

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6 VOLUME I

7  
8  
9 McGrath, Alaska  
10 October 28, 2008  
11 10:45 o'clock a.m.

12  
13  
14 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

15  
16 Jack Reakoff, Chairman  
17 Ray Collins  
18 Donald Honea  
19 Carl Morgan  
20 Jenny Pelkola  
21 Ronald Sam  
22 Mickey Stickman  
23 Winchell Ticknor  
24 James Walker  
25 Robert Walker

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29 Regional Council Coordinator, Vince Mathews

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(McGrath, Alaska - 10/28/2008)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My name is Jack Reakoff. I'll be chairing this meeting. We're all set up now. We have a full Council and I'm glad to see we have lots of various dignified representatives from the North Pacific Management Council and very able Staff here.

There will be an invocation by an elder.

MR. COLLINS: I think the mayor wanted to welcome us. Could somebody go down the hall, Dusty Parker, and let him know.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the mayor will step up here shortly. Okay. I guess we can do that first. Who was going to do the invocation then.

MR. COLLINS: I'll do the invocation. Do you want to do that now?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can do that now. No telling when he's up. He might be on the phone.

(Invocation)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray. Is the mayor coming up there, Polly?

DR. WHEELER: Perhaps at some point.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. We'll go through the roll call to establish a quorum. Do you want call the roll there, Vince.

MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chair. James Walker.

MR. J. WALKER: Here.

MR. MATHEWS: Jenny Pelkola.

MS. PELKOLA: Here.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Carl Morgan.  
2  
3 MR. MORGAN: Here.  
4  
5 MR. MATHEWS: Winchell Ticknor.  
6  
7 MR. TICKNOR: Here.  
8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Ron Sam.  
10  
11 MR. SAM: Yo.  
12  
13 MR. MATHEWS: Mickey Stickman.  
14  
15 MR. STICKMAN: Here.  
16  
17 MR. MATHEWS: Robert Walker.  
18  
19 MR. R. WALKER: Here.  
20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: Donald Honea, Jr.  
22  
23 MR. HONEA: Here.  
24  
25 MR. MATHEWS: Ray Collins.  
26  
27 MR. COLLINS: Here.  
28  
29 MR. MATHEWS: Jack Reakoff.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.  
32  
33 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, you have a  
34 full quorum, a full roster of 10.  
35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We have the  
37 mayor here. Do you want to step up to the mike and say  
38 something to us, go right ahead. Introduce yourself.  
39  
40 MAYOR PARKER: I feel funny not looking  
41 at anyone, but I'll just keep this short and sweet.  
42 Thank you all for coming. This is obviously something  
43 that's really important to our community. You're going  
44 to be in meetings all day long. I'm Dustin Parker. I'm  
45 the mayor of the city and on behalf of the entire  
46 community welcome to McGrath. Thank you.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Dustin.  
49 Okay. Introduction of Agency Staff and the honored  
50 guests. Just kind of go around the room and state your

1 name and your affiliation.  
2  
3 MR. COTTEN: Sam Cotten. I'm a member  
4 of the North Pacific Council.  
5  
6 MR. CANNON: Dave Cannon, Bering Sea  
7 Fishermen's Association.  
8  
9 MR. NEWLAND: Eric Newland, Department  
10 of Fish and Game.  
11  
12 MR. THALHAUSER: Mike Thalhauser,  
13 Kuskokwim Native Association in Aniak.  
14  
15 MR. SHARP: Dan Sharp with BLM in  
16 Anchorage.  
17  
18 DR. WHEELER: Polly Wheeler at the  
19 Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage.  
20  
21 MR. MASCHMANN: Gerald Maschmann with  
22 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out of Fairbanks.  
23  
24 MR. BEYERSDORF: Geoff Beyersdorf.  
25 Once again I've switched hats. I'm now with BLM in  
26 Anchorage.  
27  
28 MS. KIMBALL: Nicole Kimball and I'm a  
29 fisheries analyst with North Pacific Council.  
30  
31 DR. STRAM: Diana Stram. I'm a  
32 fisheries analyst with North Pacific Council.  
33  
34 MR. BENSON: Dave Benson. Vice chair  
35 of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.  
36  
37 MR. SARTEN: Ed Sarten, Ruby Tribal  
38 Council and Advisory Chair.  
39  
40 MS. ROBBINS GISCLAIR: Becca Robbins  
41 Gisclair with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries  
42 Association.  
43  
44 MS. YATLIN: Eleanor Yatlin. I'm with  
45 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge Information  
46 Technician in Huslia.  
47  
48 MS. ST. LOUIS: Rita St. Louis. I'm  
49 the Advisory Committee coordinator.  
50

1 MS. BROWN: Caroline Brown, Fish and  
2 Game Subsistence in Fairbanks.

3  
4 MS. BERKBIGLER: Brandy Berkbigler,  
5 Tanana Chiefs Conference biologist.

6  
7 MR. WHITWORTH: Kevin Whitworth, Fish  
8 and Wildlife Service, Galena.

9  
10 MS. PETRIVELLI: Pat Petrivelli, BIA  
11 Subsistence anthropologist out of Anchorage.

12  
13 MR. CRAIG: Tim Craig. I work for BLM  
14 in Fairbanks.

15  
16 MS. BROWN: Wennona Brown, subsistence  
17 coordinator for the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge,  
18 Fairbanks.

19  
20 MR. MOOS: Kenton Moos, refuge manager,  
21 Nowitna.

22  
23 MR. GREGORY: David Gregory (ph), MTNT,  
24 McGrath.

25  
26 MR. EASTLAND: Warren Eastland. I'm a  
27 wildlife biologist for Bureau of Indian Affairs. I'm a  
28 member of the InterAgency Staff Committee.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.  
31 Thanks for attending this meeting. We're going to need  
32 your help in our work here. The Council members  
33 concerns. The Chair Report.

34  
35 I've gone to the Board of Game meeting  
36 this last spring. Our proposals there, the Mulchatna  
37 proposal for eliminating non-resident use was tabled.  
38 Our other proposals for coincidental subsistence hunts  
39 on Native corporation lands associated to wildlife  
40 refuges failed before the Board. I only had five  
41 minutes to talk. The Board of Game has now informed us  
42 that the Councils will have 15 minutes. It's really  
43 hard to cover a whole region in a very short period of  
44 time at the Board meeting.

45  
46 I attended the Federal Subsistence  
47 Board meeting, spoke on the statewide proposal. A lot  
48 of our proposals were on the consent agenda, but I  
49 interacted with the Federal Board and it's good for our  
50 Council to be at the Federal Board to continue to work

1 with the Federal Board and bring sort of a learning  
2 experience for the new Board members.

3

4 We have a very short period of time  
5 today to address this fairly extensive agenda, so I  
6 would like to have this meeting run as quickly as I  
7 possibly could. So we have various issues that we need  
8 to cover and concerns about various things throughout  
9 the region. So we'll go around the table asking the  
10 Council what their concerns are. Start with Carl.

11

12 MR. MORGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
13 I think my concerns are the same concerns I got, if you  
14 look at the minutes, that keep coming up, such as  
15 fishing. Part of 19A being closures. Some parts  
16 completely closed. Other part being permit only. Plus  
17 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd, the decline, that's always  
18 a concern. I don't know what's the latest numbers, but  
19 I'm sure that will come up. And the fishing. I'm glad  
20 we didn't have that same disaster or whatever at the  
21 Yukon side. My concern on that part is let's get the  
22 real numbers instead of going on if it's a good spike.  
23 Let's not hurry up and try to open it because of the  
24 rest of the people upriver. They pay the price. I'd  
25 like to see more of a conservative effort to find out  
26 their numbers really down in the lower part. Thank  
27 you.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Carl.  
30 James.

31

32 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Jack. I  
33 guess my concern is similar to what you got. However,  
34 with regards to the fishing situation in my area, the  
35 Holy Cross area, I think there needs to be some  
36 attention to the scheduling of the fishing openings  
37 because that played a really important issue with the  
38 ability of the folks in Holy Cross to actually get out  
39 there and fish. With that in mind, I know in Robert's  
40 area, in Anvik there, there was a number of fishermen  
41 that had to go up there and fish in that area and it  
42 caused some problems I know with their setnets and  
43 their fishing schedules, but I'd like to see something  
44 that could be done with regards to the fishing openings  
45 and the time schedules. Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, James.  
48 Robert.

49

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

1 My concern is always 24/7 365 subsistence, regardless  
2 of where we are, what are we doing, whether it's fall,  
3 winter, spring or summer.

4  
5 One of the big issues that is brought  
6 up in our community, Anvik and Grayling, is that the  
7 size of net is really going to have impact on our area  
8 with subsistence fishermen. Going from a regular  
9 stretch mesh of 8.5 down to a stretch mesh of 6 with a  
10 depth of 45 down to 25 or 30 mesh deep. It's really  
11 going to impact the way of dollars being spent, how  
12 you're going to budget your next couple years with the  
13 price of gasoline. It's going to impact our area to  
14 where we're going to have to have a legal activity,  
15 which I wouldn't want to see, but it's going to happen.

16  
17 Another issue was I and Geoff are  
18 working on getting a five-day extension for 21E and I  
19 believe they were doing that in 19A. It says here in  
20 the agenda to get a five-day extension on the moose  
21 season. The moose didn't move early this year. It was  
22 too warm. A lot of people didn't get a moose. A lot  
23 of people shared their meat with each other to get by  
24 until February. But, again, when they did have this  
25 meeting, Geoff can do that later, Subsistence Board  
26 rejected our proposal from 21E for a five-day  
27 extension. Now it's going to create a problem where  
28 there's going to be poaching and we discussed this and  
29 that's all I'll say. That's what's going to happen  
30 though. I'm just sad to see that because some people  
31 just don't realize what the need in rural Alaska really  
32 is. Thank you, Jack.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Robert.  
35 Ray.

36  
37 MR. COLLINS: I was just recently at  
38 the meeting of the Chairs of the Park Service. I'm on  
39 the Denali Park Subsistence Resource Council. An issue  
40 was brought up there that I think needs to come before  
41 us and that has to do with the local hire that's been  
42 going on. There's been a freeze put on that now. It's  
43 the Office of Budget and Management, is it?

44  
45 MR. MATHEWS: No, it's Office of  
46 Personnel Management.

47  
48 MR. COLLINS: Office of Personnel  
49 Management has come down. In ANILCA there were  
50 provisions for local hire that the refuges and the

1 parks and so on have been following up here and a lot  
2 of local people have been hired to work in those  
3 refuges. They're asking for other criterion than that  
4 and it will result in less local people being hired. I  
5 think we need to make a statement about that because I  
6 think the intent of ANILCA was to get local people  
7 involved in refuges to give them the opportunity to  
8 work because they have the local knowledge and also the  
9 economic need in the area for work. So that's the  
10 issue I'd like to bring up here and see if we can make  
11 a statement on that.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's a very  
14 important issue, Ray. I talked to the Park Service  
15 about that before myself. Mickey.

16  
17 MR. STICKMAN: Thanks, Mr. Chair. One  
18 of the concerns I have, like Jimmy and Robert and a lot  
19 of the other members here, a lot of people in Nulato  
20 rely on king salmon for their food for the winter. One  
21 of the things I've seen that's a big concern for me is  
22 how it spikes up and down from year to year.

23  
24 For instance, 2008 I maybe did 160  
25 kings, but we have to split it up between five and six  
26 families. I went from 160 this past summer, but the  
27 summer before I did 280 and the summer before that I  
28 did 380, so you can see in that three-year time span my  
29 harvest went from 380 down to 160. To get to 160 I had  
30 to fish 12 hours a day when normally I was only fishing  
31 between six to eight. I had to fish around the clock  
32 and there was one time this summer I fished a whole 48  
33 hours just taking breaks to go in and drop off fish,  
34 but heading right back out. But, you know, just  
35 fishing the whole 48-hour period and that's expensive.  
36 You know, gas is not cheap in Nulato. That's just one  
37 of the concerns that I have.

38  
39 Another one is when it comes to moose,  
40 even though you look at the records for this year, it  
41 looked like Nulato did okay, and we did. You can tell  
42 by looking at the smokehouses this fall. But then you  
43 look at -- you know, they increased the number of  
44 permits for drawing permits and because they did that a  
45 lot of the local people think that it's time for not  
46 only Fish and Game but Fish and Wildlife to maybe  
47 consider having a five-day cow season. I made three  
48 hunting trips and I was only successful on two, but on  
49 the very first one I saw 14 hours and no bulls and I  
50 live in a bull only area. Other people are seeing the

1 same thing. There's a general consensus in Nulato  
2 anyway that if they're increasing the drawing permits,  
3 that maybe it's time for them to have like a five-day  
4 cow opening just so people can have moose meat.

5  
6 That's two concerns I have. Like  
7 Robert, one of the things I'm concerned about is people  
8 -- I mean as it gets harder and harder to be  
9 successful, people are going to be -- I know personally  
10 it's happening already. People are doing things that  
11 are not legal. They're shooting moose out of season,  
12 they're fishing outside of the windows. It's just  
13 something that's going to happen because people want to  
14 go out there and be successful. They don't want to  
15 fail their families or fail their children. So  
16 whatever it takes to feed themselves and their kids and  
17 that's a concern for me.

18  
19 Out there where we all live, you get in  
20 trouble with Fish and Wildlife, State Department of  
21 Fish and Game, it just brings more monetary pressure on  
22 the family that they really can't afford and that's a  
23 concern.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mickey.  
26 Jenny.

27  
28 MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My  
29 concern would be something on the same order as Carl  
30 and Robert. I live below Galena in a fish camp and it  
31 seems like we always have to shut down when the fish is  
32 going by. We're a big family in camp and we have to  
33 share that fish and some days we get only three fish  
34 each and it's really hard. If you've grown up eating  
35 fish or meat, the wild stuff, your body craves it and  
36 it's good to go to Anchorage and stuff or out of town  
37 and eat -- I don't even eat beef really, but you crave  
38 that stuff and your body wants it, and if you don't  
39 have enough of it, it's like hurting the person. A lot  
40 of our elders look forward to having all this stuff and  
41 if they don't have it, they don't want to eat. They'll  
42 eat Western stuff, beef and stuff, once in a while, but  
43 it doesn't fill their body up like their food.

44  
45 Another concern I have is like in the  
46 fall time they have a fishing season and they still  
47 have those windows and you have to open for two days  
48 and shut for two days, whatever. I would suggest in  
49 the beginning when the silvers are running to leave it  
50 open like five days because that's when the weather is

1 good. Other than that it gets too cold by September.  
2 I think in the middle of August or third week in August  
3 is when we start getting silvers and the weather is too  
4 cold to dry them thoroughly, so I would suggest that  
5 you look into opening them five days a week and then  
6 later on you can close it, but that would really help a  
7 lot of people. This is the first year I really got to  
8 fish for silvers and that's a lot of work.

9  
10 I'm also concerned with the mesh sizes.  
11 Like Robert said, it's going to be expensive for people  
12 in our area. You buy a net and that can last for you up to  
13 10, 15 years if you take care of it. If you have to  
14 buy all these new nets, you know, things are not cheap.  
15 The gas in Galena is \$7 a gallon. You know, it's  
16 ridiculous. So when I hear people in Fairbanks  
17 complaining about \$3 a gallon on their gas, I thought,  
18 wow, they should come to our area and see if they have  
19 something to complain about.

20  
21 But that's my concerns, Mr. Chair.  
22 Thank you.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. Don.

25  
26 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
27 guess we're already facing budget cuts. I don't have  
28 one of these. (Laughs) But, I really don't have any  
29 concerns other than what we echo year after year and  
30 that's bycatch numbers and stuff like that. Speaking  
31 to a biologist out of Fairbanks this fall, he says you  
32 can -- I think it takes a united effort because it's  
33 almost like an international thing to deal with the  
34 bycatch issue. Still, as tribal councils, advisory  
35 boards up and down the Yukon, we should be uniting in  
36 that effort.

37  
38 Just talking to Jenny this morning I  
39 was kind of surprised at the windows they have and  
40 we're only within 100 miles of each other and their  
41 closing is too -- you know, I've been fishing with a  
42 net too and I'm maybe going back to a fishwheel next  
43 year because it's so hard to have to deal with pulling  
44 them out. I deem it most necessary just 100 miles up  
45 the river that we can go ahead and have a five-day  
46 opening period. The disparity between whoever makes  
47 these should be looked into.

48  
49 The only thing I come here is with the  
50 fishing, the depth size and proposals introduced or put

1 forth by the Eastern Interior. Whether we disagree  
2 with them or not, I think that at one of these meetings  
3 we should put it to a vote and, you know, take a stand.  
4 I don't like to be in the middle of this. The State  
5 kind of took the pressure off of us this summer with  
6 that in closing the commercial fishing, but who knows  
7 what's going to happen next year. You know, the  
8 proposals that they put forth, we could look at it and  
9 modify it or whatever. To me, I'm ready to vote on  
10 that and I think that we should at some point take  
11 action on that.

12  
13 Other than that, I thank Ray for giving  
14 the invocation. It's good to be in McGrath again.  
15 Thank you.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.  
18 Winchell.

19  
20 MR. TICKNOR: Thank you. Thank  
21 everybody for being here. Even though I'm from Nikolai  
22 it's so close to McGrath, I just feel like I'm here.  
23 Anyway, my concerns were about the same as last year.  
24 A concern about global warming. Price of gas this year  
25 in Nikolai is \$9 a gallon, which made it pretty hard on  
26 a lot of people, especially their pocketbook. Some  
27 hunters reported a lot of bears and moose above Nikolai  
28 and not much moose, so those are some of my concerns.  
29 Other than that, I don't have too much more. Thank  
30 you.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Ron.

33  
34 MR. SAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm  
35 pretty much in consensus with what Carl says. We're  
36 right smack dab in the middle of the Kanuti Wildlife  
37 Refuge and we get five days before moose season opens  
38 for the State, we get five days after, but then it  
39 still doesn't work. There's too many restrictions, too  
40 many boundaries. We have National Wildlife Refuge  
41 land, we have State land, we have Doyon Corporation  
42 land, village corporation land, Native allotments, and  
43 every one of those pieces of land or parcels of land  
44 are governed by a different set of rules. People just  
45 kind of give up on trying to follow the rules.

46  
47 There was very few moose caught again  
48 at Allakaket and Alatna. I know quite a few people  
49 that were out. They went through five or six props,  
50 outboard motor props, in a couple of low units because

1 we didn't have no water again at moose hunting season.

2

3

4                   The two places that showed 76 bulls to  
5 100 cows at Henshaw Creek and Kanuti River, there's no  
6 way in hell we can get up there. People are saying  
7 that there's only one alternative to putting moose meat  
8 in the freezer and that's poaching. I've talked with a  
9 lot of people back home, like Mickey. The tribal  
10 councils will just have a fundraiser. Go ahead, poach,  
11 put some meat in our freezer and we'll cover your legal  
12 costs. It's come to that point and there's no other  
13 way out of it. We still have 76 bulls per 100 cows.  
14 They're just inaccessible. Thank you.

15

16                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ron. Yeah,  
17 those are very concerning issues. That's been my  
18 concern as this high cost of fuel and the pressures  
19 that it's putting on subsistence users to try and stay  
20 within regulatory processes. The bycatch issue, this  
21 is a fisheries meeting, that's one of my main concerns  
22 for this meeting. The additional effort that's imposed  
23 on people to try and harvest is costing a phenomenal  
24 amount of money. We talked to a guy in Galena last  
25 fall and he was telling our Council that it was \$150 a  
26 trip to go fishing. This year the fuel is another  
27 dollar a gallon on top of that. So people are trying  
28 to meet subsistence needs within these regulatory  
29 processes.

30

31                   As resources are inadvertently or  
32 advertently utilized beyond what can be sustained, the  
33 subsistence users, the end product is AFN was talking  
34 about the out-migration from villages and the  
35 additional pressures that people have to poach and fish  
36 out of the windows and things. This is not the  
37 direction that management should be going. The  
38 direction of management is to sustain the resources and  
39 maintain subsistence uses. That's the direction of the  
40 management and that's what I would like this Council to  
41 be addressing. That's one of my concerns.

42

43                   I have concerns about all various kinds  
44 of issues, but since we're on a fisheries meeting, the  
45 proposal on the gear size, the 7.5 gear size proposal,  
46 will not be seen by this Council. That was tabled by  
47 the Federal Subsistence Board. We may be looking at  
48 that this next spring. I feel like Don, that we should  
49 vote one way or another. We should not avoid the  
50 issue.

1 I sat before that Federal Subsistence  
2 Board last winter listening to all the data on 7.5  
3 inch, so we need to deliberate that proposal, unlike  
4 Galena where we didn't take the proposal up. So that  
5 would be my concerns for this meeting that we can  
6 address some of these issues that are affecting  
7 fisheries.

8  
9 Review and adoption of the agenda. We  
10 need to get onto the fisheries issues themselves. Does  
11 anybody want to insert anything into the agenda as it's  
12 stated. Vince.

13  
14 MR. MATHEWS: You had two items. One  
15 would be the Board of Game bear proposals and the other  
16 one was local hire that came up that you discussed. My  
17 recommendation on the Board of Game proposals would  
18 probably pick them up -- I don't think Randy Rogers is  
19 going to be here for any of the wildlife planning  
20 effort, so that might be a good time after you have a  
21 status report on Unit 19A moose. The packet of  
22 proposals looks thick. I took all the bear proposals  
23 in there. There may be quite a few of them you don't  
24 want to take action on because they're out of your  
25 region, but I didn't want to limit you to the  
26 outreaching effects of those bear proposals.

27  
28 Then the local hire, I don't know if  
29 you want to consider that an annual report topic or a  
30 separate letter. I circled it around your annual  
31 report, but that's just a wild guess where you'd like  
32 to take that up.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's probably a  
35 good point to bring it up. Go ahead, Ron.

36  
37 MR. SAM: Move to adopt the agenda with  
38 the understanding that due to travel schedules and  
39 travel time that most of our Staff are here, but that  
40 we move up and down the agenda as we need to and I  
41 would move to adopt the agenda with that understanding.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that,  
44 Ron. Any other insertions into the agenda.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.

49  
50 MR. STICKMAN: Second.

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of  
2 adopting the agenda as modified signify by saying aye.  
3  
4                   IN UNISON: Aye.  
5  
6                   (No opposing votes)  
7  
8                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. So we're  
9 to the approval of the February 2008 Fairbanks meeting  
10 minutes. I reviewed the minutes. Has anybody else  
11 reviewed those. Any corrections found. Mickey, go  
12 ahead.  
13  
14                  MR. STICKMAN: I'll just make a motion  
15 to adopt the minutes.  
16  
17                  MR. SAM: Second.  
18  
19                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded  
20 to adopt the minutes. Has everybody read the minutes.  
21  
22                  (Members nodding affirmatively)  
23  
24                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We were sent these  
25 in our normal correspondence with Vince. The minutes  
26 seem correct to me.  
27  
28                  MR. STICKMAN: Question.  
29  
30                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is  
31 called on the minutes. Those in favor of adopting the  
32 minutes as provided signify by saying aye.  
33  
34                  IN UNISON: Aye.  
35  
36                  (No opposing votes)  
37  
38                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Minutes approved.  
39 We're on to the fisheries issues, the main meat of this  
40 meeting, so to speak. Subsistence fisheries post  
41 season review, joint Federal and State presentation.  
42 Vince.  
43  
44                  MR. MATHEWS: Yes, there's Staff here.  
45 Gerald Maschmann and Fish and Game have a presentation  
46 to hand out. Is there anybody online so we can  
47 recognize you that are listening in by teleconference?  
48  
49                  (No comments)  
50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. I know there was a  
2 bunch that was going to call in around 10:15 or 10:30.  
3 Anyway, those two Staff and then there will be a  
4 handout on the post 2008 season.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Do you want  
7 to step up here to the mike and make a presentation.  
8

9 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. There will  
10 be some people possibly joining online at 11:15. It  
11 doesn't seem to be a problem. They did want to listen  
12 in on this. It would be your summer season area  
13 biologist and some others. I thought there would be  
14 some Staff from OSM in Anchorage. If I get a break,  
15 I'll see if there's a phone problem, but I don't think  
16 there is.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead with  
19 the presentation.

20  
21 MR. MASCHMANN: Chairman. Council. If  
22 you prefer, I can read the whole thing into the record  
23 or I can summarize.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I prefer that you go  
26 through the summary of seasons, just an overview, and  
27 hitting the high points.

28  
29 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay. Thank you. My  
30 name is Gerald Maschmann and I work for Russ Holder,  
31 who is the Federal in-season manager on the Yukon  
32 River. My report will be Yukon River and not  
33 Kuskokwim.

34  
35 Managers entered the season  
36 anticipating that the four primary Yukon River salmon  
37 runs would return with sufficient abundance to meet  
38 escapement objectives, provide for normal subsistence  
39 harvest and maybe provide for additional harvest  
40 opportunities. The chinook salmon run was anticipated  
41 to be below average and likely similar to the 2007 run.  
42 The summer and fall chum salmon runs were projected to  
43 be average, while coho salmon were anticipated to be  
44 average to above average.

45  
46 For the summer season. Run strength  
47 assessment of the in-season abundance of chinook and  
48 summer chum salmon was based on lower river test  
49 fishery, Pilot Station sonar, and subsistence fishermen  
50 catch reports. Chinook salmon entry timing was about

1 four days later than average and finished with near  
2 average cumulative CPUE as measured by the ADF&G lower  
3 river test net project. The preliminary end of season  
4 Pilot Station sonar estimate was approximately 130,600  
5 chinook salmon as compared to the 2007 passage of  
6 125,500 fish. Summer chum salmon run strength of 1.6  
7 million fish was near average.

8  
9 Subsistence salmon in-season harvest  
10 information collected by both US Fish and Wildlife  
11 Service and ADF&G indicated that some fishermen were  
12 able to obtain their subsistence harvest goals if they  
13 had started fishing early, although many fishers did  
14 not. Many fishermen reported fishing one to two weeks  
15 more than average until suspending their fishing  
16 efforts until the fall.

17  
18 After over 80 percent of the chinook  
19 salmon run had passed through a fishing district,  
20 summer chum salmon commercial opportunities were  
21 pursued if there was processor interest and the  
22 subsistence salmon fishing schedule was liberalized to  
23 7 or 5 days per week.

24  
25 In December of 2004, the Federal  
26 Subsistence Board adopted a regulation that provided  
27 Federally-qualified subsistence fishermen the  
28 opportunity to use drift gillnets no more than 150 feet  
29 long and no more than 35 meshes deep to harvest chinook  
30 salmon in Subdistricts 4B and 4C. In 2008, a total of  
31 25 permits were issued by Koyukuk/Nowitna National  
32 Wildlife Refuge Complex staff to Galena, Ruby and  
33 Koyukuk rural residents. Of the 24 permittees who have  
34 reported their fishing activity as of September 18th,  
35 10 reported fishing, with 44 chinook salmon harvested  
36 in 82 hours of fishing. It appears that there remains  
37 some interest in this fishing opportunity, but  
38 Subdistricts 4B and 4C fishermen have not reported  
39 finding productive drifting spots within Federal public  
40 waters.

41  
42 Based on the preseason outlook, no  
43 directed chinook salmon commercial fishing periods  
44 occurred. Eleven summer chum commercial periods  
45 occurred at the end of the summer season with 150,000  
46 summer chum salmon and 4,300 chinook salmon harvested.

47  
48 Post-season evaluation of the chinook  
49 and summer chum salmon escapement numbers confirmed  
50 that most Alaskan escapement goals were near the low

1 end of the desired escapement goal ranges. The  
2 escapement of 38,097 chinook salmon past the Eagle  
3 sonar provided for a spawning ground escapement goal  
4 into Canada of 32,500 fish, which was much less than  
5 the greater than 45,000 U.S./Canada Panel escapement  
6 goal for this year.

7  
8 For the fall season. The 2008 run  
9 timing was near average for the quarter and three-  
10 quarter points of the run, but the mid-point was  
11 delayed until almost the three-quarter point, meaning  
12 the run was much weaker in the middle portion of the  
13 run than expected. Based on sonar cumulative passage  
14 estimates and the cumulative commercial harvest, the  
15 2008 fall chum salmon run was estimated to be 730,000  
16 fish. The coho salmon run appeared to have average  
17 timing and a slightly below average run size for the  
18 season, the lowest since 2002.

19  
20 Based on the preseason outlook, fall  
21 chum salmon commercial fishing occurred during the  
22 early portion of the run, was suspended during the  
23 middle portion of the run due to a less than expected  
24 run size and resumed under the Coho Salmon Management  
25 Plan during the late portion of the season. The Yukon  
26 commercial harvest was about 119,386 fall chum salmon  
27 and 36,460 coho salmon as of October 1, 2008.

28  
29 The outlook for 2009 will be prepared  
30 by ADF&G after escapement information and age  
31 composition analysis are completed over the next  
32 several months. Should the trend of poor productivity  
33 continue into 2009, management staff are discussing  
34 options for altering subsistence fishing to ensure  
35 enough fish get to the spawning grounds.

36  
37 That's all I have for written material.  
38 If you look at the tables I provided, the first table  
39 just shows Federal projects and their escapements for  
40 the 2008 season and then on the back it shows a brief  
41 summary of our in-season subsistence harvest interview  
42 project results.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.  
45 Vince.

46  
47 MR. MATHEWS: We just need to check  
48 who's on line. We counted three people joining on  
49 line. Is anybody on line?

50

1 MS. EVENSON: Dani Evenson.  
2  
3 MR. MATHEWS: Dani, you're on. Is  
4 anybody else on? Dani Evenson with the Department of  
5 Fish and Game. Is anybody on from the Office of  
6 Subsistence Management?  
7  
8 MS. EVENSON: Tom McClain.  
9  
10 MR. MATHEWS: Tom McClain is on line.  
11 Oh, you're at the American Fisheries Society meeting.  
12 Are you getting feedback? We're getting feedback here.  
13  
14 MS. EVENSON: We're having a hard time.  
15 The line.....  
16  
17 MR. MATHEWS: All right. I'll try to  
18 correct it during lunch. I think we're just going to  
19 have to struggle through it.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My impression is  
22 that your receiver is too close to this equipment here.  
23 I was wondering if you could put it on the other side  
24 of the room away from these mikes. That might help.  
25 The people that are on line, do they have anything to  
26 say to us or are they just listening in on our  
27 deliberations.  
28  
29 MR. MATHEWS: I understand they're just  
30 listening in. There were two topics. One is the post  
31 season and then Staff wanted to listen in on the  
32 discussions you had on the Bering Sea pollock fishery  
33 bycatch.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let's continue on  
36 with the presentation. Do you have something to tell  
37 us here? Thank you.  
38  
39 MR. NEWLAND: Mr. Chair. Council.  
40 Again, my name is Eric Newland. I'm a commercial  
41 fisheries biologist with the Department of Fish and  
42 Game. I work with Steve Hayes and Fred Bue.  
43  
44 Thank you, Gerald, for your  
45 presentation and the summary of this year. It would be  
46 safe to say this year's management of the summer season  
47 was quite a challenge for everybody involved.  
48  
49 Now I'm going to go into what we'll be  
50 looking at for 2009. The outlook for 2009 will be

1 prepared after escapement information and age  
2 composition analysis are completed over the next  
3 several months. Preliminary analysis suggests the 2009  
4 Yukon River chinook salmon run will be below average.  
5 Based on average productivity, the run is expected to  
6 provide for escapement and subsistence uses. However,  
7 as we have seen in 2007, 2008, despite good parent year  
8 escapements, runs were poor and the escapement goal in  
9 Canada was not met.

10

11 It is therefore prudent to enter the  
12 2009 season, which also has good parent year  
13 escapements, with the expectation that conservation  
14 measures may be required in order to meet Canadian  
15 border passage. Should the trend of poor productivity  
16 continue in 2009, Staff are discussing options for  
17 altering subsistence fishing to ensure enough fish to  
18 get to the spawning grounds in Alaska and Canada.

19

20 This is, I guess, our opportunity to  
21 discuss what -- or you guys can have input on what you  
22 would see as important for the subsistence fishing  
23 opportunities and what you would like to see done.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Well,  
26 thank you. That's the point where I'm at too. I think  
27 we have plenty of comment on that issue. I would like  
28 to poll the Council on how they feel about subsistence  
29 restrictions when this year there was almost 5,000  
30 chinook harvested in the directed chum fishery. So  
31 there was basically a bycatch of 5,000 chinook salmon  
32 trying to target 25 cents a pound chums. The issue is  
33 very concerning, but our subsistence users are going to  
34 meet higher and higher bars to try and meet subsistence  
35 needs when there's a directed chum fishery.

36

37 Another issue that's not in the data is  
38 the drop loss, when you're fishing six-inch gear and  
39 the chinooks that fall out of the gear and are lost and  
40 are wasted, which all of the lower river people will  
41 tell you six-inch gear will drop those kings like  
42 crazy. I used to fish in Bristol Bay and I'm very  
43 aware of how many chinook will fall off the gear,  
44 pinched on the face and dead in the gear and fall in  
45 the water and drift away. Five thousand were the  
46 harvested chinook.

47

48 So I'm very concerned about going on  
49 subsistence restrictions on the upper river when you  
50 have directed chum fisheries in the lower river that

1 basically have an incidental catch of chinook and I  
2 would like to poll the Council on that issue. Anybody  
3 want to speak to that issue.

4

5 Ron.

6

7 MR. SAM: I have a question. On the  
8 Yukon River, how many days of commercial fishing was  
9 allowed and how many days -- and what was the catch?

10

11 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12 Council. You should have a season summary in front of  
13 you and there is a table in that that would have your  
14 periods as well. This is the commercial catch in Y1  
15 and Y2 in 2008, Page 13, Table 4. It's discussed in  
16 the summer chum salmon season. The total commercial  
17 harvest was 151,786 summer chum salmon for the Yukon  
18 River drainage. The summer chum harvest was above the  
19 '98 to 2007 average harvest of 49,675 fish.  
20 Additionally, a total of 14,100 pink salmon were  
21 harvested in Districts 1 and 2.

22

23 I think it's important to look at when  
24 these fisheries did occur. The summer chum directed  
25 fisheries did occur after 80 percent of the chinook had  
26 gone by. It was also, I believe, past the mid point of  
27 the summer chum run, so there's a large foregone  
28 harvest of a relatively strong summer chum run. I  
29 believe 4,100 chinook were taken in that commercial  
30 fishery and in the fall season I believe another 290  
31 were taken.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Some preliminary  
34 data I saw it was more like 47-something chinook were  
35 harvested.

36

37 MR. NEWLAND: 4,700.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that's the  
40 issue. If we continue to have harvestable surplus for  
41 chum and even though 80 percent of the chinook have  
42 passed through, we're still fighting for every fish on  
43 the spawning grounds to meet subsistence needs and to  
44 have fish harvested, chinook salmon harvested in the  
45 commercial fishery on these low return years, that's  
46 sort of a concerning issue. When we're talking about  
47 subsistence users going through more restrictions, has  
48 the Department discussed this issue of incidental catch  
49 of a stock of concern?

50

1 MR. NEWLAND: Yes, we consider this an  
2 important issue of what we're catching and how many  
3 we're catching. I would say what's the ratio. I think  
4 it was 151,000 to 5,000, so it's better than 1 in 30.  
5 The ratio is pretty good at that point.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The other issue is  
8 there's no data that I've seen presented on this what I  
9 call drop loss, so that is a huge issue. On those  
10 kings, they're bust halfway through two batches.  
11 They're basically dead and the gear hanging on their  
12 face, then you drop them, so you can double that  
13 amount. My impression is you could double 5,000 as a  
14 10,000 mortality in that fishery. So that's not 5 to  
15 1, you're approaching a significant amount of fish. Go  
16 ahead, Ron.

17  
18 MR. SAM: By the time the chums and  
19 king salmon hit the upper Koyokuk, they're red on the  
20 outside, white on the inside, so they're damn near  
21 inedible. Maybe 100 might be edible. My question was  
22 and still is, why does Mr. Holder keep issuing  
23 commercial permits and why have commercial opening  
24 periods on the river and we can't even meet Canadian  
25 needs or requests?

26  
27 MR. MASCHMANN: At the time, with the  
28 in-season, it was discussed with Fish and Game and it  
29 was felt since 80 percent of the run had gone by and it  
30 was going to be a directed summer chum, it was Russ's  
31 assessment that we probably could go ahead and not  
32 object to that commercial fishery and have minimal  
33 impact on the king salmon.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does any other  
36 Council members have comment on that. Mickey.

37  
38 MR. STICKMAN: Mr. Chairman. I'm at an  
39 impasse here because, as you know, in Y4 area at one  
40 time commercial fishing was very important to the  
41 region. It brought millions of dollars to the middle  
42 Yukon. With the commercial chum fishery just making a  
43 comeback in the Y4 area, you know, I would have a  
44 problem if it was just fishermen that are commercial  
45 fishing that are multimillionaires that didn't have  
46 nothing better to do than use commercial fishing as a  
47 tax write-off, but it's something that's making a  
48 comeback in the Y4 area. You know, these people that  
49 are out there fishing, there was only one guy from  
50 Nulato this summer who actually participated. Well, I

1 think he made like \$13,000 and I never talked to him  
2 about how many king salmon he caught in his efforts.

3  
4 For one, I know there's going to be a  
5 few more permit holders going to be fishing this coming  
6 summer because, you know, maybe a few years ago it  
7 wasn't viable, but now I think it is. They're actually  
8 going to make a little bit of money. They're not going  
9 to make a lot of money, but that's why it's an impasse  
10 for me. I'm basically just a subsistence fisherman,  
11 but my father was a commercial fisherman, so there's a  
12 commercial permit in the family. So I'm at an impasse  
13 there. I want to fish my subsistence, but, on the  
14 other hand, my nephew, who has my father's license, I'd  
15 like to see him be able to make a little bit of money.  
16 He's not going to be making a huge amount of money.

17  
18 You know, that's why I'm at an impasse  
19 there. I'm not going to be going out there amongst my  
20 people and saying I went against commercial fishing  
21 just so that I can have my share.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mickey.  
24 Ray.

25  
26 MR. SAM: Mr. Chairman. Similar issues  
27 have come up on the Kuskokwim over there. There is a  
28 relation between the commercial and the subsistence,  
29 especially in the lower river. With the high cost of  
30 gas and so on, the limited amount that they catch under  
31 the commercial actually helps to pay for subsistence  
32 activities. I think that's part of what Mickey's  
33 talking about. The ones that engage in it will give  
34 them some money to do that.

35  
36 The other thing is, there was a limited  
37 catch on kings allowed in the lower river with the  
38 smaller mesh, but most of the take were smaller king  
39 salmon, many of them jacks and so on, that would not  
40 contribute much to the spawning.

41  
42 What was the case on the Kuskokwim of  
43 those 5,000 that were taken? Did they look at age, sex  
44 and size and so on on those fish?

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That data is added  
47 in the size of the fish that are harvested in age class  
48 in the directed chum fishery. The demographics of the  
49 fish is towards the lower structure, but that's the  
50 data the Department does not have, is this drop loss

1 issue and how many fish are falling out of the gear.  
2 So when the fish hit the gear, they don't just bounce  
3 off all the time. They're hanging in the net and when  
4 you pick up and it's rough, they fall off the net.

5  
6 That's an unanswered question of  
7 mortality and that's one of the issues that I'm talking  
8 about here. If you start directing this chum fishery  
9 towards when you still have passage and if people are  
10 accepting of commercial harvest of chums and wanting  
11 the chum fishery to continue, the subsistence users are  
12 also going to have to realize that we're going to have  
13 to endure more subsistence restrictions in the main  
14 king run. So that's kind of the trade-off of going in  
15 that direction.

16  
17 So that's probably enough coverage of  
18 that particular issue. So we've got a Kuskokwim River  
19 presentation.

20  
21 MR. NEWLAND: We actually don't have a  
22 Kuskokwim River presentation.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, there is none.

25  
26 MR. NEWLAND: John is sorry he couldn't  
27 be here, but I can tell you his season summary is out  
28 online and if I can get to a printer, I can get you a  
29 copy of that.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think KNA did some  
32 work down there. We'll probably hear a little bit  
33 about some of those projects down there. What  
34 direction should we go with this, Vince?

35  
36 MR. MATHEWS: Well, KNA, it's not their  
37 responsibility to cover that as far as the Kuskokwim,  
38 but they may have some comments on that. He was going  
39 to talk about projects the Kuskokwim Native Association  
40 was involved with on monitoring. So that's where we  
41 would be on that. I mean if he's wanting to jump into  
42 that issue.....

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Mike.

45  
46 MR. THALHAUSER: I think you'll  
47 probably get a little bit just from my presentation as  
48 far as the Kuskokwim River and what happened this  
49 summer. So that's about as far as I'm willing to go on  
50 that one.

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You had a  
2 comment, Mickey.

3  
4                   MR. STICKMAN: I wanted to make one  
5 final comment on the Yukon. We keep talking about mesh  
6 size and one of the things I wanted to point out and go  
7 on record was for driftnet fishing last summer a lot of  
8 the people who came the closest to meeting their  
9 overall subsistence needs were people who fished with  
10 silver salmon gear at the beginning, which is a lot  
11 smaller than king gear, and then switched to regular  
12 king salmon gear when the big kings showed up. I think  
13 that should be on record because we keep bringing up  
14 mesh size. Last summer, if you have both gear, you can  
15 switch back and forth.

16  
17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

18  
19                   MR. MATHEWS: Just for the record, what  
20 size is a silver net?

21  
22                   MR. STICKMAN: It's 5-7/8ths.

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other discussion  
25 about the Yukon and Kuskokwim. Ray.

26  
27                   MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. You raised  
28 the issue of the drop off. Is there any way that that  
29 can be studied effectively to see what that is? I mean  
30 how would you go about getting that kind of data?

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Staff.

33  
34                   MR. MASCHMANN: I know that in our  
35 office we've been looking at possibly looking at using  
36 a DIDSON sonar to say follow the smaller mesh net and  
37 to see if you can see the kings hitting and then  
38 dropping out. It's been thrown around in our office.  
39 I don't know how far we've gotten with an actual  
40 proposal yet.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Go ahead,  
43 Jenny.

44  
45                   MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair. I was just  
46 thinking what Mickey said for the drifters that did use  
47 a smaller mesh in the beginning. I have a setnet. I  
48 don't go drifting. Once in a while I do, but I'm just  
49 learning. So I have a setnet. If they started  
50 monitoring it, and I know I have to have my silver net

1 in when I know what kind of fish is going by, that's  
2 going to put a hindrance on a lot of people's fishing  
3 also. This is a very touchy subject and I think we  
4 need to think about it. Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's no proposal.  
7 I'm just discussing the ins and outs of the future  
8 subsistence restrictions that are being proposed by the  
9 Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife fisheries.  
10 So this is a fisheries meeting, so this is where you're  
11 asking about comment on those and I'm bringing up some  
12 issues that the agencies should be discussing, this  
13 drop loss and this bycatch issue and the further  
14 reductions upriver.

15

16 Did you have a comment there, Robert.  
17 Go ahead.

18

19 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
20 Jim and I were just talking about last year when we had  
21 an incident in Y4 where Russ Holder and his crew had  
22 taken Y3 into the smaller mesh. All of a sudden the  
23 subsistence fisher in Y3 had to use a 6 inch. Nobody  
24 had a 6-inch mesh. All of a sudden they end up in the  
25 lower portion of Y4. Like Bristol Bay, they had 40  
26 boats riding around, drifting, making fire and guys  
27 were having lunch and just completely took over the  
28 lower portion of Y4 for three days. All the time the  
29 windows were open in Y4. Guys I never seen all winter  
30 long were stopping saying hello. I'm looking at these  
31 guys.

32

33 I talked to Russ and Russ said you can  
34 call the fish cop and he can be over here and take  
35 these guys' nets away. We don't want to do that. We  
36 don't want to go that far. It just shows how much Y3  
37 subsistence fishermen want salmon. They come up to Y4  
38 and had to subsistence fish there for all the time the  
39 windows were open. We were odd about it because so  
40 many boats all of a sudden showed up and it was kind of  
41 like Bristol Bay when you see all these boats out there  
42 running around. It was amazing.

43

44 How many boats do you think there were,  
45 Jim?

46

47 MR. J. WALKER: At least 30 or 40.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, Don.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
2 just had a comment, a question, from either one of you  
3 about your analysis. I was just wondering how do you  
4 come up with your next year forecast real quickly. You  
5 said after escapement information and stuff. I thought  
6 that you come up with next year's forecast with the  
7 escapement from eight years ago. I don't understand  
8 how the forecasts are made.

9  
10 MR. NEWLAND: I think a lot of our  
11 preliminary age analysis is done, but some of it still  
12 needs to be done. It's the relationship of the age  
13 class returning last year to what we would expect out  
14 of next year. Based on our previous years'  
15 escapements, those parent years. That's kind of the  
16 way we project. What came back five, six years ago,  
17 seeing what we saw come back this year and then can  
18 pretty much come up with a projection for next year.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question is, in  
21 your pre-season analysis, are you taking into  
22 consideration the bycatch in the Bering Sea on  
23 incidental harvest of chinook salmon in correlation to  
24 reduction in your forecast?

25  
26 MR. NEWLAND: I don't believe I can  
27 speak to that. I think generally it's assumed they  
28 take average productivity of the ocean.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ron.

31  
32 MR. SAM: When you make these pre-  
33 season projections, that's where the commercial permits  
34 are pretty much put in place?

35  
36 MR. NEWLAND: I think it's just giving  
37 people an idea of what they might expect out of the  
38 next year. I don't think that we're issuing permits  
39 for commercial fisheries at that point if that's what  
40 you're asking. All our decisions are made in-season.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
43 questions on the Yukon fishery. James.

44  
45 MR. J. WALKER: Mr. Chair. I've got a  
46 question. In your historical data, looking at Emmonak  
47 and you interviewed 91 individuals there with a harvest  
48 rate of 90 percent, an overall average historically, I  
49 fished in the lower Yukon back in '79, '80, when we  
50 used to fish down there we started in June 3 and the

1 majority of the subsistence user were already done with  
2 their subsistence. You said the average is 84 percent.  
3 When did that start as far as your historical data?

4

5 MR. MASCHMANN: I believe our first  
6 interviews were started in 2002 and we've been going  
7 since then. For Emmonak, since we have an office down  
8 there, we've got quite a bit of historical data and we  
9 had a technician working for us who could report to us  
10 every day. Some of these other villages we haven't --  
11 we're trying to fold these villages in as the years go  
12 by because it's important information for us. Some  
13 years we haven't been able to get interviews from some  
14 villages, but it seems like as we continue we're  
15 getting more and more participation.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That kind of  
18 concludes our -- you have one more comment. Go ahead.

19

20 MR. MASCHMANN: I just wanted to  
21 reiterate Russ Holder values your input and with the  
22 '09 season coming up I think he's been wanting to  
23 stress that we're really looking from you guys what to  
24 do when '09 comes in what's the best way to handle the  
25 management. We're looking for input before the season  
26 instead of in-season, but we definitely want to urge  
27 everyone to participate in-season on the YRDFA  
28 teleconferences and let us know what you're thinking.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Well, my  
31 opinion, and that would be my opinion, is that I feel  
32 there needs to be this drop loss data collection. I  
33 feel that if there's a directed chum salmon fishery,  
34 that those chinook salmon should be disseminated  
35 throughout the subsistence user base. So I feel that  
36 there should be a direction away from the sale of that  
37 incidental harvest and the directed chum salmon  
38 fisheries towards the subsistence user base local to  
39 those fisheries.

40

41 I feel that the subsistence users would  
42 have to understand that if they're encouraging chum  
43 salmon harvest, that there are going to be additional  
44 subsistence restrictions and shorter windows and gear  
45 restrictions and various things like that. Those  
46 things are going to be very trying for the general  
47 subsistence user population that does not have  
48 commercial harvest permits.

49

50 So these are the issues that this

1 Council is going to be wrestling with if these  
2 continuing subsistence restrictions for next year are  
3 implemented. So that would be my comment.

4

5 Any other comments to that effect.

6 Carl.

7

8 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, I'm just glad that  
9 the Kuskokwim River had a pretty good return. You  
10 know, I was disappointed that they did have openings  
11 before the test fisheries, such as the weirs and the  
12 test fisheries, had the numbers. One of the  
13 determinations made was, hey, by regulation we're  
14 supposed to open and have a commercial opening at this  
15 time. There was no attention paid to the numbers that  
16 were coming up. It was just a projected forecast that  
17 they were saying don't worry, the fish will be there,  
18 and we were lucky we got it. These different  
19 organizations spend so much money trying to get these  
20 grants and stuff to do these test fisheries and if  
21 we're not going to use them, why have them. If we're  
22 just going to go by regulation, not by numbers on the  
23 river.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good point,

26 Carl. Ron.

27

28 MR. SAM: I would just like to direct  
29 this comment to Mr. Holder. I respect him. I know  
30 what he's working for. But do not open up these  
31 commercial fisheries just on projections alone, okay.  
32 Like Carl says, use those test fisheries. Test  
33 fisheries are out there for one purpose and that is to  
34 base your analysis and your deliberations and your  
35 final decision on what you have to do.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would reiterate  
38 that myself. Extreme caution in implementing directed  
39 fisheries when we're not looking at current data. Too  
40 many times I've seen where the projection has a heavy  
41 weight in the first openings, the quarter point. We're  
42 going for the quarter point no matter what we had. So  
43 I feel that extreme caution is due here.

44

45 Any other comments on the Yukon  
46 fishery.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll have probably

1 a five minute break for people and then we'll come back  
2 on line here.

3

4 (Off record)

5

6 (On record)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to be  
9 bringing this meeting back in session. We have a full  
10 agenda today and we have lunch coming up and we need to  
11 finish off the Yukon and Kuskokwim presentation so we  
12 can move on to the North Pacific Management Council  
13 business, a very important issue before this Council.  
14 I need the rest of the Western Interior Council here.  
15 We can probably start. You can give us an overview of  
16 your projects there, Mike, if you could. We want to  
17 get some updates on the Kuskokwim because that's  
18 another important river within our region. Go ahead  
19 and fire up your presentation.

20

21 MR. THALHAUSER: All right. Mike  
22 Thalhauser from KNA. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess  
23 I'm not too bummed out about the fact that this is  
24 probably going to take me a little longer than I had  
25 previously thought since we didn't have much else from  
26 the Kuskokwim, so I'll try to hit on this as much as I  
27 can. If anyone has any questions, I can elaborate as  
28 much as I can.

29

30 Again, I'm from the Kuskokwim Native  
31 Association. This is just kind of a listing of the  
32 services we provide to our communities as far as  
33 education and training, realty services, housing  
34 improvement program and elder assistance program. We  
35 have a watershed council and I'm the director of the  
36 fisheries department.

37

38 Just some updates as far as the  
39 Kuskokwim Native Association actually goes. This year  
40 executive director Calvin Simeon stepped down earlier  
41 this summer and he's been replaced by Cynthia  
42 Navarrette, who is also from Aniak and has been living  
43 in Anchorage for a few years and is back and she's been  
44 in the position for a few months and I think getting a  
45 good start.

46

47 The other update, KNA fisheries  
48 director, David Orabutt, hasn't officially stepped down  
49 yet. He stepped down as the director and has been sort  
50 of working part time to help me transition into the

1 position, so he's being replaced by me and a special  
2 thanks to both of them for all the work they've done as  
3 far as natural resource issues and subsistence issues  
4 on the Kuskokwim.

5  
6 Our mission statement is that the  
7 fisheries department is to actively participate in  
8 managing and conserving Kuskokwim area fisheries  
9 resources to ensure long-term sustainability of the  
10 subsistence way of life for our members. So our  
11 participation in these meetings is really important to  
12 me and to the fishery department and to KNA. So I  
13 thank you guys for having me here.

14  
15 This year was the first year for our  
16 coho salmon radiotelemetry project that I think most of  
17 you will probably remember. The presentations I've  
18 given in the past are chinook run reconstruction. This  
19 is a really similar study that was this past year and  
20 is going to be next year also. Basically there's a two  
21 part goal to this study. One is to reliably estimate  
22 the in-river abundance of coho salmon and then, two, to  
23 use those numbers and compare those to the weir data  
24 and the aerial surveys, then look back at historical  
25 subsistence numbers and aerial surveys and reconstruct  
26 those years that we don't have exact or close to exact  
27 estimates on how many coho were in the river.

28  
29 This is a really good time for these  
30 kind of projects because we're basically using the same  
31 platforms that have been in place for the chinook  
32 reconstruction and before that the chum reconstruction  
33 and that we have the fixed receivers that are used to  
34 track these fish and we have the weirs already set up.  
35 They just sort of flow really well together. And the  
36 fishwheel in Kalskag.

37  
38 These are just kind of results that I  
39 got from the comm fish guys at Fish and Game and I'll  
40 go through these. These results are really  
41 preliminary. They just sort of put them together as a  
42 report for AFS and they're still working on the  
43 modeling and estimate numbers.

44  
45 These are the fishwheel numbers as far  
46 as their total catch. They caught 3,234 coho in the  
47 fishwheels, 608 of them were radio tagged and 2,517  
48 were anchor tagged, and that basically represents all  
49 the healthy fish that they caught. If they caught a  
50 fish that they thought was going to make it, they radio

1 tagged them to what they thought was proportional to  
2 the run at that time and then the rest of the fish they  
3 used anchor tags with.

4

5                   This is just a slide showing the tag  
6 deployment. The reason I included this is it shows the  
7 one sort of missing piece or problem to work around as  
8 far as getting these estimates and kind of shows why  
9 these results are preliminary. If you look at the  
10 purple line there, that's the total catch at the  
11 fishwheels and the green line is the fish that were  
12 anchor tagged and the yellow line is the number of fish  
13 that were radio tagged. You can see by just looking at  
14 it in general the green and the purple match up and  
15 that's because we had an unlimited number of anchor  
16 tags. Like I said, every healthy fish was tagged with  
17 an anchor tag.

18

19                   The goal here would be to have the  
20 yellow line also mirror that but to a lower number to  
21 get those radio tags to be in the same proportion as  
22 the run strength. We use the Bethel test fishery and  
23 other information to decide sort of how to put those  
24 out and just catches at the fishwheels.

25

26                   This first pulse around the 7th of  
27 August you can see the yellow line goes up and that's  
28 kind of the goal of the project. Like I said, there  
29 are a limited number of the radio tags and with this  
30 second pulse here around the 20th or so, it was to the  
31 point where they were getting lower on radio tags and  
32 weren't expecting that second peak, so the decision was  
33 made to sort of steadily go as planned and put those  
34 out and then hopefully weight the tags that would have  
35 been put out during that time and sort of build that  
36 into the model. That's sort of why some of these  
37 results that I'll give you as far as actual abundance  
38 numbers are preliminary.

39

40                   These are, again, the total tagged fish  
41 and total downstream fish. That's fish that were  
42 tagged and that actually moved downstream, so weren't  
43 counted above Kalskag. So 60 percent went upstream  
44 total and 21 percent are unknown. The downstream fish  
45 were determined by a fixed receiver station below the  
46 fishwheels that if they pass that point it was decided  
47 those fish were not coming up and were probably nosing  
48 around and left the system. Then we used aerial  
49 surveys and the fixed receivers along the Kuskokwim to  
50 track them as they went up.

1                               As far as distribution, again, these  
2 are preliminary. I'll go through the numbers here. Of  
3 the 363 that actually went up stream, 44 went up the  
4 Aniak drainage, Holitna got 107 of the tags, Stony  
5 River had 11 and the Swift 52, so the main spawning  
6 areas were the Holitna and the Kogrukluuk. The upper  
7 drainage received 32. So that's just sort of a  
8 proportion and the distribution of where these tagged  
9 fish went.

10  
11                               Then as far as abundance estimates,  
12 this is a mark recapture study, so it's just taking  
13 into account the number of fish that were actually  
14 marked and then the number of fish that were actually  
15 seen passing the weirs and recorded and then the total  
16 passage at the fish weirs. Using these numbers, the  
17 estimate for the coho in the Kuskokwim this year was  
18 740,513. Like I said, it's still under construction  
19 and they're still working on this as far as narrowing  
20 it down to as close as they can get with the modeling.

21  
22                               Does anyone have any questions? Maybe  
23 I'll do that after each project. I have quite a few.

24  
25                               CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like you to  
26 more compress this presentation if you possibly can.

27  
28                               MR. THALHAUSER: Okay. This project is  
29 our ecotypic variation of sockeye salmon for the  
30 Kuskokwim River and the investigators on this were  
31 Megan McFee, Tom Quinn, Jack Stanford. This is also a  
32 cooperation between KNA ADF&G and Kuskokwim Aquatics  
33 consultant Dave Cannon here. It's basically looking at  
34 the different -- it was based on a study done in the  
35 Bristol Bay area looking at the biocomplexity in  
36 sockeye salmon and the study there looked at basically  
37 morphological characteristics or physical  
38 characteristics, showed a higher degree of diversity in  
39 the population, which then sort of contributed to a  
40 more stable population, whether it was different  
41 variables as far as climate, weather and feeding. So  
42 differences in these fish can show us that a population  
43 is a little more stable.

44  
45                               These are slides that I had from a  
46 previous study by Sara Gill that just sort of show that  
47 we do have two different types of sockeye and 23  
48 percent are the lake type sockeye in the Kuskokwim and  
49 about 66 percent were river type, which was a little  
50 higher than expected.

1                   This is just a picture of one of our  
2 college interns working on the Holitna. They were  
3 sampling the fish on the spawning grounds and taking  
4 measurements and looking at these points right here on  
5 the fish and then using them to determine variables in  
6 the size and shape of the fish.

7  
8                   Just to kind of give you a really quick  
9 idea of the sizes and shapes of these, this is some  
10 sockeye from small creeks, larger creeks and rivers,  
11 and lake type. So this year's project was basically  
12 looking at the river type sockeye, so that's why they  
13 were up in the Holitna because it's the major producer  
14 of sockeye in the Kuskokwim. Next year we'll be doing  
15 the same sort of work on Lake Telaquana.

16  
17                   Whitefish radiotelemetry updates. We  
18 located potential spawning areas for broad and humpback  
19 whitefish and just looked at the migration patterns and  
20 realizing that these whitefish are traveling past  
21 Medfra and far upriver and then going past Bethel  
22 downriver, so they're subject to drainage-wide fishing  
23 and something that's important to look at. They don't  
24 have quite a set migration timing. The time that they  
25 leave the feeding grounds to go to the spawning grounds  
26 is different, depending on how far they have to go. It  
27 seems like the rate they travel actually is as well.

28  
29                   How do we get here. We use PIT tag  
30 reading, which is basically inserting one of these  
31 little PIT tags in the fish. We started this project on  
32 the outlet of Whitefish Lake, which is a feeding area  
33 of whitefish. The reason I put that in here is because  
34 there's an update from this year. Then using telemetry  
35 and fixed receivers and flying aerial surveys. These  
36 are the tagging spots in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

37  
38                   This year we did a little bit of  
39 tagging, caught a few fish around the fishwheel in  
40 Kalskag. I think about 16 tags were put out near  
41 Discovery Creek in Kalskag and actually traveled up  
42 here past McGrath and we did some tagging of broads.  
43 This year was focused on broads because we had quite a  
44 few tags on humpback whitefish out and we had a pretty  
45 good idea where they're spawning or at least one  
46 population of them. I think we got a total of about 45  
47 tags or so out this year on broads and then we use the  
48 fixed receivers and the airplane to fly surveys to look  
49 at these.

50

1                                 Again, spawning locations that we  
2 suspect for the humpback whitefish are mainly in the  
3 Big River, the Holitna River, somewhere above Whitefish  
4 Lake down by Kalskag and the Swift River and that is  
5 where we found most of our spawning whitefish. That's  
6 also where in 2007 we did quite a bit of seining in  
7 places where we thought there might be groups of  
8 spawning fish and did find quite a few. Once we got  
9 those narrowed down and actually sampled the fish and  
10 looked at their gonads and tried to see if they were  
11 really in spawning condition, we then this year went  
12 back to the Swift River for about a week and did some  
13 habitat surveys to look at what they fish are keying in  
14 on as far as habitat when they're looking for a  
15 spawning area. With all the development and  
16 opportunity in the area and prospecting as far as  
17 development, it's a good time to be finding out what  
18 habitats are critical and what's important with DUI  
19 fish.

20  
21                                 Also the PIT tag reader that we had in  
22 the outlet of Whitefish Lake was moved up to one of the  
23 spawning areas in the Swift River. I think we caught  
24 about 1,000 whitefish in one drift last year. So we  
25 figured that was a really good spot and so we set up  
26 the PIT tag reader to see if any of those fish that  
27 were tagged in Whitefish Lake with the PIT tags are  
28 going up there. So we set two antennas at the bottom  
29 of the river near this area, so we'll be able to go  
30 back and look to see if those fish are, in fact, going  
31 back up there.

32  
33                                 As far as broad whitefish, we still  
34 have the suspect that they're spawning mainly between  
35 here and Medfra and possibly an area a little below  
36 McGrath.

37  
38                                 As far as future direction, like I  
39 said, I kind of went through what we did this year as  
40 far as moving the PIT tag reader, continuing our  
41 flights and our boat tracking and using the fixed  
42 receivers. We're done with putting out tags and we're  
43 just going to continue to track these until the end of  
44 the project, which is this year, and then put out a  
45 report on that.

46  
47                                 This was the second year for the  
48 radiotelemetry project dealing with sheefish in the  
49 Kuskokwim River looking at spawning distribution  
50 migration timing from Lisa Stuby and cooperating with

1 us.

2

3

4 Basically our main objectives were  
5 looking at spawning locations and just a really quick  
6 update. These are the secondary objectives, looking at  
7 migratory timing, summer feeding areas, genetic  
8 samples. Again, looking for really important critical  
9 areas that are important to these fish that if  
10 something were to happen, places we need to protect.

11

12 In 2007, Lisa put out nine tags and  
13 this year 111 tags were put out between Bethel and  
14 McGrath. A couple of our college interns worked on  
15 that project. Most of these projects actually.

16

17 This was the first year of the rainbow  
18 trout radiotelemetry project that I have going on in  
19 the Aniak River. The goals of this project were to  
20 look at spawning locations and times of the rainbow  
21 trout in the Aniak and more importantly I think to  
22 describe the seasonal distributions of rainbow trout on  
23 the Aniak and to look at possible seasonal movements of  
24 these fish. We know that during the summer for the  
25 most part they're up in these higher tributaries  
26 feeding and basically what we're looking at and there's  
27 a pretty significant subsistence fishery in the lower  
28 Aniak and we wanted to know if these fish -- because we  
29 suspect that during the winter they're coming down to  
30 the lower Aniak towards the Doestock Creek where quite  
31 a few people ice fish for them in the winter.  
32 Basically to see if the fish from up here that are  
33 getting pressured by sport fishing in the summer are  
34 going down here and then having pressure from  
35 subsistence fishing and basically to see if those two  
36 are going to affect each other.

37

38 The goal is to put 50 tags out in the  
39 mainstem of the Aniak and then 25 in each main  
40 hydrological unit or tributary up here. We did this in  
41 about a week. We put a rafting crew on each one of  
42 these three tributaries and basically inserted radio  
43 tags surgically into the rainbow trout and we're going  
44 to use aerial tracking to find out where these are.

45

46 This is a map of where the tags were  
47 actually put out, so each one of these dots represents  
48 -- there's a few that represent two or three fish, but  
49 basically that's 125 tags and where they were put out.

50

51

1                                   And then I've got two surveys that Lisa  
2 Stuby flew and agreed to radio track through there.  
3 This one is in September. The last one was -- the  
4 first one was in August and then the end of September.  
5 They really hadn't moved at all. It looks like October  
6 9th they're starting to move down a little bit, but  
7 still it's pretty preliminary and we can't really tell  
8 anything by this. But we have a lot of surveys coming  
9 up this winter to see where they're moving to.

10  
11                                   Our weirs, and this is kind of, I  
12 guess, the main part other than the coho where I'll get  
13 into some other terms as far as the Kuskokwim.

14  
15                                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike, we're coming  
16 up on lunch. Can you squish 'er down a little bit  
17 more.

18  
19                                   MR. THALHAUSER: Yeah. The George and  
20 the Tatlawiksuk weirs were basically our first and  
21 they're basically looking at escapement daily and  
22 yearly so we can look at how the fish are doing as far  
23 as escapement needs. It's also where we conduct our  
24 high school internship program.

25  
26                                   As far as escapement results for the  
27 weirs that KNA is involved with, I have the Salmon  
28 River, the Tatlawiksuk River and the George River.  
29 These are the results for chinook, all down a little  
30 bit below what the projected, I believe, returns were,  
31 but still pretty reasonable escapements. Then I also  
32 have the escapement numbers for chum and coho. It was  
33 a pretty good year for coho.

34  
35                                   Another main project that I'll be  
36 getting back to next week is our post season  
37 subsistence surveys that is now going to be run through  
38 -- this year is the first year it will be run through  
39 ADF&G comm fish as opposed to subsistence division and  
40 this is basically looking at trends in subsistence and  
41 needs for subsistence use. Something new for this year  
42 is KNA is basically in charge of Aniak, ONC does Bethel  
43 for these surveys and ADF&G is going to be doing the  
44 rest of them. It's our goal to get ADF&G and KNA to  
45 really look at non-salmon species and whitefish and  
46 rainbow trout, especially with all these big issues  
47 going on with the Whitefish Conservation Plan coming up  
48 that I think Caroline is going to talk about later.

49  
50                                   Outreach and education I won't go

1 through. This year we had six college interns. We  
2 were initially going to have four and it was great to  
3 have six. I believe they were all Native students this  
4 year and I believe we had one from Nanwalek. Each of  
5 those are going to be given a scholarship this year and  
6 two of them are ANSEP students or Alaskan Natives of  
7 Science and Engineering Program.

8  
9                   It's kind of business as usual as far  
10 as our community meetings and outreach. The only thing  
11 that I did want to hit on this year that's new is that  
12 through David and I going to the schools and teaching  
13 science concepts to the kids we put in a proposal a few  
14 years ago to hire a graduate student, and to get a  
15 curriculum built that uses the science and the  
16 fisheries that's going on in the Kuskokwim in our area,  
17 to go to these schools and stay there for a little  
18 longer and to match these concepts up with standards  
19 that the teachers are actually looking at and basically  
20 to develop a curriculum that does that. So we have a  
21 graduate student, Carrie Hackett, that's going to be  
22 spending from a week to three weeks in each of the  
23 communities that we represent using these kind of  
24 things that we're talking about here to try to address  
25 some standards that the kids have to meet anyway.

26  
27                   As far as proposed projects, right now  
28 currently ADF&G is going to be submitting a sockeye  
29 project to the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund and  
30 basically that's similar to the other ones. It doesn't  
31 involve radio tags, but its goal is to estimate the in-  
32 river abundance for sockeye from 2010-12 and now with  
33 the increasing interest in the commercial sockeye  
34 fishery, this is an important time to do something like  
35 this. This will also look at the samples that are  
36 being collected from 2008-12, genetic samples and using  
37 genetic samples from this to find out where the fish  
38 that are being commercially caught are actually coming  
39 from as we can determine a stock specific exploitation  
40 for the catch.

41  
42                   KNA will be putting in a new proposal  
43 to continue this education curriculum that we have  
44 started and hiring someone else when Dave leaves. I  
45 think that's it.

46  
47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions from  
48 the Council on KNA's presentation. It was a fairly  
49 thorough presentation. Thanks, Mike.  
50

1 MR. THALHAUSER: And if there are  
2 certain projects that you want me to address a little  
3 closer in the future, I'd love to hear about it.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Winchell.

6  
7 MR. TICKNOR: I was just wondering if  
8 you received those tags back between McGrath and where  
9 else you said, Medfra?

10  
11 MR. THALHAUSER: For coho or are you  
12 talking about whitefish?

13  
14 MR. TICKNOR: Whitefish.

15  
16 MR. THALHAUSER: Yeah, I believe we  
17 have. Did you send those to U.S. Fish and Wildlife or  
18 KNA? I know I got some from KNA that were from  
19 somewhere up here.

20  
21 MR. TICKNOR: How many?

22  
23 MR. THALHAUSER: I couldn't tell you  
24 offhand. At least two or three this year. But if you  
25 sent any in, maybe let me know and I can make sure I  
26 got them.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
29 questions.

30  
31 (No comments)

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Mike.  
34 The Council is probably ready for lunch. When should  
35 we return, Vince?

36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: I would say an hour,  
38 which would make it 1:20, 1:25. Then I'll fix the  
39 phone and see if we can get that back together.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to ask,  
42 just for the general discussion here, Dani Evenson  
43 about her project, why it was discontinued, the  
44 selectivity project, but the phone was so screwed up  
45 that I don't think we were going to do that. That was  
46 one of the issues I didn't get to cover with that Yukon  
47 presentation. Do you have something there?

48  
49 MR. MASCHMANN: That project was  
50 started but discontinued due to the concern with the

1 kings. They just didn't feel like it was appropriate  
2 to be taking those kings for that study due to the low  
3 numbers of the run.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They couldn't be  
6 disseminated throughout the subsistence user groups?

7

8 MR. MASCHMANN: Well, the State does  
9 have their test fishery down there already and they're  
10 already giving those fish out and with the concern of  
11 restricting the subsistence users down to 6-inch mesh  
12 in the lower river and cutting their time, they just  
13 thought it would be inappropriate to be out there  
14 catching more kings.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're going  
17 to break for lunch. Be back here at 1:20.

18

19 (Off record)

20

21 (On record)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to come  
24 back to order. So we've covered the Yukon, sort of a  
25 Kuskokwim overlay. ADF&G said they would give a  
26 further presentation on the Kuskokwim, but I feel we've  
27 kind of covered that. There's sort of a season  
28 overview. Would the Council like -- they can't be on  
29 line at this time to talk about that, but later on, or  
30 do you feel comfortable with what occurred on the  
31 Kuskokwim this year. Council membership feels  
32 comfortable with this presentation.

33

34 So we're going to be moving on past the  
35 fisheries overview. We're moving into the Chinook  
36 Salmon Bycatch in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery, so  
37 that will be the North Pacific Fishery Management  
38 Council presentation. They're coming to the table. Go  
39 ahead, Robert.

40

41 MR. R. WALKER: Jack, just one  
42 question. Are we going to cover both the Kuskokwim,  
43 Yukon and other under bycatch?

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question was are  
46 we going to cover other portions of the region. Those  
47 two river systems are the primary within our region, so  
48 that would be the two main effects for our region, the  
49 Kuskokwim and Yukon River. Are you ready for a  
50 presentation there, Vince, or are there computer

1 problems?

2

3

MR. MATHEWS: Yes.

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have Nicole Kimball with North Pacific Fishery Management Council staff. We're going to have them give a presentation with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council representatives Sam Cotten and Dave Benson. Go ahead.

10

11

MS. KIMBALL: My name is Nicole Kimball. I'm a fisheries analyst for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. Dr. Diana Stram is going to give the presentation on this issue as we have to the other Regional Advisory Councils that we've been able to attend. Before we got started I was asked to give a little bit of an overview on what the North Pacific Council does and how they operate. I also wanted to introduce the two Council members that are here today, Dave Benson, vice chair of the Council, who is a Washington representative, and Sam Cotten from Alaska. If you just want to say a few words to introduce yourselves. Council members are generally here to listen, field questions and then take your feedback back to the rest of the Council. Did you want to say a few words?

27

28

MR. BENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate you making time on your agenda for us today and the welcome that we've had here. I've been involved in the council process about 15 years, 10 years on an advisory panel and five years on the council and I think we've been dealing with salmon that entire time at one level or another through closures and seasonal restrictions and so forth.

36

37

The good news is the council moves slowly and it's a very transparent process and everybody has a chance to testify. As Nicole said, we're here to listen and learn.

41

42

The bad news is the council moves slowly. It takes a long time to get some of these actions done. Several years to get a planned amendment such as this one we're dealing with done. We hope to take final action in April on this.

47

48

Industry is working hard to come up with an incentive program that goes beyond just a cap. An incentive program that will deal with salmon bycatch

50

1 at all levels of abundance. A reward and/or penalty  
2 system is how the motion was structured. It's very  
3 difficult at low levels like we're experiencing this  
4 year, maybe one-tenth of what we experienced in 2007 on  
5 chinook bycatch, but the industry is hard at work on  
6 that and they're taking it seriously.

7

8 So, with that, I know you have a full  
9 agenda and I'll shut up.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Sam.

12

13 MR. COTTEN: Mr. Chairman. Members of  
14 the Council. I'll say thank you as well. We're told  
15 that we're here to learn and I've already learned a lot  
16 listening to your earlier presentations and appreciate  
17 that.

18

19 I'm a lifelong Alaska resident. I've  
20 been involved in public service in a lot of different  
21 venues over the years, but for about the last few I've  
22 been a member of the North Pacific Council and it's  
23 been a real eye-opener for me, too. We look at quite a  
24 broad range of fishery issues mostly in Federal water,  
25 but here we are in the Interior of Alaska.

26

27 I think it's showing, at least on the  
28 council's part, that we recognize the importance of  
29 especially king salmon but also chum salmon and other  
30 salmon species. Not only the commercial salmon  
31 fishermen but the subsistence users. King salmon have  
32 a friend every place in Alaska and all the way down the  
33 west coast, so we very much recognize the importance of  
34 king and chum salmon to the river system residents as  
35 well. Thanks for inviting us.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
38 your attendance in this meeting. When I learned you  
39 were going to be here, I was very pleased about that.  
40 This Council has been wanting to have dialogue with the  
41 North Pacific Fishery Management Council, sent letters  
42 and so forth. I'm very happy that you've attended this  
43 meeting. Go ahead, Nicole.

44

45 MS. KIMBALL: We were asked to just  
46 give a little bit of background to clear up any  
47 misconceptions about what the council manages. We  
48 learned this from previous meetings that it might be  
49 helpful to start out with this.

50

1                                Obviously the council works with  
2 Federal government, the National Marine Fisheries  
3 Service to manage the Federal groundfish fisheries in  
4 Federal waters, so everything from three miles to 200  
5 miles out. We also work with the State of Alaska to  
6 help manage salmon, scallops and herring, but obviously  
7 the State of Alaska has the primary responsibility for  
8 managing the directed salmon fisheries.

9  
10                              One of the authorities the council has  
11 is to regulate the Bering Sea pollock fishery and that  
12 includes bycatch of salmon, in this case chinook, in  
13 that fishery. So that's the action the council is  
14 supposed to deal with. They've been dealing with it a  
15 long time, but we're supposed to take action on this  
16 particular analysis, like Dave said, in April of 2009.  
17 So that's when we would expect a final decision from  
18 the council.

19  
20                              If you're interested, they put these  
21 handbooks out last year and I think they've proven  
22 quite helpful. If anyone wants to take these back to  
23 the communities, please do. It's also online on our  
24 website, but it's called Navigating North Pacific  
25 Council Process. It lays out how our meetings are  
26 scheduled, how our advisory council works for us. We  
27 have a scientific and statistic committee as well that  
28 feeds into the council recommendations, lays out where  
29 our meetings are. So it's helpful to at least talk to  
30 people how to get more involved in our process.

31  
32                              They asked me to go over this. We have  
33 five meetings a year. Four of those are in Alaska,  
34 three of them are in Anchorage, and then the other  
35 meeting in Alaska usually rotates between Sitka, Kodiak  
36 and Dutch Harbor. We also have a meeting scheduled in  
37 Nome in a couple years, so that will be our first  
38 meeting in Nome. The other meeting is in either  
39 Seattle or Portland since we have Washington and Oregon  
40 representatives on the council as well.

41  
42                              All the meetings are public and our  
43 council receives public testimony on every issue prior  
44 to making a decision. Prior to the council making a  
45 decision there's staff, like Diana and I, who have to  
46 develop an analysis of the social, economic and  
47 environmental impacts of their potential decision. So  
48 that's the process we're in now.

49  
50                              I also needed to emphasize that the

1 North Pacific Council's recommendations or decisions  
2 are actual recommendations to the Secretary of  
3 Commerce, where the final decision rests. There's  
4 another comment process associated with that.

5  
6                   Because we're here I thought it would  
7 be appropriate to let you know also that the council  
8 has recognized recently a priority to improve  
9 communication with rural communities and Alaska Native  
10 entities. It's hard for everyone to get to our  
11 meetings and there's a whole group of stakeholders that  
12 we don't reach on a regular basis. So they recognized  
13 that priority last year and we're in the process of our  
14 chair initiating a committee to deal with some  
15 approaches to bring to the whole council to say how do  
16 we want to go forward with creating a policy to improve  
17 our communications. So I think that's a big step for  
18 the council and part of why we're here today and  
19 meeting with these other Regional Advisory Councils, to  
20 kind of test those waters.

21  
22                   This is the fifth of six of these  
23 regional meetings. National Marine Fisheries Service  
24 gave a presentation at the Southeast RAC in late  
25 September. We were at the Bristol Bay meeting in  
26 Dillingham earlier this month. We gave the  
27 presentation at the Association of Village Council  
28 Presidents meeting in Bethel. We were also in Nenana  
29 and Kotzebue for the Eastern Interior and Northwest  
30 Arctic meetings and we're here today.

31  
32                   We're part way through this process,  
33 but obviously the purpose is for you to hear this  
34 information and for us to hear your feedback. Diana is  
35 going to give you about a 20 minute presentation. The  
36 council has chosen a preliminary preferred alternative.  
37 This is specific to limiting chinook salmon bycatch  
38 even though there is a chum bycatch proposal in the  
39 works as well. The council's action in April is  
40 specific to chinook.

41  
42                   So Diana will go through the  
43 preliminary preferred alternative, tell you what you  
44 can expect to see in the analysis, and make you aware  
45 of the schedule for releasing that analysis and the  
46 schedule for the council's action. This handbook and  
47 the other handouts Vince put in your packet also  
48 provide that schedule to you.

49  
50                   Other RACs and other groups have

1 provided letters, resolutions and, of course, if you  
2 can testify in public at the North Pacific Council  
3 meeting, that is going to make a great impact. Any  
4 feedback and discussion that we get today from you or  
5 from the public, we'll document that and provide it to  
6 the council and that will be part of the final  
7 environmental impact statement that the council reviews  
8 in April.

9

10 That's a long introduction, but I  
11 wanted to be clear on why we're here and where we are  
12 in the process.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that  
15 overview. We're looking at the fish decline. I'm not  
16 sure about the regulatory process of the North Pacific  
17 Management Council and the ins and outs of that  
18 council. I'm fully aware it's an involved process. I  
19 think this council would like to have input during this  
20 meeting and in the future. Thank you for your  
21 presentation. Any questions on how the process works.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll listen to  
26 Dr. Stram's presentation. Thank you.

27

28 MS. KIMBALL: Copies of the PowerPoint  
29 presentation that she's going through are also in your  
30 packets.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ron, you had a  
33 question.

34

35 MR. SAM: It's been in the news that  
36 some countries are voluntarily giving up some of their  
37 harvest in the ocean and I just wonder if you're aware  
38 of that and where it stands.

39

40 MR. COTTEN: There are some  
41 international agreements that by treaty countries have  
42 agreed to curtail certain fishing activities and I know  
43 that our Coast Guard at our council meetings will  
44 report to us of the different typically Chinese vessels  
45 that they discover illegally fishing and then they turn  
46 them over to the Chinese officials or whichever  
47 countries the boats originate in.

48

49 I know that Dave was just in a meeting  
50 in Tokyo dealing with some international considerations

1 for restricting locations of fishing, but I'm not  
2 familiar with any particular agreements to curtail  
3 chinook or pollock fishing in international waters.  
4 Maybe Dave is.

5

6

MR. SAM: Thank you.

7

8

MR. BENSON: (Away from microphone)  
9 that's been a treaty for 12 years and there's been no  
10 fishing during that time because the stocks have never  
11 come back, the pollock stocks. So that's the only  
12 thing I'm aware of.

13

14

MR. SAM: Thank you. The main point of  
15 my question was were you aware of these people  
16 individually giving up their catch. It's quite  
17 apparent that you are. Thank you very much.

18

19

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ron.  
20 Robert.

21

22

MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
23 You see on the news Russian submarines that are sunk  
24 there and other Russian ships that are in the harbor  
25 with nuclear reactors. Is there any way to keep track  
26 of this, your fishery department take a look at this?  
27 Is there any kind of leakage? Do you know anything  
28 about this question?

29

30

MR. COTTEN: We always hear from the  
31 Coast Guard issues like that, as far as the Russian  
32 vessels and their nature. I don't have any information  
33 on that. I'll ask the Coast Guard at the next meeting.

34

35

MR. R. WALKER: I think since you're in  
36 this department here and you're kind of watching our  
37 Pacific, Northern Pacific, whatever, Bering Sea, take a  
38 look at this and find out what's going on with this  
39 foreign country next to us and see if there is any kind  
40 of nuclear spillage or whatever. We'd like to know  
41 because we don't want to end up glowing in the dark  
42 after eating all this beautiful fish.

43

44

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: North Pacific  
45 Management Council deals with fisheries management and  
46 contaminant load inventories are being provided by --  
47 U.S. Fish and Wildlife has done some contaminant  
48 inventories in river systems, so that data could  
49 probably be made available to our Council. Any other  
50 questions from the Council. Mickey.

1 MR. STICKMAN: I don't have any  
2 questions, but Robert brought up something that made me  
3 think about offshore exploration. A couple years ago I  
4 was up in Kotzebue and there was a British Petroleum or  
5 a Conoco Phillips ship out there and they were doing  
6 some seismic testing out there. The people in Kotzebue  
7 and that area had no idea that they were doing  
8 exploration. So that's just a thing Robert sparked in  
9 my mind when he talked about foreign ships, but also  
10 our own domestic ships.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
13 comment, Mickey. Any other questions. Jenny.

14  
15 MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
16 just have a comment. I look back at our fishing for  
17 maybe the last 10 years now. There was a time where we  
18 had fish and you caught them and they were half rotten  
19 already, you know. They had spots on them and the half  
20 of the heads were gone. I'm just wondering if all this  
21 testing out in the sea had something to do with that.  
22 I haven't really seen any of that in our fish much  
23 anymore.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think what Jenny  
26 is questioning is if there's injuries induced by high  
27 seas fishery. Can that question be answered.

28  
29 DR. STRAM: Mr. Chair. I can answer  
30 that at least with respect to salmon. All salmon  
31 that's brought on board is retained on board. It's all  
32 dead, so there's no salmon that have been injured by a  
33 trauma that are returning to any of the rivers.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. There were  
36 these excluders and so forth. I was wondering if there  
37 were injuries by that excluder, is what she was  
38 probably getting to.

39  
40 DR. STRAM: That's a good point  
41 actually. The excluder devices, when we test them,  
42 it's a hole in the trawl net that allows the salmon to  
43 swim out and in testing the excluder devices they have  
44 underwater cameras to evaluate it to see if they're  
45 being pushed up against the net at all. In general,  
46 almost all of the chinook get immediately out of the  
47 trawl excluder net.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It's probably  
50 more related to ichthyophonous, those diseases, and

1 those head injuries they've fallen out of a gill net or  
2 something. Any other questions from the Council. Go  
3 ahead, Don.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
6 guess maybe this is a little premature, you haven't  
7 done your presentation yet, but I was just wondering,  
8 you know, each year we write letters in support of like  
9 the EIS and stuff and I was just wondering, you know,  
10 collectively, this is something we can agree on with  
11 the lower Yukon and YRDFA and everybody else. Are we  
12 doing anything -- you know, like the Ruby Tribal  
13 Council, we submit these. I don't know if it makes any  
14 difference or whether we should do it collectively as a  
15 whole, the whole river or something, and whether it  
16 goes to you or if this is an international issue are we  
17 making any difference. I would just like to be able to  
18 go home and tell my members that we are making a  
19 difference whether it's POM's or whatever we do. Thank  
20 you.

21

22 MS. KIMBALL: I think you are making a  
23 difference and YRDFA is a good voice at the Council,  
24 but I think the collective message is really important.  
25 I think that works best. I think it works best when we  
26 can come to you, as well as we can have a  
27 representative at the Council meeting to make in-person  
28 testimony. I think that has the greatest effect.

29

30 I know AFN just put out a resolution as  
31 well to set the cap at the lowest level that's in the  
32 analysis, which Diana will go over in a moment. I  
33 think those kinds of resolutions probably have a bigger  
34 impact because of the collective action.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Nicole.  
37 That was a good question, Don, on the process. Sam.

38

39 MR. COTTEN: From the Council members'  
40 perspective, and I'm sure everybody on the council  
41 would say the same thing, we presume you care, but when  
42 we actually get letters from the several entities, we  
43 know you're paying attention, you're aware of the  
44 problems. You maybe have a different perspective from  
45 someone in a different location or different river  
46 system. Or if you act collectively, that's another  
47 perspective. I think they're all valuable, all  
48 listened to, all printed out. We get them in our  
49 packets and I think everybody reads them. So, yes.

50

1 MS. KIMBALL: Just to add on. Just  
2 like in your packets, every letter that you send is  
3 sent to the council and included in their briefing book  
4 prior to making a decision at that next meeting. So  
5 they receive it and everybody is aware of that.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for  
8 the clarification on your process. Any other questions  
9 from the Council on the process.

10  
11 (No comments)

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll go to Dr.  
14 Stram on their presentation.

15  
16 DR. STRAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
17 Members of the Council. I will walk through this  
18 presentation. Again, this is specific to the action  
19 that is before the council right now and the analysis  
20 we're putting forward.

21  
22 I think Nicole already walked through  
23 this in terms of who we are and sort of the division of  
24 responsibility between the North Pacific Fishery  
25 Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries  
26 Service. Again, the North Pacific Council makes the  
27 policy recommendations, the decision, that is then  
28 forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce to approve or  
29 disapprove, but the decision itself on the preferred  
30 management measure is by the council. National Marine  
31 Fisheries Service implements the regulations once the  
32 Secretary of Commerce approves them. So the process  
33 now is getting the council the analysis upon which they  
34 can make their decision in this respect. I think  
35 Nicole already covered the fact that we're talking  
36 about the Bering Sea pollock fishery.

37  
38 So just to get into what the problem  
39 itself is. The Bering Sea pollock fishery is the  
40 largest fishery by volume in the United States. It's  
41 divided between inshore and offshore in terms of the  
42 fleet itself, but we're talking three to 200 mile  
43 Federal fishery. It's a pelagic trawl fishery, so the  
44 fishery itself is restricted to the use of pelagic  
45 trawls. They can't drag the bottom.

46  
47 What happens in the fishery is they  
48 accidentally catch chinook salmon. They also catch  
49 chum salmon, but what we have are two different means  
50 of accounting for salmon. We account for chinook

1 salmon and then we account for all other salmon  
2 species, but for all intents and purposes those are  
3 over 99 percent chum salmon. So we really don't catch  
4 coho or any of the other salmon species. It's just  
5 chum and chinook. This action is specific to chinook.

6  
7 The council, on a separate track, is  
8 also looking at management measures for chum salmon  
9 very similar to looking at a cap for the pollock  
10 fishery. It was decided that the chinook problem, both  
11 in terms of its complexity as well as the need to  
12 really speed this along, will be looked at on separate  
13 tracks. So the council will discuss chum salmon  
14 management at our upcoming December meeting.

15  
16 The reason why this is specific to the  
17 Bering Sea pollock fishery only is that the pollock  
18 fishery catches over 95 percent of the chinook salmon  
19 in our offshore fishery. The other fisheries that we  
20 have for groundfish really don't contribute that much  
21 to any of the salmon species.

22  
23 So when this salmon is brought on board  
24 it, they are by law counted, but they cannot be  
25 retained or sold. However, it is all dead. It's 100  
26 percent mortality. It is retained in the catch until  
27 it is counted and then it is disposed of at sea or some  
28 proportion of the salmon that is brought on board is  
29 donated to food banks. We've had this discussion with  
30 other RACs in the past couple weeks and the salmon that  
31 is donated to food banks it is donated in the Seattle  
32 area because that is where the catch is offloaded.

33  
34 In terms of bycatch trends, this graph  
35 shows you by year and then the number of salmon. What  
36 we're looking at is the fact that -- I think Dave  
37 Benson indicated to you we've been grappling with  
38 salmon bycatch for quite some time. We have time area  
39 closures that we looked at in the mid '90s when bycatch  
40 started to increase there. You see on this trend chart  
41 it's from 1992 to 2007, the chinook salmon taken in the  
42 pollock fishery. What we're really grappling with is  
43 the fact that since 2002 our numbers have been  
44 climbing. This does not show you 2008 where numbers  
45 have been much lower, right around 17,000. The highest  
46 we've had then was in 2007 where we had about 122,000  
47 chinook salmon taken in the pollock fishery.

48  
49 The biggest thing that has been coming  
50 up in front of the council since we've been grappling

1 with this issue in the last two years is why are  
2 numbers increasing. The short answer is we don't know.  
3 We don't know if it's because there are more salmon in  
4 the ocean in the years we've been taking so much  
5 bycatch in the pollock fishery, if salmon and pollock  
6 are co-locating more. One of the the things that we  
7 looked at from the beginning was whether or not the  
8 pollock fishery is towing longer. Because the pollock  
9 catch has been going down in recent years, there was  
10 some concern that perhaps the pollock fishery's CPUE is  
11 dropping and they're towing longer and catching more  
12 salmon. We looked at that and while there's a marginal  
13 increase in the last couple years, it's not enough to  
14 be the smoking gun as to why we're catching so much  
15 more salmon. We wish we knew that answer, but we  
16 don't.

17  
18 Previously we've had time area  
19 closures. These are very large-scale closures in the  
20 Bering Sea that were based on average bycatch patterns  
21 over a period of years in the '90s. When the fleet  
22 reaches a certain limit, these broad areas in the  
23 Bering Sea would close. The fishery could continue  
24 outside of those areas.

25  
26 What we found in recent years is that  
27 wasn't working. It was inflexible and in some cases we  
28 were finding that when we closed those large areas we  
29 were driving the fleet into regions where they were  
30 catching more salmon than they were catching inside the  
31 closure area. So we then moved on to looking at other  
32 means of managing salmon bycatch other than time area  
33 closures.

34  
35 The council then is responding to the  
36 concerns that they've heard from both Western Alaska  
37 from the pollock fishery as well as we have  
38 international treaty obligations to return salmon  
39 through the Yukon to Canada. We also have a State  
40 Department seat on our council, a non-voting member,  
41 but we do have guidance from them as well and they've  
42 been very concerned with this given our obligation  
43 through the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

44  
45 The rest of this presentation will be  
46 talking about what these alternative management  
47 measures are that the council is looking at.  
48 Fundamentally, the big change is looking from previous  
49 time area closures to an absolute cap on the pollock  
50 fishery. The previous cap used to move the fleet

1 outside of a closure area. Looking at an absolute cap  
2 would shut the pollock fishery down when they reached  
3 that.

4  
5 In order to provide the council the  
6 information they need to look at what the effects of  
7 their alternatives are, we put together this broad  
8 analysis, this environmental impact statement, and it's  
9 looking at the effect of these different caps.  
10 Primarily when we're talking about salmon, we're  
11 looking at the stock of origin of the bycatch, the  
12 number of salmon that would have returned to any river  
13 system in any one year, as well as the run strengths by  
14 rivers system.

15  
16 First, what the council is considering  
17 then are these different management alternatives. By  
18 law we always analyze everything against our current  
19 system, which is our no action alternative. That's the  
20 broad scale time area closures. Since 2006 the pollock  
21 fishery has been exempt from those broad closures by  
22 virtue of participating in what's called a voluntary  
23 rolling hot spot closure system. What that does is set  
24 up short term, three to seven day, closures based on  
25 weekly data that indicates to the fleet where the high  
26 areas of bycatch are, then they move the fleet out of  
27 those areas for short periods of time. The intention  
28 there is that it would be more responsive than our  
29 large-scale closure to in-season spacial locations of  
30 bycatch.

31  
32 The problem then is that the fleet has  
33 been exempt since 2006 from these closures by  
34 participating in what we thought would be a very  
35 responsive system, but the bycatch numbers have been  
36 increasing. That why the council is saying, okay, we  
37 still need to do more.

38  
39 So the main thing that we're looking at  
40 is either a new closure system that's based on recent  
41 bycatch data, what we have as alternative three, which  
42 would be looking at a brand new closure system. Again,  
43 an area closure. The other aspect is to look at a hard  
44 cap on the pollock fishery and this is when reaching a  
45 number would shut down the pollock fishery.

46  
47 In June of 2008, based on a preliminary  
48 analysis that we put forward to the council, the  
49 council created what they call their preliminary  
50 preferred alternative and that's what I'm going to walk

1 through. That's basically building off of what's  
2 listed as alternative two, these hard caps. I should  
3 note that the hard caps the council is considering --  
4 and all this is still on the table for the council to  
5 pick from. What they tried to do is indicate the  
6 direction they wanted to go in June.

7  
8                   The range of numbers then that are  
9 before the council is an annual number of about 29,300  
10 to 87,500. That range is based on historical bycatch  
11 averages, not on anything about returning to the river  
12 system.

13  
14                   The cap then is divided between A  
15 season and B season. We have two main pollock fishery  
16 seasons, a winter season, the A season, which is the  
17 more lucrative roe season for pollock, and then a B  
18 season, which occurs throughout the fall, generally  
19 August through November.

20  
21                   So the preliminary preferred  
22 alternative sets a high cap and a low cap for chinook  
23 salmon. So a high cap of 68,392, this is an annual  
24 level, is based on the most recent three-year average  
25 for bycatch from 2004 through 2006. The low cap under  
26 consideration would be 47,591 and that is based on the  
27 10-year average from '97 to 2006.

28  
29                   The distinction between the two then is  
30 that the fleet would receive this high cap of 68,000 if  
31 they demonstrate participation in an industry  
32 incentive-based bycatch reduction program. The  
33 council's objective being to reduce bycatch in all  
34 years regardless of annual abundance of salmon.

35  
36                   The intent of this preliminary  
37 preferred alternative is to provide to the fleet you  
38 will be given a higher cap if you can put forward to  
39 the council what we believe to be an appropriate  
40 incentive-based program that will meet council intent.  
41 So they put the onus back on industry to come up with  
42 this program, which is what's going on right now. The  
43 industry is meeting amongst themselves and trying to  
44 develop what they think will meet council intent.

45  
46                   The analysis that we have put forward  
47 and that is before the council does not include this  
48 program because industry has not yet completed their  
49 development of it. That program will be presented to  
50 the council in April at the time of final action. If

1 the council does not believe this program meets council  
2 intent, then under their preferred alternative they  
3 would go with the lower cap of 47,500. That cap then  
4 has no requirement for an industry-based program.

5  
6 Further information then on how this  
7 cap is managed. Again, the cap is divided by season  
8 and it's divided such that 70 percent of the cap is in  
9 the A season and 30 percent is in the B season.  
10 There's a provision where any leftover salmon in the A  
11 season 80 percent could be rolled over to the B season.

12  
13  
14 The caps are allocated to the four  
15 pollock fishing sectors; our CDQ sector, in-shore  
16 catcher vessels, the mothership sector and the off-  
17 shore catcher processors. There's also a provision  
18 that sectors can transfer salmon back and forth amongst  
19 sectors in any given season.

20  
21 So those are the alternatives that are  
22 in front of the council. What we're in the process of  
23 finalizing is an analysis of what the effects are of  
24 those alternatives. The analysis then evaluates the  
25 impacts of these alternatives on both chinook and chum  
26 salmon on pollock stock, on other marine resources,  
27 which include other groundfish, crab, other prohibited  
28 species like halibut and herring, on seabird, marine  
29 mammals. We look at environmental justice,  
30 specifically whether or not there's disproportional  
31 impacts on low income or minority populations. And  
32 then we look at the economic impacts of these  
33 alternative management measures, specifically on the  
34 pollock fishery as well as the salmon fishery. Here  
35 we're looking at both commercial and subsistence salmon  
36 fisheries.

37  
38 So how do we evaluate the impacts of  
39 these alternatives. We don't have the ability to  
40 project ahead, to look at how the fleet would behave  
41 under a constraining cap on pollock fishing for salmon.  
42 So we made the decision to evaluate this looking  
43 backwards over the last five years, from 2003 to 2007.  
44 We look at if these caps that have been proposed had  
45 been in place, when would the pollock fishery have had  
46 to stop fishing.

47  
48 So then that gives us an ability to  
49 project a closure date in any one of those years by  
50 sector. Then we look at what date each sector would

1 have stopped fishing by year and by season. Once we  
2 have that hypothetical closure date, then we look at,  
3 okay, if that sector or the whole fishery had stopped  
4 on that date, how many salmon would not have been  
5 caught and how much pollock would not have been caught  
6 and that's what the whole basis of our analysis starts  
7 from then, is looking at this foregone pollock catch by  
8 virtue of stopping fishing and what we've been calling  
9 the chinook salmon savings because you stopped fishing,  
10 you didn't catch those fish.

11  
12                   So this table then gives you an example  
13 of the results that are put forward in this analysis in  
14 terms of comparing and contrasting these things. This  
15 is the kind of decision that's in front of the council.  
16 Under the two mandates to reduce bycatch to the extent  
17 practical, these are under the national standards of  
18 the Magnuson-Stevens Act, whether to reduce bycatch to  
19 the extent practicable as well as to allow for optimum  
20 yield in the pollock fishery. So the council is  
21 balancing these two. Given the range of caps under  
22 consideration here, this just shows you over two of the  
23 years that we compare in the analysis, 2007, which is  
24 our highest bycatch year, and then 2003, which is not  
25 our lowest bycatch year historically but the lowest  
26 it's considered in this analysis over that five-year  
27 period.

28  
29                   So for a high bycatch year and a lower  
30 bycatch year, how do those caps perform basically in  
31 terms of salmon reduction and pollock reduction. So  
32 looking at the range then it's 29,300 to 87,500. The  
33 council's preferred alternative falls in the middle of  
34 that on this table. What you're looking at then is a  
35 percent of salmon reduction compared to the actual  
36 numbers and the percent of pollock catch that was  
37 foregone.

38  
39                   So for the highest cap then in 2007,  
40 the highest cap would still have reduced salmon bycatch  
41 by about 37 percent, compared to 22 percent of pollock  
42 that was given up. The council's preferred  
43 alternative, the high cap in that same year, would have  
44 reduced salmon bycatch by 46 percent and reduced the  
45 pollock catch by very little more than the higher cap.  
46 So you get more salmon savings under that cap for  
47 relatively similar foregone pollock.

48  
49                   On the other end of that then, the  
50 lowest cap under consideration at 29,300, would have

1 reduced the salmon bycatch in that fishery by 92  
2 percent, at a cost of 46 percent of the pollock catch.  
3 That's for the highest year we've ever seen. If you  
4 look at 2003, the same range of caps, when the bycatch  
5 is lower, obviously the highest cap does nothing for  
6 you because your actual bycatch level was below that.

7  
8 Similarly, in this instance then, both  
9 of the council's preferred alternatives, the high cap  
10 and the low cap, don't perform as well in a lower  
11 bycatch year. Only the lowest cap under consideration  
12 would have reduced the bycatch in that year by about  
13 52 percent.

14  
15 That's just looking at the actual  
16 numbers of salmon that would have been saved, but how  
17 does that translate into the number of salmon returning  
18 to individual river systems. We know not all salmon  
19 that are caught as bycatch would have survived to  
20 return to the river system as adults. So we try to  
21 estimate both the ocean mortality of the salmon and  
22 take into account the age of the fish in the bycatch  
23 and estimate the year they would have returned to the  
24 river to spawn to come up with what we call the adult  
25 equivalent.

26  
27 The pollock fishery is very well  
28 observed. Not only does that give us very precise  
29 estimates of bycatch numbers, but we also get  
30 additional information from the observers such as the  
31 age composition of the bycatch. So we have very good  
32 information annually on the age composition of the fish  
33 in the bycatch and we use that in comparison with the  
34 maturation rates for different river systems in Western  
35 Alaska to estimate the comparison of how many of those  
36 fish would have gone back in any one year.

37  
38 So that gives us our adult equivalent.  
39 Now we have to look at which rivers would they have  
40 returned to. That's when we have to go to the best  
41 available information we have, which is some genetic  
42 information. The genetic information indicates that  
43 the rivers of origin varies by season and area in the  
44 Bering Sea. When the pollock fishery concentrates in  
45 different areas in the Bering Sea, you get a different  
46 proportion of fish that would have gone back to  
47 different river systems because they're spatially  
48 segregated in that manner.

49  
50 We take these adult equivalent

1 estimates and translate them back to the river of  
2 origin. What we've chosen to do is use the most recent  
3 genetic data from bycatch samples, so we have genetic  
4 information from samples from 2005 through 2007. We  
5 then have to use how they've aggregated their genetics,  
6 so we don't necessarily have every river system we  
7 would like to have individually. We have them by the  
8 way the geneticists were able to resolve each river  
9 system. So our results then to river of origin are  
10 very dependant on the river systems in the aggregations  
11 from the genetics.

12  
13                   One thing that's come out of trying to  
14 do this as well as the attention on salmon bycatch is  
15 that the National Marine Fisheries Service and ADF&G  
16 are working to better sample the bycatch in the Bering  
17 Sea pollock fishery. We have very good genetic  
18 information, so this slide is a little misleading.  
19 It's not that the genetic data needs improvement. It's  
20 our spacial coverage in the pollock fishery so that we  
21 know that what we're actually sampling is  
22 representative. So they're really working hard and  
23 coming up with a pretty comprehensive sampling plan in  
24 order to do that so we can continue to improve our  
25 ability to resolve to river of origin from the pollock  
26 bycatch.

27  
28                   When we're looking at what are the  
29 specific impacts to Western Alaska rivers, the genetic  
30 information that we have would indicate about 54  
31 percent of the bycatch is going back to an aggregated  
32 category of Western Alaska river systems and that  
33 aggregated category then includes the lower Yukon, the  
34 Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay and Nushagak.

35  
36                   What we wanted to be able to do is look  
37 at it as separate river systems, so we had to go to a  
38 different study, which is Kate Meyers' study from 2003  
39 where she used a different scale pattern analysis, not  
40 genetics, and resolved them as individual river  
41 systems. So we kind of combined these two studies  
42 together. We took the aggregated Western Alaska, added  
43 in the other segments of the Yukon to it, then we broke  
44 it out based on this proportionality from Meyers'  
45 study. So what her study does then is first you take  
46 this 54 percent to the Western Alaska rivers and of  
47 that 40 percent of that goes to the Yukon, 26 percent  
48 to the Kuskokwim and 34 percent to Bristol Bay.

49  
50                   So what I'm showing you here then in

1 these ranges, when you look over the whole range of  
2 different cap alternatives the council is considering  
3 and it's very dependant on which year you're looking at  
4 your results from and which cap configuration you look  
5 at, basically the range of salmon that would have gone  
6 back to the Yukon by different alternatives and  
7 different years would be between 0-15,000, to the  
8 Kuskokwim 0-9,000 salmon, to Bristol Bay 0-13,000  
9 salmon.

10  
11 So this is kind of a snapshot of some  
12 of the results that we are characterizing in this  
13 analysis and we also obviously look at other Western  
14 Alaska river systems as well as Pacific Northwest, but  
15 our focus has primarily been on the Yukon, Kuskokwim  
16 and Bristol Bay.

17  
18 So where are we at right now. We're  
19 conducting these outreach meetings and our analysis is  
20 in internal review period and we anticipate we'll be  
21 able to release it for public review the first week in  
22 December.

23  
24 What happens then is that we start a  
25 60-day public comment period when the draft  
26 environmental impact statement is available to the  
27 public to provide public comments to the National  
28 Marine Fishery Service. The council itself will take  
29 final action in April of 2009 in Anchorage. The  
30 council will not be taking any action on this prior to  
31 that but they will hear reports at the December  
32 meeting. We have a workshop scheduled and at the  
33 February meeting, which is in Seattle, Washington.

34  
35 The council will be hearing progress  
36 reports only on the industry's incentive program so  
37 that they can provide feedback to the industry on  
38 whether or not this program that they're developing may  
39 meet their intent or if they have guidance to the  
40 industry in developing that program. That program,  
41 again, is not included in this analysis.

42  
43 At final action, the council will have  
44 that analysis in front of them as well as a summary of  
45 all the public comments they've received and a summary  
46 of the discussions we've had at these outreach  
47 meetings. They will hear a presentation from Staff on  
48 the EIS of these alternatives. They will also receive  
49 a presentation from the industry on their progress  
50 towards this incentive-based program. At that time the

1 council will take final action to decide what their  
2 final preferred alternative is. It may be exactly as  
3 their preliminary preferred alternative or it may be  
4 completely different. It is on the table before the  
5 council to modify that. That was just an indication to  
6 the public of what direction they may go in.

7  
8 After the council takes final action in  
9 April, any new regulations, whatever cap they put into  
10 place at that time, implementing regulations, given the  
11 different review periods, it takes until 2011. So  
12 January of 2011 is the first time the fishery will  
13 operate under these new caps.

14  
15 This just gives you the different  
16 council outreach meetings that we're in the process of.  
17 We're still trying to schedule our Nome meeting. Two  
18 of the RACs we weren't able to attend their meetings  
19 because they coincided with our council meeting in  
20 October.

21  
22 So what we're trying to do here then is  
23 alert you to what the alternatives are, explain what  
24 action is before the council and make sure you  
25 understand how you can get a copy of this analysis as  
26 well as what's your best means to comment to the public  
27 on what you think the council ought to do. The ways  
28 you can provide this input, you can write a letter to  
29 the council or to the National Marine Fisheries  
30 Service, you can comment on the EIS. Any comments on  
31 the EIS are summarized and put forward to the council  
32 as well, so you don't necessarily have to do both. You  
33 can also come in person and testify at our April 2009  
34 council meeting.

35  
36 Your comments could address the scope  
37 of the analysis, the content, the adequacy, the impact  
38 analysis, is it sufficient, the merits of the  
39 alternatives, and especially your recommendation for a  
40 preferred alternative by the council.

41  
42 The EIS will be available for download  
43 on the NMFS website. You can also request a printed  
44 copy or a CD by calling NMFS as well. That's it.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you very much.  
47 I appreciate that presentation. It was fairly complex  
48 for those who are uninitiated to your processes. I  
49 would like the Council to ask questions about the  
50 presentation. The direction I would like the Council

1 to go with this is to transmit a letter to the North  
2 Pacific Fisheries Management Council on the various  
3 aspects of your alternatives and I would like that  
4 letter to include certain aspects that the Council may  
5 find flawed in that process. I would also like the  
6 Council to be represented at your April meeting to have  
7 input on the process. I'll open the discussion for the  
8 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council to question  
9 the presentation.

10

11 Go ahead, Carl.

12

13 MR. MORGAN: On your averages, like  
14 you're going zero to so many thousand, zero to so many  
15 thousand, is that a historical average?

16

17 DR. STRAM: There's two different  
18 averages. The averages that are being used as the  
19 candidate caps are based on historical averages. When  
20 we're looking at the results, the 0 to 12,000 range,  
21 that's looking at the actual impact analysis, so the  
22 zero would be for a particular year where the cap was  
23 high enough that you didn't actually catch it. So in  
24 that year if you had a high cap and your bycatch came  
25 in lower, then that cap would have had no effect, so  
26 that's why you start at zero.

27

28 MR. MORGAN: One more quick question.  
29 You said you've got a basic idea where these chinook  
30 are going, you've got your generics and you've got a  
31 number how many is going to the Kuskokwim, how many is  
32 going to the Yukon and different places, but do you  
33 have any in that region for what you're getting out of  
34 the Cook Inlet area like the Kenai or in the Copper  
35 River Basin? Have you seen any of those catches?

36

37 DR. STRAM: Genetically we can resolve  
38 to an aggregate Cook Inlet. We can't resolve the  
39 Copper individually, so we're looking at all the river  
40 systems that comprise Cook Inlet. I think it's about  
41 20 different river systems. When we reported in our  
42 analysis, we're just reporting it as Cook Inlet itself.  
43 So the general trend of fish that might have gone back  
44 to the Cook Inlet region.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray.

47

48 MR. COLLINS: One weakness in your  
49 analysis that I think there could be another approach  
50 in is that what you're looking at, let's say how many

1 would go to those rivers there, that's only dealing  
2 with the future. There's no mitigation built in there  
3 for right now for those rivers that are affected. I  
4 mean if the caps were in place, it might help in the  
5 future, but there's another approach where you could  
6 analyze that same data and see where there could be an  
7 immediate remediation.

8  
9 For instance, about 66 percent of those  
10 returns were heading to Western Alaska when you caught  
11 120,000 fish that year. If you took 60,000 of those  
12 fish and they were sent back to those rivers in that  
13 year, there would be an immediate remediation in those  
14 rivers way beyond what you're going to save in the  
15 future if they were required to send those back to the  
16 river.

17  
18 In other words, if you'd have put  
19 67,000 fish back into the Kuskokwim/Yukon in those  
20 years, that would have had a direct impact on  
21 escapement and meeting subsistence needs and so on  
22 instead of distributing them in a food bank in Seattle.  
23 So something like that you could see there would be an  
24 immediate return.

25  
26 The other thing is, if you did analyze  
27 it that way, you'd need to look at the dependance on  
28 those resources. About 50 percent of the salmon that  
29 are caught for subsistence are caught in the Kuskokwim.  
30 The Yukon is about 25 percent, I think.  
31 So in the distribution back again you could distribute  
32 them back to the rivers according to which is the most  
33 dependant on subsistence and if you started at the head  
34 of the stream where the runs are the smallest and went  
35 downstream where they have less difficulty catching  
36 them, you would have a tremendous impact on escapement.  
37 Have you considered anything like that in your  
38 analysis?

39  
40 DR. STRAM: Mr. Chair. Mr. Collins.  
41 That is actually how we structure the analysis.  
42 Perhaps in trying to give you the general overview I  
43 wasn't going into those kind of specifics. Basically  
44 what we do is when we look at these adult equivalents  
45 and we know that each year it's cumulative from the  
46 years before, what we have to stop at is 2007, so we  
47 know the bycatch we took in 2007 is going to propagate  
48 to impacts in the future that we're not characterizing.  
49 So we admit that up front in terms of that's just in a  
50 general sense of salmon that aren't going to come back

1 this year because of bycatch we took last year and the  
2 year before that and the year before that. That's one  
3 aspect.

4

5                   The second is that we look at these  
6 adult equivalents by year that go back to each river  
7 system. So, for instance, say we estimated that 5,000  
8 would have gone back in 2007 to Bristol Bay for  
9 instance. We then take that number, the 5,000, and we  
10 compare it against what was going on in that year in  
11 Bristol Bay. How much of the catch was subsistence, how  
12 much was commercial, how much was sport. We then have  
13 communicated where ADF&G is a cooperating agency on  
14 this analysis and so then we've met with ADF&G managers  
15 to say if you had had this many more fish coming back  
16 all we can do is estimate how many would have gone to  
17 the mouth of the river. We don't know. ADF&G is the  
18 one who determines how they manage it. We know that  
19 subsistence has priority and then commercial and sport.

20

21                   So they would then indicate to us,  
22 well, if we had this many more fish in that year,  
23 perhaps we wouldn't have had the sport restriction we  
24 had in that year. We would have had additional fish  
25 towards escapement and we might have met more  
26 escapement goals if we had that many more fish. They  
27 can't indicate exactly we would have had this much more  
28 subsistence, this much more commercial, but they can  
29 give us general overview of how they might have changed  
30 management on that river in that year to the extent  
31 they can do that retrospectively. It depends on when  
32 the fish would have come back, were they back in the  
33 beginning of the season, would they have come back  
34 later in the year.

35

36                   All of that we try to characterize to  
37 the extent that we can. That's the whole purpose of  
38 calculating a number of salmon that would have gone  
39 back to a river system.

40

41                   MR. COLLINS: I understand that. But,  
42 again, I think you missed my point. If you had taken  
43 those fish frozen and distributed them right back to  
44 the river in that year, even half of them, there would  
45 have been a tremendous impact on meeting subsistence  
46 needs and mitigating what people needed to catch and  
47 what they allowed to escape, more so than what you're  
48 saying. Understand that if it's in place, that's how  
49 it will work in the future and you can figure out what  
50 the impact is, but what about a direct contribution

1 back?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sam's got a  
4 statement there.

5

6 MR. COTTEN: A lot of people find it a  
7 real shame that those fish get dumped, but some  
8 companies do participate in this food bank program.  
9 It's a voluntary program. It costs them money to do  
10 it. What I've never heard from folks like yourself as  
11 to whether there's even an interest. Do you want those  
12 fish? I mean if you do, that would be something you  
13 could say, yes, we do or no, we don't want those fish  
14 because they may not be the quality that we'd like to  
15 have or we'd just as soon catch our own. I just don't  
16 know. We've never heard from Regional Councils on that  
17 subject to my knowledge. So that would be an area  
18 you'd want to consider whether you'd like to say  
19 something about that. If so, I think you'd be raising  
20 it for the first time and you might even get a  
21 favorable response.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My personal position  
24 on that is that all chinook and salmon bycatch should  
25 be processed. They've got processing facilities for  
26 the pollock. I've said for several years and it's  
27 probably in one of our letters that those should have  
28 been disseminated back to the rivers of origin,  
29 especially in the demographics that Ray is talking  
30 about. Those fish should be disseminated to the upper  
31 river drainages because that's the hardest place for  
32 people to meet their subsistence needs. That's where  
33 you're hearing the highest volume of screaming, it  
34 breaks your squelch.

35

36 It will do two things. It will reduce  
37 those impacts to those fishers from that bycatch. It  
38 will also make a disincentive to the commercial  
39 harvest, the bycatch harvest, to incur the cost of  
40 processing and shipping those fish to those rivers of  
41 origin. So that's one of the disincentives that could  
42 be implemented with the use of that fish. It's just a  
43 shame that those fish are being ground up. I don't  
44 know of anybody in the upper Yukon and Kuskokwim  
45 drainages that won't take salmon. You could request  
46 each community whether they want fish. If there's  
47 excess fish that you have you could disseminate those  
48 to the Alaskan food banks. The resource should be  
49 returned at least to the Interior of Alaska for 66  
50 percent of that bycatch.

1 Vince.

2

3 MR. MATHEWS: The Eastern Interior took  
4 that up and they grappled with that and they put a two-  
5 prong approach to it and hopefully I captured it right.  
6 This has not been approved by the Chair of Eastern  
7 Interior. I didn't have time. This is based on notes  
8 from Staff and myself. The Eastern Interior recommends  
9 to the Management Council that it modifies the food  
10 bank to distribute bycatch salmon to the upper and  
11 middle Yukon communities impacted by the pollock  
12 fishery. That's matching what you're saying.

13

14 Then they had quite a bit of discussion  
15 and Mitch Demientieff was there, the past chair of the  
16 Federal Subsistence Board, and he wanted it clear and  
17 the Council agreed with it that this distribution would  
18 by no means be considered a substitution or replacement  
19 of active in-river subsistence and commercial  
20 fisheries.

21

22 The way I took that, he didn't want it  
23 to be a give-away and then the industry could continue  
24 to go that path and the needs of subsistence are met.  
25 He wanted it clear that it's not just the fish, it's  
26 the actual activity and the cultural significance of  
27 that activity of harvesting fish.

28

29 Again, this has not been approved by  
30 the Chair, but this is based on notes from Staff.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good point.  
33 The North Pacific Fishery Management Council must  
34 understand that these activities are a learned activity  
35 and it's passed on from generation to generation as  
36 part of subsistence. If chinook salmon fishing was  
37 eliminated for a time frame, the tutorialship would be  
38 lost. We don't want the dissemination to river of  
39 origin to be a replacement for subsistence use, but I  
40 do feel personally that the letter we transmit should  
41 reflect that use. The full retention, processing and  
42 dissemination back to the rivers of origin within the  
43 Alaskan region.

44

45 Any more comments from Western Interior  
46 Council. Mickey.

47

48 MR. STICKMAN: First of all, I just  
49 wanted to thank you for being here. That's the first  
50 opportunity that we've ever had to present comments to

1 the council. One of the things that I always think  
2 about, if you look at the numbers from last year, it  
3 was 122,000 bycatch. On an annual basis, just for the  
4 Yukon itself where I live, for subsistence, it's  
5 anywhere from around 50,000 to 55,000 chinook for  
6 subsistence and that's if everyone meets their  
7 subsistence needs.

8  
9 If you look at that number for 2007 and  
10 the amount of fish that's thrown overboard by the  
11 fishermen, on an annual basis it's 70,000 more fish  
12 than a whole river system of people survive on. I mean  
13 they're just tossing overboard what a whole river  
14 system of people survive on an annual basis.

15  
16 If you look at the numbers now for  
17 2008, which is only 17,000, but as scientists and  
18 council members you don't think, maybe because of the  
19 time frame we put ourselves in, the slow process that  
20 you systematically slaughtered a wild salmon stock and  
21 it's in a position where its recovery is not  
22 sustainable.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

25  
26 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Another comment  
27 there about whether or not people would take them. The  
28 reason I stressed the head of the rivers is because  
29 there the runs are much diminished and the quality of  
30 the fish up here is not what it is down in the other.  
31 People from up here buy fish strips from the Yukon  
32 because they don't put up as many fish strips any more  
33 up here. Even if I can, I'll have a friend send me a  
34 whole salmon I put in my freezer. And people are using  
35 freezers more now. So you would not displace the  
36 people that want to make strips. That's going to still  
37 go on, but there's quite a few of the salmon now that  
38 are going into a freezer and they could just as well  
39 come in and they would be in better shape at the head  
40 of the water than the ones they're getting now.

41  
42 So they would be high quality up here  
43 and I think most people would take some of those in  
44 those headwaters communities. Then they could allow  
45 that many more fish to go into the escapement. So I  
46 think, yes, there would be a need.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll incorporate  
49 that into our letter of transmittal. Go ahead there,  
50 James.

1 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.  
2 Chairman. I'd like to also thank you for this  
3 presentation to us. I think it's due time that this  
4 dialogue gets off to hopefully a good start to  
5 understand both sides, processes and concerns that we  
6 have on the river.

7  
8 I'd like to ask you a question on the  
9 reasoning why you feel there's a high increase in  
10 chinook being caught and in what areas of the ocean  
11 does the interception take place. I imagine  
12 interception on the high seas in certain areas is  
13 better than others.

14  
15 Also the pollock and chinook  
16 combination. Is there any data on the reasoning why  
17 the size of the pollock and the chinook are decreasing?

18  
19 DR. STRAM: To answer your first  
20 question, we have very good spatial data because of the  
21 observer coverage and the coverage we have in the  
22 pollock fleet. We have really good data on where we're  
23 catching chinook and pollock. Our problem is it's  
24 highly variable by year. The fleet is following the  
25 pollock stocks and lately the pollock stocks have been  
26 moving towards the northwest.

27 When we set up our original system of  
28 time area closures, it was based on where the fleet was  
29 catching the most bycatch, but it changes on an annual  
30 basis. It changes on a seasonal basis. So if you  
31 looked at it on average, our closures were right, but  
32 that doesn't mean that they're right in any season. So  
33 what we're finding -- you know, anything you look at on  
34 average looks a lot better. So when we looked at a  
35 five-year average of where we were catching all of the  
36 salmon, we can put a box around it, but that doesn't  
37 mean that in 2007 our box might have been completely  
38 wrong and all the salmon was caught outside of it in  
39 that year.

40  
41 That's the problem we run into in  
42 trying to manage this on a spatial basis. If we knew  
43 the reason the industry developed their own short-term  
44 closure system is because of the highly variable nature  
45 of where they catch these hot spots. Our regulations  
46 are slow. We can't close an area real time in one week  
47 for three days. The industry can, so they tried to do  
48 that, but obviously the salmon bycatch was still  
49 increasing even when they were doing short-term hot  
50 spot closures.

1                               We honestly don't know why the fleet  
2 caught so much salmon in 2007. We don't know if it  
3 happened to be due to warming conditions, more salmon  
4 in the ocean at that time, for reasons of food/diet  
5 overlap, pollock and salmon are co-locating more.  
6 There's been no real change in fishing patterns  
7 themselves, so there's some things we can rule out, but  
8 there's nothing we can pin it on.

9  
10                               So that's why we're moving in the  
11 direction of caps because  
12 we're a little bit out of ideas. The fleet is looking  
13 at the salmon excluder and then trying to encourage  
14 voluntary participation in using a salmon excluder  
15 device, but we don't have a smoking gun for why we  
16 catch more in some years than we do in others. We'd  
17 like to believe it's due to more salmon, but we also  
18 don't have the exact connection between salmon in the  
19 open ocean in one year and bycatch and a return to a  
20 river system a couple years later.

21  
22                               CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sam's got a  
23 statement. Go ahead, Sam.

24  
25                               MR. COTTEN: Quickly. The blocks that  
26 she's talking about, for example they call it a chinook  
27 salmon savings area, which means that was an area where  
28 they'd kick them out if they caught too many. That was  
29 primarily right above the Alaska Peninsula, close to  
30 shore. As Diana points out, sometimes they'd kick them  
31 out of here and they'd catch more fish someplace else.

32  
33  
34                               CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's my  
35 understanding that that occurred at a specific time of  
36 year also. Isn't the most bycatch during the B season,  
37 the winter season?

38  
39                               DR. STRAM: It varies by year. The  
40 original closures themselves were set up on a time  
41 basis so that if they were triggered during the A  
42 season they closed to the end of the A season and then  
43 they re-closed in the beginning of the B season. Those  
44 closures were never triggered in the A season until  
45 just recently. So, when you have a high bycatch year,  
46 you have it right from the start and you pretty much  
47 have it everywhere. So in 2007 those closures were  
48 triggered within weeks of the fishery opening and  
49 that's totally unlike years that we've had. Spatially,  
50 it's not easily managed.

1                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Sam.  
2  
3                           MR. COTTEN: This chart shows, and you  
4 can't see much of it there, but you can see the high  
5 spikes on this end. That's the B season that shows  
6 chinook catch per metric ton of pollock and you can see  
7 it dramatically goes up near the end of the year in the  
8 B season.  
9  
10                          CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's what I'm  
11 referring to, is that there's specific times of the  
12 year, and I understand that the roe fishery is the more  
13 affluent fishery, but there's times of the year that  
14 this bycatch issue could be reduced. It's my opinion  
15 that the direction of the management should go towards  
16 a hard cap. The fishery is shifting throughout the  
17 whole area and there needs to be a hard cap. There's  
18 intolerable thresholds, so that is part of the issue.  
19 Without a cap, the bycatch can just keep shifting all  
20 over the whole Bering Sea until you hit 122,000  
21 chinook. So I feel a hard cap is integral as to part  
22 of how to control this issue, so that's what we're  
23 talking about here.  
24  
25                          Do you have a question or a position.  
26  
27                          MR. J. WALKER: The second part of that  
28 question, I asked you about the size and weight of  
29 chinook versus pollock also.  
30  
31                          DR. STRAM: The question is why are the  
32 pollock size decreasing?  
33  
34                          MR. J. WALKER: Yes. Both.  
35  
36                          DR. STRAM: I don't think that we have  
37 any indication that the pollock size is decreasing. On  
38 an annual basis, we have a stock assessment for the  
39 pollock stock and all the catch information is  
40 incorporated into it, including the size at age of the  
41 pollock stock and the way the quota is managed. The  
42 actual size and age of the pollock is incorporated on  
43 an annual basis into the assessment and if the fishery  
44 fished earlier in the year and caught smaller pollock  
45 because they were younger, that is incorporated into  
46 the assessment in the following year and the quota in  
47 general would then go down to allow for those fish to  
48 get older before they're caught.  
49  
50                          MR. J. WALKER: I guess my question

1 would be also to the effect that there is a size limit  
2 that's being reduced and there is a reasoning for  
3 fishing longer. The trawl is getting longer to make up  
4 for the metric ton that you need to catch to make a  
5 profit. With the longer fishery, you're going to have  
6 more increased interception over a period of time. I  
7 guess that's what I'm getting at, too.

8  
9 DR. STRAM: Maybe I'm not answering  
10 your question, but we haven't had a change in our  
11 pollock fishery in recent years and the timing or in  
12 the -- our catch has been declining, our quota has been  
13 declining in recent years. Catcher vessels are  
14 reporting it's taking longer to catch their fish.  
15 That's not an overall fishery, that's a sector specific  
16 issue in terms of if the pollock -- the catcher vessels  
17 need to deliver shoreside, so they can't travel as far.  
18 The majority of the pollock fishery is following the  
19 pollock stock as it moves up to the northwest, but  
20 catcher vessels have their own limitations and they  
21 need to deliver shoreside, so they can't follow all the  
22 way up there. Is that getting at your issue?

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I agree with James.  
25 I feel that's just an indicator of the biomass of the  
26 pollock. If you have to fish for longer and longer  
27 periods of time, it's indicating that the biomass isn't  
28 there. Of course, with a longer endurance fishery  
29 you'd have additional bycatch if your ratios of chinook  
30 to pollock are closer together. I feel a time  
31 reduction or a season reduction would be another aspect  
32 to explore on the length of the seasons. I would be  
33 very concerned if I was in your seat with the way the  
34 pollock biomass in the Aleutians and south Alaska  
35 Peninsula have declined. Now you have the fleet  
36 chasing these fish for longer and longer period of  
37 time. I'd be very concerned about biomass. So this is  
38 an aspect that I feel I have to comment on.

39  
40 Any other points. Go right ahead.

41  
42 MR. BENSON: Just a brief comment on  
43 that. Anecdotally from the fleet, we are hearing there  
44 was more searching going on this year than in past  
45 years, particularly in the B season. The general rule  
46 of thumb is the more you're searching, the higher  
47 proportion of bycatch you're going to get. From what  
48 we saw in 2007, October was the real problem month.  
49 Historically it has been. I know some of the fleet  
50 shifted their behavior this year so they wouldn't have

1 to fish in October. Not everybody has the luxury to  
2 make that decision because some of these vessels are  
3 tendering salmon in the summer and so forth and then  
4 they have to get their pollock in. That's something  
5 we're taking a close look at because in 2007 it was  
6 like 40,000 fish in October.

7  
8 You've got to keep in mind that we're  
9 book-ended by Steller sea lion regulations. November 1  
10 it closes and it doesn't open again until January 20,  
11 then you've got late January, February, March for your  
12 A season and then a stand-down until June or July. This  
13 year everybody started fishing maybe a little sooner  
14 than usual, so they didn't have to go as far into  
15 October. But that's something that's so obvious we  
16 have to deal with that.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. You've got a  
19 point there, Vince.

20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: If you're getting close  
22 to a motion, I know there's tribal council  
23 recommendations on bycatch numbers. There's also other  
24 Councils I have summaries. I don't know if YRDFA has  
25 taken a stand on it. Becca is here. Maybe Mickey or  
26 Brandy would know if TCC has done any resolutions. You  
27 may want to get that information before you decide if  
28 you want to go with the hard cap or time area closures  
29 or a combination.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We do want to hear  
32 what other Council actions were and from the other  
33 interests. I wanted to expend the Council's comments.  
34 Any other Council comments. Ron.

35  
36 MR. SAM: I've always been impressed  
37 with North Pacific Council. Four or five years ago we  
38 did meet at their office in Anchorage and they welcomed  
39 us in there and answered all our questions then. I  
40 guess I didn't relay to this Council at that time the  
41 importance I feel about developing a partnership with  
42 North Pacific Management Council. They've always been  
43 open and fair with us all the way through. I commend  
44 you on your outreach Council meetings and I feel like  
45 the Chair does, that we should be in attendance at  
46 their April council meeting. Thank you.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

49  
50 MR. MATHEWS: To get everyone up to

1 speed, what Ron was talking about that was a meeting  
2 with Chris Oliver and David and they had what I  
3 consider high-liner fishermen captains present and  
4 there was an open discussion about in-river and open  
5 sea. To be honest with you, what I took away from it is  
6 that the staff presentations everybody was kind of  
7 getting bored about and when fishermen talked to  
8 fishermen all the lights went on and everything worked.  
9 But that was at the time when they were looking at this  
10 incentive program, voluntary rolling hot spots, and  
11 that was an experiment, but it was won over. It was a  
12 historic time for the fishers of the trawling fishing  
13 to meet with fishers in-river. So that's what he's  
14 saying. Some of you members were not involved at that  
15 time. So that was the start of an actual interaction  
16 with -- that would have been North Pacific Fishery  
17 Management staff. There was no council members  
18 present.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Carl. We've  
21 got to move on.

22

23 MR. MORGAN: Okay. I'll make it short.  
24 Is there competition between the pollock and the  
25 chinook as far as food source?

26

27 DR. STRAM: There's some overlap,  
28 particularly in the younger fish. There is some  
29 overlap in their food source, in their diets. There's  
30 a lot of recent ongoing studies now of trying to look  
31 at what both chinook and pollock are eating in the open  
32 ocean. I think an area close to the Aleutians they  
33 overlap more.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. One last,  
36 real short.

37

38 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
39 just wanted to thank you guys for your presentation. I  
40 think I speak for the board in saying this is the first  
41 time we've been able to meet with you guys. I like the  
42 idea of the program to give us an option. Right in my  
43 village I know that the school lunch program years ago  
44 would take fish on a volunteer thing and you offered up  
45 why would you bring it to Seattle or something. I just  
46 like the idea of having that option open. Thank you.

47

48 DR. STRAM: Just to follow up on that.  
49 There is no regulation that says it has to be  
50 distributed in Seattle. It is important that when you

1 are commenting, just raising the awareness that it  
2 should come back in-river is enough to start to put  
3 pressure on. Basically it's a voluntary program, so it  
4 just requires a distribution center in Alaska and  
5 industries focus on offloading and/or shipping up to  
6 Alaska. Someone has to apply for the permit and  
7 setting up the voluntary donation. But raising this  
8 kind of awareness and indicating to the council is the  
9 kind of message we'll be taking back and is enough to  
10 get it rolling.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's the direction  
13 I'd like to see this going. Sam, go ahead.

14

15 MR. COTTEN: I apologize. I try to do  
16 more listening than talking. A lot of times on an  
17 issue like this in front of the Council it comes down  
18 to sort of the focal point. What really is the  
19 decision the council is going to make. With the  
20 preliminary preferred alternative, there's so much  
21 terminology here but that's an easy one to understand.  
22 That's probably where we're going. It's going to be a  
23 hard cap. There's two choices there, either the 68,392  
24 or the 47,591, so you've got about a 21,000 fish range  
25 there.

26

27 If the industry comes forward with an  
28 acceptable plan that's incentive based, then  
29 theoretically the council will approve the higher cap.  
30 If they don't satisfy the council, they'll be stuck  
31 with the lower cap. That's the focus a lot of people  
32 are zeroing in on now. The incentives are whatever the  
33 industry feels they can do. If they think they'll  
34 probably not reach the higher cap, I think they'll have  
35 some success with the council.

36

37 The last time they spoke to us it  
38 appeared they were going to trade. If one of the  
39 sectors ran out of salmon to catch, they could buy some  
40 from another sector. The criticism of that was you're  
41 still going to hit the high numbers, so where are you  
42 really saving anything.

43

44 So I think they've got some feedback on  
45 that. That's going to be what's in the press. That's  
46 kind of the focal point, which cap are we going to pick  
47 and did they meet the council's expectations for an  
48 incentive-based program.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was a red light

1 that went off on my panel when the industry is not  
2 going to be presenting until April when the public has  
3 no real input into what they're doing. You're getting  
4 updates, but the public can't comment on that. You had  
5 a point there.

6  
7 DR. STRAM: Yeah, Mr. Chair. To  
8 clarify, because they are slightly separate, it is not  
9 to indicate that you don't have the ability to comment  
10 on the incentive-based program. There's several  
11 opportunities that you could comment to the council.  
12 First, in December, we're having an evening workshop,  
13 so that's not a public comment period, that's more of a  
14 try to understand what direction industry is going.  
15 That would be in Anchorage during our December council  
16 meeting.

17  
18 We have a committee of the council  
19 called the Salmon Bycatch Work Group. They will be  
20 holding a meeting in Anchorage on January 20th with the  
21 sole purpose of receiving presentations from the  
22 industry on the direction they're going with these  
23 programs and for the committee to provide the council a  
24 report. That is also a public meeting.

25  
26 All the committees of the council in  
27 February, this is in Seattle unfortunately, but the  
28 council will be receiving these reports from the  
29 industry and at all of our council meetings we take  
30 public comment on those. It's just that they're not  
31 action items. If you wish to express your opinion on  
32 whether or not you think that's an appropriate program,  
33 there are several different opportunities you could do  
34 so.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those will be posted  
37 on your website what the industry updates are?

38  
39 DR. STRAM: We have yet to receive an  
40 actual written report from industry. Anything we  
41 receive as a report from industry we can post and make  
42 available to the public. We also have a letter that we  
43 have copies of that lays out all these milestones for  
44 time periods when public comment is accepted.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Vince.

47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: I was just consulting  
49 with Polly because we usually send a Staff person to  
50 all these meetings. If Don Rivard is online, I believe

1 Don is going to continue that. They could possibly  
2 give a summary to you on these incentive programs.

3  
4 MR. RIVARD: This is Don. I'm still  
5 online. I plan on attending the October and the  
6 December meeting and have requested to go to the  
7 February meeting in Seattle. Hopefully I'll be able to  
8 attend all those.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll have  
11 another Western Interior meeting before your April  
12 meeting and we may make comment before that. I'm under  
13 a time compression here and I need to get what the  
14 other Regional Councils have done. I would like to lay  
15 out the points of our letter of transmittal to your  
16 council.

17  
18 Go ahead, Vince, with what the Councils  
19 have done.

20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: This is a draft, but I'm  
22 pretty sure this is accurate. The Bristol Bay RAC  
23 requests the North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
24 to adopt regulations designed to significantly minimize  
25 the bycatch of all salmon species in the Bering Sea  
26 pollock fishery. That Council continues to support  
27 chinook bycatch not to exceed 38,000 fish annually.  
28 The Bristol Bay Council supports hard and other  
29 regulations that are conservative and err in the favor  
30 of salmon stocks. Bristol Bay Council supports North  
31 Pacific Fishery Management Council, NOAA, Alaska  
32 Department of Fish and Game's effort to conduct  
33 additional data collection and analyses to refine  
34 regulations that minimize salmon bycatch in the Bering  
35 Sea trawl fisheries.

36  
37 I did consult Staff and transcripts for  
38 Yukon/Kuskokwim Delta Regional Council. They did not  
39 have a presentation at their meeting, but they did  
40 bring it up. My understanding of that is that they  
41 were going to re-issue their letter that looks at a 10-  
42 year average. What I got from an email is that was  
43 looking at 68,000. If anyone knows different, let me  
44 know.

45  
46 DR. STRAM: The 10-year would be 47.  
47 The most recent three years would be 68.

48  
49 MR. MATHEWS: Right. I understand  
50 that, but the email said 68,000. It would be fair to

1 say, Dr. Stram, they were looking at a hard cap and  
2 then their number would be 47 or 68,000.

3  
4 Northwest Arctic took no action on it.  
5 They didn't have a stand.

6  
7 Eastern Interior, they passed six  
8 motions, so I'll try to capture those. Their main  
9 motion was to support having a hard cap of 29,323  
10 chinook salmon for the Bering Sea pollock fishery.  
11 This is in reference to alternative 2 of the EIS. This  
12 is the only proposed cap that uses the average bycatch  
13 numbers in the years prior to the United States/Canada  
14 Yukon River Salmon Agreement of 2001; therefore, is the  
15 only cap which would comply with the treaty.

16 Their second motion was recommend  
17 economic penalties be implemented and strictly enforced  
18 to prevent high chinook salmon bycatch. Their key  
19 point of that is the penalty should only apply to the  
20 individual trawler vessel and not across the fleet or  
21 industry.

22  
23 Number three. They request the  
24 Management Council to recommend to the pollock fishing  
25 industry to fund genetic studies on chinook salmon  
26 stocks impacted by the industry's bycatch. The  
27 recommendation should be tied to economic incentives to  
28 improve the overall commercial fisheries.

29  
30 This goes back to some comments you had  
31 earlier and I think Dr. Stram can get it correct. I  
32 was blind-sided by this. Basically the Council  
33 expressed concerns about the length of time it takes,  
34 four years, to have management actions implemented.  
35 The Council, based on advice from North Pacific Fishery  
36 Management Council members present to send a letter to  
37 Chris Oliver, Executive Director, to identify where  
38 Council concerns should be addressed to review the  
39 Magnuson-Stevens Act and the Federal Register. I  
40 gather there's a Register notice out to look at -- I  
41 would call it streamlining, but Dr. Stram could  
42 probably straighten that out.

43  
44 I read to you earlier they wanted the  
45 distribution upriver. Their final one is they directed  
46 a thank you letter be sent to the chair of the North  
47 Pacific Fishery Management Council for allowing the  
48 staff to attend the Regional Council meeting.

49  
50 So that is Eastern, your meeting now,

1 Y-K, Bristol Bay, Northwest. Southeast they didn't  
2 consult with, nor did I attend their meeting.  
3 Southeast requested Staff make a presentation there,  
4 but I don't have a report on that. I think that's all  
5 the Councils that have taken action on this.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Vince. Is  
8 there a position to present here from YRDFA?

9

10 MS. ROBBINS GISCLAIR: Just real  
11 quickly. The YRDFA board met last week in Anchorage  
12 and the official position from YRDFA is that we support  
13 a hard cap of 32,000 to protect Yukon River chinook.  
14 Within the understanding that the council has to  
15 balance the needs of the pollock fishery, the YRDFA  
16 board is willing to compromise a hard cap no higher  
17 than 47,500, which represents that 10-year average.  
18 They're not supportive of the higher cap of 68,000 for  
19 an incentive program, understanding that there will be  
20 limited ability to control that incentive-based program  
21 and I think some concern after the experience of the  
22 rolling hot spot system about allowing that much higher  
23 of a cap for an industry-controlled system.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Anyone  
26 else in the room have a position.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Chair would like  
31 to entertain a motion to transmit a letter to the North  
32 Pacific Fishery Management Council and we can insert  
33 Council members' points into the letter during that  
34 motion.

35

36 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair. I  
37 have no idea how the rest of the Council feels on hard  
38 cap numbers and I'm not too sure about the YRDFA  
39 numbers, but I would like to see the Council here  
40 support the 29,000 number. That's from the year 2001  
41 and it has something to do with the Canadian  
42 obligations we have.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I need a second for  
45 the motion.

46

47 MR. J. WALKER: Second.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by James.  
50 I've been jotting down some points. The hard cap is a

1 given in this letter. The high cap of 67,000 in a  
2 three-year average, that's averaging out the three  
3 highest bycatch years, so I don't agree with that at  
4 all. The 10-year average at the absolute maximum.  
5 More in the 29-38,000 range would be more to our  
6 liking.

7

8 So the bycatch would be processed and  
9 returned to the rivers of origin in Alaska by either  
10 apportionment, which there's an apportionment by  
11 percentage of bycatch. And expedite the other salmon  
12 bycatch.

13

14 I feel that quota reductions to protect  
15 the pollock itself and season reduction would behoove  
16 the council to look into that, review that again.

17

18 I am very appreciative to the North  
19 Pacific Fishery Management Council for attending our  
20 meeting and having outreach into the communities. I  
21 wanted to express that in that letter also.

22

23 So those would be the points I would  
24 like to see inserted. Any discussion on those points  
25 and additional points from the Council. Vince.

26

27 MR. MATHEWS: Just to get the motion  
28 clear, Mickey mentioned 29,323. You mentioned a range  
29 of 29,000 to 38,000. We need to make that clear in the  
30 record. Are you going with a range or a set number and  
31 which number is that?

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your motion included  
34 the 29,000 cap?

35

36 MR. STICKMAN: Yes, Mr. Chair. One  
37 other thing that I would like to see just under  
38 discussion is I wouldn't want the distribution of the  
39 bycatch throughout the Yukon River. I wouldn't want  
40 that to have any kind of an impact on the subsistence  
41 activities of the people that fish on the river.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. It would  
44 basically be disseminated to the tribal councils and  
45 the people who would be able to utilize those inter-  
46 community. Other points, discussion on the hard cap  
47 amount by the Council.

48

49 MR. COLLINS: If higher caps are  
50 established, there certainly should be no allowing of

1 selling those caps, then it results in an allocation of  
2 salmon. If they come in with a lower cap, then there  
3 should be no problem with that.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a good point,  
6 Ray. Allowing the movement of those allocations among  
7 the fisheries. That just continues to target the  
8 points of bycatch or where bycatch is occurring. Any  
9 other points to be inserted into the letter.

10

11 This Council, by consensus, is drawing  
12 the conclusion that the high bycatch of 67,000 is  
13 completely intolerable. It's averaging the three worst  
14 years of bycatch. The bycatch, we'll propose a 29,300.  
15 So the Management Council understands those were more  
16 of the general overall range of what this fishery has  
17 incurred in bycatch in its history, the lower bycatch  
18 limit of 47,000 is an absolute maximum. So 29,300  
19 would be the more average of the fishery itself. I  
20 have concerns about the pollock itself and especially  
21 this bycatch.

22

23 I also want to reiterate to the North  
24 Pacific Fishery Management Council that people are  
25 incurring extreme expense. Every few thousand fish  
26 that decline there's more subsistence restrictions and  
27 various things that cost people, the high cost of fuel,  
28 to their catch per unit of effort declines and the cost  
29 of these villages. These villages are going through a  
30 drying period. AFN just addressed how these villages  
31 are drying up because of the economic cost.

32

33 It doesn't sound like too many salmon  
34 in bycatch, but in reality it has a huge impact on how  
35 much money people are going to expend to try and meet  
36 their subsistence needs.

37

38 Any other discussion. Mickey.

39

40 MR. STICKMAN: No other discussion on  
41 the motion. I just want to again thank the members  
42 that are present. One other thing James talked about,  
43 one of the big issues for the Yukon River chinook  
44 salmon is size and weight. We didn't have a big open  
45 discussion today about it in front of you, but I think  
46 it's something you should bring back to your council.  
47 It's an issue on the Yukon. I don't know how big an  
48 issue it is on the Kuskokwim, but it definitely is a  
49 big issue on the Yukon.

50

1                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Are we ready  
2 to vote on this.  
3  
4                           MR. MATHEWS: So it is 29,323?  
5  
6                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 29,323.  
7  
8                           MR. STICKMAN: I call for the question.  
9  
10                          CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question has  
11 been called by Mickey. Those in favor of this letter  
12 of transmittal with the points included in our  
13 discussion on the record signify by saying aye.  
14  
15                          IN UNISON: Aye.  
16  
17                          (No opposing votes)  
18  
19                          CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous vote for  
20 letter of transmittal to the North Pacific Fishery  
21 Management Council. I again appreciate your attendance  
22 here. We're under time constraints, so we're moving on  
23 to strategic plan for research of whitefish species on  
24 the Yukon River and Kuskokwim.  
25  
26                          We'll have a five-minute break and then  
27 we'll return on the record.  
28  
29                          (Off record)  
30  
31                          (On record)  
32  
33                          CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're coming back on  
34 the record. It's 3:24 or so. Caroline is going to  
35 give us an overview on this whitefish strategic plan.  
36 Go ahead, Caroline.  
37  
38                          MS. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
39 Members of the Council. My name is Caroline Brown. I  
40 work for Fish and Game Subsistence Division in  
41 Fairbanks. I'm the Interior researcher.  
42  
43                          I think it's Page 21 of your books.  
44 You have a summary that looks like this with pictures  
45 of whitefish on it. There's a summary of a joint  
46 project that's funded by OSM. It's a joint project  
47 between Fish and Wildlife and Fish and Game to develop  
48 a strategic action plan for whitefish species that will  
49 provide direction for research on this important  
50 subsistence resource.

1                   Our objectives are to bring together  
2 the available information on the biology, local  
3 knowledge, including use patterns, and the management  
4 of whitefish species throughout the Yukon and Kuskokwim  
5 drainages so that we can identify gaps and then  
6 prioritize research directions.

7  
8                   To do this we're assembling a working  
9 group of biologists, local representatives, social  
10 scientists and managers to discuss the available  
11 information and to set a research agenda.

12  
13                   So I'm here today to ask the Council to  
14 select a delegate to be part of that working group. On  
15 the second page of this there is a preliminary list of  
16 delegates. On the table back there is an updated list  
17 since the Y-K RAC and the Eastern Interior RAC have  
18 chosen their delegates.

19  
20                   Just to give you a bit of information.  
21 It's summarized for you on Page 21 under the schedule.  
22 We've accomplished most of Phase 1, which was scoping  
23 meetings in lower Yukon and Central Kuskokwim to  
24 address serious data gaps we had there. Randy Brown,  
25 who is my co-PI for Fish and Wildlife, we are  
26 finalizing a draft interim report on Friday and then  
27 sending it out to all the meeting participants. We'll  
28 plan to have our first meeting of the working group on  
29 November 18th and 19th, so your delegate would  
30 hopefully be able to attend that meeting in Anchorage.

31  
32                   We'll have a second follow-up meeting  
33 sometime in the spring of '09 in Fairbanks. We'll be  
34 paying for the travel and accommodations of your  
35 delegate.

36  
37                   If you have any questions about this  
38 effort, I can try to answer them and also to ask you to  
39 select a delegate.

40  
41                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think this is a  
42 very important project. I would like our Council to  
43 send a delegate. Is anybody interested in attending  
44 that meeting. Ron.

45  
46                   MR. SAM: Mr. Chairman. I would like  
47 to nominate Stanley Ned. He's pretty interested in this  
48 and I commend all his studies. I'm ready to appoint  
49 him. Every time you start talking about anything of  
50 major importance to upper Koyukuk River is whitefish.

1 I may have been overstating it earlier when I said 1 in  
2 100, but it's up to that point. I would like to  
3 appoint someone.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nominate Stanley  
6 Ned. Go ahead, Caroline.

7

8 MS. BROWN: Mr. Chair. Stanley did  
9 give me a call and expressed his interest. Randy and I  
10 agreed with him that the Koyukuk River really does need  
11 some representation because of their reliance on  
12 whitefish. So we are prepared to invite Stanley Ned  
13 outside of a delegate for your RAC.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Mickey.

16

17 MR. STICKMAN: I was just going to ask  
18 Member Jenny if she would be interested in being the  
19 Councils representative on this delegation. I'll make  
20 that as a motion for Council action to have Jenny be  
21 the rep.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ron.

24

25 MR. SAM: I'd like to amend that motion  
26 and also appoint Ray as an alternate. I know in  
27 speaking with him earlier upper Kuskokwim is highly  
28 dependant on whitefish species too.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I asked Ray and he's  
31 kind of swamped, but you can put him in as the  
32 alternate. You had a point there, Caroline.

33

34 MS. BROWN: It's up to your RAC to  
35 choose. Because your RAC represents both rivers, if we  
36 have Stanley, it would be good to have Kuskokwim and we  
37 do have a gap there, but I understand if you're  
38 swamped.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those would be  
41 the nominees. Any additional nominees.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of  
46 sending Jenny as the primary and Ray as the alternate  
47 signify by saying aye.

48

49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Caroline.  
4 Then we're to Polly Wheeler's presentation. Go ahead,  
5 Polly.

6

7 DR. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
8 Council members. It's actually been interesting  
9 listening to the conversation this morning because some  
10 of the issues that have been raised may be able to be  
11 addressed through our Fisheries Resources Monitoring  
12 Program.

13

14 If you bear with me a little bit, I  
15 know you're feeling the press of the agenda, but I also  
16 know that there are some new Council members or members  
17 that haven't heard about the Fisheries Resources  
18 Monitoring Program, so I think it would useful to just  
19 cover a little background. I talk pretty fast, so I  
20 should be able to make up for any lost time here.

21

22 I did want to point out that almost all  
23 of the research projects that were talked about this  
24 morning were funded by the Federal Subsistence  
25 Management Program. All of the projects that Mr.  
26 Maschmann talked about, all the weir projects on the  
27 Yukon are funded by the Fisheries Resources Monitoring  
28 Program, which basically means that you guys are  
29 funding it or you're making the recommendation because  
30 we come before you and we will come before you about a  
31 year from now with a list of projects we're  
32 recommending funding. So you're weighing in on these  
33 projects and clearly this program is providing key  
34 information for fisheries management both on the Yukon  
35 and the Kuskokwim.

36

37 Last time I checked, I believe the  
38 Monitoring Program is funding about 50-60 percent of  
39 the research going on on the Kuskokwim. Not quite as  
40 much on the Yukon. Many of the projects that Mr.  
41 Thalhauser mentioned this morning are also funded by  
42 the Monitoring Program, so we're well represented.

43

44 Just to remind some of you, the Federal  
45 Subsistence Management Program has two functions.  
46 There's the regulatory function and the research  
47 function. Ideally, you don't do regulations unless you  
48 have done the research beforehand. Sometimes it  
49 doesn't always happen that way, but that's our goal  
50 certainly with fisheries.

1                   Early on in the program we had more  
2 money, money was worth more if that makes sense, so we  
3 were able to fund a lot of projects. As time has gone  
4 by, our budgets have been flatlined and projects are  
5 costing more, so we're not able to fund quite as many  
6 research projects. We're trying to focus on the  
7 highest priority research needs statewide.

8  
9                   We have about \$6 million, give or take,  
10 which sounds like a lot, but when you start putting it  
11 out for projects, it's not as much as it might appear.  
12 That's again statewide. The monies are divided up by  
13 region by sort of what are the more contentious issues.  
14 Right now the Kuskokwim and the Yukon each get about  
15 20 percent of the funding. The Northern Region only  
16 gets about 5 percent, but that's indicative of the fact  
17 that a lot of the really contentious management issues  
18 don't always occur up there or haven't as of yet.

19  
20                   The priority information needs. The  
21 staff at OSM have put together a document and consulted  
22 with managers across the board. The starting point is  
23 the issues and information needs that the Regional  
24 Advisory Councils came up with starting in about 2000  
25 and then updating them on a regular basis.

26  
27                   The list of high priority information  
28 needs can be found on Page 23 in your book. This is  
29 going to guide the request for proposals that's going  
30 to be going out from OSM this fall. Because we have a  
31 very lengthy public review process, you people won't be  
32 able to see those projects until about a year from now.  
33 So October or so of 2009 the slate of projects that are  
34 going to be recommended for funding will be put before  
35 you and those projects will then go in the water  
36 beginning in spring of 2010.

37  
38                   So we have a very lengthy process and  
39 it's hard to keep track of it at times. The chart that  
40 Vince showed you earlier I kind of wince at because it  
41 makes it look awfully complicated, but if you look at  
42 the yellow box kind of in the middle of the page,  
43 that's what we'll be talking about, the 2010 FRMP.  
44 That outlines the process for the research projects  
45 that deal with fisheries if that helps you.

46  
47                   Again, the document that starts on Page  
48 23 in your book is a draft that covers all the regions  
49 statewide. We have a small interregional category that  
50 in the past has sort of been for projects covering a

1 couple different regions. This year we've included  
2 climate change projects in the interregional category.  
3 Hopefully we'll get fishery specific projects dealing  
4 with climate change, not just throwing climate change  
5 into the title and hope they can pick up a few bucks.  
6 I guess we'll see.

7  
8                   On Page 25 is the priority information  
9 needs. As far as the Yukon goes, I'm not going to read  
10 them to you specifically. You can see them there on  
11 Page 25 and over to Page 26. They pretty much all deal  
12 with what's going on with salmon in the Yukon River and  
13 looking at escapement, quality of escapement, which  
14 means there's going to be more weir projects obviously,  
15 long-term management application, such as escapement  
16 goal development and run reconstruction of Yukon River  
17 chinook and chum salmon escapement projects.

18  
19                   So it's actually taking the information  
20 that's been gathered from all these escapement projects  
21 and taking it to the next level analytically, which  
22 I've advocated for because I think it's all well and  
23 good to collect information, but sometimes we get so  
24 excited about collecting the information that we forget  
25 to do some analysis with it. So these seven points are  
26 pretty specific for the Yukon Region.

27  
28                   We have two general categories, the  
29 biological and then social science projects. There's  
30 been some stellar examples that have been supported by  
31 this Council and I'm thinking specifically of the  
32 Koyukuk River traditional knowledge and harvest  
33 assessment project, the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and  
34 Holy Cross traditional knowledge and harvest assessment  
35 project for non-salmon fish. Caroline is finishing up  
36 on a middle Yukon traditional knowledge and harvest  
37 assessment project. We're also in the final stages of  
38 doing one for the Yukon Flats.

39  
40                   I would say that those four projects  
41 are some of the only rigorous, non-salmon harvest and  
42 traditional knowledge information that we have  
43 statewide. It's a phenomenal collection of  
44 information. As you well know, most of the research  
45 that's gone on in fisheries in this state has been  
46 salmon directed, but obviously non-salmon are a key  
47 resource for all kinds of people, particularly  
48 subsistence users, so I'm proud our program is focused  
49 on non-salmon or has directed considerable effort on  
50 non-salmon. And collecting not only the traditional

1 knowledge but also some really important harvest  
2 assessment information. Nobody paid me to say that.  
3 I've been with this program for six years and I've  
4 really advocated for that because I think it's  
5 important.

6  
7 Also ADF&G is looking at having a  
8 commercial fishery not only for lamprey but also  
9 potentially whitefish. It's really important to know  
10 what's going on with these fisheries. As a non-  
11 biologist, maybe having a commercial fishery to find  
12 out what's going on with the fishery may not be the  
13 best approach. That's all I'll say about that.

14  
15 You're not seeing any social science  
16 projects in front of you for the Yukon River region for  
17 a couple reasons. One is we've got a few projects  
18 going on right now and one is the Yukon River fish for  
19 dogs project that was originally done in 1992. Dave  
20 Anderson was the researcher. He's doing that project  
21 again right now. Same methodology, same villages.  
22 Looking at what's going on with mushers and dogs and  
23 what's going on with fish that's harvested. So we'll  
24 basically have the same project that's done twice over  
25 the course of 20 years so we'll kind of know what's  
26 going on.

27  
28 We also have another project in the  
29 Yukon River that's looking at changing social  
30 situations, populations, what's going on with that and  
31 how that's affecting fisheries use. Which this was  
32 funded before the crazy fuel costs we saw this past  
33 summer. So we figured rather than launching some new  
34 projects in that realm it might be best to get the  
35 results of the existing projects and then move on from  
36 there.

37  
38 Then we have the whitefish planning  
39 effort that's covering the Yukon and the Kuskokwim.

40  
41 For the Kuskokwim projects, the  
42 priority information needs are in the middle of Page 26  
43 and those you can see look sort of different than the  
44 Yukon projects, but they are salmon focused.

45  
46 So there you have it. You have the  
47 Yukon on Page 25, the Kuskokwim on Page 26. I would  
48 recommend you look at that, think about it. It's a  
49 draft. We are interested in your input. I'm here  
50 through the duration of the meeting. So if you want to

1 think about it, talk amongst yourselves and maybe at  
2 some point before the meeting ends go back on the  
3 record and make some recommendations. If you want to  
4 endorse what's there, that's great, but having the time  
5 to think about it would be helpful too.

6

7 I did write down what you were calling  
8 -- I can't remember what you called it when fish fall  
9 off the net.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was calling it  
12 dead loss or basically fish that die from human-induced  
13 mortality, but they're lost and not retained. I feel  
14 that's a very important issue that we're going to be  
15 looking at in the future of salmon fisheries on the  
16 Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. Are you finished now,  
17 Polly?

18

19 DR. WHEELER: I am.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Polly always gives a  
22 great presentation. I would like to endorse this  
23 priority information needs paper. Polly and OSM are  
24 prioritizing towards analyzing the current studies and  
25 information that we have and making that applicable and  
26 are very worthwhile. I can't personally think of any  
27 additional projects that could be prioritized into  
28 this. I do want the Council to make inputs at this  
29 time, but I would like to endorse this proposal at this  
30 point in our agenda. Mickey.

31

32 MR. STICKMAN: Yes, Mr. Chair. Polly,  
33 you mentioned something about climate change in here  
34 somewhere.

35

36 DR. WHEELER: If you look on Page 28 of  
37 your books, there's a inter-regional priority  
38 information needs and it's got that catch-all category  
39 for documenting effects of climate change on  
40 subsistence resources and uses, and determine how  
41 subsistence  
42 fishery management can be better adapted to deal with  
43 these effects.

44

45 I was a little nervous about having  
46 this category in there in part because how do you  
47 really measure the effects from management. I think  
48 our program is one of the few programs that has really  
49 focused on baseline monitoring, baseline harvest  
50 assessment, kind of knowing what's happening on the

1 ground so we can act in real time. That's how you're  
2 going to measure the effects of change.

3

4                   So I have mixed feelings. That's me.  
5 It's certainly not the program. The program clearly  
6 realizes and I do too the importance of climate change,  
7 but kind of measuring it and coming up with something  
8 you can do for management is interesting. I'll leave  
9 it at that, Mickey.

10

11                   MR. STICKMAN: The only reason I was  
12 thinking about it is -- well, the two primary examples  
13 I have in my mind is Jenny's cite at Bishop Mountain on  
14 the south bank. It had to be because of weather they  
15 lost one whole eddy fishing spot and then you go down  
16 nine miles below Nulato where Eddie Hildebrand and  
17 (indiscernible) had their primary setnet spots for  
18 chinook salmon. Over time they were catching like 100  
19 kings a day and now they were only picking up between  
20 three and four.

21

22                   For Eddie Hildebrand, he has the only  
23 three-story smokehouse in Nulato and you can't miss it.  
24 He's 95 and he has children and grandchildren and  
25 great-grandchildren that all depend on him because it  
26 was his spot originally. For as long as I can remember  
27 he was the main fisherman for the whole clan and then  
28 all of a sudden this summer they were all there and  
29 their only alternative was to learn how to driftnet.

30

31                   The best examples of how climate change  
32 has changed fishing especially in my area. That's why  
33 I wanted to talk about it.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: James.

36

37                   MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
38 Polly, does your work entail any surveys on the Innoko  
39 River in regards to whitefish or shee or pike?

40

41                   DR. WHEELER: We have a couple projects  
42 and I'm not going to be able to speak to them very  
43 intelligently right here because I don't have the  
44 information right offhand, but we do have an Innoko --  
45 is there somebody here that can speak to it? Caroline  
46 can speak to it. But we have funded two projects,  
47 Innoko whitefish and a sheefish project as well and  
48 then Caroline's work as well.

49

50                   MR. J. WALKER: Thank you. The reason

1 I asked that question is that the village of Shageluk  
2 on the Innoko really depends on whitefish and sheefish.  
3

4 MS. BROWN: Member Walker through the  
5 Chair. In 2003-2005, we did a traditional knowledge of  
6 non-salmon fish species project, which included  
7 Shageluk and the Holy Cross subregion, and that report  
8 is available. I can make sure you have a copy of that  
9 report. That included work for Grayling, Anvik,  
10 Shageluk and Holy Cross. More recently Randy Brown,  
11 John Burr and myself have been working on a  
12 radiotelemetry project on sheefish in the Innoko  
13 drainage and where they go throughout the rest of the  
14 year.

15  
16 We are also working with Joy Hamilton's  
17 class at the school and they are getting involved in  
18 the telemetry part of it. They have done two years of  
19 tagging of sheefish in the Innoko drainage and I think  
20 they're going to do one more and those are five-year  
21 tags, I believe. They're already getting telemetry  
22 results back on that and they're pretty significant.  
23 They're finding sheefish from the Innoko drainage that  
24 are feeding in the Innoko drainage in the summertime in  
25 Yukon Flats, Alatna River, most of the spawning grounds  
26 -- well, the few spawning grounds for sheefish in the  
27 entire drainage.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other. Ray.

30  
31 MR. COLLINS: Polly, that might be  
32 another weather one because I think they're having  
33 trouble putting that fence in in the fall, aren't they,  
34 because the whitefish are leaving and the ice isn't  
35 there like it usually is, so they haven't put in that  
36 traditional fence weir system. Did they get it in?  
37 Oh, so it varies from year to year then, I guess.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So should we vote.  
40 Polly.

41  
42 DR. WHEELER: One thing that I forgot  
43 to mention and it's important is that these priority  
44 information needs direct the call. So when  
45 investigators are looking out there, they're going to  
46 look at this and sort of design their projects around  
47 that, but if there's an issue that pops out as  
48 something that really needs attention and is important  
49 for subsistence fisheries, it will be considered. So  
50 it's not like this is the definitive list and if you go

1 outside of this box we're going to throw it out. I  
2 mean if issues come up and they're high priority and  
3 they need attention now, they will be considered. So  
4 that's an important caveat in there.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that.  
7 So I endorse this planning effort. Do we need to vote  
8 on this? The Council has endorsed it in their  
9 discussion. I think we've covered that thoroughly.

10  
11 Our next agenda item moves on to  
12 wildlife issues. We're at the special action positive  
13 C&T determination for Unit 21E for some of Unit 19A  
14 communities, Wildlife Special Action request 08-01  
15 submitted by the Kuskokwim Native Association. Polly.

16  
17 MR. MATHEWS: Before Polly starts off,  
18 I'm not sure if KNA was going to call in.

19  
20 MR. THALHAUSER: I asked Calvin Simeon,  
21 the executive director, when this proposal was put in  
22 to call in and I talked to him earlier and he was going  
23 to try to get on, but my idea of when we'd get to it  
24 was earlier and I think he may have had something going  
25 on this afternoon.

26  
27 MR. MATHEWS: I attempted to have a  
28 reciprocal teleconference with the leadership of the  
29 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council. I've  
30 gotten no response on it. If I hear a funny electronic  
31 sound here I'll have to interrupt Polly and find out  
32 who it is for the record.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Brandy.

35  
36 MS. BERKBIGLER: Brandy Berkbigler,  
37 TCC. I didn't know if you wanted me to give my  
38 Partners presentation update since we're in this  
39 category before we moved on to wildlife.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I didn't see that  
42 here, but if it's fairly brief.

43  
44 MS. BERKBIGLER: It's fairly brief.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead and finish  
47 the fisheries off. Sorry.

48  
49 MS. BERKBIGLER: Under the FRMP program  
50 that Polly was talking about, there's also the Partners

1 For Fisheries and Resource Monitoring Program. The  
2 idea behind that was to put research biologists and  
3 some of the tribal entities to build their capacity, so  
4 I'm funded through the Partners Program, the Office of  
5 Subsistence Management, but I work for TCC in  
6 Fairbanks.

7  
8 To start off, I just want to talk about  
9 a couple projects that we did this summer. Two of them  
10 was Bishop Mountain and Holy Cross sampling project  
11 This year was the second year we have funding through  
12 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commercial Fisheries  
13 and we worked with subsistence fishermen to gain  
14 samples of genetics, age, sex, length, girth from catch  
15 that were primarily in half-inch drift and setnets in  
16 Holy Cross and then 8-inch in Bishop Mountain. Here's  
17 the numbers. We had 133 in Holy Cross and 102. Our  
18 sample size was 200, but due to the limited subsistence  
19 fishing schedule restrictions we were unable to get the  
20 full sample size. The age data will be out this fall.

21  
22 The next project is a FRMP project, the  
23 Henshaw Creek Weir located above Allakaket on Henshaw  
24 Creek. This year TCC operated it solely on their own.  
25 This is all preliminary data. These are accounts for  
26 chinook and chum, male to female ratios. The whole  
27 crew was local hire from Allakaket except for the crew  
28 leader, which was a fisheries intern supported through  
29 the Partners Program out of Fairbanks.

30  
31 With that weir project being funded, we  
32 were able to tie in a challenge cost share grant with  
33 Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge to host a science  
34 traditional knowledge camp. We advertised for students  
35 from Hughes, Allakaket, Evansville, Bettles and Alatna  
36 and we had 13, which was double our numbers from last  
37 year. Here we go over traditional fishing practices,  
38 we had the kids set a net to catch salmon, fish  
39 dissections and they learned internal and external  
40 anatomy, stream ecology, net mending and we had refuge  
41 personnel there, Mike Spindler, and Kristin Reakoff,  
42 the Kanuti interpretive park ranger, to do activities  
43 on wildlife and habitat.

44  
45 The student were also able to get into  
46 the weir and actually do the escapement counting  
47 themselves, watch the fish come through the weir and  
48 take the sex and age samples from those fish. This was  
49 our group from this past year and we also had elders  
50 there to help with the instruction.

1                               Then we move outside your region. One  
2 of the Partners Programs is to help build capacity, so  
3 sometimes these projects are not always in each of the  
4 regions, but one I've been working on is the  
5 radiotelemetry project for fall chum salmon in the  
6 Tanana River. This is the second year of the project  
7 and we tagged 300 fall chum salmon and currently we are  
8 still monitoring where they are going. So ongoing  
9 flight radiotelemetry surveys are occurring and also  
10 foot surveys to collect some of those tags. We  
11 deployed 35 archival tags which record temperature. I  
12 was out this year for two weeks tagging.

13  
14                               Here's the radio tower locations. We  
15 have nine towers on the Tanana River which record the  
16 passing of the chum salmon. As of October 10th this is  
17 where the 300 fish were located, so we're hoping to  
18 find most of them spawning in the mainstem Tanana since  
19 that's where we can't account for a majority of the  
20 population returning to the Tanana River.

21  
22                               Also I'd like to inform everyone that  
23 TCC is having their first annual transboundary tribal  
24 symposium on the status of Yukon River salmon. This  
25 will be the week of December 10th through the 12th.  
26 TCC is paying for travel for one representative from  
27 each of TCC's villages, so one person from all the 42  
28 villages will have a paid spot to come to Fairbanks for  
29 this meeting. We're also inviting AVCP villages and  
30 Canadian First Nations as well as any others that  
31 expressed interest in this meeting. We'd like to have  
32 an open forum, lay out all the information on the table  
33 as to what the current issues are with life history,  
34 genetics, escapement, management, et cetera, with the  
35 bycatch as well. We're having guest speakers come and  
36 get everybody together to hear one set of information  
37 and have an open discussion on where we'd like to go in  
38 the future and really get some subsistence users'  
39 input.

40  
41                               I'd like to encourage one person from  
42 each of your villages to be a representative and they  
43 do need to have the authority to speak for the tribe.  
44 With that, if there's any questions.

45  
46                               CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council  
47 have any questions on Brandy's presentation.

48  
49                               (No comments)  
50

1                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.  
2 Brandy, thanks. And Vince reminded me that Dave Cannon  
3 has a short presentation on something.

4  
5                           MR. CANNON: Yes, Mr. Chairman.  
6 Members of the Council. Thank you. My name is Dave  
7 Cannon and I'm here with the Bering Sea Fishermen's  
8 Association. I'll explain why I didn't have any  
9 position on the bycatch. I'm basically just on a  
10 contract to work on this program that I'm going to talk  
11 about, so I didn't really feel qualified to go ahead  
12 and make an official statement for Bering Sea  
13 Fishermen's Association.

14  
15                           You may have seen these Advocate  
16 newsletters that have been sent out. I think 40,000  
17 were sent out the last go around. What Bering Sea has  
18 now is a website and I hope some people have been on  
19 that. What we have is a program called the FAIR  
20 program, Fisheries Awareness Information and  
21 Responsibility.

22  
23                           What I want to talk mostly about is  
24 there's a website and a forum where we can discuss  
25 through posts on the internet a myriad of issues that  
26 have already been discussed today. Jenny had mentioned  
27 ichthyophonous concerns, Mike mentioned habitat changes,  
28 climate change. All kinds of things that if you have  
29 an issue or concern you can sign on to the website and  
30 you have a paper there that explains a fairly easy way  
31 to get to the site. This has a calendar if you want to  
32 let people know you have an important activity coming  
33 up. This is the one page how to get to the FAIR  
34 program and what you want to do is look for the word  
35 forum.

36  
37                           The program basically is to build  
38 awareness between and among all the users in the Bering  
39 Sea. Subsistence fishermen, commercial fishermen,  
40 researchers and I specifically want to mention to the  
41 researchers in the group that they can definitely  
42 provide a post and keep people abreast of the current  
43 research that's going on. If there's any way that you  
44 see we can improve on this, please don't hesitate to  
45 give us a call.

46  
47                           This happens to be one of the pages you  
48 will access the forum to make a post and I'm going to  
49 assume that most people are familiar with getting  
50 online and, unfortunately, you would have to get an

1 email address there and log in, which is just a minor  
2 deal. Once you log in you can go ahead and either  
3 respond to an existing post or create a new one.

4

5                   This is just a short list of some of  
6 the posts that have already been posted. You'll see  
7 Karen Gillis. She had a post there about the king run.  
8 It says king run could be the Yukon's worst. We have  
9 one, Art Nelson, Mr. Fish, is one of the people who  
10 have made posts. There's one on bycatch. If that  
11 piques your interest, you could go ahead and respond to  
12 that or you can start up a whole new topic if you would  
13 like.

14

15                   Just some other examples, Spruce needle  
16 rust. I don't know how common that was up here in the  
17 upper Kuskokwim or the Yukon, but earlier this summer  
18 on the middle Kuskokwim on the Holitna there was Spruce  
19 trees and fungus was just thick in Spruce needle rust  
20 and you go up the Holitna and the whole river was just  
21 covered in orange. The radio call-in show in Bethel on  
22 Friday one person from Tuluksak just noticed it and he  
23 called in and wondered if that had anything to do with  
24 the mining exploration. Another caller thought it had  
25 to do with the substraits and some of this rust-colored  
26 water coming up. It turned out it was Spruce needle  
27 rust and we did some research and explained what that  
28 was. So I think this is a real good avenue to dispel  
29 rumors and things like that.

30

31                   I was up in Kotzebue just last week and  
32 someone mentioned that there were quite a few fish  
33 found with lesions this past summer but a different  
34 disease than ichthyophonous. I would hope that people,  
35 as you're out in the field fishing or whatever, you  
36 might have a camera and if you come across something  
37 like that this is a very good tool immediately to get  
38 that out there to a lot of people and show, hey, this  
39 is something different that I saw and does anybody else  
40 know what it is or have you seen similar things.

41

42                   There's a couple research projects  
43 here, Dolly Varden, Mark Lisac with Fish and Wildlife  
44 Service out of Dillingham, he did a post and also  
45 sheefish, Lisa Stuby, Fish and Game. You can add  
46 pictures and things like that.

47

48                   The only other thing I wanted to  
49 mention, there's also an observation part of this  
50 program. Let's say you see something very unique, a

1 particular fish species you've never seen in that area  
2 before. You can go ahead and hopefully document it  
3 with a picture or get a location with a GPS unit. One  
4 of the things we'd like to do with this program is help  
5 update the State's anadromous waters catalogue. With  
6 climate change we may see areas where we never saw  
7 species of salmon before.

8

9 I will close with that. If you have  
10 any questions.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Dave.  
13 That sounds like a great program as people become more  
14 computer literate. Any questions. Vince, you have  
15 something?

16

17 MR. MATHEWS: No. As we switch over to  
18 Polly, don't feel like the agenda -- I can change your  
19 planes, I can change your reservations. I sense a real  
20 -- you know, I set these agendas up three months ago.  
21 I can change that. I just need direction fairly soon  
22 to call the plane in differently. It would impact you  
23 and Ron on your connecting flights back home.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question to you,  
26 at this point in the agenda, how does it look to you  
27 for finishing this evening?

28

29 MR. MATHEWS: Well, since I didn't do  
30 well on planning this agenda. My concern is you're  
31 rushing on some of the issues. Yes, I think you can  
32 complete it. The next issue has a lot of sensitivity  
33 in it and I would advise you not to rush.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't intend to  
36 rush on this issue. Go ahead, Polly.

37

38 MR. MATHEWS: And in no way did I mean  
39 that you should take exorbitant time on this. I'm just  
40 saying.....

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 DR. WHEELER: I was going to say,  
45 Vince, thanks.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can inform the  
48 Council we had a preliminary teleconference with  
49 Robert, Carl and I identifying some of these issues to  
50 expedite this particular special action request. We

1 were asking for specific information to be provided to  
2 the Council during this deliberation. Go ahead, Polly.

3

4 DR. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
5 The analysis for this special action can be found on  
6 Page 29 of your Council books. One of my Staff  
7 developed the analysis and I'm presenting it here. I  
8 did not go to the Y-K meeting where it was covered and  
9 you were on teleconference, but I know what happened  
10 there, so I can certainly speak to that.

11

12 Just to give you a little background.  
13 Basically I'm here to present the request. I'm not  
14 going to go through it in the way that we would  
15 sometimes go through analyses. I'll touch on the  
16 highlights, but I think you're all clear on the content  
17 of the issue. The schedule that Vince handed out  
18 earlier shows you we've gone to an every other year  
19 cycle for wildlife and fisheries proposals and then the  
20 monitoring program is also every other year.

21

22 Our office is going to start accepting  
23 wildlife proposals in January 2009 to change wildlife  
24 regulations and the Federal board will consider them in  
25 December 2009, which is over a year from now. The  
26 Kuskokwim Native Association submitted this request in  
27 February of 2008, but it was after the deadline for  
28 wildlife proposals for the cycle you dealt with last  
29 spring and basically a year and a half before the  
30 wildlife proposals are going to be dealt with again, so  
31 that's why it's a special action request rather than a  
32 regular proposal.

33

34 My understanding is they are open to  
35 the possibility of submitting a proposal in 2009 as a  
36 wildlife proposal, regardless of what the action is on  
37 this special action.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One question. The  
40 call for proposal will fall through our March meeting  
41 so the Council can submit proposals?

42

43 DR. WHEELER: Yes. Kuskokwim Native  
44 Association or KNA basically submitted this request  
45 arguing that their villages have a demonstrated pattern  
46 of customary and traditional use of moose in Unit 21E.  
47 They submitted this as a special action request asking  
48 the Federal Board to take special action to expand the  
49 customary and traditional use finding for moose in Unit  
50 21E to include the residents of five communities; Lower

1 Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, and  
2 Napaimute.

3  
4 As you are all pretty much aware, a  
5 community must have a positive C&T determination to be  
6 eligible to hunt under Federal subsistence regulations.  
7 Because a community must have a C&T determination to be  
8 eligible to hunt under Federal regulations, and there's  
9 an existing C&T determination for moose in Unit 21E,  
10 KNA submitted this request that their five villages be  
11 included in the existing C&T.

12  
13 I think you're all aware of what C&T  
14 is, but maybe for some of the newer ones it's just  
15 easier than saying customary and traditional. The  
16 current C&T use finding for moose in 21E includes the  
17 communities of Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross  
18 and Russian Mission. Russian Mission because many of  
19 the people who lived in Napaimute on the Yukon River  
20 moved to Russian Mission.

21  
22 This request is unusual in that it only  
23 requests the revised C&T for the winter 2009 hunt and  
24 because it's a special action it would only last until  
25 June 30th, 2009. Our special actions are either for 60  
26 days or until the end of the regulatory season. In  
27 this instance it would last until June of 2009. By  
28 that time a proposal may or may not have been submitted  
29 to the Federal program.

30  
31 In it's request, Kuskokwim Native  
32 Association stated that residents of the villages  
33 traditionally used areas in Unit 21E to harvest moose,  
34 particularly the last half of winter until breakup when  
35 moose are present in Unit 21E. This is also the time  
36 when travel to other areas is limited due to weather,  
37 and when moose harvesting opportunities do not exist  
38 closer to the villages.

39  
40 Of the five communities, Aniak and  
41 Chuathbaluk already have a positive C&T for caribou in  
42 Unit 21E. However, no community in Unit 19 or 18  
43 except Russian Mission is included in the C&T  
44 determination for moose in 21E.

45  
46 A discussion of the eight factors can  
47 be found beginning on Page 34. I don't think I need to  
48 name the eight factors. As you know in the Federal  
49 program, we use the eight factors as a guide. The  
50 understanding being that the eight factors exemplify a

1 customary and traditional pattern of use. We use them  
2 in sort of a holistic fashion to elaborate on and  
3 understand the pattern of use of a particular resource  
4 in a particular area.

5  
6 Based on a review of the eight factors,  
7 residents of Lower Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, Aniak, and  
8 Chuathbaluk have demonstrated customary and traditional  
9 uses of moose in a wide area accessible to them by boat  
10 and snowmachine, including parts of Unit 21E. This is  
11 based on the data collected during three annual  
12 household surveys and reported on harvest tickets to  
13 ADF&G since 1983, and the findings of ethnographic  
14 studies describing areas used by the communities to  
15 harvest moose.

16  
17 If this special action is approved,  
18 residents of Lower Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, Aniak, and  
19 Chuathbaluk will be eligible to take moose in Unit 21E  
20 during the February 2009 moose season. This will be in  
21 addition to communities which already have traditional  
22 uses of moose in Unit 21E, which would be Grayling,  
23 Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross and Russian Mission.

24  
25 The preliminary conclusion from the  
26 Office of Subsistence Management is to support the  
27 request with modification to omit Napaimute. At this  
28 time there are no year-round residents at Napaimute.  
29 This is unlikely to change before or during the period  
30 the special action would be in effect.

31  
32 That's really the end of my  
33 presentation specific to the analysis. I had a few  
34 process points that I think might help to clarify the  
35 issue for you, Mr. Chair, if you'd indulge me for a  
36 minute.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, please do.

39  
40 DR. WHEELER: As I just described to  
41 you, this request is for a revision of the existing C&T  
42 determination for the Federal winter moose hunt in Unit  
43 21E to include the residents of the five communities.  
44 These are all 19A communities. This request was  
45 submitted by Kuskokwim Native Association in February  
46 2008, but because it was requesting a change to the C&T  
47 determination only for the winter 2009 hunt, it wasn't  
48 immediately time sensitive. In that respect, this  
49 situation is a little bit different from other special  
50 action requests, such as season extensions, which are

1 typically addressed as quickly as time allows. They  
2 also don't include a public review process.

3

4                   At first, quite frankly, we were a  
5 little unsure of how to deal with this request since in  
6 doing our research it appeared that we'd never actually  
7 dealt with a customary and traditional use  
8 determination as a special action. But our regulations  
9 allow for C&T determinations to be addressed through  
10 the special action process. The actual reading says,  
11 in general, customary and traditional use  
12 determinations will be dealt with through the annual  
13 regulatory process, but that sort of implies that  
14 there's an opening for them to be dealt with through  
15 this special action process.

16

17                   Again, temporary special actions entail  
18 employment of a properly noticed public hearing. The  
19 properly noticed hearing is the Y-K Delta meeting and  
20 this meeting. It is certainly properly noticed even if  
21 the agenda does change in the three months since it was  
22 starting to be properly noticed.

23

24                   (Laughter)

25

26                   We certainly knew that this issue was  
27 one that the Y-K Council would be interested in and  
28 this Council particularly interested in given some of  
29 the history here. These two meetings do provide the  
30 opportunity for public comment. The State of Alaska  
31 did send a letter to the Chair of the Federal  
32 Subsistence Board expressing its opposition to  
33 treatment of this request as a special action and  
34 complaining about not having the opportunity for public  
35 comment. As I said, this is an opportunity for public  
36 comment. I have a copy of the letter here.

37

38                   Again, it is unusual. I'm not going to  
39 sit here and tell you that it isn't unusual to be  
40 dealing with a C&T request as a special action. It is.  
41 The analysis is full and complete as you can see in the  
42 20-odd pages before you.

43

44                   I know there are concerns about the  
45 moose population in 21E and how can we let more users  
46 in. Under ANILCA, the initial pool of users are all  
47 rural Alaskans and then our program, through our  
48 implementing regulations, has used C&T use findings to  
49 further refine the pool of eligible users. We've not  
50 used C&T use determinations as a tool to keep people

1 out or a tool to include people. If there are  
2 biological concerns with the population, those are  
3 dealt with other ways.

4

5 I know the inclination is to lump the  
6 biology with the customary and traditional pattern of  
7 use, but the issue before you today is really just if  
8 you feel like the analysis indicates that there's a  
9 customary and traditional pattern of use by these  
10 villages in this area.

11

12 I'm happy to answer any questions, Mr.  
13 Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My primary question  
16 is, when the original customary and traditional use  
17 determination was made for the residents of Unit 21E  
18 and Russian Mission, when was that made and why didn't  
19 these villages petition for inclusion at that time?

20

21 DR. WHEELER: In terms of our program,  
22 the C&T finding for moose in Unit 21E was adopted from  
23 State regulations at the beginning of the Federal  
24 program in 1990. Since then I would add that there's  
25 been a number of proposals dealing with C&T use of  
26 moose in 21E. To my knowledge, this is the first  
27 proposal we've received dealing with Unit 19A  
28 residents.

29

30 I asked Mr. Simeon that when he called  
31 me on this last February and he said he had thought  
32 they had submitted a proposal, but I dug around and  
33 there's no record of it. I'm not saying it wasn't  
34 submitted because sometimes things do fall through the  
35 cracks. But we do have these other five or six  
36 proposals that have dealt with Unit 18 residents.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're going  
39 through the normal deliberation process here, Vince?

40

41 MR. MATHEWS: It would be best to go  
42 through that so you have a clean record.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The next comments we  
45 would take in our deliberation process would be the  
46 State of Alaska.

47

48 (Pause)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let's take a five

1 minute break and be ready for the presentation.

2

3 (Off record)

4

5 (On record)

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We want to be fairly  
8 thorough on our deliberation of this issue. It's  
9 contentious throughout the whole realm. Roger has his  
10 State points to present to the Council. Go ahead,  
11 Roger.

12

13 MR. SEAVOY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
14 I'll preface this by saying I got an email from Randy  
15 Rogers, who wasn't able to be here, and he asked me to  
16 present these points for your consideration with this  
17 proposal. I'm basically going to read this.

18

19 The Yukon/Innoko Moose Management Plan  
20 was endorsed in 2006 by the Federal Subsistence Board.  
21 There are several recommendations. Recommendation 1.2  
22 provides for a small harvest of antlerless moose in the  
23 winter of no more than 40 cows by keeping the Federal  
24 February 1 through 10 season open. Recommendation 1.3  
25 indicates that if the cow harvest is greater than 40  
26 there should be consideration of closing the Federal  
27 winter season.

28

29 The Federal Subsistence Management  
30 program has nothing in place to monitor the winter  
31 harvest and reports on State harvest tickets are not  
32 reliable. Recommendation 1.9 indicates that if the  
33 Federal C&T determination for Unit 21E is revised to  
34 make a large number of additional communities eligible  
35 to hunt in 21E, the Federal winter season should be  
36 eliminated.

37

38 Fish and Game is working on an  
39 intensive management plan for moose in 21E and that  
40 plan as well as a proposal for a wolf predation control  
41 plan will be considered by the Board of Game in March  
42 2009. If a wolf control plan is implemented in 21E,  
43 the IM plan calls for eliminating the Federal winter  
44 season to protect cows and maintain the reproductive  
45 potential of the moose population.

46

47 A wolf control program could be  
48 implemented in Unit 21E as soon as the winter of 2009-  
49 2010 if an additional moose survey scheduled for March  
50 2009 demonstrates the population has declined. If

1 there are seasons still open for cow harvest, the wolf  
2 control program will likely not be implemented.

3

4 Those are Randy's comments.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Roger. Does  
7 the Council have any questions about those points made  
8 by the State. Robert.

9

10 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
11 I believe this was done in our four meetings that we  
12 had in 21E in Shageluk, Grayling, Anvik and Holy Cross.  
13 Polly was part of it, Ken was there. A lot of people  
14 did partake in that. We came to these points here.

15

16 We are not to exceed more than what we  
17 really needed and this was just for people that didn't  
18 get a moose in the September hunt. That's one of the  
19 reasons it was set at 40. Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
22 other questions of the State. Do you have something,  
23 George.

24

25 MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chairman. George  
26 Pappas, Department of Fish and Game. I have some  
27 procedural comments if you're interested in hearing  
28 them.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

31

32 MR. PAPPAS: This is somewhat based on  
33 the letter you received from the Commissioner, but it  
34 elaborates a little bit more. I'll try to make it  
35 brief and touch on the high points.

36

37 The Department of Fish and Game does  
38 not support the special action request on procedural  
39 grounds. First, we question whether the applicable  
40 regulations authorize changes to C&T use determinations  
41 via the temporary special action process after a  
42 Federal program has been in place for more than 18  
43 years.

44

45 Nowhere in the regulation are the C&T  
46 use determinations identified as a type of change that  
47 can be made through a temporal special action process,  
48 although, as mentioned earlier, regulations says, in  
49 general, changes to the customary and traditional use  
50 determinations will only be considered through annual

1 subpart C the proposal cycle.

2

3                   Perhaps this language does allow the  
4 C&T use determinations to be made by special action in  
5 truly extenuating circumstances. If so, no evidence  
6 has been presented indicating that this special action  
7 is a response to extenuating circumstances.

8

9                   Second, if this special action request  
10 is approved either in written or modified by the Staff  
11 analysis, the Federal Board will essentially be saying  
12 that the affected rural communities have a C&T for  
13 moose in this area but only for one season. This is  
14 not how the C&T process works. Usually C&T  
15 determinations are not actions that can be easily  
16 undone and special actions typically involve shortening  
17 or lengthening seasons, adjusting harvest limits in  
18 response to different changes, unusual conditions, lack  
19 of harvest, et cetera.

20

21                   Third, the Federal Board has on several  
22 occasions considered but not adopted proposals  
23 established C&T for 21E to communities in Unit 18 even  
24 though Unit 19 is being discussed right now. Even in  
25 the absence of extenuating circumstances for some  
26 reason the Board has agreed to consider special action  
27 requests that more appropriately should have been  
28 submitted during the annual call for proposals and  
29 subjected to more comprehensive public review. The  
30 Department doesn't find compelling evidence to support  
31 this.

32

33                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, George. Any  
36 questions on the points made by the State. Carl.

37

38                   MR. MORGAN: I'm kind of questioning  
39 your reasoning. But, anyway, you know, the State used  
40 to have a February hunt over there and I used to hunt  
41 there and I hunt there almost every winter and I didn't  
42 go all the way to the Yukon. I specifically stayed in  
43 the Pike Lake area. We do have a history. It might be  
44 just a few people. But I know I used to go there every  
45 year in the February hunt if I didn't catch a moose in  
46 the fall hunt. It's not even two miles.

47

48                   One of the theories is if the water is  
49 running north, you're in 21E. If the water is running  
50 south, you're in 18. It's about 15 minutes with a

1 four-wheeler. We do go over there and use the Pike  
2 Lake area a lot. Waterfowl in the spring, waterfowl in  
3 the fall. We use that for ice fishing over at the Pike  
4 Lake area. All my mother's relations were born in  
5 Napaimiut. For some reason that village moved because  
6 I think for health problems and stuff. They were  
7 predominantly one denomination, so they went to a  
8 denomination that wasn't that. So some went to Holy  
9 Cross. None of them went to Russian Mission. They  
10 went to Upper Kalskag and Aniak. It was health  
11 reasons. The epidemic about the '30s or so.

12  
13 I'm not going to push the point. I  
14 just wanted to bring the fact out that we do use it.  
15 We've always used it.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Carl.  
18 George.

19  
20 MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Morgan.  
21 He's making biological points about what the population  
22 is. I'm just making the procedural points. We're not  
23 arguing that folks didn't use it. That's just two  
24 aspects we have here. The bottom line from the  
25 Commissioner's Office is it should go through the  
26 normal process instead of an in-season action. No  
27 argument that folks use it.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
30 comment, Carl. Any other Council comments on the  
31 State's position or questions for the State.

32  
33 (No comments)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So we're  
36 at Federal Agencies, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, BLM, have  
37 a position on this proposal.

38  
39 (No comments)

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Native and tribal,  
42 village organizations. Vince.

43  
44 MR. MATHEWS: I don't know if Ken  
45 Chase's committee has met on this, but I know Ken Chase  
46 is here, the chair of the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk,  
47 Holy Cross and I know he has comments on this.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you want to  
50 comment, Ken.

1 MR. CHASE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 Members of the committee. My name is Ken Chase. I  
3 chair the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross  
4 Advisory Group. I'll try to be short. I agree with  
5 the procedural thing, that we've been kind of blind-  
6 sided by this. We didn't have a chance to meet. I  
7 just got word of it here not too long ago and I hurried  
8 over here from Anchorage. I don't think it's  
9 appropriate the way it's been handled. We have never  
10 been notified of it that I know of.

11  
12 We have a management plan in Unit 21E  
13 that we amended a few years ago and the reason why was  
14 shortage of moose. We recognized that was a problem.  
15 We gave up our cow moose hunt to try to bring back the  
16 moose, to enhance it. There was about five things that  
17 caused those problems with the moose. Predation,  
18 flooding, bad winters, over-hunting and there was  
19 migration. If they want to hunt moose, they can go to  
20 Unit 18 now because that's where all our moose migrated  
21 to, down by Russian Mission.

22  
23 Another point is I've never heard of  
24 stats of how many moose were taken under the Federal  
25 hunt. We don't see that. I think our committee will  
26 probably vote to close the winter Fed hunt down until  
27 our moose can rebound. We've been real active on our  
28 moose for the last 30 years and we implemented the  
29 first no-fly zone in the state, so our committee is  
30 pretty adamant about being against this sort of  
31 proposal from the Kuskokwim area.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ken. Any  
34 questions from the Council. James.

35  
36 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
37 I do agree with you, Ken, on your comments. I did a  
38 personal survey of some individuals there in Holy Cross  
39 just to get an idea of what their feelings were on this  
40 issue. Carl, I have no indifference to the facts.

41  
42 MR. MORGAN: No, that's just difference  
43 of opinion.

44  
45 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I understand.  
46 Thank you. But 90 percent of them were totally not in  
47 favor of it. The traditional chief of Holy Cross wrote  
48 a little resolution here that I want to put in the  
49 record opposing this issue. I'd like to insert it into  
50 the record.

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You can read it if  
2 you like.

3  
4                   MR. J. WALKER: Okay. It says October  
5 28th, Holy Cross Tribal Council. It says to whom it  
6 may concern. The Village of Holy Cross does not agree  
7 in allowing the Kuskokwim residents to hunt in Unit 21E  
8 during the February moose hunt. Traditionally, it's  
9 always been a Unit 21E resident hunt only.  
10 Respectfully, Eugene Paul, First Chief of Holy Cross.

11  
12                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Duly  
13 recorded. Any other comments on Ken's position.

14  
15                   (No comments)

16  
17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Thanks a lot,  
18 Ken. Any other comments from Native, tribal or village  
19 organizations. Go ahead, Robert.

20  
21                   MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.  
22 Chairman. I talked to the chief of Anvik and the chief  
23 of Grayling and they oppose it with all due respect to  
24 Member Morgan because they both know him. They oppose  
25 it.

26  
27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So personal  
28 communication with other villages, Grayling and Anvik,  
29 is opposed to this special action request. At this  
30 point, seeing no others. Is there any Inter-agency  
31 Staff Committee comments.

32  
33                   MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. There is  
34 one present here and he informed me that the Staff  
35 Committee has no comments or questions on this.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Advisory  
38 groups. We kind of heard that from Ken. Neighboring  
39 Regional Council recommendations.

40  
41                   MR. MATHEWS: Yes. The Yukon-Kuskokwim  
42 Delta Regional Advisory Committee took it up earlier  
43 this month and they endorsed or supported this special  
44 action.

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. National Park  
47 Service, Subsistence Resource Commissions don't apply.  
48 Summary of written comments. Do we have written  
49 comments other than those read into the record.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: No, I'm not aware of any  
2 written comments. I don't know if Polly has any, but  
3 there's none been submitted to my knowledge on this  
4 temporary special action.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other public  
7 testimony here in McGrath on this special action  
8 request.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council  
13 recommendations. Motion to adopt is preferred so we  
14 can deliberate the proposal.

15  
16 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt. Do  
19 I have a second.

20  
21 MR. COLLINS: Second.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Second by Ray,  
24 motion by Mickey. Deliberation of the proposal. Go  
25 ahead, Carl.

26  
27 MR. MORGAN: I just want to make a  
28 comment that I'm not taking this personal or anything.  
29 It's just that we agree to disagree. There's no hard  
30 feelings. But being from the area I have no choice.  
31 I'm going to vote for the proposal. I know it's a dead  
32 issue. I knew it when I was coming in. If I don't do  
33 otherwise, I live in the area, you know. I have to go  
34 back and live there. I know I might be the only no  
35 vote.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Carl.  
38 We've heard from Robert and James on this. Any other  
39 Council members discussion or comment. Ray.

40  
41 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I'd like  
42 to comment. I've been involved in this in related  
43 issues a number of times over the years. I know when  
44 all of the Delta villages on the Yukon wanted to be in  
45 21E too. Part of the problem here is we're talking  
46 about apples and oranges. In deference to Carl there,  
47 he's talking about a small portion of the area that he  
48 used consistently and that's probably true.

49  
50 The problem is with the C&T. It talks

1 about 21E, which is a huge area. Then you're talking  
2 about a few people in those communities that use it,  
3 but when you look at the population to give them in  
4 21E, you've all of a sudden got 1,000 people or  
5 something like that that's all of a sudden eligible to  
6 hunt there. Obviously, a limit of 40 moose is not  
7 going to sustain any kind of pressure like that.

8  
9 So my main objection is I don't think  
10 this is a forum and I think more careful deliberation  
11 needs to be given to it in the regular process when  
12 you're finding C&T. If you do it in a special action,  
13 then you've made a decision which is going to set  
14 precedent if you discuss it further, even if it's only  
15 going to be in effect for a short time. So I just  
16 don't think this is the right forum for dealing with  
17 it.

18  
19 I think at some point we're going to  
20 have to deal with the issue of how do we get down to  
21 portions of subunits instead of whole units. I think  
22 at that point you might be able to work out a solution.  
23 A lot of people from 21E may not even get over in that  
24 small corner that Carl is talking about, but how do you  
25 deal with it if you're going to deal with whole units.

26  
27  
28 I guess my question would be is there  
29 any precedent for breaking down subunits on some of  
30 these C&T determinations?

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray has raised a  
33 question that is one of my primary issues with this  
34 special action request. Polly has some examples of how  
35 that has happened in certain court rulings that would  
36 allow certain delineation. Go ahead, Polly.

37  
38 DR. WHEELER: Well, a couple of things.  
39 First off, Ray raises a good point. If you're talking  
40 about a portion of the subunit but the special action  
41 request came in for the entire subunit, so that's what  
42 was responded to in the context of the special action.  
43 You all know that we were involved in a lawsuit where  
44 the Federal Subsistence Board made a decision. I'm not  
45 a lawyer. I'll start out by saying that. I'll just  
46 recount to you what I know about the Chistochina  
47 lawsuit.

48  
49 The Federal Board made a decision  
50 regarding customary and traditional use of moose in

1 Unit 12. The State appealed that decision saying they  
2 shouldn't have done the whole -- Pat, B or C?

3

4 MS. PETRIVELLI: There were three  
5 smaller areas.

6

7 DR. WHEELER: But the Federal Board  
8 made the decision for the unit. The State came back  
9 arguing that it should be a portion of a subunit. It  
10 went through the entire appeals process up to the Ninth  
11 Circuit. We just had a decision this summer and the  
12 Ninth Circuit affirmed the Federal Board's decision.  
13 In their affirmation of the Federal Board's decision  
14 and the Federal Board's process for dealing with C&T's,  
15 they did actually address the issue of taking out  
16 little tiny portions of subunits and they said if you  
17 did this as a general rule, it would make management  
18 impossible. So, that said, it doesn't mean that you  
19 can't.

20

21 I know when this Council and the  
22 Federal Board dealt with proposal 33 in 2003, there was  
23 a portion of Unit 21E that was discussed as a possible  
24 alternative. It wasn't all of 21E and it was for Unit  
25 18 communities, but it was a small portion of it.  
26 Given the fact that this issue has been before this  
27 Council a number of times, that may be an option for  
28 this Council saying that at this point in time -- I'm  
29 not telling you what to do, I'm just saying at this  
30 point in time it's apples and oranges. It's too big a  
31 piece to chew off in this process. If it was a  
32 proposal going through the regulatory process, you may  
33 be able to delineate a portion of 21E because it  
34 certainly can be done.

35

36 We had a C&T this past cycle for moose  
37 in Berners Bay, which was just a drainage of a  
38 southeastern unit, so, yes, it has been done. As a  
39 practice across the state, it's probably not going to  
40 be done excising portions of subunits or drainages, but  
41 it can be done. It has been done. Ultimately it's  
42 your recommendation and that recommendation goes to the  
43 Federal Board and the Federal Board makes the decision.

44

45 I did want to speak about just one  
46 point about the process. That is our attorneys  
47 reviewed this special action and they said, yes, it's  
48 legitimate to do this request as a special action.  
49 Again, I'm not an attorney, but I think that issue has  
50 been addressed. It also went before the Federal Board.

1 The Federal Board opted to deal with this special  
2 action, too. So what's before you today has been -- or  
3 the request itself has been looked at by the Federal  
4 Board. Thanks.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for the  
7 clarification on that. I'm in agreement with Ray on  
8 that issue. Any other Council discussion. You've got  
9 a point there?

10

11 MS. PETRIVELLI: I guess because the  
12 idea of apples and oranges I'd just like to bring this  
13 up. With the idea of apples and oranges, if this  
14 proposal came again through the regular process, I  
15 don't think there would be any new information that  
16 would be put in the proposal analysis. What you have  
17 before you is the evidence that shows the use of the  
18 people making the request. So if you get this proposal  
19 through the special action or the regular process, you  
20 wouldn't get any different information.

21

22 Then looking at Berners Bay. That's a  
23 special transplanted moose population and the State  
24 biologist called it an isolated population and I don't  
25 really know if Unit 21E is an isolated population.  
26 It's treated as a particular management unit by the  
27 State and by the Federal program and that's what the  
28 people who made the request asked to use because that's  
29 how that population was managed.

30

31 So I just wanted to add those comments  
32 about your consideration. So even if you reject it as  
33 a special action, they would make the same request in a  
34 year and it would be the same information because it's  
35 about past use of the area. So when you're thinking  
36 about this, just to take that into account so it will  
37 be easier for the Federal Board to reconcile your  
38 decision with the Y-K, who looked at this request and  
39 gave the positive recommendation. When you keep saying  
40 it's a biological concern, C&T determinations aren't  
41 made on the basis of biological concerns. They're on  
42 the basis of who used the resource, how long and how  
43 that was customarily used.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Exactly. The where  
46 issue. The biological boundaries of game management  
47 units are drawn on geologic features and so forth and  
48 that doesn't necessarily delineate where the use  
49 occurred. That's where I'm having a problem with this  
50 broad stroke of the whole Unit 21E. That's an

1 extensive area on the Yukon River.

2

3                   Personally, I'll express my opinions on  
4 the proposal at this point. I have concern that the  
5 special action request is for the entire Unit 21E and  
6 not a specific delineated area that was customary and  
7 traditionally used by the villages in Unit 19A. That's  
8 my primary concern about that. The special action  
9 request is flawed in that it is requesting areas within  
10 Unit 21E that are not customary and traditionally used.

11

12                   There is a biological concern when we  
13 have people who are on the cusp of loosing their winter  
14 hunts in Unit 21E with the amount of use and the  
15 declining perceived and documented decline of moose in  
16 Unit 21E, an additional large amount of eligibility  
17 into the winter hunt would exacerbate the issue and, of  
18 course, we'll lose the winter hunt or go under some  
19 kind of 804 allocation. That's a concern for the  
20 people that live closest to the resource on that side.

21

22                   I would have preferred to have been  
23 deliberating a proposal that delineated the use where  
24 it occurred for customary and traditional use in 21E.  
25 So those are the factors that are going to require me  
26 to vote against the special action request that's  
27 before us.

28

29                   Hopefully the Federal Subsistence Board  
30 will also look at it the same way as the Western  
31 Interior position. Hopefully a separate, different  
32 proposal during the normal wildlife cycle will be  
33 presented where that use occurred. I would probably be  
34 in favor of that type of proposal.

35

36                   Any other comments from the Council.

37

38                   MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I'd like  
39 to clarify why I said apples and oranges because I  
40 thought it was a way of resolving this. What I mean  
41 was when Anvik or Shageluk say we're opposed to this,  
42 they didn't hunt there, they're talking about their  
43 back yard. When someone from -- Carl talks about it,  
44 he's talking about a corner. So if they were talking  
45 about that corner as opposed to Shageluk's back yard or  
46 Grayling's back yard, they could probably reach an  
47 agreement on a portion, but they'll never reach  
48 agreement I don't think on that whole area because it  
49 just didn't happen. Especially in the long term it  
50 didn't happen. It would have led to a war. If

1 resources were short and you were that far away from  
2 home over there, it would be the wrong place to be I  
3 would think in the distant past.

4

5                   So I think there's a way of resolving  
6 it if it was laid out right and we're specifying what  
7 area we're talking about when we say we hunted there  
8 and somebody else says, no, you didn't, then it could  
9 probably resolve itself, but not with the whole 21E.

10

11                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

12

13                   MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Chairman. I think we should vote right now. It will  
15 come back again next year. Next year we'll have a  
16 little more answers. Geoff Beyersdorf and his crew are  
17 going to get a moose survey done come April and that  
18 will be in the records for the next year what our moose  
19 count is in 21E.

20

21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When you go before  
22 the Federal Subsistence Board, you have to have reasons  
23 why you took certain actions. These gray areas, for  
24 the person who may attend that Federal Subsistence  
25 Board meeting, you have to have why your Council took  
26 certain positions and that's why I'm having this laid  
27 out on the table. It seems daunting, but Ron has been  
28 there. You have to have documentation. Go ahead, Ron.

29

30                   MR. SAM: Yeah, I have a big problem  
31 with the term temporary. It opens up more and more  
32 cans of worms. That's all it does. The other reason  
33 I'm voting against this proposal.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

36

37                   MR. MATHEWS: I want to get the Council  
38 up to speed. This is not going to be the January  
39 regular board meeting. The Board, to my knowledge,  
40 unless the Staff has additional knowledge, has not set  
41 a date for this and it may not be a physical meeting.  
42 After you made your action I was going to ask if you  
43 wanted to listen by teleconference. I assume that  
44 option will be available, but I don't know if Warren  
45 with BIA knows if there's been a date set or anything  
46 on this.

47

48                   DR. WHEELER: A decision hasn't been  
49 made on whether this is going to be an actual face-to-  
50 face meeting or if it's going to be a Board polling and

1 a date hasn't been set. With that said, having the  
2 rationale behind the decision is important no matter if  
3 it's a Board polling situation or a face-to-face  
4 meeting.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Federal Board,  
7 when they get our recommendations, whatever we have  
8 stated during our deliberations, that's going to be  
9 displayed before the Board. If it just says yes or no,  
10 they don't know what that means. Go ahead, Vince.

11

12 MR. MATHEWS: It was already mentioned  
13 by Ken Chase and I think you caught it, is that with  
14 this temporary special action there has not been a wide  
15 distribution of this request. He represents several of  
16 those communities. I know their committee has not met,  
17 but they were not aware of this special action. So the  
18 special action process did not have the normal public  
19 outreach. That may be a reason to consider with your  
20 action. Like Ray pointed out, maybe there is some  
21 middle ground or maybe there's no middle ground, but  
22 people have not had a chance through the regular  
23 process to look at it.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Mickey.

26

27 MR. STICKMAN: Yes, Mr. Chair. I'd  
28 like to call for the question on the motion.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Polly's got one more  
31 point to make.

32

33 DR. WHEELER: Sorry. Just for the  
34 record, Warren said that he thought the Board is  
35 meeting on Monday. They have three separate meetings  
36 on Monday and Warren says he thinks maybe that will be  
37 on the agenda. That's the first I've heard of it. I  
38 just wanted to make sure I didn't misspeak on the  
39 record.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Vince.

42

43 MR. MATHEWS: The Monday meeting, my  
44 understanding by email, was that the Board is going to  
45 look at a date for the meeting, not that they're going  
46 to do anything with this issue.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Our Council is going  
49 to take a position one way or another whatever the  
50 Federal Board does, so at this point the question has

1 been called. Those in favor of Special Action Request  
2 08-01 signify by saying aye.

3

4 MR. MORGAN: With a voice of one, yea.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same  
7 sign.

8

9 IN UNISON: Aye.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've I think  
12 thoroughly deliberated that proposal. We're moving on  
13 to Unit 19A moose population management status report.  
14 Who is supposed to make that joint presentation. We've  
15 got Roger Seavoy. If you could sort of bleed over the  
16 boundary there into 21E with some of this stuff, that  
17 would be good.

18

19 MR. SEAVOY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm  
20 going to go through 19A moose as it says on the  
21 schedule there and if you'd like me to go through some  
22 of the predator control programs, I could. I might  
23 have misinterpreted the agenda where it said something  
24 about planning projects. I'll just start going through  
25 this and if you don't want to hear that, that's fine.  
26 I can make it kind of quick because I know you're in a  
27 hurry.

28

29 19A moose populations were surveyed in  
30 February 2005 and along the Kuskokwim River -- excuse  
31 me, in 2005 that was all south of the Kuskokwim River  
32 and you can see the line of red across the northern  
33 part of that count area, that kind of defines the  
34 Kuskokwim River. The point to look at here -- because  
35 we can compare this number to other numbers that I'll  
36 talk about later -- is that we had .27 moose per square  
37 mile, which is a real low density of moose. Notice  
38 there's a couple different shaded areas in that map  
39 right there. There's a western area on the Aniak side  
40 and the eastern area on the Holitna side. With funding  
41 the way it is, we're going to be able to do one of  
42 those at a time.

43

44 In February 2006, the 19A west part,  
45 Aniak area, was surveyed and we measured .38 moose per  
46 square mile there. A little bit better than what we  
47 had the previous year. In March, 2008, we measured the  
48 moose population and got an estimate for the Holitna  
49 area where we measured .44 moose per square mile. I'd  
50 like to look at the trend that's taking place on the

1 Holitna because it has something to do with what's  
2 really happening, I think, with moose in 19A. It  
3 centers around the management action that includes wolf  
4 control so we can keep that in mind as we're looking at  
5 this.

6  
7                   If you do a sub-analysis of what we  
8 looked at in 2005 for the Holitna area, you see we had  
9 .28 moose per square mile. That's increased to .44  
10 moose per square mile. We've also seen the percent of  
11 calves increase a little bit. We've also done some  
12 composition surveys. Jack and I talked about this  
13 earlier where you can see the composition on the  
14 Holitna has increased from 8 in 2004 to 35 moose per  
15 100 cows in 2007. You'll see that on the bottom left  
16 side of the screen.

17  
18                   If you look at the bottom right side of  
19 the screen, you can see that the number of moose per  
20 hour has increased from 18 up to 65. Moose per hour is  
21 an index of abundance. It's not your best way to get  
22 abundance measures but it's an index to abundance and  
23 it's consistent with what we looked at when we looked  
24 at the densities. At .28 moose per square mile, we're  
25 looking at 18 moose per hour. At .44 moose per square  
26 mile, we're looking at 65 moose per hour.

27  
28                   Prior to doing those kind of density  
29 estimates for moose populations, we used to do this  
30 kind of survey and use that as our index to abundance  
31 and you can see that 65 moose per hour in 2007 doesn't  
32 compare very favorably to what we saw in the mid '90s.  
33 In 1994 we were looking at 251 moose per hour. So you  
34 can see we're making progress but we're not quite to  
35 where we'd like to be.

36  
37                   Let's look at what's happening with  
38 wolves and wolf control in 19A now. Notice the first  
39 five packs there. Stoney River there were a couple  
40 packs when we did this survey in February 2008. Each  
41 of these were packs of two. We had been conducting  
42 wolf control for a few years, so some of the pack sizes  
43 were small. Stoney River 1, 2, Hoholitna 1, Holitna 1  
44 and 2, were five different packs we had there of 74  
45 that we found throughout the area.

46  
47                   You'll see in 2007-2008 we only took 15  
48 wolves using same day airborne methods and 24 overall.  
49 You can see in 2004 and 2005, the first couple years  
50 that we began wolf control, there were a lot of wolves

1 taken out of there and the small numbers we've seen  
2 since then are probably because it's taken a while for  
3 the wolves to recover from that. At least in the  
4 Holitna and the Hoholitna.

5  
6 If you go back to this table right  
7 here, the packs outside the Holitna, Hoholitna and  
8 Stoney Rivers are legally subject to wolf control, but  
9 there's not a lot of wolves being taken from those and  
10 I'll talk about those a little later. Actually, I can  
11 talk about it right here with this map. If you look at  
12 -- I've used the phrase that you can only do wolf  
13 control where you can do wolf control, which is about  
14 as Yogi Berra-ism as you can get.

15  
16 If you look at the area north of the  
17 Kuskokwim there's a lot of topography there that's hard  
18 to work with with airplanes if you're trying to get  
19 wolves from the air. There's a lot more trees there,  
20 so there's a lot more cover. There's a handful of wolf  
21 packs there, but it's not conducive to taking wolves  
22 using that method. It's difficult to have the kind of  
23 impact it takes to reduce predation, which is really  
24 what we're trying to do. I guess I would make it one  
25 more step. We're trying to increase the number of  
26 moose.

27  
28 If you look on the western side, the  
29 Aniak drainage, there's some areas there where wolf  
30 control can legally take place, but you've got the  
31 Yukon Delta Refuge where it's not permitted and there's  
32 private landowners throughout this area who are not  
33 allowing wolf control to take place on their land, so  
34 that's most prevalent in the western part there.

35  
36 The other thing about that Aniak area  
37 is it has kind of a perfect storm of things that are  
38 working against it as far as doing wolf control. Land  
39 ownership is an issue there, but weather is real  
40 difficult to work with. You don't get good tracking  
41 conditions there. You've got rain, wind. Whether  
42 you're able to remove enough wolves in a broad enough  
43 area at a high enough level consistently enough year  
44 after year is questionable. What we're not seeing from  
45 that area are permitted wolf control pilots taking  
46 wolves from the western side.

47  
48 So if you look at what's left in the  
49 Holitna, Hoholitna and Stoney River drainages, the  
50 topography is basically a lot of flat country there,

1 open meadows there, real good moose habitat there,  
2 wolves in that area and land ownership favors that  
3 method. Of the 15 wolves that were taken in the wolf  
4 control in 2007-2008, they were taken from those first  
5 five packs, all but a couple of them. The pack of 14  
6 is on the border between 19A and 19B. When it's in  
7 19A, it's subject to wolf control. When it's outside  
8 19A, those wolf control pilots aren't able to take them  
9 using that method.

10

11 Of the remaining four packs, each pack  
12 of two, there was seven wolves taken from those four  
13 packs of two. That's enough to expect that predation  
14 has been depressed. There's a mechanism there where  
15 you can improve moose survival because of that.

16

17 Let's go on to 21E. In 21E, as you've  
18 heard a couple times, there's wolf and moose surveys  
19 that are planned during February and March 2009. We're  
20 going to present to the Board of Game an intensive  
21 management plan that's consistent with the Yukon/Innoko  
22 Moose Management Plan, which was to try to prevent the  
23 decline of that moose population. The plan we're going  
24 to present states that if the moose population falls  
25 below a previous density of wolves, then wolf control  
26 would be initiated. Left in place, and this is an  
27 important point, we would leave that wolf control  
28 program in place until we measure a recovery and then  
29 you can take it off because your moose population has  
30 recovered. Equally important is that predator  
31 management is ongoing in that if the moose population  
32 falls below a certain density we can put it back on  
33 without having to rebuild the wheel.

34

35 In 19A, we've got an intensive  
36 management plan right now and we're conducting wolf  
37 control as part of it. The current IM plan is approved  
38 through this regulatory year. We're going to go to the  
39 Board of Game in March and probably ask for an  
40 extension. We may be able to get a renewal for five  
41 years, but we're probably looking at a one-year thing  
42 just because of work loads. Again, in subsequent  
43 plans, we're going to request that we're able to leave  
44 wolf control in place until recovery and then once it's  
45 recovered then we can take wolf control off. If moose  
46 populations fall below a certain density again we can  
47 put it back on.

48

49 19D east intensive management plan, and  
50 Ray and I have talked about this somewhat already, is

1 currently being rewritten. We're going to go to the  
2 Board of Game in March for an extension with the  
3 rewrite. There's going to be a wolf survey this  
4 winter. Mark Keach is going to conduct that as part of  
5 his research project. He'll also try to conduct moose  
6 surveys. Again, just like the other plans, we're  
7 intending to go to the Board with the idea that we'll  
8 leave wolf control in place until we get recovery and  
9 take wolf control off. If the moose population  
10 declines again, then we're going to be able to reapply  
11 wolf control. This will probably be part of an ongoing  
12 management action.

13  
14                   When you consider the intensive  
15 management law, it requires us to manage for high  
16 levels of human consumptive use with population and  
17 harvest objectives. Until we reach those population  
18 and harvest objectives we're compelled to try to bring  
19 populations to that level. This is the tool that we  
20 have for it.

21  
22                   This is the other slide that you saw  
23 already. With that, that's what I have.

24  
25                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Roger. Does  
26 the Council have questions about State's presentation  
27 on moose population and wolf control projects.

28  
29                   (No comments)

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see any.  
32 Thanks, Roger. So, Vince, where are we at here.

33  
34                   MR. MATHEWS: That would bring you up  
35 -- and I think he already covered, unless I  
36 misunderstood it, wildlife planning efforts by Fish and  
37 Game. My understanding is there's not anything else  
38 other than there's a possible bison presentation when  
39 there's time. So that would bring us up to the Board  
40 of Game bear proposals.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm not sure if the  
43 State is prepared to speak on those deferred proposals.

44  
45                   MR. MATHEWS: My understanding is  
46 they're probably not. I just didn't know if they  
47 wanted to be at the mike. In your packet you've got  
48 this thick thing that starts off with please read  
49 carefully reviewer letter. That's all the black bear  
50 proposals. I can assist you to walk through them.

1 Eastern Interior had the same packet.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: To expedite this, we  
4 reviewed these proposals last spring at our meeting in  
5 Fairbanks. This Council took positions on these  
6 proposals. The State Board of Game is going to review  
7 these proposals because they deferred them. There's  
8 one point Len Stout called me on on one of the  
9 proposals as to utilize artificial light while hunting  
10 large animals in dens. There was concern with  
11 enforcement on when that occurred and they wanted to  
12 amend the proposal to push that back until late  
13 October, 20th or 25th. Enforcement was concerned about  
14 people utilizing artificial lights for hunting other  
15 kinds of bears at other times of the year.

16

17 To expedite this Council's position on  
18 these proposals, our previous recommendation should be  
19 resubmitted to the State Board of Game and we also  
20 asked for a customary and traditional use for black  
21 bear in Unit 19, 21 and 24. The bottom line is we've  
22 taken a position on these proposals and our position  
23 should still be reiterated. Vince, do you think that  
24 would expedite things?

25

26 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. If that's the  
27 wishes of the Council. The only thing I would have to  
28 do -- for example, Proposal 78 last round is now called  
29 Proposal 52, so I may have to rework your letter or put  
30 a cover letter on explaining that.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Basically to  
33 reiterate our previous position on these same proposals  
34 that we deliberated. The State has for some reason  
35 changed the numbering to accommodate the current Board  
36 of Game's deliberation. What does the Council feel  
37 about doing that. We've already gone through these.  
38 The Chair will entertain a motion to take the same  
39 positions we did in our February 29th Western Interior  
40 Regional Council meeting on the State proposals that  
41 will be reviewed at the Alaska Board of Game under  
42 different numerical order.

43

44 MR. STICKMAN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

45

46 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded.  
49 Any further discussion by the Council.

50

1 (No comments)  
2  
3 MR. STICKMAN: Question.  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is  
6 called on that. All in favor of that motion signify by  
7 saying aye.  
8  
9 IN UNISON: Aye.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous consent.  
12 Let's see where we're at now.  
13  
14 MR. MATHEWS: That brings you up to  
15 what's .805(c) report. For the new members, that's  
16 basically the Board's response to your past  
17 recommendations on proposals. You received it in the  
18 mail already and it's on Page 47. If you have any  
19 questions on that, I'm sure the Staff will help.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We received this  
22 .805(c) letter this summer in response to various  
23 proposals. Everybody reviewed those during the summer.  
24 Any comments to the .805(c) response.  
25  
26 (No comments)  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is the Council  
29 comfortable with the Federal Board's response to our  
30 recommendations? Council seems to be comfortable with  
31 that.  
32  
33 I feel this Alaska Moose Management  
34 video, with our time constraints, can we forego that  
35 one, Vince?  
36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. If anybody wants to  
38 see it and Ray's house is willing to do it, I can just  
39 bring the laptop over and you can look at it. If you'd  
40 like to get a copy of it, I can get it. It's a joint  
41 effort of Fish and Wildlife Service and Fish and Game.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to see  
44 it but in the privacy of my own home if I can get it on  
45 a DVD. So I think we can forego that point E under 8,  
46 wildlife issues.  
47  
48 Discussion on informal exchange of fall  
49 moose season efforts and success. Does Council have  
50 comments. I know Allakaket had a real weak harvest and

1 that should enter into the winter hunt deliberations.  
2 This Council has advocated for the winter bull hunt for  
3 the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge lands. Even though  
4 those have poor success, virtually no harvest, it's  
5 incumbent upon this Council to try to provide for  
6 subsistence needs.

7

8 In the future, I would like to see --  
9 when we go for a proposal to the Federal Subsistence  
10 Board, I would like the Council to entertain at this  
11 time, not that we're submitting, but for our next  
12 round, providing a different time frame. We got into  
13 cold weather in March, we got into identification of  
14 bulls was hard, and we've had various issues with this  
15 bull only hunt.

16

17 The State of Alaska provided a bull  
18 moose hunt in April on the North Slope of the Brooks  
19 Range in Unit 26B this past spring and so the State has  
20 been opposed to our winter hunts under the auspices  
21 that there be fears of harvesting cow moose. Well, the  
22 State is already providing a bull hunt in the winter.  
23 That got me to thinking about bull moose begin growing  
24 antler around the spring equinox and by the first week  
25 in April bulls are starting to present antler. I'm  
26 thinking that we could actually provide a Federal hunt  
27 that would provide an antlered bull between the 7th of  
28 April and the 15th of April.

29

30 I talked about that with Ron. Are you  
31 still comfortable with that line of thought on that  
32 proposal since this is your last meeting?

33

34 MR. SAM: Yes, I am. There was also  
35 some discussion with our State people, Glen Stout, this  
36 time to see what we could do about the November hunt,  
37 too. I was wondering if any Staff knows anything about  
38 this because this was being pursued by a local  
39 resident.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a November  
42 bull hunt?

43

44 MR. SAM: Yes.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be in the  
47 State proposals which will be submitted in '09. If  
48 you're talking about Glen Stout providing a November  
49 hunt, the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee could submit  
50 that proposal. When is that, Rita?

1 MS. ST. LOUIS: It's early December.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Of '09. That would  
4 be a proposal that could be submitted by the Koyukuk  
5 River Advisory Committee. There's areas within the  
6 Western Interior Region where instead of losing our  
7 winter hunts because of fears of harvesting cows, like  
8 in 21E, we could go for these antlered bull in April.  
9 It's still winter. You can still travel. The larger  
10 bulls start to present. Those are the healthier moose.  
11 Small bulls. Like caribou. I just want to cast that  
12 out there so people can think about that. We'll be  
13 making proposals in our spring meeting in March, which  
14 may be in Aniak.

15

16 Any other exchange on that. Ray.

17

18 MR. COLLINS: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I  
19 raised this issue at the Parks meeting of the Chairs.  
20 My concern is we're not very flexible when it comes to  
21 weather and things and the only tool we seem to be  
22 using is these special actions and they can't respond  
23 in time. They're usually a couple of weeks to get  
24 those through. In our discussion there, it was brought  
25 up that there is some precedent now with some seasons  
26 where they're being set with the opening to be  
27 announced. So if we take some action with guidelines  
28 to set these up ahead of time, like an extension in the  
29 fall. The condition would be if a certain number of  
30 moose weren't taken, if we knew what the subsistence  
31 need was, would they be able to extend the season  
32 automatically five days without going through all these  
33 special actions.

34

35 My argument is this. The Federal regs  
36 under ANILCA is supposed to provide an opportunity for  
37 subsistence hunters. Well, the opportunity is five  
38 days or 15 days, but if nobody is able to take what  
39 they need during that time and the resource is still  
40 there, have we really provided an opportunity. We need  
41 to be more flexible.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We talked about that  
44 down in Ruby. Trigger points when communities don't  
45 meet subsistence, their normal subsistence amounts,  
46 that we would trigger into basically a season  
47 extension. That could be a proposal. Ron.

48

49 MR. SAM: The other thing that bothers  
50 us, we have so many different lands. We had a special

1 five-day early hunt, but then you had to go about 60,  
2 70 miles up the Koyukuk River in order to attempt to  
3 harvest that. Then the State season opened up and we  
4 had certain areas to harvest them and then we had five  
5 extra days that shot us almost down to Hughes that we  
6 had harvest them. By that time people had already  
7 spent upwards of seven, 800 dollars in gas. We are  
8 dictated too by our land situation and that creates a  
9 hardship. When we had that winter hunt, this is middle  
10 of March, we had 40, 50 below. Again, that's a land  
11 issue and where you could hunt became another issue.  
12 The State agent who sells us our moose harvest tickets  
13 was out there marking between Allakaket and Bettles.  
14 We've got five foot of snow, you know. We've got an  
15 acre here and there we could hunt.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments  
18 on how the fall season went and how to address meeting  
19 subsistence needs. Mickey.

20  
21 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, Jack. I think  
22 it's important for the rest of the Council here to know  
23 last year when I brought it up, throughout the year  
24 Kenton and Kevin has come out to Nulato because I  
25 thought it would be a good idea for an opportunity for  
26 the folks out there. It seemed there was not consensus  
27 of actually wanting it, some for it, some against it.  
28 If you look at the moose numbers in the last couple  
29 years, the folks in Nulato have been on average doing  
30 pretty good. They're having more success in the Kaiyuh  
31 Flats. There's a lot of people successful up the  
32 Koyukuk River. For the most part, I think the folks  
33 actually want you to come to Nulato again and discuss  
34 it again in an open forum. Sometimes they really  
35 believe to enhance the moose population out there and  
36 some of them don't want it.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ron.

39  
40 MR. SAM: Thank you again, Mr.  
41 Chairman. I guess my request then would be to address  
42 our next fall moose hunt that one bull anywhere on  
43 anybody's land, even with the extended season.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We made that  
46 proposal before the State Board of Game and they failed  
47 the proposal. There was inadequate deliberation on the  
48 Unit 26B proposal we had. I think it was number 63.  
49 The bull/cow ratios were completely adequate to provide  
50 for additional hunting opportunity on the Native

1 corporation and village corporation lands, which could  
2 be closed to non-shareholders at the discretion of the  
3 landowner. The Board of Game did an incorrect  
4 deliberation on that proposal and I was at that meeting  
5 and I was annoyed with only having five minutes of  
6 comment and the State is not providing for subsistence  
7 needs to those landowners local to these villages.  
8 When AFN is discussing this exodus of these villages  
9 and the hardships that are being endured and the high  
10 cost of fuel and so forth. It is incumbent upon the  
11 Board of Game to provide a subsistence priority and  
12 extension of the season. We went through the Board of  
13 Game process for a five-day extension to the first of  
14 October and they failed the proposal. Didn't even  
15 deliberate the proposal. Deliberated the first  
16 proposal of our four that would have done that and they  
17 took the easiest one to fail down in 21B and they  
18 failed all the proposals on that basis. That was  
19 inadequate deliberation in the State Board of Game. If  
20 I had a lawyer, I'd have requested reconsideration on  
21 that.

22  
23 Ron is right. We need to submit those  
24 types of proposals to provide for subsistence needs  
25 whether it's the State Advisory Committee procedures or  
26 the Federal Subsistence Board. There's a real need to  
27 attain a bull killed -- as I tell all these biologists,  
28 a bull killed in the fall is a cow saved in the winter.  
29 So you can take it however you'd like to believe it.  
30 The reality is we have to provide for subsistence needs  
31 and the Board of Game has been inadequate in providing  
32 for local needs closest to the landowners. We need to  
33 resubmit that proposal at the next Board of Game  
34 meeting in March of 2010.

35  
36 Any other comments on future proposals,  
37 then we're going to have to move on in this agenda.

38  
39 (No comments)

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we've  
42 belabored this need for additional proposals. We're at  
43 the 2007 annual report portion. We received that in  
44 the summertime. Does anybody have any comment on that.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've reviewed  
49 that. The 2008 annual report, we usually take topics  
50 at this time of year. I will throw out the first

1 topic. I was unsatisfied with the Board's response to  
2 our reply regarding maintaining viable ungulate  
3 populations and a management strategy. Issue number  
4 one, the Federal Subsistence Board's response was  
5 providing for telemetry projects and various issues  
6 like that. It did not address our request for a  
7 management strategy to address this issue of statewide  
8 management objectives for moose and caribou with  
9 inadequate bull/cow ratios set in management  
10 objectives. There is no management objectives in  
11 various areas on caribou and moose. So our request was  
12 for basically a strategic plan like they did on  
13 fisheries, drawing up data that's recognized in the  
14 data that adequate bull/cow ratios are necessary for  
15 maintenance of ungulate populations. So there's lot of  
16 documentation that strategic planning could be used.  
17 And those documentations should be -- certain  
18 parameters of population should be set for all of the  
19 moose and caribou within our region and the state of  
20 Alaska in general. So I think that this topic should  
21 be resubmitted to the Federal Subsistence Board. They  
22 didn't adequately address our strategic management  
23 plan. The Federal Subsistence Board should go back  
24 through the strategic management plan on ungulate  
25 harvest and maintenance of populations.

26

27 Does anybody want to comment on that  
28 one.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other Council  
33 members that have points of concern to put into the  
34 annual report. Vince.

35

36 MR. MATHEWS: You talked about earlier  
37 that this would be the appropriate spot to put in local  
38 hire, which is Section .1308 in ANILCA. My suggestion  
39 on that, and I'll work with the Chair on it, would be  
40 in the statute it says that the Secretary from time to  
41 time will prepare a report to Congress that you would  
42 like those reports on the local hire and then also  
43 possibly stress the reason for this local hire and how  
44 it's prescribed in there. I can read it to you, but it  
45 basically was supposed to be there and now it's in  
46 question either at Office of Personnel Management level  
47 where it says here, after consultation with OPM that  
48 the Secretary shall establish a program. So there  
49 appears to be a breakdown. I've talked to Refuge Staff  
50 on it and it's not clear what's really going on. Park

1 Service may have briefed you guys as SRC chairs, but  
2 there seems to be a breakdown between OPM and what's  
3 required in ANILCA.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

6

7 MR. COLLINS: Just the briefing we had,  
8 it was raised by the director of Denali Park in that  
9 they have a large number of local hires that have been  
10 hired under that. The system has been working in other  
11 words out of Healy and Cantwell. They've had 40, 50  
12 people hired every summer and all of a sudden now that  
13 procedure is on hold until this is resolved. We should  
14 probably state that the current system is working  
15 because we have seen local people hired on the various  
16 refuges gone on to become biologists, managers and so  
17 on. Meanwhile, those local people have provided  
18 important input.

19

20 One of the concerns I would have if  
21 they go to a completely nationwide system out there,  
22 you're not only going to have the local hires that can  
23 come from Outside, you already have the managers that  
24 often come from Outside that know nothing about  
25 subsistence. Those local people make a valuable  
26 contribution of orienting the new staff that comes in  
27 on what's been happening. If they're all new, it would  
28 be a whole different kind of management. So somehow  
29 this needs to be resolved and keep that local hire in  
30 there.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .1308 of ANILCA  
33 provides for local hire and the knowledge base that  
34 local people bring to the agencies. I feel it's  
35 completely within our purview because we interact with  
36 the agency staff and it's better to interact with  
37 people who know what the problems are. Like we've got  
38 Eleanor back there. Local hires understand what local  
39 conditions are. They're a benefit to the agencies and  
40 we should submit this as an annual report topic. We  
41 will insert the .1308 language into the Federal  
42 Subsistence Board, which is made up of the agency  
43 heads, BLM, Fish and Wildlife, et cetera.

44

45 Any other topics for the annual report.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We won't have any  
50 other annual report topics. We'll just act on these at

1 our spring meeting.

2

3 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. The process is that  
4 you bring up topics now and then I draft up a draft of  
5 it, run it by the Chair or who he designates and then  
6 that draft comes before you at your next meeting, then  
7 you adopt it and it's submitted.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. If the  
10 Council is comfortable with the annual report topics,  
11 including the exploration of fluidity of management  
12 issue, I feel comfortable with these 2008 annual report  
13 topics.

14

15 We're to the organization reports,  
16 briefings on timely and concerns and issues relating to  
17 subsistence, Native corporations. Do we have any  
18 Native corporations here that want to speak before the  
19 Council.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see any.  
24 Office of Subsistence Management, status on rural/non-  
25 rural request for reconsideration. Do we really need  
26 to.....

27

28 MR. MATHEWS: No, it's just an  
29 informational item. You can look at it on Page 66.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Alaska Department of  
32 Fish and Game, Wildlife Division. We've had comments  
33 on those various issues that have been before the  
34 Council. Subsistence Division, update on traditional  
35 ecological knowledge and harvest, survey of non-salmon  
36 project. Did you want to make a comment on that,  
37 Caroline?

38

39 MS. BROWN: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
40 Council. I actually have a PowerPoint on that, so it  
41 depends on whether or not you want me to give it. The  
42 project is completed, so this is a report to you guys  
43 on the results of that project, which I can provide to  
44 Vince in hard copy that he can distribute to you or I  
45 can do the PowerPoint.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Maybe you could  
48 provide us the hard copy and sort of an overview.

49

50 MS. BROWN: Without the PowerPoint.

1                                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Without the  
2 PowerPoint.

3  
4                                   MS. BROWN: The traditional ecological  
5 knowledge and harvest survey of non-salmon fish in the  
6 middle Yukon region is a project that spanned from 2005  
7 and it's just coming to an end. The results are just  
8 now going out for community review. The purpose of the  
9 study was to document traditional ecological knowledge  
10 of non-salmon fish in the middle Yukon and that  
11 includes Tanana, Ruby, Galena, Nulato and Kaltag. Also  
12 to assess harvest of all non-salmon fish species for  
13 one year.

14  
15                                   Just as an aside, part of that project  
16 was to work -- one of the partners on that project was  
17 the tribal council and we worked with the students at  
18 the GILA Charter School in Galena to have them do the  
19 data collection in Galena and some of the initial  
20 analysis to get high school kids more involved with  
21 wildlife and fish management and research.

22  
23                                   To document the traditional knowledge  
24 we did key respondent interviews. I think the proposal  
25 suggested we would do 25 to 30. We ended up doing 41,  
26 so we exceeded that goal in the five communities. We  
27 had an average of about 90 percent participation in the  
28 household survey across the communities with the  
29 exception of Galena because of its size.

30  
31                                   Very briefly summarizing the results,  
32 the hard copy will be useful for you in seeing the  
33 results of the harvest survey, which are interesting,  
34 and in the PowerPoint there's one slide that provides  
35 the harvest survey results for the middle Yukon  
36 communities. There's a second slide that actually  
37 compares those results across all the other regions in  
38 the interior that we've done similar projects.

39  
40                                   In the middle Yukon communities, strong  
41 community patterns emerged in the key respondent  
42 interviews and also that were consistent with the  
43 harvest survey results. Things like Tanana and Galena  
44 where there's a very strong commitment to dog teams you  
45 saw very different harvest patterns and use patterns,  
46 versus communities like Kaltag and Nulato, which  
47 maintain historical uses of Kaiyuh Flats and things  
48 like that.

49  
50                                   There's also a slide where we paid

1 particular attention to the documentation of place  
2 names, especially in Kaltag and Nulato, because there  
3 was such a rich history of that.

4

5 I guess that would be it. One last  
6 thing. I'd just like to thank all of the communities  
7 that did participate, the key respondents, the village  
8 research assistants, the kids at GILA and last but not  
9 least OSM for funding it. That's it.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
12 comments from the Council.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So we've  
17 covered Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We're at  
18 Bureau of Land Management, Daniel Sharp and others.  
19 They've got this draft subsistence timber policy, which  
20 has been an issue before this Council since 2006. So  
21 just an overview of that. Go ahead, Tim.

22

23 MR. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman. Council  
24 members. My name is Tim Craig. I work for the central  
25 Yukon field office of BLM. I think you've got a  
26 handout in front of you. I've highlighted in yellow  
27 things I think you might be most interested in. I'm  
28 going to distill that down even further because I think  
29 you want to talk to Dan about this new policy.

30

31 First of all, the Central Yukon  
32 Management Plan, the Utility Corridor Management Plan,  
33 has been delayed another year because of lack of  
34 funding. We conducted four fish projects in or very  
35 near the Western Interior region and you can see the  
36 results there. They're in green, numbers 1 through 4,  
37 and the first three are the Tozitna River that's  
38 technically in the Eastern Interior, but it's right on  
39 the border there. Probably the take-home message there  
40 is that both chinook and summer chum are 50 and 40  
41 percent below returns for the six-year average.

42

43 Skipping over to Page 3, the fourth  
44 study is within the Western Interior Region proper in  
45 the Sulukna River sheefish stock assessment. We've got  
46 a biologist working on a master's degree there. The  
47 preliminary results show that there's a spawning  
48 population in the Sulukna of about 2,00 sheefish.

49

50 Skipping to Page 4 under mining to the

1 Koyukuk Mining District there are a few things there I  
2 thought you might be particularly interested in. Ralph  
3 Hamm has completed an eight-mile long road into Marion  
4 Creek and has gated the road to restrict OHV use. That  
5 was a proposal by your Chairman to help mitigate that  
6 action.

7

8 BLM has issued a notice of non-  
9 compliance for operators in Sheep Creek. That might be  
10 of interest to you.

11

12 Skipping down again to the bottom of  
13 Page 4, we issued a permit to BP Exploration to do  
14 exploratory drilling just two test holes access via  
15 helicopter into a canyon off of the Atigun River. The  
16 final date they could do it is November 1. When I left  
17 the office two days ago, they hadn't done it yet, so  
18 we're not sure that's going to happen.

19

20 Page 5, under realty actions, this is  
21 in the Eastern Interior but it's right on the border.  
22 They're preliminary studies to study the efficacy of  
23 building a road from the Dalton Highway to Stevens  
24 Village going on right now.

25

26 Doyon has made a final prioritization  
27 on their lands and I've outlined in pink or magenta all  
28 the lands that are in the Western Interior. I thought  
29 you might be interested in seeing which lands they've  
30 set as final prioritization. Conveyance could be as  
31 early as January or February on those lands. They'd be  
32 private lands then, of course.

33

34 Under recreation we've issues no new  
35 hunting guide permits since I last spoke to you last  
36 March. On top of Page 6, the BLM is set to designate  
37 the Dalton Highway as a National Scenic Byway, which  
38 would increase funding for infrastructure there.

39

40 Under the Arctic Interagency Visitor  
41 Center this year, they started to log the number of  
42 hunters coming through the center and they logged 289  
43 hunters there. They completed a survey and between  
44 2005 and 2007 -- I'm sorry, in 2005 and 2007 four and  
45 five percent of the visitors to the AIVC in Coldfoot  
46 were sport hunters.

47

48 Also, we issue subsistence hunting  
49 permits out of the AIVC and a question arose this year  
50 about whether State seasonal workers that reside in the

1 utility corridor qualify for subsistence permits and  
2 Dan Sharp settled the question with a definitive no.  
3 So that's an established policy for us now.

4  
5 I would like to point out under  
6 vegetation on Page 6 for three years we've led a  
7 volunteer effort to hand pull weeds that are marching  
8 up the Dalton Highway at an alarming rate and most of  
9 the work we're doing is north of 98 Mile because that's  
10 the hydrologic divide between the Koyukuk and the  
11 rivers that flow right into the Yukon proper. It's  
12 effective, but we feel strongly that it's not going to  
13 be effective in the future, so we're developing a weed  
14 management plan. One of the alternatives would be an  
15 application of herbicides. It's precedent setting and  
16 important. Anybody that lives in the Koyukuk is going  
17 to want to watch and maybe be involved there.

18  
19 Before the plan is implemented, of  
20 course it will go through NEPA, public scoping, we'll  
21 have to do an .810, so there will be plenty of time to  
22 comment, but you might want to put that in the back of  
23 your mind that's ongoing.

24  
25 Moving on to wildlife. Fish and Game  
26 and BLM conducted herd composition counts again in the  
27 Hodzana Hills and Ray Mountains. It's the highest  
28 number of calves we've ever come up with, 28, in both  
29 those herds.

30  
31 I've been telling you about a sheep  
32 study that we're successful in getting a grant from  
33 NFWF, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Fish and  
34 Game has come up with the money, so we're going to be  
35 implementing that project this spring. That will be a  
36 mortality study in the utility corridor. We've had a  
37 preliminary meeting about it and I think it's going to  
38 be Snowden Mountain and Poss Mountain, are the two  
39 study areas.

40  
41 Next, as many of us have told you  
42 before about this project that Fish and Game, BLM,  
43 Kanuti National Park Service has embarked on with  
44 radiotelemetry study on moose. On Page 85 in your book  
45 is an inter-agency report on that. I can give you a  
46 brief rundown on that or you can just read it. Kind of  
47 the basic is that we put 58 collars on moose and last  
48 week we put 10 more. Some of those collars are GPS  
49 collars that are going to give us lots of information  
50 like on daily movements and habitat use and maybe the

1 effects of human activities on moose. We've already  
2 started to glean some real good information that we  
3 have very healthy moose. They're the cleanest in the  
4 state. That's a quote from the State wildlife vet.  
5 They have a high pregnancy and twinning rate.

6  
7 The last thing there is BLM, Fish and  
8 Game and Koyukuk and Nowitna -- actually, I should have  
9 put BLM at the end of the line there because the other  
10 two agencies are putting most of the money in, are  
11 going to be involved in a Geospatial Population  
12 Estimation in 21B and we're going to start that on  
13 Thursday.

14  
15 That's all I have to say.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was very  
18 concise. Thank you. We're at what point. Okay,  
19 Geoff.

20  
21 MR. BEYERSDORF: I think I can even be  
22 more concise. For the record, Mr. Chair, members of  
23 the Council, Geoff Beyersdorf with the Bureau of Land  
24 Management, Anchorage field office. I just have a  
25 couple things I want to touch on.

26  
27 First off, I'd like to introduce Dan  
28 Sharp. He's a new State subsistence office  
29 coordinator. In February I came before you and told  
30 you about the Bering Sea/Western Interior land and  
31 resource development plan that BLM was looking to start  
32 in 2009. Similar to the Central Yukon, due to funding  
33 constraints, it doesn't look like we're going to be  
34 funded for that in '09 and we're looking at potentially  
35 starting that in 2010.

36  
37 Another thing I wanted to bring up with  
38 you -- I'll probably be staying after your meeting.  
39 I'm going to be meeting with Roger Seavoy and Steve  
40 Kovach and the other Staff from Fish and Wildlife  
41 Service and we're looking at trying to plan the  
42 logistics and coordinating the 21E moose and wolf  
43 surveys for February, March of '09. Also it's going to  
44 be a mini-comp survey for 21E and working with the  
45 State on that in that area that Robert's been talking  
46 about.

47  
48 Also, just for the record, Robert, you  
49 mentioned BLM doing moose surveys in 19A and at this  
50 point we don't have any plans for that. I just talked

1 to Roger and it looks like what Roger is planning to do  
2 is work with Fish and Wildlife Service in 2010 and I  
3 will talk with Roger about participating in that.

4

5                   The last thing I wanted to go to.  
6 Having just come on board with the BLM, I know that the  
7 Western Interior has been pretty interested in what's  
8 going on with the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. I was able  
9 to start working with the area biologist down there,  
10 Jim Woolington, and started to go out with him last  
11 month. They did do composition counts on the Mulchatna  
12 herd earlier in October and I just wanted to relay to  
13 you, and there's further information in the back on the  
14 last page, but it looks like the calf/cow ratios for  
15 the combined fall 2008 surveys are increased from the  
16 fall 2007. Looking at 23 calves per 100 cows. Also  
17 the bull/cow ratios, although not as high as 2007, they  
18 still are on an increase compared to the low of 2005.  
19 There was a photo census done this summer and Fish and  
20 Game is looking at trying to complete that. Once that  
21 is completed I will pass that information on to you.  
22 I've started to become actively involved with the  
23 Mulchatna Working Group.

24

25                   With that I'll end unless there's  
26 questions.

27

28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on  
29 that. My one question would be is there a population  
30 estimate from that photo inventory?

31

32                   MR. BEYERSDORF: No, I don't have it at  
33 this point.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean you will.

36

37                   MR. BEYERSDORF: Yes, we'll hope to  
38 have population and some productivity information  
39 broken down from there and then I'll pass that back.

40

41                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another question is  
42 what did those bulls look like? Were they getting any  
43 bigger bulls in there?

44

45                   MR. BEYERSDORF: I think one of the  
46 concerns, the small bull component of that population  
47 is around 46 percent and the large bull component has  
48 decreased slightly, although it is still above the 2005  
49 levels. Fish and Game out of Palmer is starting to  
50 take a look at that. I know they put some collars

1 specifically on bulls this year to try and address that  
2 issue.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions  
5 from the Council.

6

7 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.  
8 Chairman. Geoff, I thought we were going to do a  
9 survey for 21E. Am I correct?

10

11 MR. BEYERSDORF: Excuse me. Through  
12 the Chair to Member Walker. What we're looking at for  
13 21E is to try to do moose and wolf surveys in February  
14 and March and those will be mostly recruitment type  
15 surveys. We can't do composition counts at that time.  
16 However, I have talked to Roger and Roger can correct  
17 me if I'm wrong here, we're looking to do a two-day,  
18 kind of a mini composition count survey this November  
19 if we can. However, when I got off the plane this  
20 morning, I found out from Steve Kovach that the refuge  
21 plane here is not available. I'm going to see what I  
22 can put together when I get back to Anchorage.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Sounds  
25 good. Robert.

26

27 MR. R. WALKER: That's what I  
28 understood. My other question here, Geoff, we have all  
29 these transporters and guides here applying for 21E,  
30 Federal land. Again, when we do have a special hunt  
31 after the regular hunt in September, we are competing  
32 with these very people here because they're all parked  
33 right there on the Federal land and we don't have very  
34 much Federal land in 21E, especially around Anvik.  
35 When there's low water, we get the Grayling people  
36 hunting where we hunt. So we're kind of like getting  
37 crowded.

38

39 Another question we brought up when we  
40 do the GASH meeting is how many guides are we going to  
41 have here to partake in this hunt in the fall? We're  
42 going to be tripping over each other.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Geoff.

45

46 MR. BEYERSDORF: Member Walker. As Tim  
47 pointed out, one thing I wanted to mention is that  
48 there has not been an increase in the number of permits  
49 that we have issued. The one thing I see here is  
50 there's only been two in regards to moose guides in the

1 area and it looks like they took a total of three for  
2 last year. I think kind of what I'm hearing in that  
3 phone conversation we had earlier this year, it sounds  
4 like one of the issues you wanted to try to take a look  
5 at was the number of non-local sport hunters coming to  
6 the area. Is that more your concern or the guides?  
7

8 MR. R. WALKER: Apparently we do have  
9 some new unknown guides who are just local people that  
10 are guiding people for a price here and it's getting a  
11 little out of control in 21E.  
12

13 MR. BEYERSDORF: Through the Chair to  
14 Member Walker. One of the things that Roger and I have  
15 talked about is potentially when we're out to do these  
16 moose surveys this next spring is to actually give a  
17 presentation in the villages with regard to moose  
18 management. One of the thoughts I had was to  
19 potentially include our law enforcement and recreation  
20 person in there to help discuss the policies and try  
21 and look at your issue you just brought up.  
22

23 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Geoff.  
24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray.  
26

27 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. You raised  
28 the issue in here of those invasive plants and it said  
29 targeted ones you were after. Is there any handout  
30 that identifies those and why the concern? The reason  
31 I'm asking that is I know I heard about the white  
32 clover that's a concern in some areas. That's showing  
33 up in McGrath too, but I don't know if it's the same.  
34 So if villages don't know about this, those things can  
35 be brought into the villages and spread up and down the  
36 river as well as on the highway corridors.  
37

38 MR. BEYERSDORF: Member Collins through  
39 the Chair. Yeah, BLM has some handouts and I can bring  
40 a whole bunch to the next meeting and pass them out.  
41 There's a number of plants in the Dalton, not just  
42 sweet white clover. It's the more common one and it  
43 ironically has been used as fodder in other places as a  
44 farm crop. The problem is that it grows in disturbed  
45 areas. As you know, the rivers in Alaska have  
46 extensive gravel bars that are populated by willow,  
47 which is a principal moose habitat, and most of the  
48 biologists I've talked to in the state are really  
49 nervous because in at least three places in the state  
50 white sweet clover has gone under those gravel bars and

1 completely taken them over. There's some preliminary  
2 information coming out of a graduate project from UAA  
3 that it may affect willows. Even if it doesn't, it may  
4 affect the hydrology of how those rivers work.

5  
6                   Anyway, we're nervous about it. We'd  
7 just as soon it wasn't there. It's kind of too late in  
8 some places, but it's not north of 98 Mile.

9  
10                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Dan,  
11 your subsistence timber policy. Go ahead.

12  
13                   MR. CRAIG: Chairman. Members of the  
14 Council. My name is Dan Sharp. I'm with BLM in  
15 Anchorage. The reason I'm before you is basically in  
16 response to a letter from this Council to the Federal  
17 Subsistence Board requesting clarity on Agency's  
18 management of other renewable resources besides fish  
19 and wildlife, basically timber and other vegetative  
20 resources.

21  
22                   BLM created this draft policy that's  
23 being submitted to various RAC's, tribal entities and  
24 such for comment. We're not looking for action from  
25 the Council at this point, just comments as to how this  
26 particular policy addresses subsistence needs for  
27 timber and other vegetative resources.

28  
29                   In summary, just to break it down, the  
30 policy is divided into a couple sections. The first  
31 one tries to address the subsistence priority that BLM  
32 recognizes based on Title VIII of ANILCA. Section two  
33 talks about firewood. What we're trying to do there is  
34 to allow harvest of up to 15 cords per calendar year  
35 without require a written authorization. Currently BLM  
36 has a free use timber regulation. The regulation first  
37 promulgated in 1878, I believe, to address  
38 sternwheelers coming up various rivers and such. It's  
39 worthwhile then to bring this up to modern times and  
40 bring the policy around to address requirements in  
41 ANILCA.

42  
43                   This is the first cut at this. The  
44 third section goes on to address subsistence harvest of  
45 timber resources, basically house logs or timber  
46 requests in excess of 15 cords. The other section is  
47 special forest products basically for folks interested  
48 in any sort of berry picking, birching, whatever other  
49 needs in that respect. The last section is on amounts  
50 exceeding subsistence needs.

1 I've had some comments back from the  
2 Chair and we're working on trying to incorporate his  
3 fairly substantive comments within the policy. I'll  
4 try to capture some of those to save having to repeat  
5 them, but I think the request we've had is to  
6 strengthen the priority use and C&T language that's  
7 captured in the policy, provide language that  
8 recognizes harvest practices, harvesting in multiple  
9 locations and selective harvest and girdling trees,  
10 ease the methods of reporting requirements such as  
11 email and such so that authorizations aren't onerous or  
12 so, provide for better public outreach to address what,  
13 if any, agency concerns are with respect to timber  
14 harvesting, define access in ANILCA terms, make a clear  
15 distinction between subsistence use and commercial  
16 harvests. Also to allow proxy harvesting and in some  
17 fashion make sure that language allows that. The other  
18 is to address the priority use and priority needs via  
19 permit stipulation for folks that are non-Federally  
20 qualified subsistence users.

21  
22 In general, I think we're trying to  
23 address the Chair's comments here. What we're finding  
24 is that a statewide policy is a difficult thing to  
25 craft with specific language addressing restrictions  
26 and uses and such. The fallback position may be to try  
27 to capture the subsistence priority language, some of  
28 the boilerplate language that's in here and perhaps  
29 empower area managers to address unique needs within  
30 specific area.

31  
32 I'll leave it at that as a brief  
33 summary and address any questions folks have.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This issue arose in  
36 our community. We were surrounded by BLM land and  
37 harvest wood. The majority of our use of subsistence  
38 in biomass weight is trees. That far exceeds anything  
39 we eat. So wood resource in rural Alaska is very  
40 important and becomes more important as these fuel  
41 prices increase. So it's very important to have a  
42 policy that reflects customary and traditional use  
43 practices that entail what people actually do with the  
44 least amount of impact to the subsistence users through  
45 a regulatory process. In the area where I'm at, I  
46 don't consider our impact on the resource as negligible.  
47 But there may be areas in Alaska that have problems.  
48 To try and drive a square peg in a round hole, this is  
49 very concerning to people who live where I'm at.  
50 There's Hughes village and other villages in our region

1 that utilize resources on BLM land. So this BLM policy  
2 is very important.

3

4 My question to Council is, my position  
5 is that people utilize -- have subsistence access,  
6 boats, snowmachines and harvesting wood in the  
7 wintertime or harvesting wood by girding trees or  
8 ringing trees to kill them and let them stand to dry.  
9 That's a customary practice where I live. I want to  
10 know if other Council members utilize these same  
11 harvest practices.

12

13 I feel this policy, as originally  
14 written, had many inadequacies, did not address what  
15 subsistence users do or what they need, so I wrote many  
16 comments and I would like other comments from the  
17 Council if they have another comments on this.

18

19 Go ahead, Ron.

20

21 MR. SAM: That practice is used pretty  
22 widely around Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia area too.  
23 After the flood in the last couple years the trees seem  
24 to be slowly dying and we don't know what the cause of  
25 it is.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's  
28 environmental occurrences where the hot summers of '04  
29 and '05 seemed to make the beetles more active. I will  
30 harvest trees that naturally die, but if I don't have  
31 trees, I'm not going to freeze. So we have to be able  
32 to utilize customary and traditional practices.

33

34 Any other comments on this. Mickey.

35

36 MR. STICKMAN: I don't have like a  
37 Council member comment, but I'll take off my Council  
38 member hat and put on my chairman of the board for  
39 Gana-A'Yoo, Ltd., hat and it was an issue for the Gana-  
40 A'Yoo board of directors because in Galena specifically  
41 there was wood boilers and they typically used up to 30  
42 cords of wood a year. If you have 10 of these boilers  
43 in one village, it definitely has an impact on  
44 subsistence activities.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are those commercial  
47 or subsistence, the boilers?

48

49 MR. STICKMAN: They're mainly  
50 commercial. I know for sure there's one at the liquor

1 store, a couple private ones.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel it is  
4 necessary for the BLM to recognize the subsistence  
5 priority, so that's an example. In your packet I have  
6 various comments that I've written out here in my  
7 conferencing email with Dan here. I just want this  
8 Council to be aware of this issue. I don't feel that  
9 we can take any action until you're finalized your  
10 process, but I do feel it was beneficial for this  
11 Council to be aware of what is occurring and this  
12 policy, as some of the Council members have stated,  
13 does not reflect what is customary and traditional  
14 practices.

15

16 Do you have another comment, Mickey.

17

18 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah. What really  
19 brought the issue out in the open for us, the  
20 traditional use of wood, when I was a kid that's all we  
21 had was a woodstove. We didn't traditionally go out  
22 and knock down green trees 10 cords at a time and pull  
23 it out of the woods with a tractor. That's the kind of  
24 thing that was happening primarily in Galena, but it  
25 was destroying corporation land, crossing corporation  
26 land with the tractors. Once you destroy it, it just  
27 doesn't look good.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My position is that  
30 traditional subsistence harvest is low impact, so using  
31 snowmobile, dog teams, river boats, various things like  
32 that are low impact uses compared to the more  
33 mechanized uses.

34

35 You had a comment there, Ray.

36

37 MR. COLLINS: I'm wondering if there's  
38 room in that process to step back and maybe go around  
39 and determine what subsistence users are around the  
40 state in various areas on BLM lands. Something like  
41 this came up in Denali when there was a cabin supposed  
42 to be replaceable, but before they could authorize one  
43 they did a study to see where cabins were built and how  
44 they were and so on. Is there anything like that in  
45 your process in coming up with this policy of actually  
46 going out and documenting subsistence use in various  
47 areas because it might vary quite a bit and then use  
48 that to build policy.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Dan.

1 MR. SHARP: I don't believe that's  
2 built into the policy. Part of it too is BLM lands are  
3 constantly changing as lands are given over. Lands are  
4 recognized for free use timber where we do allow  
5 harvest and a lot of it is from urban areas, folks  
6 coming up. I think in general this policy is trying to  
7 liberalize what is currently on the books and make  
8 things less onerous. It isn't necessarily that the  
9 harvest is fully allocated and we're having problems  
10 with meeting subsistence needs. The other point is, as  
11 you said, recognizing where those uses occur. One of  
12 the ways that's done is when folks request  
13 authorizations and such.

14  
15 The same problems that have been  
16 addressed on wildlife issues, if that documentation  
17 isn't there, it's difficult to prove reliance on the  
18 resource, so it works both ways for us to understand  
19 where those needs are coming from. They're trying to  
20 liberalize this policy for subsistence use.

21  
22 One other point, the way BLM is funded  
23 through the Washington office is if we have documented  
24 use. We have folks using this resource and we need to  
25 gather that sort of information. We need funding to do  
26 that. It works both ways type of thing. So for us to  
27 address those needs and uses, we need to know that it's  
28 happening.

29  
30 I understand your point. I don't know  
31 that it needs to be built into the policy. It's not  
32 that finite a resource. I don't think it would receive  
33 the attention I think you're looking for.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One comment there,  
36 Vince.

37  
38 MR. MATHEWS: I just need to know from  
39 Dan, is this going to be in front of all the 10  
40 Councils and are you indicating that as you collect all  
41 these comments that you're going to come back to this  
42 Council with a policy to review again? I guess I'm  
43 asking what's the schedule.

44  
45 MR. SHARP: Through the Chair. I'm  
46 trying to get this out to as many Councils as possible.  
47 It wasn't presented in Southeast. There's not a large  
48 BLM nexus down there. Again, other resource agencies  
49 have their own policies and this only addresses BLM  
50 lands. It wasn't presented in Barrow. I'm trying to

1 put this in front of the most affected entities in  
2 addition to Native and Tribal groups.

3  
4 As far as a schedule, I was unsure what  
5 type of comments and how this policy would fly, but my  
6 intent is probably to send out a second draft probably  
7 to Councils and those folks who have responded with an  
8 interest and see how that one flies.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate -- I do  
11 want the Council to realize that I worked on this draft  
12 policy in the last week or two with Dan and he's been  
13 very responsive, incorporating various ideas that I'm  
14 bringing forward. The original draft was basically  
15 written by a forester utilizing Alaska Department of  
16 Forestry practices in an 1898 organic act, regulations  
17 that were for basically any kind of urban or non-  
18 subsistence. So I've been very satisfied with the  
19 dialogue I've been having with Dan.

20  
21 I do feel that this Council should be  
22 aware that this is a very important issue in certain  
23 areas within our region and it's going to become more  
24 and more concerning as people have to switch away from  
25 Toyo stoves at 10 bucks a gallon or something for fuel.

26  
27 So I feel we've expended this. I would  
28 enjoy seeing the next draft of this policy in the  
29 future. Thank you. Good presentations.

30  
31 How are we doing on time, Vince. Ron.

32  
33 MR. SAM: Yeah. Just a comment on Tim  
34 Craig's report. They radio collared moose. When Mike  
35 Spindler told Allakaket -- Alatna residents they were  
36 going to radio collar 60 moose, they were almost  
37 laughed out of town. They said we don't have no moose.

38  
39 (Laughter)

40  
41 MR. SAM: In three days they radio  
42 collared 58 of them. So that's a pretty good report.  
43 I appreciate that.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I really  
46 appreciate all the work that BLM is doing in the Dalton  
47 Highway Corridor area because these resource  
48 inventories and understanding these resources as they  
49 build this gas line increased use of that area is going  
50 to be integral into when to impact areas, what time

1 frames are critical, times of concern.

2

3                   You had a comment, Mickey.

4

5                   MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, one last comment  
6 on wood. One of the things the city of Galena has  
7 bestowed is a biomass to liquids project that's going to  
8 be turning wood into diesel fuel. You would think it's  
9 nothing to worry about because it's technology that  
10 takes years of planning, but actually it doesn't  
11 because it's already in use in several different  
12 countries. There's a test plant in Kenai that they're  
13 going to be finishing their testing this year, so  
14 they'll have a complete plant just sitting there.  
15 That's one of the things the city of Galena has in  
16 their plans is a biomass to liquids plants right there  
17 in Galena. That's going to take tons and tons of wood.

18

19                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. You know,  
20 they could catch logs going floating by, but I would  
21 really hate to see them clear-cut the forest around  
22 Galena.

23

24                   Geoff, go ahead.

25

26                   MR. BEYERSDORF: Mr. Chair. Members of  
27 the Council. Again, Geoff Beyersdorf with the BLM.  
28 I'll start off and say when people found out I was  
29 coming to McGrath I was asked if I could do a favor, so  
30 here's the favor.

31

32                   BLM is the administrator for the  
33 Iditarod Trail Management Plan and this year, I'm sure  
34 many of you are aware, it's a kick-off centennial for  
35 the trail. I did bring a couple items back there in  
36 regards to some stickers and pins and brochures,  
37 promotional items.

38

39                   One of the main things that I wanted to  
40 do, and this is mostly because Bill Schaff is going to  
41 be leaving and I hope, Bill, I didn't let the cat out  
42 of the bag here. Bill is going to be going to the King  
43 Salmon Refuge later on in December and Bill and his  
44 Staff have been extremely helpful to the BLM since he  
45 has been here in regards to Iditarod Trail Management  
46 and I've been asked to say thank you on behalf of BLM  
47 and also present the Innoko Refuge with a photo. So I  
48 wanted to take the opportunity to do that if that's  
49 okay.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You're under  
2 BLM time. Go ahead.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 MR. BEYERSDORF: Bill, on behalf of  
7 BLM, I'd like to say thanks to you and your Staff for  
8 all the help you've (away from microphone). This is a  
9 1953 reconnaissance map that we found in our office for  
10 you. Thank you.

11  
12 (Applause)

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's cool.  
15 Appreciate that. So we're on to the Fish and Wildlife  
16 Service, Innoko. I guess Bill has to come back up here  
17 to the table.

18  
19 MR. SCHAFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One  
20 thing about going last is a lot of stuff has already  
21 been said. A lot of the cooperative projects that we  
22 will be working on and have worked on, both with Roger,  
23 Fish and Game, Geoff with BLM, has all been stated.

24  
25 I'll go through some of this real  
26 quick. Innoko completed it's third census of the  
27 southern half of the refuge in late February of 2008.  
28 Previous efforts were conducted in 1996 and 2000. Our  
29 2004 efforts was cut short due to weather.

30  
31 Population estimates were completed  
32 under less than optimal conditions. Snow cover was  
33 good, but it was very old, resulting in a large number  
34 of accumulated tracks which reduces search efficiency.  
35 High winds occurred during part of the survey resulting  
36 in a bumpy ride and less than efficient counting  
37 conditions.

38  
39 Results. The overall population  
40 estimate for the south half of the refuge is 534 moose  
41 with a 90 percent confidence interval, which is 413-635  
42 outside numbers. This is a reduction from the previous  
43 estimates. Population estimates for the Yukon River  
44 and the Innoko River sections were also reduced in 2008  
45 compared to previous estimates. While the data clearly  
46 shows a reduction in the overall size of the  
47 population, survey crews felt that the moose were  
48 missed during the survey and that heavy snows had  
49 caused moose to be distributed differently compared to  
50 previous surveys. Conditions were not very good at

1 all.

2

3

4                   The refuge was scheduled to conduct a  
5 composition count earlier this month, but it was not  
6 completed due to lack of aircraft availability. We had  
7 a Super Cub assigned to us for about three months  
8 towards the end of summer, beginning of fall. OAS have  
9 taken that airplane back, so we're back to just the 185  
10 Cub, so Kenton is now my best advocate for getting us  
11 an airplane because we share one with the Galena  
12 office.

12

13

14                   The refuge will attempt to conduct a  
15 composition count next fall. I know that's something  
16 you were purposefully asking for and we tried but we  
17 just couldn't get it done under the conditions we had.

17

18

19                   Other projects this year, we conducted  
20 our annual goose banding and avian influenza  
21 monitoring, waterfowl counts, invasive species  
22 monitoring. Innoko Refuge is also looking at several  
23 invasive species of both plant and insects. One of the  
24 big insects I'm personally concerned with is the larch  
25 borer, which is really affecting large population out  
26 on the refuge. I don't know if you're noticing that  
27 down in lower areas, it's really getting hammered  
28 heavily because of larch borer.

28

29

30                   We also provided sport and logistical  
31 assistance to fisheries, Randy Brown and John Burr,  
32 which is already mentioned on the whitefish surveys  
33 that are going on on the refuge. We worked with  
34 regional archeological investigations on Iditarod Trail  
35 as well as other historical sites on the refuge. We've  
36 worked on the Kuskokwim side with Ken Harper and his  
37 whitefish out of the Kenai office doing whitefish  
38 surveys on the Kuskokwim River.

38

39

40                   I'll close it in addition to the fact  
41 that we did acquire a new person this year, we have a  
42 pilot law enforcement position that came on the end of  
43 the summer. He was away doing training for most of the  
44 last two and a half months. Hopefully that position  
45 will be up and running here in another month or so.

45

46

47                   The last thing I'll add is, as Geoff  
48 mentioned, I have accepted a position of refuge  
49 manager, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof Refuges stationed in  
50 King Salmon and I'll be leaving McGrath and going to  
51 King Salmon approximately November 23rd. I would like

1 to express my appreciation to the Council, all the  
2 people I've worked with on the Council over the years  
3 and I'm going to miss you.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks a lot, Bill.  
6 Any questions on Innoko's presentation. Go ahead,  
7 Robert.

8  
9 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman. Bill, when we look at the moose population  
11 estimates, it has dropped considerably on the back  
12 here. This is 21A?

13  
14 MR. SCHAFF: A small portion of 21A --  
15 21A, 21E and a very small portion of 21D. So it's  
16 mostly 21A, yes.

17  
18 MR. R. WALKER: It seems like we're not  
19 going to have anything migrating out of 21A down to  
20 21E. Again, congratulations on your promotion. Don't  
21 cry now. I don't want you to be bawling in front of  
22 everybody.

23  
24 (Laughter)

25  
26 MR. R. WALKER: You get to buy the  
27 first 100 beers tonight. Thank you, Bill.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, James.

30  
31 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 Bill, I'd just like to say this. You're leaving at a  
33 good time. You're leaving this refuge in pretty poor  
34 shape. There's hardly any moose left. Is that why  
35 you're going to King Salmon?

36  
37 (Laughter)

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Questions or  
40 comments on Innoko's presentation.

41  
42 (No comments)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wish you well down  
45 there in Becharof. I'm hoping you have a long and  
46 happy career down there and everything is cool. Your  
47 successor I hope is aware that this Council is  
48 continuing to ask for these composition make-ups of  
49 this herd population. With that list of guides and  
50 basically unknown amounts of resident and air taxi

1 drop-offs, I'm concerned about at least having an idea  
2 of what those bull/cow ratios are throughout the whole  
3 refuge. I'm happy to see the State and BLM are going  
4 to get a mini-comp. Your successor will arrive here at  
5 what time? He'll be here for our spring meeting in  
6 March of '09?

7

8 MR. SCHAFF: Yes. A person has been  
9 selected and he's due to arrive in January, I believe.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments  
12 from the Council. Go ahead, Ray.

13

14 MR. COLLINS: Just one, Bill. I know a  
15 year or so ago the hunter success was very poor with  
16 the fly-ins, like Willow and that. What happened this  
17 year? Do you have any results back from that?

18

19 MR. SCHAFF: I apologize for not having  
20 anything written. I haven't gotten all the results  
21 back from the air taxis. We issued five air taxi  
22 permits, one water taxi and we had one guide working  
23 the Innoko Refuge. I spent a fair amount of time out  
24 there in September doing law enforcement on moose  
25 patrols. My gut feeling is the take was up this year.  
26 I don't know if it will reach the five-year average,  
27 but my gut reaction from being out there and checking  
28 hunters and watching what was taken is the take was up  
29 this year. When that information comes in, then the  
30 15th of November I'll hopefully have time to get  
31 something consolidated.

32

33 MR. COLLINS: Are you getting numbers  
34 on the number of hunter's too? I wondered if that's  
35 changed.

36

37 MR. SCHAFF: I'll get numbers on the  
38 amount of hunters that were brought in via those  
39 commercial services. I still don't have hard numbers  
40 on people who come in on their own. That's always been  
41 a guesstimate issue.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
44 comments. Don.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd  
47 like to find out what's going on in the other refuges  
48 and stuff other than my own area. Robert brought up  
49 something. What do you attribute that kind of loss to  
50 the moose density? Are you getting a lot of hunting

1 pressure or wolves?

2

3 MR. SCHAFF: That's the question every  
4 biologist in this room would like to have. If we had  
5 an answer to that question, there's a lot we could do.  
6 My feeling is it's a number of factors. There's no one  
7 issue. When we fly the surveys, we see animals in  
8 different locations. We may pick them up during the  
9 late winter, early spring when we do our surveys, but  
10 they're not being seen by the hunters earlier in the  
11 fall. There's a number of factors and it's a  
12 cumulative effect of what we're seeing.

13

14 I know that's probably not the best  
15 answer in the world, but if I had the answer, I'm sure  
16 I could get a lot of money from Roger and every other  
17 biologist.

18

19 (Laughter)

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'm sure it's  
22 a cumulative effect myself. Any other comments.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're to the  
27 Koyukuk/Nowitna report. Kevin.

28

29 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
30 Council members. Kevin Whitworth with the  
31 Koyukuk/Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge in Galena.  
32 Actually, I grew up in McGrath. I just want to say to  
33 everybody welcome to McGrath and it's good to be back  
34 here.

35

36 Just briefly, I'll go through a few  
37 things. Right now our draft comprehensive conservation  
38 plan is open for public comments for the next 90 days  
39 up until December 19th. I know Chairman Reakoff  
40 requested a draft. I don't know if you received that.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I received the short  
43 form, but I can access it on the web now.

44

45 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay. This October we  
46 went through each village meetings and we're hopefully  
47 going to go through the comprehensive conservation plan  
48 and it will be done in January.

49

50 I'm not going to go over the fish

1 portion. Gerald already went through that.

2

3 Last March in 2008 we had a March 1-5  
4 moose hunt and we set a quota of eight moose and 11  
5 were shot, six cows and five bulls. Two law enforcement  
6 issues did come up and State Troopers issued two  
7 citations. Due to these citations, we're going to go  
8 up to Huslia and have a pre-season moose hunt meeting  
9 and kind of go over education and permitting with this  
10 village.

11

12 We had the check station open on the  
13 Nowitna River this year from August 28 through October  
14 1. We had a total of 110 moose hunters check in, which  
15 is slightly below the average of about 144. Total  
16 moose harvested was about 41, which is usually about  
17 44.

18

19 On the Nowitna Unit 21B we had our  
20 Federal subsistence moose hunt September 26 through  
21 October 1. Twelve permits were issued, six to Tanana  
22 and six to Ruby. As of two weeks ago, nobody reported  
23 any moose being taken.

24

25 As of yesterday, I was talking to a  
26 wildlife biologist back home and he said on Thursday  
27 we'll be starting our trend count surveys for Kaiyuh,  
28 Koyukuk and Nowitna Refuges. In cooperation with  
29 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Tim pointed out  
30 we're going to be doing a census over Unit 21B starting  
31 in November.

32

33 This past year we did waterfowl  
34 surveys, aerial swan trend count surveys and we've seen  
35 steady increases of all trumpeter swans on all three  
36 refuges.

37

38 Avian influenza testing. So far we  
39 have not seen any avian flu in any of the waterfowl  
40 that we've tested. Most of it has been with pintails,  
41 but we have not reported any highly pathogenic avian  
42 flu in the birds, just your normal bird flues.

43

44 We've had a couple Staff changes. Bob  
45 Lambrecht has retired as the FMO, Fire Management  
46 Officer, and he's been hired as a planner to finish up  
47 our comprehensive conservation plan. He's up for  
48 retirement this January.

49

50 Sid Hall is our new Fire Management

1 Officer. He started this past summer. He moved up  
2 from Colorado and he's already working with Ruby on  
3 kind of a fire management plan.

4  
5 Our latest hire was Eleanor Yatlin from  
6 Huslia and she's our Refuge Information Technician.  
7 She's lived in Huslia and the Koyukuk River for over 40  
8 years and it's good to have her on staff.

9  
10 That's it. Thank you.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any questions  
13 on Koyukuk's presentation. Don.

14  
15 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
16 don't have any questions. I'd personally like to thank  
17 Kevin and his wife for manning the station the last  
18 week of the Federal hunt. I know it got pretty cold  
19 there and we were in a cabin and they were in a tent.  
20 So I want to personally thank them and the Kenton for  
21 being open and meeting with us. We're open to  
22 suggestions and I think we have a good working rapport.  
23 Thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments  
26 or questions. My one question would be on the spring  
27 hunt in 24D and C. It says that leaving eight moose,  
28 that should be cow moose, would be the quota or are you  
29 defining the quota as 10 moose period.

30  
31 MR. WHITWORTH: Ten moose period.  
32 That's cow/bull open season.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hmm. Okay. When we  
35 started that hunt, this Council basically worked with  
36 Mike Spindler on identifying bulls and wanted the  
37 community to harvest towards bulls, so I feel there  
38 should be not such a great restriction on the bull  
39 harvest. The bull/cow ratios are exceeding 30 bulls  
40 per 100 cows. So the limitation should be more  
41 directed towards the cow component. We're trying to  
42 meet subsistence needs. So that would be my comment on  
43 that spring quota.

44  
45 Any other questions. Ron.

46  
47 MR. SAM: Kevin, do you have any  
48 numbers on how many Allakaket residents harvested moose  
49 in Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge?

50

1 MR. WHITWORTH: No, I don't have that  
2 data with me. Preliminary data, Glen Stout is working  
3 on compiling all that data and we'll get that data from  
4 Glen, but we don't have it right now.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions.  
7 Ron.

8  
9 MR. SAM: Yeah. I know two hunters  
10 that got two moose down the Koyukuk National Wildlife  
11 Refuge and they broke down going back up to Allakaket  
12 and that's why people like to go hunting upriver.

13  
14 (Laughter)

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Ray.

17  
18 MR. COLLINS: Kevin, I just want to  
19 welcome you home again. I'm glad to see you in your  
20 current position. I want to wish you well. I hope  
21 we're going to see more of you in the future. I want  
22 to congratulate you on your career choice and hope you  
23 do well.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will reiterate  
26 that. That's the necessity for the .1308  
27 implementation. I'm happy to have local people on  
28 Staff. Thanks for your presentation. So we're going to  
29 go for Kanuti. Wennona.

30  
31 MS. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
32 the record, Wennona Brown for Kanuti National Wildlife  
33 Refuge. Due to the lateness of the hour and trying to  
34 be brief. Kanuti did have a fairly complete report  
35 that's in your book starting on Page 76. Just a few  
36 things I would add to that.

37  
38 I did want to comment that Kanuti's  
39 final comprehensive conservation plan is at the  
40 printer. What I heard is back late October, but I  
41 haven't seen it yet. Hopefully it will be back soon.

42  
43 In the report is last year's moose  
44 population counts. The Refuge is planning to do  
45 surveys again this fall, probably starting as early as  
46 the 7th, but hopefully by the 10th, weather permitting.

47  
48 Tim talked about the radiotelemetry  
49 project and just to note there that Mike is out this  
50 week trying to do the radio tracking on those. They're

1 trying to get those done in close proximity to when  
2 they do the fall survey to try to look at the  
3 sightability index of knowing where the moose is from  
4 the radio collar and how that translates to their  
5 sightability when they're doing the moose surveys.

6

7 He also noted that from the radio  
8 tracking it was showing the moose were avoiding the  
9 rivers in September and using the upland burned areas.  
10 Just an observation they made.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One quick question.  
13 Did he comment on the age class of the burns?

14

15 MS. BROWN: He didn't note it. He just  
16 said it was the upland burns. I think they tend to  
17 look at burns that are more than 10 years. I could  
18 check that for you if you like.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll get back with  
21 Lisa on that one. The reason I asked that question is  
22 we had recent burns and those moose beeline right into  
23 those fresh burns. The new growth is real lush. Go  
24 ahead, Wennona.

25

26 MS. BROWN: A point of interest. On  
27 the telemetry flights, he does fly at about 2,000 feet  
28 when tracking those moose. From the harvest surveys  
29 that the local contractor did the fall 2008 season,  
30 there were eight moose harvested in Allakaket and  
31 Alatna that were reported, but none of those were in  
32 that late extension season in September 25th to October  
33 1st. There were also no moose harvested in the March  
34 opening.

35

36 I can go over other points or if you  
37 just want to -- because most everything else is written  
38 in the report.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: As usual, Kanuti  
41 does excellent work. A very small refuge, 1.6 million  
42 acres, I think, and lots of various projects and Kanuti  
43 has always had various good information for this  
44 Council.

45

46 We've provided for the extension on the  
47 September 26 to October 1 moose season. Water was low.  
48 Everybody chewed their props up and couldn't get  
49 around. The water continued to fall in that area.  
50 This Council has been trying to provide for the needs

1 of the subsistence hunters there with our regulatory  
2 proposals.

3

4 Any questions the Council might have.  
5 Go ahead, Ron.

6

7 MR. SAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As  
8 Jack stated, this is a fairly small refuge and I'd like  
9 to thank the Staff for having meetings and just trying  
10 to keep our spirits up. The moose are there. As I  
11 stated before, I used to work for BLM and one of my  
12 jobs was the fire map, put the years and dates in it.  
13 Within the Kanuti, it burns every seven to 12 years.  
14 Just burning over and over. That's why all the moose  
15 were up in the fresh burns up in the hills and  
16 mountains. Like Jack said, the water was so low we  
17 just considered them inaccessible because there's no  
18 way we could go up the Kanuti River or the Henshaw  
19 River. That's where we had the misleading counts. I  
20 mean we had 76 bulls to 100 cows in those areas. Just  
21 inaccessible.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Any other  
24 comments. The water was as low as I'd seen it for  
25 probably 25, 30 years. We didn't get the flood that  
26 Fairbanks got.

27

28 I think that will probably complete  
29 Kanuti's information. Do you have anything additional  
30 there, Wennona.

31

32 MS. BROWN: I just want to note that  
33 there is a fairly complete report in here on the wolf  
34 surveys and wolf counts. I would just direct the  
35 Council's attention to that and not spend the time to  
36 reiterate it.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I reviewed this  
39 report and those wolf numbers had declined from the  
40 previous survey, as I expected, because that's what I  
41 saw when I was trapping, the wolf numbers had declined.  
42 Mainly no snow. They had a harder time and they  
43 weren't as productive and their population declined,  
44 which is a good thing.

45

46 We had an average snow fall this past  
47 winter. I'm seeing wolf recruitment this year. Four  
48 to six pups in packs, so we will see more moose  
49 mortality from wolves.

50

1                   That's probably it from Kanuti. The  
2 report is in our book here. Any other Council comments  
3 on the fish and wildlife reports.

4

5                   (No comments)

6

7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm very appreciate  
8 of that, Wennona, and all various Council members were  
9 appreciative of the outreach that the refuges have had  
10 to the communities and I think that's important for  
11 people to have an understanding of what's going on in  
12 the refuge. So visiting various villages is integral  
13 as to the working relationship that the subsistence  
14 users have with the refuge managers and the Federal  
15 managers in general. BLM has been accommodating of a  
16 working relationship with these various villages that  
17 are affected with various issues.

18

19                   So we're down to the National Park  
20 Service. Vince tells me that the Park Service is not  
21 in attendance and has nothing to report to us.

22

23                   MR. MATHEWS: I contacted Gates of the  
24 Arctic and they're involved with an elder study right  
25 now, so they're not present. In Denali, I didn't reach  
26 them, but I think they expect Ray as an SRC member to  
27 bring that up. And then the Anchorage office usually  
28 sends somebody out, but they're not present.

29

30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Did you want  
31 to bring anything up from the SRC?

32

33                   MR. COLLINS: We don't have any issues  
34 I think need to come before us.

35

36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is there any other  
37 agency groups. Go ahead there, George.

38

39                   MR. PAPPAS: Chairman. Members of the  
40 Council. George Pappas, Department of Fish and Game.  
41 I missed out earlier on a planning comment from the  
42 Department about bear claws.

43

44                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

45

46                   MR. PAPPAS: The marking of bear parts  
47 work group, OSM and Department of Fish and Game will be  
48 meeting very soon to develop a small work group process  
49 to address conservation enforcement issues created by  
50 the Federal Subsistence Board's regulations that

1 authorize the sale of bear parts, particularly bear  
2 claws. In the interim, consultation is under way to  
3 acquire known techniques for discreetly marking animal  
4 parts that are used to trade of legal parts in order to  
5 distinguish illegal take of animals under the  
6 Endangered Species Act. The feasibility and the cost  
7 of such marking will be necessary information for the  
8 work group to evaluate.

9  
10 When OSM and the Department have agreed  
11 to the work group process, representatives from the  
12 Regional Advisory Councils, local Fish and Game  
13 Advisory Committees and Federal, State and law  
14 enforcement officers and Federal and State Staff will  
15 be invited to participate. The work group will review  
16 existing Federal, State and CITES regulations involved  
17 in trade and traffic of animal parts, enforcement  
18 issues, conservation issues, marking techniques and  
19 possible actions to resolve issues. This work group  
20 will expected to be initiated in the next few months,  
21 so a solution will be available for the upcoming  
22 Federal and State regulatory cycles.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You've got  
25 something, Vince.

26  
27 MR. MATHEWS: Maybe others can be drawn  
28 into this. Nothing against George or anyone, but this  
29 Council has made it clear that the bear claw issue and  
30 all that is for other regions and that you're very  
31 concerned about cultural sensitivity on bears. I kind  
32 of wanted to convey that to the State. This Council  
33 has been on the record hesitant to talk about bears.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's been an  
36 issue. This Council has avoided the sale of bear  
37 parts. That's why the Federal Board has taken them up  
38 on a regional basis. Do you have a comment on that,  
39 George.

40  
41 MR. PAPPAS: No, I apologize. I've  
42 been providing this information to all the RACs.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's good to know  
45 what's going on though. Thank you.

46  
47 Vince.

48  
49 MR. MATHEWS: YRDFA is another agency  
50 and they do have a presentation.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Becca.

2

3 MS. ROBBINS GISCLAIR: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Chair. Members of the Council. Becca Robbins Gisclair  
5 with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. I  
6 just wanted to give you a very brief summary of a  
7 couple of our projects from the summer and clue you in  
8 on a couple upcoming events.

9

10 The first is we had the YRDFA  
11 teleconferences again this season starting June 3rd and  
12 the last one was on September 2nd. Due to the not so  
13 great king season, we had record high volumes of  
14 callers. That project is partially funded by OSM  
15 through the Fisheries Monitoring Program. Summaries of  
16 all those calls are available on our website, which is  
17 yukonsalmon.org.

18

19 I also wanted to provide a quick update  
20 on our local hires. Several of them funded through OSM  
21 for the Tozitna Weir and also in-season harvest  
22 interviewers throughout the Yukon River watershed. We  
23 also had ADF&G funded technicians in Galena, Nulato and  
24 Ruby and also for post-season subsistence harvest  
25 interviewers in more than 30 communities. Those are  
26 projects we can hope to continue as funding is  
27 available.

28

29 We also did the US/Canada Educational  
30 Exchange again this summer. We brought five people  
31 from Yukon Territory to the lower and middle river to  
32 learn about fisheries in Alaska and next year we'll be  
33 doing the opposite and bring folks from Alaska over to  
34 Canada. If you're interested, we're always looking for  
35 candidates involved in the fisheries to go on those  
36 trips.

37

38 YRDFA also took over the Marshall test  
39 fishery this year and so we ran that project, providing  
40 estimates of chinook salmon abundance and run timing.  
41 That was largely run by local people and our YRDFA  
42 fishery biologist was overseeing that.

43

44 Finally, I just wanted to give you a  
45 heads up. The YRDFA annual meeting is going to be held  
46 in Hooper Bay this year. It's tentatively scheduled  
47 for the week of March 3rd. Those are all my updates  
48 for you today.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Does

1 anybody have questions for Becca. Don.

2

3 MR. HONEA: No, I don't have a  
4 question. I'm appreciative of any studies and stuff  
5 that employs people on the local level. I believe that  
6 happened in Ruby, so I appreciate that.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've been  
13 appreciative to YRDFA assistance on this bycatch issue  
14 and tracking of that and that's been a great assistance  
15 to the Council by their attendance of meetings and so  
16 forth and Becca in particular. YRDFA facilitates a  
17 broad-based user group to this Council. I appreciate  
18 those teleconferences that OSM has been funding through  
19 YRDFA.

20

21 Those would be my comments on YRDFA's  
22 presentation. Thank you.

23

24 MS. ROBBINS GISCLAIR: Thanks.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Vince, we're  
27 down on the bottom of this day's agenda. At this point  
28 in time, how can we complete this meeting the most  
29 expeditious way.

30

31 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chair. There's some  
32 other small items, but the other thing is Ray and the  
33 school have put a big effort to have a meal ready over  
34 there. The plane doesn't come until 10:30 tomorrow, so  
35 you have time to cover these. We have some urgent  
36 needs to get some good pictures of you guys. It's kind  
37 of dark outside. Basically all you have left are small  
38 items that could be done tomorrow.

39

40 Mr. Chair, you can either plow through  
41 and complete it in 40 minutes or take that 40 minutes  
42 tomorrow, but you do have people waiting at the house.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I personally would  
45 like to complete this in one hour, from 8:30 to 9:30.  
46 If we come on record at 8:30, I'll be happy about that.

47

48 MR. R. WALKER: You mean in the  
49 morning.

50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tomorrow morning.  
2  
3                   MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, okay. I thought  
4 you meant at 8:30 tonight.  
5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sorry. I'm looking  
7 at our agenda here. So 8:30 tomorrow morning, one hour  
8 session to clean up this housecleaning stuff. Do you  
9 have a question, Robert.  
10  
11                  MR. R. WALKER: Yes. Thank you, Mr.  
12 Chair. The winter 2009 meeting and the fall 2009  
13 meeting, you're going to discuss that tomorrow. I have  
14 to wait to find out where it's going to be? Good  
15 grief. Okay.  
16  
17                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you're leaving  
18 right away in the morning.  
19  
20                  MR. R. WALKER: 8:00 o'clock.  
21  
22                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, you'll have  
23 time to think about it. Ray is getting kind of  
24 stressed here.  
25  
26                  MR. COLLINS: You might ask if there's  
27 anybody here to testify so we don't have this 7:00  
28 thing.  
29  
30                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. It is in the  
31 agenda that there's an evening session and I have seen  
32 nobody come in from the community to testify. We have  
33 an open forum. We're 15 minutes into that. What do  
34 you feel on that, Vince? Have we given an opportunity?  
35  
36                  MR. MATHEWS: Our general practice is  
37 to wait 15 minutes. I can post a sign on the door for  
38 those that might show up and want to testify that  
39 you're available tomorrow morning.  
40  
41                  The last thing on that, if anybody  
42 doesn't know where Ray's house is, we can obviously  
43 transport you there, point in the right direction.  
44  
45                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll adjourn --  
46 correction, recess this meeting until 8:30 a.m.  
47 tomorrow morning. We're going to Ray's house for  
48 dinner.  
49  
50                  (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

