

1 WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME I

7
8 Ruby, Alaska
9 October, 11, 2006
10 9:25 o'clock a.m.
11

12
13 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

14
15 Jack Reakoff, Acting Chair
16 Ray Collins
17 Donald Honea
18 Benedict Jones
19 Mickey Stickman

20
21
22
23
24
25 Regional Council Coordinator, Vince Mathews

26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42 Recorded and transcribed by:

43
44 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
45 3522 West 27th Avenue
46 Anchorage, AK 99517
47 907-243-0668
48 jpk@gci.net

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2
3 (Ruby, Alaska - 10/11/2006)

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'd like to bring this
6 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting to
7 order. My name is Jack Reakoff. I'll be chairing this
8 meeting. Our Chairman Ron Sam is having a surgery and
9 couldn't attend, so if I can do half as well as Ron I'll
10 be doing good. So we'll be working through the agenda.
11 I think we have some agendas in the back there.

12
13 I live up in the Brooks Range. I've been
14 on this Council since 1993 with Ray Collins here. This
15 Council deals with fish and game management on Federal
16 public lands. We're really happy to be meeting in Ruby
17 and really appreciated the cover dish that was provided
18 last night. So the meeting primarily revolves around
19 fisheries issues, but we are very anxious to hear
20 comments on game management problems, moose seasons and
21 so forth.

22
23 Looking at the agenda here, we have an
24 invocation by elder and Ben has volunteered to do that,
25 so at this time we're going to have that invocation.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: At this time we'll do
28 roll call. Go ahead, Vince.

29
30 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, but if
31 it's okay with you I've got a few housekeeping things
32 before that.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

35
36 MR. MATHEWS: The housekeeping things,
37 real quickly, for those that don't know the layout of the
38 building, the location, the outhouses are back in that
39 corner over there or there's one up behind the Bible
40 Church up there, so that's where that's at. It's part of
41 our policy to make sure we have a First Aid kit here, so
42 if someone needs something, we have that, but I'm sure
43 there's medical staff within the village. But don't
44 hesitate if you're having some kind of situation to get a
45 hold of either myself or Donald Honea over there. If you
46 do have some kind of medical thing, we'll try to get you
47 connected with the people.

48
49 The other thing is Ron Sam is having
50 surgery today, so I have a get well card here. I'll pass

1 it around and you can sign it and then get it back to me
2 and we'll mail it from Ruby here. So he'd appreciate
3 that.

4
5 Earlier this summer I sent you out a
6 letter about Mitch Demientieff no longer being the Chair
7 of the Subsistence Board and I didn't know what you guys
8 wanted to do with that, so I went ahead and made a little
9 sheet of paper with his picture on there and if you want
10 to write a little note on it, I'll figure out some way
11 with the computer wizards in Arctic Refuge, if they'll
12 still talk to me because I've been leaning on them a lot
13 for computer wizardry, somehow we'll get that into some
14 kind of package to Mitch. It's also available for the
15 public, too. There's several sheets here, so write a
16 note if you'd like to to Mitch. I'll pass that around
17 and then Mickey or someone will pick it up and put it out
18 on the main table.

19
20 Let's see. What else do we have here. I
21 need to go through the Council Members and other Staff.
22 They all have a blue folder. This is all the additional
23 handouts that were not in your books, so I'll go through
24 some of those now and I'll try to remember to remind you
25 where they're at. It's probably not the same order. You
26 have copies of all the Board of Fish proposals. If you'd
27 like to comment on that, we will assist you with that.
28 Of course, the State is here that would be the experts on
29 those Board of Fish proposals that relate to the Yukon-
30 Kuskokwim.

31
32 I also threw in there just to keep you
33 informed the four proposals that were deferred by the
34 Federal Board for the Yukon River. Again, no action is
35 needed on that, but you just have a copy of them in case
36 you wanted to see them.

37
38 In your packet is two materials that
39 we'll talk about later on the agenda. Unit 19(A) and
40 19(B) this past summer were special actions as well as
41 emergency order actions on the moose population. We'll
42 be talking to you about possibly submitting a proposal to
43 address those situations or at least be appraised of a
44 possible proposal coming forward on that. So those are
45 two packets. One says State of Alaska dated April 19th
46 and then behind it hopefully is the Staff analysis WSA06-
47 01(A).

48
49 Finally, the blue thing in there is
50 applications. We're starting our nomination process for

1 2007. I'll draw a blank here which seats are open, but I
2 will get up to speed on that. If your seat is open, this
3 way you can reapply, but also if there's others in the
4 community or the community back home, people there that
5 would like to apply, you have a copy.

6
7 I threw in there the announcement for the
8 Yukon River Drainage Fishery Association. This is
9 dealing with the size of fish meeting. Ron Sam is going
10 to go, he feels his recovery will be pretty quick, but
11 we'll have to monitor that to see how that is, and that's
12 October 30th. I think that will come up in fisheries
13 discussions.

14
15 I also threw in there, because Ron Sam
16 was quite concerned about this subsistence form that AFN
17 is having on October 25th, so he wanted you to have that
18 information on the subsistence forms, so that's for your
19 information.

20
21 Finally, it was this Council, Robert
22 Walker, that made it clear to the Staff that the Council
23 and the villages wanted to be kept informed on avian flu.
24 This is the most recent questions and answers on avian
25 flu and on HPAI H5N1 bird flu facts. So we're not going
26 to cover that, but it's going to be available for you if
27 you need additional copies or if you need additional
28 information on that, I think Wenona is somehow connected
29 with this issue, so she can help, and other refuge staff
30 can help you if you need additional copies or more
31 information on that.

32
33 Then finally, because of your policy in
34 programs feeling that we need to work together with the
35 State system, I also threw in there the call for
36 proposals for the joint boards. I don't know if everyone
37 understands that, but very quickly the joint board is the
38 Board of Game and Board of Fisheries. Their jurisdiction
39 covers advisory committees, so the improvement of
40 advisory committees is out for call for proposals. I
41 think they're looking at possibly combining committees as
42 an option. That's just the board's suggestion. That
43 doesn't mean that's what they're going to do.

44
45 And in non-subsistence area regulations,
46 you do not have any non-subsistence area in your area,
47 but you might want to be informed on that. That's just
48 for your information. If you do want to do more with
49 that, then we'll have to see if there's State Staff here,
50 but it's just a call for proposals. All of you serve on

1 the local advisory committee, so that's kind of why I put
2 it in your packet.

3

4 So that's all the information I have.
5 Any questions on your blue folder. The folder also
6 serves another purpose. For example, the State has a
7 handout on the summer season summary. When they get up
8 to speak, I will be handing those out. Otherwise they
9 kind of get lost. Then you can shove it in your blue
10 folder. The other reason is we have to have a complete
11 record for our records, so these materials are all in one
12 spot and I can turn it over to our records clerk.

13

14 So, Mr. Chair, that's our housekeeping --
15 oh, meals, food. I'm a Boy Scout leader. We always start
16 off with food. It's very important. Food is being
17 provided. The Tribal Council is coordinating that, so
18 lunch will be here around noon and then dinner is going
19 to be another cover dish. For those that weren't here
20 last night, it was really nice to have that cover dish.
21 That's how food is going to be. There will be a donation
22 can out there. The donation can is to help the village
23 kind of cover some of these expenses. They did not
24 request it at all. It's just what we've done over the
25 years.

26

27 The next thing is lodging. You don't
28 need to pay any of your lodging. That's coordinated
29 through the Tribal Council for Council members only. So
30 I'll be working with Janice and Donald on your housing,
31 so that's all covered. As far as other expenses, that's
32 up to you. We'll need to talk with Tom on that, but I
33 don't think there's a problem if you want to help with
34 covering some of the gas for people driving you around.
35 You have to check with Tom, but I think you can just add
36 that onto your travel thing, just like you would a cab.
37 I think Tom is saying yes on that. That's up to you.
38 That's not been requested by the tribe or the village.

39

40 For other Staff, I don't know if there's
41 any other announcement that needs to be made. No.
42 That's it, Mr. Chair. So I can go into the quorum if
43 you'd like.

44

45 Real quickly, Robert Walker, he called in
46 ill, so he's not present. Donald Honea, Jr.

47

48 MR. HONEA: Here.

49

50 MR. MATHEWS: Mickey Stickman.

1 MR. STICKMAN: Here.
2
3 MR. MATHEWS: Ron Sam we've already said
4 is having surgery, so he's ill. Other than that, he very
5 much wants to know what happens with this meeting. He's
6 called me right up to the moment he was leaving. So he's
7 absent. Ray Collins.
8
9 MR. COLLINS: Here.
10
11 MR. MATHEWS: Jack Reakoff.
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.
14
15 MR. MATHEWS: Benedict Jones.
16
17 MR. JONES: Here.
18
19 MR. MATHEWS: Carl Morgan called
20 yesterday. I got an emergency phone call. There's been
21 a drowning in his village. I don't know the details of
22 it. Hopefully it's not one of his immediate family
23 members, but he had to stay back in the village, so he's
24 absent. Winchell Ticknor, I got a hold of him. He's had
25 a family emergency within his immediate family that's
26 preventing him from traveling, so he's not present. Mr.
27 Chairman, you have nine seats because you have a vacant
28 seat with the resignation of Tom Kriska, so a quorum of
29 nine is five and right now you have five members, so you
30 have a quorum.
31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So is Tommy's
33 seat going to be filled before the next meeting in Aniak?
34
35 MR. MATHEWS: That's the hope. Several
36 of you have talked to me about where the nominations are
37 at. We were kind of put on hold because of some actions
38 in the court system, but my understanding is they're in
39 Washington and should be approved. Normally they're
40 approved in November and released in December. My guess
41 is we're still on that schedule, but I'm almost certain
42 we'll have those appointments by the March meeting. If
43 that fails for some reason and those in those seats
44 continue to serve until replaced. Well, we'll have to
45 check on that, but the hold up delay was in summer and I
46 believe that's now free to move forward. So the letters
47 should be going out to those individuals.
48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So at this time
50 we're going to go through the Chairman's report and I'm

1 the vice chair of this Council and I was wondering if Ron
2 had any comments that he'd sent in.

3

4 MR. MATHEWS: No, Ron didn't provide me
5 any comments. He's been in touch with me throughout the
6 summer. You, as well as him, have been informed of the
7 actions in Unit 19(A) moose. I'm drawing a blank here if
8 we've had any other major issue on the Western Interior.
9 On the wildlife side, no. On the fish side, no. On the
10 Kuskokwim, Ray can bring us up to speed on that, but to
11 my knowledge there was no issue. Just normal in-season
12 management on the Kuskokwim. To my knowledge, that's it.
13 He didn't provide me a report.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray has pointed out
16 that I'm off track on the agenda. We're going to go
17 through the introduction of Agency Staff and our guests
18 here. We'll start with our court recorder here and we'll
19 work around the room going in this clockwise direction.

20

21 REPORTER: I'm Nathan. I'm the court
22 reporter.

23

24 MR. MATHEWS: I'm Vince Mathews,
25 coordinator for Western Interior Regional Council.
26 Before we go to the next people, the reason we go through
27 this is for our records and then Jack or I will ask you
28 to repeat your name when you come to the mike because
29 obviously we're not going to pick up all these
30 announcements on the mike. So it's just to get the
31 record clear and then there is a sign-up sheet back there
32 to help us for spelling your name.

33

34 MR. McCARTY: Billy McCarty.

35

36 MR. HOLDER: Russ Holder with Fish and
37 Wildlife Service in Fairbanks.

38

39 MR. NEWLAND: Eric Newland with Alaska
40 Department of Fish and Game.

41

42 MR. HAYES: Steve Hayes, Alaska
43 Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage.

44

45 MR. WALTEMYER: I'm David Waltemyer with
46 AVCP as a partner biologist.

47

48 MR. MOOS: Kenton Moos.

49

50 MR. BEYERSDORF: Geoff Beyersdorf, U.S.

1 Fish and Wildlife Service, Galena. I work with Kenton.
2
3 MR. BOS: Greg Bos, Fish and Wildlife
4 Service, Staff Committee member.
5
6 MR. KRON: Tom Kron, OSM.
7
8 MS. ROBBINS: Becca Robbins, Yukon River
9 Drainage Fisheries Association.
10
11 MR. POST: Jason Post, fisheries
12 biologist, BLM management, Fairbanks.
13
14 MS. BROWN: Wennona Brown, subsistence
15 coordinator for the Committee. Mike Spindler also wanted
16 me to let you know that he does plan to be here on the
17 noon flight today, so he should be here today.
18
19 MS. BROWN: Caroline Brown with Fish and
20 Game Subsistence in Fairbanks.
21
22 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard with the Office
23 of Subsistence Management.
24
25 MS. BERKBIGLER: Brandy Berkbigler with
26 Tanana Chiefs Conference, Yukon Partners fisheries
27 biologist.
28
29 MS. KANGAS: Lisa Kangas with Tanana
30 Chiefs Conference, the TCC's intern.
31
32 MR. SARTIN: Ed Sartin, Ruby Advisory
33 chair.
34
35 MR. DENTON: Jeff Denton, Anchorage Field
36 Office of BLM, wildlife biologist.
37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate
39 everybody coming out to the meeting and we're very
40 interested in local comments. Without Ron's report,
41 we're going to go through the Council here and we'll
42 start with Ben and we'll go through the Council's
43 concerns for management.
44
45 MR. JONES: Benedict Jones from Koyukuk.
46 I've been serving since 1997 and this is my last Western
47 Interior Regional meeting. I was happy to serve for the
48 last nine years. On the report of moose hunting season
49 this year, I didn't get no moose myself. It was hard
50 hunting this year due to the weather and high water. The

1 moose didn't move in the Koyukuk area like before. They
2 stayed back away from the river. Nulato and Allakaket
3 didn't harvest much moose. Same as Kaltag. Koyukuk got
4 about 90 percent the residents harvest for moose.

5
6 The fishing was really good this summer
7 for the chinook and the silvers, but due to the high
8 water for chinook we didn't harvest as much as we
9 normally do because of the high water. We had three feet
10 above normally that stayed through the whole summer, so
11 our fish net wasn't deep enough. All the chinooks were
12 going underneath the net. We harvest about 90 percent of
13 what we normally do. I want to thank Ruby for hosting
14 the meeting.

15
16 MR. COLLINS: Ray Collins, the McGrath
17 Advisory Committee member. As Vince mentioned, I'm on
18 the Kuskokwim River fishery. Probably the item I'd like
19 to bring up was something that surprised us this summer.
20 There's a limited silver harvest over there commercially
21 and they've been tracking that over the last 16 years and
22 the fish were running one pound lighter on average this
23 year than over the last 16 years. Since the silvers
24 spend the least time in the ocean, just about a year out
25 there usually, it's an indication of possibly something
26 going on. They don't know the significance of this yet,
27 but they normally run about seven pounds average. They
28 were just over six pounds this year. So it might be an
29 indication that something is going on out in the ocean.

30
31 Other than that it was a good season.
32 Subsistence needs were met on the Kuskokwim. As was
33 mentioned, high water was some problem but lower river
34 certainly got all the fish they needed.

35
36 In terms of my concerns as a member, I
37 think over the last two years we've seen wild
38 fluctuations in the weather in the fall. The summers
39 lasting longer, the leaves are falling off later. It's
40 causing a disruption in the hunting pattern, as Benedict
41 mentioned.

42
43 I attended a science conference up at
44 Denali Park. It was dealing with weather change, a lot
45 of reports on that. I was hoping that I would come out
46 with some idea of what the weather trends are going to
47 be, but at the end of the conference I came to the
48 conclusion from what I was hearing there that it's going
49 to be very erratic over the next few years. They're not
50 going to move into a stable pattern, so we don't know

1 what to expect. The same with the winters. They said
2 there will probably be more moisture in the winter, which
3 could mean deeper snow, but it's liable to keep going up
4 and down.

5
6 At that conference I talked to the
7 managers there a little bit about subsistence and what
8 the implication is that our current management system
9 makes it very difficult for subsistence users. We have
10 such a short window of opportunity now with these short
11 seasons that if the weather is off and doesn't cooperate,
12 a lot of people are not getting the moose they need and
13 we need to think about having some flexibility built in
14 where refuge managers or others on the State side could
15 be more flexible in that. They look at the harvest and
16 be able to extend the season. We can't wait for a winter
17 season later that may not be productive either. Somehow
18 we've got to think about developing a system that can be
19 more responsive to these changes.

20
21 Traditionally, the subsistence hunters
22 picked and chose. When I first came to the state back in
23 the '60s we had long seasons. We didn't go hunting in
24 the fall until the weather was right and we got our
25 moose. The same with the winter when trapping. They
26 could hunt. There was a winter season that was fairly
27 long. In relation to trapping, they would hunt out on
28 the Alaska Range and other places, but they were in
29 control then. They could pick and choose when it was
30 appropriate and now that's not the case. We've got these
31 little, short State seasons there and if things don't go
32 right, especially with the high cost of gas now, people
33 are having to go out and spend gas hunting when it's not
34 very productive. So I'm hoping we can move toward a more
35 flexible system somehow to respond to these changes.

36
37 MR. HONEA: Good morning. As first chief
38 of the village of Ruby, I'd like to kind of formally
39 thank you guys for meeting here. I believe this is the
40 first time that you had this meeting here for a number of
41 years. Emmett Peters was the former member on that board
42 at that time. I've only been on here -- oh, incidently,
43 my name is Don Honea, Jr. As first chief, I just feel it
44 would be an appropriate time to kind of thank you guys
45 for coming. I hope everybody is accommodated. If
46 there's anybody without housing, let us know. I hope
47 everybody has a good trip.

48
49 I'd like to introduce our traditional
50 chief Bill McCarty, Jr. to my left over there. Thank

1 you, Bill, for coming. I would introduce the Tribal
2 Council members but they aren't present. We do have Ed
3 Sartin, who is a chairperson for Ruby Advisory Committee.
4 I'm looking forward to a good meeting. I'd like to
5 remind members tonight to remind their host that we're
6 having an open forum tonight and hopefully we'll get a
7 lot of input. There's been a lot of controversial
8 things. I can't say controversial, maybe it isn't, but
9 there's a petition at the store going around for a winter
10 hunt that's been discontinued. There's a number of
11 things. I wanted to mention, like Benedict mentioned,
12 not everybody got a moose this fall.

13

14 With that said, I'd like to just mention
15 that again. It will be informal and a great get-
16 together. Again, thank you for coming to our village. I
17 miss Robert and Carl. I've never gone to a meeting with
18 Winchell, our newest board member, but Carl and Robert,
19 over the years they've picked up a lot of insight and
20 experience in this kind of thing. And, of course, Ron.
21 Ron has been our chairperson and leader for a number of
22 years. I kind of really miss him because he put us up so
23 well when we were in Allakaket. With that said, I'll
24 turn it over to the next person.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 MR. STICKMAN: Good morning. My name is
29 Mickey Stickman. I'm from Nulato. Like Ben said, the
30 fishermen in Nulato basically did pretty well. I was
31 talking to a couple guys earlier, I was telling them that
32 the water was high this year, so the guys who had setnet
33 spots that usually normally do well, they didn't -- I
34 don't think those guys met their needs this year because
35 this summer was the first time I ever saw those guys with
36 those setnet spots actually out drifting with the other
37 people. I can probably say those guys didn't meet their
38 needs because they just didn't do as well as they
39 normally do.

40

41 Like Ben said, the water was high, so the
42 fish were swimming below the net and I think they were
43 swimming a little further out. Where you normally catch
44 fish right up against the bank, you weren't catching
45 nothing, so you had to fish further out because the water
46 was high and you have a limit on the size of your fish
47 net. I was one of the guys who probably did fairly well
48 because I fish for 12 hours every night. I normally fish
49 anywhere from five to six hours, but this past summer I
50 was fishing anywhere from 8:00 o'clock at night to 8:00

1 o'clock in the morning, so I was able to actually meet my
2 own needs, but I had to fish double time and I was lucky
3 enough to have a younger partner than I did the last five
4 or six years, so I was able to stay out there longer.
5 The thing about staying out there longer is you burn a
6 lot more gas. You spend a lot more time out on the
7 river.

8

9 Even though the weather was really good,
10 there was a lot of wind, so there was a lot of days when
11 you couldn't actually get out there because it was
12 actually too rough. The young partners I used to force
13 them to go out there with me. Even though it was really
14 rough I would force them to go out there with me and I'd
15 go across on the other side where it's actually not so
16 rough. There was a couple times there I got scared but
17 not scared enough not to go. I didn't fear for my life
18 because I figured, well, I'm wearing a life jacket, I
19 can't possibly die, you know. I could possibly lose my
20 boat, but I'm pretty sure I could swim to the bank.

21

22 For moose hunting this fall it was not
23 that great back home. A lot of people didn't get their
24 moose. I'd say maybe 50 percent of the people back home
25 didn't get a moose. In a village where we normally get
26 anywhere from 40 to 45 moose every fall, I think there
27 was like 20 moose killed this fall.

28

29 Like Don said from Ruby, I have a
30 petition from the residents of Nulato for 21(D) and it's
31 going to be for February 2007 moose hunt. Because we
32 have a bull only hunting area and there was a good number
33 of cows out there, we're going to be asking for a cow
34 season. Even though the petition is to the Alaska
35 Department of Fish and Game, I wanted to bring it here
36 because a lot of our hunting area over in the Kaiyuh
37 Flats is actually refuge land and then you go up past
38 Koyukuk 18 miles away and that's all refuge land. That's
39 the reason for me bringing the petition here today.

40

41 With that I want to thank the village of
42 Ruby for hosting the meeting this year. I'm staying with
43 Lorraine Honea, so I have a great place to stay just
44 right down the hill and don't have to worry about
45 anything really. I stayed with her last year we had a
46 Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association meeting here,
47 so I stayed with her and I got a hold of her ahead of
48 time and arranged for my own place to stay. That's one
49 of the things about being on the Regional Advisory
50 Committee, you get to know a lot of people, so you're

1 pretty much welcome wherever you go.

2

3

4 With that, I'll just close my comments.
5 That's the only concerns that I have. The only other
6 one, the last one, that's becoming a big issue on the
7 Yukon, is the size of the chinook, the king salmon.
8 That's become an issue of concern not only for us here in
9 the Western Interior but also at the Yukon River Drainage
10 Fisheries Association. With that, I'll close my comments
11 and say thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I thank the
14 Council for those comments, so I'll make mine. I'm
15 missing my fellow Council members, so we normally have a
16 fairly full Council. I think this is one of the most
17 minimum Council that I've been to meetings to. So Ron is
18 instrumental in our meeting and has worked long and hard.
19 We work together in the off season conferring with
20 proposals, Staff Committee meetings and all kinds of
21 stuff. So behind the scenes there's quite a bit of
22 stuff that's going on for the chairman and I work with
23 Ron on a lot of those issues.

24

25 I thank the Staff for attending. Without
26 Staff support we would have a really hard time with these
27 meetings and I appreciate all that our Staff does,
28 especially Vince. He keeps us all very well informed
29 through the whole season. And our court recorder here,
30 Nathan, his mom does a great job and Nathan does a great
31 job down at the Federal Board meetings, so he's -- I'm
32 looking forward to seeing some of the -- there's going to
33 be need for the transcripts of some of this meeting.

34

35 So my concerns revolve around, again,
36 warm fall, the bulls moving late. The biologists say all
37 the cows are bred from the end of September through the
38 first week in October. Well, that's all fine and dandy
39 and that's true, but the bulls don't move around a lot if
40 it's warm, so that's the problem. The harvest will hurt
41 if we don't have good bull movements. The bulls go
42 zipping in to the cows at the last minute and there's
43 lots of breeding activity, but that's half of the season
44 is typically over.

45

46 I'm concerned about that in that this
47 Council under 805 of ANILCA is charged with -- one of our
48 jobs in this Council is to identify current and
49 anticipated subsistence needs. That's what the law says.
50 So we're hearing throughout our whole region that people
51 are having a hard time getting moose because of these

1 warmer and warmer falls. So this Council needs to
2 strategize on management regimes that will accommodate
3 those subsistence needs. We need additional input from
4 local people. I would really encourage people to come in
5 today and comment. Especially tonight. We're going to
6 have a night meeting. People are busy. I don't like to
7 do anything in the daytime. People come by to visit and
8 I'm going to cut wood or doing stuff, but in the evening
9 that's a good time to talk. So I would really encourage
10 local people to show up and give us some discussion on
11 their input.

12
13 I feel that this Council should entertain
14 setting -- communities have harvest needs and those needs
15 should be set as a parameter. If those needs aren't
16 being met, then there should be a special action forum
17 where the village councils can show by the end of the
18 season they're approaching only maybe half or a quarter
19 component of that need. That should trigger a special
20 action, an automatic special action for extension for
21 bull harvest.

22
23 In the upper portion of Unit 24 we went
24 to an October 1 closure date from the 25th of October.
25 That helped a little bit when the water levels were low
26 and a lot of people couldn't get back. Some years it
27 would be froze up. We're trying to accommodate
28 subsistence needs. Those are the imperatives for this
29 Council.

30
31 I'm concerned on the fisheries issues.
32 I'm very concerned about the Alaska Department of Fish
33 and Game opening a commercial harvest for king salmon to
34 accommodate a market regime in the Lower Yukon River.
35 I'm very concerned about that with the indicator showing
36 the silver salmon size reduction. And we just went
37 through a marine decline and we just came through some
38 very hard times. So starting into a harvest for
39 commercial which supersedes the subsistence users, we
40 have a subsistence law in State statute and this Federal
41 statute, so I'm very concerned about putting a commercial
42 harvest in front of subsistence harvest. I'm very
43 interested in those discussions involving that.

44
45 We hunted harder at home for moose.
46 During the main moose hunting time when we normally are
47 harvesting moose, people were hunting very hard and
48 spending a lot of time and packing a lot further, putting
49 a lot more effort into hunting. It's just like these
50 king salmon when the water was high, put a lot more

1 effort into it. We hunted pretty hard for moose this
2 year also. Most people got moose, but it was a lot
3 harder. You spent a lot more fuel and a lot more time.
4 I got lucky myself, but most of the people weren't so
5 lucky.

6
7 I'm also very concerned, this year an
8 issue came up about cutting firewood and logs on Federal
9 lands. There was a solicitor that made a statement, I've
10 not seen a written statement, a lawyer for the Federal
11 government, that said subsistence does not include
12 forestry products and that's on our agenda here. I am
13 very concerned about that statement and I'm very
14 concerned about managers that have to manage when a
15 solicitor just states something. In reality, Title VIII
16 includes fish and wildlife and all wild renewable
17 resources. So that's on our agenda and we're going to be
18 talking about that. I feel it's very inappropriate to
19 discard a significant subsistence resource. Wood cutting
20 for fuel and so forth on Federal public lands.

21
22 I've reviewed the Federal ANILCA law,
23 I've reviewed the House and Senate record, I've written
24 my own opinion using the law as a basis and the
25 Congressional Record as a basis, so I'm going to be very
26 interested in comment from the local people on
27 subsistence use of other than fish and wildlife
28 resources.

29
30 So at this time that would be my own
31 concerns. Now we're down to review and adoption of the
32 agenda. I'd like comment from the Council on the agenda.
33 Go ahead, Vince.

34
35 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, I forgot one safety
36 concern as a lot of people are coming in and going.
37 There are receptacles that are marked with duct tape. Do
38 not plug into those. There's a short over there. So if
39 you're not sure if the plug is safe or not, don't plug
40 into it because it could be a shock.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So what does the
43 Council feel about the agenda. Personally, I'm more
44 inclined to push these agency reports and the corporation
45 reports up closer to the front of the agenda. A lot of
46 times we go through a whole bunch of our own
47 deliberations and processes without comment from the
48 agencies and I would prefer to see those comments much
49 higher in the agenda. I would like to know if the Staff
50 would be prepared to make their presentations earlier in

1 the agenda. Are most people prepared to do a
2 presentation earlier in the agenda if we move this up?
3 Go ahead, Geoff.

4
5 MR. BEYERSDORF: Geoff Beyersdorf with
6 the Koyukuk/Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge. As far as
7 a Staff report, I think we can put something together
8 earlier if need be. My only question, which I discussed
9 earlier, is last spring you had some questions on avian
10 influenza and Wenona and I and our staff went back and
11 worked on a village presentation on avian influenza which
12 I brought with me if you'd like to see that. That would
13 probably take about 20, 25 minutes to give.

14
15 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I make a
16 motion that we approve the agenda as written but
17 authorize the Chair to move items forward if appropriate.
18 Will that do it?

19
20 MR. HONEA: I second.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would just prefer to
23 hear these presentations much earlier in the agenda, so
24 I'll work with Vince on the appropriate time to move
25 those forward. Any further comment on that. That sounds
26 good to me.

27
28 MR. STICKMAN: I don't have any comments
29 on the agenda, but one of the things I have here from the
30 Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association is that
31 they're hosting a river-wide meeting on the size of the
32 Yukon River chinook and I was wondering if anybody from
33 the RAC is going to be at that meeting.

34
35 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. We are funding one
36 Council member per the three Councils. Ron Sam has
37 agreed to it. When this is more on the table, I would
38 like direction from you if Ron's recovery -- and I hope
39 it's as quick as he believes it will be -- that there be
40 an alternate. I know Jack cannot do it, but we may want
41 to have an alternate for that. I think the main two
42 issues you have to help with thinking through the agenda
43 is you have the fish issue, which you both have
44 registered on, good season maybe smaller fish, and then
45 you have the moose. So Donald may be able to give us an
46 insight on this, but I think the village is more
47 interested in the moose at this point, so that may be
48 timing of that so that the village can benefit on that
49 moose and I don't know how you can do that. Donald can
50 talk more, but most of the people I talked to in the

1 village, except one, their main concern was the moose,
2 access to the moose in the present seasons.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So at this time
5 I'd like to vote on this agenda.

6

7 MR. COLLINS: Did you say we needed to
8 add moose to our agenda somewhere?

9

10 MR. MATHEWS: No, no. It's on there at
11 different places. I'm just saying where you're
12 structuring your meeting is you're responding to public
13 requests of concerns and the two that are on the table
14 are fish and then the main one for the village, if I've
15 got it correct, is the moose situation locally.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those in favor of
18 adopting the agenda with the understanding of moving some
19 of these agency reports further up, those in favor say
20 aye.

21

22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

25

26 (No opposing votes)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. All right.
29 We're going to go through fisheries issues and
30 subsistence fisheries post season report. This is a
31 joint Federal/State presentation on the Yukon River.

32

33 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. Before you
34 do that, because they'll need a second or two to get
35 together, you have the minutes to review. Not a big
36 deal. They're on Page 6 and we can address those. We're
37 going a little more formal on these, meaning they were
38 certified by your Chair. I can't remember the date, but
39 it was back this summer. You've all gotten them in the
40 mail, but I know your summers are busy. So the review of
41 the minutes is the next one and that will give time for
42 the fishery guys to plan how they're going to table.

43

44 For all the Staff, this Council's policy
45 or way of dealing with this is to get the appropriate
46 people to the table and to kind of stay at the table and
47 get into kind of a roundtable discussion, not a testimony
48 and go back to your seat kind of situation.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll give a couple

1 minutes to review the minutes. I reviewed them on the
2 flight down here. They looked good to me. We'll wait a
3 couple minutes for the Council to see if they see any
4 changes.

5
6 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I'll move
7 approval of the minutes.

8
9 MR. JONES: I second the motion.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.

12
13 MR. STICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One
14 of the things I think is important for me to point out,
15 not only as a Council member at the table but also as a
16 Middle Yukon Advisory Committee member, if you can recall
17 I got quite a bit of ribbing over Proposal 144 at the
18 meeting in Koyukuk, but I just wanted the Council to know
19 that when it actually went in front of the Board in March
20 it was right during the same time as the Tanana Chiefs
21 convention and actually got the full delegation there to
22 support opposition and actually recanted my vote on that
23 proposal. Doing that actually killed it at the Board
24 level. Even though it was going to go before the Board,
25 it was actually stopped and killed before it got to the
26 floor because I recanted my vote and so did the rest of
27 the Middle Yukon Advisory Committee.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those
30 comments. That was a very contentious issue down in
31 Koyukuk last spring, the elimination of the Koyukuk
32 controlled use area. The Middle Yukon had adopted that
33 elimination with a corridor. This Council, with great
34 comment from Koyukuk village wrote letters in opposition
35 to losing the Koyukuk controlled use, so I'm very happy
36 that Tanana Chiefs and Mickey were instrumental in the
37 Board process to retain the Koyukuk River controlled use
38 area.

39
40 Does anybody have any further comments on
41 the minutes from our Koyukuk meeting last March.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 MR. STICKMAN: Call the question.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question being
48 called, those in favor of adopting the minutes as
49 presented say aye.

50

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

4

5 (No opposing votes)

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It looks like a
8 unanimous vote. So we have Russ Holder and Steve Hayes
9 here and they're going to give us the Yukon River
10 presentation from the joint Federal perspective. Go
11 right ahead.

12

13 MR. HOLDER: Yes, Mr. Chairman and
14 Council members. My name is Russ Holder with Fish and
15 Wildlife Service stationed in Fairbanks and on my right
16 is Steve Hayes with the Alaska Department of Fish and
17 Game, summer season manager. Right now Vince is handing
18 out two summaries for you. One is the summary which I
19 put together and the other is a summary that Steve has
20 compiled. I'll be primarily providing you an overview
21 summarizing the information that is contained in the
22 handout. Steve will be focusing on supplemental
23 information, focusing additionally on some of the
24 commercial activities which has occurred this past
25 summer.

26

27 In summary of the 2006 Yukon River salmon
28 season, it appears that it was a successful season in
29 meeting the escapement objectives and providing
30 preferential subsistence opportunities and Fish and Game
31 being able to provide additional commercial and other
32 harvest opportunities.

33

34 Pre-season, Fish and Wildlife Service
35 Staff and Fish and Game Staff worked cooperatively to
36 develop this purple flyer, which was mailed to all
37 commercial and subsistence households by Fish and Game
38 pre-season. Kind of the important piece in there that I
39 wanted to cover is that our outlook pre-season for the
40 chinook salmon run was for an average to below average
41 return and the summer chum salmon, fall chum salmon and
42 coho salmon were looking at coming back as average or
43 above average here on the Yukon.

44

45 As we entered into the summer season, the
46 ice breakup was about a week late and similarly, in
47 trying to assess the run timing of the chinook salmon,
48 they came in approximately one week late. We did have
49 chum salmon that were entering along with the chinook
50 salmon, but the entry timing, looking at it, was close to

1 average for summer chum salmon, but chinook were about
2 five or so days later than average.

3
4 The first commercial period, which you've
5 already identified, Mr. Chairman, did occur on June 15th.
6 That was fairly controversial. The premise for that was
7 based on the pre-season outlook. I would not
8 characterize that as an in-season decision but as a pre-
9 season outlook decision. The information that we did
10 have at that time in my viewpoint was insufficient to say
11 no. It was designed and discussed at the annual YRDFA
12 meeting to try to bolster the commercial market for the
13 Yukon, which has been having trouble in the past several
14 years because of lack of supply.

15
16 There was a commercial period that
17 occurred in District 3 and as commercial was implemented,
18 then upriver subsistence was being liberalized based on a
19 similar assessment in liberalization that occurred in the
20 lower river. So with District 1 and District 2 starting
21 the commercial fishing, then District 3 and on upriver
22 were liberalized as the fish numbers were traveling
23 upriver. I've characterized that primarily from the
24 bottom of Page 1 and the top of Page 2.

25
26 Some upriver fishermen had more
27 difficulty, as Council members have also shared. Some of
28 the reasons that we heard upriver fishermen had more
29 difficulties in getting their fish were that chinook
30 salmon seemed to be migrating in different portions of
31 the river, possibly being pushed offshore by the large
32 numbers of summer chum that came in this year.

33
34 The second pulse that we had assessed to
35 be very abundant seemed to be more compressed and perhaps
36 not as numerous as we had assessed it in the lower part
37 of the river, so when we were sharing with fishermen kind
38 of when to get out there and get their fish, if they were
39 on top and were able to hit that pulse they seemed to do
40 pretty well. If they were one or two days on either side
41 of it, which we may not have given as close information
42 as we would have liked to, fishermen had more trouble.

43
44 Fishermen shared as far as higher water
45 that there was more debris giving some folks problems and
46 that also the window schedule early on may have caused
47 difficulty in fishermen not being able to go out there
48 when they thought the fish were present.

49
50 The 4(B) and 4(C) Federal drift gillnet

1 fishery did occur this year and fishermen primarily in
2 Galena and I believe one in Ruby obtained 18 permits. At
3 this point in time, we've received four permits back and
4 we are in the process of contacting other permittees to
5 get that reporting number as close as we can to complete.
6 My assessment, similar to last year, is that fishermen
7 continue to be interested in that opportunity but haven't
8 found good harvest areas or good fishing locations in the
9 Federal waters in 4(B) and (C) in the past two years.

10

11 The summer chum salmon run was a very
12 good run this year and exceeded what we had seen in 2003,
13 4 and 5. We had more than 3.7 million fish return this
14 season. Basically the commercial harvest was taken
15 incidental to the chinook salmon harvest except in
16 District 6. For chinook salmon, it appears that our
17 passage into Canada was between 43,000 and 49,000, which
18 exceeded our goal which was established pre-season with
19 the Canadians.

20

21 Shifting to the fall season, the outlook
22 was for a return of close to 1.2 million. With that
23 outlook and the large number of summer chums that we had
24 return, the subsistence fishing schedule remained
25 liberalized. It was not put back on the windows schedule
26 as we entered into the fall schedule to try to provide
27 fishermen additional opportunity to catch their
28 subsistence fish. At the end of the season it appears
29 that the run size was approximately 800,000. This season
30 also, from Pilot Station, genetic samples were taken in
31 season from the fall chum salmon and processed at the
32 Fish and Wildlife Service lab in Anchorage and the
33 information was provided to managers in season to be able
34 to take a look at the proportions of fish going to
35 different areas in season.

36

37 The Yukon coho salmon run. This season
38 was closer to average production, which is lowering the
39 higher numbers which we had been experiencing the last
40 three years. It appears that both fall chum and coho
41 salmon escapement objectives will be achieved and that
42 the interim fall chum salmon Canadian border escapement
43 commitments will be exceeded this year.

44

45 The outlook for 2007 will be prepared by
46 Alaska Department of Fish and Game after all the
47 escapement and composition information is compiled for
48 this season. So, with that, I'll turn it over to Steve
49 to fill in some additional information.

50

1 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Holder
2 said, my name is Steve Hayes. I'm a summer season area
3 manager for the Yukon River. I'm going to try to cover a
4 little bit more on the commercial activities for the
5 summer season and then I'll give a brief overview of the
6 fall season, which Fred Bue, the fall area manager, is
7 not present.

8
9 I'll try not to repeat some of the things
10 Mr. Holder said, but it's hard not to. So I apologize
11 from the start if it's redundant. For the summer season,
12 early run assessment indicated that the chinook and
13 summer chum salmon runs were of adequate strength to
14 allow subsistence salmon fishing to continue on a
15 regulatory schedule. Of course, further assessment
16 indicated that a surplus of chinook salmon was available
17 for other uses. Typically once it's projected there is a
18 surplus beyond escapement needs and subsistence needs.
19 The schedule reverts to the pre-2001 Board of Fish
20 subsistence fishing regulations and the commercial season
21 is opened. However, with the June 15th opening that was
22 mentioned in District 2 occurring early in the run, the
23 subsistence schedule was not terminated until about a
24 week after the opening of the commercial season in the
25 district and on June 19th in District 1.

26
27 As was mentioned, in meetings this past
28 winter fishers, processors and the Department discussed
29 having a second commercial opening in the lower river
30 district, either 1 or 2, around the historical first
31 quarter point of the run, which typically is on June
32 15th. The objective was to harvest a small amount of
33 fish to maintain the Yukon king name in the marketplace,
34 which, as Mr. Holder indicated, due to the lower runs and
35 the market conditions, buyers have been having a problem
36 marketing the fish. So this was to help bolster the
37 Yukon king name. Of course, this was discussed during
38 the 2006 YRDFA annual meeting in Ruby, which a motion was
39 made to have a short commercial opening at the historical
40 first quarter point of the run.

41
42 The 2006 chinook run was late and the
43 Department estimated the run to be five days later than
44 average according to the comparative test for CPUE data
45 at the lower river. Because of the late run timing it
46 was determined that a short commercial opening on a pre-
47 selected date of June 15th to assist in salmon marketing
48 efforts would not harvest a lot of fish. A small early
49 commercial harvest would not impact the run based on our
50 pre-season run outlook, which had taken into account the

1 average return of five-year-old fish in 2005.

2

3 District 2 was open to commercial fishing
4 for three hours on June 15th, which was the shortest
5 commercial opening targeting chinook on record. Although
6 this commercial period was controversial, it appears to
7 have worked out well with a small harvest of around 900
8 kings, of which 63 percent were males.

9

10 We then delayed opening the next
11 commercial period until June 19th in District 1. On June
12 17th, we estimated the first quarter point of the run for
13 the lower river test fishing project to be around June
14 19th. Based on this run timing, we projected that the
15 Pilot Station sonar passage for chinook salmon would be
16 near 170,000 for the year and the cumulative test for
17 CPUE would reach 22 to 24 CPUE.

18

19 At the end of the season an estimated
20 168,000 king salmon past the Pilot Station sonar site and
21 the cumulative test for CPUE was 21.81. The first
22 quarter point of the lower river test fishery was on June
23 20th. So, with that, based on our projection, everything
24 matched up with what we were projecting.

25

26 Commercial fishing was again delayed
27 until the start of the second chinook pulse that we
28 identified by the lower river test fish project on June
29 23rd to the 26th, with a total CPUE of 7.62 and the Pilot
30 Station sonar project on June 25th through the 27th with
31 a pass estimate of approximately 44,400 king salmon.

32

33 As the second pulse moved in the upper
34 river districts it appeared to fishers that there were
35 not many fish in the second pulse; however, high water
36 was prevalent in Districts 4 and 5 during this time
37 period and an above average abundance of summer chum that
38 were present at the same time, which may have hampered
39 the fishing efficiency. The presence of large numbers of
40 summer chum salmon may have resulted in the chinook
41 salmon migrating further offshore, making it more
42 difficult to harvest.

43

44 Ultimately, the second pulse was observed
45 in good numbers in Canada and as indicated by the Eagle
46 sonar estimate numbers. And in the Tanana River as
47 indicated by the Salcha River tower where the escapement
48 goal was exceeded. It actually doubled, close to 10,400
49 chinook.

50

1 The total commercial harvest was
2 approximately 45,800 king salmon for the Alaska portion
3 of the Yukon Drainage. The chinook harvest was the sixth
4 lowest commercial harvest since Statehood and 14 percent
5 below the '96 through 2005 average harvest of 53,200
6 fish.

7
8 The summer chum salmon runs have
9 exhibited steady improvement since 2001 with harvestable
10 surpluses in each of the last four years, from 2002 to
11 2005. Because of the lack of the summer chum salmon
12 market, the summer chum harvest was taken incidentally to
13 fishing directed to king salmon in the lower river,
14 except for one short directed chum salmon period in
15 District 2 and six directed chum salmon periods in
16 District 6. In addition, Subdistrict 4(A) was open five
17 days a week beginning June 28th but only a test fishery
18 harvest of 46 chum salmon were documented due to lack of
19 market interest. As Mr. Holder said, based on the Pilot
20 Station sonar passage estimate of approximately 3.7
21 million chum salmon, there was a large surplus of chum
22 salmon available for harvest.

23
24 As for X vessel value for Yukon River
25 fishermen in Alaska received an estimated 3.4 million for
26 their chinook and summer chum salmon harvest in 2006.
27 This was approximately 4 percent above the '96 through
28 2005 average of 3.2 million. For escapement for chinook
29 salmon, the Yukon River chinook salmon escapements in
30 2006 through most tributaries were within or exceeded the
31 goals. Of course, this assessment is based on escapement
32 counts and estimates from selected tributaries.
33 Sustainable escapement goals for aerial survey
34 assessments have been established for the East Fork
35 Andreafsky and Anvik, Nulato and Gisasa Rivers. All
36 aerial survey escapement indices were within or exceeded
37 the sustainable escapement goals, except for the East
38 Fork Andreafsky which was rated as an incomplete survey.

39
40 Biological escapement goals have been
41 established for the Chena and Salcha Rivers. An
42 estimated 2,900 chinook salmon were counted by the Chena
43 River tower project and the biological escapement goal
44 range is 2,800 to 5,700, so we just met the lower end of
45 the goal. The Salcha River, as I said before, the
46 escapement was 10,400 and our goal there is 3,300 to
47 6,500. Typically, Chena and Salcha mirror each other, so
48 we're not sure why the Chena River was so low this year.

49
50 Preliminary post season analysis of

1 escapement data indicates for the summer chum salmon that
2 they were above average in most tributaries. The Anvik
3 River count of roughly 600,000 was within the BEG of 350-
4 700,000. Gisasa River was a record at 225,000
5 approximately summer chum. So we did really well on
6 summer chum in all areas.

7
8 The Canadian fisheries are preliminary
9 information at this time, indicates that they had a
10 harvest of 5,900 chinook salmon, of which 2,000 was in
11 their commercial fishery and 3,900 was in their
12 aboriginal fishery. Of course, these estimates are
13 conservative at this time or incomplete and complete
14 harvest information will be available in the U.S./Canada
15 Joint Technical Committee report.

16
17 So, for the fall season, with the big
18 summer chum salmon run, there was still a lot of summer
19 chums entering the river at the normal start date of the
20 fall season, which suggested that the summer chums were
21 contributing to the fall chum estimate at Pilot Station
22 sonar.

23
24 The commercial fishery started near the
25 first quarter point around July 30th. There was more
26 market interest in Districts Y1 and 2 and none in
27 District Y3 this year. They had 28 commercial periods in
28 Districts Y1 and 2, of which they had a harvest of
29 134,000 approximately in Y1 and 2 combined. For fall
30 chum and coho harvest was around 52,000 for Districts Y1
31 and 2.

32
33 The commercial harvest of both fall chum
34 and coho were higher this year than last year in the
35 lower river. The upriver District 4 was open to
36 commercial fishing for most of the season but there was
37 no interest for markets of fall chum or coho. 5(B) and
38 5(C) did have a fall market this year, which hasn't been
39 there for 10 years, but with the bulk of the fish passing
40 there was very high water and effort was low, so they
41 didn't land many fish, approximately 10,000.

42
43 The Tanana River subdistrict 6(A) and
44 6(B) they did have a market. They had five commercial
45 openings with a harvest of around 25,000 fall chum and
46 11,000 coho salmon. That brings the total fall season
47 commercial harvest for the entire river to approximately
48 170,000 fall chum and 63,000 coho.

49
50 Escapement assessment in the lower river

1 was complicated by the large number of late running
2 summer chum, so it isn't until the fish move upriver
3 where they separate out that they can really quantify the
4 summer chum from the fall chum. They're still counting
5 fish on the spawning grounds for at least another few
6 weeks, so they don't have a firm escapement estimate at
7 this time.

8
9 Possibly the upper river tributaries have
10 higher production rates than the Tanana, but the Tanana
11 still had good production. The Delta Clearwater River is
12 the only stream with an established salmon escapement
13 goal in the Yukon. There haven't been any counts yet,
14 however fishermen report a good coho for getting there on
15 time. So the Department assumes the coho run was similar
16 to the Pilot Station sonar estimate, which indicated
17 another above average run with most escapements likely
18 attained.

19
20 As Russ mentioned, subsistence surveys
21 were being conducted and if anybody was missed they're
22 asking that subsistence calendars be sent in to our
23 office.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for your
26 report. I would like questions from the Council.

27
28 MR. JONES: Mr. Chair, I'd like to ask a
29 question. You said the whole Yukon drainage fishery the
30 chinook was smaller than the previous years. As we had a
31 meeting in Anchorage three years ago at that time they
32 said hatchery fish in the Pacific Rim was 60 percent and
33 only 40 percent of Alaska wild stock, so therefore
34 they're starving out our chinook in the Pacific. This
35 may be the cause of the smaller fish returning. Where 50
36 years ago the average for an eight year old was about 40
37 to 50 pounds, now you only barely get 25 pounds. So we
38 need to do something about the hatcheries in the Pacific,
39 in Japan and China, in the Pacific Rim, a reduction of
40 their hatcheries by maybe 20 percent.

41
42 Another thing I noticed this year on the
43 chinook first fall run are the females had lesser eggs
44 than the previous years. I don't know whether they were
45 Canadian bound because they had further to go they had
46 less eggs and the second pulse was the same. The third
47 pulse had more eggs for the local Yukon tributary return.

48
49
50 A bycatch on the Bering Sea, approximately 40

1 percent of our chinook return is bycatch. I also noticed
2 this fall the coho the first run was four and five year
3 old, but this late run this last week have been catching
4 the coho only three year old, which are really small,
5 maybe two pounds, three pounds average weight, where
6 usually get about six pounds this time of the year.
7 That's all my comment.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
12 from the Council.

13

14 MR. COLLINS: Are you doing any genetic
15 work to identify specific stocks? What I'm interested in
16 is are earlier in the season are most of those fish
17 heading for the upwaters, like Canada and so on, or are
18 you doing any tracking of those to see the timing of it?

19

20 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Collins.
21 Specifically with the fall chum salmon the resolution
22 that we're working with is for specific areas. Right now
23 the fall chum salmon, I believe we have two geographic
24 management areas on the Yukon side of the border and
25 there are additional areas over in Canada and within
26 those geographic areas they do have some better
27 resolution to or they can go finer, but as they try to do
28 specific tributaries, I mean they are able to do that,
29 but the estimate or the WOW around that estimate gets
30 wider. So, for management purposes, the strategy is to
31 try to group a geographic area together for management
32 purposes, because we know there's a strain that goes
33 within these different areas, and so basically the Tanana
34 River drainage and then non-Tanana for the fall chum
35 salmon on the Alaska side of the border is the basic
36 approach that we're pursuing and that is occurring in
37 season. And in the summer season, the Alaska Department
38 of Fish and Game is conducting a post season analysis on
39 the run as it has come in primarily from commercial
40 sampling that has occurred in the lower portion of the
41 river. So did I answer your question.

42

43 MR. COLLINS: I was thinking more of the
44 chinooks because that's the one with the early commercial
45 harvest there. And with the run running a week later and
46 then you're starting on the 15th, whether you're not
47 hitting more of those earlier fish that may be going all
48 the way to Canada. Are you able to separate those stocks
49 to see which ones you're catching in that early one?

50

1 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Collins.
2 If the information was able to be processed and provided
3 in season, we would be able to look at it. It's not
4 really a problem with the genetics processing. It's more
5 a problem with being able to collect it and get that
6 information to managers in season, but the genetics
7 information I've seen and also the radio telemetry
8 information, it appears that the Canadian bound fish are
9 spread throughout the run. There is a slightly higher
10 portion in the beginning, but it's not as -- a lot of
11 fishermen would think the Canadian fish are all in this
12 early part. That doesn't seem to be what the information
13 that we've collected bears out. It looks like the
14 Canadian fish are broader spread out throughout the run
15 than we had thought.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
18 from the Council.

19
20 MR. STICKMAN: I was just wondering with
21 this small size of fish that's becoming a concern in the
22 last couple years, I was wondering if there was any data
23 out there or any research being done. I know you guys do
24 10-year averages on fish run size, but I was wondering if
25 you guys did those same averages on age, size and weight.
26 One of the things that Member Jones brought out was the
27 fact that, you know, even though we're catching six-year-
28 old kings up in Nulato and Koyukuk area, those same fish
29 that weigh 25 pounds in the last couple years, even up to
30 11 years ago, those fish were running from 40 to 50
31 pounds.

32
33 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Stickman.
34 There is from last winter, the Joint Technical Committee
35 meeting, they created a subcommittee that's looking into
36 collecting the data, putting it together to come up with
37 are the fish getting smaller, why are they getting
38 smaller, options of where to proceed from here. So, yes,
39 to answer your question, things are being done at this
40 point. If I'm correct, at the YR DFA meeting October 30th
41 they should be presenting a paper to present some of
42 their findings and a possible where to proceed from here.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Got any comments, Don?

45
46 MR. HONEA: No.

47 MR. STICKMAN: Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Mickey.

50

1 MR. STICKMAN: One of the things I saw
2 this summer was in the early pulse the fish were small.
3 I didn't catch any real big kings until the very last
4 pulse and even then it wasn't, like I say, like 11 years
5 ago when you'd get maybe 60 to 70 percent of your kings
6 would be over 35 pounds. The last couple years I'd say
7 the average is between 25 and 30 pounds, but it's nothing
8 like 10 or 15 years ago where 60 percent of the fish you
9 catch were basically over 30 pounds. We used to be able
10 to catch fish that were as much as 70 to 75 pounds and we
11 don't see that anymore.

12
13 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Stickman.
14 I guess in reference you are correct earlier in the run
15 and if you look at the season summary report, if you have
16 it, Table 1, we had a higher proportion of five-year-olds
17 early in the run than we expected, which caused the
18 average weight to go down. We did see the larger fish,
19 the six-year-olds, increase more as the run went through,
20 which you can actually see through the commercial
21 harvest. So early in the run there were more five-year-
22 olds than expected. We expected the five-year-olds to be
23 average. They were a little above average this year.
24 Six-year-olds were a little lower than we expected, which
25 caused the average weight to be around 19 pounds.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other
28 comments from the Council. I have a few comments myself.
29 This Pilot Station has had problems with apportionment
30 and so forth. What's the confidence level of the
31 passages, these passage of 168,000 chinook, and the
32 second pulse is showing up as weak? Is there a problem
33 with chum salmon inundation and with the high water and
34 turbidity, what is the confidence level at Pilot Station?

35
36 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. The 2006
37 season for Pilot Station because there were a high
38 abundance of summer chum salmon it was more difficult for
39 them to apportion out the kings. So anything at this
40 point we would assume that the king numbers are a
41 conservative estimate at this time. They're pretty
42 confident that the 168 is a good number, but it most
43 likely should be higher. I'm sorry, what was your second
44 question.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the turbidity,
47 does that affect -- with this level of water or the
48 turbidity levels, were they actually getting the beam out
49 to the middle of the river?

50

1 MR. HAYES: Well, beginning last year
2 they started to deploy the Ditson Sonar after the problem
3 where they were missing the fish, so they were able to
4 move that around as needed. So they feel that their aim
5 was good this year and that things were working well.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

8

9 MR. COLLINS: I had a question of
10 interest. Are you getting sockeyes showing up in the
11 Yukon? They seem to be expanding in the Kuskokwim. For
12 instance in the Tokatna weir up there they had one or two
13 show up about two years ago. There were 60 of them this
14 year. I was wondering if they were picking up any
15 incidental sockeye up in the Yukon.

16

17 MR. HAYES: Typically in our test fishery
18 at the mouth we'll catch a few of them every year, but no
19 large numbers. I think it was 2004 we actually saw an
20 increase, like 60 or so we had caught. I can't say in
21 the escapement projects because I don't track the sockeye
22 that well in those.

23

24 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Collins.
25 The East Fork Andreafsky weir has -- we have been keeping
26 track of those and there does seem to be a slight
27 increase but my recollection is it has annually been less
28 than a couple hundred.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. This first
31 commercial harvest had 62 percent males. What would be
32 your feeling on why that -- did the run still maintain
33 that disproportionate number of males throughout the run
34 then?

35

36 MR. HAYES: No, as the run progresses,
37 typically more females come in. Early on we see more
38 males, which gave us more confidence to actually have the
39 period, is that we would be harvesting more males at that
40 time.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another one of my
43 comments is, so you had set this June 15th date, the run
44 was running behind schedule and you put a three-hour
45 opening period and they harvested 900 fish. If the run
46 had been on time, would you still have had three hours or
47 reduced that? What was your target for harvest?

48

49 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. The target
50 after we had the meeting in Ruby was, to me, looking at

1 around 1,000 fish. Because the run was late this year it
2 was safer that we would be at that harvest level. If the
3 run was more on time, the opportunity was there to catch
4 a higher number of fish. So, as I said, it did work out
5 well and we based it on a pre-season projection that the
6 run would be similar to 2005 and average to below
7 average. So to us, the Department, it worked out well on
8 how we put it into action. As I said, if we would have
9 gone more towards a normal run timing, we could have
10 harvested more fish. Which is not what we wanted to do.
11 We wanted to stick in that 1,000 fish area.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's my primary
14 concern is that you get a slightly earlier break up time
15 and you've got the main pulse, first pulse, on target on
16 the 15th of June and you have a commercial opening. I'm
17 very concerned about that. And harvesting tens of
18 thousands of chinook at one whack right off the front
19 portion of that run. That's my primary concern. I feel
20 it's setting undue precedence for setting a date. I
21 consider it very risky. The commercial interest is
22 strictly a periphery to the subsistence needs on the Yukon
23 River and the escapement, so I'm very concerned about
24 that. It showed this year that with the late run you
25 harvested near your target.

26
27 One-hour openings, I used to fish down in
28 Bristol Bay. Commercial fishermen are very adroit at
29 finding out where those fish are and harvesting, so I
30 would be very concerned about lengthy periods. The
31 quarter point with average run strengths and stuff and
32 staying within timing of the run, but setting dates, I
33 consider this a very risky management regime and I'm very
34 concerned about that. If we're saying reduced coho size,
35 we may be looking at some reduced run strengths in the
36 future. I'm going to be very concerned if we start
37 harvesting large numbers of fish on these peak first
38 pulses. That's what my primary concern is.

39
40 And you gave the total for the chinook
41 fishery. What was the price per pound that was being
42 paid down there average compared to last year?

43
44 MR. HAYES: For this year it was around
45 \$3.94 for the kings and the average from '96 to 2005 is
46 \$2.89 a pound, so they had a really high price this year
47 for them.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So my opinion is that
50 Yukon chinook are a very high demand fish in Japan and

1 that the culturing of this fishery is -- there will
2 always be demand for those fish and risking the health of
3 the fishery by setting target dates for harvest I
4 consider is not prudent sustained yield management. So I
5 want to voice my opinion about that and I think you got
6 by with it this year because you were kind of lucky with
7 the late run and still harvesting near that 1,000 fish
8 threshold.

9
10 I'm going to be very interested in the
11 direction of this management in the future. I'm very
12 concerned about these marine oscillations. I don't think
13 we're out of the woods on this thing. We've got some
14 good runs coming back, but the fall chum run coming back
15 weak, the small coho size. I think the managers should
16 be very concerned about another productivity downturn on
17 the chinook runs for this next season. Okay, that's my
18 comments. Any other comments from the Council. Ben.

19
20 MR. JONES: Yeah, on a June 15 commercial
21 opening you had a small three-hour opening. It was
22 mostly for marketing down in Colorado and California.
23 Did they meet the market down there for that opening?

24
25 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Jones. The
26 marketing was more for the fresh market. They're losing
27 the Japanese market, which typically they bought most of
28 the kings off the river and the lower river, so they were
29 trying to bolster the fresh market, which they need more
30 of an indicator when the fish are going to be available.

31
32 One thing I would like to point out with
33 the June 15th opening is that while we did say we'd look
34 at doing it, we left our options open not to have the
35 opening. In other words, we said based on our pre-season
36 projection but also on in-season run assessment. So at
37 any time we felt it wasn't do-able, we wouldn't have done
38 it. So your concern for the future, nothing is set.
39 There's no guarantee this will even happen next year.
40 What I'd like to see from these future meetings this
41 winter is how it worked, to get people's input, and, of
42 course, there's two proposals in front of the Board of
43 Fish to address this issue.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other
46 comments. Mickey.

47
48 MR. STICKMAN: I was there at the YRDFA
49 annual meeting when they came up with this June 15th
50 opening and they had a specific goal for that opening and

1 I was wondering if they met that goal. There was a
2 reason for it and I was just wondering if they met their
3 goal or the objective they had in mind, was that
4 accomplished.

5
6 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Stickman.
7 Actually, everything I've heard it worked out well, but
8 there was actually a marketing meeting yesterday in
9 Anchorage with YRDFA and the buyers and I wasn't able to
10 attend because I was traveling here. So until I get that
11 information I won't know exactly how well it worked.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments. I
14 would like to know about Ichthyophonus, but I think we're
15 coming down on a break here, so we might go for a 10, 15
16 minute break and come back. I want to know about
17 Ichthyophonus incidents.

18
19 Jackie. Do you want to come up to the
20 mike there, Jackie.

21
22 MR. WHOLECHEESE: I don't need a mike. I
23 have a question for Steve and Russ. On these commercial
24 fisheries do they sell the fish whole or do they sell the
25 roes alone? As a subsistence user I want to know this
26 because what do they do with the fish after they collect
27 the roe.

28
29 MR. HAYES: The fish that are harvested
30 in the lower river -- I mean obviously they're typically
31 taken for the flesh. Any of the roe that's taken out of
32 them, if they're going to Japan, Japan does keep the roe,
33 but they're not sought after for the roe.

34
35 MR. WHOLECHEESE: What do they do with
36 the fish, the whole fish? As a subsistence user, I
37 consider that wanton waste if they don't utilize it.

38
39 MR. HAYES: All of the fish is being
40 utilized. It's either going to the fresh market whole
41 and then at that point wherever it ends up they process
42 the fish, cut it up into filets. If it's going to Japan,
43 it's typically frozen whole and then sent to Japan.

44
45 MR. WHOLECHEESE: I mean in the old days
46 when commercial fishing first opened we used to buy the
47 eggs, but the person that used the eggs used to split the
48 fish and cut it up for dogs. I know for a fact because I
49 saw it happen on many fishwheels where a commercial
50 fisherman just stands there and gets the fish, gets the

1 eggs out, put it in the bucket and throw the fish in the
2 river. I'm pretty sure that's still being done. Do they
3 enforce that down there?

4
5 MR. HAYES: As I said, the fish that were
6 harvested, the kings, are being sought for the flesh.
7 The roe is a byproduct after they cut the fish up.
8 They're actually wanting the fish itself. It's not like
9 when we had the Anvik River fishery they were looking at
10 roe out of the chums and the flesh was actually not
11 useful. It's the total opposite in the lower river.

12
13 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Okay. I have a lot of
14 questions for these guys, but maybe I could do it later.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we've got to go
17 to a break, so we're going to take a break here for about
18 10, 15 minutes.

19
20 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Yeah, they've got to
21 clear their minds.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll be back --
24 it's about 11:00, so we'll be back at 11:15.

25
26 (Off record)

27
28 (On record)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to
31 reconvene this meeting. We were in Yukon fisheries and
32 Russ and Steve here. Jackie was asking questions. Come
33 up at the mike. They have to have this on record.

34
35 MR. WHOLECHEESE: I just have one more
36 question. In the summary you guys study all these fish
37 and in the winter a lot of us subsistence users have fish
38 nets under the ice. We're still catching fall chum maybe
39 -- well, last year I had a net in under the ice until
40 right before Christmas and I was still catching female
41 chum in my whitefish net with eggs in them. Do you guys
42 study fish in the winter?

43
44 MR. HAYES: The simple answer is no, we
45 do not. We monitor the run up until fall season.
46 They're pretty much getting done at this point. So
47 anything when it freezes up, no, they're not monitoring
48 it.

49
50 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Well, you're doing all

1 these studies. Why not try and go year round? Maybe
2 you'll come up with some answers of what's happening to
3 our summer runs. I caught a king last year, believe it
4 or not, in November under the ice.

5
6 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman. I would
7 characterize that as part of the genetic variability
8 within fish that allows them to survive a lot of
9 different conditions. It doesn't surprise me that much
10 to have a few that are coming in way out here in November
11 and even December. It is interesting, but I think in
12 part that's part of the fish's ability to survive some of
13 the different conditions they encounter both in the ocean
14 and variability of the streams.

15
16 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Also I'm catching some
17 jack salmon, females, with a lot of loose eggs, and
18 they're small. They're only about one pound. When you
19 start to pull them out of the net, all the eggs come
20 shooting out. That's something we have to keep studying.
21 Where are they going to spawn? I catch maybe four or
22 five a day, females, that's that small. I throw them in
23 the dog pot, but that's just enough for one pup.

24
25 With that, that's all I have. That's
26 just some information I'd like to share with the Board
27 and Fish and Game.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jackie.
30 Those are very interesting comments. Unless there's any
31 other questions from the Council, I appreciate the Yukon
32 fishery overview for 2006. So we can go down to the
33 Kuskokwim River presentation at this time.

34
35 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, John Linderman,
36 the area manager, is not here, so Eric Newland will be
37 giving a brief overview.

38
39 MR. MATHEWS: Also, Jack, Ray has agreed
40 to go to the fall post-season review and has for several
41 years now gone to the pre-season meeting on the Kuskokwim
42 and the post, and he has kept you informed. But I think
43 it should be recognized that it's a tremendous effort on
44 Ray's part to do that. So that's coming up and I don't
45 remember the dates, November 6th and 7th.

46
47 MR. COLLINS: In that regard, Mr.
48 Chairman, I'd just like to note for future reference
49 that's really been an education for me because that's
50 when you get a report of what they learned during the

1 summer, so it's been very informative and I think you
2 should keep that in mind in the future. I don't know
3 when I'll stop going to these, but it's real worthwhile
4 to send another member there.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I appreciate
7 that Ray. At this time you fellows can go right ahead.

8
9 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you. Again, my name
10 is Eric Newland. I work for the Department of Fish and
11 Game. The 2006 Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries were
12 managed according to the Kuskokwim River Salmon
13 Rebuilding Management Plan for chinook and chum salmon
14 stocks identified as stocks of yield concern. Kuskokwim
15 Bay salmon fisheries were managed according to the
16 District 4 Salmon Management Plan and the associated
17 regulations.

18
19 From the beginning of the season there
20 was a good showing of chinook and chum salmon throughout
21 the Kuskokwim area. Chinook salmon abundance was
22 characterized as average to above average while sockeye
23 and chum salmon abundance was characterized as above
24 average to near record with average to late run timing
25 for all three species. Coho salmon abundance was
26 characterized as average with overall average run timing.
27 Amounts necessary for subsistence use is expected to have
28 been achieved throughout the area.

29
30 Kuskokwim River District 1, the
31 subsistence fishing schedule was implemented according to
32 the Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan and
33 was put into effect June 4th from Bogus Creek downstream,
34 June 11th from Chuathbaluk downstream. Subsistence
35 fishing schedule was discontinued on June 18th when it
36 was scheduled to go into effect for the entire drainage.
37 Subsistence fishing remained open for the remainder of
38 the season with the exception of closed periods six hours
39 before, during and three hours after commercial fishing
40 periods. Subsistence harvest was described as good to
41 very good for chinook, chum and sockeye salmon. The
42 amounts necessary for subsistence use is expected to have
43 been achieved.

44
45 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working
46 Group met 11 times in 2006. Fishery management
47 information was presented by the working group members,
48 State and Federal staff, tribal organizations, fishery
49 partners and the public. Information discussed included
50 subsistence and commercial fishing reports from the

1 Working Group members and the public, the Lower Kuskokwim
2 subsistence catch monitoring report, test fish project
3 summaries, and reports from weir, tagging, sonar, and
4 aerial survey programs.

5
6 Two subdistrict chum and sockeye salmon
7 directed commercial fishing periods occurred in District
8 1 from June 26th to June 28th. Seventeen commercial
9 fishing periods occurred from August 1st through August
10 30th when the District 1 fishery was redirected towards
11 the harvest of coho salmon.

12
13 Chinook salmon escapements were evaluated
14 through aerial surveys on 13 index streams. Enumerations
15 at weirs on six tributary streams and bycatch abundance
16 at a mainstem tagging project near Upper Kalskag.
17 Chinook escapement in 2006 were above average and nearly
18 all monitored locations, with the exception of the
19 Tatlawiksuk River where escapement was near average.
20 Kogrukluk River chinook escapement exceeded the
21 escapement goal range and all aerial survey escapements
22 were either exceeded or within their respective
23 escapement goal ranges. Chinook salmon escapements in
24 2006 were consistent with the general trend of increasing
25 chinook salmon abundance in the Kuskokwim River since the
26 low abundance years of 1998, '99 and 2000.

27
28 Sockeye salmon escapements were monitored
29 at each of the six tributary weir projects; however,
30 sockeye are not a prominent species in many of these
31 systems. Among these locations, Kogrukluk and Kwethluk
32 Rivers receive the largest sockeye escapements.
33 Kogrukluk and Kwethluk River sockeye salmon passage in
34 2006 was at a record high. Sockeye salmon catch at the
35 mainstem tagging project near Upper Kalskag indicated a
36 stronger abundance of sockeye salmon in 2006 compared to
37 the previous record escapement of 2005. Data collection
38 from the sockeye tagging project will continue through
39 September.

40
41 Chum salmon escapements were evaluated
42 through enumeration at weirs on six tributary streams, a
43 tributary sonar project on the Aniak River and bycatch
44 abundance at the tagging project near Upper Kalskag.
45 Chum escapements in 2006 were at record highs in the
46 Kwethluk, George and Takotna monitoring projects and
47 above average at the Tuluksak and Tatlawiksuk monitoring
48 projects. Escapements were well above the Kogrukluk and
49 Aniak escapement goal ranges. Kogrukluk River weir and
50 Aniak River sonar escapements were near record highs.

1 Chum escapements were exceptionally low in 1999 and 2000
2 and nearly all chum salmon escapements observed since
3 that time have been above those years.

4 Coho salmon escapements were evaluated
5 through enumeration at weirs on six tributary streams and
6 bycatch abundance at the mainstem tagging project near
7 Upper Kalskag. Coho salmon escapements in 2006 were
8 average to below average at the majority of monitored
9 locations with the exceptions of the Kalskag tagging
10 project where coho salmon catches were higher compared to
11 2005, and the Takotna River weir where coho salmon
12 escapement was above average. Escapement at Kogruklu
13 River weir was within the escapement goal range. Coho
14 salmon in the Kuskokwim river was extremely low in the
15 late 1990s but has generally improved since that time.

16
17 Let's move on to Kuskokwim Bay, District
18 4. Subsistence fishing in Quinhagak and Goodnews Bay
19 areas was allowed seven days per week throughout the
20 season with the exception of closed periods 16 hours
21 before, during and six hours after commercial fishing
22 periods. Subsistence harvests were characterized as
23 adequate and amounts necessary for subsistence use is
24 expected to have been achieved.

25
26 For escapement, chinook and sockeye
27 salmon aerial surveys were flown over the Kanektok River
28 drainage on July 31st and August 1st. A total of
29 approximately 8,500 chinook and 380,000 sockeye salmon
30 were observed. Kanektok River chinook and sockeye salmon
31 aerial survey escapement goals were exceeded. The
32 sockeye salmon aerial survey count was at a record high
33 and almost three and a half times higher than the
34 previous record count of 110,000 fish in 2005.

35
36 The Kanektok River weir was not operating
37 in 2006 because the majority of the weir was damaged
38 beyond repair from remaining in river during the winter
39 of 2005-2006. Funding for the 2006 weir operations was
40 redirected towards the purchase of and construction of
41 new weir materials. Several delays in transportation and
42 delivery of replacement materials were encountered during
43 the 2006 season. The project crew has completed repair
44 and reconstruction of the Kanektok River weir. All new
45 and repaired materials have been transported to the weir
46 site and they are staged for installation in 2007.
47 Additionally, the project crew took advantage of the low
48 water level at the weir site in early August and
49 completed installation of the new weir rail.
50 Installation of the weir rail this season greatly

1 increased the likelihood of timely weir installation and
2 operation in 2007.

3
4 The Middle Fork Goodnews River was
5 operational from June 26th through September 7th with
6 preliminary escapement counts of approximately 4,500
7 chinook, 125,000 sockeye, 13,000 coho and approximately
8 55,000 chum salmon. Sockeye and chum salmon counts were
9 the highest on record, exceeding previous records counts
10 of 111,000 sockeye salmon in 2005 and 40,000 chum salmon
11 in 1996. The chinook and sockeye salmon escapement goals
12 were exceeded in the chum and coho salmon escapement goal
13 thresholds were achieved. Coho salmon escapement is
14 believed to be higher because weir counts were suspended
15 prematurely on September 7th as a result of continuous
16 high water conditions. Chinook and sockeye salmon aerial
17 surveys were flown over the Goodnews River drainage on
18 August 2nd.

19
20 A total of 4,159 chinook and 78,000
21 sockeye salmon were observed in the North Fork Goodnews
22 River. The North Fork Goodnews River chinook and sockeye
23 salmon aerial survey escapement goals were exceeded with
24 sockeye salmon counts at a record high.

25
26 The Middle Fork Goodnews River aerial
27 survey was incomplete because of poor survey conditions
28 in the upper portion of the drainage. That concludes my
29 report.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any
32 comments or questions from the Council.

33
34 MR. COLLINS: I don't have a question. I
35 just have a comment. Again, for future information on
36 the Council, the concern is still to allow the chinook,
37 which is the most important, to get upriver. Even though
38 there was enough provided over the season, because it was
39 late this year there was concern from the mid-river and
40 up those fish weren't showing up and they didn't know
41 what the end result was going to be. What happens on the
42 Kuskokwim is that about 80 percent of the king salmon
43 harvest is in that lower river from Bethel down below and
44 about half of that, 80 is right in Bethel, so Bethel has
45 a tremendous impact on what's happening.

46
47 One of my long-term goals there in terms
48 of management is to see how -- we tried the windows to
49 let fish by, but the study that they've done over there
50 on the windows indicated that it hasn't distributed the

1 catch throughout the season because during the window
2 when it's open the people are fishing harder, so they're
3 still taking most of their fish early in the season
4 because that's drying weather and so on. So it hasn't
5 resulted in a reduction of the catch early in the season
6 and there's concern I know from the upper river that fish
7 be getting by.

8
9 So the question for management in the
10 future is how we're going to manage, especially with a
11 growing population in Bethel there, and that's where the
12 river narrows down. It starts narrowing down below those
13 villages even though they take a lot of fish, they're
14 spread out across a wider water column. But there, if
15 you have most of the fishing going right there, they
16 could have a big impact.

17
18 My concern is that fishing methods have
19 changed. There used to be a lot of setnets along the
20 shore, but now the majority of them is probably taken by
21 drifting and with large nets like the eight-inch mesh and
22 so on there, they can have a tremendous impact on that
23 run. So I think some of those issues you have over in
24 the Kuskokwim, too.

25
26 How do you manage that to make sure
27 you're getting fish up there and are we targeting just
28 the big fish even by subsistence by just using those
29 large nets? That's the thing we're going to have to
30 think about on the Kuskokwim, is what do we do with -- it
31 was a growing population. I guess it's stabilizing in
32 Bethel now, there wasn't quite as much growth this year,
33 but a big part of the harvest is going on right there. I
34 know you can't manage for one community.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
37 from the Council. I would echo Ray's concern on that.
38 As far as I know, there's been no telemetry project on
39 the Kuskokwim to find out the run distribution for the
40 front portion of that chinook run into the upper drainage
41 or whether that, like the Yukon, is spread protracted
42 across a larger portion of the run. Is there such a
43 study?

44
45 MR. COLLINS: From what I've gathered
46 there is a higher proportion in that early run of the
47 ones heading up there from the timing with the tagging
48 and when they show up at the Takotna and so on. They
49 have been tagging fish and tracking them up there. It
50 does seem earlier in the run a lot of the ones, like for

1 the Takotna River and up in the McGrath area, are coming
2 through their fairly early. When they had the
3 commercial, I think one of the reasons they continued is
4 the commercial didn't start until later over there, so
5 that allowed some of them to get by. I think there is a
6 different distribution of those fish over there than what
7 I'm hearing from the Yukon.

8

9 MR. HAYES: I can't answer the question
10 for you, but what I can relay is that any questions you
11 do have I can relay to Mr. Linderman and you will get a
12 response back from him.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would also echo
15 Ray's concern about harvesting all the fish off the front
16 component. Maybe it should be warranted to have a
17 regulatory reduction in the window length so all of the
18 subsistence harvest aren't occurring all on the front
19 portion of the run. That isn't wise distribution of
20 harvest. I do know they have a lot of problems with
21 drying down there on the Lower Yukon and so forth.

22

23 As that community grows and it's
24 approaching such a huge size and such a large harvest
25 capacity, I would be concerned about impacting with large
26 mesh gear. Two main factors: that amount of gear
27 deployment during a longer period of time to subject that
28 run to a reduction in the front component. So I think
29 the Council should think about that and a possible future
30 proposal for a window length reduction. Maybe just a few
31 hours. It's exponential. As the amount of gear
32 deployment, number of permits in the expansion, there has
33 to be a set parameter of proper harvest. So this Council
34 may have to entertain a proposal for reduction in window
35 length on the front portion of that run.

36

37 What would you think about that, Ray?

38

39 MR. COLLINS: Well, I was thinking a lot
40 about this in the fall meeting down there and at one
41 point I was thinking of proposing -- they're thinking of
42 actually eliminating the windows because it doesn't seem
43 to be doing what they want it to do on that. I thought
44 that one of the prices for doing that would be to not
45 allow -- anybody could fish seven days a week in setnets,
46 but the drifters would be restricted during that early
47 season with eight-inch mesh, but I haven't actually come
48 up with a proposal. The ones heading upriver tend to go
49 out deeper and faster. By drifting, especially at the
50 Bethel area there where it starts to get a little

1 shallower and more restricted, drifting with eight-inch
2 net, they're hitting those big ones, too. So I was
3 thinking of some way of kind of reducing that if they
4 actually lift the windows off because it doesn't seem to
5 be working. We need to think about it, but I don't have
6 an answer right now what a proposal would do.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think this is going
9 to be an issue that's going to continue to escalate on
10 the Kuskokwim River with that large of a community there.
11 I think it behooves the Department to consider those
12 impacts to the front component. Ben.

13
14 MR. JONES: On your mesh size, do you
15 have a regulation on your mesh size over in the Kuskokwim
16 and the length of the net? On the Yukon it's 150 foot
17 and 45 mesh deep.

18
19 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Jones. I
20 can look it up. I don't know offhand what the regulation
21 is, but I can get that information for you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The other question
24 that I had, you know, the sockeye run was large or much
25 larger than normal. Are those sockeye an average weight
26 or are they fairly small or did you have any kind of idea
27 what the health of that -- it would seem that there's a
28 large biomass, but I was wondering if they're competing
29 with each other. So size of salmon for managers should
30 be really looked at closely. Especially I'm a little gun
31 shy after these crashes in the AYK stocks. So I'm
32 wondering how the biomass is doing in the marine system.

33
34 MR. HAYES: My understanding, the same as
35 it was in the Yukon, cohos were smaller, but as far as
36 sockeye things are fine.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

39
40 MR. MATHEWS: If it is the wishes of the
41 Councils to look at various options on the concern on
42 concentration of fishing pressure and timing -- Ray, is
43 this meeting on the 6th and 7th kind of a real working
44 group meeting or is it -- I mean you could carry from
45 this Council the concerns and say to the working group
46 give us some solutions, we're willing to work with you,
47 but I don't know if your 6th and 7th meeting is a working
48 group meeting.

49
50 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. No, Vince,

1 it's for all the people doing research projects. It's an
2 interagency, both Federal and State, to share the
3 information of what they learned through the season and
4 there's a couple Council members there that sit in on
5 that, but it's really not a working group. There would
6 be a spring pre-season when there would be a working
7 group meeting, but not in the fall.

8
9 MR. MATHEWS: Correct me if I'm wrong,
10 Ray, that spring meeting would be after the Council
11 meetings, which would be after the time to submit
12 proposals. So we've kind of got a missing link here.
13 Your Council would rather have it come up from the
14 grassroots than to send one out to find it's the wrong
15 ship. So I don't know of any solution here. I'm only
16 reading Jack here. I don't know whether the whole
17 Council wants to go with this, but there seems to be some
18 kind of intermediary here that could do this and then
19 report back to you guys. If it's still a concern of the
20 users there as well as the Council, then a proposal would
21 be drafted in March. Is there an intermediary there,
22 Ray? What I'm signaling you guys don't want to get ahead
23 of that working group.

24
25 MR. COLLINS: The working group had their
26 fall wrap-up meeting in Bethel not too long ago and I
27 attended that. There was some discussion of this, but we
28 didn't come up with any solutions or proposals. So I
29 don't know of any other opportunity right now.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My opinion is that
32 doing away with the windows is not prudent. I feel that
33 the windows are a real viable management tool and doing
34 away with the windows would not be a prudent thing to do.
35 Going to seven days a week would just basically inundate
36 that first component with harvest. I can see trying to
37 put the longer window harvest on the setnet harvest
38 component and reducing the drift component in numbers of
39 hours and trying to maintain subsistence harvest with
40 setnet as a more traditional means and not target the
41 upriver component. There's going to have to be something
42 to reduce that population of people that's growing so
43 rapidly down there. You're going to have to have a
44 mechanism to maintain subsistence use, but not damage the
45 resource. Reducing the drift component and maintaining
46 more setnet hours but still maintaining windows. Do away
47 with windows and, oh, man, we're going to be screwed.

48
49 MR. JONES: Driftnetting in Galena area,
50 we set the regulation the last 18 hours of the

1 subsistence opening window. So I think if you want to do
2 the driftnetting in the Kuskokwim area it would be the
3 same thing, the last window opening hours, reduce the
4 driftnetting on the Kuskokwim.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would very much
7 agree with Ben. The window should be maintained for
8 setnet and reduction in harvest on the drift and the
9 drift would be in the last hours of that window. This
10 working group should really consider a proposal like
11 that. Vince.

12
13 MR. MATHEWS: Well, my understanding, the
14 working group doesn't meet within the window to submit
15 Federal proposals. I'm drawing a blank on the State side
16 of when the due date is for Kuskokwim proposals. It
17 would be two, three years down the road. There is one
18 other avenue. You guys meet March 6th and 7th in Aniak.
19 Y-K meets the following week in Hooper Bay on the 15th
20 and 16th. You could at your March meeting put together
21 proposals or ideas pending consultation with the
22 neighboring Council, but the difficulty with that is you
23 don't have a backfeed mechanism. If they come up with
24 something you guys really like, you can't react to it
25 because you haven't met.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm reluctant to
28 submit a Federal proposal without the working group's
29 concurrence and without a State joint proposal also. The
30 Board of Fish isn't coming before a regulatory review for
31 a few more years. I think we should be spending time on
32 this issue and the working group should mull this over.
33 I think this Council has been strong on maintaining
34 windows. I think the windows are a viable management
35 tool. There can be a disparity in the gear types to
36 address a portion of that harvest in the first windows.
37 I know we don't want to completely eliminate subsistence
38 use down there. I don't want to put a Federal proposal
39 out in front of the whole system, so I don't want to go
40 there. That would be my comment. I would prefer the
41 working group to address these issues.

42
43 The eight-inch mesh I'm very strong on
44 that issue. I feel that utilizing large mesh gear --
45 I've always felt the Department should go through a mesh
46 size selective harvest data for each drainage of harvest.
47 Where you have the primary harvest on the Lower Yukon and
48 Lower Kuskokwim Rivers that a selection of mesh size
49 should be optimum harvest should be obtained.
50

1 The majority of small fish should be
2 retained by the dorsal and gilling the large fish.
3 Straining the waters with large mesh gear and letting all
4 the small fish go through the net, it doesn't take a
5 rocket scientist to figure out what's happening here.
6 Propagating small genetics in different age class.
7 Everybody is talking about small fish and we need to get
8 a handle on this. YRDFA was going to do that. I don't
9 know what happened with that one.

10
11 This large mesh selection is past due on
12 this coming to an optimum harvest. If you're going to
13 harvest, you have an opening, you should harvest
14 everything that's there, not just straining the water.
15 It can't be too small. I fished down in Bristol Bay and
16 I've seen guys fish too small gear and they gill on the
17 face and they fall out of the net. You can't go the
18 other way either. There's an optimum size for harvest
19 where you catch the majority of the fish and you retain
20 them. That's the direction this fishery should be going.
21 That would be my comment on that issue.

22
23 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. That brings
24 you up to a new line that we added in at last meeting,
25 which is other timely organization /agency reports
26 because these agendas are creating five, six months in
27 advance. You and I talked with a TCC representative.
28 They didn't have any timely organization reports, but
29 there is a representative here of AVCP and others. So
30 that line is to allow others to come up to the mike if
31 they have some other reports.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are there other people
34 that would like to comment at this time.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. That brings
39 us up to, and they've been deferred, you've been informed
40 of the deferral of the Yukon River proposals. If you
41 have any questions on that, Don is here to answer those
42 questions. I don't know if Becca is carrying information
43 on any updates on the YRDFA -- this is the old title,
44 Stakeholders Group progress report, but this is an
45 opportunity to give an update on where that's at. I
46 don't know if there's anything new, but that's what's on
47 the agenda.

48
49 MS. ROBBINS: Hi, I'm Becca Robbins with
50 the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. The only

1 update I have is I just wanted to make sure everyone
2 knows about the meeting that we're planning to discuss
3 the changing size of Yukon River chinook and we've
4 scheduled it for October 30th in Anchorage. Basically
5 the day is kind of scheduled around getting observations
6 from people on the river on what they're seeing as far as
7 the changing size of fish.

8

9 We have three presentations scheduled.
10 One is kind of a general overview of what we know in
11 terms of scientific data on the changing size and part of
12 that is going to be the white paper that Steve Hayes had
13 mentioned earlier out of the Joint Technical Committee
14 from the Yukon River panel and just presenting what we
15 have and what data can be analyzed down the road to give
16 us some hard numbers on what's happening.

17

18 Also we have a presentation on what's
19 occurring out in the marine environment and how ocean
20 productivity might be impacting the size of fish. And
21 finally have a presentation on genetics and the impacts
22 in terms of fish population that you get from decreasing
23 sizes of fish. Then we're hoping we can spend a good
24 part of the afternoon on that day really getting people
25 to work through what they've heard and what they've
26 experienced and looking at the Board of Fish proposals
27 that we have in front of us trying to see if there are
28 things that people can agree on as far as what to do from
29 there. So I just wanted to give you that update and hope
30 that you can make it to that meeting.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I won't be able to
33 attend that meeting. I was wondering if the Council had
34 any comments for YRDFA before I start my questions.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My primary question
39 revolves around a few years back YRDFA was going to come
40 up with a net size selection study and I've yet to find
41 anything out about that. Is that part of the discussion
42 at this workshop?

43

44 MS. ROBBINS: It's not. There was talk
45 of a study looking at size selectivity from gillnets and
46 Chris Stark was working on that. We still don't have a
47 final paper out on that.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did that entail
50 utilizing various sized mesh in the Lower Yukon for

1 harvest or was that just taking data from incidental
2 information?

3

4 MS. ROBBINS: He was using existing data,
5 so he wasn't out with a net. That's all the information
6 I have on that. I can get you more information if you're
7 interested specifically.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If you can bring
10 anything back from that meeting to this Council, it's
11 chronic, this reduction in size of fish on the Yukon
12 River. We've got various members that fish on the river
13 speaking to the issue of reduced size, not even seeing
14 large fish anymore. They're almost extinct here. It's
15 super recessive. This is way past due. YRDFA has to
16 come around to protect the fishery. YRDFA has to be the
17 advocate for the fishery. This net size selection, in my
18 opinion, is the primary reason why the size of fish has
19 been reduced. It is straining the water. So this
20 Council is very concerned with the size of fish in the
21 Yukon River. We're getting more fish but we're not
22 getting bigger fish, so that doesn't make any sense.

23

24 YRDFA has a large component of the
25 membership is from the lower river that uses large mesh
26 gear and I feel that YRDFA is far too weighted to the
27 lower river interest of harvesting for commercial and
28 using commercial gear for subsistence. I have some real
29 strong concerns about that.

30

31 MS. ROBBINS: I'll certainly bring those
32 concerns back to the meeting. The whole purpose of the
33 meeting is to get people together from the whole river
34 and not to have it weighted one way or another, so we're
35 hoping this will be a good opportunity for people to talk
36 that through. I'm glad there will be a representative
37 from your group as well.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Cliff.

40

41 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
42 My name is Cliff Schleusner. I'm a fisheries biologist
43 with the Office of Subsistence Management. I'm actually
44 a member of that JTC Chinook Size Subcommittee, so I
45 thought it might be appropriate to kind of fill you in on
46 this white paper and what the subcommittee is about.

47

48 Basically we've got representatives from
49 ADF&G, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, YRDFA and the
50 DFO all getting together. The initial intent was to look

1 at the existing research, what was out there and present
2 that in front of the Board of Fish. The white paper you
3 heard mentioned here today, basically there's five
4 chapters to the white paper. There's going to be a
5 history of the chinook commercial harvest as well as a
6 summary of the available data. That will be one section
7 of it. There's a summary of the existing research that's
8 been done on ASL, the age/sex/length for Yukon River
9 chinook. There's a section on inheritability of
10 basically what is known, what's out on the literature
11 about how fish inherit size from their parents. There's
12 a section on ocean survival, so the changing in the
13 Bering Sea, summarizing what's been going on there.
14 There's actually a section on net selectivity.

15
16 Jeff Bromagin has done a comprehensive
17 study on net selectivity and has the curves that show
18 what size mesh catches what size fish and that will be
19 summarized in the white paper. The sections of the
20 presentation that will be given at the YRDFA are being
21 drawn from that white paper.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm very happy to hear
24 about that. How recent is that study and can I obtain a
25 copy of that study?

26
27 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Certainly. I think
28 that's a couple years old and I can shoot you a copy of
29 that, Jack.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This Council and the
32 Eastern Interior has been very concerned about this issue
33 and I'm happy to see the progress on this white paper.
34 I'm going to be highly attuned to the progress of that.
35 Ray.

36
37 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I think
38 there may be one component of this issue that's missing
39 in our research and data and that is how has subsistence
40 practices been changing. From my impression, like on the
41 Kuskokwim at least, traditionally there were setnets and
42 people that were fishing closer to the actual streams and
43 when commercial came in and made the bigger gear
44 affordable, people shifted more to drifting out there.
45 If that's the case, even now I think in recent years
46 instead of going to fish camp and using setnets, many
47 people are going out and drifting, so they're still
48 making changes there. So that's something if we could
49 get historical data I think by the subsistence division
50 on how those are changing, you can't just look at the

1 commercial or the net size itself but how the actual
2 practices are changing. We might have to see how we can
3 modify that then. Subsistence practices that would
4 accommodate what we're trying to do.

5
6 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Ray. Not
7 to get ahead of ourselves here, but one of the things
8 coming up on your agenda is the 2007 Fisheries Resource
9 Monitoring Plan. Before the Council today is actually a
10 project looking at changes in harvest pattern
11 specifically addressing that issue on the Yukon River.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. What do you
14 think, Vince? We're coming down on lunch.

15
16 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, the women are
17 hovering around me here, so I think it's lunch time. You
18 need to give a time to report back. And I failed to
19 announce people do need to sign in. We need to know
20 who's here and do things like that.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tom.

23
24 MR. KRON: Mr. Chairman. I guess just a
25 final comment on the process that YRDFA is embarking on.
26 I first started hearing concern about size selective gear
27 in I think 1997. There was an effort at that time led by
28 the Department to look at the data working with the
29 Canadians to see what data is available and the challenge
30 is we don't have size information from spawners on
31 spawning grounds going back very far. There's been size
32 selection going on for 80-plus years. Again, we don't
33 have data going back that far, particularly for the
34 spawning grounds. So it gets to be a challenge and then
35 you're trying to look at changes that have occurred in
36 recent years. So it's hard.

37
38 I guess what I wanted to point out was I
39 feel like we're making progress in addressing this issue.
40 YRDFA has identified it as an issue of concern that they
41 want to address. I think all the concerns this Council
42 and others have been raising are being heard. Again,
43 there are regulatory proposals that will be addressed on
44 the State side with the State Board. The Federal Board
45 has deferred them, hoping again that working among all
46 the users on the river can generate some positive
47 results. This is a big issue. I think it's going to
48 take some time.

49
50 I think YRDFA has a history of working

1 with all fishermen along the river and able to work
2 things out. They essentially put together a regulatory
3 approach to deal with Toklat chums back in the early '90s
4 and then following that put together the fall chum
5 management plan. Essentially there have been
6 modifications made to it, but they've provided that
7 through their work with the public. They put together an
8 Anvik management plan. They put together a coho
9 management plan. They've made good progress in reaching
10 resolution on some very difficult issues and I think this
11 is probably the most difficult one they've tackled yet.

12
13 It seems as though we're making progress,
14 but we just have to keep pushing and keep listening and
15 talking.

16
17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for your
20 comment on YRDFA. I've always enjoyed YRDFA's work that
21 they've done on the Yukon River. I'm not defacing YRDFA.
22 I do have concerns on this very -- like Tom said, it's
23 one of the more tougher issues they're going to deal
24 with. I am concerned with the representation on YRDFA
25 and the user group, the large number of people that use
26 large mesh gear. I want YRDFA to be aware that I
27 personally have that concern. I think that's a component
28 of this deliberation and I'm happy that YRDFA has put
29 this at the top of their agenda.

30
31 It's been a big issue in the upriver
32 communities for many years, all the way to the border, so
33 I'm very pleased that this process is going forth. I do
34 feel that YRDFA does bring many people together and it's
35 more of a grassroots kind of thing, but I do have some
36 concerns on the process and the number of representation
37 of that gear size in this process. So I'm going to be
38 very interested in how this plays out and how this issue
39 is addressed. I'm very happy that OSM has been listening
40 to the Councils and has come forward. There's various
41 projects that are addressing this.

42
43 Any other comments from the Council on
44 that. Mickey.

45
46 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, you know, that's one
47 of the things we've been talking about for quite a while
48 now, is having mesh size restrictions. I don't want to
49 be picking on the lower river guys, but I normally do on
50 every teleconference. You look at their harvest and then

1 you look at the overall numbers of fish, you just have to
2 think they're taking all the big fish and not really
3 leaving anything for the spawning grounds really and
4 they're not giving any big fish for the people above
5 them. There's still 1,000 to 1,200 miles of river, but
6 basically they're targeting all the big fish with their
7 big mesh gear. They keep balking when we bring up the
8 subject of mesh gear restrictions.

9
10 I don't know how often they change their
11 gear down there, but I know fishing at Nulato myself I
12 know it can wear out my fish net in five or six years and
13 I have to buy a new net or not fish at all. I know they
14 balk at the economics, but you look at the overall
15 picture and they have a commercial fishery and they make
16 money. In Nulato or anywhere above there, there's no
17 money in fishing. The only reason we fish is so we can
18 eat. We don't have the option of selling fish or fish
19 eggs to replace gear but on the lower river they do.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we've covered
22 that to the most degree, so I think it's time for a break
23 for lunch. It's 12:20, so about an hour or so should be
24 good. We'll reconvene about 1:20 or so. Bona petit.

25
26 (Off record)

27
28 (On record)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to bring
31 this meeting back to order. I hope everybody had a great
32 lunch. I don't eat lunch myself, but it smells good. I
33 went down to the local store, as my custom when I go to
34 these villages and look at the meat prices. Not that I'm
35 going to buy any meat, but I like to know what people are
36 paying for beef. When I've attended meetings at the
37 Board of Game, the Subsistence Division, through no fault
38 of the Subsistence Division, but they state the
39 replacement value is \$5 a pound, but that's not what the
40 meat prices are here in Ruby for most of this stuff. I'm
41 looking at between 12.40 for steak and hamburger is 4.47,
42 so that's a bearing on our thought process about what the
43 moose replacement value is and the worth to the village,
44 the economic hardship of not getting a moose.

45
46 I'm still encouraging local people to
47 come this evening, around 7:00 o'clock, and get comments
48 from local people. If people are working, come down and
49 comment on how moose hunting is going and ideas people
50 have about how to remedy these harvests.

1 We're going to go back to our agenda
2 again. We were on B of 7, regulatory proposal review and
3 recommendations., Federal subsistence fisheries
4 proposals. Do you have something to present on that,
5 Don, the deferrals?
6

7 MR. RIVARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
8 Council members. Good afternoon. My name is Don Rivard.
9 I'm with the Office of Subsistence Management. As Vince
10 already pointed out, there were four proposals submitted
11 to the Federal Subsistence Board in the spring and those
12 were all from the Eastern Interior Regional Council. The
13 Board decided that they would defer those until next year
14 so that they could allow this YRDFA process to go on and
15 see if there's some recommendations and some other things
16 that come out of that meeting. That's all I have.
17

18 Thank you.
19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've got this
21 review of action items and recommendations. Who would
22 that be, Vince?
23

24 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. The reason I
25 put that down there is when this was put together I
26 wasn't real sure how the stakeholders or working group
27 was going to come together, so there might have been some
28 positional statements or something like that prior to the
29 stakeholder's group meeting that you guys would want to
30 comment on. That's not happening. You've already
31 discussed that you want a Council member there. That's
32 kind of in light of it. Subsequent to that we have
33 funded Council members to attend. That's basically a
34 non-issue item.
35

36 The one that comes up next is your call.
37 Your history with Board of Fish and Board of Game
38 proposals is generally you do not take them up. You allow
39 the local advisory committees to do that and etcetera,
40 but this is a little different. We sent you the
41 proposals ahead of time even though you most likely got
42 them from the State, but we felt since the four proposals
43 that were deferred on the Federal side are alive on the
44 State side we're not encouraging you to comment on them,
45 we're just saying we want to make sure you had them
46 available if you so desired. Don has a sheet if we want
47 to walk through those or you guys can just let him go.
48 There's other proposals besides those four that we've
49 looked at, but it's your call.
50

1 You do have standing with the Board of
2 Fish, the same as other individuals. You don't have a
3 preferred standing that you have like with the Federal
4 Board, but you do have a place there. Then under working
5 groups, I think they're called, I can't remember their
6 name, the committees, you have a standing seat on that.
7 We haven't even explored needing to send someone there.
8 So that's why they're there. We're here to help manage
9 you through it, but we would prefer if you have specific
10 questions about the proposals, there's in-season managers
11 and etcetera for the State here.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My feeling would be
14 that we would put that back in the agenda and move
15 forward past that. If we clean up our agenda by later in
16 the meeting, we can go look through those. We'll just
17 put those towards the back of this agenda. That would be
18 my feeling. I would prefer to get the agency comments
19 moved forward, so that would be one way of doing that.

20
21 So we'll come down to Item C, the
22 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, which Cliff is
23 going to do that presentation for us.

24
25 MR. MATHEWS: As you see, Polly was
26 listed on there. She's in advanced leadership training
27 course, I talked to Jack about it, which is an intensive
28 leadership training program. It's a high honor for her
29 to be in that, so she is way over her head on time, so
30 that's partially why she couldn't be here. I haven't
31 talked to her personally, but I'm sure that she would
32 like to be here for your meeting but these other demands
33 do not allow her. So Cliff is here to cover those
34 topics.

35
36 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
37 My name again is Cliff Schleusner. I'm a fisheries
38 biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.
39 Vince has a handout that he'll be passing out. Basically
40 I'll be covering the 2007 Draft Fisheries Resource
41 Monitoring Program today.

42
43 I'd like to just go through some of the
44 materials in the book, starting on Page 26 of your blue
45 Council book. One of the big parts of our program is the
46 Resource Monitoring branch where we actually fund
47 monitoring projects that look at subsistence fisheries.
48 You've heard today from the State and Federal managers
49 about the 2006 season outlook. A lot of the projects
50 that they're reporting on that they're assessing these

1 salmon runs are funded through the Office of Subsistence
2 Management through the monitoring program.

3
4 On Page 26 it gives a brief introduction,
5 some background materials on how the program was
6 initiated. The goal of the program has always been to
7 address the highest priority of subsistence issues, to
8 fund technically sound research projects that address
9 information to manage Federal subsistence fisheries.

10
11 Moving on, the 2007 Fisheries Resource
12 Monitoring Plan began last November with the call for
13 proposals, requesting agencies and NGO's or individuals
14 to submit proposals to do fisheries research. There's a
15 Technical Review Committee made of senior fisheries
16 biologists and anthropologists from the Alaska Department
17 of Fish and Game, BLM, ADF&G, US Fish and Wildlife
18 Service, the Forest Service, Park Service and BIA as
19 well. They review the proposals that are submitted and
20 develop a Draft Fisheries Monitoring Program for all six
21 regions of the state, so they don't just deal with the
22 Yukon or the Kuskokwim.

23
24 The next step of the process is where
25 we're at today. This is the public input, the Regional
26 Advisory Council. You get a chance to review the TRC
27 recommendations and before you today are 14 proposals,
28 eight in the Yukon and six in the Kuskokwim. The end of
29 the process happens in January where the Federal
30 Subsistence Board reviews all the comments and makes a
31 decision on funding and that, again, takes place in
32 January.

33
34 The evaluation of the projects by the TRC
35 they look at four areas; one is strategic priority,
36 technical merit, the investigator ability and resources,
37 and partnership and capacity building.

38
39 The Federal Subsistence Board has
40 provided some guidelines for us in administering these
41 funds, primarily that the majority of the Monitoring
42 Program funding go to non-Federal sources. They've also
43 identified some areas where we can't fund and that's
44 habitat protection, hatchery propagation, contaminant
45 assessment, and the last one they've added is projects
46 where the primary
47 objective is capacity building.

48
49 Continuing on Page 28 under guideline
50 model for funding, there's \$3.97 million available to

1 fund projects in 2007. What that means for the Yukon and
2 Kuskokwim is in the Yukon region there's \$778,000
3 available to fund projects. The same amount is available
4 on the Kuskokwim, \$778,000.

5
6 Table 1 on Page 29 summarizes what the
7 TRC received looking at the bottom of that table, bottom
8 middle, the TRC received a total of 37 investigation
9 plans and then to the far right they're recommending
10 funding 35 of those 37, so they met the standards of the
11 TRC.

12
13 Turning the page on Page 30, this Figure
14 1 shows you a breakup of the funding allocations in the
15 2007 Draft Monitoring Plan. So, statewide, 33 percent of
16 the money would be going to the Alaska Department of Fish
17 and Game, 35 percent to Alaska Native organizations, 4
18 percent to other individuals or NGO's, and 28 percent to
19 the Federal.

20
21 That kind of brings us to the action item
22 at hand, which is the Yukon River. I'd like to take that
23 one first. Since the Monitoring Program began in 2000,
24 70 projects have been funded under the Office of
25 Subsistence Management Monitoring Program. Table 1 on
26 Pages 32 through 34 lists those projects for you and the
27 associated budgets with each one of them. I think if you
28 read through that it's a testament to the quality of
29 research that's been funded through this program. A lot
30 of those projects are ongoing and are critical to the
31 management of the fisheries. Fifty-four of the projects
32 directly relate to salmon, 16 of them have addressed
33 resident fish species.

34
35 Continuing on to Page 36, you get a list
36 of the projects that are before you today, the eight
37 projects that are requesting funding in the Yukon. The
38 TRC has recommended funding seven of these projects. The
39 list on the top of Page 36 is in a prioritized order.
40 Four of the eight projects before you today are
41 continuation projects. You've heard people talk about
42 the Andreadfsky River, the Gisasa River, the Tozitna River
43 and the Lower Yukon Drift Test Fishing Project.

44
45 Those are all continuation projects that
46 have come before this Council and the Board before for
47 funding in previous years. Under the rules of the
48 Federal Subsistence Board, we're only allowed to fund
49 projects for a three-year duration, so after that period
50 they have to come back and request funding for an

1 additional three years. All the projects before you are
2 requesting three years of funding.

3
4 With that, I'd just like to go through a
5 brief description of each of the projects. Project 07-
6 253, this is the continuity and change in Yukon River
7 salmon harvest patterns. This is the project I had
8 mentioned earlier. One of the things that you guys were
9 requesting was documenting the change in the trends in
10 subsistence salmon fishing in the Yukon River drainage.
11 This project is going to go back and look at changes from
12 1990 forward and try to describe what's happened, what
13 changes have taken place in the subsistence salmon
14 fishing, how people harvest, how the social structure of
15 these communities has changed and how the regulations
16 change how people fish.

17
18 That's 07-253 and this one actually will
19 look at key informant interviews and systematic surveys
20 of households in three villages in the lower, middle, and
21 upper Yukon. So it's going to try to take kind of a
22 drainage-wide perspective.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have a question on
25 that. Is that how far back the data is viable or can the
26 data be collected back into the '70s as far as the
27 change?

28
29 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I honestly don't know
30 the answer, how far back the subsistence data goes. The
31 proposal was just speaking to 1990 to present.

32
33 The second project is the East Fork
34 Andreadfsky weir. This is a salmon weir in the Lower
35 Yukon River. It supports a 12-year data set. It
36 monitors chinook and chum salmon.

37
38 07-207, the Gisasa River salmon weir,
39 this one again supports a 12-year data set. It's in the
40 Lower Koyukuk River, providing escapement counts for
41 chinook and again chum salmon.

42
43 07-204, the Lower Yukon River Drift Test
44 Fishing Project. This provides the managers with the
45 first indication of run timing for fall chum and coho
46 salmon down to the mouth of the Yukon.

47
48 07-252, Non-Salmon Fishing Practices and
49 TEK in the Northern Yukon Flats. This is a project that
50 compliments some previously funded projects through OSM

1 in understanding the use of non-salmon fish species from
2 Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon and Venetie.

3
4 07-206, the Innoko River radio telemetry
5 project. This project is proposing to radio tag 50
6 sheefish a year and track them seasonally and identify
7 spawning, feeding and overwintering habits. As you're
8 aware, there was a commercial fishery on whitefish in the
9 Lower Yukon, which there's very little information known.
10 This is an attempt to kind of start addressing those
11 issues, find out some of the migratory habits of these
12 fish.

13
14 07-208, the Tozitna River weir. This
15 weir supports five consecutive years of escapement data.
16 It's in the Middle Yukon River, again providing
17 escapement counts for chinook and chum salmon.

18
19 The last project, 07-251, is actually the
20 only project the TRC is not recommending for funding.
21 This is the salmon run abundance and timing in the Middle
22 and Upper Yukon. It's taking a look at natural
23 indicators for chinook, summer chum, and fall chum and
24 trying to correlate those with abundance in timing in the
25 Yukon River. It was proposing to look at Nulato, Huslia,
26 Galena, Fort Yukon, Nenana and Eagle. Some of the TRC
27 comments about 07-251, there's currently a project that's
28 proposing to do similar work to this in the Lower Yukon
29 River. The TRC felt that they'd like to see the results
30 of that study prior to funding something like this to
31 look at the methods and applicability to management, how
32 this information would be used to help manage the
33 fishery. So they didn't recommend that one for funding.

34
35 All the TRC recommendations and the
36 three-year budgets for these are contained on Table 4 on
37 Page 37, so you can see what the out-years of these
38 projects cost. And the executive summaries are provided
39 on Page 39 through 55, which give a little more detail
40 about each of the projects.

41
42 With that I'd be happy to try to answer
43 any questions you might have.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are there any
46 questions with these Yukon projects.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will make a comment

1 on the 07-253. I think that the change that's occurred
2 in the fishery occurred before that time. The dramatic
3 changes occurred in the '70s when there was high
4 commercial harvest, in the '70s and '80s, escalating
5 commercial fishery. Those time frames would be more
6 applicable to how the fishery was impacted. If the data
7 set goes that far back, I would rather have seen that
8 included in that. It's either all or nothing, I guess.
9 I think it's a worthwhile project knowing what the
10 changes are in the fishery, but there was much more
11 dramatic changes in those days when drift gillnet was
12 accelerating and the size of gear and various aspects to
13 those time frames. I think the future project should
14 more target those time frames as impacting the fishery.

15

16 Any other comments on that.

17

18 MR. KRON: Just a quick comment and maybe
19 Russ would have some information as well, but for both
20 the Yukon and the Kuskokwim there's subsistence harvest
21 data that goes back all the way prior to Statehood. The
22 challenge gets to be that over time, as we've gotten
23 closer to the present day, the methodologies have
24 improved, the estimates are better. So the further back
25 in time you go, it gets harder to do analysis on the
26 information. They didn't collect a lot of the peripheral
27 data, but there are harvest estimates going back all the
28 way prior to Statehood for both the Yukon and the
29 Kuskokwim just for your information.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Those data
32 sets may have generalizations, but there's a specific
33 occurrence that should be put into the time line, you
34 know, when drift gear was used as a predominance on the
35 Lower Yukon and those kinds of aspects. So those may be
36 looked at in more of a general focus. Vince.

37

38 MR. MATHEWS: Cliff, I'm reading over the
39 summary of 253 and it's possible, just because it's a
40 summary, Dr. Wolfe always does very thorough work and
41 Cheryl Scott is the co-investigator I assume will be
42 conducting the interviews, a more liberal reading of the
43 summary indicates that they're going to be looking at all
44 these different factors, economic systems, commercial,
45 subsistence harvest. Is it allowable, Cliff, for this
46 Council to politely recommend when they conduct these
47 face-to-face interviews to ask for more deeper time depth
48 or is that beyond them asking for this? That's what
49 you're getting at, Jack, because this methodology is
50 face-to-face interviews.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The time frames of
2 this change and we're tracking these changes in harvest
3 methodologies that impacted the fishery and the upshot is
4 that they're reducing impacts to the size of the salmon,
5 which is what everybody is concerned about. If I may
6 comment to that, I would like to see a peripheral
7 inclusion of those time frames back when the commercial
8 fishery expanded dramatically.

9
10 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I can certainly provide
11 those comments. I think the focus of this particular
12 study was looking at it from the '90s on, coinciding with
13 the declines in the western salmon stocks, trying to
14 assess in kind of a detailed fashion what those impacts
15 were to the communities and how the subsistence fishery
16 was prosecuted. I can certainly provide those comments,
17 but I can't speak for Dr. Wolfe. They came up with a
18 pretty thorough investigation plan here, but we can
19 certainly provide those comments that looking back would
20 be beneficial in kind of understanding some larger scale
21 changes.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, I do
24 understand this is a very detailed investigation and we
25 don't want to reinvent the wheel or anything. We do want
26 the investigators to be aware that we have concerns about
27 how the fishery changed, which may impact this time frame
28 from 1990 to present. Ray.

29
30 MR. COLLINS: That's in line with my
31 comments earlier. I know the whole change from
32 fishwheels to gear and so on, a lot of that took place
33 earlier than that. It would be good at least at the end
34 they could say how was it before that or somewhere in
35 there to get a summary of what was going on before maybe.
36 I think there were some dramatic changes that already
37 took place before that time period. I'm concerned in-
38 river and off-river fishery, too, because I think in
39 earlier time period there was more fishing in the
40 tributaries and there were weirs and those kind of
41 things. That's elder information. Then there was a move
42 to the river and there was the fishwheels and then the
43 whole commercial thing brought another change. I would
44 like that longer time frame, yeah.

45
46 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I apologize. I'm not
47 familiar with this data or the research that's been
48 conducted. That may very well be available in published
49 literature. I'm just not familiar with that. But I will
50 talk with Dr. Wheeler and get these comments

1 incorporated.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate
4 that. Any other comments from the Council on why the
5 Review Committee's recommendation for funding should not
6 happen. If not, I would entertain a motion to adopt all
7 of these projects as a block. Mickey.

8

9 MR. STICKMAN: I was looking at this one,
10 the recommendation for do not fund 07-251, and I was
11 wondering when the committee was looking at it if they --
12 it says in the justification there was a 41 percent
13 increase over the proposal. I was wondering maybe there
14 was a specific reason why there was an increase.

15

16 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Are you talking about
17 -- when the project was received as a proposal and then
18 it came back as an investigation plan, there was a 41
19 percent increase in the cost of the project overall.
20 That was included in the budget what those figures were.
21 It was still an issue that was discussed at the TRC
22 meeting.

23

24 MR. STICKMAN: Well, I was just wondering
25 about that because if you're going to be doing a project
26 on the river and if you're going to be actually driving
27 on the river or doing something like that, the price of
28 gas in Nulato rose like 50 cents per gallon inside of a
29 month, but for some places like Galena it went from 4.50
30 a gallon to 5.28 a gallon in the same amount of time. I
31 was just wondering, you know, why -- I mean is this a
32 proposal that they could bring back up next year? I'm
33 not really familiar with the cycle.

34

35 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Mr.
36 Stickman. One of the comments of the TRC is they thought
37 it was an innovative approach and they thought it had
38 some merit. What their comment was is that there's an
39 existing project in the Lower Yukon that's using this
40 same kind of approach and they'd like to see the results
41 of that and the applicability of that. One of the
42 comments they suggested is perhaps a comeback as a pilot
43 study on a smaller scale. So that certainly is a
44 possibility. This November we'll form another call for
45 2008 and we'll start the process all over again.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do they have a
48 projection for next year's funding for projects?

49

50 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I think there's a little

1 over 2 million that will be available for new starts for
2 next year is what we're projecting.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This proposal looks
5 like it would be good to resubmit. These investigators
6 do very good work and I've been happy with their work on
7 other projects. The completion of the downriver projects
8 will enhance the likelihood of this project coming
9 forward.

10
11 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Well, the TRC would
12 obviously evaluate it in the context of the suite of all
13 the projects we get, but certainly that lower project
14 demonstrating an applicability to management would
15 strengthen this proposal tremendously.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to see
18 this proposal come forward again in future funding. Any
19 other comments by the Council.

20
21 MR. STICKMAN: I also would like to see
22 the proposal come back. Like you said, there is a study
23 like that being done already on the Lower Yukon. I would
24 very much like to see the comparison once we had like six
25 years of data to look at.

26
27 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
28 Vince has passed out a little handout that summarizes the
29 block of projects before you. The Yukon is number one.
30 These are your two action items for today. On this
31 handout it shows you the TRC recommendations. Since the
32 Y-K Delta Regional Advisory Council met last week, it
33 also has their recommendations on there. So just some
34 more information for you before you make your decision.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair would
37 entertain a motion to adopt these projects as a block.

38
39 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

40
41 MR. COLLINS: I'll second.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further
44 discussion.

45
46 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under
47 discussion, I also would like to voice my opposition to
48 completely doing away with 07-251. Any time a study has
49 been done to this effect, money has been already
50 allocated. I don't know how many years it's been in

1 study, but I'd like to somehow keep this. Maybe face the
2 issue again next year or something, but not to completely
3 discontinue the project. Any time we deal with numbers
4 of fish and stuff around here I deem that important
5 enough to keep it on there.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other discussion.
10 Mickey.

11

12 MR. STICKMAN: Just under discussion, I
13 was wondering just after listening to Member Don speak do
14 we want to go on record as a Council supporting this
15 proposal for submission for next year.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Yeah, if we had a motion to
18 that effect, I think we should somehow include this for
19 further study.

20

21 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Don. One
22 of the things we certainly can do is incorporate your
23 notes and they are now part of the permanent record of
24 this meeting. I'm not sure you could make a motion and
25 make Caroline resubmit it. She can resubmit it next year
26 on her own and she's here today and she's heard your
27 support and I'm sure she'll take that into consideration.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think our comments
30 for resubmission are sufficient. Any other discussion on
31 the motion.

32

33 MR. STICKMAN: Question.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question being
36 called, all those in favor say aye.

37

38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

41

42 (No opposing votes)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's unanimous
45 support for the TRC's recommendations for the Yukon. So
46 onto the Kuskokwim.

47

48 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
49 The Kuskokwim gets even easier. Since the inception of
50 the Monitoring Program in 2000, 57 projects have been

1 funded on the Kuskokwim and this is Table 1, Page 57 and
2 59 of your Council book. Currently, over 50 percent of
3 the monitoring that's done on the Kuskokwim River is
4 funded through the Office of Subsistence Management.

5
6 On Page 60 of your book there's the same
7 prioritized list of the six projects that are proposed
8 for funding in the Kuskokwim. All six of these were
9 reviewed and recommended for funding by the Kuskokwim
10 Salmon Management Working Group. The TRC recommends
11 funding all six of these projects.

12
13 Five of the projects are continuation
14 projects that you've seen before, continuing the
15 monitoring efforts on the Kuskokwim River. I'll just
16 briefly touch on them.

17
18 07-303, the Kuskokwim Salmon
19 Age/Sex/Length Assessment. This is a continuation
20 project continuing the ASL work being done at Bethel that
21 looks at annually over 30,000 salmon to help do the run
22 reconstruction on that.

23
24 07-304, the Tatlawiksuk River Salmon
25 Weir. This is a cooperative project between the Alaska
26 Department of Fish and Game and KNA. It provides
27 valuable escapement data but also serves as a training
28 platform for interns.

29
30 07-306, the Kwethluk River Salmon Weir,
31 provides escapements for chinook, sockeye, chum and coho
32 salmon. They're actually proposing to do smolt work
33 there next year.

34
35 07-305, Kanektok, Goodnews River Salmon
36 Weirs. These are the primary escapement projects in the
37 Kuskokwim Bay providing escapement for estimates for
38 chinook, sockeye, chum and coho.

39
40 07-307, the Tuluksak River Salmon Weir, a
41 cooperative project between the US Fish and Wildlife
42 Service and the Native Village of Tuluksak enumerating
43 chinook, sockeye, chum and coho.

44
45 And then we've got the Kuskokwim River
46 Chum Salmon Run Reconstruction. This is a new start
47 basically looking at mining the old data from 1976 to
48 2007 and trying to build a statistical model looking at
49 multiple data sources to be a better predictor of run
50 abundance pre-season, looking at the parental escapement

1 on the abundance for various returns.

2

3 TRC funding recommendations again are on
4 Table 4 along with the three-year budgets. That's on
5 Page 61. The executive summaries are provided on Pages
6 63 through 74. Again, the TRC is recommending all these
7 projects move forward for funding and the Y-K Council
8 recommended all of these projects for funding as well.

9

10 With that I'd be happy to entertain any
11 questions.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on that.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can have a motion
18 to adopt as a block.

19

20 MR. COLLINS: Make a motion to adopt the
21 recommendation.

22

23 MR. STICKMAN: I second.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Discussion. My
26 position would be that these are all worthwhile projects
27 and I put a high degree of confidence in the TRC process
28 and so I feel these are all worthwhile. Any other
29 comments.

30

31 MR. COLLINS: Just to comment that the
32 continuation of the weir project is really important
33 because that data is really vital for the in-season
34 management we've been doing. Without those results we
35 can't see what the impact is on what the subsistence
36 activities are and so on. And also any commercial
37 activity depends on weir escapement data to make
38 recommendations on some of the commercial openings later
39 in the season. So it's good, vital information.

40

41 MR. JONES: Call for question.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has been
44 called. All those in favor of the motion of adopting the
45 TRC recommendations for the Kuskokwim River all say aye.

46

47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

50

1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, it's
4 adopted as one block. Onto our agenda. We have
5 strategic planning update.

6

7 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
8 We just wanted for your information to give you an update
9 on the strategic planning processes on the Yukon and
10 Kuskokwim. 2005 showed the completion of actually a plan
11 in both rivers for salmon. In the Yukon, the U.S. and
12 Canada Joint Technical Committee Plan was completed and
13 in November of 2005, the Yukon River Joint Technical
14 Committee Alaska Escapement Monitoring Plan Working
15 Group, that's a mouthful, held a meeting to apply the
16 plan and help prioritize the monitoring and assessment
17 projects on the Alaskan portion of the Yukon River
18 Drainage.

19

20 OSM is using that prioritized monitoring
21 and comments directly from the in-season Federal and
22 State managers to help prioritize projects in the TRC
23 process. So we're utilizing that information for the
24 salmon portion of our monitoring program.

25

26 On the Yukon, the one thing that is
27 lacking is a non-salmon management plan and that is one
28 thing that OSM is still planning on pursuing by 2008. So
29 that's one of the goals of the program, to help fill that
30 void to provide some direction for the resident fish
31 monitoring in the Yukon and Kuskokwim for that matter.

32

33 On the Kuskokwim River, OSM, along with
34 AYKSSI, State and Federal agencies and BSE's have funded
35 a long-term plan for salmon monitoring and research.
36 That plan was completed in 2005 and again this one steps
37 through the process and prioritizes the salmon monitoring
38 in the Kuskokwim River. The working group was a big part
39 of that plan and that forms the basis for our
40 recommendation to you annually.

41

42 So that was just an update on the salmon
43 management since in '05 we did have two of those efforts
44 completed.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on that.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Partners for Fisheries

1 Monitoring Program, Yukon Region.

2

3 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
4 I think there's a PowerPoint presentation. Is that ready
5 to go? May I suggest we have a short break if possible
6 to set that up.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can do that.
9 About a 10 minute break. It's 2:12. 2:22.

10

11 (Off record)

12

13 (On record)

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are we ready to
16 present here?

17

18 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. If everybody could
19 have a seat. Thank you. We have several PowerPoint
20 presentations and this will be the format. Don't let it
21 limit you on conversation. We'll try to get you so we
22 can see each other. Jack is here somewhere to help if
23 someone has a question. Once we start splitting up like
24 this, sometimes people don't want to say things and
25 that's not the purpose of these PowerPoints, to cut off
26 conversation. With that, Cliff will introduce the thing,
27 I believe.

28

29 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, Council.
30 One of the programs that's nested within the Fisheries
31 Information Services under the Monitoring Program is the
32 Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. On the agenda
33 we had several partners that were slated to present.
34 Heather Hildebrand from KNA is not here. Brandy
35 Berkbigler is the first on your agenda to present. She's
36 an Alaska Native, well, lived in Alaska all her life,
37 graduated in 2002 with a bachelor's of science degree in
38 biology from UAF. She worked with the U.S. Fish and
39 Wildlife Service and in June of 2006 became our Partners
40 biologist with TCC up in Fairbanks.

41

42 Along with her we've got Lisa Kangas, who
43 is going to do a presentation after Brandy. She was
44 raised in Ruby, Alaska. She's working on her degree at
45 UAF currently and she's going to give a presentation
46 after Brandy on the intern program.

47

48 Without any more introduction I turn it
49 over to Brandy.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Before we start that, Jack,
2 I did get an input that Heather Hildebrand is stuck in
3 Galena and is trying to get over here.

4
5 MS. BERKBIGLER: Hello, Mr. Chair and
6 Council members. Thank you for letting me speak today.
7 My name is Brandy Berkbigler and like Cliff said I
8 started in June. Actually June 19th and I left for the
9 field four days later to run a project. So I sort of got
10 a whirlwind tour of TCC and then thrown right into
11 projects for the entire summer.

12
13 Why is the Fisheries Program important
14 for Tanana Chiefs Conference? Well, TCC represents 42
15 interior villages, which is a pretty broad area. Fish
16 are extremely important subsistence resources. By having
17 a program here hopefully it lets Tanana Chiefs hire local
18 technicians on different various fisheries projects and
19 that way will allow better understanding of projects and
20 fishery management hopefully.

21
22 To give you a better perspective, these
23 are the villages and rivers of Interior Alaska to deal
24 with TCC. The department that I work in is the Cultural
25 and Natural Resources Department. Within that we have
26 forestry, archaeology, realty and wildlife and fisheries.
27 Within the wildlife and fisheries department there's one
28 subsistence resource director, which is Mike Smith, who
29 is my supervisor. I am a Fisheries Partners biologist
30 and the program Partners for Fisheries Monitoring is
31 provided for through OSM and the Fisheries Resource
32 Monitoring Program. We also have funding for two
33 temporary interns. One which I was grateful to be able
34 to bring with me today, Lisa Kangas, to let you know what
35 she's learning about being an intern.

36
37 Some of the goals of the Partner Program
38 are to promote cooperation between Alaska Native Rural
39 Organizations, State and Federal Agencies and academy and
40 others. TCC has been pretty influential in getting
41 partnerships with State and Federal agencies and doing
42 different projects. I hope to continue that and
43 facilitate participation in the Fisheries Resource
44 Monitoring Program, support community outreach and
45 education, is one of the goals I'm hopefully going to
46 work a little bit more towards this year, and encourage
47 future scientists through the mentoring of college
48 students, which I'll be hiring another intern. I hope
49 Lisa comes back. She said she will, but we'll see when
50 summer comes around. So I'll have another position

1 available for another college intern. If you can think
2 of anybody that would benefit from this program, send
3 them my way.

4
5 An overview of the fisheries projects
6 that we ran at TCC this year. We had the Henshaw Creek
7 weir, the Goodpaster River chinook salmon enumeration,
8 and Fort Yukon Science Camp.

9
10 The Henshaw Creek weir was first
11 installed in 2000 with the Fish and Wildlife Service.
12 This year was our second year as a cooperative project
13 with the Fish and Wildlife Service out of the Fairbanks
14 office. It's funded through 2007. We hired local hires
15 from Allakaket to work on the weir. TCC's role is to
16 provide two technicians and an intern as well as having
17 the Partners biologist out there to assume duties and
18 roles of operating the weir. The Fish and Wildlife
19 Service provides another biologist to oversee and a crew
20 leader.

21
22 Unfortunately this year the Henshaw Creek
23 weir flooded the day after we had it fish tight and it
24 stayed flooded the entire season. It was pretty much
25 bank full and the trap was completely under water until
26 the end of July when we got low enough water to pull the
27 weir out. So we have four salmon that we counted before
28 the weir flooded. It's kind of disappointing that we
29 don't have any numbers because it's a very good
30 escapement project for the Upper Koyukuk.

31
32 The objectives of the study are to
33 determine daily escapement and run timing of adult
34 salmon. We gather age, sex and size composition of adult
35 salmon and we monitor the non-salmon species present in
36 migrating.

37
38 Move on to the Goodpaster counting tower.
39 It was established in 2004 and it was privately funded
40 through the Tetpogo Mine and we jointly operate with the
41 Bering Sea Fishermen's Association and we hire two local
42 technicians out of Dot Lake. One last year returned this
43 year, so it's kind of a good project for the other side
44 of the state for us.

45
46 At the Goodpaster counting tower we
47 enumerate chinook salmon population and we monitor
48 population changes for the mine and their EIS statement.

49
50 The last project we were involved in was

1 the traditional ecological knowledge camp in Fort Yukon.
2 This camp was a cooperative project through TCC, Council
3 of Athabaskan Tribal Governments and Fort Yukon and
4 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence Division.
5 This camp was funded for 2005 and 2006. This was last
6 year in the funding cycle, so it's not to be going next
7 year, but CATG and myself are trying to work on getting
8 funding to run another year since we had such a good
9 turnout this year at the camp. It was really well
10 received.

11
12 The objectives of the camp in Fort Yukon
13 were to provide a forum for youth, elders, fisheries
14 biologists and social scientists and managers to
15 interact. It was a way of providing training in
16 fisheries science by incorporating traditional and
17 western science and to collect biological and
18 anthropological data that could be used in future
19 fisheries management.

20
21 With that, thanks. Are there any
22 questions I can answer.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How many students were
25 at your Fort Yukon camp?

26
27 MS. BERKBIGLER: There's 13. The
28 majority were from Fort Yukon and we had two from Arctic
29 Village, one from Circle and one from Venetie.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So there's no
32 other assessment for that Henshaw other than that weir
33 project. You lost the data, so there's no overflight
34 data that the -- I guess we could ask the refuge. Do you
35 work with the refuge on maintaining some kind of data
36 set?

37
38 MS. BERKBIGLER: The data set has been
39 pretty much maintained at the Fish and Wildlife Service.
40 Next year will be the last year of running the
41 cooperative project with the intent that this is a
42 training platform for Tanana Chiefs and we will reapply
43 for funding with this next go round with FIS and then we
44 will take it over solely as our own responsible project.
45 So, as far as the refuge goes, we've been using them for
46 logistical help and we use the hangar in Bettles, but
47 I've been contacting Evansville and trying to work with
48 the Tribal Council there as far as acquiring storage
49 facilities.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other
2 questions.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

7
8 MS. KANGAS: Chairman, Council members.
9 My name is Lisa Kangas and there are a few generalities
10 on this page just to tell about me, but the goal of this
11 presentation I want to highlight my background and just
12 general history as it pertains to fisheries. I would
13 also like to go through the highlights of these past two
14 summers. This is my second summer as a fisheries intern
15 and I'm just going to show you highlights from each
16 project. I won't get into depth. Also, I want to
17 express the importance of the Partners Program for up and
18 coming fisheries biologists and why it's such a good
19 program.

20
21 On a less serious note, there's a little
22 bit more about me. Cliff mentioned earlier I wasn't able
23 to make a presentation down in Anchorage, so Brandy did
24 it for me and he thought that Brandy had a little loss in
25 translation moment where I was supposed to say a big
26 joke, but really no. I just wanted to show you these
27 pictures. You can see on the right I completed my bear
28 and firearm safety course. That is just one of the
29 reasons why being an intern is so important.

30
31 I'm originally from Ruby, Alaska. I
32 lived here for the first 12 years of my life. In the
33 sixth grade, my family and I moved to Fairbanks so that
34 my siblings and I could get a better education and I
35 could have more options in what I wanted to do as a
36 career path.

37
38 A big part of my upbringing was going to
39 fish camp every summer for the first 19 years of my life
40 and here is where I learned about fish. I didn't learn
41 from a book or I didn't learn in a classroom. This is
42 where I first saw it. I learned to cut fish, hang them,
43 you know, and also to pick berries, just a subsistence
44 lifestyle, so that's a huge part of who I am.

45
46 This fish camp is called Fish Mountain.
47 It's about 20 miles below Galena and 15 miles above
48 Koyukuk and that's how I got into the fisheries program
49 at TCC. My mom told me about the Tribal Council, they
50 were hiring a technician. So I was a supervisor and I

1 supervised my little sister and little cousin. We did
2 the ASL project, which we took the age, sex and length of
3 the fish by collecting the otoliths, which are the ear
4 bones, and we also took heart samples which checked for
5 Ichthyophonous, which is a non-lethal heart disease but it
6 doesn't look pretty.

7
8 I learned about the fisheries intern
9 program, Kim Elkin contacted me the next summer, and I
10 applied for the job and I got it and that's how I got to
11 where I am today. Of course, none of this would be
12 possible without the correct funding. The Partners for
13 Fisheries Monitoring Program is funded through U.S. Fish
14 and Wildlife and OSM. So one of your questions is
15 probably where does TCC come into all of this. It's a
16 partnership between TCC, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and OSM.
17 What TCC's responsibilities and roles is they basically
18 provide the logistical support, getting the reservations,
19 supply two interns, a project biologist and technicians
20 to work on the Henshaw weir.

21
22 Here are my supervisors. You can see
23 Brandy Berkgigler, aka B-dog. I met her last year. She
24 worked for U.S. Fish and Wildlife and this is her first
25 summer as the Partners biologist. You can also see
26 Michael Smith, the director of subsistence resources
27 management at TCC.

28
29 I'm going to go on and explain all the
30 projects I've been on this year and last year. My first
31 field project was the whitefish tagging in the Kanuti
32 National Wildlife Refuge, which is located in the Bettles
33 area, so I went to the South Fork and the Kanuti Lakes.
34 You can see Randy Brown's hands. He's performing an
35 operation on whitefish. The main goal of this project is
36 to assess the spawning, overwintering, feeding habitats
37 of the whitefish population. Cliff went over a little
38 bit about why they're doing this. It's because no one
39 really knows much about the whitefish population.
40 Focusing on least cisco, broad and humpback whitefish.

41
42 I was fortunately able to go on a radio
43 telemetry flight. I'm on the left bottom corner.

44
45 Another big Partners Program project is
46 Henshaw Creek weir. You can see here an outhouse is in
47 the back, you can't see it, and we have a shower tent and
48 that's our cook tent where I learned to cook. This is my
49 home away from home. This is where I stayed. It was a
50 nice setup. This project is funded throughout 2007.

1 So both years, this year and last year, I
2 was able to put in the weir, learning the basics on how a
3 weir operates and this summer I helped take it out.

4
5 Counting fish. Just to give you a little
6 bit more of an insight on how my days were spent, you can
7 see my views. I can see the fish passing through the
8 trap and also the sunset. I did two three-hour shifts a
9 day and that's where I sat on top of the trap. As you
10 can imagine, there's a lot of down time and a lot of
11 thinking. Imagine what it's like if the weir is flooded
12 and there's no two three-hour shifts a day. So I think
13 it really takes a strong person, mentally and physically,
14 to actually perform these job requirements.

15
16 Another project that isn't funded by the
17 Partners Program is the Goodpaster River Project. Me
18 being a Partners intern, I didn't spend a lot of time on
19 the Goodpaster River, which is a shame because it's
20 beautiful. Brandy talked about the reason why it's
21 there. Last year I spent the first couple days building
22 a platform, so I was a carpenter for a day. This summer
23 I was actually able to spend five days out there on the
24 counting tower.

25
26 This is one of the last field projects
27 that I went on both last year and this year. It was the
28 traditional ecological knowledge camp in Fort Yukon.
29 Again, Brandy talked about what this camp is trying to
30 do. They're trying to blend traditional and western
31 knowledge as it pertains to fisheries and get this
32 message across to the younger generations, incorporating
33 fish pathology and other sessions.

34
35 One session was -- Trimble Gilbert, he
36 helped us make a traditional fish trap. You can see
37 they're gathering the willows, peeling the bark, tying
38 the willows together and, voila, you have a fish trap. A
39 traditional Athabaskan Gwitch'in fish trap.

40
41 Last year I put the curriculum together
42 for the fish identification section. I learned a lot
43 about fish. Of course, you can't teach segments if you
44 don't know what you're talking about. Through this entry
45 program I was able to learn a lot about these different
46 fish.

47
48 I also ran the fish dissection lab
49 afterwards. I had Paul Williams, an elder from Beaver, I
50 believe, do the traditional fish cutting and then later I

1 ran the western dissection lab where we looked at the
2 different organs and what they do, how they function.

3
4 Here's some of the camp sessions that we
5 had last year. Of course, it was changed this year. Kim
6 didn't teach us stream ecology, Brandy did. Joe came
7 back and so did Trimble.

8
9 I really enjoyed this project because it
10 gave me a chance to interact with the community and learn
11 a little bit more about their culture as it pertains to
12 mine.

13
14 Growth. I noticed that there was a big
15 difference between my first summer as an intern and my
16 second summer. The first summer was basically seeing the
17 plan in action and seeing if I had what it took to go out
18 there and do the job requirements at a satisfactory
19 level. Through U.S. Fish and Wildlife I received boat
20 certifications so I could drive government vehicles, I
21 received a lesson on basic lower unit jet repair and
22 upkeep, and I am also certified in my bear and firearm
23 safety, CPR, First-Aid and water safety.

24
25 My last point is the importance of the
26 Partners Program. I think it's great for young people
27 aspiring to become a fisheries biologist because it
28 really gives them the insight. Say someone went to
29 college, they spent their four years going towards a
30 fisheries degree, they get out there and they either find
31 out one or two things. One, they can't handle it or,
32 two, they don't like it. So I think it's great that the
33 intern position kind of shows them what they're getting
34 themselves into.

35
36 My goals for next summer. I'd like to
37 expand my horizons. Brandy explained the possibility of
38 me going to other projects throughout the state, such as
39 one in Bristol Bay. I'd like to reach out to
40 communities, get involved more, much like the science
41 camp. I think that affected a lot of younger people and
42 I think it was a really good cause. Also, an unrealistic
43 goal, I'd like to become one with the fish. Any
44 questions.

45
46 (Applause)

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions from the
49 Council.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There
2 was an ongoing fish count or survey going on this summer
3 where a local student came back, your cousin Margaret
4 Hoffman, and I was just wondering -- I mean not to get
5 off on something else here, but since you're kind of
6 representing TCC, if you knew anything about that
7 project. It's too bad Mike Smith couldn't attend these
8 meetings. In future meetings, I would like to see TCC
9 more represented. Anyway, she had some kind of a program
10 here where they would cut off the fins of the fish or
11 something that you had to do it immediately after taking
12 it from the fishwheel and I was wondering if you knew of
13 that or whether it's an ongoing thing.

14
15 MS. BERKBIGLER: I'm not actually sure of
16 the project. The only thing I can think of with fin
17 clippings is either a genetic type study run by a
18 different program or possibly it was the difference
19 between subsistence and commercial caught fish where you
20 have to clip the fins off to identify them. But I'm not
21 familiar with that project and I didn't hear anything
22 about it. I will definitely express your concerns with
23 Mike Smith and I'm hoping I can maybe get him to attend
24 the Eastern RAC, but he's been obligated to go to the
25 Board of Game meetings that are occurring this week.

26
27 MR. HONEA: Thank you. I just wanted to
28 bring that up because if it employs a few people in the
29 village, one or two persons, and she had fun doing it.
30 So I just thank you for TCC's -- I believe it came out of
31 their office anyway.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments.

36
37 MR. STICKMAN: Thanks, Jack. I like your
38 presentation. I often wondered -- I think this is about
39 the first time I ever saw a presentation from anyone at
40 TCC. One of the things maybe you should go back and tell
41 Mike is when we have our teleconferences throughout the
42 summer Mike doesn't usually get on, so there's no
43 representation from TCC but there is representation from
44 all the villages, so we're all a part of TCC. As
45 biologists and Mike being the director, it would probably
46 be a good idea for him or have someone pay attention to
47 these teleconferences. I mean I know you're here now so
48 you see how the project proposals come up for adoption by
49 the Council, so you can write up your own proposals for
50 projects that you have as far as thinking ahead. I feel

1 that it's real important that Mike, being the director,
2 he should have some idea of what's actually going on out
3 there by being involved in the teleconferences.

4
5 One thing, I was following the
6 teleconferences this summer because that's how you get
7 involved in in-season management and there was always
8 somebody from AVCP on for the lower villages and there
9 was always someone on for CATG, but for Tanana Chiefs I
10 saw nothing.

11
12 MS. BERKBIGLER: I'll definitely bring
13 that back to Mike. I couldn't be on the conferences due
14 to my hectic schedule of trying to run around to
15 different projects this year, but in the future that's
16 one of the goals, is to be a little bit more on the
17 conferences. Mike, I know, was at the Goodpaster as
18 well, but I'll definitely relay all your concerns to him
19 when I return back and let him know how the meeting went.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've got one comment
22 myself. I would reiterate that I felt it would have been
23 applicable for Mike to send sort of a greetings to the
24 Council and some of the positions the TCC has on various
25 issues on our agenda. They're representing 43 villages.
26 They should send you in with something to state to us.
27 So we've been lacking on TCC input and we enjoy TCC input
28 and encourage it. I really liked both of your
29 presentations. I think the Partners Program is very
30 worthwhile. I think we can build in the future local
31 people who have meaningful management in the system,
32 working with the system and actually being in the field
33 and I think that's a great program. So I really enjoyed
34 your presentation on your aspect of it.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. That brings
39 us up, if I've got the agenda right.....

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've got Jackie
42 Wholecheese back there wants to say something.

43
44 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Brandy, I was
45 wondering, on the Koyukuk River every summer they have a
46 weir or counting tower on Clear Creek, that's on Hog
47 River. Did they have one this summer?

48
49 MS. BERKBIGLER: As far as I know, I
50 think they did have a Clear Creek weir again this year

1 and I know they've expanded to the Caribou Creek, which
2 is near the Clear Creek.

3
4 MR. WHOLECHEESE: This comes to another
5 point I want to bring up. Everybody on the Council is
6 concerned on the lack of input from TCC. We are too. I
7 mean they're there to represent 42 villages and they
8 didn't notify Huslia that they were going to have a Clear
9 Creek count this year. You were talking about local
10 hire. Nobody from Huslia got hired this summer. In
11 fact, Huslia didn't know about it.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Russ.

14
15 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, Mr.
16 Wholecheese. The Clear Creek counting operation is being
17 conducted by BLM and they shifted from doing an in-season
18 count, basically they're doing a video count on Clear and
19 Caribou Creek, which they aren't hiring as many locals.
20 They've been trying to decrease the overhead cost, the
21 cost associated with the project, and try to make those
22 counts as efficiently as they can. So the management is
23 not receiving those counts in-season, but they are
24 compiling that information on video. On the handout I
25 provided in my presentation, I indicated on there that
26 those counts are anticipated to be available sometime
27 this winter. So it's not TCC that's actually conducting
28 that operation up there. BLM is doing that. TCC was a
29 cooperator early on several years ago, but they are not
30 presently involved.

31
32 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Sorry I picked on TCC.
33 So I've got to pick on BLM. For my information I'd like
34 to know where is BLM's partnership act? I mean why can't
35 they partner with the villages using traditional
36 knowledge? For instance, like if you started your count
37 in the spring, there's a mine up in Clear Creek and if
38 you asked us what was the first thing you wanted us to
39 do, we'd probably tell you get your water samples first
40 in the spring and then get water samples in the middle of
41 the summer and get water samples when you're done
42 counting. I mean we're catching some weird fish on the
43 Koyukuk River. We're catching whitefish with rotten
44 heads. I mean this is testimony, this is fact, because I
45 fish ever summer and fall and winter. So we've got to
46 find out what all these fish are getting deformed from.
47 It would be good when we know you're going to start your
48 counts or studies and get suggestions and work with the
49 people. You'll find out you'll go along further.
50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those are good
4 comments, Jackie. I do think the agency should partner
5 and send out publication for hiring for camp maintenance
6 and so forth with other project. Ray.

7

8 MR. COLLINS: I had a question. I hadn't
9 heard of video counting before. Is that a new approach?
10 Technically, how does it work?

11

12 MR. HOLDER: No, it's not a new approach.
13 It's been in development for probably 10 years or more.
14 The idea behind it is using a recording, a video to
15 record fish passage. Usually they put down some kind of
16 flash panels on the bottom. As the fish go over, they
17 get recorded. Some of the newer software, what they're
18 trying to do is actually have it programmed so the video
19 only comes on when there's actually movement across them.
20 Usually it's conducted similar to a tower operation in
21 that they'll record for say 10 minutes and expand it for
22 half an hour or record for 20 minutes and expand it for
23 an hour and come up with a daily count. Usually you have
24 people there maintaining it, changing the tapes and
25 things and then somebody has to physically go back and
26 review that information and expand it. Does that address
27 your question.

28

29 MR. JONES: Yeah, on your videotape
30 recording, do you do a study in the evening and day
31 count, whether they increase or decrease?

32

33 MR. HOLDER: Different systems are
34 different. Some have higher counts during the evening,
35 nighttime. Other systems have had higher counts during
36 the daytime. Usually they use lights to illuminate and
37 sometimes the fish will be kind of slow approaching where
38 the light is and where the light is they'll scoot across
39 pretty fast. That's about what I could tell you, Mr.
40 Chairman, Mr. Jones.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. Getting on
45 into the fisheries here, I didn't know where to put this
46 one in, but on the Lower Nowitna River there's like a
47 tracking thing up there. It looks like a solar panel.
48 It's up on a tree and stuff. It was kind of interesting
49 to take a look at the thing. I believe it's for counting
50 pike or something. I was wondering how that worked. I

1 mean up till the fall time or something because you
2 mentioned earlier that you don't do winter studies.

3
4 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Honea.
5 Specifically the non-winter studies was in daily
6 assessment projects. The tower that you're referring to,
7 I believe it's probably a holdover from the chinook
8 salmon radio tagging project earlier on. It may be
9 converted to pike or sheefish or whitefish radio
10 telemetry. The way that actually works is that as the
11 fish comes within detectability range it's sending out a
12 single that the tower picks up. At the top there's an
13 antenna that receives that. The solar panel you're
14 seeing is charging the batteries that keep the receiver
15 that's inside a box on the tower there and it collects
16 that information. Depending upon the design of the
17 system, it may be transmitting that information that is
18 collected to a satellite that gets downloaded at a
19 station and then the biologist can access that
20 information wherever they're at to identify which fish
21 have gone past that tower.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we still have
24 Heather Hildebrand still down in Galena, so we're going
25 to skip over her until later. Then we're going to go to
26 additional fisheries updates, salmon bycatch. Who is
27 going to present that?

28
29 MR. MATHEWS: That would be Becca.

30
31 MS. ROBBINS: Mr. Chairman, Members of
32 the Council, thank you for giving me the opportunity to
33 talk to you about this issue at today's meeting. I
34 wanted to talk to you about something that's an ongoing
35 threat to Western and Interior Alaska salmon and that's
36 the issue of salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock
37 fishery.

38
39 You're getting some handouts with more
40 information on this, but I'd like to just give you an
41 overview of what the latest numbers have been on bycatch
42 in the pollock fishery and some of the management
43 measures that they're trying to reduce bycatch and
44 finally some of the opportunities to maybe push to get
45 these numbers down further.

46
47 So far this year, as of October 1st, the
48 pollock fleet had caught over 69,000 chinook salmon and
49 268,000 chum salmon as bycatch. The pollock fishery
50 should be ending sometime at the end of October, so these

1 numbers are hopefully close to as high as they'll get.
2 We'll get back to you at the close of the season.

3
4 These high numbers are part of an
5 increasing trend. You can see up on the charts there and
6 this is in your handouts as well that bycatch numbers
7 have increased incredibly, especially over the last three
8 years, with record high amounts of chinook and chum
9 salmon bycatch last year and it looks like this year's
10 chinook rate is going to be even higher than last year's,
11 although chum is actually lower, so that's good news in
12 there.

13
14 These graphs show the bycatch for the
15 total of the groundfish fishery in the Bering Sea and
16 Aleutian Islands, but almost all the bycatch is from the
17 pollock fishery.

18
19 Just looking back at last year, because
20 that is a complete year's data that we have, there were
21 over 76,000 chinook and 700,000 chum salmon caught as
22 bycatch. Just to clarify, basically in the pollock fleet
23 they classify salmon as a prohibited species, which means
24 that they're not allowed to keep any of the salmon, but
25 of course they're dead after hours in the trawl nets, so
26 most of them are thrown overboard. At some points in
27 time they've donated some to food banks, but the last few
28 years most of them have just been thrown overboard.

29
30 This should be of particular concern to
31 those of us in Western Alaska and particularly on the
32 Yukon River. YRDFA had a study done using the 1997 to
33 '99 samples that they collect in the pollock fishery and
34 they do have observers on most of the boats in the fleet
35 and they're the ones providing the numbers I gave you
36 earlier of how many salmon are caught. They also take
37 scale samples from some of these. We don't have a lot of
38 information yet, although we hopefully will after this
39 year have some genetic analysis done recently. But
40 looking at those samples from '97 to '99, over 56 percent
41 of chinook salmon caught as bycatch were from Western
42 Alaska and of that over 40 percent were from the Yukon
43 River.

44
45 To put that into perspective, if you
46 apply that study I just went over to the final 2005
47 bycatch numbers, that means that over 13,400 fish, which
48 would have returned to the Yukon River, were caught as
49 bycatch. To put that into perspective, that number was
50 42 percent of the commercial catch, 27 percent of the

1 subsistence catch or 47 percent of the Board of Passage
2 goal with Canada.

3
4 So obviously this is a problem and it has
5 been recognized by the pollock fishery and by the North
6 Pacific Fishery Management Council, which is the
7 management body for the Federal fisheries in Federal
8 waters from 3 to 200 nautical miles offshore.

9
10 Back in the mid-'90s the Council adopted
11 this system called the salmon savings areas and that's
12 what's pictured up on the screen there. The red boxes
13 are essentially areas that they designated at that time
14 where they knew they were catching high amounts of
15 bycatch and so they devised this system where at certain
16 times of the year if they hit a target number those areas
17 would close and the pollock fleet would have to move out
18 of that black box you can see there on the right.
19 Basically that system over the past three years obviously
20 hadn't been working and a big part of that is we know
21 that salmon migration patterns have shifted certainly
22 since the mid-'90s, so those boxes definitely weren't the
23 right place to be closing anymore.

24
25 Instead of moving those boxes, what the
26 Council and the pollock fishery did was adopted this new
27 method called the voluntary rolling hot spot system and
28 this is basically initiated and designed by the pollock
29 fishery and the whole basic premise of it is to move the
30 pollock fleet away from areas of high salmon bycatch.
31 The pollock boats during the season report their bycatch
32 numbers to a central administrator, which is called Sea
33 State, and they collect that information and analyze it
34 and issue closure orders for areas that have a bycatch
35 rate over what they've set at the beginning of the season
36 as their standard. So the pollock fleet is continually
37 moving around away from those areas.

38
39 The system has been in effect since 2001
40 for chum salmon and since 2003 for chinook salmon, but
41 it's been used until August of this year in addition to
42 those savings areas that I just showed you in the
43 previous slide. Just starting in August of this year
44 they were using it on its own and were exempt from those
45 savings areas. You can see the numbers are still
46 incredibly high.

47
48 Basically this system is a good idea in
49 theory. In practice, the way it's been designed is such
50 that it doesn't really move pollock boats. It moves them

1 out of one high bycatch area, but it doesn't necessarily
2 close them out of all. So just to highlight some of the
3 things that are problematic about the system, there's no
4 real limit on the number of salmon which can be caught in
5 the system. It's all based on the rate as compared to
6 the pollock catch and it's all this proportional system
7 where they don't close areas unless they reach this set
8 bycatch rate and that's set three weeks into the pollock
9 fishing season at whatever the rate is three weeks in.
10 So if you're catching a lot of salmon as bycatch the
11 first three weeks of the season, that means you're going
12 to be able to do that the whole time.

13

14 Finally, what we see as one of the
15 problems is that this system is conducted entirely
16 outside of Federal and agency control. While certainly
17 sometimes this could be a good thing in terms of
18 management, it does allow us more flexibility, in this
19 case it means that Western Alaskans and the public in
20 general really don't have much of an input or the ability
21 to change this system.

22

23 So there are some opportunities to try to
24 change that. I just came back from a meeting of the
25 North Pacific Fishery Management Council in Dutch Harbor.
26 Basically what the council has done is that when they
27 adopted that hot spot system that I went over they also
28 set up kind of another set of alternatives that they're
29 going to analyze as well. Within that they're looking
30 again at these salmon savings areas and looking at
31 redesigning those in light of current salmon migration
32 patterns instead of those from the early '90s.

33

34 They're also looking at the option of
35 setting caps. This means that there would be some kind
36 of numerical limit on the number of salmon which could be
37 caught and those would either be fixed at a set number or
38 they could be indexed to salmon abundance, so if there
39 were more salmon, they could catch more, and if there
40 were less, they really wouldn't be allowed to catch very
41 many at all.

42

43 There's another option in there that
44 they're looking at, which is individual vessel bycatch
45 accountability, which is a little problematic, too. The
46 good news out of last meeting in Dutch Harbor is that the
47 council did agree to setting a precautionary cap,
48 basically acknowledging they don't have all the data that
49 they'd like to have to set a cap that's perfectly indexed
50 to salmon abundance but recognizing that there is a need

1 to set some kind of limit on this. At the council's
2 meeting in April they'll be looking at that and examining
3 what the possibilities are there.

4
5 So I'd just like to leave you today with
6 a few ways to get involved in this issue and make sure --
7 the council operates pretty much mostly within the
8 pollock industry and the groundfish industry, so there's
9 not often a lot of voices from people who depend on the
10 salmon, so it's really important to make sure that that's
11 heard within the council. So you can, of course, give
12 testimony at a council meeting. The April meeting will
13 be held in Anchorage. You can also send letters to the
14 Council and they print those in their meeting materials
15 so everyone received them and that's a good way to get
16 information out. You can pass resolutions in your
17 community and send those in. I'll be sending in updates
18 about opportunities to testify and to send letters in and
19 I'll have a sign-up sheet over at the table here if you'd
20 like for me to let you know when there is a time when
21 it's really important to send letters in.

22
23 That's all I wanted to present, just a
24 brief overview. I'm happy to take any questions that you
25 have.

26
27 MR. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We
28 don't understand what kind of groundfishing for the
29 pollock. We don't understand what kind of gear you're
30 using. Are you using fish trap or nets or what?

31
32 MS. ROBBINS: The pollock fishery is
33 what's called a pelagic trawl fishery, so basically
34 they're towing enormous nets behind their boats. You can
35 see on the left up here the net and that's the haul being
36 dumped out of it. There are some smaller boats which are
37 called catcher processors which have huge nets but aren't
38 quite as big. Then there are factory trawlers in the
39 pollock fleet which are about the size of a football
40 field and just tow these huge nets behind them.
41 Basically, because of where they're fishing, their whole
42 catch is pollock and salmon. They don't really drag up
43 anything else.

44
45 MR. JONES: At what depth do you use
46 these nets?

47
48 MS. ROBBINS: I don't know the exact
49 depth, but it's pretty deep. They're, in theory, not
50 allowed to bottom trawl. They haven't been allowed to

1 since the late 1990s, but about 40 percent of them
2 actually do hit the bottom while they're fishing, so it's
3 pretty deep.

4
5 MR. COLLINS: How accurate are the
6 bycatch numbers? Do they have monitors aboard now? Is
7 this a self-counting thing? How good is the data I guess
8 is what I'm asking?

9
10 MS. ROBBINS: They do carry observers on
11 board. Larger boats are required to carry observers 100
12 percent of the time and the smaller boats carry them
13 about 60 percent of the time. The best guess is that
14 they're covering about 80 percent of the pollock fishery
15 is observed. Now, within that they're sampling each
16 fleet, so they count the number of salmon, but they're
17 just sampling a small part of the catch because they
18 can't possibly count through all those fish. So it's
19 definitely not exact, but it is an observer, not the
20 pollock fleet themselves that's collecting that data.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

23
24 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Jack. I don't
25 want to sound like a pessimist here, but looking at the
26 numbers and stuff of the bycatch and just getting back to
27 reality here, I mean who actually is going to be a
28 watchdog of this thing. It says right here YRDFA has the
29 right to take legal action. I mean I'm just wondering
30 what's the reality of that. Maybe I'm missing something
31 here. What are the options that you gave us that we can
32 do, maybe in proposals or what?

33
34 MS. ROBBINS: Basically the North Pacific
35 Fishery Management Council is the body who has the
36 ability to take action to reduce salmon bycatch in the
37 fishery. While they're largely dominated by the pollock
38 fleet itself, there are fortunately some laws on the side
39 of salmon and there is -- the governing regulation for
40 our Federal fisheries does say that you have to reduce
41 bycatch. I think we've seen already -- just at this last
42 meeting the council took a lot more forward action than
43 we thought they were going to. I think what really helps
44 a lot is hearing from the people who depend on the salmon
45 resource and that's where I'm encouraging people to send
46 letters and to give testimony when they can.

47
48 MR. KRON: I just wanted to follow up
49 here. The laws that are in place at the North Pacific
50 Council they put in place in response to proposals from

1 Yukon River fishermen. Basically YRDFA submitted a
2 proposal back in 1993 after the really poor chum run,
3 which resulted in the council taking action in 1994 on
4 chums and then the bycatch regulations on king salmon
5 occurred in -- excuse me, chums was '94, kings was 1998.
6 Fish and Game was there along with representatives from
7 the Yukon. It was a YRDFA proposal that got it going.
8 Basically the Yukon fishermen and YRDFA have been
9 involved in this from the start. I guess I'm a little
10 frustrated that the numbers are still as high as they
11 are. You've got people watching the process, which I
12 think over time will generate a positive change.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I personally would
15 like a letter transmitted from this Council to express
16 our displeasure to the North Pacific Management Council
17 with the tried and failed voluntary rolling hot spot
18 system and they should be proactive in reducing these
19 bycatch rates back dramatically. This self-policing of
20 the pollock fleet, a multi-billion-dollar fishery, is
21 unconscionable. The fishery has shown that they cannot
22 control themselves. So we need to transmit a letter. Of
23 course it has to go through the OSM review to be
24 transmitted to the North Pacific Management Council.
25 These impact the subsistence fishery on the Yukon and
26 Kuskokwim systems dramatically. I'm highly annoyed with
27 these elevated numbers. I didn't think that system was
28 going to work. I have no faith in a multi-billion-dollar
29 entity policing itself and it proved to do exactly what I
30 thought it was going to do. So I'm very displeased with
31 these numbers and I would like a letter to be drafted and
32 transmitted in regards to our displeasure to the North
33 Pacific Management Council.

34
35 MR. SARTIN: I'm Ed Sartin. So what
36 you're saying is there is no real police above these
37 people. They police themselves. They're accountable to
38 no one but themselves. There's no international
39 anything.

40
41 MS. ROBBINS: The National Marine Fishery
42 Service ultimately has authority over the fishery and the
43 Council has the ability to change these regulations. The
44 way the hot spot system is set up it is just the pollock
45 fleet policing themselves essentially.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

48
49 MR. MATHEWS: Becca, is this process
50 that's in effect now the good captain and the bad captain

1 system where they're reporting in the pollock captain of
2 fish boat X, his harvest bycatch, and then if he is not
3 within a range he gets a black-listing? The reason I
4 bring this up is the three Councils met with the North
5 Pacific Fishery Management Council staff and supported
6 this good cop/bad cop scenario. What you described, is
7 that this good captain/bad captain or not?

8
9 MS. ROBBINS: It could be. That's part
10 of the hot spot system, is that each of the captains
11 report their catch and bycatch as they're out fishing and
12 then each week they publish -- they call it the Dirty 20
13 list of who the worst fishers are and who the best
14 fishers are in terms of bycatch rates. If it was
15 presented in the past few years, then this is the only
16 pollock bycatch reduction measure that's been out there.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

19
20 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. So then it is this
21 dirty list process. Your presentation and your analysis
22 is that that process is still not working to protect the
23 stock. What I'm trying to do is -- the negotiations that
24 went on with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council
25 had the three Chairs of the three Councils on the Yukon
26 meet with them and it was like a meeting like this and
27 when fishermen talked to fishermen everything worked and
28 the three Chairs were supportive of this black-listing.
29 If that's not working, then that would be -- I'm sure the
30 fishermen, because of the amount of investment in this
31 industry, will remember that dialogue. So is it fair to
32 say your presentation is that black-listing way of doing
33 things is still not protecting the bycatch? I guess
34 that's the bottom line.

35
36 MS. ROBBINS: Yeah. I think the problem,
37 too, is this method was presented to the YRDFA board as
38 well and they had supported it at the time. I wasn't
39 with YRDFA at the time, but from what I've gotten from
40 talking with people is that the way it was presented is
41 different than how it's finally been implemented and
42 essentially they've set some parameters on setting the
43 bycatch rate, which basically determines how areas will
44 be closed, so it doesn't have the desired effect of
45 reducing the bycatch.

46
47 MR. MATHEWS: So, Mr. Chairman, then that
48 would be incorporated in the letter. The reason I'm
49 saying that is bridges were built, small bridges, but
50 that was a few years ago with that, and I don't think the

1 Council wants to burn those bridges unless there's
2 compelling reasons. But what you're saying is what you
3 agreed to at that time, not the Council, the Chairs, is
4 not working and you would still like to have this bycatch
5 addressed by the North Pacific Fishery Management
6 Council.

7

8 Don might have more because Don has
9 attended the North Pacific Fishery meeting.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

12

13 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard with OSM. Mr.
14 Chair. I was at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council
15 meeting last week and they also got this exact
16 presentation done by Jill Klein. They didn't take any
17 formal action, but they did say that they would like to
18 see put in regulation a cap on the overall bycatch as
19 well as caps on the hot spots. That was just their
20 comments. So just for your information.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I feel we
25 have to make a vocalization and that this system was
26 tried, it's proven a tremendous failure in bycatch
27 increase, so I'm in favor of caps and expansion of those
28 savings areas, whatever it takes for the Council to
29 encourage this North Pacific Management Council to get
30 some real enforcement. We need Federal oversight in
31 these waters. So I feel that our Council should transmit
32 a letter in support of the Council's review of this issue
33 but encourage them to put some teeth in the new plans,
34 put some caps in place and expansions into areas that are
35 high bycatch. The Federal managers have to be involved
36 with real management and they have to have caps. They
37 can't just let these fleets harvest beyond
38 sustainability. These kind of harvests could decimate
39 our runs on the Yukon/Kuskokwim drainages, AYK stocks in
40 general. So I do feel that we need a letter transmitted
41 setting out our displeasure with the increase in the
42 bycatch, a need for Federal oversight and encouragement
43 to the council to take control of this situation
44 imperatively immediately.

45

46 I really appreciate your presentation and
47 I'm in full agreement with YRDFA's work on this issue.
48 Thank you very much for that.

49

50 MR. MATHEWS: So, Mr. Chairman, by

1 consensus then Council wants this letter to go forward?
2 I mean it's going to rock a few boats when it hits a few
3 desks, so I just need to know it's consensus of the
4 Council. I'm not forcing you that, I just need to know.

5
6 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, I agree with Jack.
7 I also think YRDFA should be seeking similar letters from
8 the Eastern Interior and the Y-K Delta and maybe even
9 Mike Smith and the delegation at TCC because a lot of
10 times if you really want to make a difference you have to
11 have broad public support. I believe this is a very
12 important thing for us to do, to get a handle on this
13 bycatch.

14
15 MS. ROBBINS: Just to let you know, I'm
16 giving this presentation at the Eastern Interior RAC
17 meeting next week as well and one of the employees of the
18 Yukon Delta CDQ group is a member of the North Pacific
19 Council and he is the one really pushing for getting some
20 kind of precautionary cap in place, so there's that, too.
21 They're not going to send in a letter straightforwardly
22 as you might, but there's definitely support throughout
23 the river for setting some caps on this.

24
25 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Becca, for your
26 presentation at the beginning here. I initially said I
27 didn't want to be pessimistic and I'm still of that
28 opinion. I think you're kind of undergoing a huge
29 monumental task and that's why I agree with Mickey here
30 that it should be a united front with the Eastern
31 Interior, TCC, whoever is in agreement with this. It
32 just seems like we have been hearing for so many years,
33 years and years, of this bycatch that's being literally
34 wasted. Anyway, I commend YRDFA for bringing this up.
35 My opinion, whether it goes in the form of a proposal or
36 something, is to fully support this. I appreciate
37 your presentation.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like consensus
44 of the Council on that letter transmission. I see all
45 the heads are shaking.

46
47 MR. MATHEWS: I'll work with you, Mr.
48 Chair, on that letter and realize it does go through the
49 process, the dates and make it clear on the record you do
50 not have jurisdiction over marine environments, so that's

1 why I'm doing what I'm doing.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These actions affect
4 the subsistence resources of the Yukon River drainage, so
5 I feel we're within our purview of advising a Federal
6 system. Congress, under 805, empowered these Councils to
7 set out concerns and this is a very severe concern to me.

8

9 We've got to move on with this agenda.
10 Glenn says he's got to maybe go back to Galena here by
11 5:00, so we want to get onto Agency reports on wildlife
12 studies, issues and concerns.

13

14 MR. STOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
15 want to give you a quick update and hand some copies to
16 Vince of this season's preliminary harvest.

17

18 The permit system, the way it's
19 implemented now, we have the two subsistence permits, one
20 on the Koyukuk is the RM832 and the one surrounding all
21 the Koyukuk controlled use area is the RM834. The
22 deadline for submitting the reports for those hunters was
23 just this Monday and post offices were closed on Monday,
24 just the way it worked out, so a lot of those reports are
25 still coming in, so these are preliminary results.

26

27 The one thing I'll just go through first,
28 where we have a good opportunity to monitor the harvest
29 going through the check station there on the Koyukuk.
30 You'll notice in what I've given Vince to hand out is the
31 summary reports that I've produced each year. It's a
32 real mirror image of the previous two years of what's
33 taken place up there on the Koyukuk.

34

35 We checked 314 hunters at the check
36 station this year. That's about the only number that's
37 down much. We've been seeing about 350 hunters coming
38 through the check station the previous two years. 106
39 hunters were registered at Huslia. I guess I'd just like
40 to acknowledge Elsie Bent's work up there, that she's
41 really encouraging people up there in Huslia to come in
42 and get their permits. She's also getting really good
43 reporting up there. I think part of that is just
44 people's participation up there the last few years. It's
45 been in the upper 90's and now just over 100.

46

47 I haven't got all the information yet
48 from Janet up there in Hughes and that's just a matter of
49 trying to get that stuff mailed in right now and get the
50 antlers from her that we typically do up there. I talked

1 with her up there and got some preliminary figures from
2 her. It seemed like it was on track with previous years
3 as far as number of permits she issued as well as number
4 of moose harvested.

5
6 The numbers there, the RM832 subsistence
7 permit, they're real similar to what we've had the last
8 few years as far as total number of moose harvested,
9 success rates. The number of return reports is down a
10 little bit and that's just characteristic of this being
11 pretty early as far as trying to get the data that's
12 represented there.

13
14 158 moose harvested. I think in the
15 previous two years it was like 154, 155, so we're right
16 on track with where we were. I expect this number to go
17 up because so many more permits are still out there that
18 need to be reported. For instance I know, talking with
19 Janet, there's probably another eight or nine moose out
20 of Hughes that are going to be added to that and there's
21 several other different areas that we're still waiting
22 for a box full of permits to show up. So I think that
23 number is actually going to end up showing we had a
24 pretty good harvest up on the Koyukuk this year.

25
26 Just to go through as far as the drawing
27 permit system. We issued the same number of permits as
28 we had the previous two years with one exception. There
29 was one additional permit and that was just an
30 administrative problem we had this year. The one thing
31 we did see differently is it looks like there was better
32 participation this year, more of the drawing permit
33 hunters actually showed up to go hunting, so that changed
34 a little bit. Our harvest went up just a few moose
35 there, but our success rate is right on track, right
36 around 70 percent success rate.

37
38 I just want to show just kind of an
39 overall picture of the check station data. The 2006 data
40 is not showing up on your screen there, but it's pretty
41 much right on track with the 2004 and 2005 data. That's
42 the real testimony of how well the permit system is
43 working up on the Koyukuk. Those last three years, 2004,
44 5 and 6 we've issued the same number of permits. Fifty
45 permits were issued in the drawing permit system. It
46 seems to be tied in real closely, the subsistence permit
47 too, as far as non-local residents that come and take
48 advantage of that and that's why the previous years, when
49 we first implemented this in 2000, it's pretty much gone
50 up and down just at our control as far as number of

1 permits that were issued, so we're still maintaining good
2 control. This year, if anything, it looks like our
3 success rates will actually go up a little bit.

4
5 Part of the reason we saw a few less
6 hunters come up the Koyukuk this year had to do with the
7 fact that we had that early 10-day hunt outside the
8 controlled use area that started on August 22nd. I think
9 probably also the price of fuel. More people stayed down
10 in Nulato and Kaltag that had early season success. I
11 haven't gone through all the harvest data yet on that,
12 but just with some phone calls I made it looked like
13 there was about 25 moose between Ruby, Galena, Koyukuk,
14 Kaltag, Nulato taken during that first 10 days of hunt
15 amongst those villages.

16
17 Compare that to that same 10-day season
18 that we took out of that December, the best year we had
19 on that was five moose and it was three moose last year.
20 So I think it was a real boon for us as far as people
21 getting moose earlier and certainly the comments were
22 that obviously we knew the quality of the moose was going
23 to be higher quality taken at that time rather than in
24 December. So I got a lot of positive feedback as far as
25 that early season. There were fewer Nulato, Kaltag
26 people coming all the way up to the Koyukuk because they
27 had some early season success down river.

28
29 Also another factor was early in that
30 season there was still a lot of water in the Yukon and
31 they were able to access way out into Kaiyuh Flats during
32 that first 10 days, so that helped them out down there.

33
34 Just some data that we show you
35 typically, our predator harvest out there on the Koyukuk.
36 Shot a few more black bears this year. Pretty much
37 typical as far as grizzly bears and wolf harvests up
38 there. Pretty low in general. People were coming back
39 and bears were apparently more visible this year, so
40 there was a little bit better harvest this year.

41
42 Just as far as throughout the area here,
43 I just rang up some quick numbers we have and these ones
44 again are preliminary. I just ran these late last night.
45 I ran these for the RM832, all the drawing permit hunts
46 in the area, and all the RM834, that registration permit
47 outside the controlled use area. I ran them for the
48 villages Galena, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia and Ruby and
49 then gave a total up there on top. The numbers I'm
50 comparing it to in 2004 and 2005 were the final harvest

1 data figures that we had for the harvest in these
2 villages. For instance, the total value there, 162, was
3 the total reported moose for the whole season amongst
4 those villages and 157 total for all seasons for those
5 villages and this year already we're up to 147.

6
7 Looking down on the screen there you can
8 see the yellow line, which is Nulato. It was running 37
9 the previous two years and we're at 17 this year.
10 Looking at the data I pulled up last night, there were
11 151 permits issued to people in Nulato and only 52 of
12 those are reported so far. So we've got almost 100
13 permits still out there. So I think, you know, that just
14 speaks to the fact there are still going to be quite a
15 few more moose yet to be reported when those come in the
16 mail, so we're just behind yet on some of that data.

17
18 The really encouraging sign up there is
19 that turquoise line there for Huslia. Right now our
20 current preliminary estimate is that there are 52 moose
21 reported up there, so it looks like they had a real
22 banner year up there in Huslia. As far as the number of
23 moose or the characteristics of the moose, I'm getting a
24 lot of people and certainly there at Ellis Cabin we had a
25 lot of yearling bulls harvested this year. I see that as
26 a real positive indication of certainly our recruitment
27 that we got from last year's productivity and I think
28 that is a real positive indication that we are seeing now
29 some of the benefits of saving the cows that we've been
30 saving. We've produced a bunch of moose out there.

31
32 You know, from the data that we presented
33 earlier from our surveys that we conducted last November
34 our bull numbers were pretty stable and so we know that
35 there's mature bulls out there, but I just think that
36 there were so many young bulls out there this year that
37 just because of their apparancy and proportion in the
38 population I think that's why we harvested a lot of young
39 bulls out there. We're certainly seeing some artifact of
40 the bad years when we didn't have good productivity and
41 our population was declining and so there we knew when
42 our bull/cow ratios were going down that there were fewer
43 large bulls out there. We certainly expected that, but I
44 think it is a real positive sign that we're seeing a lot
45 of young bulls in the harvest this year because that's
46 what we're building for the future.

47
48 As far as survey data, of course, we
49 haven't done our surveys yet, the post-season surveys
50 that we do in November. You've already seen the stuff

1 from last year, I won't go over that again, but we have
2 done -- since the last meeting you had we did do spring
3 twinning surveys and this is up on Three Day Slough. The
4 trend continued our seventh year in a row as far as an
5 increase in the twinning rates up there. Just real
6 tremendous twinning rates. And then I threw in also the
7 stuff Fish and Wildlife Service is also doing; Pilot
8 Mountain, Kaiyuh area and then up at Huslia Flats, Treat
9 Island. We don't have the long-term data sets on those
10 two other areas, but you can see they track pretty well
11 with the trend we were seeing in there. I suspect if we
12 did have a long-term data set that they would match up
13 fairly well.

14

15 If you look at the 2005 bars on the far
16 right there, you can see everything was up around 40
17 percent twinning rates and that's getting pretty close to
18 biological potential. I think we should be real pleased
19 as far as our productivity. Of course, this goes right
20 into the discussion of the real important factor is
21 survival. How many of these calves are we recruiting.
22 We had a pretty mild winter last year. That certainly
23 helps with our survival and, of course, predation becomes
24 a big factor for us, how many of those calves can we get
25 recruited in the population.

26

27 But that's pretty much it as far as
28 preliminary data that I have at this point.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions for
31 Glenn on the data presented. What was your yearling bull
32 component last fall survey?

33

34 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair. It was real
35 variable throughout the area. Did you have one trend
36 area in particular that you had in mind?

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean just kind of
39 round it off.

40

41 MR. STOUT: It was generally pretty good
42 yearling bulls last year, which was, of course, the
43 previous year's calving. Our calving rates, which is our
44 yearlings this year, is that what you're trying to get
45 at?

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm looking at
48 yearling and two-year-old bulls. You have a high harvest
49 of young component. I was wondering does it look like
50 we're still recruiting through good numbers of those

1 calves or are these twin rates or are we keeping a larger
2 component of that calving? What's your feel on that?

3

4 MR. STOUT: I think that this year,
5 seeing the number of yearlings in the harvest, makes me
6 feel like that's a positive indication that we did have
7 good recruitment, we did recruit those. Once we get a
8 two-year-old bull, survival is really high, mortality
9 rate is pretty low once they get past that yearling age
10 class. I'll just throw out a few numbers that are kind
11 of a reflection of that. Up at Treat Island our yearling
12 bull/cow ratio was nine yearling bulls per 100 cows.

13

14 We typically kind of look at our harvest
15 rates and match that up, just kind of a rule of thumb,
16 just a rough rule of thumb. If we're looking for a seven
17 percent harvest rate, we'd like to be recruiting at least
18 that many on a stable population, but we're trying pretty
19 hard to grow a population to increase the number of moose
20 out there. We're actually harvesting well below seven
21 percent up there right now. So if you look at a nine
22 percent yearling bull/cow ratio, you know that's pretty
23 good. That's a positive sign to me.

24

25 Last year there on Treat Island though it
26 was seven bulls per 100 cows, so it was definitely lower
27 the year before on that.
28 At Three Day Slough last year our yearling bull/cow ratio
29 wasn't as good in there. It was five yearling bulls per
30 100 cows compared to nine the previous year.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is your feeling that's
33 where the harvest is coming from for your yearling bull
34 harvest, Three Day Slough area?

35

36 MR. STOUT: Certainly it's pretty focused
37 in Koyukuk controlled use area. It's pretty focused in
38 that area between the Dulbi River and the Kateel River
39 and the Three Day Slough trend area captures a lot of the
40 moose numbers in there.

41

42 Last year I remember the yearling moose
43 harvest in there was pretty normal. It wasn't
44 exceptional, not compared to what we're seeing
45 preliminarily at least this year.

46

47 Going further up river in your area,
48 Jack, look at Middle Fork. Yearling bull/cow ratios up
49 there were five yearling bulls per 100 cows last year,
50 last November, and then six the previous year. That

1 actually matches up well. It's not surprising for that
2 country where our harvest rate objectives are three to
3 five percent.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That gives me
6 an idea. Did you have some comments, Ben, on the small
7 bull harvest? You were talking about smaller moose being
8 harvested.

9
10 MR. JONES: Yeah. The people of Huslia
11 were kind of concerned about that, if the yearling bulls
12 are harvested three years in a row, it's going to affect
13 long-term reproduction on the moose. They were kind of
14 concerned about that.

15
16 Another thing, Glenn, I would like to
17 have a report from the sports hunters, like Virgil, how
18 many moose have they harvested out of the Huslia
19 drainage, Kateel area and the Hog River area? Those have
20 to be included in the harvest report for the Koyukuk
21 drainage.

22
23 MR. STOUT: Member Jones, Mr. Chairman.
24 That stuff is still coming in. The deadline for
25 reporting was a little later. We haven't reached the
26 deadline for them mailing in their permits. I just don't
27 have a very good picture of what they've harvested up
28 there yet. That's why I don't have it with me today.
29 With the exception of the drawing permit stuff that I
30 showed on the sheets I handed out.

31
32 As far as the concerns up in Huslia with
33 the number of young bulls, once again I'll suggest that I
34 see that as a real positive sign. I think if we are
35 harvesting moose in the proportion that they're occurring
36 in the population, it stands to reason we've got a big
37 bunch of yearlings out there right now and people
38 encounter them more because it's a big cohort of animals.
39 That tends to swamp the perception that that's all that's
40 out there and I think it's just because in that age class
41 there's a bunch of those out there right now and that
42 just demonstrates we're bringing in the animals for our
43 future. We're finally getting the payoff and saving our
44 cows, we're producing these animals and then we had a
45 good recruitment, good survival this recent year.

46
47 We know from our surveys from last years
48 that there were still the bulls out there, the mature
49 bulls were out there. We've been fighting to keep our
50 bull/cow ratios up and the last three years we've seen an

1 increase in our bull/cow ratios when it fell below our 30
2 bull per 100 cow objective. It fell below that, but now
3 we're starting to build our total bull count back up and
4 it's just the proportion of yearlings that are out there
5 that I think are swamping the perception there.

6

7 MR. JONES: Yeah. Does the guide service
8 do the reports how many clients they have each year, are
9 they increasing or decreasing or what, the transporters
10 in our area?

11

12 MR. STOUT: Through the Chair, Member
13 Jones. Yes, they do to Fish and Wildlife Service. They
14 report their clients. But I have a real good idea of how
15 many there are through our permitting system. Their only
16 option in those drainages is the drawing permit.
17 Typically it's all non-residents that are going with
18 them. I have every guy's name that's hunting up there as
19 far as a non-resident because they have to apply for a
20 drawing permit. Before the season starts even I know
21 who's going to be up there and it's pretty highly
22 regulated because of our drawing permit system in all
23 those drainages.

24

25 MR. JONES: I'm concerned about the
26 Koyukuk controlled use area.

27

28 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I was really
29 surprised that the harvest was as high as it was this
30 fall because reports I'm hearing from other areas it was
31 a pretty slow season. Was there a real pickup towards
32 the end, do you know, in the harvest? Was it just early
33 in the season that it was slow? And you didn't have
34 anything on Allakaket in there.

35

36 MR. STOUT: Through the Chair, Member
37 Collins. Yeah, most of Allakaket now is still on the
38 general harvest ticket. We typically don't get good
39 reporting on that until probably next may because they
40 have winter hunts. So people, if they don't get a moose,
41 they don't report because they could still have hunting
42 opportunities way into next spring. It's just not very
43 good data at this point to try to show a preliminary
44 harvest for Allakaket.

45

46 I certainly have heard the same thing and
47 I know it was pretty slow. I think people got some moose
48 early, particularly on the Middle Yukon, then it seemed
49 to slow down quite a bit in that early portion of the
50 season and then the bugs got actually worse as the season

1 wore on and it was pretty miserable hunting. The last few
2 days it seemed to pick up really well. We got a lot of
3 moose harvested on the Koyukuk and certainly there in
4 Galena we had a banner year, kind of like Huslia as far
5 as the number of moose that were harvested later in the
6 season.

7
8 One thing I will say on the Koyukuk is it
9 certainly took more days of hunting to get their moose.
10 I don't have that data summarized yet, but I fully expect
11 to be able to see in the data pretty substantial length
12 of time had to take place for getting their moose. Even
13 though a lot of moose were taken, I think they had to
14 hunt pretty hard this year to get them and I think that
15 kind of feeds into that a little bit.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jackie.

18
19 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Yes. You were talking
20 about yearling bulls. I don't think there were that many
21 taken in Huslia this year. I should know, I'm from
22 Huslia. But there were a lot of two-year-olds. The
23 reason for that is the local hunters are listening to the
24 elders through tradition. The elders say if you guys
25 keep on shooting those big moose with big horns, you're
26 going to lose all your breeding stock. The younger
27 generation listens to the elders. They see a bull with a
28 70-inch horn, they let it go. I mean sure it's meat for
29 the table, but that bull could produce about 20 more and
30 healthy stock. If you start killing off all the big
31 bulls and then the two-year-olds start breeding with our
32 cows, you won't have any success rate. When they're
33 born, they're small. That's according to our elders. So
34 I really congratulate the people of Huslia, especially
35 the young hunters, for listening to their elders.

36
37 There's a lot of yearlings running around
38 up there. Those will be good next year. And I really
39 enjoy working with Glenn and them because they're trying
40 to listen to the people. I think co-management is what
41 we need. With that, I say it wasn't that good hunting.
42 A lot of people didn't get their moose in Huslia like a
43 lot of people think. A lot of hunters turned in moose
44 harvest tickets that were blank, no moose. Like me, for
45 instance, I didn't get my moose, which is not a sad fact
46 because my nephew is 16 years old and he's got to learn,
47 so I let him get his moose. I let him be the man, so I
48 sacrificed my ticket for his moose. And it's going to go
49 on like that. But it was a good year. A lot of people
50 shared with the elders. So everybody's happy that they

1 got their moose.

2

3 By February we're going to be pushing for
4 another hunt because it's not going to last all winter.
5 Later on I'll tell you a story of what I found out
6 traveling through the villages.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So that's
11 your update on the moose population and hunt. What did
12 you have in mind there, Vince, on the wildlife studies
13 and issues? Should we have people bring things up? I
14 have a petition laying here in front of me from Nulato.

15

16 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. Again, the
17 agenda was drafted months ago and there is flexibility in
18 there to jump into issues. I haven't had a chance to talk
19 to Randy on his flight schedules, but I assume he's here
20 through tomorrow. Yeah. So there's some flexibility on
21 the planning effort there and the Unit 18 moose
22 moratorium. Probably the best use of time would be to
23 address the local issue here.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think it would be
26 good. Glenn is going to be here a little while longer.
27 So if local people want to bring up some issues that are
28 revolving around moose management, I think it would be
29 prudent to go into local people's perspective on how the
30 hunting went and what they would like to see done to
31 remedy things. I think Mickey and Don have some local
32 things they want to bring up. Go ahead, Mickey.

33

34 MR. STICKMAN: Okay, Glenn, I brought a
35 petition from the residents of Nulato. I'll just read it
36 off to you so you'll know what it is. It says the
37 residents of Nulato respectfully request that the Alaska
38 Department of Fish and Game open the spring moose hunting
39 season within Unit 21(D) during February 2007 for cow and
40 bull moose. The open seasons during August 22nd through
41 September 25th, 2006 for bull only were unsuccessful for
42 many resident hunters. Successful hunters harvested a
43 greater number of small bulls than large bulls. Hunters
44 reported cows in abundance throughout 21(D). Many
45 Interior low income Native families will not have moose
46 meat to supplement their winter food supply without the
47 February 2007 spring moose hunt.

48

49 It says we, the undersigned, hereby
50 support opening the spring hunt for cow and bull moose

1 during February 2007. That's one of the local issues I
2 have. I guess at this time I would ask the Western
3 Interior Advisory Council for support of the petition.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that to the State
6 of Alaska for a State hunt?

7
8 MR. STICKMAN: Excuse me. It is, but our
9 primary hunting area over in the Kaiyuh Flats is refuge
10 land. So since we're a Federal Regional Council, I would
11 ask for a Federal Regional Council support.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the petition is
14 to the State of Alaska and Glenn or Randy can speak to
15 it. Didn't the State Board discontinue cow harvest in
16 Unit 24? Didn't they do that in Unit 21?

17
18 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair. Yeah, they did
19 adopt that regulation that did away with antlerless moose
20 seasons that we had on the books that had been closed by
21 emergency order for like four years in a row. They did
22 go ahead and adopt that recommendation by the Department,
23 to take that off the books.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the hunt in the
26 Kaiyuh -- where is our Kaiyuh staff. Are we still under
27 a limited winter hunt slate for over there in the Kaiyuh,
28 Unit 21(D) Innoko portion?

29
30 MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Stickman.
31 Brad Scotton here from Koyukuk Refuge, Innoko Refuge. I
32 wasn't really prepared to address this particular issue
33 at this meeting. In the past couple years when the State
34 was really bringing up management concerns about moose
35 populations, particularly cow moose in certain areas, the
36 State and the refuge, Fish and Wildlife Service, has had
37 a pretty united front, particularly in 21(D) south of the
38 Yukon River, the Kaiyuh Flats, in terms of management
39 concerns over the number of moose, the density of moose
40 in that area.

41
42 I've testified to the Federal Subsistence
43 Board and the Office of Subsistence Management that we
44 really cannot biologically support any cow hunting on the
45 Kaiyuh Flats with the population that we have there right
46 now. Even with that, there's still potlatch hunting that
47 occurs. There are cow moose that are harvested. The
48 State and the Fish and Wildlife Service have been united
49 in maintaining that closed winter season for cows on the
50 Kaiyuh due to biological concerns.

1 It's a little different system there on
2 the Kaiyuh than up on the Koyukuk around Huslia and Three
3 Day Slough where the moose densities are much higher. We
4 do have that very limited cow season during the winter
5 around Huslia on the belief that that population is a
6 little more robust and can sustain a very small harvest
7 of cows. But the Kaiyuh Flats we have not pursued any
8 openings there just for biological reasons.

9
10 We do realize that creates a hardship for
11 some individuals, but from a population standpoint, I
12 guess as biologists we feel like it's the best thing to
13 do for the long term for those populations. If we want
14 to maintain moose in that area, the best way to do it is
15 to preserve those cows now so they continue to have
16 calves and we can take advantage of these higher twinning
17 rates we're seeing and get those cows producing and
18 hopefully we can at least increase some bull harvest in
19 that area and maybe over the long term we can hope for a
20 broader scale recovery of the population or higher
21 densities in that area.

22
23 I don't know if that addresses exactly
24 what you want. I don't have the data in front of me, but
25 we could certainly talk about that at a future date more
26 in depth if you want that information. I know Glenn and
27 I both have spent a lot of time modeling that and looking
28 at cow numbers and whatnot. That's sort of where we're
29 at with it in Galena.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. That was just
32 refreshing my memory and the Council's memory. So we
33 basically are up against a rock and a hard place. The
34 Board of Game has closed antlerless moose hunting and the
35 population is too low. When we reviewed the winter hunt
36 in the Kaiyuh area, the cow numbers -- the refuge staff
37 can't justify a harvest over there. We have to stay
38 within basically sustainable numbers, so we're kind of in
39 a fix. That's why we were working on trying to promote
40 more bull harvest as much as we can trying to get more
41 harvest in the fall time.

42
43 The Council can say that we would like to
44 have more cow harvest and I'm concerned about losing cow
45 hunting in general. The Board of Game rescinding
46 antlerless moose harvest, it gets kind of hard to bring
47 that back, so I am concerned about that issue when these
48 populations do start to recover.

49
50 What's the wishes of the Council on this?

1 If I have to go fight these proposals, there's no way
2 we're going to win that one. There's not enough
3 population there to support a cow harvest. We would like
4 to have a cow harvest. It's a real component of
5 subsistence harvest, but when the populations are falling
6 off by -- what are we, 50-some percent in a lot of areas.
7 In the last 15, 20 years we've fallen off, significant
8 amounts of moose have declined.

9

10 I would like to know the wishes of the
11 Council. I don't think we can get cow harvest. We'd
12 have to go through the Board of Game process to get on
13 State land and with these level of moose on the refuge,
14 Kaiyuh especially, the density is low to where I don't
15 see how we're going to get a cow harvest there. I like
16 to fight battles that I can win. I don't like going to
17 bat when I'm going to get hit between the eyes with a
18 hardball. I would like to express that to the Council.

19

20 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. Is it
21 feasible to have a winter bull hunt? Will it sustain
22 harvest of more bulls if people did not get a moose this
23 fall? We don't know what the total numbers are yet, I
24 guess. What's the possibility of that, a winter hunt?

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've been an advocate
27 of winter bull hunts and the Department is reluctant to
28 talk about winter bull hunts because they don't have
29 antlers on them and they can get shot as cows can get
30 shot as bulls and that kind of gets into an
31 identification issue, but that hasn't been the concern.
32 I would like to see for these villages that aren't
33 meeting their subsistence needs, it's the 805 mandate of
34 this Council to identify subsistence uses and needs.

35

36 Each community should have the
37 Subsistence Division and OSM Staff setting out the normal
38 harvest for the villages, what their needs are, and if
39 we're not meeting those in the fall time, then we've got
40 to have a winter bull hunt of some kind. I would prefer
41 a winter hunt later on when they start to come back a
42 little bit. Ruby doesn't mind the December hunt.

43

44 I do think we need to meet our
45 subsistence needs for harvest, but I don't think the
46 direction of this Council should be fighting a losing
47 battle with cow moose. I just don't think we'll win that
48 one at all. We can barely hang onto that up there in the
49 Koyukuk/Huslia Flats because that country has fairly high
50 density moose and we're barely holding on to 10 cows up

1 there. So I would encourage this Council to direct our
2 activities towards trying to come up with something that
3 can help the people here with winter bull hunts. I think
4 that would be more productive for our meeting.

5
6 MR. STICKMAN: Actually it wouldn't be
7 fighting a losing battle by writing a letter of support.
8 It's not like you're going to bat for anybody. I guess
9 all the tribe is doing is just asking for a letter of
10 support and that's it. It's not like we're saying that
11 we're writing a proposal for -- we're just asking for
12 support.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would totally agree
15 with that. I'm in total agreement that subsistence
16 harvest of cows in winter is a normal -- when I was a
17 little kid down in Galena, people went out in the winter
18 time and killed cow moose. I don't even know if it was
19 legal, but people shot cow moose in the winter time.
20 That's a normal component of subsistence harvest and at
21 the earliest possible date I would endorse the concept of
22 regaining that at the earliest possible date, so I would
23 be in favor of the petition. But as far as going through
24 a proposal, I think it would be a waste of our Council's
25 time, the OSM's time to try and battle that right now in
26 the Kaiyuh. I would encourage a letter of support for
27 that concept of return of winter cow moose hunting at the
28 earliest possible date and I'm very supportive of that.

29
30 Any other comments on that. Do you have
31 something, Don.

32
33 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 When you're referring to that petition there, you're also
35 referring to support or un-support for the same petition
36 we have here that's requesting for a bull or cow season,
37 the February hunt that was taken away.

38
39 Going back to the Koyukuk meeting, I
40 believe it was WP-34 or something that would have given
41 the residents in 21(B), which is from here up to Nowitna,
42 an extra week or something for subsistence users after
43 the regular season closed. I was unable to make that
44 meeting. Therefore, before that it was -- well, anyway,
45 this fall it was kind of a shock to myself and to other
46 members to find out that our winter season was taken away
47 from us and that 10 days in hindsight, if anybody looked
48 at it, and there was only one bull moose taken at that
49 time, it would be ridiculous to even want that. I'm not
50 saying we were under different pretenses, but if given

1 the same thing, if we knew we had the option in 034,
2 which is what the Advisory Council here had us -- if we
3 had the option, then I believe we would have used that.
4 I just feel that we were somehow led astray to lose that.
5 Whether you want to support this or not. I know the cow
6 season is out of the question, but maybe we could discuss
7 the one for Federal proposal.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would encourage a
12 proposal for winter bull harvest. There's 38 names on
13 that petition from Ruby. That's telling me that people
14 aren't meeting their subsistence needs here. We need
15 some kind of a winter hunt. The data right on the wall
16 there for Ruby was pretty pathetic. Was it nine moose
17 killed here in Ruby?

18

19 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair. That's what I had
20 for preliminary reported harvest. In conversation here,
21 I understand there was 12 or 13. I just haven't got the
22 rest of it. But that's still below what had typically
23 been taken for the whole year.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That shows me that
26 these warmer conditions moose aren't moving around,
27 they're staying back further, it's hot, buggy. When it
28 comes to breeding season, they zip right in to the cows.
29 The cows are aggregating on their own. That's what I
30 see. The cows all get together by themselves. So we're
31 not seeing the exposure of the moose in these warmer
32 falls. I'm seeing a huge outcry from the area here for a
33 winter hunt. I don't think we can get a cow hunt, but I
34 do think we need to accommodate a winter bull harvest.
35 It's very apparent subsistence needs are not being met
36 here. We have two petitions from two villages here. We
37 need to have a proposal. What's our proposal time frame,
38 Vince?

39

40 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. I think it
41 might be easier for the Council to focus first on the
42 Kaiyuh Flats issue and that petition and then go into the
43 other. I know they're coupled, but that would help to
44 focus on that. The Board of Game is not open to
45 proposals, so it would have to be an emergency order on
46 that side. Federal is open for proposals, but that would
47 not go into effect until next year, so it would not meet
48 this year's petition demand if I understood it for a
49 February cow season. That would have to be under a
50 special action. It appears the case is that there's not

1 a strong biological justification to allow that cow
2 season. It doesn't mean that the village and others
3 can't request it, but it's kind of on the record that
4 it's not biological sound. So that's your Kaiyuh Flats
5 issue. You may want to address that and close it out
6 what you want to do on that and then look at the Ruby one
7 and then you may want to go back and look at the Kaiyuh
8 one for a bull season. For note-taking, that would help
9 me.

10

11 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I personally
12 would favor the bull and I think going special action
13 would be better than the State. Again, in the State,
14 everybody is a subsistence hunter, but on the Federal
15 lands it's limited to local people that are more
16 dependant on that resource. As you said, it's the
17 hunter's responsibility to identify whether that's a bull
18 and what I hear from the traditional people in most of
19 the villages they know the difference between a bull and
20 a cow. If they're given the opportunity, we can monitor
21 the hunt and see what the results are, but I would guess
22 they'd be killing bulls.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My feeling is in the
25 Kaiyuh we have a winter hunt. The Council can make the
26 recommendation that there not be a cow harvest but only a
27 bull antlerless harvest in the Kaiyuh this February. How
28 would the Council feel about transmitting a letter for
29 bull harvest in February in the Kaiyuh? We have an
30 antlerless hunt and we can kill antlerless bulls. We can
31 designate it as a special action request for antlerless
32 bull harvest but now cow harvest. That's a question for
33 the OSM and the Refuge Staff whether that will float.
34 That will address one winter hunt.

35

36 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, are you looking
37 for a motion?

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: First I'm asking a
40 question, whether that actually can go forward.

41

42 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chair, that can go
43 forward. If we're talking about the Kaiyuh Flats, it
44 looks like a checkerboard there. I understand the wishes
45 of the Council and the needs that have been expressed,
46 but I don't know if the pattern of hunting use out of
47 Nulato, Kaltag and that falls on the right checkerboard.
48 So that's one.

49

50 When we talk about the one for the Ruby

1 area, the makeup there is different, but I would
2 encourage the Refuge Staff to make that clear. But the
3 northern portion of the Innoko Refuge it's not conducive
4 to a recognizable hunt, but maybe Refuge Staff can
5 correct me on that.

6
7 MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman. Just to
8 maybe address a little bit along those lines. And Ray
9 asked some good questions. Because of the land status on
10 the Kaiyuh, Northern Innoko Refuge, it's about three-
11 quarters of a million acres, it's completely
12 checkerboarded. Most of the land status right along the
13 Yukon River, which is actually where most of the
14 population of moose spend the winter, they don't actually
15 spend the winter in the lake district, the central Kaiyuh
16 Flats, which is predominantly Federal land. They
17 actually spend a lot of it along the Yukon River corridor
18 itself, which is mostly either village corporation or
19 Doyon land or some State land. That checkerboard status
20 makes it really difficult for the hunters to know exactly
21 where they are and what the regulations are. So, in the
22 past, we've always tried to maintain as much alignment as
23 we could between State and Federal regulations so the
24 hunters didn't have that extra burden of knowing where
25 they were.

26
27 Biologically, the Kaiyuh Flats, the
28 bull/cow ratio in the one trend count area that we do
29 down there is relatively healthy. It's one of the higher
30 ones. I don't have the numbers. And that trend count
31 area is from Koyukuk downriver to Kaltag, right along the
32 Yukon, and it's been between 50 and 60 bulls per 100
33 cows, which is really pretty high, but the total numbers
34 of bulls is 50 to 60 bulls and around 100 cows, so
35 there's not a lot of moose there. The bull/cow ratio
36 could support biologically, I guess in my assessment, a
37 limited extra bull harvest at that time. It would be my
38 desire to have both concurrent State and Federal seasons
39 if we did that. Right now there aren't any winter
40 seasons for bulls.

41
42 Jack said something about antlerless
43 bulls at that time of year and Glenn and I had a side
44 conversation. If you did pursue something like that, I
45 guess I would rather hear the language of any bull during
46 that time of year because young bulls actually retain
47 their antlers sometimes in February and March. The large
48 bulls almost all lose their antlers right at the
49 beginning of December. So having an antlerless bull
50 season you would actually not be including some bulls

1 that would be available otherwise.

2

3 So I don't know if that sheds some light
4 or confuses you. The State's natural cycle for proposals
5 is not until next year to make that proposal for a winter
6 season, and even for this winter we'd have to deal with a
7 special action request to the Federal Subsistence Board
8 on the Federal side.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So what's the wishes
11 of the Council. Do we want to pursue this? We've only
12 got 50 to 60 bulls to be harvested down there in the
13 Kaiyuh.

14

15 MR. SCOTTON: Jack, just as a point of
16 clarification. Sorry to interrupt. That's in the trend
17 count area there's 50 to 60 bulls. The overall
18 population is higher than that, but the core area right
19 along the river where likely a lot of the hunting would
20 occur, so we're not talking about a large population of
21 moose. For the entire Kaiyuh, Northern Innoko Refuge a
22 total population estimate of around 1,500 moose when we
23 did that estimate in 2004.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I see. I'm having
26 a hard time finding how many moose were to be harvested
27 in the spring season, March 1 to 5th season. That's a
28 season opened by special action by the refuge. Go ahead.

29

30 MR. JONES: Yeah, I'm kind of confused
31 with the Kaiyuh Flats refuge area. South of Koyukuk up
32 to Squirrel Creek, is that considered as Kaiyuh Flats
33 refuge area?

34

35 MR. SCOTTON: Yes, Northern Innoko Refuge
36 is essentially everything from Galena straight south and
37 then southwest down to Kaltag, so it includes Pilot
38 Mountain, Bishop Creek, Squirrel Creek and then down into
39 the Kaiyuh.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How many moose do you
42 think we would like to harvest, 10 to 15 bulls?

43

44 MR. STICKMAN: I don't know. Just the
45 preliminary numbers show 13. I don't know, 13 for a
46 village of 350. I would want something to happen. I
47 know what's going to happen if nothing is done. People
48 are going to wait for winter and they're going to go out
49 there and they're going to harvest whatever they see, no
50 matter what the regulations or what the State or what the

1 Feds do. So I'd rather be able to give them an
2 opportunity rather than have them become criminals.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think it's shown to
5 the Council that we have a need for harvest on refuge
6 lands. The State concurrence cannot happen this year,
7 but we have need this year. I would feel that this
8 Council could transmit a letter to the Koyukuk/Nowitna
9 Staff to consider an opening for 15 bulls in the March 1
10 to March 5 season on that portion of the Northern Innoko
11 National Wildlife Refuge. The participants would have to
12 know where those boundaries are and those markers would
13 have to be set on the bank of the Yukon River. I do feel
14 we have a serious showing of need for additional harvest
15 in winter. Because of the extenuating circumstances,
16 this Council has taken special action request after
17 special action request for additional harvest time
18 because of the warm falls, so I do feel that it's
19 incumbent upon this Council to make this request of the
20 Koyukuk/Nowitna Staff to provide a winter bull hunt. The
21 hunters will have to know what a bull moose looks like.
22 I would entertain a motion to make that letter of
23 transmittal.

24

25 The refuge manager wants something to say
26 there. Do you have something to say? All right.

27

28 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, while they're
29 discussing this, I'm just curious why you're not
30 discussing any -- and I know it may not succeed, any
31 emergency order request to the Board of Game due to the
32 land make-up in that area because it's already been
33 expressed that it's checkerboard. If the harvest is
34 along the river, that's in State jurisdiction, so I'm
35 just curious as to why the Council is not exploring the
36 option of an emergency order request. I realize it may
37 not win, but I don't even hear it in your conversation.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we're dealing
40 with the Federal. I was going to get to the State thing
41 after this. We're dealing with the refuge staff here
42 right now. I don't feel we'll have nearly the success
43 rate with the State. I would like to make that special
44 action request to the State. Are you ready with your
45 comment.

46

47 MR. MOOS: Yes, Mr. Chair. I'm Kenton
48 Moos, the refuge manager at Koyukuk National Wildlife
49 Refuge. We're discussing it. We do have the option --
50 or I do have the authority to open up a March 1st hunt,

1 which we've typically done by Huslia. We can do it down
2 in that area as well. The thing we need to check into is
3 whether we can limit it to certain villages because
4 potentially Kaiyuh Flats could potentially have to
5 include Galena village as part of that hunt. If we do
6 that, the number of moose that could be taken out of
7 Galena potentially could fill the quota very quickly. So
8 it's something we'll look into. It would be contingent
9 on several things, such as our biological assessment
10 which is going to occur here shortly, but it's something
11 we can look into. We do have the authority to do that,
12 but I'm going to have to look into it a little bit.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's kind of an 804
15 kind of deal and I don't know if we really want to go to
16 that. What do you have there in the regs?

17

18 MR. MATHEWS: I think what everyone is
19 stumbling around is the customary and traditional use
20 determination for 21(D) is residents of that unit, Huslia
21 and Ruby. So if this March 1 to 5 season -- it's on the
22 books, it's allowed to go forward and correct me if I'm
23 wrong, limit that to any bull, then those people would
24 qualify to do it. But the petition in front of you, and
25 again I didn't capture it, was for how long in February.
26 So is 1 through 5 matching the time frame that the
27 petition has. I don't know.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My position is to
30 change the season date to a February hunt would take a
31 complete proposal, which we'd have to go all the way --
32 we're trying to remedy the situation this year. If
33 Nulato wants to change that harvest time to February
34 instead of March, then they'd have to submit a proposal
35 to do that. But if we want to get something done this
36 year for Nulato, then we have to use this March 1 to 5
37 season. I think we can neck it down to a bull harvest.
38 Whether we can arbitrarily make an 804 determination,
39 that's completely different. When you get into
40 allocating the moose in the Kaiyuh to Nulato and Kaltag
41 and excluding Galena, I don't know about that. That's a
42 nightmare.

43

44 MR. MATHEWS: Just to get it on the
45 table, then maybe this season March 1 to the 5th has been
46 in existence how long? What has been the pattern of
47 people hunting it? Has it mainly been the locals there
48 or has it been more from Galena? You're further
49 restricting, if I understand your discussion here, to any
50 bull where now it's a cow quota. So, if that goes

1 forward, would that be attractive for more hunters? I
2 don't think so. Hunters that qualify with a positive
3 C&T. I'm drawing a blank. Do we have a history of use
4 for March 1 to 5, who actually hunted it? It may not be
5 an issue is what I'm trying to point out.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Glenn was presenting
8 data that winter, December 1 to 10 hunt, was harvesting
9 out of Galena -- did he say five moose?

10

11 MR. STOUT: Yeah, Mr. Chair, that was
12 actually all of 21(D). That's all the villages, that's
13 the total harvest that occurred in 21(D).

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would say to the
16 refuge staff that the harvests have been fairly low on
17 this winter bull hunt when it's necked to a bull. Nobody
18 wants those so much as they want a cow in the winter. I
19 think it's worth a try to provide an opportunity to
20 people from Nulato, which is right across the river from
21 their village, to access refuge lands. We'll also submit
22 a special action request to the State of Alaska for a
23 concurrent one bull harvest during that time frame also.
24 Because of the low harvest in Nulato this year, I feel we
25 need to make that recommendation from this Council to the
26 Koyukuk/Nowitna staff for 15 bulls to be harvested on the
27 Koyukuk, north portion of the Innoko Refuge, known as the
28 Kaiyuh Flats. I'll entertain a motion for that.

29

30 MR. STICKMAN: So moved.

31

32 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I'll second
33 that. And I have comments, too. I think this gives us
34 an opportunity to bring forward the issue of the deed for
35 flexibility and I think in our supporting letter it would
36 be good to spell that out because of the fluctuating
37 weather and so on and the limited current seasons.
38 What's happening is people are not meeting their
39 subsistence needs, so we need to be moving towards on
40 both the State and Federal level a more flexible system
41 that can respond to these changing conditions.

42

43 MR. MATHEWS: Let me play devil's
44 advocate here. The cow quota would still remain in
45 effect for March 1 to the 5th. So when that's met, this
46 would have to shut down.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. The request is
49 strictly for bull only harvest during that time frame.
50 It does not include cows. Refuge staff has said over and

1 over they do not want to have a cow harvest and
2 biologically it cannot be supported. We do want this
3 hunt to occur, so this is strictly a request for bulls
4 only during March 1 to 5 season.

5
6 MR. MATHEWS: So to follow that through
7 then, we really don't need a special action.

8
9 MR. SCOTTON: I don't know if I'm the
10 right person to address this or not. Talking to Kenton
11 and looking at the regs, the regulation on the book
12 currently we could entertain the prospect of a March 1 to
13 5 hunt for bulls only with a quota on Federal land only
14 in some portion of 21(D) and that hunt would be available
15 to all rural residents of 21(D) and Huslia, which is in
16 Unit 24. The cow hunt you've been mentioning is in Unit
17 24 and it's March 1 through 5 with a quota of 10 cows.
18 It's kind of separate. Rural residents of 21(D), Huslia
19 and Ruby. So that's something within our power now
20 without a special action request.

21
22 We're just talking about it. Like I
23 said, this is the first time it's been brought up. Sort
24 of thinking about it on the fly, talking to Glenn about
25 what the State's position would be. My concerns as the
26 local wildlife biologist and Kenton as manager is there's
27 a lot of land status issues and checkerboarding. Our
28 mantra has been it's really nice to stay concurrent so
29 that we don't have issues of law enforcement where we're
30 out patrolling and we have to cite people for hunting on
31 the wrong land. We've successfully managed the hunt out
32 of Huslia that's on Federal land only. So these are
33 things we're just sort of discussing. Certainly it's
34 within your purview to suggest to us that winter season.
35 The manager is here and he's listening. I'm going to
36 talk to him about it.

37
38 Maybe the thing to do, Vince, is take a
39 break, discuss things a little bit and sort of see how to
40 proceed and get an idea if we're all thinking correctly
41 as we go here and what we can do right now without a
42 special action request.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll take a
45 10-minute break. It's 4:50. We'll go till 5:00.

46
47 (Off record)

48
49 (On record)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to start
2 this meeting again. Everybody please be seated. So I
3 had a little chat with Glenn. He went over the bull/cow
4 ratios in the Innoko. They fall off as you go toward
5 Galena and they increase as you move downriver across
6 from Nulato. I talked to Caroline Brown back here. The
7 rule of thumb is .2 moose per person in these villages
8 here. With a community of 400 people approximately -- is
9 that about what it is, Mickey?

10

11 MR. STICKMAN: It's about 350.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 350. So we're still
14 shy of that objective. In the winter hunts that have
15 occurred there five bulls were harvested in those winter
16 hunts at the most. So if we get full participation from
17 Kaltag and Nulato, Koyukuk and Galena we may get around
18 this 15 bulls. There's concerns about inadvertent
19 harvest of cows and people getting tickets for shooting
20 cows during a bulls only hunt and that would be a real
21 bummer. I was wondering about what the Council's
22 feelings were about harvest of antlered bulls during this
23 time. Some of the yearling and two-year-olds still have
24 antlers on. They shed theirs last. I would like the
25 Council to comment on that aspect instead of one bull.

26

27 MR. STICKMAN: I was talking with Kenton
28 and Geoff, the subsistence person with Koyukuk/Nowitna.
29 Just the simple fact that this would be like a special
30 deal that would be -- of course it would be State
31 enforcement presence out there enforcing State law on
32 State land. Of course, I live in Nulato, so I would go
33 to Kaltag with Jeff and help him. So just a verbal
34 education of what's actually going to be permitted if we
35 do get this permission.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That sounds good. Any
38 other comments from the Council. What was your feeling
39 on antlered bulls harvest only instead of a bull where
40 people may get in a bind by inadvertently shooting a cow?
41 What do you think about that?

42

43 MR. STICKMAN: I was talking with Kenton
44 and Geoff about that too and I figured something like
45 this is better than absolutely nothing. As the Regional
46 Advisory Council, we're giving them that opportunity and
47 that's one of our charges, to give them that opportunity.
48 If that's the only opportunity we can give, at least
49 we're living within the parameters of our duties.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
2 from the Council on this. It's not a special action
3 request, it's a request to allow this hunts for bulls.

4
5 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. Do we have
6 good information on how many bulls actually have horns
7 then? We're talking about a March hunt now, aren't we,
8 or are we talking February?

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: March 1 to March 5.
11 That's my concern, some of the two-year-olds are starting
12 to lose their antlers. The yearlings still have their
13 antlers, so we're going into the smallest component of
14 our population. So it would be your feeling to stay with
15 the one bull.

16
17 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I would lean towards
18 one bull because I think you're going to really have a
19 limited number. You're not only just looking for the
20 bulls, you're looking for the bulls with horns and that's
21 going to be such a small part that it might be very
22 difficult for the hunter to come across something like
23 that.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I thought I'd
26 throw that out there and ask for your comments. What do
27 you say, Ben?

28
29 MR. JONES: I'd go for the one bull
30 because there's five days where you're going to be
31 scouting around quite a bit on snowmachine looking for a
32 small bull with horns. It will be kind of hard to locate
33 one.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a comment,
36 Don.

37
38 MR. HONEA: No, I'm of the same opinion
39 as Mickey.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. We'll stay
42 with that one bull. There is a very small component of
43 moose that would have antlers at that time, especially a
44 two-year-old, which would be a preferred animal to
45 harvest. My experience where I live would be more than
46 50 percent of the two-year-olds would have deciduated and
47 the ones that still got antlers are runts. That's not
48 real good moose to eat. So I would still stay with the
49 one bull. I think we've covered this.

50

1 Do we need a vote on this, Vince? I
2 think we should vote on this.
3
4 MR. MATHEWS: It will make a clean record
5 and when you look at more distant solutions on this, then
6 you'll have it on the record also.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further
9 discussion.
10
11 MR. STICKMAN: I call for the question.
12 It's already been moved and seconded.
13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has been
15 called. All those in favor of this letter of transmittal
16 to the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge on the March 1 to March 5
17 winter hunt in the Kaiyuh Flats, northern portion of the
18 Innoko, all those in favor say aye.
19
20 IN UNISON: Aye.
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.
23
24 (No opposing votes)
25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. Go ahead,
27 Vince.
28
29 MR. MATHEWS: Just to make it clear, the
30 motion was for a 15 bull harvest.
31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.
33
34
35 MR. STICKMAN: No, Vince. I think that
36 number would have to come from Kenton and his staff after
37 they do their moose count in November, so we can't put a
38 number in there. Only the staff from the Koyukuk/Nowitna
39 can put a number in there.
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It would be my opinion
42 that that population can support a 15 bull harvest. That
43 would be the Western Interior's objective on this hunt.
44 If it can support that, I would still like to stay with
45 that 15 bull harvest.
46
47 MR. MATHEWS: Ray, you were the mover of
48 that motion. Do you concur with that and then the second
49 of the motion.
50

1 MR. COLLINS: Mickey moved and I
2 seconded.

3
4 MR. STICKMAN: Okay, yeah, I'll concur
5 with that, but I still believe it would be up to Kenton
6 and his staff to actually come up with a number. I mean
7 it could be more than 15.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if you want to
10 go that way. I think the threshold is 15. If it's more,
11 then that would be appreciated. I don't want to see it
12 down to three or two.

13
14 MR. MATHEWS: I think the record is clear
15 that the mover of the motion and the second agree to 15.
16 It's obvious it's going to be biologically tested with
17 the surveys. That's always inherent, protection of the
18 resource, so I think it's clear where it's at. There
19 will need to be communication between the refuge and the
20 affected villages. I assume, Jack, you're going to want
21 to be informed of what they want. Generally they write
22 up a small justification on it, so you'll be informed of
23 it.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that
28 addresses that petition. So now we've got the Ruby
29 petition. It basically mirrored the petition requesting
30 a winter hunt in February. Because there is no winter
31 hunt on the books here in the Nowitna that I'm aware of,
32 is there? This would have to go through a proposal
33 process, special action request -- oh, I skipped ahead of
34 one issue.

35
36 We wanted to have an emergency order
37 request sent in to the State of a mirrored issue, so I
38 was going to entertain that as a motion and vote on that
39 also on the Northern Innoko. That was for the State of
40 Alaska, State lands. I don't know if that will happen,
41 but I want that to be submitted to the State. I want the
42 State Board of Game to be aware that we have a lack of
43 meeting subsistence needs in this area, so I want that to
44 be transmitted. I'll entertain a motion to send an
45 emergency order request to the State of Alaska for that
46 March 1 to March 5 season, south of the Yukon River in
47 the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge area.

48
49 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

50

1 MR. COLLINS: I'll second.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.
4
5 MR. JONES: I noticed that Ruby would
6 fall under that 21(B).
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ruby is right on the
9 boundary and the Federal lands are basically just upriver
10 and then the Nowitna Wildlife Refuge. We're trying to
11 address the Nulato issue right now with this emergency
12 order request to the State for the State control of lands
13 of the Innoko northern portion known as the Kaiyuh Flats.
14 Any further comment, Ben. Any further discussion.
15
16 (No comments)
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of the
19 motion signify by saying aye.
20
21 IN UNISON: Aye.
22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.
24
25 (No opposing votes)
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous. So going
28 back up here to Ruby. There needs to be a proposal
29 submitted. It would behoove the people -- the Council
30 could submit the proposal, but I would be more inclined
31 to see the people of Ruby submit the proposal. The people
32 in Ruby must be aware because of these moose population
33 status trying to get a cow hunt here will fail the
34 proposal. So I'm into winning the proposals. If we go
35 for something similar to what we just did for Nulato and
36 Nowitna Wildlife Refuge and BLM associated Federal lands,
37 then we probably could more than likely get past the
38 Federal Board. I would like to know what the Council
39 feels about that.
40
41 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. If I could bring
42 it back and meet as the Ruby Fish and Game Advisory
43 Committee and submit such a proposal because this has
44 been at this door for a while here and it's true, I've
45 seen people hunting from day one and literally going
46 every day up our little tributaries even up to Nowitna
47 without getting anything. I don't know what the numbers
48 are going to come back when we come back with the
49 numbers, but I do know that whether it's 21(D) or 21(B)
50 up here, the numbers during our December hunt a year ago

1 that was taken away from us, we only harvested one moose.
2 We're not talking very large numbers. I didn't even sign
3 this, so this is coming straight from the people. If we
4 have to reword it and stuff, so be it.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would enjoy hearing
9 from the people of Ruby tonight at 7:00, so I'm inclined
10 not to move any further forward at this time on this
11 issue. I do want the community of Ruby to understand
12 what direction we're possibly moving, so that would be my
13 position.

14
15 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. Can I just move
16 we table this and then we can pull it off.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we'll table this
19 at this time until after public comment.

20
21 MR. STICKMAN: I second.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray moved to table,
24 Mickey seconded. Those in favor of tabling this item
25 until after public comment say aye.

26
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

30
31 (No opposing votes)

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. So where are we
34 at on the agenda, Vince.

35
36 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. That would
37 bring us to the 805(c) letter. In the past, you've
38 looked at the letter on Page 75 and if you have any
39 questions, we can address those. That's kind of your
40 report card back from the Board.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What are the wishes of
43 the Council on this letter.

44
45 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. Can I have
46 clarification on this. I don't know what we're talking
47 about here, consensus agenda.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Vince.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Real quickly on that. A
2 consensus agenda for the Federal Subsistence Board is
3 when the Regional Council recommendations align with the
4 State's comments as well as the Interagency Staff
5 Committees recommendations. If they all say it should go
6 this certain way, the Board, in a single motion, brings
7 up a whole list of proposals that are on the consent
8 agenda in the beginning of the meeting and announces it.
9 Anybody can raise their hand and say, no, I'd like
10 Proposal 56 pulled off that consent agenda. Then it goes
11 through a full presentation. You may be more familiar
12 with the term housekeeping proposals at the Board of
13 Game. It's similar to that. It's used as a meeting
14 management tool.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So this 805(c) is
17 basically what the Board actions were on our proposals
18 that they went through last spring. These were sent out
19 this past summer. Unless you want to comment on
20 something the Board did that you don't agree with, we'll
21 move on the agenda.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moving down this
26 agenda list here, I think we're on number 2, update on
27 ADF&G wildlife planning efforts.

28
29 MR. MATHEWS: I don't know what time
30 frame Randy needs for that.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you need a while,
33 Randy?

34
35 MR. ROGERS: No, my report isn't too
36 long.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You can step up to the
39 mike there and have at it.

40
41 MR. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
42 members of the Council. My name is Randy Rogers. I'm
43 the wildlife planner for Department of Fish and Game.
44 It's always a pleasure to be here with you. I'm sorry I
45 missed the meeting in Koyukuk last spring.

46
47 I'm going to give a brief update on three
48 different projects; the Yukon/Innoko Moose Management
49 Plan, the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan and
50 progress we're making on the Wood Bison Restoration

1 Project.

2

3

4 To start with, the Yukon/Innoko Moose
5 Management Plan, I just want to say thanks to Robert
6 Walker for presenting the plan at the Council meeting
7 last year. I was unable to attend because of the Board
8 of Game, but from what I understand he did an excellent
9 job and I appreciate the fact that the Council passed a
10 resolution in support of the plan. I also wanted to
11 express thanks to the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge and
12 BLM staff, among other agencies who participated in the
13 planning process.

14

15 The Board did go ahead and endorse the
16 Yukon/Innoko Moose Management Plan and adopted all the
17 reg proposals. Later the Federal Subsistence Board also
18 endorsed the plan. I've got a set of some handouts here
19 and I made copies of both the State and Federal Board
20 letter of endorsement and resolution of endorsement for
21 you.

22

23 A couple of the key things that happened
24 as a result of the plan. The non-resident season in Unit
25 21(E) was reduced by five days at the end of the season
26 starting this year. Beginning next season there will be
27 a non-resident drawing permit system put in place. There
28 will be a winter draw similar to what was established on
29 the Koyukuk. For next year there will be 60 permits
30 issued.

31

32 One thing the Board did which wasn't
33 specified in the plan is they split the allocation of
34 permits between guided and non-guided. Kind of following
35 the pattern of what Virgil Umphenour first suggested in
36 the Koyukuk. This wasn't a huge issue of concern to
37 members of the planning committee, so I didn't raise
38 major objections. I think the key point was to limit the
39 total level of non-resident harvest there. So what we're
40 shooting for is to keep it at the status of what the
41 harvest has been historically in recent years, which is
42 about 30 moose taken by non-residents. So, to be pretty
43 conservative in the initial year, we're authorized up to
44 100 permits but we'll be issuing 60 this year. With the
45 50 percent harvest rate, we would hit the 30. We're
46 likely to have a significant no-show rate, so I think
47 we're being pretty cautious. As we get more experience,
48 we can adjust those numbers of permits.

49

50 One thing the Board of Game did not do
that was recommended by the planning group was adopt a

1 wolf predation control plan for Unit 21(E). The Board
2 did request that the Department work to prepare an
3 intensive management plan and present it to the Board at
4 the next available opportunity.

5
6 Just in the context of the predation
7 control programs, Region 3 presently doesn't have enough
8 staff or resources to support additional predator control
9 programs. We're stretched pretty thin trying to make
10 sure we conduct the surveys that we need to to provide
11 biological information to support the programs that we
12 have. We've had some special funding from the
13 Legislature which has enabled us to keep up with some
14 surveys to improve the data that we have.

15
16 I'm sure most of you have heard that
17 there's been another lawsuit filed against the State
18 Predation Control Programs and that's pending right now.
19 Between the lawsuit, the upcoming change in
20 administration, there will be a bit of caution about
21 moving forward with these things, but I think within the
22 Department we hope that we can maintain some kind of
23 middle ground so that we have the ability to manage
24 predation when the need is really there.

25
26 I'll move on to the Central Kuskokwim
27 Moose Management Plan. That's been a pretty severe
28 situation as I think you're all aware of. The program
29 initially recommended by our planning committee that went
30 to registration permits in Unit 19(A) didn't succeed in
31 reducing the number of hunters or level of harvest. We
32 had already known we needed to look at reducing hunting
33 pressure in that area. I went to the Central Kuskokwim
34 Advisory Committee meeting in Stony River. Many folks
35 from the eastern portion of 19(A), Sleetmute/Stony River
36 residents, were very strongly advocating a complete
37 closure of all moose hunting in 19(A). Some of the folks
38 who live further downriver in the Aniak/Kalskag area felt
39 that maybe moose numbers were coming up a little and they
40 didn't want to see a complete closure. So this was and
41 still is a somewhat divisive issue in the area there.

42
43 Anyhow, the end result was that the Board
44 of Game went ahead and closed the eastern portion of Unit
45 19(A) to all moose hunting. This wouldn't have happened
46 without the request coming from the local residents. The
47 western portion of Unit 19(A) was changed to State Tier
48 II permits and Federal drawing permits that were
49 allocated according to ANILCA Section 804 criteria.
50 Local residents there would have preferred to maintain

1 the registration permit program, but with closure in the
2 upper area, the moratorium in Unit 18, we just didn't see
3 any way that you could manage the level of harvest
4 without going to Tier II. It's an unfortunate situation,
5 but it became the reality.

6
7 I'd like to thank the Federal Subsistence
8 Management Program for their efforts to work with us and
9 support that and team up with careful analysis of what
10 harvest could be allowed and how we could coordinate the
11 State Tier II permit and Federal permit program. It
12 wasn't an easy job to make the decisions on how to do the
13 allocation according to the 804 criteria, so I think they
14 are to be commended for that.

15
16 Both the State and the Federal managers
17 put extra efforts into informing hunters of this new
18 change in the system. I personally issued a couple
19 special newsletters to the residents in Unit 19(A) and
20 went out myself with some extra help to conduct workshops
21 to help people fill out Tier II applications and make
22 sure they knew they had to get them in in May.

23
24 This morning I talked with Hollis
25 Twitchell, who is now working with the Yukon Delta Refuge
26 and asked me to say hello and that he appreciated working
27 with the Council when he was in this area. He explained
28 how extensive their efforts were to manage the hunt
29 there.

30
31 At any rate, we're hoping if we can
32 manage harvest carefully and continue the predation
33 control program, the population will rebuild. The
34 preliminary reports from our Tier II permits, which we
35 still have several out that haven't reported yet, we have
36 22 moose harvested under State Tier II permits and six
37 under Federal permits. We figured the maximum allowable
38 harvest was 60 bull moose, so I think we'll end up well
39 within that. Again, I think this is a testimony to how
40 few moose there are in the area and how difficult it was
41 for people who got permits to get one.

42
43 As you're probably aware, we do need to
44 have a permanent Federal proposal and regulation adopted
45 to make permanent the special action request and I know
46 that OSM Staff has one of those drafted, so we support
47 that and will work with you and OSM to refine that
48 however it's needed.

49
50 On a positive note, the Wolf Control

1 Program in Unit 19(A) was the only one in the state that
2 achieved the harvest objective for reducing the wolf
3 population last year. We ended up closing the wolf
4 control program by emergency order to maintain the
5 minimum wolf population that's specified in the Board of
6 Game approval.

7
8 Last year in recognition of the difficult
9 situation with moose and the need to address all sides of
10 predation as much as possible and in response to proposal
11 by the Central Kuskokwim Advisory Committee, the Board
12 further liberalized the bear hunting regulations in Unit
13 19(A). I brought with me some handouts on the new bear
14 hunting regulations in 19(A) and Unit 19(D) East.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Quick question, Randy.
17 Where was that demarcation between 19(A) East and 19(A)
18 West?

19
20 MR. ROGERS: They basically drew the line
21 from the George River drainage up, is the area that is
22 closed, and from Downey Creek, which doesn't probably
23 show on the map. So it was drawn essentially to include
24 Red Devil, Sleetmute, Stony River. Also the Lime Village
25 management area was not included in the closure area.
26 They have a Tier II hunt that they had before and that's
27 still in place.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are they under a one
30 bull harvest in the Tier II Lime Village area?

31
32 MR. ROGERS: I believe there's a two bull
33 limit in there. When the Central Kuskokwim Moose Plan
34 was adopted, both the State and Federal seasons were
35 cranked down to reduce the total level of allowable
36 harvest. In fact, folks in that area haven't been coming
37 close to what the allowable harvest is anyhow, so it's
38 sort of a matter of what's on the books than what's
39 reality. Talking to folks from Lime Village, they're
40 optimistic that maybe they're starting to see a few more
41 moose around there and maybe there's a recovery beginning
42 to happen.

43
44 So, to clearly answer your question, I'd
45 have to refer to the regs, Jack.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: At that point I would
48 be concerned about some of our Western Interior residents
49 going on moratorium and having a two bull limit in a
50 management area. I know they used to kill a lot of moose

1 around Lime Village and things went bad. It would be my
2 opinion that everybody's got to bite the bullet. I don't
3 know anybody in Alaska that's got a two moose limit, so
4 I'm not too happy to hear about that. In this planning
5 effort, Lime has to come around to certain thing about
6 reducing their harvest like everybody else. Their
7 associated villages are under basically a moratorium
8 right now. That's my opinion and I just wanted to
9 express that.

10

11 MR. ROGERS: I think that point is well
12 taken. I'll continue on here. Part of the handout I
13 gave you I'm not focusing on Unit 19(D) East and Ray is
14 more familiar with the details than I am, but the Board
15 also adopted some regulations to provide for bear
16 predation and control in that area to further reduce
17 predation on moose calves.

18

19 Just a few words on the Wood Bison
20 Restoration Project. Since the public meetings we had
21 last summer we haven't been real active in this project.
22 We were kept quite busy dealing with the writing and
23 rewriting of the wolf predation control programs in
24 response to the lawsuit we had and multiple Board of Game
25 meetings. Not to mention the fact that my priority was
26 focused on completing the Unit 21(E) Yukon/Innoko Plan.

27

28 We did go and consult with -- I provided
29 some information to this Council last year, the Eastern
30 Interior Council. We gave presentations at their
31 Grayling/Anvik/Shageluk/Holy Cross Advisory Committee,
32 Minto/Nenana Advisory Committee, and
33 Manley/Tanana/Rampart Advisory Committee. All those
34 committees voted to support further work to consider wood
35 bison restoration in their areas.

36

37 Right now we're working on completing an
38 environmental review of wood bison restoration. That
39 will be available for public review and comment this
40 winter. In fact, we're very close to finishing it right
41 now. The main point I'd like to make here is that we
42 would like the Western Interior Council to review this
43 document and submit some kind of comments or
44 recommendations to us. I realize that this might be a
45 little bit of a challenge because our comment period will
46 fall between your meetings for the most part. So I don't
47 know if it's possible to have a committee or phone poll
48 or however you might handle that. We really want to push
49 for as broad a public input from advisory committees,
50 councils and the general public as possible.

1 Part of one of your handouts is an
2 article that just came out in the Alaska Wildlife News,
3 which is an online newsletter our division puts out. So
4 there's an article on the wood bison project and the main
5 point of that is to let people know this environmental
6 review is coming out. The environmental review itself is
7 going to be over 100 pages long. I'm not going to kid
8 myself to think that most people want to read all that
9 stuff, so we'll have a newsletter coming out that will
10 have a concise summary of it and some of the main points
11 and it will let people know where the full document is if
12 they really want to look at it.

13
14 So we'll make sure all your members are
15 on that mailing list. I've got a clipboard with me that
16 I'll put out here so any people in the public want on
17 that list. The more the better as far as we're
18 concerned.

19
20 Just as a reminder, we're looking at
21 three primary sites right now, which is Yukon Flats,
22 which we've looked at for 15 years or so now, Minto Flats
23 and the Lower Yukon/Innoko River as the primary spots.
24 It's likely that this environmental review will recommend
25 proceeding with wood bison restoration in Alaska and we
26 will seek to initiate site specific planning for both
27 Yukon Flats and Minto Flats.

28
29 These final proposed decisions are in
30 review, so that may change somewhat. The absolute final
31 decision won't be made until after the public comment
32 period and that will be based on what we hear back.

33
34 One key issue that we're dealing with now
35 involving the wood bison project is concerns of Doyon
36 about potential implications of the Endangered Species
37 Act should wood bison be listed as a domestic species if
38 brought into Alaska. There's a concern about how that
39 might affect resource development, specifically oil and
40 gas development on Minto Flats and potentially all areas.
41 So that's a concern we need to try to work out.

42
43 We have a policy decision from Fish and
44 Wildlife Service saying they don't feel they need to be
45 added to the U.S. Endangered Species Act or list and
46 that's a favorable decision for us, but there is concern
47 that a third party can petition for listing, a new
48 administration might change that policy decision. We
49 feel that if you look at the listing criteria in the
50 Endangered Species Act, a listing action would not be

1 likely. Nonetheless, with the financial stakes there
2 are, it's understandable that Doyon is concerned and we
3 want to make sure that we do this cautiously so that
4 we're not interfering with other developments. On the
5 other hand, we don't want to see wood bison held hostage
6 for concern over possible oil development.

7

8 So that's all I have for you right now.
9 I'd be happy to answer any questions that I can.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council have
12 questions. I have a couple. Go ahead.

13

14 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Randy,
15 I just want to thank you for your presentation. On
16 behalf of the Ruby Advisory we'd welcome you back. To
17 see a PowerPoint, we'd be very interested. We talked in
18 the past about the wood bison project and I said Ruby
19 would certainly be open to such a thing if you were to
20 come to one of our meetings and give a presentation.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 MR. ROGERS: If I might just comment
25 back. During the break I mentioned to Don that I did go
26 ahead and bring a PowerPoint file with me and if there
27 was extra time I considered it might be an option for
28 extra entertainment, but it's not a main part of the
29 Council's business and I don't want to detract from the
30 Council business. If the opportunity doesn't come now, I
31 would look for a chance to come to Ruby AC and just share
32 that information with folks.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments on
35 Randy's presentation.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've personally
40 reviewed this wood bison reintroduction. I've been
41 following it since Bob Stevenson came up with this idea a
42 few years ago and read some of that archeological stuff.
43 Competition of wood bison with other species doesn't seem
44 to be a factor. I have two questions. One, has the
45 brucellosis thing been addressed with the introduction of
46 wood bison and are wood bison considered an endangered
47 species in Canada where they come from?

48

49 MR. ROGERS: Wood bison have been listed
50 on the Canadian endangered species list. Right now

1 they're classified as threatened in Canada. There is an
2 action underway in the Fish and Wildlife Service to --
3 they were incorporated by reference as a foreign listed
4 species on the U.S. list. When Canada downgraded them to
5 threatened, the U.S. has not done that yet but it's in
6 the process. If that happens, it can make some
7 permitting things go a little easier. So they have been
8 listed.

9

10 Part of the whole purpose of this project
11 is to fulfill one of the major goals of the Canadian wood
12 bison recovery plan, which is to establish a separate
13 distinct disease-free free-ranging herd. It's important
14 for -- real consideration in this is maintaining the
15 genetic integrity of wood bison separate and distinct
16 from plains bison.

17

18 So you'll definitely have the full
19 environmental review, Jack, and look through all the
20 details of it. In the environmental review and in our
21 public meetings last year, one of the biggest issues of
22 concern is diseases. It goes well beyond brucellosis,
23 bovine tuberculosis. Right now there's a closure of the
24 border importing any bovines into the United States from
25 Canada due to Mad Cow Disease. There's really little to
26 no threat with the wood bison stock we're looking at.
27 USDA folks recognize that and are willing to work with us
28 to try to get an exemption at the right time.

29

30 We have very strict protocols in place
31 and being further refined and developed between the
32 Alaska State veterinarian and our own wildlife
33 veterinarian for testing for brucellosis, TB and a number
34 of other diseases.

35

36 Last summer the concern came up the stock
37 we were looking at getting from Elk Island National Park
38 showed the possible presence of a disease called Yoni's
39 (ph) disease, which isn't present in Alaska I think in
40 wildlife at all. There's a few cases of it in cattle
41 found in Delta or Palmer. However, we don't want that
42 disease in this state. For a while that looked like it
43 might rule out Elk Island as a source of stock. We've
44 done follow-up testing and it looks like those were false
45 positives.

46

47 I guess the bottom line of this whole
48 thing is we won't ever bring animals into the state if
49 they're not conclusively shown to be disease free. Once
50 they're brought into this state we will probably have

1 them held in quarantine for six months at least, probably
2 a year, for further testing. With further requirements
3 for testing once they're released in the wild. We would
4 have some radio-collared animals. So, potentially, our
5 own criteria developed in-house could be so stringent
6 that we can't get stock.

7
8 There's a remote chance -- as you may
9 know, there's 22 wood bison now at the Wildlife
10 Conservation Center down by Portage. They've been
11 multiplying. They started out at 13. We could look at
12 the possibility of using artificial insemination to
13 increase the genetic diversity of that particular herd
14 and build it up to the point where we could get enough to
15 release to the wild. That's worse case scenario. If we
16 did that, that would delay the project for several years.

17
18
19 In this environmental review we identify
20 five or six issues that if we can't overcome them, then
21 the project can't go. We wanted to be as up front with
22 the public as we can about those issues. There's disease
23 testing, there's the border closing, there's the
24 Endangered Species Act. Allocation could be a big issue.
25 A lot of folks are concerned about subsistence versus
26 non-subsistence. We've got to develop a program so that
27 we share the benefits of it.

28
29 Of course you folks are all aware that in
30 terms of the ability to do this on Fish and Wildlife
31 Service lands has been up in the air and Fish and
32 Wildlife Service has, you know, opposed this as far as
33 moving forward on Yukon Flats. Recently the Commissioner
34 wrote to the new Regional Director of Fish and Wildlife
35 Service, reviewed some of the history of the project and
36 basically was hoping that we might get in a more
37 cooperative mode on this. It doesn't mean that we would
38 expect any just blanket go ahead and do it, but we would
39 like to have a partnership in working to consider Yukon
40 Flats and that may or may not end up in a decision to go
41 forward.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. That
44 answered my questions. Any other questions.

45
46 MR. ROGERS: I think people probably want
47 a dinner break and I'll be around to talk about this
48 stuff, too.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a comment

1 there, Don.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
4 Randy, you just mentioned CATG or whatever in conjunction
5 with Stevens Village or with Fort Yukon there. Did they
6 not open up a brand-new place there? I was just
7 wondering if you had any participation in that particular
8 project where they opened up the one in Delta and how
9 many wood bison they brought in, et cetera.

10

11 MR. ROGERS: Yes. Actually, what took
12 place down there, Stevens Village, on its own initiative,
13 they wanted bison for a long time. All the folks out on
14 the flats are frustrated with the pace of this project.
15 They've supported it. All the tribal councils for years.
16 The CATG Board of Directors voted to designate it as a
17 priority for their natural resource program. It's
18 amazing how difficult this is compared to -- you know,
19 you think back in the 1920s when we established the Delta
20 Plains Bison Herd almost no thought went into that. Now
21 the regulatory hurdles are incredible.

22

23 At any rate, Stevens Village purchased
24 with some grants and support from the Inter-Tribal Bison
25 Cooperative and elsewhere about 2,000 acres down at
26 Delta. A portion of that is fenced in. They would like
27 to have wood bison there. They are unable to get wood
28 bison stock brought into Alaska. For right now what they
29 have there is plains bison.

30

31 We went down to their gathering and their
32 ceremony to bless the herd when that took place because
33 we wanted to commend them for having bison on the ground
34 when we're still shuffling paper. At any rate, they
35 would like to get wild bison out there on the Yukon Flats
36 as the other villages would. As time goes by, they're
37 looking more seriously at the option of getting captive
38 bison herds out there. If they end up putting captive
39 bison herd on village corporation lands, if they can get
40 wood bison in, then that would be great. We could still
41 consider a wild wood bison herd out there.

42

43 If we're unable to do that and they go to
44 the option of plains bison out there, which legally they
45 can do that, it's their land and plains bison are
46 available, it would basically kill consideration of wood
47 bison out there because it would eliminate the
48 possibility of having a genetically pure wood bison
49 strain out there.

50

1 So the State is in this for the purpose
2 of enhancing recovery and conservation of wood bison on
3 an international basis and also for providing benefits to
4 the people of Alaska, both subsistence, non-subsistence
5 and wildlife viewing.

6
7 Next week I'm going to a conference in
8 Denver that's sponsored by the Wildlife Conservation
9 Society, co-sponsored by World Wildlife Fund and the
10 Nature Conservancy and the theme of the conference is
11 designed to put together a working plan for restoring the
12 ecological role of bison in all of North America. The
13 focus is largely on plains bison, but the options for
14 doing that with plains bison are very limited. I think
15 that it's going to be an opportunity to get further
16 discussion of the potential for wood bison here and
17 hopefully better understanding among the scientific
18 conservation community and general public.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.
21 Well, all that grub smells pretty good over there. We've
22 had a long meeting so far today and we're going to have a
23 continuance at 7:00 with public coming in. At this time
24 I'd like to break for dinner and to be adjourned until
25 about 7:15 would be good, about an hour.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 (Off record)

30
31 (On record)

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Western Interior
34 Regional Advisory Council was going to listen to comments
35 from local people from Ruby. I've been sending word out
36 to various sources to get the local people to come down
37 and comment about their subsistence needs. This is
38 primarily a fisheries meeting, but we're wanting to hear
39 about your needs for moose harvest in this area.

40
41 The whole Council is here and we're going
42 to be on the record, so we're going to really need to
43 hear what people feel their subsistence needs are and
44 their ideas about how to participate in a winter moose
45 hunt here. We've been working on proposals for winter
46 hunts here in the Unit 21(D) area. We have on the books
47 a season down in the Kaiyuh Flats and it was an
48 antlerless moose season. The State Board of Game has
49 discontinued use of antlerless moose, so killing cows is
50 practically out of the window.

1 There's a petition floating around here
2 in Ruby about a winter hunt in February and everybody
3 wants a nice, fat cow in the spring, but I've commented
4 that we have to be able to pass these proposals and
5 trying to get a cow hunt through the Federal Subsistence
6 Board and the State Board of Game is highly unlikely. I
7 do feel that we could have a winter bull hunt and that's
8 what we're going to be talking about primarily here.

9
10 We want to know how many people are
11 lacking meat. That's part of the Federal Subsistence
12 ANILCA law, Title VIII of ANILCA, that this Council is
13 supposed to identify the subsistence needs and strategize
14 to come up with plans and proposals to address those
15 needs.

16
17 So I live in the Upper Koyukuk River.
18 I'm from Wiseman up in the Brooks Range. The river is
19 really small up there and we hunt moose as our primary
20 meat. We hunt dall sheep, caribou. We have some other
21 animals that you don't have down here and I know how it
22 is not to get a moose. I feel for people who didn't get
23 a moose this year. I went down to your store down here
24 and I was seeing meat prices. Steaks are 12-something a
25 pound, beef, hamburger, which I consider low-grade meat.
26 It's not even worth half or a quarter as much as a moose.
27 I'm wanting to get some kind of proposal together during
28 this meeting to address the subsistence needs in Ruby.

29
30 We'll have people coming up to the mike.
31 You have to hit the little button and the red light
32 lights up. State your name for the record. The more
33 people we have come up and comment about your needs, the
34 better it is. Do you have anything additional there,
35 Vince.

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: No. Just that if we get
38 into actually some ideas and that, I'll project it's kind
39 of a crude map, but so you know where the refuge is and
40 understand what this Council's jurisdiction is. Don't
41 worry about that when you're testifying. That's when we
42 get to the action phase.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any comments that the
45 Council would like to make to the public at this time.

46
47 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Chair. Like I
48 mentioned last night, this is our chance for local
49 concerns to be heard. Next time we come by here will
50 probably be a couple years. We try to visit each village

1 where our Board members are represented. When we met in
2 Allakaket we pretty much has similar concerns last winter
3 and we find out as you sit on here we have to take
4 control into our own hands, be it tribal councils or the
5 village councils. We can come up here and talk about
6 predator control. We aren't the only one that had the
7 problem.

8

9 When you're talking about State programs
10 like that, it's going to take a lot. You see how many
11 years it took for McGrath to get their wolf control. So
12 some of the concerns we have locally we're just going to
13 have to initiate some programs in controlling them
14 ourselves.

15

16 Right now our proposal that we wrote up
17 and put down at the store here for a February hunt we put
18 on hold and it's pending. That's why I wanted to get the
19 word out and get people to voice their concerns. I seen
20 some people go out and they really, really tried and they
21 didn't get a moose. I feel for them because I'm in the
22 same boat. I didn't get a moose. So that's why I wanted
23 to have public comment. I'm saddened that Glenn isn't
24 here. I guess he had to go back to Galena. I wanted the
25 local State office to hear our same concerns. With that,
26 I'll turn it back to you, Jack.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other Council
31 comments before we start public comment.

32

33 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, this is Ray Collins
34 from McGrath. Just general information on what's going
35 on here is useful to us in the future. If you just want
36 to tell us how your hunt went this fall, how many times,
37 how many days to get a moose, what's happening with the
38 high cost of gas, just some general information is useful
39 to get a picture of what's happening in the communities.

40

41

42 And if there's any fisheries issues,
43 things like that. How did the fishing go for you. Even
44 if it went well, tell us that. Some general information
45 is useful to us too just to know what's happening.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any other Council
48 comments. At this time whoever would like to step up to
49 the mike there. You look like you're ready to go, Ed.

50

1 MR. SARTIN: I'm Ed Sartin of the Ruby
2 Advisory, the Advisory Chair. A lot of the things I'm
3 sure will sound pretty redundant, but basically most
4 people aren't getting their moose, as you've heard, and
5 the weather is different now, so they're not moving. Gas
6 is up. We've heard all these things. Basically
7 everybody has put this petition out hoping that we can
8 get our winter hunt back. I don't think a lot of people
9 understand that we can't really afford to be shooting our
10 cows because they're the main source of our future moose
11 and that we only have certain alternatives, which is this
12 new proposal that we're getting ready to discuss. As
13 chair here I feel it's the only choice we really have to
14 have any kind of a winter moose hunt now. As I said
15 before, a cow season is out of the question due to our
16 low numbers.

17
18 I'm sure the people in Ruby would be open
19 to any kind of alternative to get some kind of winter
20 hunt back, which we've lost through -- I don't know how
21 to explain it, but I feel we were kind of talked into
22 giving up our winter hunt in exchange for a fall hunt
23 that we felt we may get five extra days for. So we ended
24 up with a little earlier hunt as kind of a token or
25 whatever for giving up our winter hunt. A few people got
26 a moose on that one, but not too many. Still, during our
27 hunting season we only got a few moose, 10, 11, maybe 12,
28 but that's definitely not enough moose for the village at
29 all.

30
31 Basically people just want the
32 opportunity to have more hunting opportunity in the
33 winter time or late in the fall. People keep saying when
34 do we get our five days of cow season back and I have to
35 let people know we can't really afford that and I think
36 people are just barely understanding that. Then they
37 say, well, saw lots of cows. There must be lots of cows
38 out there. Well, yeah, maybe so, but that doesn't
39 necessarily mean that's the numbers. So we go round and
40 round with this whole thing. In the meantime we're just
41 trying to find a solution to be able to have more moose
42 meat on the table.

43
44 So, like I say, a lot of stuff will sound
45 redundant, we've heard it, the weather's changed, people
46 aren't getting their moose. That leaves more comment.
47 I'm sure there's people behind me that have more to say
48 besides just myself and my opinion of what the village is
49 going through and my own personal experience of looking a
50 lot and not finding anything. So there you go and I

1 thank you for your time.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ed. Anybody
4 else.

5

6 MS. GREENWAY: Hi, my name is Donna Honea
7 Greenway. I'm here from Ruby. I've been hearing this
8 thing going around about this moose hunting stuff for how
9 many years now. I was fortunate to get a moose this
10 fall. There was a lot of people that haven't got moose.
11 I feel that we should get our hunting back in February.
12 Nobody has gotten a moose around here. Everybody could
13 see cows and everything, but what's cows going to do.
14 Like Ed said, we've got to look at the numbers and stuff.
15 I think it would only be fair if we can get our rights
16 back to fish and hunt whenever we want.

17

18 I remember years ago growing up with my
19 grandparents in fish camp. We didn't have to worry about
20 Fish and Game coming to close down our fishwheels or tell
21 us when to fish and it was fun out there teaching us how
22 to grow up in a fish camp and live off the land. I think
23 it's really important that we do get our rights back and
24 I do appreciate you guys being here.

25

26 How about this. Wolf hunting stuff and
27 the bear thing that they did one year brought all the
28 bears over here from McGrath. Well, they all went back
29 to McGrath, so maybe we'll get a little bit more moose.

30

31 Thank you guys for being here and
32 listening to us.

33

34 I was raised on the banks here in Ruby
35 and my mom and dad were hard fish cutters and so were my
36 grandparents. There's a lot of people here that live off
37 of subsistence and that's all we have here. Like the guy
38 mentioned about the store prices down there. That's
39 ridiculous having to pay that much for meat when you can
40 just go get it right out your back door practically.

41

42 I thank you guys for listening and hope
43 you all have a safe trip back home. Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for your
46 comments. Yeah, we'd like to know how your fishing went
47 this summer and comments on those too, meeting your
48 subsistence needs. It's primarily a fisheries meeting.
49 If you want to step up there and comment on the moose
50 issue or fisheries issue.

1 MR. TITUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and the
2 Council for bringing your fisheries meeting to a table in
3 our village. I guess by now you all know our subsistence
4 need is a great value here. We survive on subsistence
5 issues. We're all avid hunters here. We survive on
6 subsistence meat hunted in our back yard, fish caught in
7 our own rivers.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me. Could you
10 state your name.

11

12 MR. TITUS: Oh, excuse me. My name is
13 Allen Titus. I'm a resident here in Ruby, born and
14 raised here. Now my children are growing up here. The
15 subsistence values here, it's fine. I appreciate you
16 guys making the offer and giving us a little bit -- a
17 week of hunting in August, but that didn't seem to work
18 too good. As many of the people here in Ruby find out,
19 they found out themselves the weather was 80, 90 degrees
20 in August. Who wants to go hunting then. You can't even
21 go in the woods. The gnats will do you in.

22

23 Another thing here, I went hunting this
24 fall and all I've seen was cows. Our own Fish and Game
25 biologist, Galena management office, they can't tell me
26 there's not enough cows because that's all I seen was
27 cows and calves, so there's plenty of those. It's one
28 thing to sit behind a desk and make all these rules and
29 regulations and tell people that there's something going
30 on out there and they don't even know. They haven't been
31 out there with us. I feel that we're the ones that's
32 going out there doing the hunting and we get a bird's eye
33 view of what's happening.

34

35 This winter hunt, I'm not really too
36 excited about that idea because who wants to kill a
37 skinny bull in March. The doggone skin is stuck to his
38 ribs. You can't even eat it. I'd rather have a cow.
39 The politicians and the biologists and whoever run the
40 world around here say we can't do that. I thought about
41 it today. Due to the global warming effect, it's getting
42 warmer and warmer. It's getting too hot to hunt in
43 September.

44

45 If you're not going to give us the winter
46 time hunt, like I say, you don't want to shoot no bull
47 and they won't give us a cow season, and we don't want
48 the hunting in August. Due to the global warming,
49 there's not enough time. Our moose season, I believe,
50 opens September 5th and runs through the 25th. The last

1 four, five, six years now I seen the season closed on the
2 25th and about the 26th, 27th, 28th there's moose
3 standing all over the road. They're getting in your way
4 and running across what you're trying to do, so I know
5 there's lots of bulls out there.

6
7 Another idea that you guys might want to
8 look at if you're not going to help us out any other way
9 is moving our moose season back a little bit. Instead of
10 opening from the 5th to the 25th, another good idea would
11 be to go from the 10th to the 1st of October. What do
12 you people think of that? I mean that will give us a
13 little bit more time. Maybe a slight chance the weather
14 will cool off and the majority of the people here will
15 luck out and get a moose.

16
17 If you're not going to do that for us,
18 give us back our moose season and the last give us any
19 sex, cow or bull. I mean you can't be taking everything
20 away from us and not giving nothing back to us. That's
21 right.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, everybody is
24 taking cuts all over the country. This Western Interior
25 deals from the Brooks Range. I have people in Allakaket
26 used to killing cow moose in the wintertime. Everybody
27 is taking these cuts. Nobody likes it, but the moose
28 population is only half of what it used to be. We've got
29 too many bears and wolves running around, not enough
30 people killing bears and wolves. That's the problem.

31
32 A friend of mine used to trap wolves, got
33 killed in an airplane snaring wolves over in the 40 Mile.
34 He said if you kill a moose or a caribou, it's your
35 obligation to kill a bear or a wolf. The problem is we
36 don't have enough people harvesting bears or wolves.
37 Everybody is out shooting moose all fall or whatever. We
38 need to start killing a lot more bears. We need to start
39 trapping more wolves. So that's kind of some of the
40 reality problems here. Guys are losing track of how to
41 trap wolves.

42
43 Up around Huslia they kill bears, they
44 kill wolves. That's why they've got a pretty heavy moose
45 population. They've got their little bit of a winter
46 harvest for cows and we've been able to hang onto that
47 because they have a decent sized moose population. We
48 need to start harvesting more bears and wolves. That's
49 the main thing.

50

1 I've sat on this Council since 1993 and
2 been on the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee, I've worked
3 a lot of proposals through the Board of Game and the
4 Federal Subsistence Board and there's no chance to get a
5 cow hunt through. I would like to try and get one
6 through there. I might as well go beat my head on that
7 cliff up the river there.

8
9 We can try and get a bull hunt, maybe
10 push the season back in the fall up to the first part of
11 October, we can try and do that. Yeah, a bull is not as
12 good as a cow, but the way the moose population is and
13 the bear and wolf harvests are relatively low, that's
14 just not going to happen. That's just the reality. I'm
15 not going to flower it up and make it smell rosy. That's
16 the reality. State and Federal managers are very
17 reluctant to have any kind of cow harvest right now.

18
19 What we want to know are your ideas. We
20 went to that on the Koyukuk River. We went from the 25th
21 of September closure and we pushed that up to the 1st of
22 October to give additional harvest, so we could probably
23 do something like that. We could make a proposal for
24 that.

25
26 MR. TITUS: Mr. Chairperson, Council.
27 That sounds real good. I kind of got an understanding
28 now whatever we do you people ain't going to give us back
29 our cow hunt. Like I say, a majority of us don't want
30 that skinny bull hunt in March. What will happen if
31 there's a hornless bull running around there and he's
32 running around with a cow in March and you get somebody
33 who can't barely see out there and, bang, you walk up
34 there, whoops, I'm sorry, I shot a cow. What are you
35 supposed to do? Then if you do that, you've got a chance
36 of shooting three moose with one shot.

37
38 I understand that part now. It's
39 eliminating the cow part, but still in all we don't want
40 the skinny old bull either in March. Like I say, it just
41 brings us back to moving the fall bull hunt up from maybe
42 September 10th to October 1st. For that matter, you can
43 look outside right now. Just like a summer day. It's
44 still raining out there. Or move it a little later. Or
45 give us another week. That might be something to look
46 at.

47
48 Another thing, getting back from the
49 moose season. I guess fishing went pretty good around
50 here for most people. I didn't fish. I was pretty busy

1 all summer. I guess some people that did fish got a
2 little bit of fish to put on their table and eat, so I
3 guess they did pretty good with that.

4
5 Another thing I wanted to address, what
6 can we do about this overabundance of wolves we have
7 here? As you all know, they're eating us out of house
8 and home here. That's the reason we can't hunt cows,
9 because they're taking care of them too. I notice over
10 in McGrath they're shooting them out of airplanes. Why
11 can't we do that down here? Who is our Fish and Game
12 biologist in Galena area? Is that Glenn Stout? Where is
13 that Glenn? How come he didn't stay around to listen to
14 the subsistence issues?

15
16 MR. ROGERS: Hi, I'm Randy Rogers with
17 Fish and Game. Glenn is on kid duty tonight, so he had
18 to go back to Galena. He asked me to try to keep notes
19 of what's said here tonight and he wants to hear about
20 it, so I will pass your thoughts on to Glenn.

21
22 MR. TITUS: Thank you. That's what I was
23 mainly concerned about is our predator control. I went
24 hunting all over and there's a lot of wolves around here
25 eating everything up. I went hunting out on the Poor Man
26 Highway. I spent a night out there. Wolves howling all
27 around me. I went up to Deep Creek area there, spend a
28 night up there, my younger son and I. Wolves howling all
29 around me. I went west of here. Wolves howling that
30 direction. North of here, wolves playing around over
31 there. There's got to be something we can do. There's
32 got to be some help so we can work on getting rid of
33 these things.

34
35 The bears, yeah, they eat quite a bit of
36 the moose calves early in the spring, but the wolves is
37 the worst ones right now. Bears, I feel that they fall
38 into the subsistence line of our food source because we
39 eat the bears. I don't know if you've ever tried to eat
40 a wolf. I never had to. Pretty soon, you've got no more
41 bears, you've got no more moose, you might have to.

42
43 So that's the issues concerning me.
44 Basically mainly are moose hunt, moving it back or moving
45 it ahead a little bit and work on the predator control.

46
47 Another thing, I'd like to thank Ed
48 Sartin, our fish and game spokesperson here in Ruby for
49 bringing many issues to the roundtable. Sometimes they
50 get looked at and sometimes they get shuffled around,

1 shuffled around and then they get shoved under the
2 paperwork. He's been doing a great job for us and I'd
3 like to thank you for that, Ed.

4
5 Basically that's all I have. Thank you
6 for letting me speak here.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Did you
9 want to say something there, Don.

10
11 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 In reference to what Allen -- by the way, thank you,
13 Allen, for those comments. In reference to our season
14 ending -- I had mentioned this today that I had missed a
15 Koyukuk meeting but the Western Interior committee here
16 had a proposal to include -- I believe it was the Kanuti
17 and also the Ruby Advisory, which we were asking for -- I
18 believe last fall we wanted an extension or something and
19 they had written it in there for us. I didn't make the
20 meeting. So anyway the proposal passed with the wording
21 that they would grant us that extra seven days or
22 whatever it was at the end of the -- it would give us an
23 extra seven days toward the end of the season, which
24 would have ended near October 1st or something and that
25 was part of the language, but the wording was if the
26 State did not grant us that early season. Now, when we
27 got that earlier season, the State did not tell us at the
28 time that we lost that winter hunt. In hindsight, we
29 would have took that different route, that later season
30 as you mentioned.

31
32 Also requesting of the Board here, we put
33 in proposals, and I believe it goes from this Board to
34 the Federal Subsistence Board, then to the State for
35 passage, is that right? So actually we don't have the
36 power to open up these seasons. Just clarification on
37 that.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we've got State
42 and Federal lands. The Nowitna Wildlife Refuge up here
43 is Federal lands and so those fall under this Federal
44 Regional Council and the Federal Board opens and closes
45 the subsistence seasons on those Federal lands. The
46 State of Alaska is in control of all the other Native
47 corporation lands, which is something I don't
48 particularly care for, but the State of Alaska controls
49 hunting on Native corporation lands. The subsistence
50 users can't even use their own lands for subsistence. I

1 don't like that. But the State does have control of
2 those State lands.

3
4 There's a dual system in Alaska. We're
5 advisory. We advise the Federal Subsistence Board on
6 proposals. We can't pass the proposals. We're not a
7 governing body ourselves, but we have quite a bit of
8 weight with the Federal system.

9
10 So that deal last year, we're down there
11 in Koyukuk talking about moving the season forward to the
12 first of October for up here around Ruby. Well, we
13 listened to the area biologist and he told us that Ruby
14 wanted that early season extension and didn't want the
15 late season extension. Well, we're going to have to stop
16 listening to that stuff and start talking directly to
17 Ruby.

18
19 So we can make a proposal. This Council
20 can make a Federal subsistence proposal to the Federal
21 Board, which will be reviewed and will go into effect the
22 next regulatory cycle if it's passed by the Federal Board
23 for an extension up to the 1st of October. We got that
24 in the upper part of the unit of 24(B) and (C), basically
25 below Allakaket all the way up, we got that extension.
26 It has limited success. The water was low up there.
27 Yeah, sometimes there's these two-year-olds running all
28 over the place after the season is over. I get bummed
29 out after not getting a moose and seeing them running all
30 over.

31
32 It's frustrating, this whole regulatory
33 system, but we have to deal with that. That's what we
34 have to do. But we're here to listen to people's
35 comments. We want to hear how mad you are and we want
36 that on the record over there because that gives us
37 ammunition for when we go to the Federal Board with a
38 proposal. This is what people really want. We want to
39 hear people's comments and build a consensus about what
40 we're going to do about this issue here. So I want to
41 have more comments if we have more people to comment.

42
43 MR. SARTIN: Ed Sartin here. Nobody is
44 going to say anything right now. I wanted to bring up
45 something about our chum harvest I noticed. I was
46 noticing a lot of people catching a good amount of kings
47 this summer and I also noticed a lot of chums that were
48 with those kings and people having to deal with them. I
49 noticed people sitting at their wheels all night long
50 sometimes or all day throwing the chums back in the water

1 alive, you know, that's why they were sitting there, so
2 they could keep their kings. So this one man was very
3 nice to say, hey, Ed, I got 100 chums here I really don't
4 want, do you want them, so I took them and we dried them
5 all up in my greenhouse because I don't have a
6 smokehouse.

7

8 But my point is we have this resource,
9 we're lacking in kings, we're having trouble, what are we
10 going to do, and we look around and we've got all these
11 chums coming out of our ears and no dogs to feed them to
12 and nowhere to put them and nobody wants them. However,
13 when I dry some up and I go down and visit my friends
14 down in Arizona and New Mexico everybody loves the stuff.
15 Chum? What's chum? What's king? They don't know.
16 Tastes good to them.

17

18 So I guess what I'm bringing up is we
19 have this resource that's not being utilized, these
20 chums, they're just kind of like what do we do with them,
21 they're in our way, that's what I see. I think it would
22 be good to bring that to the attention of others and
23 think of a way we can utilize these chums and sell them
24 legally within our customary trade or something like
25 that. We're talking about something excessive that we
26 don't know what to do with anymore due to the fact that
27 there's not a lot of people with dog teams anymore.

28

29 I just wanted to bring that up for
30 discussion, you know, and think about that and bring it
31 to the Board's attention.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. That was a
36 huge chum run this year, 3.5 million or 3.7. How people
37 use those chums, we have more things to worry about.

38

39 MR. SARTIN: We hear of shortage so much,
40 I just thought I'd mention the fact that we do have an
41 abundance of something we should probably focus on also.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, people are
44 drying kings and selling them at AFN. They could
45 probably sell some of those dried chum, too. Any other
46 comments on this moose proposal.

47

48 Please.

49

50 MR. McCARTY: Thank you for allowing me,

1 Mr. Chairman. My name is Billy McCarty. I'm the
2 traditional chief here in Ruby. I'm very concerned for
3 the whole village of Ruby, for everyone that needs moose
4 meat to put on the table for the winter months. With
5 that I recommend highly that you chop off that early
6 hunt, subsistence hunt, which was around the end of
7 August. That didn't do any good because it was too warm.
8 We were literally going back in the woods and looking for
9 the moose. They were far back napping, you know. We
10 couldn't find them. Only one moose I know of was gotten
11 during that subsistence hunt.

12
13 Also the regular fall hunt. I would like
14 to see that open on the 10th of September instead of the
15 5th and maybe close 1st of October. Does that sound
16 right? That's what I would like to see. The people
17 would have more chance. A lot of people didn't get any.
18 The people spend an awful lot of money on gas with no
19 luck of getting a moose. The moose didn't start moving
20 until about the 25th of September and that was the
21 closing day. The day after the season closed I seen a
22 bull. It was a day too late.

23
24 With that, I thank you for allowing me to
25 speak.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate
28 those comments. Yeah, it's always frustrating when I've
29 seen a moose the day after the season is closed. Do we
30 have somebody else over here to speak?

31
32 MS. McLIN: Hi. My name is Eileen McLin.
33 I've lived here for the past 10 years. I'm partner to
34 George Albert and we're raising three children under the
35 age of eight. I have several issues. One may seem at
36 first a little frivolous but it really isn't. It's not
37 the moose tag. What do you call the gray postcard?

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Harvest report.

40
41 MS. McLIN: Harvest report. Okay. I
42 substitute at the post office, so this past week I saw a
43 lot of nervous people and then I heard sort of a horror
44 story, someone here locally that works for the city told
45 me about seven or eight people last year were fined \$170,
46 \$180, I'm not sure, for not returning it or them not
47 having proof that it was received. Then I was told one
48 person that works for the clinic that she was able to --
49 when she was told you did not send in your postcard, she
50 went home and got her certified return receipt proof from

1 the post office and she was able to prove that she had
2 mailed something. Otherwise, if she wasn't able to
3 locate that, let alone have done that additional little
4 fee, she would have had to pay the fee just as other
5 people here have had.

6
7 I just thought, just like with PFD's, as
8 things change with technology, just like now for the last
9 few years register online, and I would assume get a
10 confirmation number, you do some reviewing of that
11 postcard. At the post office you wouldn't believe the
12 conditions that they come. Everything from stamped in
13 the mud to ripped. With the bar code, once they leave
14 Ruby, I'm not sure what the Fairbanks post office -- how
15 they read the bar code, if it goes through machines or
16 conveyor belts, all the mail that goes there from the
17 villages. So whether it gets eaten up or lost, let alone
18 once it gets to the government, just the fact that they
19 lost that one person's, who is a truthful person. So
20 those other people had to pay the fee if they didn't have
21 their receipt, if they weren't smart enough at the time
22 to do it. So once I heard that story I was telling
23 everybody you really should do return receipt certified.
24 So you might consider either where people can do that
25 same postcard but online get a confirmation.

26
27 Also, like Kaltag, maybe two weeks to one
28 month before the start of moose hunting season they
29 didn't even have a postmaster. She decided to go fire-
30 fighting and never returned. So our postmaster had to go
31 down there and I had to substitute. So strange things do
32 happen. You can't assume that we have even somebody
33 there to stamp it. Okay? And that definitely happened.
34 At least three days, if not five days, they had no post
35 office service.

36
37 Then the other thing is, there was a
38 little bit of confusion. I know one elder came in and
39 she was carrying some other people's, doing the favor,
40 because it's not her official job, and, you know, like
41 Columbus Day is like that odd kind of holiday this past
42 week where Monday, the 10th, those postcards were due to
43 be postmarked and that happens to be a holiday when we're
44 not open, the post office, and it was horrible rain for
45 many days, definitely Monday and Friday. So if they
46 said, oh, I'm an elder or whoever, busy, don't want to go
47 in, then they may have missed the deadline. Those people
48 may be surprised to get a -- you know.

49
50 Also, the cards themselves are sort of

1 wimpy. So maybe it's convenient for people who don't
2 live here and they're hunting and they just take the
3 card, the guide or whoever just throws it in, they don't
4 have to have a stamp, they're more concerned about
5 bringing their racks home, let's say. But for the locals
6 you have a busy life, you get to your job. Like with
7 George, we're every night hunting. He spent up to \$1,000
8 in gas and that is not kidding because you had the extra
9 season, the early and the regular, for nothing.

10
11 So those postcards you might consider a
12 different format. The postcard makes it so people want
13 to just filling it in to the postal system and not really
14 give it a thought as far as certified or return receipt.
15 But having that proof -- I was thinking maybe this is a
16 way to generate money for the government. So you really
17 trust that they're going to get there through the postal
18 system in the Bush and that they're also then not going
19 to be lost in the mounds that you have. Because that's
20 an insult to injury when someone has to pay \$170 and that
21 fee is sort of high. Maybe you have your reasons for it,
22 so maybe think about lowering the fee.

23
24 Really, when you look at it, is that the
25 only system to prove that you got a moose? When you look
26 at it, it's not that informative. I mean it is, but
27 maybe there's a way to have something more informative.
28 You're getting fined for something that says what area,
29 how many days. What about how much gas, how about the
30 fact that -- you know, both your cars are out, your
31 fishwheel just floated down the Yukon, you almost lost
32 your entire boat on Monday, the engine, and you had to
33 get towed by several friends. I mean disasters happen.
34 So that is insult to injury if that's the only protection
35 that you have whether you got a moose or not whether
36 somebody acknowledged that receipt. Sort of scary when
37 that one person definitely was able to avoid that fee by
38 having that little post office certified thing.

39
40 The other thing is winter hunt. I'm all
41 for the winter hunt. I heard a lot of complaints. I
42 work in the post office too, so I hear a lot of
43 conversations in the lobby. It seems like that's way too
44 early. Everyone kept saying they weren't seeing anything
45 moving.

46
47 The other thing is you mentioned that --
48 and this is true, depending on each individual family, if
49 they're able to take their subsistence skills and teach
50 it to their children and their grandchildren and some

1 families don't have that and you might consider like in
2 Galena the locals have formed in the last five years or
3 so sort of like a moose and trapping kind of school. I
4 forget what they call it. Just volunteer basis. Our
5 local advisory board or the tribe with your help could
6 maybe bring some of these skills. Our kids have been
7 able to see everything from a moose being skinned to make
8 snowshoes to a marten being skinned in our kitchen. At
9 the same time, like last year we took them out of school,
10 as young as they are and you're in the rain, but other
11 than the very early morning hunt they're there in the
12 boat scouting, you know.

13

14 So, trapping, I know David Ashley, before
15 he went up to be sort of stuck up there, he's on our
16 local advisory board and he was saying the local trappers
17 -- he's concerned that they're not given sort of like the
18 impetus to go out there and trap more and that goes for
19 the younger generation, before any kind of management
20 comes in.

21

22 George was able to get a bear, so that
23 was sort of the type of thing, well, there's a bear, so
24 that makes a big difference when you're living on such
25 little income. And I stayed home with the two-year-old
26 foster child for the last two years, but definitely we
27 were given the hind quarters from someone who was
28 successful and that makes a difference just having food
29 on the table. I guess that's about it.

30

31 And then I would like to see more for
32 those people who aren't on the local advisory board that
33 maybe they be required to post the minutes of the
34 meetings, that kind of thing, like on the post office
35 bulletin board. I was hearing the concern in people's
36 voices and just the nervousness and then seeing the shape
37 of those postcards. I was thinking, man, if they have to
38 pay a fee on top of not getting the moose, that's just
39 another hardship. I guess that's it.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. I
44 appreciate that. Don wants to ask you a question here.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Eileen, can I ask you a
47 question. I was kind of unclear about what you meant. I
48 know last year in reporting we had a lot of controversial
49 things about people not reporting or it's getting lost in
50 the mail and I don't know what it's like this year. It

1 comes up pretty fast and we just mailed them out a few
2 days ago. Anyway, I was just wondering what procedure --
3 are you saying that we should have that certified, is
4 that what you said?

5
6 MS. McLIN: I'm saying in the case of
7 like R.K. who works at the clinic, if it's true, the
8 person who told me, she had the proof from the post
9 office because her mother happens to be the postmaster
10 that she had a certified return receipt, something
11 they've learned in their household, so when she was told
12 by the government you did not send in your card last
13 year, whenever this happened, she was one of the seven or
14 eight in this community that supposedly didn't send in
15 their card, she said that is not true and went home and
16 got the proof and was able to show that she had done a
17 mailing before the deadline.

18
19 Even though the post office is separate
20 from hunting, at the same time you might think of other
21 alternatives, whether it's online with a confirmation
22 number, then you can't lose that confirmation number, or
23 even a bigger postcard. I've seen the shape of them.
24 They're pitiful. They're just thrown through the slot
25 for those people that just put it in the slot. Other
26 people are very nervous and bring it up to me and I'm
27 postmarking it on the card and putting it in -- some are
28 buying an envelope with a stamp and then some doing
29 certified.

30
31 So I'm just saying maybe review that
32 whole postcard format. Or even have a thing on it that
33 says -- whether you could say send it by certified mail
34 because then you have to scan it and there's a barcode.
35 If you do return receipt, then they have to sign for it,
36 which would be a hassle on the other end of it, but then
37 you'd have that green postcard that comes back for you.

38
39 So just other formats, like online too,
40 which actually I don't 100 percent trust, even though we
41 have internet computers in our house. Or even a phone
42 number where the person sends it in. Because I've gotten
43 George so paranoid because he sent his in about two weeks
44 ago and he's so paranoid now, as I'm telling these horror
45 stories that I'm hearing from locals that I just found
46 out in the past week, you know, by substituting at the
47 post office, he's like I don't want to hear about it.

48
49 Definitely next year it's going to be
50 certified return receipt and I advise everybody to do

1 that until there's a little bit -- you can send it in and
2 then you could call to make sure they received it,
3 whatever. Because that's a big fee. And that makes me
4 concerned too on the other end as far as their
5 bookkeeping system, filing system.

6

7 MR. HONEA: Well, thank you for that.
8 Being that they're State regs, we'll pass that on to
9 Glenn, whoever is taking notes for Glenn.

10

11 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I have a
12 question for Randy and maybe that's what he's going to
13 answer now, but I believe you can file electronically
14 now, right? You can phone in that report rather than
15 mail it?

16

17 MR. ROGERS: Yes, that's correct, Ray.
18 We are getting online reporting systems going. I just
19 wanted to acknowledge that most of the issues that Eileen
20 is raising are State issues with our registration
21 permits. I am taking notes on this and I will pass it
22 on. We've had similar problems in other areas and we're
23 trying to get the system better.

24

25 The Board of Game recently did pass
26 regulations making much more stringent requirements for
27 reporting, particularly on these registration permits,
28 and we have tried to phase them in. We usually have a
29 couple reminder letters before we go to the fines and all
30 that, but I'm not going to at all claim that the system
31 is perfect. I have heard stories of things getting lost
32 in the mail, so I think the comments are well placed and
33 I'll pass those on and we'll do our best to improve it.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One thing I thought of
38 while she was talking was why couldn't they, especially
39 these mandatory returns, that they couldn't return them
40 to the vendors that they're getting them from in the
41 villages. They're issuing them at the vendors. If
42 they're concerned about them getting lost, why can't they
43 just return them to the vendors and the vendors can send
44 them in a block with their receipts. That way the local
45 people would have more assurity that they turned them in.
46 I'm getting a whole bunch of hands here. Jackie.

47

48 MR. WHOLECHEESE: Yes, Mr. Chairman and
49 Board. I'm Jack Wholecheese. I'm from Huslia. I'm the
50 Huslia wildlife manager. The State do issue permits and

1 we have a local vendor. You heard earlier how Glenn
2 Stout thanked Elsie Bent for doing such a good job.
3 Before we used to have the same problem that she's
4 having, turning in our tickets late. When we started
5 utilizing a local
6 vendor, the whole processed changed. Nobody is getting
7 fined. Nobody is getting dirty letters from the State.

8
9 Our vendor reminds people about three
10 days before the deadline. We have a CB system in Huslia.
11 Just about every house has a CB thanks to the tribal
12 council. But she gets on that CB and she reminds the
13 people to turn in their harvest tickets whether they got
14 a moose or not. Being ignorant as I am, I almost forgot
15 because I didn't get a moose, so what's the use turning
16 in my ticket. But you have to turn it in whether you got
17 a moose or not. The people were really cooperative.
18 They turned in the horns with their harvest tickets.
19 With that, I just have to say utilize your local vendors.

20
21
22 Before I get off the subject, I got a
23 letter from the Nulato Tribal Council and I brought it up
24 to the tribe and they were in support of their hunt. A
25 lot of people are misunderstanding what the Western
26 Interior Board is here for. I heard a lot of comments
27 about why are you not doing this. As Advisory Committee
28 members, you listen to other Advisory Committee members.
29 We bring our proposals to you. I forgot to say I'm on
30 the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee. We bring our
31 proposals to the Western Interior Board and the Board
32 brings it up to the Federal government and the Federal
33 government brings it up to the State. So actually what
34 the Advisory Committee members are doing is trying to get
35 our subsistence rights back for the people. I know it's
36 a tough process to fight the Federal Subsistence Board
37 and get changes done.

38
39 I really agree with this petition because
40 doing a study on traditional ecological knowledge we
41 survey people, we interview people, and we ask them what
42 do you think you spend on your annual income on store-
43 bought meat. Right now we're at the stage where most of
44 the people spend about 80 percent of their annual income
45 on store-bought meat because they don't have the moose
46 meat that they need to survive for the winter. And I
47 really support what the people of Ruby and Nulato are
48 trying to do.

49
50 With that, I'd like to thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Go ahead,
2 Mickey.

3
4 MR. STICKMAN: I want to thank Jack for
5 the clarification. Getting back to the reason why we're
6 sitting here this evening, we listened to Allen and we
7 listened to the traditional chief talk about moving the
8 hunt back and I was just wondering are we going to be
9 starting a process on our proposal here tonight?

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's the
12 intention of this discussion, is to come up with a
13 consensus of what the community of Ruby wants to see.
14 I'm getting a little tired of hearing hearsay through the
15 State system when we're not in this village. This
16 village, you've got a communication break. You have to
17 understand once your -- what we're hearing outside of the
18 Koyukuk River Advisory and the Regional Council is
19 something that's going on different from this village. I
20 need to start calling you guys directly and find out
21 what's going on down here.

22 We're listening to you right now. We
23 want to know what you want to -- if you want to hunt,
24 move an extension into the fall season up in the 1st of
25 October, we're into that. Do you have a comment back
26 there? I saw a hand. Yes, it's still open.

27
28 MS. HONEA: My name is Clara Honea and I
29 was born here in Ruby in 1930. Lived here most of my
30 life and I've been the license vendor here for almost 40
31 years, 36 years I think, and I enjoy being the license
32 vendor here. I really encourage everybody that comes in
33 to get the moose tickets, I encourage them to please read
34 the hunt conditions so they know what to do. It's
35 important. And to mail the permit cards at the end of
36 the season, no later than October 9th, I think. It says
37 on the cards also that they can bring those cards back to
38 whoever issued them.

39
40 Those that brought them to me I spent my
41 own money and had those cards certified because this fall
42 sometime somebody came into my house and I thought he was
43 going to get a license and I said, oh, you're here for a
44 license and he said, no, I didn't turn in my permit last
45 year. How did he say now, even though it was here in
46 Ruby or something. He got fined in Fairbanks \$110 and he
47 lost his hunting license. I forgot what else he lost. I
48 felt bad about that, so I encourage everybody to turn in
49 those permits.

50

1 Glenn Stout was here to pick up their
2 horns maybe a week ago and he was in such a big hurry. I
3 really wanted to talk to him. He just grabbed a few
4 horns that I had there for him. I did talk to him
5 because I felt really bad because a lot of people didn't
6 get their moose this year. Those people really tried
7 hard and bought so much gas, including my brother,
8 McCarty Jr. here, Bill McCarty, and I really felt bad
9 about them. But I really praised the Lord, too, because
10 I prayed for everybody to get a moose and I praised and
11 thanked God every time somebody got a moose because I saw
12 that the people shared, shared with family and friends.
13 So I really thanked God that -- I didn't just pray for my
14 family to get a moose. I did, of course, and God
15 answered my prayers. I also prayed for everybody else in
16 town. So I am really praising God tonight that he heard
17 and answered my prayers.

18
19 I had a question. Last year somebody --
20 I heard a rumor. I really shouldn't listen to that
21 rumor. Somebody said, hey, they're not charging for --
22 you know, the big game tags, grizzly, brown bear. They
23 said everybody can shoot a brown bear now. They don't
24 have to pay \$25. So I told two guys that and right away
25 they bought them. I sent my end of the month report in
26 September. At the end of October or November I got a
27 letter from Fish and Game in Juneau that I issued two big
28 game tags without getting paid for them. So what I did
29 was I just, like I always do, I just paid out of my own
30 pocket for \$50 for these two guys' big game tags. So
31 this fall -- I work with Glenn Stout, so I always ask him
32 questions and he's always there for me. He's always
33 helping me. I forgot what I asked him and he said, oh,
34 by the way, you don't charge for the big game tags
35 anymore. You know that? I said yes and I told him what
36 happened last year. I said, Glenn, if I get a letter
37 from Juneau, you're going to pay. This time if I make a
38 mistake you're going to pay and he said okay. But it
39 never happened yet.

40
41 Oh, I did tell him while he was picking
42 up those horns I think that one week or was it 10 days in
43 August, I think it's just a waste of time. It was too
44 warm. There was only one young bull taken in that time.
45 He said, okay, what do you think and I said I think you
46 should extend it to October 1st and he said, yeah, but
47 the moose are rutting and that's when the moose are
48 moving. I didn't tell him, but I was going to tell him,
49 well, who are you afraid of, the moose or the wolves and
50 the bears. But I'm glad you explained that. Those were

1 the questions I had, so thank you for explaining that,
2 that there's nobody hunting -- not enough hunters for the
3 wolves and the bears. I always encourage people to go
4 out and kill those wolves and those bears. They're just
5 eating up all the moose.

6

7 Thank you for listening to me.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks a lot, Clara.

10

11 MS. GREENWAY: What do they do with the
12 racks anyway?

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is what
15 do they do with the racks. I don't know what they're
16 doing with those top palms.

17

18 MS. GREENWAY: Because I got my moose
19 September 7th and they were sure quick to come get my
20 racks. What do they make out of them, moose rack soup or
21 what? That's all I have to ask.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That top palm is cut
26 off on the subsistence hunts. We started that over in
27 the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area. There were hundreds and
28 hundreds of hunters up there, 750 hunters, and every
29 Alaska resident is a subsistence hunter whether they've
30 got the biggest jet boat in Alaska, looks like a
31 battleship, they're still a subsistence hunter, and
32 they're up there shooting those 65-inch bull moose and
33 calling themselves subsistence hunters. Well, we wanted
34 them to cut that horn off. Well, they were cutting them
35 off right below the burr. They can just take two pins and
36 put that thing right back on. The number of hunters just
37 kept going up and up, so we said, no, we have to destroy
38 the trophy value. So they saw through the palm and keep
39 the top portion. Well, they can't make anything then, so
40 the number of subsistence permits went down like a rock
41 right off the bat.

42

43 So that's the reason we're cutting that
44 top portion of that palm, is because everybody in Juneau,
45 Fairbanks, Anchorage was showing up here to hunt trophy
46 moose. The Koyukuk has a big name. You can watch it on
47 TV. So we've got a lot of demand for these moose, so
48 that's why we're sawing the top portion off. I don't
49 know what the Department is doing with them. You'll have
50 to ask Randy about that. Maybe they're making chairs out

1 of them down on College Road.

2

3 So we still want more comments. Go
4 ahead, Ben.

5

6 MR. JONES: My name is Benedict Jones.
7 For your rutting season, the only one that's in ruts the
8 1st of October is the big bulls. You don't want the big
9 bulls. The yearling bulls don't go into rut at all. The
10 two-year-olds until maybe the 15th of October.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're still wanting
13 comments. I'm really encouraged by the turnout here
14 tonight. I appreciate everybody coming out for comments.

15

16 MR. TITUS: Thank you for inviting me
17 back, Mr. Chairman, Board. Here's another issue I had on
18 the subsistence hunting around here. I don't mind -- I'm
19 a pretty good subsistence hunter and I walk for miles and
20 miles and I don't mind packing moose meat. What I don't
21 care for is if I get a moose -- it wouldn't bother me to
22 get a moose a mile and a half, couple miles off the
23 river. What I don't care for is packing back that
24 useless bone rack. I don't eat it. I don't fill my
25 freezer full of bones and rib bones. I've got no use for
26 antlers. I can't eat that. So there should be something
27 we can do about that that's under the subsistence law
28 that says if we shoot a moose that far off the river then
29 we can just leave that there. Like I say, we're not
30 using it, so why do we have to lug it back. I'd rather
31 bring back a pack-sack full of moose meat. Doesn't that
32 make a lot of sense? If you don't eat bones, then why do
33 you have to pack them?

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we talked about
36 that in that Koyukuk Planning Group. It's just part of
37 the requirement to bring out the head. Most people use
38 the head meat and stuff. This antler is the main
39 problem. We have too many sport hunters wanting those
40 antlers, so it's just part of the burden of being a
41 subsistence user. The parts that are left you can sell
42 those. You get \$5 a pound for those and buy a couple
43 gallons of gas. But it's just the way the breaks are
44 with the State system.

45

46 Everybody is a subsistence hunter in
47 Alaska, 650,000 people are subsistence hunters. That's
48 what we have to deal with to be a real subsistence
49 hunter, is bringing out the head and sawing off the
50 antler. Otherwise we're going to have thousands of guys

1 down here trying to shoot these big bulls and taking the
2 horns back. That's what the big problem is. So that's
3 the only way we can regulate that. It's worked pretty
4 well. See those numbers today. Glenn had the numbers up
5 here on the Koyukuk. It's real flat. The number of
6 people has just flattened right out and staying right
7 around where we're trying to keep it. That's the only
8 way we've had success.

9

10 MR. TITUS: Mr. Chairperson, the Board.
11 Does that apply for subsistence hunters here in the
12 village, too? Everybody I know around here ain't sport
13 hunters.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, they're
16 bringing out the meat and using the meat. We've got
17 thousands and thousands of people in Alaska that say
18 they're subsistence hunters, but they're down here
19 shooting 65-inch moose and wanting to keep the antler.
20 That's what we're up against. That's the only way we can
21 figure it out after talking for I don't know how many
22 meetings. It would be like the Yukon Flats. That's what
23 it would look like, .1 moose per square mile. Nobody is
24 getting a moose up there.

25

26 We have a success story on the Koyukuk.
27 We're holding the moose there. The Yukon Flats, look at
28 that place. That should have five moose a square mile
29 just like Huslia. They've got nothing up there.

30

31 MR. TITUS: All right, Mr. Chairman. The
32 reason why I'm wrestling around with that issue so much
33 is for instance, like I say, I'm a pretty good
34 subsistence hunter and I value that subsistence hunting
35 for moose. A few years ago I shot a moose and I hauled
36 the whole thing in with my neck with a toboggan and I
37 went to all the trouble of bringing back the bones.
38 There was a dog team here maybe a little underweight and
39 I said, oh, well, rather than throwing the bones in the
40 dump I threw the bones to the dogs. I did that and about
41 three days later here's Fish and Game. Hey, are you Mr.
42 Titus. Yes, I am. Well, are these your moose bones. I
43 said, yeah, they are. Well, you know there's a law
44 against feeding moose bones to dogs. No, I wasn't aware
45 of that, sir. He gave me a ticket and I had to show up
46 in court, got \$100 fine, so after that I just put it in
47 my own mind there's got to be some way we can just leave
48 these bones out in the grass lakes where you shoot the
49 animal. It would have been better if I left it out in
50 the country and let the wolves eat it rather than bring

1 it back and throw it in the dump. That's the issue I'm
2 pushing around here. The point is there's no use packing
3 it back if you're not going to eat it. I'll push that
4 one around until the end of time.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Boil them bones up and
7 get the marrow out of there and stuff, the sinews and
8 stuff. As far as I know, and I've got to get a hold of
9 the State regulation, you can use the skin, hide,
10 viscera, bones, for trapping, bait or dog feed. If you
11 got a ticket for feeding game meat to dogs, unless it had
12 a significant amount of meat on it, you should have
13 fought that in court because I think you were legal.

14
15 MR. TITUS: Yeah. Excuse me, Mr.
16 Chairman. It was just a bloodshot piece of neck bone, no
17 meat on it, just a bone. I wasn't going to eat it, so I
18 figured let the dogs chew on it. But, no, I got a ticket
19 and \$100 fine. That's basically why I'm arguing that
20 point.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I would have
23 fought that ticket. You can use those for trapping, bait
24 or dog feed.

25
26 MR. TITUS: Okay. Thanks. That's all I
27 had. I just wanted to bring that up.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Any other
30 comments. So we've heard a lot of good testimony
31 tonight. Go ahead.

32
33 MR. COLLINS: After listening to
34 testimony one night I thought I should share with you an
35 experience in McGrath because you mentioned you're able
36 to kill wolves over there. I'm the chairman of the local
37 Fish and Game Advisory Committee in McGrath as well as
38 being in this group. We started working in the mid '90s
39 on our wolf problem and it wasn't until just a few years
40 ago that we finally got a plan in place and approved by
41 the Board. One of the things we had to answer was what
42 was happening to our moose calves. Tony Knowles was the
43 governor then and before he'd let us move forward we had
44 to determine that. So they had to do a study on what was
45 taking the moose calves.

46
47 The main problem for the population going
48 down was there was no recruitment. The calves were not
49 surviving from the time they were born to the spring.
50 There were just enough calves surviving just to keep the

1 numbers flat. In fact, they were actually going down.
2 So they started tagging calves and they did that for
3 three springs and they found out at least 60 to 75
4 percent of the calves were being taken by bears. So in
5 the spring the bears are a significant problem on what's
6 happening to your calves.

7
8 So then they were deciding what to do
9 about the bears. We have an area created around McGrath
10 that's 20 miles below McGrath and up the river and up the
11 Takotna. How many bears do you think are in that area.
12 If they had asked me, I would have said maybe 50 bears at
13 the most. The first year they went out in the spring to
14 take bears and they didn't touch any sows with cubs, they
15 got 94 bears within 20 miles of McGrath. Unfortunately,
16 some of them ended up over here because they were flying
17 them out. They couldn't kill them.

18
19 They went back and did it a second year
20 and took another 45 and, again, they didn't touch any of
21 the sows or the cubs because of the problem of
22 tranquilizing them and losing them there. So if you
23 counted the sows and cubs, we must have had at least 200
24 bears within 20 miles of McGrath.

25
26 What has changed, I know everybody used
27 to be in fish camp over there during the summer. Those
28 bears come around, they didn't live. They come around
29 the mines out there and break into the grub shack and so
30 on. The miners were taking them. That stopped now.
31 People aren't out there all summer long at fish camp and
32 the harvest of bears went down and their numbers went up.

33
34
35 The reason we feel that wolves are so bad
36 is we see them in the winter, we see their tracks, we
37 find the moose they kill and they're killing adult moose
38 and they're taking some of the calves too. But bears are
39 a significant problem. If you want to keep your numbers
40 in balance, you're going to have to start taking more
41 bears here, too. That's what our problem is, too.
42 They're not going to fly anymore out and we're trying to
43 figure out how we're going to increase the bear harvest.
44 Yeah, 94 bears they flew out the first year. I think
45 you'll find they're taking an awful lot of your calves
46 now. If you're not seeing those twin calves in the fall
47 or by the time you go out hunting, there's a good chance
48 a lot were taken by bears in the summer.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I read a study

1 where bears eat between .8 moose calves, 1.5 moose calves
2 per bear per day for five weeks over in Canada. Over in
3 Koyukuk they had 41 percent twins. You should have
4 around that same twin rate over here. So you have bears
5 eating up your moose, mainly black bears and grizzlies
6 and the wolves beating the tar out of them in the winter.
7

8 Vince, I want to go over with the Council
9 real quick on some of the parameters of a proposal that
10 we would like to submit. Do you have a comment, Vince.
11

12 MR. MATHEWS: I think what the public
13 needs to realize that's testified here is that the
14 proposal that you're putting forward here will go to the
15 Federal side and that will only be on refuge lands. If
16 they want to or the Council wants to have that on the
17 road out here, that has to be submitted to the Board of
18 Game, which is open 2007. So there's no confusion out
19 there that this Council can submit proposals to Board of
20 Game, but I think what they're going to talk about is a
21 proposal that the Federal Board would act on this May.
22 If they agree with the proposal, it would be in effect
23 next fall on refuge lands, not on State lands. I know
24 it's confusing and we can help you out on maps, but that
25 needs to be clear so there's no confusion over that.
26

27 Thank you.
28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's what the dual
30 system is. We're going to be dealing with Federal lands,
31 basically the Nowitna Wildlife Refuge for Ruby. Go
32 ahead, Randy.
33

34 MR. ROGERS: I just wanted to mention one
35 point that was brought up in the discussion earlier. I
36 wanted to make sure you guys were aware, and you will be
37 when you get to your State Fish and Game Advisory
38 Committee meetings, but the Joint Boards of Fish and Game
39 right now have a call for proposals on changes or
40 improvements to the State Fish and Game Advisory
41 Committee system. One thing that has been talked about
42 is a mechanism to coordinate better among different
43 Advisory Committees. I heard you talking about
44 communication problems between Middle Yukon, Koyukuk,
45 Ruby Advisory Committee and you wanted to hear straight
46 from each other what is going on. Just be aware that
47 there is an opportunity coming up. You might consider
48 input to get mechanisms in place to better coordinate
49 among some of the advisory committees. I didn't mean to
50 interrupt your flow on moose discussion.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There are problems
2 with the advisory committees. I don't like sitting at a
3 game board meeting for a day and a half. I think the
4 advisory committees should go to the front of the docket
5 and talk to the board right off the bat. The advisory
6 committees are not looked at with weighted testimony that
7 they really hold. They hold the weighted testimony of
8 the public in their area. The boards haven't been really
9 looking at the advisory committee. These Regional
10 Councils -- whatever these Regional Councils do, the
11 Federal Subsistence Board looks at what they say, what
12 the real interest. They really, really listen to these
13 Councils. The State Board kind of poo-poo our comments.
14 Thanks a lot. Thanks for sitting there a day and a half
15 and we're not there for the deliberation or anything. So
16 there's some real problems with the advisory committee
17 system.

18
19 All right. Ed.

20
21 MR. SARTIN: Mr. Chair, Board. I'd just
22 like to briefly add that what the State is trying to get
23 us to do is to group together into one big advisory
24 committee. That's Ruby, Galena, maybe Koyukuk. So I
25 just wanted everybody to be aware that that's what their
26 plans are or are hoping what will happen.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The advisory
29 committees will have to deal with that. This is a
30 Regional Council meeting and we're formulating a
31 proposal. I would like to work through the parameters of
32 that proposal while the public is here so the public
33 knows what we're up to. I would like to see.....

34
35 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. To be in
36 order, I move that we bring that issue off the table if
37 we want to discuss it again. Is that what you want to do
38 formally?

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

41
42 MR. COLLINS: We tabled that issue,
43 remember. We need to bring it back if we're going to
44 discuss it and actually formulate one now. Unless we're
45 going to do it informally.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we can bring it
48 back up. Go right ahead.

49
50 MR. COLLINS: I'll move to bring it off

1 the table, the issue of a proposal for this area.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. Before we take
4 action on this particular proposal, I would like to find
5 out who the author is. I'm just presenting it here with
6 all these names. This requests that the Department of
7 Fish and Game open this spring moose hunting season
8 within 21(B) or (D), 21(D). I believe we're going to
9 have to do some wording on here. This is not going to
10 the State.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead.

13

14 MR. STICKMAN: Don, I guess it wouldn't
15 be exactly this petition right here. What we're planning
16 to do here or Jack is leading us up to is us as the
17 Regional Advisory Council writing up our own proposal.
18 To your pertaining to State land, Ed, as the chairman of
19 the Ruby Advisory Committee, would have to take that same
20 proposal and pass it through the Ruby Advisory Committee
21 to pass on to the State Board of Game. If the Federal
22 Subsistence Board were to pass our proposal, it would be
23 only pertaining to Federal land. If Ed was successful in
24 getting that exact same proposal passed before the State
25 Game Board, it would be pertaining to all State land
26 also.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We tabled that issue
29 this afternoon. As far as I was aware, we were just
30 tabling the issue and going to bring it back up before
31 this public meeting. The public comment is going to
32 drive the direction of the proposal as far as I'm
33 concerned. The petition is to the Department of Fish and
34 Game. This isn't a State regulatory body or a Federal
35 regulatory body. I would like to entertain a discussion
36 bringing the issue back up. If we have to vote that
37 forward, fine.

38

39 I would like to formulate two proposals
40 to address what the communities concerns are and that's
41 my intention, is to go towards one or two proposals. One
42 for an extension to October 1. The other, a possible
43 winter hunt additionally. I'll entertain a motion to
44 bring that back up if you feel that's necessary in
45 Robert's Rules.

46

47 MR. MATHEWS: I think you just tabled it,
48 like Jack said, to further discussion, so I don't know if
49 it has to have a motion, but if you want to, you can, to
50 get it off the table. I don't think you need to be that

1 formal.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm open to the
4 Council now to talk about what we would like to do with
5 the public comment here. Don, you're from Ruby. What do
6 you -- I prefer to see, myself, two proposals. Two might
7 have more success than one. I'm trying to address the
8 subsistence needs here.

9

10 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
11 didn't want to delete any of the language or anything the
12 original author wrote to go through a better route of
13 getting this passed by going through the Feds than going
14 through the State, which we may not get at all,
15 particularly this year in view of the time that we have.

16

17

18 Also the fact of putting a proposal
19 through the RAC has more substance than it would have if
20 we went through the State. I don't want to change the
21 wording on this. If I hear otherwise, then I'll just go
22 with the change of language on here.

23

24 MR. SARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Board.
25 I agree with you, Don. We would be square with the
26 people in the petition by going ahead with this on the
27 Federal side because that's basically all we can go for
28 now. As Mickey added earlier, I plan on hopefully
29 organizing a meeting after this, our own advisory
30 meeting, and then we'll go through the State that way and
31 give it a try. I see no harm or going against the
32 petition in any way by going ahead with this proposal.
33 It would be in agreement with the community, would you
34 not think so. I mean we're not going against what's on
35 the petition, what the people want. We can only
36 accomplish that though to a certain degree and only with
37 the Federal government because this is a Federal
38 proposal.

39

40 However, as Mickey said, I will initiate
41 a State proposal and I have heard the State say many
42 times that they would like to stay in line with the
43 Federal government. So, I'm thinking if this does go
44 through, the State would have to look at it more
45 seriously. If it does become a regulation, then the
46 State will look at it more seriously. As they told me,
47 they like to comply and go along with the Federal
48 government because we don't like this deal on one side of
49 the road you can do this and the other side of the road
50 you can't. That's pretty much what they've told me.

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Ed. In that I
4 would like to take maybe the steps that Jack here offered
5 and have two proposals written up. We know that even
6 submitting the two, the cow season is most likely not
7 going to be granted.

8

9 MR. SARTIN: Right.

10

11 MR. HONEA: But if the author doesn't
12 mind, we just do one here and then we, as the Ruby
13 Advisory, at a later date submit another one.

14

15 MR. SARTIN: Exactly. Thank you, Mr.
16 Chair and Don.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm looking at your
19 Unit 21(B) regulations. You've got a Federal season
20 August 22 to August 31. If I heard right, the community
21 didn't like that early season, way too warm. That's 10
22 days hunting that you would like to use another way. We
23 have the season from September 5th to September 25th,
24 Unit 21(B). We could take -- we heard comments of moving
25 the season back to the 10th of September and going to the
26 1st of October, but that would be losing 15 days of
27 hunting. So I would be more inclined to stay with
28 September 5th and putting six of those days onto the 1st
29 of October, so we're down to four more days and I would
30 be more inclined to see a winter hunt in February or
31 March or sometime like that for a five-day hunt. I think
32 the Federal government can spring for one extra day here
33 in the springtime. So that's what I would prefer to see.

34

35

36 So we would be eliminating the August
37 component of a 21(B) hunt, extending from the 5th of
38 September to the 1st of October and a five-day hunt at
39 your discretion, whatever you guys want to hunt in
40 February or March. What do you think about that, Don?

41

42 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
43 think that's a viable option that we could live with.
44 That's what we would have liked -- I keep referring back
45 to the meeting I missed in Koyukuk that was an option for
46 us, but at the time we didn't know. If we could use
47 that. I'm just offering this up, if you want to call it
48 an emergency order for this February.

49

50 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. I think the

1 petition needs to be set aside for the moment. The
2 Council is dealing with the issue that's behind the
3 petition. Bring that up separately because that is an
4 emergency request. You guys are dealing with long-range
5 proposals. When this gets further along, we'll discuss
6 how this overlaps with the State seasons.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If I've heard the
9 public correctly, staying September 5 to October 1 would
10 be a good hunting time frame. I would not want to cut
11 five days out of the first part of September needlessly.
12 We don't want to throw the baby out with the bath water,
13 so we'll try to keep the September 5 to the 1st of
14 October.

15

16 Then take five days and I would like to
17 know when for a winter hunt. Do you want that in
18 February? Downriver they have March 1 to March 5 over in
19 Huslia and down here in Kaiyuh. We could go for that
20 hunt and have three hunts running at the same time
21 possibly. Or we could go to a February hunt. I'm open
22 for comment on that from the local people.

23

24 MR. HONEA: Recognize Bill.

25

26 MR. McCARTY: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I
27 would like to go for the 1st part of March. A lot of
28 times in the first part of February it's 40, 50 below and
29 that's what happened in the past. We couldn't get out at
30 all.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I was always
33 inclined to go for the March hunt because you have warmer
34 day temperatures, more daylight, the snow is settling
35 more, more opportunity to come across wolves. So I'm
36 more inclined to go for the March 1 hunt myself.

37

38 The Nowitna Refuge portion would be open
39 for hunting. There appears to be some corporation lands
40 not too far out of the village, but you know where the
41 Nowitna Refuge is. So where this proposal would be for,
42 that Nowitna Refuge, these extensions. The October hunt
43 would be for the Nowitna Refuge area, a little bit of BLM
44 land way back there.

45

46 So everybody here understands that this
47 is strictly a Federal proposal on the Nowitna Refuge and
48 it will give subsistence priority opportunity. I feel,
49 as acting chairperson here, that Ruby has demonstrated
50 that they have not been meeting subsistence needs and

1 it's in our 805 purview to provide for that need.

2

3 So I would entertain a motion to go for a
4 dual proposal. One is eliminating the August hunt
5 component from the Unit 21(B) and having a fall one bull
6 season for September 5 to October 1 as the first
7 proposal.

8

9 MR. STICKMAN: I make a motion that the
10 Regional Advisory Council adopt that proposal.

11

12 MR. JONES: Second.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Discussion on that.

15

16 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. Under discussion,
17 could I have those dates again? September 5th to October
18 1st?

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. And then the
21 elimination of the August 22 to August 31 Federal hunt on
22 the Nowitna Refuge. Any other discussion.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 MR. STICKMAN: Call the question.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has been
29 called. All those in favor of that as one proposal,
30 signify by saying aye.

31

32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All those opposed.

35

36 (No opposing votes)

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's unanimous. The
39 second proposal that should be submitted from this
40 Council, again on the Nowitna Refuge Unit 21(B), would be
41 a proposal for a March 1 to March 5th one bull hunt to
42 give provide winter opportunity. I'll entertain a motion
43 to that effect.

44

45 MR. STICKMAN: So moved.

46

47 MR. HONEA: Second.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey moved, Don
50 seconded. Discussion.

1 MR. COLLINS: I think that's a good move,
2 Jack. One of the things that will do is it keeps the
3 Federal seasons in line up and down the river here and
4 makes it fair to the community. If you lived in the
5 middle, you could hunt both ways, but this way they're
6 going to have to pick the five days to hunt probably an
7 area closer to home.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

10

11 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. I just would
12 like to know if the Council would also like to make it
13 consistent by having the language about during the March
14 1 through 5 season a Federal registration permit is
15 required and an announcement, et cetera, would be done by
16 the refuge manager.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If the refuge feels
19 that's -- to build a comfort for this proposal, it would
20 be fully included.

21

22 MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman. My name is
23 Brad Scotton. I'm the supervisory wildlife biologist at
24 Koyukuk/Nowitna and have worked on this issue with the
25 Council here and provided testimony at your March
26 meeting. Proposal 34 that you took up last March was
27 about the fall extension to October 1st and I provided
28 testimony there.

29

30 What you're talking about here, the
31 second proposal, I guess from my perspective, I would be
32 more comfortable if it did have language for this winter
33 hunt to be announced at the discretion of the manager so
34 that we have the opportunity to go through the fall
35 hunting season and know what the success rate was, assess
36 that in the village to some extent, then also we fly our
37 moose surveys in November and assess those data quickly.
38 Usually we have some summary data around Christmas.
39 We'll have a fair amount of information to go on.

40

41 On the Nowitna, in the heavily hunted
42 portions of the Nowitna, we have had bull/cow ratios at
43 the borderline level to where we're happy. We're
44 actually below our management objectives of 20 bulls per
45 100 for several years because of some years of poor calf
46 recruitment. We have recovered from that but I think
47 last year's data we were at 24 bulls per 100 along the
48 river corridor, which is the most heavily hunted portion
49 of the refuge.

50

1 So my testimony before was that fall hunt
2 was possible if we had a limited harvest and in this case
3 it's going to be Federal rural residents only, mostly
4 from Ruby and Tanana. I wouldn't anticipate a real high
5 harvest of bulls and I believe it would be sustainable.
6 But this would give us a chance to look at that fall
7 hunt, we'll know what we've taken up to October 1st and
8 if the community is fairly happy and our bull/cow ratios
9 are only 22 per 100 when we do the surveys in November,
10 that gives us the option in March to maybe not have that
11 hunt.

12
13 On the other hand, if we have 30 bulls
14 per 100, things are good but the community didn't get
15 what they needed, we can have a little more liberal hunt
16 possibly with a higher quota of bulls for that March
17 hunt. So it gives us that discretion, the ability to use
18 the most current and best data available and makes us
19 more comfortable. There is potential, because we're at
20 that threshold, of overharvesting the bull population
21 that's already kind of right at the borderline.

22
23 So that's from my standpoint and my
24 manager is nodding at me, so that's good.

25
26 MR. HONEA: I don't really -- are you
27 saying in the form of an emergency or something that
28 would be in effect?

29
30 MR. SCOTTON: No. I think in your
31 proposal formulation for this second proposal you would
32 add language that the winter hunt season, March 1 to 5,
33 to be announced by the refuge manager at Koyukuk/Nowitna.
34 That way he has the discretion to look at all the things
35 I talked about and make that decision based on what we
36 know. If you just say March 1 through 5 one bull, then
37 it's on the books no matter what and it's open unless it
38 gets emergency closed. That way if we have a bad year
39 and poor recruitment and the bulls don't look good in
40 November, we have to jump through a lot of hoops to close
41 it. This way it's just easier.

42
43 MR. HONEA: I have no problem with that.
44 Mr. Chairman, can I introduce Pat here.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

47
48 MR. HONEA: This is Pat, our second
49 chief.
50

1 MR. McCARTY: Mr. Chair, Committee.
2 Thank you for hearing the public's comments on the low
3 amount of harvest this fall and the emergency request for
4 opening. As Don said, I also serve on the Ruby Fish and
5 Game Advisory Committee. First off, my opinion tonight
6 is my concern only, just the way I view things, I mean no
7 disrespect to anybody else and I appreciate everybody
8 else's opinion as well.

9
10 I spoke against the emergency opening and
11 the winter hunt on the Ruby Advisory's level mainly
12 because in the past there was a lot of younger people
13 going out and you hear comments -- it's often wondered if
14 a lot of that game was taken by snowmachine because
15 everybody is out zooming around on their snowmachines and
16 just shooting at anything they see. Very few people
17 could identify sex of a moose in March or February. So
18 you get waste.

19
20 I'm of the opinion that the old way of
21 putting meat on your table to feed your family, if you
22 have to, would be just a better silent way of doing it.
23 When you have a winter hunt, and I've heard some comments
24 in Galena also, that you just legalize a slaughter.

25
26 So now I've seen this petition and I'm
27 agreeing with the majority. If they signed the petition,
28 they know what they're signing, the request is
29 legitimate. So I'm just wondering now, since it's been
30 moved and seconded and you're under discussion on it, if
31 there could be some kind of regulations, like a certain
32 age limit to go out and hunt or maybe head of household
33 or something. Some type of monitoring system where
34 you're not just going to shoot a moose because I can run
35 home and tell mom and dad that I got a moose whether you
36 needed it or not.

37
38 So that's my concern. Make sure it's
39 going to be used. We're all aware of the shape of cows
40 or bulls in February.

41
42 If I may, I apologize for being here
43 late. I have evening business hours. I've been
44 wrestling with some other issues and it's also concerns
45 moose, Mr. Chair. We have up here in the Kokrine/Nowitna
46 area some lakes that only aircraft can get into, so they
47 drop off hunters up in there. I asked the Ruby Advisory
48 Committee if that could be put on hold for a couple
49 years, that they could quit doing that as well. The
50 justification is they say nobody is hunting out there.

1 There's some big lakes that you can land in and drop off
2 hunters for two, three days, however it works, but what
3 they're missing is that the areas up there are providing
4 the seed for the areas we can get to and we all don't
5 have the capability of flying out there as they do. So
6 if that can be in your consideration for game management.
7 I just thought I'd throw that out. Again, I thank you
8 for your time.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Can you
11 say again where those lakes are you're talking about.

12

13 MR. McCARTY: Those lakes are like across
14 Kokrines straight from here toward Nowitna. They're
15 prime area for the bigger bulls. The bigger bulls, as
16 you all know, are the seed for what's coming into our
17 area, the Big Creek area or Deep Creek.

18

19 These guided or drop-off hunts were up in
20 the Melozi, behind Tanana, behind Kokrines in past years
21 and we had no problem with that. Then apparently the
22 moose population started to go down, they weren't as
23 successful, so they started coming into more prosperous
24 areas and it hurts everybody. So it's going to benefit
25 everybody if that could be considered to stop that kind
26 of hunting activity.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray.

29

30 MR. COLLINS: I hear what you're saying
31 about the winter hunt that's just kind of wide open now
32 and I'm wondering if an alternative would work, something
33 along more traditional lines.

34

35 I was living in Nikolai in the '60s over
36 in the Kuskokwim. Of course, there was no winter season
37 that late in the spring. Most of the meat was gone by
38 February or sometime and people were hungry. The birds
39 weren't around yet. Somebody in the community would go
40 get one or two moose. When it came back, it was shared
41 with the community.

42

43 What if when the Federal sets up one of
44 these winter hunts they issue a certain number of permits
45 to the community and the community issues it to a hunter
46 to go out and hunt for the community and share the meat
47 around in spring. Because I know the meat isn't the best
48 then. It doesn't make sense for one family to try to eat
49 up a poor moose, but if you share that around, it was
50 good meat for people that hadn't had fresh meat for a

1 while. So maybe a community permit would be appropriate.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, head of
4 household language would do quite a bit towards
5 addressing that. You get into a whole bunch of community
6 regulatory structures. I think it would be better just
7 to include registration permits will be issued by the
8 refuge staff to the heads of households and that would
9 suffice for your concern of kids running around shooting
10 moose just for kicks. So I would be more inclined to
11 have that type of language instead of getting into too
12 complex a system.

13

14 We're still in discussion and those are
15 very good comments. Does the Council have any additions.
16 Vince.

17

18 MR. MATHEWS: Was this going to be
19 limited to any bull.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, one bull.

22

23 MR. STICKMAN: I guess we need an
24 amendment to adopt the language they recommended. I
25 think if we adopted that language they would look at
26 their numbers in November and say, well, I guess we can
27 go to Ruby this is what we have. We've counted the moose
28 and we can allow five to six moose to be taken and that
29 would be it. In a village this size, just like Nulato or
30 any other village, if you had only five moose permits,
31 you know the chief and the second chief would probably
32 have some idea, and even as a community, have some idea
33 how to split up five or six moose so that each household
34 got their fair share.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's a motion to
37 propose the seasons. This discussion has revolved without
38 implementation. Is it necessary to have an amendment to
39 that?

40

41 MR. MATHEWS: You can have a friendly
42 amendment if the mover of the motion and the second agree
43 to the language or you can go through the whole amendment
44 thing. Being that it's getting late, we may get lost in
45 the amendments.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would entertain a
48 friendly amendment for the Koyukuk/Nowitna Staff to
49 announce after population assessment to issue
50 registration permits to heads of households be included

1 in the language of the proposal.

2

3 MR. STICKMAN: So moved.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Second.

6

7 MR. MATHEWS: They were the movers and
8 the second, so they concur.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we go to any
11 further discussion.

12

13 MR. STICKMAN: Call for the question.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has been
16 called. All those in favor of this proposal signify by
17 saying aye.

18

19 IN UNISON: Aye.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

22

23 (No opposing votes)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. It's unanimous.
26 Those proposals will be typed up and submitted in the
27 time frame. I really appreciate the public comment here
28 by the community. This is what this Council is here to
29 address, subsistence issues, so I really appreciate the
30 turnout. Brad.

31

32 MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman. I kind of
33 skipped this when I gave my earlier testimony, but I
34 wanted to say I really appreciate the community showing
35 up the way it did here, too. I frequently come to the
36 advisory committee meetings, which is mostly the
37 committee and not a lot of further input from the
38 community and this is the best turnout and the most I've
39 heard from Ruby on issues and concerns on everything from
40 moose to fish. So I really appreciate that and it helps
41 me in terms of thinking about what's going on here
42 biologically as well. So thank you there and thank you
43 to everybody who cooked for us tonight. The food was
44 fantastic.

45

46 Beyond that, I just want to make sure
47 there's no confusion. What you folks just did was pass
48 two proposals that will be forwarded to the Federal
49 Subsistence Board. We will make Staff comments on those
50 and recommendations and then the Board will act. That

1 will be for seasons potentially starting next fall and
2 next winter.

3
4 I realize from the testimony very clearly
5 that this was a poor hunting year for Ruby and people
6 didn't get their meat. There is this other issue, the
7 petition, that if you want something to happen this
8 winter, because what you did won't address that, then you
9 need to do something about a special action request to
10 the Federal Board to consider something for this March
11 and then we would have to make comments on that.
12 And thank you, Greg Bos, for pointing that out, that it
13 wasn't real clear to everybody here.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those
16 comments. The Federal Subsistence Board has been more
17 open to the proposal process and these two proposals
18 should address the primary. We do have a problem this
19 year. It was a poor harvest season. Do you want to make
20 another comment, Greg.

21
22 MR. BOS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Greg
23 Bos, Fish and Wildlife Service. I think the Board would
24 be open to considering a special action in view of the
25 special circumstances of this season having such poor
26 success in Ruby and I think you could advance the
27 elements of the proposal as a special action that could
28 take place this coming March as well as have the proposal
29 for a more permanent regulation in the subsequent year.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that
32 comment. All the dialogue here has revolved around the
33 need for moose this season and so I would entertain a
34 motion to make a special action request to the Federal
35 Subsistence Board for a March 1 to March 5 one bull Unit
36 21(B) Nowitna Refuge with the same language to be
37 announced by the Refuge Staff on numbers of registration
38 permits to be issued to heads of households.

39
40 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

41
42 MR. JONES: Second the motion.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Discussion.

45
46 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Along with that
47 request, I would like to see some discussion on their
48 part of why should it only be five days if you've limited
49 it to five animals or something like that. Again you
50 face the issue maybe it's snowing that whole week or

1 something like that or early thaw, whatever. If you're
2 limiting the number of animals, maybe they should think
3 about a little longer period and give more flexibility
4 for weather and those other things in there. As long as
5 the hunt is going to be cut off when the five are
6 harvested. We may be backing ourselves in the same
7 corner. We're not really giving an opportunity if they
8 can't actually use those five days and they might not be
9 able to, although there's a better chance in March than
10 February.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see your point. A
13 point well taken. It may be 50 below. So the special
14 action request, if the Refuge is going to set a quota, it
15 could ask for March 1 to March 10. I'm more inclined to
16 go with that or give a time frame to be announced. Is
17 that harder to do, to announce the hunt when conditions
18 are happy or can we -- I don't want to put ourselves in a
19 box on this special action request.

20
21 MR. MOOS: Mr. Chair. Kenton Moos,
22 manager of Koyukuk/Nowitna. This past year we did change
23 the dates due to the tragedy that happened up in Huslia,
24 so we can do it. It does require a special action that
25 is approved and agreed to by all the members of the
26 Subsistence Board. So we can do it under certain
27 circumstances. We did it this past year.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Greg.

30
31 MR. BOS: Mr. Chair. Greg Bos again.
32 There's logic to what you're suggesting, Ray, but the
33 same applies to the proposals you're advancing. We've
34 had a similar opportunity provided in Unit 24 and it's
35 worked well for a five-day hunt in a limited quota.
36 You've just approved a proposal for the Kaiyuh Flats on
37 the same basis. So you might want to see how this works
38 out for this coming year and then consider adding more
39 flexibility in the future.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm more inclined to
42 go to the March 1 to March 5 in that it's easier to float
43 the proposal. I would rather have something happen this
44 year than to kill the special action request because
45 we're asking for too much. So I'm more inclined to go
46 with what the associated areas are, we won't get other
47 participation from the other areas, we'll have a
48 simultaneous hunt in progress in all areas of this hunt
49 region. Myself, I'd be more inclined thinking about it
50 to stay with the March 1 to March 5 special action

1 request. How does the Council feel about that?

2

3 MR. STICKMAN: I feel the same way. If
4 it was to be approved and it was successful as a special
5 action, I think it would be more readily passed by the
6 Federal Subsistence Board as a proposal for changing the
7 regulation.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further
10 discussion. Please come up to the mike.

11

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This is the worst
13 hunt we've had this fall. Everybody hunting morning to
14 night. They hunt moose almost two months and they go
15 every day and I pray for them and it never happened.
16 Then somebody kill a moose here and they divide it up and
17 share all the way around and things like that. I was
18 praying so hard we can get by and then we had a lot of
19 fish and things like that, and the garden and things,
20 too, you know. I had kids, too, all the kids and my kids
21 didn't get no moose. My other one got moose and we share
22 all the way around. Then the other son we shared, too.
23 And my youngest boy Randy didn't get nothing and we all
24 share. We all share, you know. So it was a really good
25 thing that everybody shared all the way around what they
26 got and I'm glad they did it, too. As a community, we
27 get along pretty good. Everybody share with fish and
28 everything. Any time we need help, we always have help
29 here.

30

31 I'm here alone now. My husband is gone,
32 too, so the kids left and I'm left alone, you know, with
33 one big house. I'm just glad that I'm here. My husband
34 used to be working here all the time like this and I get
35 a bunch of papers. He used to work like this all the
36 time. I get a real kick out of it. My husband was good
37 at it, too. He was sick for some years. He had a stroke
38 and was paralyzed and he died this April, you know. He
39 done everything for the people. Everybody really liked
40 him and the kids liked him. The family was there. He
41 was everybody's uncle, you know. So that's only how come
42 I'm here because I like to be here where my husband used
43 to be here and I want to be here. People are good to me
44 here. That's how come I'm here. Everybody sharing and
45 everything.

46

47 When we were young, we were poor, our
48 parents, and we had moose and there was no moose at that
49 time and they were lucky to get a moose. If they got a
50 barren cow moose, then they'd chop it up, they divide it

1 up and that's how they do it. Who knows who's going to
2 run into a barren cow this fall because the wolf get away
3 with it, the bear and black bear and things like that.

4
5 So it was the worst thing this fall, we
6 don't see no moose. I never seen no calf. I went out
7 there and we stayed overnight with the kids. I hear wolf
8 all night, howl all night. It was pretty tough this
9 year, but we get by. I guess we can't run into barren
10 cow at all this fall, so be lucky we get a barren cow,
11 but that barren cow wouldn't take care of the whole town.
12 One bite here and there and it's just terrible.

13
14 So I hope we have a better time now and
15 the moose are coming along. It's the bear and black bear
16 and brown bear and things that are doing it, kill all the
17 moose, and I never seen calf for I don't know how many
18 years.

19
20 We used to work at mining camp and
21 everybody works there and that's how we keep the wolves
22 out. My husband and everybody keep the moose around and
23 that way the moose filled up quite a bit and a lot of
24 moose around there all the time.

25
26 This is the first time I wanted to listen
27 to this and I really enjoy it and everything and
28 everybody agree with everything. I hope we have better
29 luck next year and better luck next year for moose and
30 everything. We can make it, I hope, if the good Lord
31 takes care of the moose and things like that. If we take
32 care of the wolf and the black bear. I'm glad the bears
33 are in a hole now.

34
35 I'm glad everybody is here. I enjoy it.
36 I really enjoy it and I like to listen, too. I'll get my
37 education like this, just listening to things like this.
38 I can't hunt moose and things like that. So I'm glad
39 everybody is here and I enjoy things like that. I hope
40 we have better luck and a better chance. Thank you for
41 everything. I'm glad for everything you did for
42 everybody. Thank you for everything. I enjoy it.

43
44 Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for speaking to
47 us.

48
49 (Applause)
50

1 MR. COLLINS: She made one point that I
2 think is very important that I think should be part of
3 our discussion. She talked about barren cow. When we
4 talk about any kind of cow harvest, if we do in the
5 future, we need to talk about cows unaccompanied by
6 calves. Traditionally, that's what happened when there
7 was a cow season in our area. When the rut was too far
8 on, people would always be looking for a barren cow, one
9 without calves. If they had calves with them, they'd let
10 them go. So we should keep that in our discussion.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In that harvest up
13 there in the Koyukuk Flats we had harvest of cow moose
14 accompanied by calves is prohibited.

15
16 Back to the main discussion on this
17 special action request.

18
19 MR. STICKMAN: Question.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has been
22 called for a special action request for March 1 to March
23 5, one bull, from the Federal Subsistence Board on the
24 Nowitna Wildlife Refuge. All those in favor signify by
25 saying aye.

26
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

30
31 (No opposing votes)

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a unanimous vote
34 for a special action request. Vince.

35
36 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. When this
37 comes up before the Staff Committee, I'll consult with
38 Greg on this, but it may be good to have Donald online
39 and possibly you online because I think we recently just
40 removed that season or something like that, so the Staff
41 Committee will need to understand the whole parameters of
42 what's going on here and what's driving this. I know
43 they'll see the words and the write-up, but it does help
44 to have people online. I assume, Greg, there possibly
45 would be a teleconference capacity on this issue.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

48
49 MR. MATHEWS: And that might help if we
50 could plug in the community on this.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Staff Committee --
2 the parameters of the discussion will entail the
3 community has agreed to eliminate the August hunt in
4 favor of trying to get more subjectivity to this harvest
5 in appropriate colder timeframes. If I'm available, I'll
6 be willing to participate in the Staff Committee
7 teleconference. Would you be available, Don, possibly?
8

9 MR. HONEA: Yeah, sure.
10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's fair. Where
12 are we at now. We need a State proposal for alignment.
13 This committee should propose mirrored regulations
14 because this is basically the consensus of the community.
15 Ed is acknowledging that's going to happen with the Ruby
16 Advisory Committee. At this time, do we have anything
17 else this evening? It's getting a little late now, about
18 9:30. Vince.
19

20 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. I think you
21 will need to meet with Ed Sartin to discuss how this
22 would play out in the State arena when State proposals
23 are up. It's late in the evening. There's many factors
24 that come into play with that. I think there's
25 concurrence from the community here to work out this
26 issue on the State side.
27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It's 9:36. I
29 think it's time to go to bed pretty quick. I very much
30 appreciate Ruby turning out. I've been in lots of Western
31 Interior Regional meetings all over the Western Interior
32 and I've only seen three or four communities that have
33 turned out to this degree, so I'm very pleased and I
34 appreciate your comments. We'll be recessing until
35 tomorrow morning at what time, Vince?
36

37 MR. MATHEWS: It's on the agenda as 9:00,
38 but that's the call of the Chair.
39

40 MR. HONEA: Jack, can I say something
41 before we close.
42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
44

45 MR. HONEA: Because in my reluctance in
46 bringing -- not reluctance, but in bringing this
47 particular petition up and then changing the language,
48 I'm going to just assume that the action we took tonight,
49 unless otherwise somebody comes to the Ruby Advisory
50 Committee and want to go ahead with the State, this

1 proposal to the State is null and void, correct?

2

3 MR. SARTIN: We probably need to discuss
4 that at our advisory meeting.

5

6 MR. HONEA: I thought we took pretty much
7 care of that. Unless you want to pursue it on a State
8 level, we can do it that way then.

9

10 MR. SARTIN: Yeah, I think we can just
11 try and match what we have here on the Federal level and
12 use the same wording on the State level, so that way we
13 have both sides of the road the same. Like I said before,
14 the State has told me they try to stay in line with
15 Federal regulations so there isn't that conflict. I
16 think by passing this it will cause the State to
17 acknowledge it more and then it will be easier for us to
18 do the State proposal modeled after this one at the
19 Federal level.

20

21 So I don't think we're null and voiding
22 the petition because the petition is basically asking for
23 something they can't have, which is cows, but they are
24 going to get a winter hunt and we are going to have a
25 better hunting opportunity. So I don't see where we
26 would be in opposition to the petition by doing what
27 we're doing.

28

29 MR. HONEA: Oh, we're not in opposition
30 at all. All I'm doing is saying, okay, we took care of
31 it on this side and we probably are not going to get any
32 action from the State anyway. If whoever authored this
33 still wants to go through with it, that's what I'm
34 saying.

35

36 MR. SARTIN: Yeah, which is what -- the
37 tribe basically is the author, I would think, because it
38 did come out of the tribal office.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Council has
41 expended -- this forum has expended to the extent that we
42 have to do. Ben has a comment over here.

43

44 MR. JONES: On your proposal for the
45 State side, the deadline is December 8th.

46

47 MR. SARTIN: Right. Thank you. That's
48 all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Don.

49

50 MR. HONEA: Okay. I'd like to thank

1 everyone who turned out to comment on this particular
2 proposal or whatever concerns we have in our village
3 because we find that you're dealing with the Federal
4 government and we are just subsistence Western Interior.
5 Under that this goes to the OSM and there's a whole
6 Federal Subsistence Board again. So this is just one of
7 the first things. I found that, you know, throughout the
8 last couple years we do have a lot of clout. This
9 particular -- well, all of the 10 regions in -- I
10 shouldn't say clout, but we have a lot of respect in our
11 petitions. They take them and we get some action out of
12 it. That's why for public comment I really appreciated
13 the village coming out.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

18

19 MR. MATHEWS: Jack, I think to work
20 through this, I'm available, I think the refuge manager
21 would be available and a couple others. We could meet
22 with Ed Sartin and the tribal staff. I'm predicting
23 there could be a slot after you guys adjourn tomorrow and
24 we can walk through these different things here. It's
25 getting confusing and expectations here are rising. We
26 need to get back on track what all this means and how
27 it's going to work through. That will help the Advisory
28 Committee and the tribe if it is the author on that one.

29

30

31 So Jack is right, this Council has
32 exhausted as much as it can in its arena. We will help
33 these others in these other arenas with advice and then
34 you can elect to do them. So I think tomorrow we can
35 pull this out and give everyone a clear understanding
36 what has been done here tonight and what possibly the
37 tribe and the committee could work on it. Randy may want
38 to sit in on this too if he's around.

39

40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we've had a
43 great evening session. This meeting is adjourned until
44 9:00 a.m. tomorrow. So thank you.

45

46 (Off record)

47

48 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 173 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically by Computer Matrix Court Reporters on the 11th day of October 2006, beginning at the hour of 9:25 o'clock a.m. at Ruby, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 27th day of October 2006.

Joseph P. Kolasinski
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 03/12/08