolve it.

39  
40                   A little bit about our timeline. We're  
41 still early in the process. So far leadership have met  
42 with the State and we've initiated our government-to-  
43 government consultation process with the mailing of  
44 letters to tribal governments and Alaska Native  
45 corporations in and around Refuges around the state  
46 inviting them to participate in our process. We  
47 followed the mailing with a copy of the letter to each  
48 of the Regional Advisory Council Chairs. These steps  
49 are ahead of our open public process.

50

1                   We anticipate publication of the  
2 proposed rule or draft in the Federal Register around  
3 the middle of January 2015. At that time there will be  
4 a 60-day public comment period that will end around  
5 mid-April. During the public comment period we plan on  
6 conducting public meetings in many locations, including  
7 areas most affected by the proposal. We're trying to  
8 time our process so that you have the opportunity to  
9 review the draft proposed rule before your March RAC  
10 meeting so that we can meet again and listen and gather  
11 any additional comments before that comment period  
12 closes.

13

14                   I'd like to emphasize we are still very  
15 early in our process and we'd like to hear from you to  
16 discuss any thoughts and concerns you may have  
17 regarding our proposal. This is your time to comment  
18 and provide input on issues that we may not have  
19 considered so that we can work to try and resolve any  
20 problems.

21

22                   I would also like to invite you to join  
23 us for one or both scheduled teleconferences with  
24 Regional Director Geoff Haskett and Refuge Chief for  
25 Alaska Mitch Ellis scheduled for November 7th and  
26 November 12th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. These calls have  
27 been set up as part of our tribal consultation and are  
28 not open to the general public, but RAC members are  
29 welcome to participate.

30

31                   For call-in information, please contact  
32 your local Refuge manager. I don't have that with me  
33 today. During the in-person meetings and these  
34 teleconferences I mentioned, we will provide more  
35 details about these potential changes with an  
36 opportunity to have open dialogue about the process.

37

38                   Again, we are still relatively early in  
39 this process and we're here to listen and gather input.  
40 This concludes my overview.

41

42                   Thank you.

43

44                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does the  
45 Council have any questions on the Fish and Wildlife's  
46 presentation.

47

48                   Don.

49

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

1 Mary, I just had a question. You say we're going to be  
2 visiting these places. Are you actually going to be  
3 sending someone from the National Park Service to  
4 villages or are you going to leave that to the Refuges?  
5 Or Tracey.

6  
7 MS. MCDONNELL: Could you repeat the  
8 question. I thought you were talking to Mary.

9  
10 (Laughter)

11  
12 MR. HONEA: Okay. In your presentation  
13 there, you said you're going to be taking comments and  
14 public visits and stuff to the villages to get tribal  
15 input and I was just wondering if the National Park  
16 Service is going to be coming directly or is it going  
17 to be out of the Refuge offices.

18  
19 Thank you.

20  
21 MS. MCDONNELL: We probably will see if  
22 the Park Service wants to join any of our meetings, but  
23 I don't know for sure how that's going to work with  
24 them joining us or not.

25  
26 MR. FROST: I think he said Park  
27 Service, but I think he meant Fish and Wildlife  
28 Service. Are you guys going to do it locally or are  
29 you going to do it out of the Anchorage office?

30  
31 MS. MCDONNELL: We're going to go  
32 locally. We're not doing everything just from the  
33 regional office. We're going to be going out to  
34 villages and areas that are most impacted.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I do have these  
37 Refuge Managers here. I know that you're under time  
38 constraint, Mike, so I would like to find out from the  
39 Refuge's perspective how these are going to affect the  
40 subsistence users' normal life ways on the Refuges.

41  
42 Go ahead, Mike.

43  
44 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mr. Chair. For the  
45 record, Mike Spindler, manager of Kanuti Refuge.  
46 Chairman and fellow Council members. Kanuti has  
47 already conducted one G-to-G meeting at the village of  
48 Allakaket. One of the reasons we're doing this and one  
49 of the reasons we're before you today is to find out if  
50 there are any unintended consequences of this ruling.

1 The intent is not to affect traditional subsistence  
2 methods and means.

3

4 In drilling down into the details of  
5 the regulations, we became aware of -- I'll give one  
6 example and that's an example for you guys to think  
7 about that maybe there's other things that we haven't  
8 thought of. That is use of artificial light for  
9 denning, taking bears out of their dens in the  
10 wintertime. That is not covered under the Federal  
11 subsistence regulations, the use of light.

12

13 Also it's recognized that in our area,  
14 the Koyukon region, it's an extremely important  
15 cultural tradition to hunt bears in their dens in the  
16 wintertime. Some people have left the village and  
17 returned to urban areas, but they come back to the  
18 village frequently to participate in these cultural  
19 activities. That could not be covered under the  
20 Federal subsistence regs because that applies based on  
21 rural residency.

22

23 So, in this proposed ruling we did make  
24 the exception. One of the methods and means that will  
25 not be banned with this ruling is the use of artificial  
26 light for denning, which would mean that an individual  
27 that's tied to the village, returns to the village, can  
28 come back and participate in that hunt.

29

30 There are probably other areas like  
31 that that we don't know if there's unintended  
32 consequences, but that's the main reason we're here, is  
33 so that you guys can think about each of these  
34 different methods and means and see if there's  
35 something that affects that we haven't thought about.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mike. I  
38 appreciate you bringing that forward. Any comments  
39 from the Council with Mike.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kenton, do you got  
44 anything to add with that.

45

46 MR. MOOS: I guess the one thing I  
47 would add, we also have sent out letters. We've  
48 actually followed up last week with phone calls to all  
49 the villages, including those in the Innoko area. We  
50 have not received any feedback as of yet, but we will

1 be contacting the tribal administrators again to try to  
2 facilitate any conversations that might be needed to  
3 get those comments. As of right now we have not  
4 received any request for face-to-face meetings yet, but  
5 we will be following up a third time.

6

7 MR. SPINDLER: I should also add, this  
8 is Mike again, the deadline for the government-to-  
9 government consultation is November 21st. So we did  
10 have an initial consultation with Allakaket. They  
11 wanted to go through it in quite a bit of detail and  
12 they will probably request another meeting before  
13 November 21st to finalize their input.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you contacting  
16 the tribal councils to get on their -- to hit their  
17 meetings? They have these monthly meetings.

18

19 MR. SPINDLER: That's what we did,  
20 yeah. We sent a letter and we followed up with a phone  
21 call. It was open to them to decide if they wanted to  
22 have that on their agenda and have us present. In the  
23 case of Allakaket, they very much did want that.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So has Galena or  
26 Huslia met on this issue at all? Jenny.

27

28 MS. PELKOLA: Yes, we did. I was going  
29 to attend and I just realized I'll be out of town.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so I  
32 think we've gotten the Federal perspective. I want to  
33 give a comment to the State.

34

35 Are you on there, Jennifer, or the  
36 State representative.

37

38 MS. YUHAS: I am. Thank you, Mr.  
39 Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. For the  
40 record, my name is Jennifer Yuhas, and I am the State's  
41 Federal subsistence liaison team leader. Brad Pollock  
42 is also listening on line from Anchorage.

43

44 And I really wish I could be out there.  
45 I had a great time out in McGrath last month, but  
46 sometimes you just can't be in three places at once, as  
47 you will know, Mr. Chairman.

48

49 As you know, the State is opposed to  
50 the regulation package that the Park Service has

1 released. It sounds like it a little bit more  
2 methodical, the release that the Fish and Wildlife  
3 Service is going through, and hopefully they're  
4 listening to all of the comments that the Park Service  
5 is collecting through these meetings, and taking notes  
6 for the RAC as well.

7

8 The State has asked for this regulation  
9 package recently released by the Park Service to be  
10 rescinded. As the Chairman is aware of other  
11 conversations that have taken place, and Mr. Frost has  
12 probably been briefed by Mr. Hard.

13

14 I do appreciate Mary McBurney referring  
15 to the State hunting regulations as general hunt. That  
16 has been a discrepancy of semantics over the years that  
17 the Park Service has generally referred to any State  
18 permit as sport, and that is very confusing to the  
19 public, especially the public who, whether they live  
20 rurally or not, if they're hunting under a State permit  
21 and they are a subsistence hunter, sometimes returning  
22 back to their home village, they consider themselves a  
23 subsistence user. So when they hear this will only  
24 prohibit sport hunting, they think that it doesn't  
25 apply to them, when the mechanics legally can really  
26 apply to them.

27

28 I'm not sure how detailed you want me  
29 to get, Mr. Chairman, but that's the gist of it.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the primary  
32 objection of the State is that -- what is the primary  
33 objection? You just want to rescind it and -- but I  
34 want to have your -- a reason, that it usurps State  
35 authority or you've got various reasons why that --  
36 you're rejecting?

37

38 MS. YUHAS: Our primary objection is  
39 that these regulations affect users that the published  
40 materials seeking comment does not alert them to, and  
41 that many of the comments that we see that have said  
42 they support the regulations appear to only be  
43 commenting on what was released as the published  
44 material referring to the regulations, rather than on  
45 the regulations themselves. When we've dissected these  
46 regulations, this doesn't apply just to sport hunters.  
47 This applies to Federal subsistence and State  
48 subsistence users. If the State regulation is  
49 preempted in an area where a Federal regulation has not  
50 been created, all of those local rural users who are

1 taking a predator, and in some instances -- the  
2 Chairman has been at some of the Federal Subsistence  
3 Board meetings where the Board has rejected a proposal  
4 to extend a wolf season or create a wolf season, and  
5 comments have been placed on the record to say, clearly  
6 these users are meeting their needs under State  
7 regulation. Those users will be hanging in the wind  
8 until such time as a regulation is created for them, if  
9 the State regulation is preempted.

10

11 Many of the regulations that we see  
12 preempted through this proposed package were brought  
13 forward by local rural users, including the bear  
14 baiting issue which passed the Federal Subsistence  
15 Board last April that was brought by Andrew Firmin from  
16 Fort Yukon, a member and employee of the tribe, who's a  
17 member of the RAC. There's just no way that anyone in  
18 the room can straight-face the idea that Andrew Firmin  
19 is a sport hunter who wants to gain a brown bear for  
20 sport purposes. It's simply not true.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for  
23 that more detailed explanation.

24

25 Any questions for Jennifer by the  
26 Council.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. We're clear on  
31 that.

32

33 And so now at this point the Council  
34 should be entered into discussion on the proposed rule  
35 by the Park Service, and then these comments on the  
36 proposed rule will also apply to the pre-scoping  
37 process.

38

39 So do you have any comments on this,  
40 Ray.

41

42 MR. COLLINS: I guess following the  
43 comments from State, I guess we need to look at the  
44 wording closely to see what is applying to sport and  
45 what is applying to subsistence hunters. I mean, make  
46 it clear who these are applying to and how they impact  
47 them. If they're not differentiating in here, and  
48 lumping everybody under sport, that's not a true  
49 picture of what was allowed under ANILCA where  
50 subsistence practices are supposed to continue.

1 I don't know. I guess I would ask if  
2 they would want to respond to what the State just said  
3 about that. Do you feel it is clear in there, and is  
4 it true that it's applying to all hunters and not just  
5 sporthunters.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will state that  
8 there's been recent actions by the Board of Game. I  
9 was at, my recollection is poor, but it was either the  
10 spring of 2008 or spring of 2010, when there was a  
11 proposal to allow light for denning bears. There was  
12 -- I forget what his -- I'm bad with names. It was one  
13 of the Huntingtons. And he came before the Board. I  
14 encourage Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife to  
15 get those transcripts from that Board meeting. He had  
16 those hatahnies (ph), these taboos about talking about  
17 this stuff. You're not really supposed to be talking  
18 about this stuff. You don't brag about this stuff, and  
19 going into dens with 357 magnum. He described some of  
20 the practices that they do.

21  
22 I was a little teeny kid, and there was  
23 an Athapaskan elder that was raised at Bear Paw. And  
24 because I was a 12-year-old boy, he told me all about  
25 how you get bears from dens, and how you find the dens,  
26 and all these things about that. That's -- my  
27 respected Koyukon Council members here know that this  
28 is a very touchy issue, and we don't really like to  
29 discuss this issue, but it keeps coming up, we have to  
30 keep talking about it.

31  
32 The use of light has always occurred,  
33 whether it's birch bark or however. The use of light  
34 in this practice is always there. You have to be able  
35 to see what you're dealing. You're dealing with a very  
36 large animal. And there are certain situations where  
37 it gets to be very dangerous work. And so my  
38 perception is there's very, very few sport hunters that  
39 would -- I don't think -- I think you could ask 10  
40 hunting guides to go out and find a bear den and get  
41 that bear out of the den. I bet most of them could not  
42 do it. They don't have the knowledge base to actually  
43 go out there and actually be successful at taking a  
44 bear.

45  
46 So I think -- but if we eliminate the  
47 State regulation, the Board of Game after hearing that  
48 impassioned testimony, which you actually should get  
49 -- you can get it from the State. They don't  
50 transcribe. They keep it in audio, and so that's kind

1 of a problem to research it, but after listening to  
2 that, the Board of Game provided for the use of light.  
3 There's description of hot dens, there's natal dens  
4 with moms with baby, little teeny cubs that they don't  
5 want to take. There's a lot of stuff there. There's  
6 stuff that I don't really like to be talking about at  
7 this table, but I have to put it on the record. You've  
8 come to me, you want to hear this. And so there's ways  
9 that they find a hot den, and there's ways that you  
10 find out if there's a bear in there, and there's --  
11 they sometimes take females that have bigger cubs. And  
12 that's why they wanted the allowance of taking sows  
13 with cubs, because they're meat. And so I don't really  
14 like to talk about all that.

15  
16 But this practice is customary and  
17 traditional. Bear spears with blades that long, and  
18 keeping bears in the den and killing these bears. This  
19 has been going on forever.

20  
21 And so the bottom line is if the State  
22 regulation is allowing certain practices that are  
23 customary and traditional, truly customary and  
24 traditional, taking bears in dens with lights, and sows  
25 with cubs, that's customary and traditional.

26  
27 The discussion about avoiding moms with  
28 the babies, the hot dens, that's in the record. And so  
29 that needs to be analyzed in your process.

30  
31 And so there's going to be -- when the  
32 State allows it, we don't need a Federal regulation, so  
33 since that time, just like shooting ducks in the  
34 springtime, forever people shot ducks in the  
35 springtime, and finally they came around with a  
36 regulation that allows us to legally take ducks in the  
37 springtime.

38  
39 The State of Alaska provided a legal  
40 avenue to take sows with cubs. And it's a limited  
41 harvest. I mean, it's not like this huge amount of  
42 people going out and doing it.

43  
44 And so there's -- we're going to need  
45 -- if we do preclude on Federal regulations, then we're  
46 going to need proposals to the Federal Subsistence  
47 Board to provide the use of those. And those have to  
48 be recognized, these customary and traditional  
49 practices in the Koyukon region.

50

1                   And so this Council has been fairly --  
2 has a high respect for bears. The sale of bear parts.  
3 There's been a bunch of things that Eastern will do,  
4 but the Western Council will not do. And so we have  
5 differences to the Eastern Council.

6  
7                   And so these customary practices, like  
8 I was forwarded a response by Lake Clark, that they  
9 just had a recent meeting in October 6th. Do you have  
10 that response from Lake Clark? They're going along  
11 with the reclusion of bear denning, and taking of sows  
12 and so forth. Well, that's a part of our region, but  
13 that's not the entirety of our region.

14  
15                   And so I feel that where we have  
16 customary and traditional practices of taking bears  
17 with light and in dens with females with cubs, I feel  
18 that those practices should continue, that the agencies  
19 that move forward with this proposed rule and adopt the  
20 rule, that they should be burdened with submitting a  
21 proposal to the Federal process that comes before this  
22 Council.

23  
24                   And we will talk about this issue. But  
25 I really encourage both agencies to get on the Board of  
26 Game's website and look at -- I forget what year they  
27 passed that light, with the sows with cubs. And it was  
28 a spring meeting, and it was a Region 3 meeting, and I  
29 was there. And so the Board sat forward and like,  
30 what, you're crawling in dens with a pistol in front of  
31 you? They were like, how many sport -- how many  
32 general hunters, I won't call them sporthunters, are  
33 going to do that. You have to have a lot of guts to  
34 this stuff. The perception by maybe the Outside public  
35 out in the continental United States is that, oh, it's  
36 shooting fish in a barrel. No, it's not. You start  
37 messing with those bears, they start growling and  
38 popping their teeth. I've done it. And so it's not  
39 for the light of heart.

40  
41                   And so these are some of the issues you  
42 wanted to bring before this Council. I'm putting all  
43 this stuff on the record. And if the agencies are  
44 going to preclude it under State regulations, then we  
45 need Federal proposals. And so I feel it's the burden  
46 of the agencies, if they preclude this activity, that  
47 they have to supply mechanisms to maintain the legality  
48 of these customary and traditional practices.

49  
50                   That would be my comments.

1 I would like to see the ability, like  
2 Mike is talking about, of people that are raised in  
3 Allakaket or Alatna to be able to come home and  
4 participate with family members. I would like to see  
5 certain mechanisms, and I would like the Council to  
6 comment on this.

7  
8 Don, you got some comments.

9  
10 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11  
12 You know, we are so diverse culturally  
13 in the taking of bears or the bear denning or whatever,  
14 that you're exactly right, that it's kind of a cultural  
15 thing where I could differ. We could differ from even  
16 within our region from 50 miles to the next village,  
17 that maybe this doesn't apply to us. Maybe it applies  
18 to somebody on the Koyukuk River. But I am not going  
19 to not support that because that's their way of life.  
20 And you're exactly right. I mean, it's almost like  
21 maklani (ph) or whatever, taboo, to even talk about  
22 that. And I get the feeling that, you know, some of  
23 the measure in here are detrimental to human beings,  
24 when they actually carry those traditions out.

25  
26 So, you know, I have a problem with  
27 safety in regard to that. And if -- you know, when we  
28 talk about artificial light, and the use of artificial  
29 light. Well, what other light are you going to use? I  
30 mean, it's just common sense, and I'm not going to  
31 disrupt something that's been going on for years. And  
32 like we say, I don't think even the women folk want to  
33 speak on this particular issue, because it's that  
34 sensitive. Well, maybe I will. I mean, maybe our men  
35 folk would.

36  
37 But just I concur with what your say  
38 there, and I think it's a dangerous thing to take these  
39 measures, especially in that particular -- in this bear  
40 thing.

41  
42 Thank you.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray, you've got  
45 customary knowledge of how this practice occurred?

46  
47 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, it was occurring up  
48 to about the time we came in '63. I think the old  
49 chief that had died still used a spear to kill black  
50 bear in dens. And like you say, they don't talk about

1 it. If you find a den out there, it's not even  
2 mentioned in the village, because women aren't supposed  
3 to start talking about. They said if they -- if it was  
4 mentioned to the women, and they talked about it, the  
5 bear wouldn't be there. I mean, there was -- it is a  
6 very sensitive area. And it's dying out by itself in  
7 that younger ones don't have the knowledge or the  
8 desire to do that, but it still shouldn't be prohibited  
9 by the someones that wanted to do that. But they have  
10 to really know what's going on.

11  
12                   So I've never seen it myself. I know  
13 when I was out trapping with men from the village  
14 there, we found suspected den sites, but we just  
15 avoided those. We didn't go around there; we didn't  
16 want to disturb them on the trap line.

17  
18                   So I think if you need wording in  
19 there, you should have some clear wording that would  
20 recognize customary and traditional -- except for  
21 customary and traditional practices where there's a  
22 long -- I mean, it would be a general way of allowing  
23 that under there without getting specific for those who  
24 still want to continue that practice. Some way of  
25 doing. I guess the State Board went into details and  
26 actually passed regs on it.

27  
28                   But I know Denali Park talked about it,  
29 and it wasn't used in the area, and they didn't feel  
30 that in Denali that it was necessary to the folks in  
31 Cantwell and so on. They didn't do killing in dens and  
32 they didn't bait bears there and so on. So they didn't  
33 have a problem with not allowing it there.

34  
35                   But if the people from Nikolai were  
36 hunting back on park lands, some of them might want to  
37 do that, but now they don't have access, because it's a  
38 long ways away. But in the future there may be a road  
39 that -- if they ever get a road to the Kuskokwim,  
40 things will change. And the only place that would  
41 still have rights to carry on some of those things  
42 might be in the park in the future, in the  
43 park/preserve lands. And they used to -- people from  
44 Telida went out and spent part of the year out there  
45 hunting in the fringes of Denali. I mean, that's -- so  
46 that's why they were recognized as having traditional  
47 use, and they're not doing it now, but I wouldn't for  
48 -- we don't know how it's going to change in the  
49 future, so there should be some provision to all allow  
50 those cultural practices to continue if they want to.

1                   But it's not going to be engaged in by  
2 very many like you said. They don't have the knowledge  
3 and it's not an easy thing to do. I've heard a number  
4 of stories about them approaching bears in dens and the  
5 bear coming out and, you know, it isn't something you  
6 engage in lightly. You need to know what you're about.  
7

8                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If you had a  
9 pacemaker, you'd blow your pacemaker out. As I'm  
10 saying, this isn't for the faint of heart.  
11

12                   I apologize to my Council members, my  
13 lady Council members here for this issue. I'm sorry  
14 this came up at this meeting.  
15

16                   And I personally am not real big on  
17 bear baiting. I feel that -- especially brown bears,  
18 feeding brown bears food and getting them used to human  
19 scent, and killing large males away from bait stations.  
20 You're basically training younger bears, who are some  
21 of the worst ones. You get these teenage bears, those  
22 three or four-year-old males, they're going to disperse  
23 from wherever they've come, their mom's territory  
24 areas, and you're going -- you're just basically  
25 causing DLP problems. And grizzlies can get real  
26 insistent. They're not as easily deterred about going  
27 away from your house if you've got a problem bear,  
28 whereas a black bear, you can push those around a lot  
29 -- quite a bit easier.  
30

31                   And so I'm not real big on the brown  
32 bear baiting thing. I'm not real big on brown bear  
33 baiting. And this Council has not been real receptive  
34 to a lot of bear baiting proposals. But it is the  
35 people of the Middle Yukon Advisory were talked into  
36 some bear baiting around Galena there, but I personally  
37 don't think it's a real good idea to be baiting brown  
38 bears. It gives more harvest opportunity, but you come  
39 up with more problems.  
40

41                   I remember in the good old days, long  
42 before the road into the Brooks Range, where all the  
43 bears -- there was not one person in the central Brooks  
44 Range had ever been killed by a bear. Not one person.  
45 Now there's people that got their camps torn up in  
46 Gates of the Arctic Park. All these people coming  
47 around, and the bears are getting all use to people.  
48 And the more habituation that they have, the less fear  
49 they have. The less fear they have, there are certain  
50 individuals that can be more aggressive than others.

1 And so if you're basically a lot of brown bears food at  
2 bait stations, and you're killing all the big ones,  
3 you're going to have a lot of younger bears when they  
4 disperse from their territories that are going to have  
5 a habituation issue, and you're going to have defense  
6 of life and property problems.

7

8 And, Ray, do you want to comment on  
9 that.

10

11 MR. COLLINS: Well, yeah, that's a big  
12 -- right now, because we're surrounded by State lands,  
13 the State regulation applies, and if we have a bear  
14 causing a problem in town -- like we had a mother that  
15 came in in the fall with a couple of young cubs, and  
16 they were hungry and looking for something for food. I  
17 think the female got killed finally when she caused a  
18 problem breaking into porches and things. So the next  
19 year the cub is around, wandering around town. They  
20 finally had to get rid of that, too.

21

22 So when they had the predator control  
23 program in the McGrath area, they decided that bears  
24 were one of the major predators around there. They  
25 went out and they caught over 90 bears within 20 miles  
26 of McGrath. But most of those bears didn't cause a  
27 problem, because if they did, they got shot if they  
28 were around fish camps or towns and so on.

29

30 And I could see a situation, sometimes  
31 there's winter bears prowling around the village, and  
32 they need to kill them whether there's a season or not.  
33 In the fall, they get too poor of condition then they  
34 won't go into hibernation, and you need to be able to  
35 legally remove those. But it's not a general practice.

36

37 When we decided to leave the bears,  
38 they flew those bears away, and about 20 percent of the  
39 collared ones come back within a period of time, but it  
40 wasn't during the critical birthing time.

41

42 Yeah, so there are times and situations  
43 where you need to be able to take bears, and sometimes  
44 -- as I said, I didn't have any idea there were that  
45 many around there, because you don't see them. They  
46 know if they're too visible or cause problems, they're  
47 going to get shot, so they just stay out of sight.

48

49 And if want to reduce the number of  
50 them, you almost have to use baiting or something else

1 where you can -- and it has to be done closer to the  
2 village, unfortunately, because you can't sit out there  
3 on a bait at a distance out there and be there all the  
4 time. So even though it's allowed, it's not used by  
5 very many people. And the same thing, if you do have a  
6 bait there, what do you do then if a brown bear shows  
7 up. If he's around the village, where they normally  
8 aren't, and could cause problems, you might want to  
9 take that.

10

It's a complicated issue like you said.

12

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It is.

14

15 MR. COLLINS: And I'm reluctant to talk  
16 a lot about it, too.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to thank Mike  
19 Spindler for attending the meeting. I know he's got to  
20 take off. Thanks for coming up, Mike. Or down.

21

(Laughter)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I wanted Mike  
25 here to give his perspective as a refuge manager.

26

27 And so I have one question for  
28 Jennifer. This regulation has been in place for bait-  
29 taking bears, with a light, and sows and cubs in dens.  
30 Do you have any data from general hunter on how many  
31 bears have been taken using that methods and means  
32 since the Board passed that regulation.

33

Are you still there, Jennifer?

35

36 MS. YUHAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
37 am. I was just taking the time to unmute. I  
38 apologize.

39

40 At the spring meeting that you were  
41 present for, when we discussed this at the Federal  
42 Subsistence Board, we didn't have any actual harvest  
43 yet reported, and I didn't anticipate that question. I  
44 usually try to pull the statistics. I did a pretty  
45 good job at the last two meetings, but you weren't  
46 there for those, and I'm messing up at your meeting by  
47 not having that available, but I don't have any new  
48 harvest data since April, or any -- as we've discussed  
49 this internally, this has not been a high profile,  
50 highly participated hunt as you heard at the April

1 meeting.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I know in Unit  
4 20 and several units black bears are sealed and brown  
5 bears are sealed. And I thought maybe you might have  
6 some offhand -- I would anticipate the actual  
7 participation would be almost nil to few. Would that  
8 be accurate?

9

10 MS. YUHAS: That is highly accurate.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then the other  
13 primary aspect, on the Federal proposal it allows for  
14 non-subsistence users to utilize other wild renewable  
15 resources and so forth. And I don't have a problem  
16 with that, but I am concerned that that might impact if  
17 it was a lot of berry picking and a lot of timber  
18 harvest near a community, because those are resources  
19 that are used. And so I would be concerned about a lot  
20 of other use for berries or timber or other --  
21 mushrooms or whatever it might be right next to a  
22 community. I would be concerned about that, because  
23 ANILCA provides for fish and wildlife priority use, and  
24 other wild renewable resources, so there's a  
25 subsistence priority for those.

26

27 And so the other aspect of both plans  
28 that I understand is preclusion of taking wolves and  
29 coyotes when they're in den. And there's no definition  
30 there in your -- and time frame are you talking about  
31 on precluding harvest of wolves and coyotes when  
32 they're denning. It's like, well, there's -- I know  
33 when they den, but is there a timeframe that the Park  
34 Service is talking about.

35

36 And I'll speak from my own perspective.  
37 I never take wolves when they're denning, because  
38 they're nursing. They rub out on the belly. And if  
39 you shoot them, either one of them, usually there's  
40 just a pair, but there can be more, but usually if you  
41 kill either one of them, you basically kill those pups  
42 in that den. So I don't do that. If I'm out caribou  
43 hunting in the springtime, I see a wolf running around,  
44 it might be good, maybe it's not, but if I shoot that  
45 wolf, that female's probably going to lose that litter.  
46 And so I don't do that.

47

48 But there's a time before the female  
49 actually has the litter, and so they should be -- you  
50 should be able to take them before that time, because

1 the skin would actually still be good.

2

3 So I'm wondering what the Park Service  
4 is thinking about what this -- there's no definition of  
5 when this denning period. It's just sort of -- and  
6 there should be a date for when this is going to occur.

7

8 Go ahead.

9

10 MR. FROST: Yeah, this is Bert Frost.

11

12 You know, the dates we've been talking  
13 about was during that time period, May 1st to August  
14 1st. So it's that period where wolves would be giving  
15 birth, raising their pups. Their pelts would be at  
16 their least valuable time of year. And it would just  
17 provide that -- and we're not talking about limits or  
18 anything like that, so during the other periods of the  
19 year that, you know, the State regs would still apply.  
20 And that's the same also with the bears, you know.  
21 We're not proposing -- I think you can take anywhere  
22 from three to five black bears a year in different  
23 areas, and we're not proposing to change any of that.

24

25 But for the wolves and the coyotes it  
26 would from around May 1st to August 1st, and those  
27 would be clearly defined in the final rule.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see.

30

31 Any other comments on the proposed  
32 rule.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the State have  
37 any.

38

39 MS. YUHAS: Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jennifer.

42

43 MS. YUHAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44

45 I have a question for Mr. Frost and  
46 then one more comment. But the question was, as far as  
47 the State regs applying, we're under the impression  
48 that the State regs are going to be precluded, and that  
49 there will be additional areas of precluding State  
50 regulations. We're just curious how those State regs

1 will still apply.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mr. Frost.

4

5 MR. FROST: Yeah, I'm the new guy here.

6 And so, Jennifer, I will have to get back with you on

7 that. I don't -- I'm not familiar enough with the

8 details and the nuances of the State regs and the

9 Federal regs. But we can surely get that clarified.

10

11 MS. YUHAS: Not a worry at all, Mr.

12 Chairman. And I do want to say I have sat through

13 enough rounds myself of pin the accusation on the

14 bureaucrat, that that was in no way my intent, simply

15 just looking through how we see this would apply. And

16 so we do look forward to that conversation.

17

18 Along the same lines, just pointing out

19 one of the details for the RAC as you consider your

20 comments, Mr. Collins explained the need to look at the

21 regulations in detail, and that is what kind of formed

22 the State's worries for this was taking the press

23 release against what we found in the regulations. Some

24 of these things are very difficult to find, and I don't

25 necessarily think that's by design, but they are

26 difficult to find.

27

28 In what is purported to be a move

29 towards electronic media, which seems very admirable,

30 there's an exclusion of needing to hold a meeting in

31 the rural area with the users, but that's difficult to

32 find. In the published regulations it doesn't say

33 eliminating this need, it simply doesn't list it under

34 6(d) for closures. It says that there will be a sign

35 posted in the area, and it says that you can take

36 comment over electronic media.

37

38 The State is quite worried that that

39 will be at the exclusion of local users, especially our

40 Yup'ik and Athapaskan-speaking elders who don't have

41 access to Facebook, and haven't liked the Facebook page

42 for the Park Service. They'll be disadvantaged for

43 being alerted to the comment periods, and at a

44 disadvantage to comment if the meeting isn't held in

45 the area. We understand that the Park Service has

46 attributed low turnout to excluding this need, but we

47 also think that better planning could be utilized. And

48 that's not a dig at anyone.

49

50 It is very hard, but just like in

1 Fairbanks, we're going to be having a meeting on these  
2 on these regulations tomorrow. There's several  
3 community events that had been planned for months that  
4 will take many people away from that meeting. It  
5 doesn't mean they're in support of the regulations  
6 because they didn't show up. There's the same  
7 competition for people's time in the small villages  
8 when, you know, a school board meeting is scheduled the  
9 same time as a Fish and Wildlife Service meeting like  
10 we had last month.

11  
12 So just pointing out that as you go  
13 through this, that the details are very, very small and  
14 very hard to pick out versus what was published that  
15 people think they're commenting on.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A response.

18  
19 MR. FROST: Sure. You know, the intent  
20 of that portion of the rule is to not decrease the  
21 public engagement in any way, or try and exclude any  
22 party. You know, we're still -- we will still be  
23 required to do the tribal consultation.

24  
25 But it is accurate that, you know,  
26 we've held a number of our scheduled public meetings,  
27 and I think the most we've had at any meeting was  
28 yesterday at Anchorage where there were 17 people. I  
29 think before that the most was three. I'm just stating  
30 that as a fact. I'm not saying that's either good or  
31 bad.

32  
33 But right now the Federal regulations  
34 does not allow us to use social media, and that's  
35 really the intent of the regulations is not to decrease  
36 our obligation to reach out to rural communities and  
37 tribes, but to allow us to use a more modern way of  
38 communication which not everyone, but a large majority  
39 of Alaskans and Americans use these days. And so we're  
40 just trying to be a little bit proactive; we're not  
41 trying to shirk our responsibility, but just trying to,  
42 you know, sort of bring the regs up to the 21st  
43 century.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm advocate of  
46 using social media, because I know a lot of elders on  
47 Facebook. And so you'd be dumbfounded how many people  
48 are actually using Facebook. And it reaches out to  
49 especially younger people. And we're just talking  
50 about a youth seat on this Council and stuff like that.

1 We need to engage -- through social media, we need to  
2 engage younger people in rural communities with  
3 electronic media. And I'm happy to see that. I'm  
4 happy about that.

5  
6 When I was discussing regulations,  
7 there are specific regulations in the -- passed by the  
8 Board of Game for the use of denning bears, and where  
9 the lights are, and the specific game management units.  
10 I'm not asking for a blanket proposal for the whole  
11 state of Alaska. I'm asking that the communities like  
12 Huslia and Allakaket, if there's a State regulation  
13 that provides that then the Federal regulation should  
14 also be submitted for those specific areas where those  
15 practices.

16  
17 These Preserve areas, if you look at  
18 the map, they're fairly distant from where, especially  
19 denning practices would be occurring and so that's --  
20 I'm not so worried about the Preserve areas, like I  
21 told Greg Dudgeon, I said this little tiny little spot  
22 over here and the Gates of the Arctic Preserve boot is  
23 so distant from any community, the likelihood of  
24 anybody, subsistence or sporthunter would be almost  
25 nil, zero. And so -- but around these -- in these  
26 Refuge areas there should be -- if there's a State  
27 allowance for use of light and sows with cubs, then the  
28 Federal proposal needs to be promulgated for that.  
29 That's the regulation alignment we need to have.

30  
31 MR. FROST: Mr. Chairman. You know we  
32 are more than willing to entertain those conversations,  
33 absolutely.

34  
35 Again, the regulations are here not to  
36 -- the proposed regulations are not here to impact the  
37 Federal subsistence users, so we're more than happy to  
38 have those conversations and to work on -- on a  
39 proposal that could go before the Federal Subsistence  
40 Board in order to allow those activities.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do prefer the  
43 Federal proposal regulation process with the Federal  
44 Subsistence Board but I understand -- I've read through  
45 ANILCA multiple times, I do understand that there's  
46 management objectives set out by Congress for each land  
47 managing agency and so I do understand that part. And  
48 so I -- you know, some entities might want to revoke  
49 the proposal but I've -- proposed rule, but I do see  
50 where there's certain statute limitations to what

1 agencies can do. And we've heard from Day One on this  
2 Council that we can't have predator control on Refuge  
3 lands, we've heard that from Day One, that's in -- and  
4 so that's why there's a predator control program going  
5 on right now up there by Allakaket and it's not  
6 occurring on the Refuge lands because of those  
7 limitations and I understand that. And so -- but I  
8 think we've covered everything.

9

10 Did we give you enough information. I  
11 think we've covered all the aspects of the proposed  
12 rule.

13

14 Don.

15

16 MR. HONEA: Thank you. Can I comment  
17 here.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

20

21 MR. HONEA: You know, I actually think  
22 that when you -- when you send these out to the tribal  
23 councils I don't think you're going to get much  
24 response.

25

26 Okay, number 1, well, this doesn't  
27 affect us, we don't do that. There's no hunting dogs  
28 on -- you know, we don't do that. But, you know,  
29 taking brown bear over bait, we don't do the bait  
30 stations or taking wolves or coyotes during the denning  
31 season and stuff but I want to throw in a pitch here  
32 for the -- for the den taking. When I was in high  
33 school, and this was in the '60s, late '60s, whatever,  
34 when I was in the boarding school and I'd see these  
35 guys from Huslia and they'd -- you know, there was a  
36 story about Huslia hole hunters, okay, that was about  
37 -- and they're still doing it, and it's a cultural  
38 thing. Everybody in my village often talk about that,  
39 the number of moose on the Koyukuk River, especially by  
40 Huslia. I remember going from Ruby to the bible camp,  
41 which is halfway between Ruby and Tanana and flying  
42 over to Huslia because I had to get up to Shungnak to  
43 search for my niece's body one year, this was 10, 15  
44 years ago and the closer we got to Huslia the more  
45 moose we saw. If there was a lake here we saw -- we  
46 saw a moose in there, maybe two, three, and that's  
47 because of they're -- they are taking care of their  
48 bear population, you can darn well bet that if I was  
49 from Wasilla, and I am thankful that they did that,  
50 when they go hunting on the Koyukuk, ThreeDay Slough or

1 whatever, that they're doing a conservation thing with  
2 moose. And people -- people in my village know that.

3

4                   So that's why we tell people on the  
5 Refuges take those -- take those bears in the fall time  
6 if you see them because every -- everyone knows, you  
7 know, in the fall time, we don't actually have to go  
8 out during the denning but that's a cultural thing,  
9 that's what they do and they're taking care of their  
10 moose population.

11

12                   So I wanted to throw that out there.

13

14                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

15

16                   I do want to state for the record that  
17 subsistence use takes on both sides of this equation.  
18 There's a predator base and an ungulate base. And so  
19 healthy subsistence use takes off both sides. We trap  
20 in the winter time, we catch wolves and various kinds  
21 of predators. We take some bears, we eat those, and  
22 then we take some moose, and caribou and sheep. So  
23 that negates the negative effect. You can't just take  
24 all ungulates because it unbalances the whole seesaw.  
25 And so traditionally subsistence users take off of both  
26 sides of the equation. And so harvesting bears and  
27 wolves is integral. And I want the process to  
28 recognize that, that taking predators by various means  
29 is part of subsistence use and how we, you know, manage  
30 -- or how we -- how the human influence does not affect  
31 the overall resource. It's healthy for both sides to  
32 harvest like that.

33

34                   And so I want that kind of thought  
35 process brought -- you know it's not predator control,  
36 it's just taking from one side helps the ungulates and  
37 it helps the -- I tell people, you -- I was down in  
38 Ruby, people are like, you know, we want to shoot cow  
39 moose, I says, well, you kill cow moose up by Huslia, I  
40 says well you got to kill more bears down here, he  
41 says, we got to -- those guys down there in Huslia, all  
42 those people down there are telling me there's all  
43 these dry cows, there's just dry cows everywhere, I  
44 says, yeah, the bears ate all their calves, you got to  
45 take more bears, shoot them, eat them and you'll save a  
46 moose calf. And so eating bears is a positive thing  
47 for the moose, and so it brings resource into the  
48 community and lots of communities on the Koyukuk River  
49 do that. They eat the bears and, yeah, they got more  
50 moose.

1                   And so that's a healthy balance in  
2 resource use by subsistence.

3

4                   MR. COLLINS: Uh-huh.

5

6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When people get away  
7 from harvesting bears and wolves, people don't trap as  
8 much then it puts more pressure against the moose or  
9 ungulate population.

10

11                   You got a comment there, Ray.

12

13                   MR. COLLINS: Well, I was just going to  
14 say in that regard that what has happened, people don't  
15 plan or think ahead, but when everybody went to fish  
16 camps, spent the summer in fish camp we didn't have as  
17 much problems with black bear in the area because  
18 they'd come around the fish camp and they'd get taken.  
19 And actually the placer miners, they'd come around and  
20 they'd break into the cook houses and they got taken.  
21 They helped keep a balance but now there aren't people  
22 out in the camps out there. And so you need to  
23 encourage more take of black bears as you said, and if  
24 baiting is the only way to do it, now this wouldn't  
25 necessarily be in the Park, but just in general, in  
26 some areas you need to encourage some of these  
27 activities to bring about the balance that you were  
28 talking about because traditionally they've changed  
29 that. They still want to go out and get the moose but  
30 they're not harvesting the black bears to keep the  
31 balance.

32

33                   So the State Board has tried to adopt  
34 things that would allow or encourage more balance, you  
35 could call it -- I wouldn't call it predator control  
36 either, I would call it taking a balance. I was on the  
37 State task force when we were looking at that whole  
38 thing and we were looking at each biological unit out  
39 there and deciding what the populations were and  
40 monitoring those populations, and they saw the end  
41 balance then you would do something to bring the  
42 balance back to keep things level instead of having  
43 these wildlife populations go like this that they  
44 normally do if they're unregulated.

45

46                   And I know in the Park they've done  
47 that. But before the Park didn't have hunting  
48 programs, but now in the Preserve lands where you still  
49 do have hunting you got to do something to encourage  
50 keeping some balance in the area or they're going to be

1 -- like there's hardly any -- in Denali Park there's  
2 hardly any caribou anymore. I mean there used to be  
3 huge -- but there's enough predation that it just holds  
4 the population at a low level and that's recognized as  
5 natural in that area.

6

7                   But they also tried to discourage then  
8 the harvest of wolves outside, those packs ranged  
9 outside and they were -- some of them were harvested  
10 outside and they wanted to stop that too because it was  
11 affecting the wolf numbers, well, that was helping to  
12 keep some kind of balance.

13

14                   It's -- these are really complicated  
15 issues and especially in changing times.

16

17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well.....

18

19                   MR. COLLINS: I think there should be  
20 something in there, even in general wording about  
21 recognizing traditional practices and instead of  
22 eliminating all these things in this list under one.  
23 Most of those are not being used. They're not really  
24 causing a problem in the Parks.

25

26                   I'd almost go back to saying no, except  
27 that come into the Parks where there are problems and  
28 eliminate that. I mean if bear baiting is being used  
29 and it's in conflict because of other recreational uses  
30 there, then you would -- going through the SRCs, the  
31 Park SRCs, you would prohibit that in the area, that's  
32 kind of what happened in Denali. I mean you look at it  
33 unit by unit.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question to the  
36 Park Service, is it necessary to do this statewide,  
37 rule, or can you do it on a regional rule. Is it the  
38 consensus of the Park Service that it needs to be  
39 statewide.

40

41                   MR. FROST: I mean we could do a Park  
42 by Park reg, I mean we have the ability to do that,  
43 it's a lot more difficult and a lot more bureaucratic.  
44 I think it goes back to the comment you were making  
45 earlier, Mr. Chairman, that the different entities who  
46 manage the different lands have different mandates and  
47 the nuances between those mandates are sometimes  
48 difficult to tease apart. And so it wouldn't make a  
49 lot of sense for the Park Service to do something on  
50 one -- allow something on one Preserve and not allow it

1 on another Preserve. I mean if it was sort of the same  
2 activity. And so we have the ability to do it, but it  
3 doesn't make a lot of sense for us to take that type of  
4 approach.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Did you have  
7 any final comments Tracey after our discussions here.

8  
9 MS. MCDONNELL: No, I'm good at this  
10 time, thank you.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And we've  
13 covered this subject and I would like to -- do you have  
14 any final comments, Jennifer.

15  
16 MS. YUHAS: No, Mr. Chairman. Thank  
17 you for taking the time to discuss this on the record  
18 and thank you to everybody in the room for a very  
19 respectful discussion today.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I will state  
22 to the Council, that the Gates of the Arctic  
23 Subsistence Resource Commission meeting will be meeting  
24 on November 12th in Fairbanks and so we will be  
25 addressing this issue also at that meeting.

26  
27 So I think we've covered it fairly  
28 well. I appreciate your coming all the way out here to  
29 McGrath to -- but I think it's beneficial to see how a  
30 Regional Council, as a new member to the Federal Board,  
31 how these Regional Councils kind of work, they're not  
32 all the same.

33  
34 MR. FROST: No, it's my pleasure to  
35 come out. I -- you know, one of the things I want to  
36 do is get out and -- out into the local communities and  
37 meet with people and understand the issues and being  
38 that I am the new guy, I know I have a steep learning  
39 curve but I'm looking forward to it and looking forward  
40 to working with you folks in the future and dealing  
41 with whatever issues happen to pop up, so thanks for  
42 having me.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I'll state for  
45 the record that I am very happy that you have a  
46 scientific background and to sit on the Federal Board,  
47 I feel that that's a really huge plus, so thank you.

48  
49 And, Tracey, I appreciate you coming  
50 all the way out here to visit with us and so Tracey's

1 attended various WIRAC meetings before.

2

3 MS. MCDONNELL: Yes, thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So what should we do  
6 here, Melinda.

7

8 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. There was one  
9 thing that we kind of -- we've mentioned it but I just  
10 wanted to -- as we're nearing the -- the end of our  
11 meeting I just wanted to get it in the Council member's  
12 head again about our running list. In the -- at the  
13 fall meeting we keep a running list of annual report  
14 items for the -- for the current fiscal year.

15

16 So far I've got done the sheep issue as  
17 well as no initial consultation with Galena regarding  
18 the Innoko closure, so we don't need to go into  
19 discussion now, but just wanted to remind Council  
20 members as we go through the next couple of hours, if  
21 there's any other items you'd like me to add, or if  
22 there's anything I've missed, please let me know at  
23 this time.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, you know, she's  
26 -- Melinda's talking about the annual report list. And  
27 so we build a list of concerns.

28

29 I would like to incorporate that  
30 incidental harvest mortality issue into our annual  
31 report also. Is that good with the Council.

32

33 (Council nods affirmatively)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This drop/loss  
36 issue.

37

38 So we might get a couple more before  
39 the end of the day.

40

41 And so where are we at on the agenda  
42 here.

43

44 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. According to my  
45 scribbles and hashmarks here, I believe we've gotten  
46 through everything under old and new business. We've  
47 done a couple of the agency reports. Why don't we have  
48 Chris McKee come up and we'll do the OSM updates and  
49 then let's do Innoko update after that.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
2 Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko.

3  
4 MS. BURKE: Oh, yeah.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not right now, but  
7 coming up. Go ahead, Chris.

8  
9 MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
10 members of the Council. For the record my name is  
11 Chris McKee, I'm the Wildlife Division Chief at OSM.

12  
13 I'm just going to give you a quick  
14 report on what's going on at OSM. Mostly -- well,  
15 entirely a Staffing update. As you know over the last  
16 year or two, OSM has been woefully deficient in  
17 Staffing. I don't remember the exact number, but I  
18 think at one point we had between 15 and 18 vacancies  
19 at the office and had a lot of people acting for  
20 others, and others acting for those that were supposed  
21 to be acting because they were at other meetings, so it  
22 was pretty crazy there for awhile.

23  
24 But I'm happy to report that we've gone  
25 through the process and are continuing to go through  
26 the process right now in hiring and filling some of  
27 those vacancies.

28  
29 So just real quickly, the more recent  
30 additions to our Staff, we hired Deborah Cole as our  
31 new subsistence outreach coordinator. The position was  
32 vacated by Andrea Mederios. And she's been working as  
33 the public affairs specialist for the Department of  
34 Defense in Delta and she's done an excellent job in  
35 getting the RAC booklets out quickly and done very  
36 professionally. We've been really happy with the work  
37 she's been doing on that since she's been here.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was dumbfounded to  
40 get my book long before the meeting.....

41  
42 MR. MCKEE: Uh-huh.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and it's a real  
45 nice book.

46  
47 MR. MCKEE: Yeah, we've had lots of  
48 time to review it internally as well so that's -- it's  
49 been going really well.

50

1                   Chuck Ardizzone, he used to be the  
2 Wildlife Division Chief was selected as the new Deputy  
3 Assistant Regional Director for OSM. Really happy to  
4 have him because he has a tremendous amount of  
5 institutional knowledge about subsistence.

6  
7                   Pamela Raygor was hired as the new lead  
8 secretary and recruitment has been conducted for a new  
9 administrative assistant to fill her old position.

10  
11                   Glenn Westdahl transitioned to the  
12 Council coordination division and he's dedicated  
13 basically to travel and administrative duties for that  
14 division.

15  
16                   Stewart Cogswell was recently hired and  
17 started as the new supervisory fisheries biologist in  
18 OSM and he's a 20 year US Fish and Wildlife Service  
19 employee with extensive experience in working with  
20 tribes and State agencies. He's coming from Wisconsin.

21  
22                   And as I mentioned I'm -- I was  
23 selected as the Wildlife Division Chief. I started in  
24 the new position at the end of July but I've been a  
25 Staff biologist at OSM for the past three and a half  
26 years or so.

27  
28                   Alex Nick retired from the Service  
29 after 21 years of service, 13 of which were in OSM as  
30 the Council coordinator. The recruitment for that  
31 position is actually finished, we've been doing inter  
32 -- Carl Johnson has been doing interviews for those  
33 positions. I'm not sure where we are in the process  
34 but I think we're going to have somebody hired there  
35 fairly quickly.

36  
37                   Robbin La Vine was hired as our new  
38 anthropologist. She previously worked as a subsistence  
39 resource specialist for ADF&G as well as a social  
40 scientist and subsistence work for the Eyak  
41 Preservation Council, the Bristol Bay Native  
42 Association and also the Togiak National Wildlife  
43 Refuge. So we're happy to start building up that  
44 division as well.

45  
46                   Related, the Anthropology Chief  
47 position was advertised and that advertisement is  
48 closed and I believe interviews will be starting  
49 shortly for a hire on that position.

50

1                   The Native Liaison position was vacated  
2 when Jack Lorrigan went to another Federal agency.  
3 Interviews have been going on for that. I do not know  
4 if a selection has been made but if it hasn't been  
5 we're awfully close to it.

6  
7                   And then finally, and most importantly  
8 to me, personally, two wildlife biologist positions for  
9 the Wildlife Division were advertised on the 20th of  
10 October and that closed this past Monday and so I'm  
11 waiting for the cert list and hope to get going as  
12 quickly as possible to hire those two new positions.  
13 Given that the Federal system takes a little while to  
14 get people hired on I'm not expecting it to be in the  
15 immediate future but I would certainly like to get  
16 those two people on as soon as possible, preferably  
17 before the call for proposals finishes, but I'm -- I'm  
18 going to say I'm not overly optimistic about getting  
19 those on. They might end up kind of starting right in  
20 the middle of everything, like Trevor and myself had to  
21 deal with originally. So it's just kind of the timing.

22  
23                   These things are taking awhile because  
24 we've had to have waivers go through Washington DC, and  
25 so there's a very long drawn out process to get those  
26 approved and get back to us before we can start the  
27 hiring process so it takes a little while.

28  
29                   That is the Staffing update for OSM.

30  
31                   Again, as you can tell, lots of stuff  
32 going on and I think that I'm optimistic that at least  
33 by the time the wildlife cycle gets going really  
34 heavily that we'll have a -- as close to a fully  
35 staffed office as we've had since I've started there a  
36 few years ago, so we're.....

37  
38                   MS. BURKE: David.

39  
40                   MR. MCKEE: Oh, sorry, see there's so  
41 many people coming and going I can't even keep track of  
42 it.

43  
44                   David Jenkins, who was our policy  
45 coordinator, left just a few weeks ago to take a job in  
46 Wisconsin, I believe, for the Forest Service, so that  
47 position is vacant. And I believe we have some  
48 internal recruitment to try to fill that temporarily  
49 and I'm sure that a waiver is pending to hire for that  
50 position as well.

1                   So, there, you can tell, there's so  
2 many people coming and going it's kind of hard for even  
3 us, within the office, to keep track of them. So it's  
4 been pretty crazy but, again, I'm really optimistic  
5 that by the time the wildlife cycle starts we'll have a  
6 pretty robust Staffing and not have a lot of empty  
7 positions.

8  
9                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm real happy to  
10 see that OSM's building headway in the -- over the  
11 loss. David Jenkins' loss was a huge thing for OSM, he  
12 was a very important part of that, but I -- I can see  
13 the tide sort of to turn a little bit, we've gone  
14 through the low water slack, we're starting to see a  
15 bore coming in, so hopefully we get these wildlife  
16 biologists on Staff before we have a whole bunch of  
17 bear denning proposals and so forth for you to review.

18  
19                   Ray.

20  
21                   MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. Yeah, I have  
22 a question or a request. I'm wondering if we could get  
23 a list of those Staffing and a brief description of  
24 what they do. I mean you've just given a report but I  
25 can't sort all those people out and.....

26  
27                   MR. MCKEE: Sure.

28  
29                   MR. COLLINS: .....who is doing what.

30  
31                   MR. MCKEE: Sure.

32  
33                   MR. COLLINS: And it would be nice to  
34 have something like that so we know who to call for  
35 what thing or when we meet them in a meeting we know  
36 something about what their job is, so a brief  
37 description.....

38  
39                   MR. MCKEE: Uh-huh, absolutely.

40  
41                   MR. COLLINS: .....that would really be  
42 helpful.

43  
44                   MR. MCKEE: Well, I can certainly make  
45 it easy for you now. If you're interested in anything  
46 related to wildlife, this is the Wildlife Division  
47 right here, right now so.....

48  
49                   (Laughter)

50

1 MR. MCKEE: .....but, again, that's  
2 going to change real soon, I hope. But, yeah, we'll  
3 definitely get that to you because it is pretty --  
4 pretty shifting.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. A Staff list  
7 of positions and phone numbers, sort of a roster of  
8 what your current Staff is would probably be good for  
9 this Council to see.  
10  
11 MR. MCKEE: Uh-huh.  
12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions  
14 on the OSM report.  
15  
16 (No comments)  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, thank  
19 you very much.  
20  
21 MR. MCKEE: Thank you.  
22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm happy that  
24 things are coming around a little bit. Melinda needs  
25 some help. She's been.....  
26  
27 MR. MCKEE: She's not going anywhere.  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And she's definitely  
30 not leaving this Council. Don't anybody at OSM ever  
31 get the idea she's leaving this Council. So.....  
32  
33 MS. BURKE: Well, since I feel so  
34 important can we have a 10 minute break.  
35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can have a 10  
37 minute break but that's all you get.  
38  
39 (Off record)  
40  
41 (On record)  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Come back to order.  
44 And so where are we at on the agenda here, Melinda.  
45  
46 MS. BURKE: Well, we've got a couple  
47 more refuges to go through.  
48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.  
50

1 MS. BURKE: We've got Innoko and  
2 Koyukuk/Nowitna, so whichever one you'd like to call up  
3 first.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They're the same,  
6 one and the same now.

7  
8 MS. BURKE: They're the same. And then  
9 we have Jeff Park I believe. We wrote him in the first  
10 day, Jeff Park is going to give us a research update  
11 for ADF&G.

12  
13 And we --also, I forgot to mention, Dan  
14 Gillikin wanted to be here with us today, but the river  
15 was not going to allow him to travel, so he's not here.  
16 I forgot to reflect that on the first day, Mr. Chair.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we've  
19 Kenton Moos here, and now you're the Refuge manager for  
20 name one, name them all off.

21  
22 MR. MOOS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
23 Council members. It's always great to be here.

24  
25 This past year been a very busy year.  
26 We are going through some major transitions. Obviously  
27 the 2013 flood, we're still not totally back together,  
28 but we're pretty darn close, and we've got, you know, a  
29 few construction things going on with that, but overall  
30 we're in a very good place after the flood.

31  
32 And then on the heels of the flood came  
33 the announcement that we're going to be complexing with  
34 the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. So obviously that  
35 has made our world a little bit of a whirlwind here  
36 lately, but we're doing the best we can.

37  
38 After the flood, this past summer one  
39 of our priorities was, because essentially we lost one  
40 field season, so this past summer one of our highest  
41 priorities was to conduct the biological surveys that  
42 unfortunately we weren't able to do in 2013. So we  
43 have a very, very busy year. And then coupled with the  
44 fact that we also took over Innoko, and there were some  
45 -- what we felt were some very important surveys to be  
46 done there as well, we picked those up. So, again,  
47 it's been a very, very busy year.

48  
49 In addition to those summer projects,  
50 we had some requests for projects to be done on the

1 Refuge as well.

2

3                   And a complete biological report will  
4 be given to you guys in the spring. Obviously we're  
5 just coming off the field season, so a lot of our  
6 reports aren't finalized. So instead of giving you  
7 drafts or incomplete reports, we just feel it would be  
8 more appropriate to give you those reports in the  
9 spring when they are complete. And we're also just --  
10 Monday we're anticipating beginning moose surveys as  
11 well. And so with all that going on and the business  
12 of the year, this spring we will have a much more  
13 complete biological report for you all.

14

15                   This summer we also had some additional  
16 projects going on. We had several weather stations put  
17 on the Refuge, both with NOAA as well as NRCS, in  
18 conjunction with some snow markers. You've heard a lot  
19 of, and the Chair has recognized, the importance of  
20 snow depth. Well, we recognize that as well. In  
21 looking at, in particular, some ungulate populations,  
22 we feel it's really important to understand what --  
23 instead of anecdotal information, we want good data to  
24 look at what the snow depths are and the potential  
25 impacts to ungulate populations, primarily moose. So  
26 we're real busy with that.

27

28                   In addition, there was a couple of  
29 larger regional surveys that we did. Amy Rocky (ph),  
30 our habitat biologist, participated in a habitat study  
31 that's going on, which includes a number of refuges.  
32 We did participate in the scoter, scaup large scale  
33 survey as well. And that included all the way over to  
34 Tok, and so that again was another survey that was  
35 typically not done by us, but this year we were able to  
36 complete.

37

38                   Our fisheries biologist through funding  
39 through OSM has initiated a chum salmon project on the  
40 Koyukuk River. It includes -- it's an abundance and  
41 distribution, and so we were very, very busy this  
42 summer putting spaghetti tags and then also  
43 transmitters in chum salmon. And it was very, very  
44 interesting. We had a number of chum salmon that went  
45 fairly high up the Alatna River as well as the Henshaw.  
46 And these were radio. Unfortunately, because of the  
47 high water, the Gisasa weir only functioned about -- I  
48 think it was less than 50 percent of the time. They  
49 were washed out. And the Henshaw never was put in. So  
50 we lost a little bit there, but next year we anticipate

1 with the two weirs being in, that we're going to gain  
2 some really good information on that. And Frank, our  
3 fisheries biologist is working up a report on that.

4

5 But there are some very interesting  
6 things. The number of chum salmon that went up Billy  
7 Hawk Creek. We would have never guessed, but it was an  
8 incredible number of transmitters that went up Billy  
9 Hawk. So very interesting things. And, again, that  
10 will be a report that will be coming.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How are you catching  
13 these chums, with a wheel?

14

15 MR. MOOS: No, actually drifting, but  
16 as soon as they hit, we pull. And very low mortality.  
17 And that was very evident in our -- in the number of  
18 radio-tagged salmon that we had, because it's not only  
19 from the stress from the nets, but also from inserting  
20 a transmitter down their throat, but they did -- I  
21 believe it was -- we found over 80 percent of those  
22 tagged fish, which we were very, very happy about. So  
23 it was very successful.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you spread the  
26 take over a long period of time?

27

28 MR. MOOS: Yes, we did. I believe  
29 Frank fished for six weeks I believe it was, so it was  
30 a fairly lengthy, time-consuming project.

31

32 Let's see here. Karen also did a  
33 project that we used some local elders, Benedict Jones  
34 was one. I'm trying to think who else. A couple out  
35 of Huslia as well. I can't think of the names right  
36 know. But anyway did an invasive species program up  
37 the Koyukuk River, started in Koyukuk and went all the  
38 way up to Hughes by boat, had classes and get-togethers  
39 or whatever in all three villages, up to Hughes, and it  
40 was very successful. And then that was accompanied by  
41 a place names trip as well. Again gaining the  
42 traditional knowledge regarding place names and so  
43 forth.

44

45 And then we are also just beginning  
46 working with the wood bison working group as well, both  
47 as a Refuge and we are working quite closely with Tom  
48 Seaton as well on that whole project. We recognize the  
49 importance to the Innoko Refuge, and so we're  
50 contributing wherever we can with that project as well.

1  
2                   Those are just some of the additional  
3 projects that we did.

4  
5                   We are also participating quite heavily  
6 in the BLM scoping projects that Central and Bristol  
7 Bay planning efforts. Obviously all three of our  
8 refuges, the four units, are impacted by those, so  
9 we're working quite a bit with them.

10  
11                   We also have a new Facebook page that  
12 is up. And there's a number of things that we hope to  
13 accomplish with that, whether it's general research  
14 update, spring bird identification, invasive plant  
15 identification, village profiles, local events such as  
16 the Christmas bird counts, science camp, et cetera, can  
17 be found on that Facebook page. Subsistence updates.  
18 A lot of different things. We've got three young  
19 ladies on Staff who are very excited about that, and  
20 are doing a wonderful job with that.

21  
22                   We have a couple of hunter education  
23 instructors on Staff and they are going to be assisting  
24 with a -- they did one last year in Galena, and they  
25 are going to be assisting in Kaltag here I think in a  
26 couple of weeks with a hunter education program there.

27  
28                   Fire activity. Thank goodness it was a  
29 fairly calm year with fires. We only had two fires on  
30 the Koyukuk and on the Nowitna Refuges. Innoko I  
31 believe had a small one as well But just a couple  
32 small fires totalling 55 acres, so nothing real big  
33 there.

34  
35                   Subsistence. Federal subsistence moose  
36 hunts. Last year due to decreasing population, and the  
37 -- us falling below our target of 30 bulls per 100  
38 cows, our winter hunter that we have held in the past  
39 for 24D we did not allow. We've got a number of  
40 concerns there. Obviously we talked with the ACs, the  
41 villages, as well as Jack, the Chair of the Western  
42 Interior RAC, before making those decisions. And with  
43 some of the biological concerns that we've had, we did  
44 not allow that hunt. We did not allow one either on  
45 the Nowitna as well.

46  
47                   Now, this year we're taking on Innoko,  
48 so this is a little bit new to us. I guess there was  
49 some question regarding the 21E hunt that's coming up,  
50 and some misunderstanding maybe as far as what our role

1 is. Our role has not changed in that. The only thing  
2 that we're looking at doing with Bruce Seppi is who's  
3 going to be distributing the permits. We're trying to  
4 do this effectively and efficiently, because our  
5 location up in Galena, it's a little more difficult to  
6 get down to the GASH communities, especially when we're  
7 administering other winter hunts, so we're working  
8 through that, and we'll -- you'll hear shortly on some  
9 of our staffing that we hope to be able to deal with  
10 that effectively with a new RIT that we just hired, Mr.  
11 Ken Chase. And so we're excited to have him on, and  
12 with his experience in the GASH communities, and  
13 knowing them, and also him living in Anvik, the plan is  
14 to potentially task him with distribution of those  
15 permits. So I hope that answered that question.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, one of my  
18 questions would be is there was 40 moose in the  
19 allocation, and 8 last year were allocated to the  
20 southern Paimiut -- we call it the Paimiut 19A area.  
21 Did you stay on that same allocation of eight for south  
22 of the Paimiut line?

23  
24 MR. MOOS: At this point we anticipate  
25 remaining in that same allocation. Now, again, this is  
26 a little new to me, so I've got to educate myself a  
27 little bit, but -- and my understanding is last year  
28 for some reason the number 5 sticks into my mind, that  
29 five moose were taken out of that winter hunt, so  
30 obviously it -- that allocation wasn't tested.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it's a  
33 relatively new hunt, and so, you know, as 19A residents  
34 build more familiarity with it, they may take -- but we  
35 were concerned about all of -- the Innoko plan provides  
36 for 40 moose. We didn't want all that harvest to occur  
37 in one little teeny area like that, so that's why we  
38 advocated for an allocation for that southern part. So  
39 they have the capacity to hit that fairly quickly. I  
40 mean, they've got a lot of hunters there.

41  
42 MR. MOOS: Yeah.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then on the  
45 Innoko, I'm always advocating for previous -- Bo was  
46 good about getting -- finally he built up a database  
47 for composition of the moose, and so I would encourage  
48 periodic composition -- I know the census and trends  
49 are done in February and March, but I would still like  
50 to see comp periodically. And so do you have a plan on

1 that?

2

3 MR. MOOS: Yes, we do. The last two or  
4 three years I believe we have done them for Innoko, and  
5 we anticipate -- Brad Scotten's plan is to continuing  
6 doing them this year, the trend count areas that have  
7 been established. So that information should continue.

8

9

10 We're also talking with Roger Sevoy for  
11 a spring 21E I believe it is census I believe is what  
12 they're planning. And if weather is okay, we're  
13 planning on assisting with that as well.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And I was  
16 unclear about the census versus the trend, so, thank  
17 you.

18

19 I was real happy to see what the  
20 composition was. It was a fairly healthy bull/cow. We  
21 had no clue for years. I kept asking for comp on that,  
22 and it's like we had no clue for years. And so the  
23 moose population is fairly healthy there.

24

25 So continue.

26

27 MR. MOOS: Okay. Let's see here. This  
28 fall again we did run the Nowitna check station. Again  
29 we had 98 hunters come through with 33 I believe it is  
30 -- 30 moose that were harvested, which is right on the  
31 average. The number of hunters has fluctuated right  
32 around that 100 mark, and about 30 percent, so no  
33 surprises there. The Federal hunt that followed, which  
34 is a five-day extension, I believe we had six or eight  
35 permits with one moose harvested on that Federal  
36 extension.

37

38 We did ask, because in talking with the  
39 Chair prior to this meeting, you had some interest in  
40 the Koyukuk River check station. We did ask Glen, and  
41 he gave us -- these are very preliminary numbers so  
42 these are not by any means official. But in 2014  
43 preliminary results, there were a total of 520  
44 registered hunters within the Koyukuk Controlled Use  
45 area. A total of 195 moose harvested.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 195?

48

49 MR. MOOS: Yep, 195. That was total in  
50 the controlled use area, with 351 hunters, and 120

1 being registered at the check station, 139 hunters and  
2 67 harvested from Huslia, and 30 hunters and 8 moose  
3 harvested from Hughes. So that's the breakdown of the  
4 three areas where you could pick up that RMA-32  
5 registration hunt.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was having a chat  
8 with Jenny here. She's -- I'm concerned that more  
9 fluid hunters that can travel through Ella's check  
10 station can get the permit. And so people like Jenny  
11 have to run all the way up there to get the permit, but  
12 they want to hunt in the lower part of the controlled  
13 use area. So I feel that Koyukuk/Nowitna should work  
14 with the State on.....

15

16 And are you still on line there,  
17 Jennifer? I don't know if she is or not.

18

19 But I would like the State to provide a  
20 mechanism for issuing permits at least from Galena  
21 also. When Galena.....

22

23 (Music on teleconference )

24

25 MS. YUHAS: I am, Mr. Chairman. And  
26 that's not my piano music.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So.....

29

30 MS. BURKE: Did somebody put it on  
31 hold?

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've had a  
34 discussion with Jenny, one of our Council members here.  
35 People that want to hunt the lower end of the Koyukuk  
36 Controlled Use Area have to actually go all the way up  
37 to Ella's cabin to get the permit, and then come back  
38 all the way down. So I feel that permits should be  
39 issued in Galena also. They used to be, and then that  
40 was discontinued, but people who are going to go deep  
41 into the controlled use area, it's fine for them, but  
42 people that live in Galena or down towards Koyukuk,  
43 it's a disadvantage, and it's a lot of fuel. And the  
44 prices of gas keep going up. And so I feel that there  
45 should be some mechanism to obtain permits in Galena.  
46 And so I would like the State and Koyukuk/Nowitna to  
47 work on coming up with a mechanism to issue.

48

49 Can the Refuge issue permits for the  
50 State, this RMA-32. Jennifer.

1 MS. YUHAS: Yeah. As you know, I take  
2 lots of little notes when you're putting out your  
3 recommendations like that, and I tend to follow up in  
4 the days prior -- or immediately following the RAC  
5 meeting. So I had already started taking notes on  
6 that. And, sorry, it took me a minute to unmute when  
7 you were calling for me.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No problem. I just  
10 didn't know if -- I just wanted to note if you were on  
11 line there.

12  
13 Anyway, this is, for local people in  
14 Galena and koyukuk, I feel that this should be  
15 alleviated, and there's relatively easy ways to do it.  
16 So that's what I.....

17  
18 MS. YUHAS: Understandable, so we'll  
19 rope everybody into a conversation about that next  
20 week.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
23 that.

24  
25 Oh, Jenny wants to have a comment with  
26 you there, Jennifer. Go ahead, Jenny.

27  
28 MS. PELKOLA: Jennifer, this is Jenny.

29  
30 In addition to going all the way up to  
31 get from my fish camp -- well, in Galena, it's like an  
32 80-mile round trip is what I'm thinking to get the tag  
33 or whatever I have to get. And then if I get my moose,  
34 I have to run back up there again, so it's like two  
35 trips for -- that shouldn't even be, you know, for  
36 that.

37  
38 MS. YUHAS: That's just a lot. That's  
39 a burden, and there's got to be way we can figure that  
40 out.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So what would the  
43 possibilities be of Koyukuk/Nowitna checking through a  
44 few local people? There's just going to be a few taken  
45 and issuing permits. Kenton.

46  
47 MR. MOOS: Sure, Mr. Chair. We do  
48 issue RMA-34 permits at the Nowitna check station, so I  
49 don't see any problem with that at the office there.  
50 There is a State office there though as well, and they

1 do typically man that during the moose season.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, they're there?

4

5 MR. MOOS: Yes, they are. Stephanie  
6 Kangas works there. So there is an office there, but  
7 if asked, we will be available, absolutely, to  
8 distribute those permits.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I think that  
11 you can work with State on that issue, and so I feel  
12 that this economy of fuel and expense is a big deal.  
13 So I appreciate that.

14

15 MS. YUHAS: And in other areas we  
16 report the harvest by phone. There's got to be a way  
17 to keep from having to go back up there just to report.  
18 Well, we'll figure something out.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate  
21 that. I just wanted to bring it up.

22

23 So continue, Kenton.

24

25 MR. MOOS: As far as staffing,  
26 obviously this year we've had an interesting year with  
27 staffing. We took over Innoko refuge I believe it was  
28 in April was when the official transition occurred.  
29 We've had a number of Staff members from Innoko be  
30 reassigned. We still have a number of Staff here that  
31 are going to continue as long as we can keep them busy  
32 essentially.

33

34 We are anticipating having one  
35 permanent Staff here though through this transition,  
36 and that's one of our newer employers, but an older  
37 employee as well. Clara Demientieff is our RIT. She  
38 came back to work for us this year, and we are grateful  
39 to have her back, and are excited to have her here.  
40 She will be working out of our new headquarters  
41 building, or contact station building here full time.

42

43 And then Mr. Ken Chase, we just hired  
44 him as an RIT. He will be intermittent is what we call  
45 it, work when needed as needed. And he will be working  
46 out of Anvik as well as McGrath here when he's in town.

47

48

49 So that's the staffing that will remain  
50 here in McGrath.

1                   At Koyukuk/Nowitna up in Galena, we had  
2 a little bit of change over. My deputy, Keith Ramos,  
3 took a position in North Carolina. We just are  
4 completing interviews for that, and I hope that we'll  
5 have a selection in shortly for that.

6  
7                   With this transition, one of the needs  
8 that was identified was a law enforcement/pilot. I  
9 just completed that selection, and I'm hoping to hear  
10 back soon, and we will hopefully have a law  
11 enforcement/pilot available to us fairly soon here.

12  
13                   So Myra Harris, she was an RIT for us  
14 in Galena. She was also enrolled in our Pathways  
15 program, and she completed her master's degree, and she  
16 is currently what we call an ROS, or refuge operations  
17 specialist, and she essentially is an assistant  
18 manager. So she just transitioned in that role here  
19 just about a month ago, and so we're excited to have  
20 her in that new position. We will be filling the RIT  
21 position behind her, and that will be an intermittent.  
22 And we anticipate it being in Galena, but we're open to  
23 the possibility of having it in a village some place  
24 else. We'll just sort of play that one by ear.

25  
26                   So I believe that's it for the new  
27 Staff.

28  
29                   Real quick. Law enforcement. I know  
30 there was some concern about law enforcement. We did  
31 -- this year, we detailed several law enforcement  
32 officers in for both the fishing season as well as the  
33 moose season. During the fishing season, the officers  
34 primarily operated out of a boat on the mainstem of the  
35 Yukon River, and the idea there is more of an  
36 educational type approach, and no problems whatsoever.  
37 They did a wonderful job, and everything went very  
38 smoothly. We had a pilot/officer and another officer  
39 come during moose season. The Alaska State Troopers,  
40 we worked in conjunction with them, and they also had  
41 some guys coming on programs. So we had fairly good  
42 coverage with the Koyukuk, and in the Nowitna. And  
43 then our Federal pilots/officers also came down to  
44 Innoko and did some checks, and particularly looking  
45 for guiding and so forth. They did not make any cases,  
46 but they were here and they did operate on the Innoko  
47 as well. We're hoping that, like I said, with the new  
48 officer that we have that we will be able to provide  
49 coverage, because I know there's some concerns over  
50 that.

1                   Here in McGrath, just to be honest,  
2 it's going to be a challenge for us, but we will try to  
3 ensure that operators who are operating out of McGrath  
4 here, especially if they're going onto the Refuge, that  
5 we make contact with them.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Earlier in the  
8 meeting Frank Miller back here was talking about  
9 somebody that was hunting on the Innoko bringing over  
10 10 moose to this community to try to give them away,  
11 and the meet was soured, and that they refused to take  
12 the meat, and had them ship it off to Anchorage. Isn't  
13 it in statute, State statute, that the meat has to  
14 remain in a fit state for human consumption for two  
15 weeks after removal from the field.

16  
17                   MR. MOOS: Mr. Chair. I'll be honest  
18 with you. I don't know for sure as far as in statute.  
19 I do know that the meat is to be removed from the field  
20 in a manner that is consumable. Once it is removed  
21 from the field -- I'm going to have to defer on that  
22 one. I will check, and I will.....

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like you to  
25 check on that. If this is a permitted commercial  
26 operation inside the Innoko Refuge, and this meat is  
27 being removed from the field in an unfit for human  
28 consumption, and being refused by local people, because  
29 it stinks, then the State statute -- it's in the  
30 codified regulations is where that's at. And so I  
31 would like to see that enforced on your permittees.  
32 And so if you have LE people over here and they're  
33 bringing out moose, and these moose are soured, then  
34 they should start getting a ticket, and that should  
35 reflect on their permit.

36  
37                   You've got a question or comment, Ray.

38  
39                   MR. COLLINS: Well, that doesn't -- in  
40 past meat has come here, they've got it out of the  
41 field, but it's gone right to the dump once they  
42 brought it here if it was not consumable. Some of it  
43 was taken to a local butcher who would -- at the time  
44 was cutting and packaging, and again if it was not  
45 usable -- he'd take what was usable and the rest went  
46 to the dump. After the season a few years ago I've got  
47 pictures of two quarters just laying -- they were still  
48 in the bag when the river went down, they were right  
49 there where they were unloaded. And they were just  
50 dumped in the river. And supposedly when they were

1 bringing them off the plane, they may have dropped them  
2 in the water. I don't know what happened, but it  
3 hasn't -- there's been a problem in salvaging.

4

5                   But they do -- and Innoko helped with  
6 this in the past, they kept a list of people who wanted  
7 meat, and I've gotten some meat. And we did get one  
8 quarter this year that was usable, and were offered  
9 some more later. But as was said, they were not able  
10 to get it out in a timely manner, and a lot of the  
11 early meat was not usable.

12

13                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that's a  
14 relatively short hop. If they've got a plane, if they  
15 kill a moose, they can get that thing in a pack -- they  
16 better get that moose out of the field in at least a  
17 day; otherwise they're going to have bears all over it.  
18 And so then they have actually really no excuse for not  
19 bringing the meat out in a timely manner. And whether  
20 it's the permittees need to have an education that it's  
21 going to be not tolerated, that soured meat coming from  
22 the field. I'm sure this community would welcome good  
23 meat, but nobody wants to take soured meat.

24

25                   And so just -- some of the problems  
26 that I see here, all over the place, and we heard about  
27 it on the Koyukuk, was four moose hanging on a meat  
28 pole right out in the sun out on the gravel bar. Well,  
29 anybody in their right mind knows you don't even hang a  
30 moose in the sun, let alone out for multiple days  
31 hanging in the sun. Of course it's going to be rotten.  
32 And so this is a problem.

33

34                   I think that on the Koyukuk, on the  
35 Innoko, that there should be sort of a pamphlet, don't  
36 hang your moose in the sun, put a tarp over it. Keep  
37 the rain off it so it doesn't get all wet and sour. I  
38 don't even like to shoot a moose if it's raining. I  
39 don't -- I really don't want to kill them if it's  
40 raining. And so there are certain basics for the  
41 novice hunters that might be dropped off here, non-  
42 resident hunters, never seen a moose in their live.  
43 Now, this is how big it is, and this is what it's going  
44 to take to get it cut up. Sort of a schematic on how  
45 to dismember it, and you better take care of the meat,  
46 because we don't want to see soured meat coming out of  
47 the Refuges.

48

49                   And so I would like to see that between  
50 the people who are utilizing the Refuge, and then

1 especially the permittees for transporters and guides  
2 and so forth. And so that's becoming a bigger and  
3 bigger -- I keep hearing this issue.

4

5 Ray.

6

7 MR. COLLINS: Well, the problems  
8 happened in the past, and they -- that was with an  
9 officer here. If there's not one here during the  
10 hunting season, it's not going to be possible to  
11 monitor that. They've got to be checked when they come  
12 through. Somebody has to do it.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel that they  
15 should call -- be required under their permit to call  
16 Clara. She's around here somewhere. Clara, come down  
17 here and take a look at this moose. How does it smell?  
18 It doesn't smell too good. Call the LE officer from  
19 Galena. He can fly over here and talk about it.

20

21 MR. MOOS: Yeah. I wholeheartedly  
22 agree, and, you know, one thing that have instituted  
23 both at the Nowitna and the Koyukuk check station is  
24 there is a meat rating that's given, and we do inspect  
25 the meet and give a rating and take notes as far as if  
26 there's any spoilage, so we can maybe try to do  
27 something here as well. And what I'll do is I'll talk  
28 with our State partners as well. You know, we don't  
29 have an officer here, but the State does. And so we  
30 will work on that.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, look into  
33 that. It's a statutory requirement. And Greg Roczicka  
34 showed me that multiple years.....

35

36 MS. YUHAS: Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jennifer.

39

40 MS. YUHAS: Sorry about that. The  
41 reference is Alaska Statute 16.30.010, wanton waste.

42

43 And I have been paying attention to the  
44 conversation, and some of these ideas, like the  
45 pamphlets and things are very easy to work with.

46

47 I've also heard you discuss this  
48 multiple times about the meat hanging on the poles.  
49 And I had some discussions with our wildlife folks  
50 yesterday, and checked on any of our troopers' reports,

1 and we really that you'll also spread the word about  
2 how important it is to make a report when you folks see  
3 that happen. It's very disturbing to us to hear about  
4 this. And when we check and find out if there were  
5 reports or citations issued, and we find out that the  
6 answer is no, we're wondering how we can help with  
7 this.

8

9 And so even if the local law  
10 enforcement can't fly over to the area, you were  
11 discussing a couple of times meat that was told to be  
12 shipped back out to Anchorage with people, if people  
13 are aware of this and they're getting on an airplane,  
14 and someone's near a telephone, please call and report  
15 that, so that when they land, we can cite them.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that.  
18 And, Jennifer, is the statute, is it still in place  
19 that the meat has to remain in a fit for human  
20 consumption for two weeks after removal from the field?

21

22 MS. YUHAS: The two weeks is not in  
23 statute. It simply says salvageable for human  
24 consumption under (a), and so it needs to remain  
25 eatable. There's no time limit on that in the statute.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay. And so  
28 I would encourage the McGrath Tribal Council who has  
29 been requested to receive this meat, if you are  
30 approached by people who want to give you meat, and  
31 it's sour, tell them immediately call Innoko Refuge,  
32 and they should have your number, and you've got an R  
33 -- and they should also contact the RIT here in  
34 McGrath, and so that there's -- somebody can meet them  
35 in Anchorage with a pink slip, or give them a pink slip  
36 here. And so we need to cut this out. There's no  
37 reason that commercial operators should be removing  
38 meat in a soured state from the field. And so this has  
39 got to stop. And so this is not palatable, so to  
40 speak, by this Council.

41

42 Any other.....

43

44 MS. YUHAS: Especially, Mr.  
45 Chairman.....

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You broke up there.

48

49 MS. YUHAS: Mr. Chairman, I know that  
50 -- sorry about that. In a small local area we also

1 understand that it's difficult for people to want to  
2 report, but you really can protect your anonymity,  
3 especially when they're flying out. You don't have to  
4 confront them directly. If you notice this, you can  
5 kind of give them a sideways glance and not say  
6 anything, that's okay. But just to make sure that it's  
7 reported so we can do something about it.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. I carry a  
10 camera in my pocket. I see violators, I take pictures.  
11 If I see -- I tell people, I'm taking a picture of you  
12 and your license plate number. I've got guys puffing  
13 smoke in my face and being all pissed. I don't care.  
14 I'm going to report you. If you do bad things in my  
15 country, I am going to make sure that somebody's got  
16 your -- who you are, your vehicle, it's got it time  
17 dated.

18

19 I tell people all the time, you see  
20 something going on, if you've got somebody's got a  
21 rotten moose, whip out your camera, your i-phone,  
22 whatever you've got, take pictures of it, and start  
23 reporting. Those enforcement officers love to get  
24 those pictures. They love that. And so I encourage  
25 people in any community, if you've got a violation  
26 going on, start taking pictures, you know, even if  
27 it's from a distance, take pictures from a distance if  
28 you don't want to confront them, but still -- and  
29 calling it in right away.

30

31 Enforcement can't do anything if it's  
32 reported after the season. That's like the horse is  
33 out of the barn then. You can't do anything about it.

34

35

36 Ray.

37

38 MR. COLLINS: Well, I was going to say  
39 that part of problem is this is an air taxi operation,  
40 and they're not held liable for meat being in good  
41 condition. So they don't -- it's the hunter themself  
42 that does it, so.....

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But if they're  
45 trying to give away meat, then they have a transfer of  
46 possession for them in their hand, and they're  
47 responsible for that meat. If they took it from their  
48 client, they're holding the bag so to speak.

49

50 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I'm not sure who is

1 -- yeah.

2

3 MR. MOOS: Yeah. And somewhat of a  
4 good note, we have had transporters actually notify us  
5 that, hey, we've got somebody coming in with bad meat.  
6 We did not sign for it, but they're with us, so just  
7 you know. And we have had those reports. So it's not  
8 all bad. We have had some success stories with this as  
9 well. Just so you're aware of it.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we'd like to  
12 call this as much as we can.

13

14 MR. MOOS: Yeah, I agree. I agree.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So are you.....

17

18 MR. MOOS: Well, with that, I'm done.  
19 I'll entertain any questions.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I would like  
22 to see your -- I'm happy that you're getting another  
23 RIT up there at Galena. I would like these RITs to  
24 schedule into these tribal council meetings, coming  
25 forward with sort of a brief report like we get here.  
26 You know, once you give us a report in the springtime,  
27 I would like to see that brought to -- a copy for each  
28 tribal council member. And so I would like your -- I  
29 want to see RITs interacting more with the tribal  
30 councils. Those are the decisionmakers. That's the  
31 tribal consultation process. And I want it more face-  
32 to-face as much as possible. Not all the time, but at  
33 least once or twice a year going to each tribal council  
34 meeting that you have control of. So you've got Ken  
35 can do the GASH, and Clara can do this, and you've got  
36 an RIT there, and they could go down to Kaltag, et  
37 cetera, et cetera. And Huslia.

38

39 I was a little bit concerned this  
40 spring when I said, well, what's going on in Huslia.  
41 Did they get enough moose, were they getting any  
42 caribou, and Jeremy hadn't been up there. I was like,  
43 well, before you call me on the moose hunt, I would  
44 like to know that you've had a contact with that  
45 community, with the tribal council. And it's good to  
46 walk around the village and have a little chat.

47

48 And so I want all the agencies to have  
49 more interaction, because my intention on the tribal  
50 consultation process is for them to have face-to-face

1 contact so then when we have issues, we've got  
2 proposals, they know who to get ahold of. Just sending  
3 it down to the tribe, I get all kinds of stuff. I've  
4 got stacks of papers like this. I can't read all that  
5 stuff in the summertime. But if you come to a meeting  
6 and go, this is what the Refuge is doing, this is who I  
7 am, this is my number, people know who to call. And so  
8 I think this, all this stuff could work a lot better,  
9 and so I will say that on the record here.

10

11 So I appreciate you coming to talk to  
12 us, Kenton. You've got a big plate these days, and  
13 you're the man for it. And so we'd -- but we've got a  
14 few little issues that we'd like to tighten up some of  
15 the operation there.

16

17 Comment.

18

19 MR. MOOS: Duly noted. I always  
20 believe we can do better with communication, and we're  
21 not perfect. Please understand, we're not perfect. We  
22 have been trying. You know, this spring with the  
23 fisheries, we notified a lot of villages. One village  
24 responded to have us come. And we went to a bunch of  
25 others as well.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I know.

28

29 MR. MOOS: And so, I mean, but very  
30 duly noted, and we will try to do better as best we  
31 can.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, you can have  
34 your RIT call the tribal counsel and ask them, when's  
35 your meeting? I want to come to the meeting. And so,  
36 like Galena, I mean, just jump in the pickup, run down  
37 to the tribal council meeting, so that people know who  
38 the person -- your personnel keep changing all the  
39 time, so they know who they've got to contact. Kind of  
40 a briefing of what the Refuges are doing, you know, so  
41 the familiarity of what the land statuses are.

42

43 So any other Council comments.

44

45 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. Are we going  
46 to comment on the closure, because I do have some  
47 comments that I'd like to get on the record on that  
48 before we go further.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can cover

1 that right now, but I would like, Jenny, you've got a  
2 comment there, Jenny.

3

4 MS. PELKOLA: I guess my comment my  
5 comment was also on the closure.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And then  
8 Frank Miller back there had several questions about the  
9 closure.

10

11 So, Don, you've got something in excess  
12 of the closure?

13

14 MR. HONEA: No, I would just like to  
15 pose this to Mr. Moos here, because -- to Kenton,  
16 because I just heard about it in the last couple days,  
17 that Nulato has had a shortage, and I was wondering if  
18 they specifically asked for a winter hunt or something  
19 like that. I mean, it's kind of news to me, even  
20 though they're 100 miles away and so I was -- if it  
21 falls under your regime there.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MR. MOOS: Council Member Honea through  
26 the Chair. We did talk with Nulato this past Friday.  
27 They are -- and this was the first we've heard of it.  
28 They are I believe going to put in a proposal to -- I'm  
29 not sure if it's to lengthen the moose season, or to  
30 shift the moose season back. They weren't real clear.  
31 I asked them to send us a copy of the proposal, what  
32 they're looking at, and we hadn't received it yet.  
33 They're having a meeting I believe this evening, and  
34 unfortunately we didn't have enough time, and our Staff  
35 right now -- Jeremy Havener was supposed to be here,  
36 but he has got doctors' appointments. He's got some  
37 health issues. So I wanted him to take care of that  
38 obviously. That's his priority.

39

40 But when we find out -- my understanding is  
41 it's a request to shift the moose season, but not  
42 anything as far as -- from Nulato this is.

43

44 Now, Jenny also shared a letter from  
45 Koyukuk regarding a request for an emergency order to  
46 the State of Alaska to extend the moose season for the  
47 Village of Koyukuk. That was the first I have seen of  
48 that as well.

49

50 So we're still gathering information on

1 this. We don't-- we have not received anything formal.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Just one quick comment  
4 here. I mean, I don't understand. You mean to extend  
5 a season as it exists now or next year or what? I  
6 mean, because if there -- if it was a dire situation or  
7 something, I would think that they'd be asking for a  
8 winter hunt or something like that.

9

10 MR. MOOS: Again, Mr. Honea through the  
11 Chair. There is winter hunt that is considered for the  
12 Kaiyuh Flats. Again, we have very low populations down  
13 there. The bull/cow ratios are good; however, when  
14 we're talking in our trend counts seeing only 25 bulls,  
15 I mean total, I'm hard pressed to allow additional take  
16 when we've got very, very low densities down in that  
17 area. Now, we are seeing improvement, so, you know,  
18 potentially this year and into the future, would we  
19 consider it? Absolutely. But in the past with just  
20 the extremely low numbers of moose in that area, we  
21 just felt biologically it could not sustain additional  
22 harvest.

23

24 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead.

27

28 MS. BURKE: I just wanted to let the  
29 Council know, Eva Patton, another Council coordinator  
30 in my office, is currently in the community, and I  
31 believe there's going to be a government-to-government  
32 consultation happening. So if there's anything that  
33 can be shared from that meeting, I'll make sure to get  
34 it to the Council by the end of the week, whatever can  
35 be shared from that consultation.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Melinda.

38

39 And so I want to have a brief  
40 discussion about the Innoko office closure here. I  
41 would like Frank Miller to come up to the table,  
42 because he had multiple questions, and Ray wants to go  
43 over this issue. And Tracy.....

44

45 MS. YATLIN: Oh, Mr. Chairman, I had a  
46 few questions.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead then.  
49 Before we get into that issue, go ahead, Eleanor.

50

1 MS. YATLIN: I lost my -- oh, I lost my  
2 train of thought. Anyway, I wanted to ask Kenton with  
3 the merging of this Innoko -- huh? Yeah, no, I'm  
4 stating something, you know, like I believe each  
5 community or each Refuge could have up to two RITs. So  
6 you said you had one in Galena.

7  
8 MR. MOOS: Council Member Yatlin  
9 through the Chair. We currently have two on Staff  
10 essentially, and both of them are located down here in  
11 McGrath and the GASH communities, so their primary  
12 responsibility is to Innoko Refuge. And then we have a  
13 vacancy right now as far as in Galena, which would  
14 cover both the Koyukuk as well as well as the Nowitna  
15 Refuges. and we hope to hire that one soon.

16  
17 MS. YATLIN: And in the budget is there  
18 -- what I'd asked I guess is, is there enough for two  
19 for the Koyukuk/Nowitna.

20  
21 MR. MOOS: I can request it. Part of  
22 the whole reasoning for this complexing is because of  
23 funding deficiencies in the Fish and Wildlife Service.  
24 I mean, that's the primary impetus for the complexing.  
25 So when I go to ask for additional FTs, staffing,  
26 oftentimes it's a challenge. I can put it forward.  
27 The good news is we do actually have, and this is how  
28 we've actually funded an additional RIT, is there is  
29 funding that is directly earmarked for RITs that has  
30 come from the Washington office, that we cannot spend  
31 it on anything else but RITs. Yukon Delta is the same.  
32 So that has allowed us actually our third RIT, because  
33 of that additional funding.

34  
35 MS. YATLIN: So you're saying for  
36 Koyukuk/Nowitna you have one again. Because I know the  
37 budget stated before -- well, I mean, the funding  
38 cutting, you know, cutting off the funds, but grant or  
39 whatever, the budget for RITs and some refuges like  
40 have two. And I don't know if it's the size, but if  
41 you look at the Koyukuk Refuge on there, it's the whole  
42 center of, you know -- it's a big refuge. Even the  
43 Nowitna is. And I would like to see, you know,  
44 somebody from the village. But, you know, like if you  
45 have somebody from Galena, that's great. That's, you  
46 know, even better, because -- but I'd like to see two.

47  
48 And the other thing is, you know, we  
49 get the -- I'd stated this before. We get, you know,  
50 like report from Kanuti Wildlife Refuge, and it's a

1 detailed report. And I really like it. And maybe this  
2 is the second time that I'm kind of asking I guess, is,  
3 you know, I'd like to see -- you know, you talk about  
4 moose count and stuff, I like to see the data, you  
5 know. And that's what I asked for in the past.  
6 Because in there it would state, yes, I went to Ruby to  
7 -- or I went to Koyukuk, you know, to their tribal  
8 council meeting, because that's part of the objectives  
9 on that RIT is to attend and the government-to-  
10 government, you know, and I would like to see more  
11 communications and interaction between the Refuges and  
12 the villages that the Refuges act, and the Refuge  
13 office. I know it's going to be complicated, because  
14 you've got this big Innoko now. But I think I asked  
15 for these detailed reports before.

16

17 That's just what I had to say.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kenton says that  
22 they're going to have that at our spring meeting, but  
23 this is your last meeting. So I would like you to  
24 transmit one of those when it's produced to Eleanor for  
25 her information, because it's important stuff.

26

27 So is that all your comments.

28

29 And so the burning issue of this Innoko  
30 complex shutdown here and staffing, Ray's got a few  
31 questions, Frank had some questions, and so this is a  
32 forum for discussion. So we're going to go over it. I  
33 don't want to belabor the issue. We know where we're  
34 at, but I do want some pertinent points to be made.

35

36 Go ahead, Ray.

37

38 MR. COLLINS: Well, I would like to see  
39 this in the annual report. First of all, the decision  
40 was made with no input from tribal entities or even the  
41 local Staff. It was come out and announced it was  
42 going to be closed. And then the question -- and  
43 that's a fact, that's what happened. The decision was  
44 made in Anchorage, and it was come out and announced  
45 that you're going to be leaving, we're going to move  
46 you and so on.

47

48 Then they did hold hearings, because of  
49 the concern there, but they continued -- or they made  
50 the decision then, again without consultation, they

1 afterwards reported five alternatives, but we never saw  
2 these alternatives before the decision was made, so we  
3 weren't able to respond to any of these alternatives  
4 that they laid out in there. And again there was no  
5 consultation. Like Frank said, they didn't get a  
6 report back. They asked for this information, but they  
7 got it after the fact. And already the decision was  
8 made. They moved to remove assets and send them off  
9 and so on. So again the decision was made entirely  
10 without local input. And I want that clearly on the  
11 record.

12

13 Just an example, on Page 31 it says in  
14 there, in this, we also continue to have concerns about  
15 the possibility of flooding in McGrath. Unfortunately  
16 there is not a safe place to build in McGrath that  
17 would alleviate the risk to assets as stated in  
18 McGrath's flood plan and so on.

19

20 That is not true. None of the Refuge  
21 property has ever been damaged by flood here, even  
22 though we've had floods. And in recent years we  
23 haven't had any -- and we know the flood level. All  
24 you have to do is build above that. My house is built  
25 above flood level, so there are safe places to build  
26 that are far enough from the river. And the way it's  
27 going now, the ice is not as thick in the spring, and  
28 we haven't even had it bank full the last few years.  
29 Before that we were having about a five-year average,  
30 but the river cut down below where the ice was jamming,  
31 and that's gone now. And so usually there's no problem  
32 with breakup. But to state that there's no safe place,  
33 that's not true, and I don't know why they would  
34 continue to have concerns when none of the property  
35 that they built before was ever damaged by -- even when  
36 we did have floods. So that is an inaccurate statement  
37 in this justification.

38

39 So those are my beginning comments, but  
40 mainly it was in how the decision was made, and the  
41 fact that even though these alternatives were laid out,  
42 none of the tribal entities were able to respond to any  
43 of those. They didn't see it until after the fact.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do think that that  
46 can be an annual report item for future complexing, if  
47 there's future complexing within our region, that there  
48 needs to be -- this needs to be telegraphed in advance  
49 for proper vetting by the communities. And so that  
50 needs to be taken into consideration.

1                   And, Frank Miller, he lives here in  
2 McGrath and had multiple questions about the analysis  
3 and so forth, and we provided him the analysis. But I  
4 told him that Kenton was going to be here, and so he  
5 wants to sort of have some say.

6  
7                   Go ahead, Frank.

8  
9                   MR. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10  
11                   On this, number 1, I'd like to ask, I  
12 also applied for this position for RIT. It came down  
13 to two applicants, and Mr. Chase got it, and I was  
14 happy for him. And I was surprised he wouldn't be here  
15 at this meeting, because I was told if I won that  
16 position, that I would be traveling to all these  
17 meetings wherever they held a meeting, and he was not  
18 here. So I don't know what's up with that deal.

19  
20                   As far as the closure, like Mr. Collins  
21 said, we didn't hear about this until after the fact.  
22 It came -- from what I know, the decision was made in  
23 Washington, D.C., went over to Anchorage, and then we  
24 found out about it at a later date when it was all said  
25 and done. Maybe Mr. Collins can elaborate on that a  
26 little bit more.

27  
28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I'm going to  
29 ask Tracy, was this a Region 7 decision to complex or  
30 was this a nationwide decision.

31  
32                   MS. MCDONNELL: It's a little bit of  
33 both. It was a Region 7 Alaska decision specifically  
34 on this issue, but it's the result of a national  
35 reduction in budget during the year where all Federal  
36 budgets were sequestered. And we had to come up with a  
37 considerable amount of savings in order to make our  
38 bills. And the only way to do something that fast is  
39 generally you reduce payroll to free up money. And so  
40 through much workforce planning, my boss led the  
41 effort, Mitch Ellis, to come up with ways where we  
42 could make our budget, because we were way over with  
43 these cuts. And complexing Innoko was one of the ideas  
44 that he saw as a way to make up some of that deficit.  
45 And the Staff had already been reduced just through  
46 attrition, through people moving on to other jobs or  
47 retiring, whatever. The Staff was down to about half  
48 the size, and he saw that as an opportunity to complex  
49 it with the Galena office and make up a good portion of  
50 where we had to find the money for the region under the

1 refuge program.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see. Well, that  
4 clarifies that.

5

6 Do you have other comments, Frank.  
7 We're coming down on the end of the day. We can't send  
8 a whole lot of time on this already water under the  
9 bridge issues, but I do want local people to vent some  
10 of their frustrations with how it occurred. And so, do  
11 you have another comment, Frank.

12

13 MR. MILLER: Yes. Like I said  
14 yesterday, Mr. Chair, on this deal with the wanton  
15 waste this fall, the 9 or 10 moose that were spoiled,  
16 had we had -- if the Innoko Refuge people would have  
17 been here, I'm sure something would have been done  
18 about it; however, they weren't here. They all already  
19 moved to different areas in the State. One of our  
20 friends moved down to Southeastern, one went up to Tok,  
21 and a couple to Galena. And, you know, as a result  
22 these guys got away with these nine spoiled moose, you  
23 know.

24

25 I forgot to mention yesterday when we  
26 talked about the wanton waste, there was some rib cages  
27 and some hind quarters delivered to one family, a young  
28 lady with children, no husband, no job. Gave her a rib  
29 cage and a hind quarter that was rotten. She couldn't  
30 use any of it. There's another elder lady had meat  
31 delivered to her that I found out was also rotten.

32

33 So now with the closure of Innoko here  
34 in McGrath, I asked yesterday that maybe some RITs or  
35 Fish and Game or somebody come by here next fall during  
36 the moose season and help. Like I said, our State game  
37 warden is always busy flying up in the Alaska Range  
38 with the Dall sheep hunt. And I wish there was two of  
39 him, but he's just by himself, you know, and he's busy  
40 up there.

41

42 I want to see what your comment is  
43 about sending a couple of RITs down here to help out,  
44 you know.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I mean, they  
47 have Clara here. If you get a moose that comes in  
48 that's spoiled, call her, and she will immediately be  
49 calling Kenton. If you've got a problem, she can call  
50 Kenton, and Kenton can initiate whatever it takes to

1 respond to that. There's mechanisms to report this.  
2 Just refusing the meat and letting it go to Anchorage,  
3 they get away with it. So the mechanism should be, if  
4 you are approached to receive a moose that's spoiled, I  
5 feel that if the moose has come from the Innoko, then  
6 they call Clara. Clara calls Kenton, and Kenton's got  
7 enforcement, or if Kenton's got the enforcement in  
8 Anchorage, it's going to catch them in town. And so  
9 how they're getting out of here, are they on the  
10 Peninsula aircraft, are they flying into town on their  
11 own? I mean, everybody's got to work.....

12  
13 I have to work with Protection a lot. I  
14 do various things. I see people doing stuff, I'm  
15 calling Protection all the time. I go down to  
16 Coldfoot, I see a pickup with no meat in the back and a  
17 great big moose antler on display. I took pictures of  
18 it, I was on the phone to the trooper across the road,  
19 and he was there in five minutes. I get ahold of  
20 people.

21  
22 There needs to be a list of your  
23 trooper, your RIT, the Galena office. There needs to  
24 be a mechanism that people can -- a list of enforcement  
25 that can address this.

26  
27 But multiple RITs, there's only -- I  
28 mean, it's a huge complex. We can't have two or three  
29 RITs sitting over here in McGrath. We've got one, so,  
30 I mean, you can use that.

31  
32 Kenton.

33  
34 MR. MOOS: Just real quick. Absolutely  
35 contact our RITs, but I'm going to be honest with you,  
36 I don't want our RITs getting in the middle of law  
37 enforcement issues. They've got enough to deal with.  
38 But they can definitely contact us. So please call  
39 them, but don't expect them to ask -- or to act. We  
40 will act, absolutely.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, no, I don't want  
43 them to act. I don't want them to act. I just want  
44 them to be notified that this is an issue coming out of  
45 the Innoko Refuge, and we have a tribal member that's  
46 been approached with rotten moose, and so this is the  
47 mechanism to trigger the response.

48  
49 You want to say something, Tracy.  
50

1 MS. MCDONNELL: I actually wanted to  
2 respond to some of the comments made on the closure.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

5  
6 MS. MCDONNELL: But I wanted to let you finish  
7 this part first.

8  
9 Okay. Just for the record, thank you,  
10 Mr. Chair, for letting me speak.

11  
12 Ray, the section in here that talks  
13 about the flood hazard, my understanding is that's  
14 taken directly out of that McGrath flood and all hazard  
15 mitigation plan. It wasn't something that the writer  
16 made up. But I will check that report and verify that  
17 that's -- the quote was made properly. But that's my  
18 understanding where that came from.

19  
20 MR. COLLINS: But I think it's true if  
21 you look at the record that none of the property has  
22 ever been damaged, even though there was floods.

23  
24 REPORTER: Ray, your microphone.

25  
26 MR. COLLINS: I think it's true, none  
27 of the Refuge property has ever been damaged by flood  
28 to my knowledge here. So all of it was -- it's above  
29 flood.

30  
31 MS. MCDONNELL: Right.

32  
33 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I haven't seen that  
34 plan either. I'm surprised that there's a statement  
35 like that in there that says you can't build above.  
36 Because we know the flood levels, and people that are  
37 building now look at what that level is and make sure  
38 their foundation's above it.

39  
40 MS. MCDONNELL: Right. And then when  
41 the workforce planning was being done and we were  
42 coming up with what we were going to do, you know, the  
43 proposed to close, and, yes, you know, Mitch and Polly  
44 Wheeler came out and talked to the Staff and met with  
45 some community members. And then with the interest in  
46 that type of a decision, we did agree, and came back  
47 out in February with the regional director and Mitch  
48 and myself to have this public town meeting, and then  
49 the government-to-government consultation the next  
50 morning.

1                   And as a result of that, with us  
2 listening to the comments made from the community  
3 members, Geoff Haskett was very compelled to change the  
4 path of where we were going with a complete shut down,  
5 nobody left here, all buildings gone, everything  
6 operated out of Galena. He asked that we change that  
7 and have somebody like Clara here where we were still  
8 reaching out to the community on subsistence issues and  
9 environmental education and outreach. That was  
10 something that was clearly very important to this  
11 community, and that's why we made the decision to hang  
12 on to the one small house and make it more of a contact  
13 station and an education center, retain Clara here  
14 full time, hire Ken Chase in the GASH communities, so  
15 that we had somebody that represented the GASH  
16 communities down here, not just in Galena. So as a  
17 result of listening to the community, we did actually  
18 adjust the trajectory of where the decision was going.  
19

20                   And the other thing that we committed  
21 to the community during that meeting was to put down  
22 all of the cost analysis into a report, show what we  
23 did to compare all the alternatives, and then provide  
24 that with our final decision, which is what we did.  
25

26                   MR. COLLINS: It's true, we did not see  
27 those. We weren't able to respond to any of the  
28 alternatives in there before the decision was made. I  
29 mean, this came out after the fact, and it shows what  
30 you did. It did document what you did, but there was  
31 no chance to question any of the decisions that they  
32 were using -- or the information you were using to make  
33 the decision, like the flooding one. You know, I mean,  
34 we could have commented to that. And you could have  
35 checked on it beforehand and see that that's not a real  
36 reason for closing, because you can build above.  
37

38                   MS. MCDONNELL: But it wouldn't have  
39 changed that final decision. In the end, you know, we  
40 had to make a decision to make our budget, and we  
41 followed through with what we said we would.  
42

43                   Thank you.  
44

45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny. We've got to  
46 tighten this up. We're coming down to the end of the  
47 day, and I have three more things to do here.  
48

49                   MS. PELKOLA: Okay. Well, I think mine  
50 is very important.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

2

3 MS. PELKOLA: When McGrath wrote us a  
4 letter, I just want you to know that we were -- the  
5 first chief was very concerned. I've got part of our  
6 minutes here.

7

8 The first chief of McGrath is very  
9 concerned about the closure. It will affect their  
10 economy and put too many acres of land to manage in one  
11 office. Their lifestyle concerns are different, and  
12 the council's asked our tribal administrator to do a  
13 letter in support of keeping the McGrath office open.

14

15 Well, we did do that. We wrote a  
16 letter, and in the letter -- they couldn't find the  
17 letter, they looked for it, because our office moved,  
18 and they're still trying to find the letter. I mean,  
19 you know, take stuff out of the boxes.

20

21 But in that letter it stated that there  
22 was no government-to-government relationship, and all  
23 the tribes are Federally-recognized. They did not  
24 consult us at all. And we're still wait -- I was  
25 surprised when I got here to hear that the place was  
26 closed, because we're still waiting for a response.  
27 And it's an insult to the tribal governments that they  
28 were not -- they did not sit at the table with us to  
29 discuss this before they did this.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One aspect that  
34 Jenny is sort of drawing out is that shifting Staff to  
35 Galena actually impacts the community. You have to  
36 think about additional people being there and those  
37 people become subsistence users. So you've got to --  
38 this is some of the process of thought on complexing.  
39 That's why if you're going to shift major staffing to  
40 another area, you're going to impact that other area  
41 also. And so that's some -- one of the issues you're  
42 thinking about, Jenny.

43

44 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. And so I  
47 think that that should enter into the deliberation  
48 process, into your options. And so if anything comes  
49 about from the learning curve of this whole Innoko  
50 complexing with Koyukuk/Nowitna, is that there needs to

1 be a longer lead time, there needs to be more tribal  
2 consultation, and there needs to be a consideration of  
3 shifting of more people to one community from another.  
4 And so that's -- but I can't spend a lot more time on  
5 this.

6

7 One more comment there, Tracy.

8

9 MS. MCDONNELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10

11 We did not consult in Galena, because  
12 the impacts were here in McGrath. We did not shift any  
13 employees to Galena. The positions that Kenton is  
14 getting filled were already positions that were on his  
15 books. So we did not add any people to the Galena  
16 Staff.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That  
19 clarifies that. Thank you.

20

21 MS. MCDONNELL: Thank you for the time.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think we've  
24 covered. We can't send any more time. It would be  
25 nice just to talk about this since we're in McGrath. I  
26 know it's still burning and smoldering, and still  
27 smoking, but we can't spend any more time. The  
28 Council's done all we can.

29

30 And so we need to move on in this  
31 agenda. Appreciate your comments, Kenton, and all the  
32 work you're doing.

33

34 And so I'll have Gerald come up for  
35 fisheries. We need to -- we've got Gerald, we have  
36 Vince, we've got Jeff Park, and we have the YRDFA  
37 presentation also. And so we need to go over that.

38

39 MR. MILLER: Thank you for your time,  
40 Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much for  
43 attending our meeting, Frank.

44

45 Go ahead, Gerald.

46

47 MR. MASCHMANN: I'm Gerald Maschmann  
48 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fairbanks  
49 subsistence fisheries branch. I assist Fred Bue who's  
50 the Yukon River Federal manager.

1                   What you're getting as a handout is our  
2 office's overview of the salmon season. And you  
3 probably also received the Alaska Department of Fish  
4 and Game' summer season overview. So I'm going to --  
5 I'm not going to read the whole thing, but I am going  
6 to summarize. I know you're short on time, so I'll try  
7 and move through quickly, but if you have any  
8 questions, please stop me.

9  
10                   The 2014 Chinook run size experienced  
11 the seventh consecutive season of below average to poor  
12 run size. Conversely, both summer and fall chum runs  
13 performed as expected with average runs. The coho run  
14 was well above average based on the Pilot Station sonar  
15 index, which was the highest estimated recorded since  
16 the project began in 1995.

17  
18                   Management of the 2014 summer season  
19 was challenged again with the wide disparity in run  
20 strength between the overlapping Chinook and summer  
21 chum mixed stock fisheries. Efforts to conserve  
22 Chinook were initiated at the beginning of the season  
23 in the lower river, and implemented chronologically in  
24 upriver districts as the run progressed. Essentially,  
25 fishing for Chinook was closed throughout the entire  
26 summer season in most districts, and fishing gear  
27 restrictions were applied to target the harvest of  
28 other species. Sport and personal use salmon fishing  
29 was closed as well as a large amount of commercial  
30 fishing opportunity for summer chum was foregone.  
31 Consequently, the management actions significantly  
32 limited subsistence access to the abundant summer chum  
33 and other fish species.

34  
35                   Prior to the season, because Chinook  
36 have performed below expectations in recent years,  
37 there has been a great deal of public involvement this  
38 past winter with the fishing public and stakeholder  
39 groups, including fishermen in Canada. Key  
40 conservation approaches to come out of these meetings  
41 were applied as discussed in the meetings.

42  
43                   As far as the summer season, the in-  
44 season run strength assessment of Chinook and summer  
45 chum was primarily based on the lower river test  
46 fisheries at Emmonak, the Yukon River sonar near Pilot  
47 Station and subsistence fishermen catch reports. Since  
48 the Chinook outlook was for an extremely poor run,  
49 potentially the worse on record, managers worked on the  
50 assumption that there would be little to no Chinook

1 available for subsistence harvest. Restrictions to  
2 conserve Chinook were initiated early and stayed in  
3 effect throughout the entire run. No commercial or  
4 subsistence fishing was allowed to target Chinook  
5 throughout the Yukon drainage with the exception of the  
6 Tanana River drainage.

7  
8                   Subsistence fishermen were allowed to  
9 target other fish species during the early season in  
10 most districts, utilizing six-inch or less mesh gillnet  
11 gear before the Chinook showed up. Once Chinook salmon  
12 began arriving, subsistence salmon fishing for the  
13 overlapping summer chum was allowed when and where chum  
14 were abundant with selective gear such as dipnets,  
15 beach seines, and fishwheels. These gear options  
16 required Chinook to be released alive back into the  
17 river. In addition, fishing for non-salmon species was  
18 allowed in most districts with four-inch or less mesh  
19 gillnet gear during closed salmon fishing periods.

20  
21                   At the end of the summer season when  
22 managers assessed that the majority of the Chinook had  
23 passed through a district, subsistence salmon fishing  
24 was relaxed back to six-inch or less mesh gillnet gear.

25  
26                   Under new commercial fishing  
27 regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in  
28 January 2013, ADF&G implemented the use of specially  
29 equipped fishwheels, dipnets, and beach seines to  
30 target summer chum while conserving Chinook. These  
31 commercial gear types were employed during most of the  
32 summer season in Districts 1 and 2 when Chinook can not  
33 have been avoided with traditional gillnet gear.

34  
35                   Later in the summer season when most  
36 Chinook had moved out of the area, commercial fishing  
37 periods were opened to six-inch or less mesh gillnets  
38 to provide harvest opportunity on the remaining summer  
39 chum. Those Chinook caught later in commercial  
40 gillnets could not be sold, but were allowed to be kept  
41 for subsistence use.

42  
43                   Further upriver in Districts 4 and 6,  
44 special commercial periods were opened for fish-  
45 friendly fishwheel gear to target summer chum with the  
46 requirement to immediately release all Chinook alive.

47  
48                   Preliminary commercial harvest for the  
49 summer season fishery were approximately 510,000 summer  
50 chum. 5,814 Chinook were caught and released, and 443

1 Chinook were caught, but not sold. This was the  
2 highest commercial harvest of summer chum since 1989  
3 even with the use of selective gear.

4  
5           Due to the conservation efforts of  
6 Yukon River fishermen, the estimated U.S./Canada border  
7 passage of 65,000 Chinook ended above the interim  
8 management goal of 42,500 to 55,000 with additional  
9 surplus available for the Canadian harvest share as  
10 stipulated in the Yukon River Salmon Agreement.

11  
12           Unfortunately, high water hampered  
13 several escapement projects this year, yet the data  
14 that was collected at weirs and subsequent aerial  
15 surveys indicated that Chinook escapements were strong.

16  
17           For the fall season, based upon the  
18 summer to fall chum salmon relationship, managers  
19 revised the 2014 fall season outlook to a run size  
20 greater than 850,000 fall sum, which is considered  
21 adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence use,  
22 and to provide a surplus for commercial harvest as well  
23 as other uses. At the beginning of the fall season in  
24 Districts 1, 2, and 3, subsistence salmon fishing  
25 reverted to their standard fishing gear and schedule.  
26 Since little or no commercial fishing effort was  
27 anticipated in upriver Districts 4, 5, and 6,  
28 subsistence fishing began on relaxed schedules and  
29 remained relaxed through the fall season.

30  
31           Many subsistence fishermen indicated to  
32 managers that they intended to make up for the low  
33 Chinook harvest with good quality fall chum from the  
34 front of the run.

35  
36           Commercial salmon fishing was initiated  
37 in the lower river at the start of the fall season to  
38 take advantage of the overlap in summer and fall chum  
39 runs. Through the front half of the fall season, chum  
40 entered the river in average to below average run  
41 strength, so managers were cautious, being suer to pass  
42 fish upriver for subsistence fishermen who were looking  
43 to harvest the early fall chum to make up for the lack  
44 of Chinook.

45  
46           During the second half of the season,  
47 two large pulses of approximately 100,000 and 250,000  
48 fall chum entered the river. These pulses brought the  
49 run projection back in line with pre-season  
50 expectations. Commercial fishing continued in the

1 lower river throughout the season with attempts made to  
2 align commercial openings with pulses as each passed  
3 through the districts.

4  
5                   Meanwhile, the later coho run appeared  
6 to be developing above average with passage at the  
7 mainstem sonar near Pilot Station being the second  
8 highest on record.

9  
10                   The fall chum commercial fishing season  
11 closed in the Lower Yukon by regulation on September  
12 1st. Immediately following in the Lower Yukon a coho-  
13 directed commercial fishing was allowed as stipulated  
14 in the Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan from  
15 September 1st through September 10th, because there was  
16 a high abundance of coho and an adequate fall chum  
17 salmon passage. Additionally, a small fall commercial  
18 harvest occurred in Subdistrict 5B and 5C and in  
19 District 6. The combined fall season commercial  
20 harvest through September 28th was 115,400 fall chum  
21 and 104,500 coho salmon. The fall chum commercial  
22 harvest was below the most recent five year average,  
23 while the coho commercial harvest was the second  
24 highest on record.

25  
26                   Most fall chum escapement projects  
27 ended above average with escapement goals being met or  
28 exceeded. The Eagle sonar ended operations on October  
29 6th with a preliminary final passage of 170,000 fall  
30 chum, which is adequate to provide for the Canadian  
31 escapement goals, as well as harvest-sharing  
32 agreements.

33  
34                   Escapement monitoring within the Tanana  
35 drainage will continue through November, but  
36 indications at this time are that all fall chum  
37 escapements are expected to end within or above most  
38 escapement objectives for the 2014 season, with the  
39 exception of the Fish and Branch River on the Upper  
40 Porcupine River which has consistently failed to reach  
41 it's agreement goal. Coho may end near the high end of  
42 the Delta Water/Clear Water escapement goal, which is  
43 the only established goal in the drainage for coho.

44  
45                   To wrap it up, subsistence salmon  
46 harvest information collected in-season indicated that  
47 no fishermen met their Chinook subsistence harvest  
48 goals. Generally fishermen reported a lack of fishing  
49 opportunity, having to fish later into the season, or  
50 having to shift their fishing efforts to other species.

1 And this was expected in light of the current trend in  
2 low Chinook abundance, and the most conservative  
3 management effort taken in the history of the fishery.

4  
5 On the other hand, fishermen have done  
6 well to shift their subsistence harvest to other  
7 species. They are learning to use the new selective  
8 gear options, and are shifting their harvest patterns  
9 to other times and locations to target other fishes.  
10 It is apparent that while the lack of Chinook is a real  
11 hardship, fishermen have recognized the Chinook run is  
12 not as strong as it used to be, and that we all need to  
13 take care of what we have.

14  
15 And on the back end of that handout  
16 there are some graphs, and I'll just quickly explain  
17 what those graphs are. On the top it shows the Chinook  
18 commercial harvest over time, and as you can see  
19 there's -- in the last few years there's been very  
20 little Chinook salmon commercial harvest since 2008.

21  
22 The middle graph shows the estimated  
23 subsistence harvest of chinook across years. And, you  
24 know, subsistence has been pretty consistent; however,  
25 the last few years you can see it's starting to go  
26 down, particularly with these hard Chinook years that  
27 we've had.

28  
29 And the bottom graph combines harvest  
30 and escapement to indicate total run size of Chinook  
31 entering the Yukon since 1982. Again it's obvious that  
32 somewhere around 1998 production has decreased and  
33 we've not been getting the returns that we used to get  
34 off those same level of escapements.

35  
36 The following three pages just shows  
37 escapements of Chinook projects on the river. And as  
38 was stated earlier, that the Gisasa River weir only ran  
39 for half the season and they were washed out, and the  
40 Henshaw River weir also did not -- wasn't even put in  
41 this year due to high water. The Salcha River tower  
42 was essentially washed out also, and the Chena tower  
43 was pretty much washed out, but they'd been using a  
44 Didson as somewhat of a backup to count Chinook during  
45 those high water marks, so -- but that data is all  
46 preliminary yet, too.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But the Chena made  
49 escapement by Didson?

50

1 MR. MASCHMANN: It does look like it  
2 made -- preliminary-wise it did.....

3  
4 MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chairman. This is  
5 Jeff Estensen with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

6  
7  
8 That is correct. The Chena River did  
9 make its escapement goal based on the information they  
10 got from the Didson sonar.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Continue,  
13 Gerald.

14  
15 MR. MASCHMANN: And just those final  
16 graphs show the summer chum and the fall chum run and  
17 the coho run. And all three of those runs did fine  
18 this year. And again the coho salmon run was actually  
19 pretty good.

20  
21 And then the final page, the color  
22 page, the top graph shows all the runs put together at  
23 Pilot and it shows you what we're dealing with  
24 particularly in the summer season, we're trying to  
25 manage these low Chinook runs that you see in blue are  
26 being overlapped by huge summer chum runs, and so we're  
27 trying to manage that poor Chinook run while yet  
28 providing some kind of opportunity on that summer chum.  
29 And I think the managers did pretty good this year with  
30 the dipnets and beach seines and allowing fishermen to  
31 harvest summer chum while still being able to throw the  
32 Chinook back.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm pleased with the  
35 low take of Chinook salmon in the commercial harvest,  
36 the retention of 400 and some fish. I commend the  
37 Department on that. But I did have a problem when they  
38 opened it for subsistence use of seven-and-a-half-inch  
39 gear in 5 and 5 when everybody else had been dipnetting  
40 six-inch gear below there, four-inch mesh. I feel that  
41 that should not -- we -- I also caution that if salmon  
42 got on the spawning grounds in the Koyukuk, the central  
43 -- the Interior of Alaska, the Chena, the spawning  
44 success has got to be really, really low with that kind  
45 of high water. Those fish were on the spawning grounds  
46 with really high water, so the flood events is going to  
47 be real hard on recruitment. So I don't think it's a  
48 real -- even though the Didson shows Chena made  
49 escapement, it doesn't actually mean that we had a very  
50 good spawning. I caution the managers next year to

1 refrain from allowing seven-and-a-half-inch gear to  
2 target the largest Chinook salmon. That's what's going  
3 to be present.

4  
5                   And we're trying to rebuild this stock,  
6 we do not need to be targeting any larger Chinook  
7 salmon for subsistence. If there's been significant  
8 subsistence restrictions all the way through 4,  
9 District 4, then there needs to be the same  
10 restrictions all along. What's good for the goose, is  
11 good for the gander. And so that's water under the  
12 bridge, but next year we've got to have continuity  
13 here, and so I would caution -- I feel that the Western  
14 Interior people took some huge cuts and then Eastern  
15 Interior's getting some king gear use, and so I'm not  
16 real super happy about that. And so I wanted to put  
17 that on the record.

18  
19                   Any further Council comments on  
20 Gerald's report.

21  
22                   (No comments)

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other than that, I  
25 was real happy to see escapement into Canada. For many  
26 years -- 65,000, well, that's just a bump over, because  
27 we were so low last year. We needed some overlap. And  
28 so I'm real happy to see that we're meeting some  
29 escapement needs.

30  
31                   Is there any indication of what water  
32 levels were in Canada on the spawning grounds.

33  
34                   MR. MASCHMANN: I have not about that,  
35 but that is a very good question.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would encourage  
38 management to look into what the spawning success for  
39 high water events into Canada. They may not have had  
40 the same type of events we were having in the Interior  
41 of Alaska.

42  
43                   Any Council comments on the post season  
44 report from Gerald Maschmann here.

45  
46                   (No comments)

47  
48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gerald.

49  
50                   MR. MASCHMANN: I'm here until

1 tomorrow, and if folks like Donald and Jenny and maybe  
2 Eleanor, I'd like to hear how you guys handled fishing  
3 in 2014, if you substituted fall chum or, you know,  
4 went with white fish or.....

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny.

7  
8 MS. PELKOLA: I could tell you now,  
9 because we won't be here tomorrow, but we fished for  
10 chums, the fall chums and, you know, coho.

11  
12 MR. MASCHMANN: Were you successful? I  
13 mean, were you able to get at least what you -- maybe  
14 not what you needed or wanted, but.....

15  
16 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah, this year we used  
17 fish nets whereas before we used fishwheels, because  
18 too many things going on, but I was able to fish for  
19 probably about over a week and I got my supply for  
20 myself, in addition to share with my little family.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

23  
24 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack.

25  
26 Yeah, I'd like to concur, and agree  
27 with what Jenny says, and actually, you know, we've had  
28 very good success with the summer chum and the fall  
29 chum itself. In fact, some people even preferred that  
30 over there, so we've adapted and we've done good.

31  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like to  
35 see the managers report to the fishers where the front  
36 end of this fall chum run is at as it progresses up, so  
37 that people can get on -- you know, people are used to  
38 fishing Chinook, so if you're going to shift to fall,  
39 it would help the fishers out to know approximately  
40 where that front end pulse is at so that people can be  
41 anticipating when they can fish, should be fishing.

42  
43 MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair. May I make a  
44 comment.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure. Go right  
47 ahead.

48  
49 MR. ESTENSEN: Yeah. Mr. Chair. For  
50 the record my name is Jeff Estensen, Alaska Department

1 of Fish and Game. I'm the fall season manager.

2

3 And just to make a comment on your last  
4 comment there, during the weekly teleconferences, the  
5 YRDFA teleconferences, and I don't know how many folks  
6 there in attendance listen to those on a weekly basis,  
7 but we do exactly that.

8

9 This year, you know, as we have in the  
10 last couple years, you know, with the fall chum, and it  
11 played into our management, we've taken, you know --  
12 we're fully aware that folks are switching and looking  
13 to them to meet some of their subsistence needs, and  
14 certainly trying to tailor our management to make sure  
15 that we're getting fish upriver for subsistence uses.

16

17 But during those weekly  
18 teleconferences, that's exactly what we do. We try to  
19 let folks in all the villages along the know, you know,  
20 where the front end of the fish are, and where the  
21 pulses and when they could expect to see fish, and we  
22 feel that's very important, and we try to do our best  
23 to get the word out to folks, and the YRDFA  
24 teleconference is the way we do that.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.  
29 Appreciate you being conservative on the front end of  
30 that pulse, but after the crisis is over, a lot of  
31 people drop off the call. YRDFA can document that the  
32 number of people participating in the call is going  
33 down. I feel that there should be a sequential contact  
34 with the tribal offices as the pulse is moving up the  
35 river from the U.S. fisheries and Alaska Department of  
36 Fish and Game Subsistence to let the communities know  
37 where that front end of that pulse is at, because you  
38 can't rely on the YRDFA teleconference, because the  
39 call numbers drop right over a cliff and so everybody's  
40 doing other things. But it would be nice if the tribal  
41 offices and communities were notified where that pulse  
42 is at.

43

44 Gerald.

45

46 MR. MASCHMANN: It is, and the Fish and  
47 Game does a weekly update just before the  
48 teleconference, so the -- it's a news release, but it's  
49 called an update where they update basically the run.  
50 And within that update it tells folks where the pulses

1 are at.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, those should  
4 be transmitted to the tribal councils through fax and  
5 email and possibly calling the local RITs, et cetera,  
6 who can -- should be contacting the communities, this  
7 is where the front end of the fall chum pulse is,  
8 because of breakup timing, that has variations. So  
9 they should be made aware where that's at, so this is  
10 just for next year. Just a suggestion.

11

12 MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair. Jeff  
13 Estensen, Fish and Game.

14

15 I think that's a great idea, and  
16 certainly I have made a note of that, and we'll keep  
17 that in mind, and definitely try to do that next year.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Thank  
22 you. I really appreciate the way the fishery was  
23 prosecuted this year, and the conservation that led to  
24 success in escapements.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 And so we're moving on in our agenda  
29 here. We've got Vince has got -- oh, you want to shift  
30 to -- okay.

31

32 We'll have YRDFA come up. Come on up,  
33 Wayne.

34

35 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
36 Council members. I appreciate you time and your  
37 service on the Council. Good afternoon.

38

39 I'm deputy director of Yukon Drainage  
40 Fisheries Association. My name is Wayne Jenkins. You  
41 also know the organization as YRDFA.

42

43 We appreciate this opportunity to  
44 provide information reports to you on some of YRDFA's  
45 projects that are funded by the Fisheries Resource  
46 Monitoring Program with your support, and also other  
47 projects that may be of interest to you.

48

49 The first project I'd like to briefly  
50 describe is the pre-season prep meeting. Preceding the

1 summer Yukon River fishing season on April 8th, 2014,  
2 YRDFA hosted a one-day Alaskan fisheries meeting known  
3 as the pre-season or summer prep meetings.  
4 Representatives from Alaska Native tribal councils,  
5 management agencies, and other fisheries stakeholders  
6 met together in Fairbanks and listened to presentations  
7 about the status of Yukon River king salmon and the  
8 anticipated in-season management actions for the 2014  
9 Chinook and chum salmon fisheries along the Yukon.

10

11                   There are very detailed meeting minutes  
12 that were taken by our own Melinda Burke in your  
13 meeting. That is on Page 193, so I won't spend any  
14 time on that. Great information in there on that  
15 meeting.

16

17                   This meeting is a good opportunity for  
18 a wide range of people from villages along the Yukon  
19 River to meet together with each other and with  
20 fisheries managers and researchers to discuss pre-  
21 season what they can anticipate in the upcoming fishing  
22 season.

23

24                   Following the one-day Alaska meeting,  
25 there was an international salmon summit in Fairbanks  
26 with Canadians from Yukon Territory, Canada, who also  
27 rely on the salmon resource along the Yukon River,  
28 meeting with Alaskans from up and down the river. The  
29 Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Salmon  
30 Subcommittee hosted this meeting. The Yukon River  
31 Panel funded both meetings.

32

33                   OSM Coordinator Melinda Burke also has  
34 included a very detailed report in your meeting book on  
35 this meeting. That's on Page 201, and I hope you have  
36 a chance to read that.

37

38                   The second program I'd like to report  
39 on very briefly is the in-season salmon teleconferences  
40 that were just referred to. YRDFA hosted in-season  
41 salmon management teleconferences this past fishing  
42 season. Both the Fisheries Resources Monitoring  
43 Program and also Yukon River Panel fund this project.  
44 This year YRDFA held 14 in-season management  
45 teleconferences, starting every Tuesday beginning the  
46 last week of May, which was a week early, running  
47 through August. The calls followed an agenda each  
48 week, opening with subsistence fishing reports in  
49 Alaska and First Nation reports in Yukon, hearing from  
50 State and Federal fisheries managers on their fishery

1 assessments and management strategies, and hearing from  
2 the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada.

3

4                   Important issues addressed this season  
5 during the teleconferences included the low runs of  
6 Yukon River Chinook salmon and the conservative  
7 management strategies being used in-season. Managers  
8 discussed how the run was coming in accordance to their  
9 test fisheries, when pulse closures would take place,  
10 what gear restrictions were in place.

11

12                   Yukon fishers shared harvest  
13 experiences on the river, how they were adapting to new  
14 gear types, a very rainy summer with high water, opener  
15 timing and the challenges of the complete conservation  
16 of Chinook this year.

17

18                   Although king salmon is so very  
19 important to them, fishers the length of the Yukon  
20 understood the need to conserve king salmon this year  
21 to get them to the border and their spawning grounds to  
22 ensure future returns of Chinook. Due to the  
23 sacrifices made by subsistence fishers along the Yukon,  
24 escapement goals in Canada were met and greater numbers  
25 of females did make it onto those spawning beds.

26

27                   And I want to thank you for that  
28 opportunity to share these reports, and I'll take any  
29 question you have about those programs, if you have  
30 any.

31

32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Has the Council got  
33 any questions on the work YRDFA's been doing.

34

35                   (No comments)

36

37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none. I  
38 really appreciate all the work YRDFA's been doing on  
39 the pre-season and bringing stakeholders all together.  
40 It builds the capacity to conserve the Chinook salmon  
41 and manage the fisheries.

42

43                   So thanks, Wayne. And continue.

44

45                   MR. JENKINS: So I have a couple of  
46 reports here, projects that our anthropologist,  
47 Catherine Moncrieff is working on.

48

49                   Catherine, are you on the line.

50

1 MS. MONCRIEFF: I am actually on the  
2 line. Thanks, Wayne.  
3  
4 MR. JENKINS: All right.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Catherine.  
7  
8 MS. MONCRIEFF: Good afternoon.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.  
11  
12 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. Thank you. I'd  
13 like to tell you about two projects also funded by the  
14 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, and then update  
15 you on another project that may be of interest to the  
16 Council members. Would that be okay?  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're fine. Go  
19 right ahead.  
20  
21 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. The first  
22 project in the in-season harvest survey, which is  
23 associated with the conference that we (indiscernible).  
24 Since 2002, the in-season harvest surveyors have been  
25 hired in communities along the Yukon River to ensure  
26 consistent participation and reporting on subsistence  
27 harvest and perceived abundance in the YRDFA in-season  
28 salmon teleconferences.  
29  
30 In 2014 10 communities participated,  
31 including Alakanuk, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy  
32 Cross, Kaltag, Galena, Huslia, Nenana, Fort Yukon, and  
33 Eagle. They contacted a total of 121 households and  
34 conducted a combined total of 330 interviews which  
35 spanned all six fishing districts.  
36  
37 This program focuses on Chinook salmon  
38 and took place from late May to early August, running  
39 six weeks long in each community as the Chinook salmon  
40 swam through. The surveyors reported the information  
41 they collected in their communities on 11 YRDFA  
42 teleconferences, and we submitted summaries to the  
43 State and Federal managers weekly.  
44  
45 This program has a high retention rate  
46 with 8 of the 10 surveyors being rehired this year.  
47  
48 Since managers were anticipating no  
49 Chinook salmon harvest this year, the survey questions  
50 were changed to collect information about what fishers

1 were doing instead of Chinook salmon fishing, and how  
2 alternative gear types were working to avoid Chinook  
3 salmon.

4  
5                   There's a flyer that summarizes some of  
6 the information we collected through this project that  
7 I hope you guys have received.

8  
9                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm not sure.

10  
11                   MS. MONCRIEFF: It's a two-pager.  
12 That's fine. Well, I apologize if you guys did not  
13 receive that.

14  
15                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

16  
17                   MS. MONCRIEFF: Maybe we can get it to  
18 you at a later date.

19  
20                   MS. BURKE: Yeah, we'll get it. If  
21 it's not here, we'll get it for them. Go ahead,  
22 Catherine.

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a lot of  
25 papers here. We have a lot of papers, so we may have  
26 misplaced it.

27  
28                   MS. MONCRIEFF: I believe it.

29  
30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So continue.

31  
32                   MS. MONCRIEFF: All right. I'd like to  
33 tell you about the next project, which is a new one.  
34 It's called customary trade in the Upper Yukon River.  
35 And this project is also funded by the Fisheries  
36 Resource Monitoring Program, and it's a partnership  
37 between YRDFA and the Alaska Department of Fish and  
38 Game Subsistence. It just began this year, this  
39 summer, and it goes through December of 2016.

40  
41                   This project will examine historic and  
42 contemporary customary trade in the Upper Yukon and  
43 Tanana Rivers. We hope to conduct our research in the  
44 communities of Fort Yukon, Stevens Village, and Manley  
45 Hot Springs. We plan to use ethnographic interviews to  
46 describe how customary trade practices fit within the  
47 overall subsistence use of salmon. And also we plan to  
48 use a survey on barter and exchange practices to  
49 document the scope and local nature of customary trade.

50

1                   The final objective of this project is  
2 to improve understanding of the role of customary trade  
3 within a continuum of exchange practices, and to  
4 describe any potential effects on customary trade from  
5 declining salmon runs.

6  
7                   At this point in the project we're  
8 still in the start-up phase. We've drafted our  
9 interview guide, survey, and informed consent, and  
10 we're working right now on community approvals, and  
11 once we receive them, we'll begin the field work and  
12 keep you posted on how it goes.

13  
14                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I have one  
15 question.

16  
17                   MS. MONCRIEFF: So that's it. I'm  
18 sorry, go ahead.

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have one question  
21 there on that customary trade survey. So this would be  
22 -- the survey would cover multiple years of history or  
23 just the years -- the two recent years? Because right  
24 now there's very little excess fish, and so documenting  
25 what's going on right this minute is not going to  
26 reflect historical customary trade in the Upper Yukon  
27 and Tanana.

28  
29                   MS. MONCRIEFF: True, that's a good  
30 point. And the way we've structured the questions, we  
31 ask what typical transaction are, so it doesn't  
32 necessarily have to reflect, you know, transactions  
33 that happened within the last 12 months, but what is a  
34 typical transaction, and which species and in what  
35 state are the species in.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, that  
38 addresses my concern.

39  
40                   MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. Yeah, I agree  
41 that it would be different to just document the single  
42 year.

43  
44                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Any  
45 questions on those two projects that YRDFA's doing from  
46 the Council.

47  
48                   (No comments)

49  
50                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, Wayne,

1 thank you.

2

3 MS. MONCRIEFF: I had one more projects  
4 I just wanted to briefly tell you about if that's okay.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

7

8 MS. MONCRIEFF: I know you guys are  
9 short on time.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

12

13 MS. MONCRIEFF: This is called the  
14 Koyukuk traditional place names project from Hughes to  
15 Koyukuk. And it's not funded by FRMP, but I thought  
16 you guys would be interested in hearing just a quick  
17 brief summary of it.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

20

21 MS. MONCRIEFF: This past summer I had  
22 the opportunity to travel by boat from Koyukuk. Our  
23 group traveled from Koyukuk to Hughes to map and visit  
24 traditional place names. And we brought youth and  
25 elders from the communities of Koyukuk, Huslia and  
26 Hughes, together with elders. And we posted signs with  
27 the Koyukon language name, and stories about the places  
28 were recorded and community meetings were held along  
29 the way.

30

31 And this trip was part of an ongoing  
32 project with a diverse partnership, including the  
33 elders and tribal councils of Hughes, Huslia, and  
34 Koyukuk. Also the Yukon/Koyukuk School District, the  
35 U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Koyukuk National Wildlife  
36 Refuge, the United States Geological Survey, Alaska  
37 Science Center, and YRDFA. And we also got additional  
38 funding for this project from the Alaska Humanities  
39 Forum, Gana-a'yoo, and Doyon.

40

41 And that's the end of my report. And  
42 so I thank you for your time, and will be happy to  
43 answer any questions, or turn it back over to Wayne.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any questions  
46 on that place name project.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Thanks so much

1 for your presentation and your brevity.

2

3 And so, Wayne.

4

5 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
6 The last YRDFA report I'd like to share is a salmon  
7 bycatch update. Very brief. And the comments were  
8 given to me by Becca Robbins Gisclair, our policy  
9 director. And as many of you know, she's been involved  
10 with the bycatch issue for a very, very long time, and  
11 serves on one of the information councils to the North  
12 Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

13

14 So there is an update in your packets,  
15 a bycatch update. Current bycatch numbers for 2014 are  
16 14,977 Chinook salmon caught and killed, 218,503 chum  
17 salmon.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What was the chum  
20 number again.

21

22 MR. JENKINS: 218,503. Because of the  
23 status of Western Alaska Chinook salmon stocks, the  
24 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is  
25 considering ways to reduce bycatch in the pollack  
26 fishery further. They will receive an analysis of a  
27 set of options at the December 2014 meeting to be held  
28 in Anchorage.

29

30 It's very important that they hear from  
31 the RACs and from stakeholders about the importance of  
32 reducing bycatch. You can write a letter. The  
33 comments are due December 2nd. And there is a copy of  
34 a letter that YRDFA along with AVCP, Kawerak, Tanana  
35 Chiefs Conference, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association.  
36 This letter to the Council is in your packets. It's  
37 quite a long letter with a lot of details in it. But  
38 it would be good for them to hear from this RAC also.

39

40 Also attending the meeting and  
41 providing comments. The meeting is December 8th  
42 through the 16th in Anchorage. The agenda should be  
43 out around the beginning of November.

44

45 If you need more information, and we  
46 have a lot of it, you can contact Becca at YRDFA. I  
47 can provide contact information for you, if you need  
48 to, or you can talk with me after the meeting, or you  
49 can just call the YRDFA office to get through to me or  
50 Becca.

1                   So I don't know if you have any  
2 specific questions about bycatch. I will try to answer  
3 them, or defer and get you the answers later.

4  
5                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see the  
6 letter, but I feel that this Council should transmit a  
7 letter to -- of endorsement of the concept of reducing  
8 bycatch in the Bering Sea. 15,000 Chinook, and 120,000  
9 chum is not tolerable when we're taking these kind of  
10 subsistence restrictions. We don't have quorum.

11  
12                   MS. BURKE: That's okay.

13  
14                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can write a  
15 letter? Okay. I feel this Council should write a  
16 letter to endorse the YRDFA, AVCP, et cetera, position  
17 on reducing bycatch in the Bering Sea. It highly  
18 affects the subsistence users, and the hardships that  
19 people have endured. And so I feel that that should be  
20 transmitted before the comment period of December 3rd.

21  
22                   And you have another comment on that,  
23 Ray.

24  
25                   MR. JENKINS: December 2.

26  
27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, December 2.

28  
29                   MR. COLLINS: Well, it's related to the  
30 bycatch in that we heard earlier that there may be a 75  
31 percent -- they're predicting a 75 percent increase in  
32 pollack availability. Are they liable to raise the  
33 limit of pollack catch, because that's going to have a  
34 direct effect on the bycatch. You know, if they gave  
35 them a 75 percent larger quota, you can see.....

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. That's a  
38 great point, Ray. And we can anticipate at least a 75  
39 percent increase in bycatch above what we're already  
40 enduring. And so that should be incorporated into the  
41 letter that the concern about the amount of tows, the  
42 amount of endurance of the pollack fishery as impacts  
43 would be exponentially increased. And so that should  
44 be an addition to the letter, the concern for increased  
45 biomass take by the pollack fishery.

46  
47                   Any other comments on the letter.

48  
49                   (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Great catch, Ray.

2

3 MR. COLLINS: Well, just one other  
4 comment related to that, too, that if there's 75  
5 percent more out there, that means they're taking more  
6 -- the reason there is bycatch is because they're  
7 feeding on the same thing the salmon is. Well, if you  
8 increase -- if their biomass is increasing 75 percent,  
9 there's going to be less food available for the salmon  
10 even that aren't caught. You see what I mean? It's  
11 going to put pressure on that food source. Yeah.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the zones of  
14 where the fish -- you know, it's these trenches and  
15 this upwelling water. There's all this nutrient coming  
16 up, boiling up in front of these pollack and salmon.  
17 It's a bit feeding frenzy there. So if they're telling  
18 for 75 percent longer -- the more biomass, you're going  
19 to have 150 percent more bycatch is what you're  
20 actually going to come up with, or something to that  
21 effect. And so the bottom line is the North Pacific  
22 Fisheries Management Council has got to address this  
23 bycatch issue. These numbers are climbing again.

24

25 Any other additions to that letter to  
26 the -- of comment.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, I think  
31 that should be sufficient.

32

33 Wayne.

34

35 MR. JENKINS: Along those lines from  
36 Councilman Collins, one thing that I would note from  
37 the notes that Becca provided, and I will carry this  
38 back and share this with Becca, we have not discussed  
39 this. I think it's a hugely important point. But one  
40 thing they did do was stopped fishing early this year  
41 in October, because that is a period when their  
42 percentages of Chinook catch go up.

43

44 So, you know, I think they're working  
45 with it as best they can, but this increase of 75  
46 percent quota, that's hugely questionable, or scary,  
47 from the perspective of Chinook bycatch.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

50

1 MR. JENKINS: And the concern about  
2 chum bycatch. I mean, as subsistence harvesters become  
3 more reliant on chum, we have to be really careful  
4 there also.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

7  
8 MR. JENKINS: So the last thing that I  
9 have for you is a project that YRDFA was asked to  
10 participate in, and I will just -- I put it in a letter  
11 form for you.

12  
13 Presently the Bureau of Land  
14 Management, BLM, the largest Federal land manager in  
15 Alaska is undertaking a resource management planning  
16 effort in the western Interior region, which you're  
17 probably well aware of. The resource management plans,  
18 when completed, will guide land and resource management  
19 over the next 20 to 30 years. Of Alaska's 365 million  
20 acres, BLM manages 74.7 million acres.

21  
22 The Bureau is planning for 16 million  
23 acres under the management plan in the Central Yukon  
24 resource managing planning area. A map is included for  
25 this area for reference along with this letter.

26  
27 YRDFA, along with the Pew Charitable  
28 Trust is undertaking informational outreach, and, when  
29 requested, assistance and support for tribes wishing to  
30 guide BLM planning and management with their expert  
31 advice and input during the planning process.

32  
33 YRDFA's a 501(c)(3) non-profit  
34 association of subsistence and commercial fishers with  
35 the mission of protecting and promoting all healthy  
36 fisheries and cultures along the Yukon River drainage.

37  
38 Pew Charitable Trust is a global  
39 research and public policy organization operated as a  
40 non-partisan, non-governmental organization dedicated  
41 to serving the public. Pew's focus on BLM planning  
42 centers around conservation of areas meriting special  
43 protection, as informed by local communities.

44  
45 Of the villages that we've worked with,  
46 protecting traditional harvest areas has been the major  
47 concern. So far five tribal councils in the Central  
48 Yukon area have made nominations for resource  
49 protection through what BLM refers to as their areas of  
50 critical environmental concern process. The ACEC

1 process identifies areas where special management  
2 attention is requested to protect historic, cultural,  
3 or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other  
4 natural systems of processes.

5  
6                   The Tribal Councils of Louden and  
7 Koyukuk are seeking broad support for their BLM ACEC  
8 nominations and the tribal resolutions which they have  
9 adopted, and request the support of these nominations  
10 from the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council.

11  
12                   There's a bunch of attached documents.  
13 There are even more documents in a three-ring binder  
14 there show support leading up to identifying the  
15 acreages on BLM lands that they're concerned about.

16  
17                   In making these nominations, the tribes  
18 assert that management of the watershed is key to  
19 protecting the nominated areas and the resources  
20 communities depend upon. Though much of the  
21 traditional use areas mapped do not lie directly on BLM  
22 land, the upstream and headwaters of many critical  
23 watersheds are managed by BLM and deserve protective  
24 management.

25  
26                   We'd like to thank you for your  
27 consideration of this matter and hopefully your  
28 support.

29  
30                   If you have any questions, I'll be glad  
31 to try answer them.

32  
33                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, thanks, Wayne.  
34 As everybody -- we were briefed on the ACEC, areas of  
35 critical environmental concern. I submitted an ACEC  
36 for near where I live for Dall sheep crossing, et  
37 cetera. And I know entities that have been submitting  
38 ACECs in the northern part.

39  
40                   But the Louden -- did you work on the  
41 review of this ACEC, Jenny?

42  
43                   MS. PELKOLA: Well, I did the map  
44 (indiscernible - mic not on)

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. I feel that  
47 this Council should endorse Louden's request for ACEC  
48 on the BLM lands, because these are important  
49 watersheds that support various fish stocks, freshwater  
50 fish stocks, and also some of these areas would

1 actually be salmon rearing areas. And so we're talking  
2 about Ambler roads with copper sulfate and all kinds of  
3 bad things can happen in the Upper Koyukuk if you're  
4 shipping that kind of volume of mineral. So I feel  
5 that this Council should endorse the ACECs that Louden  
6 has delineated to the BLM's RMP process.

7

8 Eleanor.

9

10 MS. YATLIN: Mr. Chairman. There's  
11 also one from Koyukuk Tribal Council.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Koyukuk has one,  
14 too?

15

16 MS. YATLIN: Yeah, they have one in  
17 there.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Similar?

20

21 MS. YATLIN: Yes.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is it in this  
24 packet?

25

26 MS. YATLIN: Yes, there's one from  
27 Koyukuk and one from Louden.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay. So both  
30 of those, Koyukuk and Louden, we will send a letter to  
31 the BLM scoping process to endorse these ACECs, and the  
32 justification is that these are important freshwater  
33 stocks, areas for resident fish, and for anadromous  
34 fish rearing areas. And I feel that these are -- with  
35 the larger aspects of mineral extraction in the Upper  
36 Koyukuk drainage, the future is in limbo, and these  
37 areas of critical concern have to enter into the EIS  
38 process for any of those other -- these mineral  
39 extraction projects that are coming on the horizon.

40

41 Does the Council -- go ahead, Melinda.

42

43 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. Would we also  
44 include the one that Ray submitted as well, the  
45 sheefish spawning area.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

48

49 MR. COLLINS: On this river, yeah.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, yeah. The one  
2 for here on the Kuskokwim River could also be included.

3

4

5 And is the Council aware of any other  
6 ACECs that have been submitted.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 MR. JENKINS: Mr. Chairman. We are  
11 engaged with others, but we have not attained full  
12 permission to bring them to you yet, and expect to  
13 bring them to you in spring.

14

15 One thing that should be noted is that  
16 this project, the process had a deadline date of August  
17 29th, but we've been told that they're still  
18 encouraging people to bring them forward. Of course,  
19 whether they have to entertain them or not becomes a  
20 question of -- I'm not quite sure how they make that  
21 decision, but I think all councils, all tribal councils  
22 should be encouraged, if they're willing to share that  
23 information and are concerned about the future  
24 management, if they have BLM lands that infringe or  
25 provide habitat, not just for fish, but for moose and  
26 the many other things that they harvest, should engage  
27 with BLM and let them know.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, that should be  
30 -- tribal consultation with the BLM should be still  
31 transmitting. If they're open for additional ACECs  
32 from communities.

33

34 I would like the Council to consider my  
35 ACEC for the sheep crossing area right near my  
36 community. There's basically a divided population of  
37 Dall sheep. They have to cross this drainage, and  
38 there's a road, this old mining road, but there's a  
39 whole bunch of mining claims, and I don't want to see  
40 any kind of development that would impede these sheep  
41 movements. Traffic, light traffic on the road, light  
42 subsistence hunting doesn't bother the sheep. I don't  
43 want to see any camps, I don't want to see hard rock  
44 extraction in the middle of that sheep crossing. And  
45 so I would like, would the Council endorse my ACEC and  
46 our letter.

47

48 (Council nods affirmatively)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I'm including

1 the ACEC that I've submitted.

2

3 Erin, come to the mic.

4

5 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah. For record this  
6 is Erin Julianus with the BLM.

7

8 If you were going to make those  
9 endorsements, we're going through -- you know, we've  
10 got all of the nominations, and, yeah, like Wayne said,  
11 the period is officially closed, but right now we're  
12 going through an internal review where we're reviewing  
13 every ACEC nomination that we've gotten for, it's  
14 called relevance and importance criteria, so I would  
15 say if you were going to, you know, endorse those, it  
16 should be a time-sensitive priority.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.  
19 I'm sure that Melinda can produce that in a timely  
20 manner. And does.

21

22 Any further discussion on the ACEC  
23 endorsement letter inclusions.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, that  
28 looks good for that.

29

30 Wayne.

31

32 MR. JENKINS: Thank you very much.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And thanks so much  
35 for sitting through our meeting and attending, and I  
36 really appreciate all the work that YRDFA -- this seems  
37 to be a building entity, and so I'm -- and with good  
38 projects, I'm appreciative of that.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Chairman and  
43 Council.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

46

47 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. I just had  
48 one comment on it.

49

50 It's kind of after the fact, but you

1 raise an issue of the importance of wildlife corridors,  
2 and I don't think most people are thinking about that,  
3 because it's undeveloped land now. And so I don't know  
4 if your review process you considered that as a key  
5 factor of wildlife corridors, of movements. Like  
6 caribou up here move from the hills down onto their  
7 wintering grounds and so on. I guess somewhere in the  
8 process that should be at least looked at or made note  
9 of so that in future leases or activities and so on,  
10 that's part of the process of weighing whether  
11 something could take place or not.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, they've had  
14 wildlife ACECs from the last RMP, Bureau of Land  
15 Management resource management plan up in the Brooks  
16 Range, because we're not a real big fish country, but  
17 we do have various wildlife concerns, and wildlife is a  
18 big part of our, you know -- the majority of the  
19 subsistence use in the Brooks Range for Anaktuvuk,  
20 Wiseman, Coldfoot, and Arctic Village is large mammals.  
21 Less than 15 percent would be fishes. So large animals  
22 is a big part of our diet.

23

24 So I would encourage that communities  
25 think about wildlife areas of critical concern. Like  
26 winter habitat for moose, you know, they get pushed to  
27 the river corridors. So that's why those are areas of  
28 critical concern is along river corridors. And so many  
29 years ago when Tim Craig became BLM biologist, I had  
30 him come up there in a deep snow year and document  
31 where the moose were actually at in the deep snow years  
32 so that when they're going to build a gas line, you  
33 can't drive all the moose out of those wintering  
34 habitats. You can't be building gas lines in those  
35 habitats when the moose are present in a deep snow  
36 year. You'll kill them.

37

38 And so animal areas of critical --  
39 mammal areas of critical concern are an important issue  
40 also.

41

42 MR. JENKINS: Well, and Councilman  
43 Collins brings up a really good point. I mean, when  
44 you're doing 20 and 30-year planning, and you need  
45 every piece of the puzzle that you can get, but the  
46 process is an invitational process. And in many cases  
47 the villages are somewhat strapped dealing with what  
48 they're already dealing with. And this is why YRDFA  
49 was interested when Pew came to us, because we felt  
50 like there was kind of this hole, or this opportunity

1 to try to help engagement.

2

3 But, you know, it takes some real  
4 desire on the part of agencies to get at these things,  
5 and then there's the challenge of how to engage  
6 respectfully. So BLM's got a big job.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Wayne.

11

12 We've got -- I was trying to call Vince  
13 earlier. Are you ready to present. Vince, and then  
14 I've got Jeff Park, who also wants to present, and we  
15 should be coming down to the end here. But we want to  
16 be very thorough in the Western Interior. We want to  
17 get as much on the record. And the court recorders  
18 love us, because they get over five bucks a page, so we  
19 do plenty of talking.

20

21 (Laughter)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So go ahead, Vince.

24

25 MR. MATHEWS: Well, first off, I think  
26 we need to recognize Ray. I was just sitting back  
27 there calculating, it was 25 years ago this month I met  
28 Ray in the building next to his house, and that's where  
29 I started out as a Regional Council coordinator. And I  
30 was blown away last night in the upstairs, talking to  
31 Ray, how much he gave me more insight. You know, even  
32 after 25 years working with these villages, he blew me  
33 away last night on different insights. So I wanted to  
34 recognize Ray on that first off, because that's very  
35 important.

36

37 The second thing, I'm working with  
38 Jack, your Chair, and with different entities to work  
39 on the complexity of the permits and regulations in  
40 Unit 24B, so hopefully we'll have some movement in that  
41 direction, possibly some proposals.

42

43 Now I'm putting on my other hat. That  
44 was as acting deputy. Now I'm back to my other hat.

45

46 I'm really encouraged by your RIT  
47 discussion. We are very much struggling on the Yukon  
48 Flats maintaining an RIT. They're critical. I think  
49 you noticed some tension between Mr Stevens and I.  
50 That was because I was supposed to hire three RITs when

1 I was hired. Money went south. We had none. So I  
2 think that was some of the tension. So I'm hoping that  
3 through whatever group you can make your voice known  
4 that the RITs, whatever term comes up for people that  
5 are in the villages that can be an interface between  
6 Fish and Wildlife Service and that, right now it  
7 happens to be RITs. So I appreciate that, and so keep  
8 it up.

9

10                   Number 3. I did have a -- I work for  
11 three Refuges and some days three bosses, some days six  
12 bosses. But I had an opportunity to meet with the  
13 Canadians and the Russians on the fisheries. I won't  
14 share what I learned from that, but if you want to talk  
15 to me in private. That ranked up as high as when Ron  
16 Sam with his leadership was able to get a meeting with  
17 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council Staff  
18 and highline fishermen. So that was, for my career,  
19 one of the highlights.

20

21                   Number 4. I hope Carl is still on  
22 line. If not, I'll be responding in an email. On the  
23 nomination process, I understood there's going to be a  
24 double outreach effort. Refuges are the front lines of  
25 that. So I think that effort needs to incorporate  
26 refuges in developing that outreach, and again that's  
27 where the RITs come in. I do, if Carl's on line,  
28 question why there was a closing date of January 23rd,  
29 2015. But I'll talk to him personally on that, but in  
30 the past that was a huge reduction in the number of  
31 applicants.

32

33                   Number 5. Working for three Refuges  
34 and multiple biologists doing multiple things, if OSM  
35 could come up with a set date when things would be due  
36 for the booklets, or some way announcing that, then I  
37 can put pressure on these people to get these done.  
38 This round, the fall meeting is difficult to do, but if  
39 we had some more set dates, that would help. It could  
40 either be a set date, so many weeks before the meeting,  
41 or it could be a production date or something. That  
42 would be helpful, so you would have these materials in  
43 your book instead of a handout.

44

45                   And I think that's all, other than I  
46 did remind Ray earlier. Ray, did you want to say how  
47 successful that was? I don't want to take your thunder  
48 away, but that's one of the advantages of having  
49 meetings in villages. And this Council knows my  
50 opinion on meeting in villages, so I don't have to

1 reiterate that.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

4

5 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I had planned to  
6 report that, and I've got it down on my list here.

7

8 Yeah, we raised \$422 last night, so  
9 thank you for your contribution, and that will go to  
10 the school to help with their travel. And Native Youth  
11 Olympics is one of those.

12

13 I want to have a little discussion,  
14 because I may use part of that as a matching thing,  
15 because the students also have to raise money. I mean,  
16 they'll get it, it will go to the school, but maybe  
17 between them and another group that's raising money for  
18 travel for theirs, you know, whoever, get a match has  
19 got a part of it. So I want to talk to the school  
20 about that, about the best way.

21

22 And one other thing I had was you're  
23 talking about the membership and the fact that there  
24 are fewer applicants. I think it would be very useful  
25 if we survey all of the outgoing members who are not  
26 reapplying, especially the ones who are only one term,  
27 that that information we get from them might be useful,  
28 to know why they're not. Are they frustrated with  
29 what, with travel, with time, with whatever. It might  
30 help, especially if we're declining, we better figure  
31 out what's going on.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good idea.

34

35 MR. COLLINS: Or not oriented enough to  
36 the situation, they didn't realize what they were  
37 getting into. But just put it in -- build it into the  
38 process that all of those people whose terms are up and  
39 are not going to renew, that they give some kind of --  
40 what's going on. Family situation or whatever. Yeah,  
41 you know, some way to catch that.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Vince.

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: In response to that, that  
46 would be great to put in there, but realize when I  
47 spoke, I was speaking as a panel member on these  
48 nominations. We're not really volunteers, but it's an  
49 additional to our duties to conduct the interviews, the  
50 three references, and then the other, so I think it's a

1 great suggestion you have. It's hard for some panel  
2 members to put this into their schedule to pull off all  
3 those interviews, so it would have to be done by  
4 someone else.

5  
6 MR. COLLINS: Oh, yeah, I wasn't  
7 thinking about any interviews, I was thinking of it in  
8 terms of the office there.....

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, the coordinator.

11  
12 MR. COLLINS: .....(indiscernible) the  
13 meeting.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The coordinator  
16 would. We've received all the applicants. I see you  
17 haven't applied, Eleanor. What's the reason for that.  
18 Would you -- do you have health reasons or whatever.  
19 Or are tired. What's the reason. That would be good  
20 to know. I'm not putting words in her mouth. I'm just  
21 using her for an example.

22  
23 Melinda.

24  
25 MS. BURKE: I just wanted to respond  
26 to, I guess, two things, Vince.

27  
28 One of them is I think that Jack and I  
29 both have spoken about utilizing all of the Staff who  
30 are involved in any kind of subsistence work in  
31 outreach, and that's not a decision that myself, Jack  
32 or Carl Johnson can make. I think that's a decision  
33 that if these different government entities in this  
34 program are going to work together, I think it's going  
35 to be up to leadership. And it's a higher level of  
36 discussion than just Vince, I, Carl, or Jack.

37  
38 And then also as far as the deadlines  
39 for the book goes, it's just up to working with each  
40 individual coordinator. We have a new outreach person.  
41 We've already heard really great feedback about the  
42 increase in timing of the books. But it's just a  
43 matter of coordinating the coordinator. You know, the  
44 deadlines are usually set pretty well, and they just  
45 continue to improve.

46  
47 So I just want to throw that out there.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Melinda.

50

1                   And so thanks so much, Vince. And  
2 Vince was our previous coordinator, and did a really  
3 great job for us. We always like to have Vince come  
4 up. He's always welcome at our fire.

5  
6                   And so we're down on our last one.  
7 Jeff, do you want to come to the -- you're Subsistence  
8 Division. And so we've got the handout here.

9  
10                  MR. PARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
11 And thank you, Council members. My name is Jeff Park.  
12 I work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
13 Subsistence Division. This is a really short update of  
14 research.....

15  
16                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Where are you out --  
17 where is your office at?

18  
19                  MR. PARK: Our office is the Northern  
20 Region, and we're in Fairbanks.

21  
22                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Region 3. Okay.

23  
24                  MR. PARK: Yes. We cover pretty much  
25 the entire Kuskokwim Delta and on up.

26  
27                  This is a really brief update that I'm  
28 going to breeze through. This is research that is  
29 ongoing or upcoming in villages that are in the Western  
30 Interior region.

31  
32                  The biggest development in 2014 was the  
33 Chinook salmon research initiative. This was  
34 coordinated and funded by the State of Alaska, and also  
35 in collaboration with Federal agencies and the  
36 University to come up with a research plan in response  
37 to declining Chinook salmon numbers. There are three  
38 projects that the Subsistence Division is involved with  
39 on the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers.

40  
41                  The first project is titled local and  
42 traditional knowledge of freshwater aspects of Chinook  
43 salmon life cycle on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.  
44 This is an ethnographic interview project where we try  
45 to identify the most knowledgeable members in a  
46 community who have a lifetime knowledge traveling the  
47 river, the tributaries, headwaters, and it's a pretty  
48 exhaustive list of questions regarding primarily  
49 environmental changes that they've witnessed, and  
50 trends in changes in the Chinook salmon life cycle as

1 well as environmental changes that they've witnessed in  
2 the region.

3

4                   The first year of that project is  
5 nearly completed. We completed that project in Aniak,  
6 McGrath, Nikolai, Sleetmute, and Stony River. And we  
7 will begin this project in McGrath next week. That  
8 project on the Yukon, there's five communities  
9 proposed, Allakaket, Anvik, and Huslia in Western  
10 Interior, and that is expected to be completed by the  
11 end of November as well.

12

13                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And how many  
14 households in each community.

15

16                   MR. PARK: The smaller communities,  
17 like Nikolai and Sleetmute and Stony, maybe three or  
18 five, but here and in Aniak we hope for 10 if we're  
19 lucky.

20

21                   The second project is titled patterns  
22 and trends in salmon fishing on the Yukon and Kuskokwim  
23 Rivers. This is a survey where we took the last 15  
24 years of household salmon harvest data collected by the  
25 annual salmon survey. And we compile that data, and  
26 we visit a household. We show them their salmon  
27 harvest history that they've reported, and then we ask  
28 them questions about what effects -- what factors  
29 contribute to the annual variation of how much salmon  
30 they harvest.

31

32                   This is taking place in Aniak, McGrath,  
33 Nikolai, Sleetmute, and Stony River this year, and  
34 again we've done them all except McGrath, which we  
35 start next week. And then also next year we will  
36 attempt to do this project in Bethel.

37

38                   On the Yukon, the patterns and trends  
39 project is six communities, including Galena and Nulato  
40 in the Western Interior region, and that will not begin  
41 until next summer.

42

43                   The final Chinook salmon research  
44 initiative project is titled in-season monitoring of  
45 subsistence salmon harvest. This project is intended  
46 to explore various methods of estimating salmon harvest  
47 during the fishing season, and then as the fishing  
48 season progresses.

49

50                   The Kuskokwim River, all the

1 communities are on the lower river. There's five  
2 communities on the Kuskokwim. It's all lower river.  
3 And three communities on the Yukon River, including  
4 Nulato.

5  
6 Moving on, there was a Middle Kuskokwim  
7 in-season harvest assessment this summer. This was a  
8 spontaneous project between Fish and Game, Subsistence  
9 Division, and KNA in response to concerns that the  
10 Middle Kuskokwim River villages had about getting  
11 enough salmon after the long closures. It was -- Fish  
12 and Game, Subsistence, and KNA employees went out and  
13 actively surveyed fishermen as they were harvesting to  
14 try to get a really good estimate of what was happening  
15 at the time so that information could be handed on to  
16 the managers for making decisions, primarily regarding  
17 the coho run.

18  
19 And, finally, the ongoing Donlin Creek  
20 Mine subsistence baseline project. These are  
21 comprehensive surveys asking about all subsistence  
22 resources. And we've completed the fourth and probably  
23 final year of field work this year. That was seven  
24 communities, including Shageluk and Nikolai.

25  
26 Also, phase 33, the third year of this  
27 report -- of this research, was published in May 2014.

28  
29 MR. COLLINS: I see you threw a new  
30 acronym, and it's LTK. You had TEK, now we've got LTK,  
31 too. That's local traditional knowledge I guess.

32  
33 MR. PARK: As far as I know, it's the  
34 same thing.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on the  
37 various Subsistence Division projects.

38  
39 (No comments)

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And the reports on  
42 these can be found on a website somewhere? Or how are  
43 these reports getting out?

44  
45 MR. PARK: Yeah. There's an Alaska  
46 Department of Fish and Game library on the Fish and  
47 Game website. I don't have that address.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. And so you  
50 would -- I tried to look at -- those are the contact

1 information. But I have tried to navigate this, and  
2 it was little bit hard to get data from that thing. I  
3 was trying to do it on caribou and the Subsistence  
4 Division. There's a lot of data. It was like -- the  
5 program that the State was using was like real  
6 antiquated, and real slow, and it was really hard to  
7 navigate it. I'm wondering if -- are these  
8 incorporated into that same system?

9

10 MR. PARK: It sounds like you were  
11 looking at the CSIS, community subsistence information  
12 system.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

15

16 MR. PARK: That pulls up data from the  
17 reports and compiles it in like Excel form. This is  
18 different. This is called the -- it's just the library  
19 where all of these are -- all reports from Fish and  
20 Game.....

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we just type in  
23 these names and they'll pop up and then we can look at  
24 what each one has.

25

26 MR. PARK: Right. The title of  
27 the.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Okay.

30

31 MR. PARK: It looks like it, yeah.

32

33 MS. BURKE: I'll send a link.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, send it  
36 to all the Council members that have email. Don't send  
37 it to Pollock. Well, they can't research it.

38

39 Any questions on these projects from  
40 the Council.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anything further.

45

46 MR. PARK: No, that's it.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I really  
49 appreciate Subsistence Division's contribution to this  
50 Council's work over the years. There's been many

1 worthwhile projects that we've used. And that's why I  
2 want to know about some of these things.

3

4 I want to read them.

5

6 MR. PARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so appreciate  
9 your attendance at our meeting, and hope that our  
10 dialogue on various issues, including that notification  
11 at the front end of the fall chum salmon pulse. Can  
12 Subsistence Division work with the other managers on  
13 notification to the communities also.

14

15 MR. PARK: I sure hope so. I'm sure  
16 you're aware that the Subsistence Division hasn't, at  
17 least not recently, in recent years, taken a big role  
18 in in-season stuff, but there is an example of that in  
19 here where.....

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I see you're  
22 contacting multiple communities on subsistence harvest.  
23 And one question is, you know, if you're bouncing from  
24 one project to the next, you've bouncing between  
25 different communities, Galena and Nulato are not  
26 included with Allakaket and Huslia. So you've got all  
27 these contacts. I think that, you know, that's what we  
28 need is a contact base, and Subsistence Division has  
29 quite a few contacts in multiple communities, so it  
30 would be good if at least the in-season managers can be  
31 provided those names of willing participants that would  
32 be active fishers also.

33

34 MR. PARK: Yeah, and I understand.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So just even if you  
37 could convey those contacts to the managers. I want to  
38 see -- you know, help the local people out as much as  
39 we can on this shift to non-Chinook salmon species.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 Any -- did you have any questions, Ray.  
44 No, for a second there.

45

46 So, all right Appreciate your  
47 participation.

48

49 MR. PARK: Thank you very much.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.  
2  
3 Melinda.  
4  
5 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. I believe we're  
6 finished up.  
7  
8 And just real quick before we start  
9 into the closing comments, before I forget. At 8:30  
10 a.m. tomorrow the radio station has invited everyone  
11 that's here, including Staff and the Council, to come  
12 down. I know that the Council, your charter gets here  
13 at around 8:45, 9:00 o'clock. I'll see what time the  
14 wheels are going to be up from Fairbanks, but you can  
15 throw a rock from the radio station to where the  
16 plane's going to pick you up. So we'll probably be  
17 able to get you down there for a couple minutes. And  
18 Staff, I think we're all here until the afternoon.  
19  
20 And then also for Staff members, Sally  
21 Collins will be able to take us to the museum tomorrow.  
22 I know there's lots of folks interested in going and  
23 checking out the museum. And she had mentioned maybe  
24 tonight, but I forgot to get a.....  
25  
26 MR. COLLINS: I can do that tonight,  
27 because there's (indiscernible - microphone off) I need  
28 to know how many would want to come tonight  
29 (indiscernible).  
30  
31 (Indiscernible - microphones off)  
32  
33 MS. BURKE: Yeah, I think there will be  
34 a few of us who would be interested in going over  
35 tonight. Yeah, let's do seven.  
36  
37 MR. COLLINS: And how many tomorrow are  
38 interested in (indiscernible - microphone off).  
39  
40 MS. BURKE: Yeah, I think 1:00 o'clock  
41 would be fine, or even if earlier would be okay, that  
42 would -- but 1:00 o'clock would be just fine.  
43  
44 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Well, my wife  
45 wouldn't be available earlier, because she's  
46 babysitting up to noon.  
47  
48 MS. BURKE: I think one will be good.  
49 We have a lot of time before the plane. Yeah, I think  
50 1:00 o'clock will be good tomorrow.

1                   So just a couple of housekeeping items.

2

3                   And then another thing I wanted to  
4 joint out to the Council as well. We've got -- I'm  
5 going to send you home with a couple of these posters.  
6 We've got the student art contest going on. We have  
7 the Board members, the Federal Subsistence Board  
8 meeting in the wintertime vote on the art. And those  
9 pictures get on the cover of the regulation books,  
10 within the regulation books.

11

12                   And we've got some -- our Subsistence  
13 Management Program file here has been updated as well.  
14 We've got a great new outreach coordinator, and she's  
15 really welcome to any feedback that anybody has  
16 regarding the books, the website, anything you'd like  
17 to see. She's very enthusiastic. She's a very hard  
18 worker, and I think she's going to work really well  
19 with the coordinators and with the Council members.

20

21                   I think that's all the housekeeping I  
22 have left.

23

24                   Mr. Chair.

25

26                   MR. COLLINS: We do have one of the  
27 traditional bear spears over there, too, if you want to  
28 see what they were using. We can show you one that was  
29 actually used.

30

31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll go around the  
32 table here. Would you like to -- your final meeting  
33 here.

34

35                   MS. YATLIN: My final meeting.

36

37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've really  
38 appreciated you being on our Council, Eleanor, so I'll  
39 give you first.....

40

41                   MS. YATLIN: I didn't get no award.

42

43                   (Laughter)

44

45                   MS. YATLIN: I'm just kidding.

46

47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll give you first  
48 chance at closing comments.

49

50                   MS. YATLIN: Uh-huh. Oops.

1                   REPORTER: You're on.

2

3                   MS. YATLIN: I'm on. First of all, I  
4 didn't mention before, I want to congratulate Ray on  
5 his award, and our Chairperson Jack.

6

7                   And I met Ray -- I mean, I didn't meet  
8 him, I took some college courses in the 70s, and it was  
9 Exceed Program, and he was my teacher. And he asked me  
10 to pick a subject, and I picked potlatch, why we have  
11 memorial potlatch. So that's what I wrote upon. I  
12 think I was required to do like, what, five pages or  
13 something like that. So I used my imagination.

14

15                   (Laughter)

16

17                   MS. YATLIN: But, no, I know all the,  
18 you know, ends and outs, yeah. And anyway that's how I  
19 knew his name. And then when I got on this Council  
20 here, you know, I actually met him.

21

22                   And I had fun being on this Council for  
23 the past six years. I learned a lot. I hope I  
24 contributed a lot with my LTK.

25

26                   (Laughter)

27

28                   MS. YATLIN: Our traditional knowledge.

29

30

31                   And the other thing I really want to  
32 point out that's really important for the U.S. Fish and  
33 Wildlife office or all the other entities that comes to  
34 these meetings, and that is we are the ones that live  
35 in the village, and everything that the Refuge offices,  
36 U.S. Fish and Wildlife, BLM, whatever they do, I think  
37 they really need to interact with the villages, because  
38 we are the ones that's impacted by it. And in the  
39 summertime, you know, maybe right after the ice go out,  
40 we move down to our fish camp. And living down there  
41 and being here, it's just totally two different, you  
42 know what I'm saying. Because living there, it's just  
43 peace and it's just, you know, you're free to, you know  
44 -- there's just nothing that -- that no the hustle and  
45 bustle or anything, you know. No planes to catch. And  
46 I like that.

47

48                   But then I really want people to  
49 realize that every input that comes from the villages,  
50 that's important knowledge. Because like I said, we

1 lived in Bettles for 10 years, almost 10 years, and the  
2 whole time I was on that Koyukuk River Advisory, and  
3 all the input I gave, it was -- you know, it was real.  
4 You know, I saw all those outfitters up in Bettles. I  
5 saw all those transporters. I know they go all the way  
6 up to Alatna, and, you know, that's around Allakaket,  
7 and they go all the way down to Help Me Jack. And  
8 that's where the outfitters bring them, you know, from  
9 way up that way, and it could be either a three-day  
10 trip, they drop them off like a certain point above  
11 Help Me Jack, because that's how far they can go, you  
12 know, and then they float down there, and those  
13 outfitters go pick them up right there.

14  
15                   And I saw a lot of wanton waste. We  
16 took pictures. That's what was required. And it's  
17 still -- and then I see it happening down around  
18 Huslia, and, you know, it's a big concern for everyone,  
19 because that's our survival. And we can't live off the  
20 store, because we tried that in Nome. We lived in Nome  
21 for a couple years, and went to the -- I mean, we got  
22 our moose in the falltime, but we had five kids over  
23 there. And we ran out of moose meat in January, and we  
24 moved to Bettles in April. And to this day I don't eat  
25 pork chops. I don't like pizza. That was the cheapest  
26 in the store over in Nome. I don't eat pizza. And I  
27 quit buying pork chops over there, because that was the  
28 next cheapest. It was expensive. But, you know, you  
29 have to feed those five kids something. And I got  
30 really -- I was almost a gourmet cook there, you know,  
31 because I followed the recipes, trying to figure out  
32 how to cook pork chops. So you know, that's reality.  
33 People need to know that, because we can't live like  
34 that. We tried. And we couldn't live off the store.  
35 And by the time we left Nome, what we ate most was  
36 rice, because that's what everybody liked, because we  
37 didn't have no fish or no meat. So I know how that is.  
38 I lived that. And our kids, too.

39  
40                   And the other thing they have to -- the  
41 first thing I think, all employees or whoever is  
42 interacting with this Western Interior or with the  
43 villages, is they have to learn our traditional  
44 knowledge, because in order for us to live there, out  
45 in the villages, we have to live by the law of the  
46 land. We have to live by our -- we have to know our  
47 language, and we have to know our traditional -- and  
48 once we know the language, we know our traditional --  
49 we have the traditional knowledge. And we have to live  
50 by those rules, respect the animals and the land and

1 the environment in order to live out there, because  
2 that's the way it is staying in camp. You have to go  
3 by these.

4  
5                   And like I stated before, you know, the  
6 management on wildlife and animals and the environment,  
7 it's critical that people know that, you know, it's  
8 managed by our people for tens of thousands of year,  
9 you know. And so it's not just coming out of the air.  
10 It's been there for a long time.

11  
12                   And I really enjoyed being here, but  
13 she asked me why, you know. I mean, somebody was  
14 saying why it is, you know, why people don't reapply.  
15 You know, I could have went for another three years,  
16 but, you know, people have health problems, too. And  
17 I'm not going to go into that.

18  
19                   And the other thing that really is  
20 happening right now, and it is affecting like the last  
21 moose hunt, and that is the climate change. It's  
22 really critical. I am trying to -- well, I wrote up  
23 something already. Well, I keep notes, and living down  
24 in the camp I know what happens on a daily basis. And  
25 my mom and dad, that's where they -- that's where we  
26 grew up. And she used to tell us a lot of things. She  
27 could look at the sky and she said, look at those  
28 cloud, 24 hours from now, just by the way the clouds  
29 look, it's going to be really windy. And that happens  
30 every time. And, you know, we have all that knowledge,  
31 because they hand it down to us through stories and  
32 just living there. So it's important that I think  
33 people know that, you know, the different entities.

34  
35                   And we as Native people have to try to  
36 get that out to the different agencies, because they're  
37 the ones that's directing, you know, managing. For  
38 example, like Koyukuk Refuge, you know, they're  
39 managing it. But they have to come to the villages and  
40 talk to the people. And inform, you know, inform all  
41 the different -- you know, it have to be government-to-  
42 government.

43  
44                   And that's about it. And I'm sure glad  
45 to meet all of you. I sure miss the rest of the Board.  
46 I really miss Pollock, my cousin Pollock, and Robert  
47 and Carl, and James. And I was looking forward to  
48 seeing them, you know, because I don't think when we  
49 had like a really full Board, you know. It's been a  
50 long time, because, you know, like I never hardly ever

1 miss meetings, but I missed two the last two years  
2 because of my health, you know, and that can't be  
3 helped.

4

5 But that's about it, and thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much for  
8 all our comments, Eleanor. I really appreciate those,  
9 and I appreciate all the work you've done. And you  
10 have had a lot of input into this Council, and so I do  
11 appreciate that.

12

13 And so I do, I miss every last member  
14 that we don't have here. It's like a team of dogs.  
15 You have five dogs pulling, and there's a 10-dog gang  
16 line, so we're doing all the -- and it's hard to get  
17 everybody's aspect throughout a huge region like that.

18

19 Eleanor.

20

21 MS. YATLIN: I'm sorry, I didn't say  
22 Tim. He wasn't here in person. It's really hard going  
23 through teleconference. I'm serious, you know. You  
24 can't hear everybody for use, and then you miss part of  
25 it. I tried teleconference on Y-K before, and it just  
26 -- you know, I was trying to hear.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The teleconference  
29 thing is real hard to do.

30

31 MS. YATLIN: That's why I say I miss  
32 Tim.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim's a trooper to  
35 be on conference call like that, probably running the  
36 boat, too. So I mean that guy's like -- talk about  
37 multi-tasking.

38

39 So Jenny is next. Your closing  
40 comments.

41

42 MS. PELKOLA: How do you want -- how  
43 long are you going to give me?

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 MS. PELKOLA: Well, I just want to  
48 thank everyone for coming here. And I want to  
49 apologize to Kenton. When you said Stephanie, you said  
50 her last name wrong, and I realize Stephanie Sweetzer

1 (ph). Okay. So I got shocked and I thought, oh,  
2 there's a new girl or a new office in town.

3

4 But anyway my closing comments are -- I  
5 wrote them down this time. An elder in our community  
6 stated that the hunters coming into our area are taking  
7 meat right off the table from our own back yards, which  
8 is true.

9

10 And this next one has been on my mind  
11 for a long time, ever since it came out when I saw it  
12 in the paper. And it's that 60-inch club. And to me  
13 it is a disrespect to our Native people. To show off  
14 our catch or to show off anything, or to brag about  
15 anything that we've done or we've caught especially, to  
16 me and to our elders is a disrespect to our way of  
17 life. Every time, you know, it comes out in the  
18 Fairbanks paper, I just look at it, and I say, oh, my  
19 goodness. And I don't even look at it.

20

21 It's also our God-given right to live  
22 and enjoy what He has given us to manage. And our  
23 people, like Eleanor say, has been doing that for  
24 thousands and thousands of years. One time I was -- a  
25 student was interviewing me, and the first question  
26 was, when did your traditions start. And I said, when  
27 did my traditions start? It started way before I was  
28 born. So a lot of people, you know, they talk about  
29 tradition, and we are -- I remember when we were  
30 growing up, we never, ever left -- like if we went to  
31 our beaver traps or marten traps or whatever, or if we  
32 caught a moose, if my dad shot a moose, we never left  
33 there without thanking the Lord, you know, say a little  
34 prayer. And our prayer was always like after. If we  
35 caught a moose, we'll say thank you, and say a little  
36 prayer.

37

38 So our culture was -- to me was based  
39 on a lot of prayer, a lot of thanks, thanking, and it  
40 still is, and respecting of our animals, and our land,  
41 and our water, and our air, just everything, in  
42 recognition that the Lord gave that to us. And a lot  
43 of people take that out of concept and say, when we do  
44 like our Native dancing, or we do something, because  
45 they don't understand, they think we're doing voodoo or  
46 something. But that's not what it is.

47

48 And I think when you're like a village,  
49 like Kaltag now is going to host the next meeting, I  
50 think it's very important that you contact the tribal

1 council and let them know -- well, I don't know if you  
2 should let them know, like maybe you should ask them,  
3 but they already know it's going to be there, but to  
4 let them know that we're all coming. Like the guy  
5 asked how many, you know, would be there, and we said  
6 about 20. So they can get ready.

7  
8                   One time in Galena that we had it  
9 there, and I thought I was going to be the contact  
10 person, and somebody else was. It was one of the Fish  
11 and Wildlife people, I don't know who it was. And a  
12 lot of people in town didn't know what was going on,  
13 and I didn't know what was going on. And I know, you  
14 know, when we come to meetings like this, we get  
15 hungry, you know, so what I did was I just prepared a  
16 whole bunch of stuff and I brought it. And I was on  
17 the Council then.

18  
19                   But something like that, so they'll be  
20 ready for us. And I know Kaltag will probably be  
21 hosting dinners every night for us.

22  
23                   And another thing I have is many of the  
24 agencies, I wouldn't say they don't like to listen to  
25 our people who are expert that live in the community.  
26 These people, I guess they just -- they listen, but  
27 they don't really take their advice. Like Jack was  
28 saying, he was telling a lot of facts, and still yet  
29 they didn't approach him for, you know, to talk with  
30 him. And I think that's wrong. And I don't know how  
31 your agencies really run, but I think including - you  
32 know, we're trying to build relationships, and I think  
33 we need to keep that going, and to build relationships  
34 with the people of the village and to especially I  
35 think the tribal councils, because the tribal councils  
36 represent the people there in the village. And if you  
37 approach them and talk with them and get to know them,  
38 and get to know the people, I think people will be  
39 willing to share some of what's going on in their  
40 lives, or, you know, what they think.

41  
42                   And I just want to thank Eleanor for  
43 your years of service. She's added a lot to this  
44 Board.

45  
46                   And like everyone's stating, we miss  
47 the other guys that aren't here, the other Board  
48 members. It's like part of, you know, we're here, but  
49 we're not all here. So if we were all here, I think it  
50 would have been a stronger meeting.

1                   And last, but not least, it seems like  
2 when we start to set our meetings, we're always the  
3 last one, and we're always like we don't know what date  
4 to pick. And I think I know the reason, because when  
5 we have our meeting, the other RACs before us have it  
6 before us, and, well, they got the first chance. So my  
7 suggestion is I think we should alternate so sometimes  
8 we'll be able to get what we want.

9  
10                   And I just want to thank the rest of  
11 the Board members here for all our hard work. This  
12 time I really -- because I guess I know the rest of the  
13 team wasn't here, I really thought I'd better listen  
14 and I'd better really pay attention, because sometimes  
15 we depend on our people. But I want to thank you all,  
16 and I thank the village and city of McGrath.

17  
18                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
19 Jenny. That was great.

20  
21                   Ray.

22  
23                   MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

24  
25                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have to turn on  
26 the mic.

27  
28                   MR. COLLINS: Yeah. First of all, I  
29 want to thank you for your contribution at dinner last  
30 night. I really enjoy hosting you when you come here,  
31 and I especially enjoy the conversation and seeing  
32 other people enjoy conversations, because sometimes at  
33 meetings we don't get a chance to really get to know  
34 like the group out here. You sit here patiently and  
35 have to listen to us for two days, but there isn't a  
36 lot of just direct, informal interchange. And last  
37 night there was a lot of that going on, and it was good  
38 to see.

39  
40                   It's -- boy, there's so much. It's  
41 been a good run. I came into this country in 1963, and  
42 we went to Nikolai and started learning the language  
43 there. We were with Bible translators at the time, but  
44 the people took me in and I trapped with the men, and  
45 we learned about traditional life. And we used dog  
46 teams for transportation on the trap line. So I got to  
47 see all that change from that to the snowmachines  
48 coming in and replacing them. And the fishwheels  
49 going, and the last of the traditional fish fence in.  
50

1                   So I had the privilege of seeing what  
2 life was like when everybody went to fish camp. Like  
3 as soon as school was out, the village was empty.  
4 Everybody was gone. There's nobody in the village.  
5 The second summer we were there, we were adding onto  
6 our house, our cabin there, and we were the only ones  
7 in the village. Everybody else was out in fish camp.  
8 And when you'd back in the fall, the grass would be  
9 this tall in the village around there, and then they'd  
10 cut that for bedding for the dogs, and so on.

11  
12                   So I'm privileged to experience all of  
13 that, and see traditional hunting and trapping, and I  
14 really enjoy the opportunity I have here to try to get  
15 that knowledge to make the regulation that you have to  
16 put into place work for the villages.

17  
18                   I know in one of the stories, it's  
19 interesting there, because the elder was talking about  
20 how life was changing, and if you want to know how he  
21 viewed you, he saw traditional game wardens and so on  
22 as locking the game up. We can't get at the resources  
23 we used to. And we used to -- we could go out and  
24 take whatever we needed, when we needed it, and so on.  
25 And so he saw them as jailers, and I guess of locking  
26 up our food and resource.

27  
28                   So it's a real -- but I understand then  
29 you're coming from the other side with you've got all  
30 these regulations you have to meet and all the Federal  
31 stuff coming down and so on, and here we sit in the  
32 middle trying to take information from the village and  
33 use it to make that system work. And it's a real  
34 challenge. So I appreciate all the members here that  
35 are willing to go through this and work on that  
36 process. And I hope you -- as was said, that you will  
37 appreciate the information you're getting, because it's  
38 good stuff.

39  
40                   But, yeah, I was really privileged to  
41 come into the country when I did, and have the  
42 experiences I've had.

43  
44                   And Nikolai is kind of my main home up  
45 here, because I lived there for eight years. And we  
46 lived without electricity, like everybody else in the  
47 village. And we got our water in the river. And so I  
48 know that that life was like, and I didn't realize how  
49 quickly it would change. And they're under tremendous  
50 pressure in the village now of how -- well, they need

1 cash income for everything. They've got a HUD house,  
2 they've got to buy oil, and they've got to pay for  
3 their water, and they've got to pay for their  
4 electricity, and there's very little work. And yet the  
5 subsistence resources are still out there sustaining  
6 them, but then they can't always -- like if they need  
7 to hunt in the wintertime, what do you do if there's no  
8 winter season, you know, and you need meat, and you're  
9 out of meat. Before they could just go get it.

10

11                   And when I first came, because there  
12 were not the population pressure from hunting and so  
13 on, we'd go out to the trapline at the hills out there,  
14 and they'd take some sheep and bring them back to the  
15 village, because that's when they were available. And  
16 so that's what they were doing. Now there's more and  
17 more pressure on those resources, and so they're  
18 managed a lot closer.

19

20                   But anyhow, it's been good to see all  
21 that, and I'm glad you're here and you're willing to  
22 listen to all this. And I hope that you really take  
23 seriously the responsibility you have under ANILCA and  
24 the others to make the regulations work for the people  
25 in the rural areas that still depend on those  
26 resources. But it's a real challenge

27

28                   So I thank you for your patience and  
29 your efforts to do that, and I'm hoping that what we're  
30 doing here helps you in doing your job.

31

32                   Thank you.

33

34                   And thank you for the recognition. I  
35 appreciate that, and the gift the other day.

36

37                   Thank you.

38

39                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks a lot, Ray.

40 Ditto.

41

42                   And, Don, go right ahead.

43

44                   MR. HONEA: Two minutes? I'm allowed  
45 two minutes? I think those ones at the end are  
46 Tlingit. Those Tlingits always say they talk too much.

47

48                   (Laughter)

49

50                   MR. HONEA: But I'm thoroughly happy to

1 serve with these ladies on here, because actually I  
2 think they're both my cousins, but anyway, we come from  
3 fish camp era. I mean, the wife and I are still doing  
4 that, and we enjoy that kind of life as she mentioned.

5

6

7                   And I want to just say a quick little  
8 story here, you know, about the game populations. When  
9 I came on here, I said, well, maybe I can't do anything  
10 so much about fish, but at least, you know, I always --  
11 there's a white guy that used to trap with my father  
12 back in the 50s and 60s, and he's about 86, 85. He  
13 lives in Fairbanks. And he just recalled -- I like to  
14 visit him whenever I go up there, and he's got these  
15 old stories and stuff. He says, when he flew over the  
16 mouth of the Anobi (ph) years ago, and he says, it was  
17 like Serengeti. There was so much moose there.

18

19                   And, you know, I just think about that  
20 and think about, you know, the fact that, you know, my  
21 concern is the moose population, whether it's the  
22 drawing permit on the Koyukuk or the Innoko, I feel for  
23 the villages like Nulato. And I also empathize with  
24 the people right here in this village. Because it's so  
25 dog gone large, just the Innoko Refuge. I feel for  
26 that. I'm hoping that this Refuge would still have the  
27 air control, air patrol, or whatever, that it's needed.  
28 You know, we're not supposed to -- it seems like it  
29 would be a burden on Clara herself to have to check  
30 that kind of stuff. And that's why I feel burden for  
31 this -- it's a huge area.

32

33                   And I thanked, you know, the committee  
34 for choosing this place. I like to meet here. Look  
35 how centrally located we are. We just walk across  
36 here, we ate over here. The thing is over here, the  
37 library, you know, the museum. Everything is within  
38 walking distance. So I'm really thankful to meet here,  
39 and I know that Kaltag in the future here is going to  
40 be a great meeting place, because I -- you know, people  
41 are vocal. People are going to be at the meetings,  
42 whether it's Nulato or Kaltag. I think we're going to  
43 have good participation. And I just, you know, invite  
44 the Koyukuk/Nowitna refuge to come out.

45

46                   And as I was thinking about some of the  
47 things that we could do, the hunter workshop thing that  
48 somebody brought up would be a good one, because  
49 there's a lot of people that don't know regs, you know.  
50 And it's surprising in this day and age.

1                   But I just -- I don't like the  
2 mentality of, you know, urban people thinking that, you  
3 know, well, you guys live in the Bush. You could get a  
4 moose any time you want, and you probably do. That's  
5 not so. And we know it here. We have to conserve what  
6 we have.

7  
8                   So, hey, it was a good meeting.

9  
10                  Thank you.

11  
12                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much, Don.

13  
14                 I do tours and that's the most common  
15 assumption by general public that subsistence hunters  
16 kill stuff all the time. Well, no, we've got all kinds  
17 licenses and bag limits and seasons and lines on the  
18 map. It's quite a bit tougher to attain your  
19 subsistence needs than the average person would  
20 suppose. And so it's -- even when you go out, you  
21 might luck out and you might not. Maybe the weather's  
22 bum or something. I mean, I've been going after a  
23 moose and a bear comes by and the moose runs up the  
24 side of the mountain, and that's it. And so the  
25 subsistence lifestyle doesn't have the assuredly that  
26 most people would have working for a job and you can go  
27 down to the store after work and buy whatever you want.  
28 There's no store in my village. It's 275 miles to a  
29 store. And so I grow potatoes, I grow vegetables and  
30 stuff, and hunt animals, and pick various things,  
31 berries and whatnot.

32  
33                 I think we had a real good meeting.  
34 I'm real happy with OSM building staff and I'm hoping  
35 that the attrition dies down with OSM. And I hope that  
36 the communication under Gene's leadership will now  
37 start building to where the OSM Staff is -- the more  
38 cohesive the whole unit is, the more better it is for  
39 the Regional Council and the subsistence program.

40  
41                 I was very happy to have the new  
42 regional director for the National Park Service come to  
43 this meeting, and the tough issue of this proposed  
44 rule. I'm aware of the reception in other areas. I  
45 think we have a real good dialogue, and I think we made  
46 a lot of good points. I think that there's some things  
47 that needed to be done.

48  
49                 I was real happy that Tracy was here to  
50 work -- oh, she's over there. That she came also to

1 talk to us and listen to the Innoko issue, and if  
2 there's -- I wouldn't be surprised if there's not more  
3 putting refuges together. I can see that coming.  
4 That's a black cloud on the horizon with the  
5 Congressional make up and so forth that we have.

6  
7 But I do feel that the Federal Staff in  
8 Refuges, BLM, and working with this Council brings us  
9 lots of good information, and dialoguing back to the  
10 main offices is an important part of how these -- what  
11 this forum.....

12  
13 I did like Frank Miller coming here and  
14 bringing out a lot of different issues. I enjoy that.  
15 There's a couple other guys who walked in here when we  
16 were in the hot bed of that other issue, and they left  
17 before I could -- I wanted to get them on the record,  
18 but they got away on me.

19  
20 And the Alaska Department of Fish and  
21 Game brings another side, and an important stakeholder  
22 in the process is the State of Alaska. And so the  
23 State has their position, they manage for the general  
24 hunt, the general regulations. A lot of the areas  
25 around the communities are on the general hunts, and so  
26 that's an important aspect of working with the State  
27 Staff and their participation is important to these.

28  
29 But I see less and less State  
30 participation as funding falls off for them also. And  
31 that's going to continue. And we're going to look at  
32 less and less State participation as the budgets of  
33 Alaska go right over the fiscal cliff, and we can see  
34 that happening. You can bet your bottom dollar the  
35 next governor and this next legislature is going to be  
36 making some deep, hacking cuts with a machete to the  
37 budgets. And so I'm not really going to enjoy the kind  
38 of -- the cuts that's to rural Alaska.

39  
40 That's the down side of democracy. The  
41 majority rules, and so the majority legislature and  
42 governor are going to take away from rural Alaska in  
43 funding. And so the good old days are passing before  
44 our eyes. And so there's going to be more and more  
45 reliance for subsistence by rural communities, because  
46 of those budget cuts. And so subsistence and  
47 maintaining healthy populations is of apex priority.  
48 And the days of selling our game for a revenue source  
49 have got to stop. These resources are far too  
50 important for the food security of especially the

1 Western Interior region, because this is our region.

2

3                   So when the sheep population's going  
4 down in the Central Brooks Range, and we've got massive  
5 amounts of hunting pressure against it, the State Board  
6 of Game has to come to come to the realization they  
7 can't keep doing that. We have to maintain for  
8 sustained yield management, period.

9

10                   There's no best economic interest of  
11 the people of the State of Alaska in the State's  
12 manifesto. There's no such thing in the State  
13 constitution. The State constitution says common use  
14 using sustained yield management. No economic.  
15 There's no economic best interest of the people; it's  
16 for the best interest for the people of Alaska, not the  
17 economic interest. The Division of Wildlife  
18 Conservation's manifesto has mutilated the intent of  
19 the constitution of Alaska. And so that takes away  
20 from rural users, the mentality that we have to sell  
21 these game animals. That has to stop on the State  
22 side.

23

24                   And so I feel that the Federal and  
25 State system is going to be here for the foreseeable  
26 future. I don't think there's ever going to be a  
27 change. The State of Alaska's not going to want to  
28 fund, what's OSM's budget, 8 million bucks? They're  
29 not going to put 8 million bucks into rural management.  
30 That's never going to happen. They look at -- if they  
31 have a rural priority, they're going to fund it, and  
32 they're not going to do that, so that's never going to  
33 happen. And so we're here to stay.

34

35                   There are two systems. Each agency has  
36 a management objective for their lands in statute from  
37 Congress and the ANILCA law, and we have to adhere to  
38 those statutory requirements. And subsistence is a  
39 statutory requirement. The State wants to -- will deny  
40 forever that rural Alaskans have a statutory priority,  
41 but that's the way it is. That's the way it's going to  
42 be.

43

44                   And so I feel that the work of this  
45 Council, working with the Federal Subsistence Board,  
46 and I'm very appreciative to the Secretary of  
47 Interior's directive to change the way the Federal  
48 Subsistence -- it was a nightmare. It was gone. It  
49 was basically -- I guess Jennifer wasn't there. There  
50 was a massive presence of the State, and the State sat

1 right in the middle of the Federal Subsistence Board  
2 and basically ran the show. And so the Board bent over  
3 backwards for them. And when the Federal Subsistence  
4 Board wrote to me that said, to this Council, and said  
5 that they take a management backseat to the State Board  
6 process, and they address management issues by  
7 implementing of a Federal priority, that's closing the  
8 door after the horse has run away.

9

10 Now, the directives in ANILCA law are  
11 that there's to be recognized scientific principles  
12 utilized for fish and wildlife management on the  
13 Federal lands, and those are to be adhered to. ANILCA  
14 Title VIII is not just a Federal priority law It's a  
15 law of direction for the land managing agencies to  
16 manage for healthy fish and wildlife resources using  
17 recognized scientific principles. Those are an  
18 imperative.

19

20 When I see bull/cow ratios, and in the  
21 life of this Council we've seen bull/cow ratios for  
22 caribou in Mulchatna goes to 14 bulls per 100 cows.  
23 They shot the tire out of those caribou. And that's  
24 the Board of Game has to take responsibility for that,  
25 causing reproductive failure of the Mulchatna Caribou  
26 Herd, falling from 200,000 caribou to 28,000 from 1997  
27 to 2007. In 10-year period. Destroyed a caribou  
28 population. We've had to have subsistence restrictions  
29 because of that. That should never be happening.

30

31 I want the land managing agencies to do  
32 what Congress said in ANILCA, that there's going to be  
33 recognized scientific principles. I don't care if it's  
34 BLM. I don't care if it's Fish and Wildlife. I don't  
35 care if it's Park Service. They're all under the same  
36 ANILCA mandate for healthy populations using recognized  
37 scientific principles.

38

39 And so I will -- I want this Council --  
40 my seat is up, and I have no clue if I'm reappointed.  
41 And so no telling what the White House is going to do,  
42 and so I don't know that I'm going to be back, but I  
43 want to be on the record at this moment before we close  
44 this meeting, that this Council is to assure that  
45 recognized scientific principles are to be adhered to  
46 on the Federal public lands with a Federal rural  
47 subsistence priority.

48

49 Having said that, we've had a greta  
50 meeting at this building. I really enjoy this meeting

1 building here in McGrath. And I really appreciate the  
2 real nice dinner that Ray has provided for us the last  
3 several meetings here, and I'm really glad that there  
4 were good donations to the school travel fund.

5  
6 And so I think we've had a great  
7 meeting, and it's really a great Council to work with.  
8 And I appreciate the Council members participation. I  
9 appreciate Tim being on the phone, and I really miss  
10 our other Council members being here.

11  
12 Having said that, the Chair will  
13 entertain a motion to adjourn.

14  
15 You've got one more comment there, Ray.

16  
17 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Can I add a P.S.?

18  
19 (Laughter)

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

22  
23 MR. COLLINS: I thought of something  
24 else that I wanted to say, that one of the things I've  
25 come to appreciate over the years is that the  
26 Athapaskans lived with the land in a way that left a  
27 very light imprint. And I know I wrote an article for  
28 Denali Park early on there, that if you -- they hunted  
29 informally in Denali Park and the Village of Telida has  
30 been there for hundreds if not a few thousand years.  
31 And yet if you go from the Park to Telida, you cannot  
32 find where the Park stops and the other started. The  
33 land is still pretty much the same all the way through  
34 there, because of the way they use the land. It was  
35 sustainable. You know, in other places there, you can  
36 sharply see where there's a park and where the other  
37 land is, because of development, but Telida's been  
38 there for a long time, and yet you can't see that kind  
39 of boundary because of the way they use the land.

40  
41 But the other thing is that one of the  
42 biggest challenge that all of us have, the agencies and  
43 the others, is for subsistence people, you have to have  
44 flexibility, and especially now with the weather change  
45 and so on. And our systems of seasons and bag limits,  
46 we're not able to make quick decisions, is really  
47 putting a stress on the whole process. So somehow  
48 either there's been -- there ought to delegation more  
49 at the local level where they can extend a season or  
50 make it, or we're going to be in a world of hurt,

1 because sometimes the weather changes in the fall, and  
2 people aren't able to get moose. You have a winter  
3 season of five days or 10 days, and it's 40 below or 20  
4 below or whatever, and you can't get out. The resource  
5 is still there, but now they don't have an opportunity.  
6 And so our biggest challenge is to have a system that  
7 has flexibility that you can respond to the people's  
8 need in a way that will provide the food, so they don't  
9 have to go to the store, or go without.

10

I'll stop with that.

11

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, it's  
14 been a long day. The Chair will entertain a motion to  
15 adjourn the meeting.

16

17 MS. YATLIN: Move to adjourn.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Move to adjourn.  
20 We've got a second?

21

22 MS. PELKOLA: Second

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded. Those in  
25 favor of adjournment signify by saying aye.

26

27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

30

31 (No opposing votes)

32

33 (Off record)

34

35

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

