

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6 VOLUME I

7  
8 Galena, Alaska  
9 October 30, 2007  
10 9:00 o'clock a.m.  
11

12  
13 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

14  
15 Jack Reakoff, Chairman  
16 Donald Honea  
17 Carl Morgan  
18 Jenny Pelkola  
19 Ron Sam  
20 Mickey Stickman

21  
22  
23  
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25  
26 Regional Council Coordinator, Vince Mathews  
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Galena, Alaska - 10/30/2007)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let's call this meeting to order. The Western Interior Regional Advisory Council, this is the fisheries meeting and Vince has some administrative stuff to go over first, off the bat here, go ahead Vince.

MR. MATHEWS: Yes, for everybody in the room I go through this because it's just part of my background. What I mean is that if there's an emergency here or in the building, you go out the door you came in. There's Refuge Staff here if there's some kind of deal that you need a vehicle or something like that and we do have a first aid kit, but we always have to think of people's safety first. And then you follow up with the nutritional and food needs. Lunch, we need to probably around 10:30 or so, we have to get a sign up sheet for those that want to participate with lunch to Shirley and we'll go over that later, but we need to call in an order to her. There are other places in town to go to. There's Refuge Staff here that can help you figure that out and, of course, there's a grocery store.

We do have a sign in sheet in the back, please sign in, it helps with spelling as well as knowing who's here. We do not share it with your supervisor unless you want us to, but anyways do sign in it really helps knowing who's here.

The other thing is is there's different handouts that are available at the desk there. If there's some other ones get a hold of myself and see if we can find you a copy or send you a copy. Let's see what else on copies. When you have any copies of handouts, you need to give them either to Tina here or myself, that way we get an administrative and we make sure the Council has copies, and then if need by, if you need additional copies, we can possibly work with the Refuge to get those done. But don't just hand them out to the Council members because we have to have it on record and they need to know that we have them also.

And, lastly, for the Council members and Staff, each of you got a blue book with your name

1 on it, and I'm going to kind of walk through this real  
2 quickly so you know what's there. Anyways you got your  
3 name tag, which you guys already discovered. On the  
4 back of your name tag, you guys have done this very  
5 well, but it's still there to help you, is a procedure  
6 list of how to handle proposals. If you follow that  
7 it'll create a great record, I'll try to encourage you  
8 to go through that but you guys have a real good track  
9 record of doing that.

10

11                   Okay, within your folder there's a copy  
12 of Title VIII of ANILCA because your Chair has  
13 requested there always be present there's a copy, so  
14 you have a copy of Title VIII.

15

16                   You have a copy of the Association of  
17 Village Council Presidents petitions, that's on the  
18 agenda later on, but just so you know it's there.

19

20                   You have a copy from the State of  
21 Alaska to Mike Fleagle dealing with the Mulchatna Herd  
22 and Jack will be talking, and other Council members  
23 will be talking about that, it's dated July 23rd.

24

25                   This should be at the end of your  
26 folder but it probably got moved around. This is the  
27 most current list of Advisory Council meeting dates so  
28 we'll look at that at the end of the meeting.

29

30                   I think every member has a copy of  
31 application, it's got the moose on the front, yours may  
32 be colored, I'm not sure which copy I gave you guys.  
33 But anyways, there's three Council members seats that  
34 are up in 2008, that's Ron Sam, Jack Reakoff, and Ray  
35 Collins, I believe. And so the due date for submitting  
36 your application is January 11th. You other Council  
37 members, if you know of other people that are  
38 interested, make sure they fill this out and if you  
39 need additional copies, get a hold of myself.

40

41                   You have a copy dated October 16th from  
42 Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife Parks to Sue  
43 Entsminger concerning their action requesting that the  
44 Secretaries exert extra-territorial jurisdiction and  
45 that's the response, basically rejecting that request.

46

47                   And then there's a letter -- I know  
48 this is a lot of material, but it came after the book  
49 was published -- you have a letter from Jack Reakoff  
50 dated October 22nd concerning the Mulchatna Herd, so

1 that will come up on the agenda. It's in large type.

2

3 And then a letter from the Secretary of  
4 Interior to Michael Fleagle, Chairman of the Board  
5 concerning the policy for addressing Federal closures,  
6 that'll be a briefing in your agenda, it's canary  
7 colored.

8

9 Then there's a letter from Larry  
10 Edwards, the Chair of the Koyukuk River Local Fish and  
11 Game Advisory Committee concerning this fall moose hunt  
12 and that will be discussed today and when we get to the  
13 agenda phase we'll announce when that will be.

14

15 I don't know if YRDFA will go on phone  
16 line, Becca Robbins usually goes to the meetings, she  
17 was in a car accident at the Eastern Interior meeting  
18 so she's not going to make this meeting, but I did  
19 offer her the teleconference. She was going to talk to  
20 you about the, I call it the open sea bycatch, so  
21 hopefully we can piece that together. You guys have  
22 played a high role in that -- you played a role in that  
23 whole issue and it's now at the action phase between  
24 the north -- before the North Pacific Fisheries  
25 Management Council, that's the purple one, lavender,  
26 purple.

27

28 The other one is there to help you,  
29 it's not to do it for you, is a potential proposal for  
30 the Mulchatna Herd, it says Board of Game, that's just  
31 something to think about, you definitely can write your  
32 own.

33

34 And I hope we're down to the end here,  
35 but we're getting close. And then there's this one her  
36 that's colored, and this one, Stan is on line, he  
37 requested this be presented to Eastern and Western, but  
38 Eastern had already met, and it's been submitted to the  
39 Federal Subsistence Board and this is his data from the  
40 Rapids Research Center Chinook Sampling, so at some  
41 point, since Stan's on line, with the Chair's  
42 concurrence, maybe he can summarize it when it's  
43 needed. I've been authorized to summarize it but since  
44 the actual author is here.....

45

46 And, Mr. Chair, I think that's all the  
47 handouts and, again, your meetings end up collecting a  
48 lot of materials so we can help you find these if need  
49 be. For the Staff and public out there we can find  
50 copies for you too if so needed. So I covered safety,

1 food, handouts, sign ups.  
2  
3 This meeting is being teleconferenced.  
4 This is kind of new ground for us. We're going to have  
5 -- if all those that agreed to call in, my  
6 understanding is you want Venetie wants to be on line,  
7 you'll have Tanana which is on line with Stan Zuray,  
8 you have Virgil Umphenour who's the vice-Chair of  
9 Eastern Interior on line, my understanding is Emmonak  
10 Tribal Council will be on line, you should have Staff  
11 on line, which would be Pete DeMatteo and possibly some  
12 other Staff, and then from there I don't know who else  
13 will be on line. So I will try to remind the Chair and  
14 Tina will remind me to remind you that when that thing  
15 beeps, that means someone's getting on line or  
16 somebody's dropping off line, we need for the record  
17 who they are.  
18  
19 What's that?  
20  
21 REPORTER: It's somebody on the line,  
22 maybe in their office.  
23  
24 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, whoever's on the  
25 phone there, you need to stop sharpening your pencils.  
26  
27 REPORTER: You need to go on hand's  
28 free.  
29  
30 MR. MATHEWS: And go on mute.  
31  
32 MR. RIVARD: I believe, people on line,  
33 you can mute your phone by doing star 6.  
34  
35 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah. And then for Don,  
36 you may want to share if they can't hear me, if you  
37 have any trouble with the phone, we had two  
38 teleconferences happening at once at Eastern Interior,  
39 please interrupt us and say and we'll try to get a hold  
40 of the operator to sort that out, we don't need to  
41 listen a teleconference from California or wherever.  
42  
43 So with that, Mr. Chair, I apologize  
44 for the length of this, but that's all.  
45  
46 REPORTER: Who's on line right now.  
47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: Oh, who's on line now,  
49 yes, go ahead and announce yourself, who's on line,  
50 Virgil you start first.

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, I'm Virgil  
2 Umphenour, I'm the vice-Chair of the Eastern Interior  
3 RAC.  
4  
5 MR. MATHEWS: Who would be next?  
6  
7 MR. RIVARD: You would have to hit star  
8 six again to speak.  
9  
10 (No comments)  
11  
12 MR. RIVARD: Anybody else on line.  
13  
14 MR. ZURAY: This is Stan Zuray in  
15 Tanana, and let's see I'm a YRDFA board member and I'm  
16 on the State Advisory Council, vice-Chair for the  
17 Tanana/Rampart/Manely group.  
18  
19 MR. MATHEWS: Is there anyone else on  
20 line.  
21  
22 (No comments)  
23  
24 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, so that's all we  
25 have, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My name is  
28 Jack Reakoff and I live in Wiseman, and I've been Chair  
29 now for about a year or so. So we're going to have an  
30 invocation by an elder, and I understand that would be  
31 Roger. So if everybody could rise for that invocation.  
32  
33 MR. R. HUNTINGTON: Our days open up  
34 with surprises now and then.  
35  
36 (Invocation)  
37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. That was  
39 Roger Huntington, and I appreciate that. And so back  
40 on to our agenda, we'll have a roll call and  
41 establishment of a quorum.  
42  
43 MR. MATHEWS: Jenny Pelkola.  
44  
45 MS. PELKOLA: Here.  
46  
47 MR. MATHEWS: Carl Morgan.  
48  
49 MR. MORGAN: Here.  
50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Winchell Ticknor couldn't  
2 make it due to employment conflicts.  
3  
4 Ron Sam.  
5  
6 MR. SAM: Here.  
7  
8 MR. MATHEWS: Mickey Stickman.  
9  
10 MR. STICKMAN: Here.  
11  
12 MR. MATHEWS: Robert Walker, we've been  
13 dialoguing with Robert, he had some employment and he's  
14 also ill, so he's not able to make the meeting.  
15  
16 Donald Honea, Jr.  
17  
18 MR. HONEA: Here.  
19  
20 MR. MATHEWS: Ray Collins. Ray  
21 Collins, I think Roger's prayer would help him out, his  
22 mother is terminally ill and I don't know the status of  
23 that situation but it's near the end, so Ray could not  
24 make it.  
25  
26 Jack Reakoff.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.  
29  
30 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chair, you have nine  
31 standing members because you have a vacant seat so you  
32 have six members present so you have a quorum.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Vince.  
35 I'm concerned about Winchell's attendance and he keeps  
36 missing meetings for various reasons and those reasons  
37 are becoming restrictive to the business of the Council  
38 so I'm becoming more and more concerned about  
39 Winchell's attendance and I would like to possibly go  
40 over our charter, I question his excused absences  
41 myself. So I would like to know what the Council feels  
42 about that issue.  
43  
44 MR. SAM: Mr. Chair.  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ron.  
47  
48 MR. SAM: Ron Sam, Alatna. I mean it  
49 has been -- establishing a quorum is becoming more and  
50 more of a problem. I've been traveling for quite some

1 time because of other meetings, I've been gone from  
2 home about 10 days now and one of my main concerns  
3 attending this meeting is the establishment of a quorum  
4 and doing business and these excuses are getting a  
5 little bit stale and old the members who are missing  
6 our meetings. To make it worse we still have an empty  
7 seat for the commercial interest and I realize we are  
8 roadless -- one of the few roadless subsistence  
9 Councils and we did agree to 80/20 for our subsistence  
10 versus rural membership but we still haven't filled  
11 this seat and I want to know why sooner or later or  
12 down the road.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ron.  
15 Carl.

16

17 MR. MORGAN: Mr. Chairman. I am too  
18 concerned about Winchell not being here. Just for the  
19 record, how many meetings has he missed or how many  
20 meetings has he attended?

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Vince.

23

24 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, he attended the  
25 meeting in Koyukuk, that's the only one that I  
26 remember, and that was his first meeting. And I kind  
27 of blank on the sequence there. But just to make it  
28 clear for the record, the Secretary is the one that has  
29 the authority to remove a member, what you can do or  
30 what we've done in other regions is send them a letter  
31 of your concerns and then ask him either to, you know,  
32 attend or put forth his own resignation. You can also  
33 go to the Secretary and ask but that's a long process.  
34 His seat is up in 2009.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I just  
37 wanted to voice my concern on that issue and we need a  
38 full Council to perform our business here and I would  
39 like to convey that to Winchell.

40

41 So back to our agenda. We have  
42 introduction of Staff and our guests here. Go ahead,  
43 Vince.

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, first before we do  
46 that, who joined us on line.

47

48 MR. HAMILTON: This is Ted Hamilton  
49 from Emmonak Tribal Council.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, so, Ted, welcome.  
2 We're just in the beginning parts of the agenda. So  
3 like I said to other ones on line, if you can't hear or  
4 there's some kind of problem, you're going to have to  
5 voice up so we can try to correct it from here.

6  
7 Right now the Chair has asked me to  
8 introduce Staff and people present. I'll do the best I  
9 can.

10  
11 Obviously Roger Huntington is present  
12 here and gave the invocation.

13  
14 And I'll start with Nancy Swanton,  
15 who's the Staff Committee person with the National Park  
16 Service.

17  
18 Ed Sarten is here. He's the chair of  
19 the Ruby Advisory Committee.

20  
21 Next to him is Steve Hayes, the in-  
22 season manager for the Alaska Department of Fish and  
23 Game.

24  
25 Behind him is the Refuge manager for  
26 Kanuti, Mike Spindler.

27  
28 Next to Mike, I don't know the  
29 individual.

30  
31 MR. BIRKENFELD: Greg Birkenfeld,  
32 Deputy at Innoko Refuge.

33  
34 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, did that get picked  
35 up, I hope.

36  
37 REPORTER: (Nods affirmatively)

38  
39 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. And then next to  
40 him is Kevin Whitworth who's the subsistence  
41 coordinator for Koyukuk Nowitna Refuge.

42  
43 And then there's Bill Schaff, the  
44 Refuge Manager for Innoko National Wildlife Refuge.

45  
46 We have another Staff Committee person  
47 here and that's Jerry Berg who is for the Fish and  
48 Wildlife Service out of Anchorage for the Staff  
49 Committee.

50

1 Behind him is the Staff Committee  
2 person for the Forest Service, which is Steve Kessler.  
3 So if we had one more Staff Committee person we almost  
4 have a quorum. And I make that a joke but it's very  
5 important to make sure that you appreciate them coming  
6 here because that's the next phrase in this process,  
7 and it's good that they hear directly from you, your  
8 concerns.

9  
10 In the back I'm going to draw a blank,  
11 so maybe Kenton could fill -- Kenton Moos is the Refuge  
12 Manager for Koyukuk Nowitna and maybe he'll introduce  
13 the people back there.

14  
15 MR. MOOS: This is Ryan Mollnow, he's  
16 the deputy at Koyukuk Nowitna. And then Jenny Bryant,  
17 Boomer, is one of our biologists on Staff.

18  
19 MR. R. HUNTINGTON: And that's my  
20 friend Percy Lolnitz from Koyukuk. Yeah, welcome  
21 Percy.

22  
23 MR. LOLNITZ: Yeah, I'm invisible so  
24 you can't hear me or you can't see me.

25  
26 (Laughter)

27  
28 MR. MATHEWS: So, Mr. Chair, we're  
29 going to try periodically, you know, maybe if you  
30 recognize somebody, to get it on the record, and when  
31 you do come to the mic, please give your name and your  
32 association, it helps tremendously with the transcript  
33 as well as minutes.

34  
35 REPORTER: Two more.

36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: Oh, I'm sorry, Don Rivard  
38 is your fisheries biologist. I'm sorry.

39  
40 And then I didn't catch the guy way in  
41 the back.

42  
43 But, anyways, Don Rivard is a fish  
44 biologist, OSM. And then there's another gentleman in  
45 the back.

46  
47 MR. BODONY: Tom Bodony, KIYU Radio.

48  
49 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. That's good the  
50 radio is here and we'll assist you as much as we can on

1 that, if you need materials.

2

3 Did I miss anyone else, I apologize to  
4 Don, I was walking through the rows back there.

5

6 And then we have the court recorder,  
7 Tina Hile.

8

9 So with that that's everybody.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, thanks,  
14 Vince. The Council members concerns and topics.

15

16 The Chair's report is the first one. I  
17 attended the Federal Subsistence Board meeting this  
18 spring, the 30th of April and May 1, I think it was.  
19 And so those were wildlife proposals. There was lots  
20 of discussion on our 21-B proposal on rearranging our  
21 seasons and the winter hunt, and those proposals did  
22 pass. And there was quite a presence by the State with  
23 their attorneys and solicitors and I was concerned  
24 about a lot of the input that the State was having  
25 basically for legal purposes and it slowed our meeting  
26 down considerably at the Federal Subsistence Board  
27 because of all these, basically I considered them  
28 housekeeping proposals, were being highly constrained  
29 by the State's -- all this long reading into the record  
30 and basically redundant stuff, and so I'm concerned  
31 about the program and about, you know, the over --  
32 over-emphasis with lawyers with trains of briefs  
33 dragging behind them. I was concerned about that.

34

35 I want the Council to be aware that  
36 this is what's going on down at the Federal Board and  
37 it makes it more intimidating, it's supposed to  
38 intimidate the Board and it makes it more intimidating  
39 for the Board to do the right thing on passing  
40 proposals that Councils have worked long and hard to  
41 pass although I considered the Board's actions  
42 appropriate.

43

44 So there's been various correspondence,  
45 which is all in your packets. So I wrote this letter  
46 to the Subsistence Resource Commission Chairs meeting,  
47 which occurred on October 23rd and I still have huge  
48 concerns for this Mulchatna Caribou Herd. The Federal  
49 Subsistence Board, in meeting, was reviewing the  
50 Mulchatna proposals and I spoke long and hard for the

1 Mulchatna Caribou Herd and the users on the non-  
2 resident hunt that the State Board of Game provided and  
3 the Federal Subsistence Board did something that was  
4 completely out of precedence, they, at my urging,  
5 requested the Board of Game to do a reconsideration on  
6 the 15 day non-resident hunt that was to occur when  
7 they have 1.33 adult bulls per 100 cows, they have no  
8 bull/cow ratio, they have 14.4 bulls per 100 cows. The  
9 State Board of Game reviewed that request and opted not  
10 to -- opted to continue the 15 day hunt showing a total  
11 lack of concern for this vastly declining herd and I'm  
12 very concerned about this State Board of Game and their  
13 objectives not meeting sustainability.

14

15 So that would be my report. And so I'm  
16 happy that we do have a quorum here and so we'll go  
17 down the table here and go through Council's concerns  
18 and comments and so we'll start down here with Mickey  
19 who's chomping at the bit to tell us what his concerns  
20 are. Go ahead, Mickey.

21

22 MR. STICKMAN: Well, actually I don't  
23 have very much concerns. My concerns are the same as  
24 from the last meeting. But I was just wondering, you  
25 know, yesterday we had a Middle Yukon Advisory  
26 Committee meeting and there was some proposals passed  
27 there and at some point in time, I guess I'll be  
28 getting a copy of those from Glenn Stout, the State  
29 biologist here. I don't think any of them will have  
30 any concern to Federal land, but since the State land  
31 butts right up to the Federal land maybe we'd like to  
32 have a look at those and maybe pass those resolutions  
33 in this body so that the State will know that they have  
34 the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council's  
35 support.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's  
38 probably a good idea. I'm not sure if we'll be able to  
39 look at those at our spring meeting, if the State  
40 proposals will be out. They have a February -- the  
41 State Board of Game is meeting late February through  
42 early March, I think, is their timeframe, and it  
43 depends on our meeting date.

44

45 So anything further.

46

47 MR. STICKMAN: Well, no, I think those  
48 have a deadline coming up in a couple of months so it  
49 would be a good idea just for us to support those.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks Mickey.

2

3 Don.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's  
6 good to be in Galena this morning. I thank Roger for  
7 the prayer that we had.

8

9 I also am concerned about, I don't know  
10 what rules and regulations we're following, whether  
11 it's Robert's Rules of Order or whatever, but I know  
12 just on our Council, local tribal council, with three  
13 unexcused absences you're out, so I am concerned about  
14 that position even though I welcome Winchell aboard, I  
15 think that we have to go ahead and take steps on that.

16

17 With the fishing, I believe that  
18 talking to local people and stuff that the fishing was  
19 kind of moderate, so-so, and the fish size was really a  
20 big issue this -- especially this summer as you see it  
21 more prevalent in the fish that we're catching. The  
22 larger fish that I've seen have been on the north side  
23 of the Yukon, and they were caught in the places that  
24 were known to catch large fish through the years but  
25 for the most part on the south bank, at Ruby and above  
26 Ruby there on the south bank the fish were really  
27 small. I mean and this is, I think, getting worse, so  
28 I mean the fish that -- the kings that we have seen are  
29 like jack, they call them jack salmon or whatever, are  
30 just no bigger than the silvers, so I think that's a  
31 big concern.

32

33 I think the hunting was maybe average  
34 or above average. A lot of mid-size to small moose  
35 were taken and a lot of them were on the road system  
36 because we have 40 miles of road there one way so a lot  
37 of them were taken. And that extra one week, I don't  
38 know, you know, I've seen Kevin up there and I know  
39 that we had some bad weather but I thank the Staff for  
40 doing that and also, I believe, there was maybe three  
41 parties from Ruby but there was one from Tanana that  
42 was coming down but they got a moose on the way, so,  
43 you know, just to maybe justify that hunt I mean I  
44 would still keep that hunt on the table, I mean on the  
45 books if it's possible.

46

47 And that's about the only comments I  
48 have.

49

50 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don,  
2 appreciate that. So the Federal Subsistence Board  
3 passed the winter hunt also and gave a long timeframe  
4 to -- between December 1 and I think it's the end or  
5 middle of January or something like that, I don't  
6 recall off hand, they'll work with the community on a  
7 five day winter hunt also. So I'd like your feelings  
8 on what the Federal Board had passed.

9  
10 MR. HONEA: Well, I am in favor of  
11 that. I mean when we initially put that in I could see  
12 some problems with it because of the dates, March or  
13 something traditionally or whatever, if the State  
14 allowed us that hunt we usually had in February or in  
15 January somewhere where you could tell when some of  
16 them still had antlers on there and I think if the  
17 wording was on there, one per household and if you got  
18 a moose in the fall time then you're not eligible for  
19 that hunt. But, you know, I would, you know.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I'm looking at  
22 the reg right now, what the Federal Subsistence Board  
23 passed and that was quite a bit of concern, they went  
24 to one antlered bull, it's one registration permit per  
25 household and a five day season between December 1 and  
26 March 31 and working with the community so you can  
27 figure out when you would like or it would feel it  
28 would be appropriate conditions to take that moose.

29  
30 And so I think this was as good as we  
31 were going to get, this proposal almost failed. I had  
32 a heck of a time trying to keep this one on there. So  
33 at least we got a back up for the winter in 21-B there.

34  
35 So do you have any further comment,  
36 Don.

37  
38 MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
39 Speaker. I appreciate that. I appreciate your efforts  
40 toward getting that hunt. I mean if we could narrow  
41 that down to a specific time, that's a large timeframe.  
42 And other than that I really appreciate you doing this  
43 because, you know, believe it or not there are still a  
44 lot of households that did not get a moose, I, for one.

45  
46 Thank you.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would encourage  
49 the community, after December 1, to be considering when  
50 you would like that hunt and to be in contact with the

1 Refuge Staff on when you want that five days to be  
2 implemented. That should be a community consensus on  
3 when the conditions are correct.

4

5 So, okay, covering that issue, Jenny.

6

7 MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
8 would also like to echo Roger's comment and welcome you  
9 all here to Galena. This is my second year being on  
10 this Board and last year I said I was a kindergarten so  
11 I think I'm first grade this year on this Board.

12

13 But I do have a concern about moose  
14 hunting. I know when my husband and I were out there  
15 were planes flying around, I don't know who they were,  
16 I don't know if they were private planes or what and we  
17 were just about to get our moose and here comes this  
18 plane and they kept on diving over that moose, about  
19 four times, I couldn't really see who they were. But I  
20 think something should be done about that. I mean I  
21 don't know what could be done, but that's one concern I  
22 have about these private planes.

23

24 I had a pretty good fishing year and I  
25 know Ruby, I heard Ruby was getting those small fish  
26 and I felt a little bit bad about getting a little  
27 bigger fish. But I also am concerned about Don's  
28 concern about getting small fish up there. I don't  
29 know what's going on with our fish but maybe we should  
30 look into that.

31

32 And I think that's about what I have.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, well, thanks,  
37 Jenny. So Carl.

38

39 MR. MORGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
40 It's good to be back in Galena.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One second, Carl.  
43 One second, Carl, I heard somebody come on line there  
44 or go off line. Did somebody just come on line on the  
45 teleconference.

46

47 MR. DEMATTEO: Yes, good morning this  
48 is Pete DeMatteo.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks Pete.

1 We've got to keep track of who's on line there. Go  
2 ahead, Carl.

3

4 MR. MORGAN: Like I said, it's good to  
5 be back in Galena again. Thank you Roger for your  
6 wonderful prayer.

7

8 I'm -- we've got the -- you know, you  
9 mentioned the Mulchatna Herd and that's our concern,  
10 you know, we mentioned the 1.3 per 100 cows and if you  
11 look at it at that again and there's hardly any big  
12 breeding bulls. Now, I think that number would even  
13 be smaller, you've got the smaller bulls but -- and the  
14 breeder's there's not very many. And it was disturbing  
15 to us in that part of the country, in 19-B that the  
16 State still left the 19-B non-resident hunt to continue  
17 -- leave those 15 days, 15 days, we need to build up  
18 that herd, every bull counts. I think from when at the  
19 peak it was over 200,000 caribou and now it's down to  
20 about maybe 43,000 40-some thousand caribou. We need  
21 to build that up. I mean there's a need there. And  
22 the Federal Board did recognize it.

23

24 And I'm always disturbed when we're  
25 always having to squeeze the subsistence, limiting them  
26 first before we limit non-residents.

27

28 And I think it was.....

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we had another  
31 -- did somebody else come on line here, this is Jack  
32 Reakoff Chair of Western Interior Council. Did  
33 somebody else come on line?

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did somebody leave?

38

39 MR. RIVARD: It sounds like somebody  
40 left.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay,  
43 continue Carl.

44

45 MR. MORGAN: We'll get this done.  
46 Yeah, and it's -- we're always having the subsistence  
47 user pay the brunt of the -- like to conserve. But,  
48 anyway, I said that.

49

50 And our moose, part of 19-A, some of

1 it's completely closed, and the other half is under  
2 Tier II and it's with the State, I'm glad the Feds do  
3 have some limited number of permits in Federal land.  
4 We're still trying -- and we agree in the area, the  
5 residents agree in the area, we need to build this, we  
6 need to do something. If we don't do anything, do  
7 nothing is not the choice. And we're concerned that  
8 some cows are still being taken out at 19-A on this  
9 Tier II area because we know of another village further  
10 down, they busted three people and another one from --  
11 and that's just the ones they caught, and I think that  
12 there's some that probably slipped through. And we  
13 want to build up the moose, that's what we eat, we eat  
14 meat, and we love the moose meat, we love caribou.

15  
16 Another thing our subsistence fishing  
17 was pretty good. I'm glad we didn't have the windows.  
18 We didn't have the windows. But for some reason we had  
19 to fish harder and longer. So, therefore, with the  
20 price of fuel, you know, it -- we got what we wanted  
21 but we had to fish harder and longer and spend more  
22 money. But I don't know what was the reason on that,  
23 but, I, like everybody else here, we're trying to push  
24 -- I'm trying to push for subsistence use for the  
25 first, first priority because we live there. I don't  
26 have the convenience of going down to Costco or Sam's  
27 Club every day plus unemployment is high in our area,  
28 it's just, all the way around, everything's expensive  
29 for us, energy, fuel, eating, gas and we need that to  
30 subsist.

31  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Carl. Ron.

35  
36 MR. SAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
37 Again, I would just like to mention that I will not  
38 file for reappointment and I've been thinking about  
39 retiring from this Council even though my term hasn't  
40 come up but with the absences of our Council members  
41 and our one seat that hasn't been filled, it's still  
42 one of my major concerns that we fill all the seats and  
43 fill them timely.

44  
45 And I would also note and thank Roger  
46 Huntington for his invocation and welcoming remarks and  
47 saying to Roger, he's our friend, and long time  
48 advocate of local and tribal concerns and fish and game  
49 concerns, and Fred Huntington, I would like to note  
50 that he is present.

1                   And the other main concern is the  
2 handout on the blue packet from Larry Edwards, it was  
3 noted that it addressed only the October hunt. This  
4 letter should also address our March 1 to March 10  
5 hunt. We were just unloaded upon by the enforcement  
6 agencies, we had planes, we had Troopers, we had  
7 snowmachines, just totally disrupting our hunt and this  
8 started two weeks before the hunts, on boats, the  
9 special March hunt and the October hunt. Again, as  
10 noted by Jenny Pelkola, these planes were flying over  
11 boats, they were just about 20 feet above the boats,  
12 just checking, checking the contents of the boat and  
13 recognizing who they were and see what they had in the  
14 boats. Plus some of these planes were also harassing  
15 the moose when they did -- when our subsistence hunters  
16 got to see these moose. And the planes also chased a  
17 moose away a few -- more than a few times.

18  
19                   Again, this letter will be discussed in  
20 more ways than one.

21  
22                   Again, for about the 10th year on the  
23 upper and middle Koyukuk we haven't seen caribou one,  
24 maybe one or two a year. We do not know what caused  
25 the migration pattern to change so much. I mean we  
26 blame everything but then we haven't seen caribou in 10  
27 years and this year, again, I would like to note that  
28 Anaktuvuk people, and Council met during the AFN  
29 Convention with BLM because of their let burn policy on  
30 unsettled lands, and I think that was one of the main  
31 reasons that we won't see caribou this year. Because  
32 even up in Wiseman, where Jack comes from, they haven't  
33 seen any caribou or tracks.

34  
35                   Another concern is the letter that we  
36 all received on our meeting packets of the Regional  
37 Councils, I understand that with all the budget cuts,  
38 while the price of oil has skyrocketed, our subsistence  
39 needs and our Subsistence Councils travel funding and  
40 meeting funding has been cut to where we probably will  
41 go into a two year rotation for our meetings. That  
42 really concerns me because the only way that we can be  
43 listened to is if we address our concerns yearly, or  
44 twice a year.

45  
46                   And the other thing that also bothers  
47 me because it's addressed also by AVCP on the  
48 jurisdiction of State on Native owned corporation lands  
49 and allotments, and that is totally wrong, that is  
50 totally against what these allotments and Native

1 corporation lands were granted for, was to meet the  
2 needs of our local people, our Native people.

3  
4 With that, I would like to thank all of  
5 you for your presence and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks a lot Ron.  
8 And I heard another beep there on that teleconference  
9 and I would like to know who's on line there, this is  
10 Jack Reakoff.

11  
12 MR. HAMILTON: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, this  
13 is Ted Hamilton at the Emmonak Tribal Council. I was  
14 using my smaller phone and now I'm using a bigger phone  
15 with better reception so I can hear you better.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, all right,  
18 appreciate that.

19  
20 MR. MATHEWS: Sorry to interrupt your  
21 agenda here but to get Ron on track, the program is  
22 going to continue with you meeting twice a year. You  
23 may have misinterpreted that two year cycle. The Board  
24 has made it clear, as well as the program, that the  
25 Councils will meet twice a year. So I want to kind of  
26 nip that in the bud right now.

27  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have further  
31 comment on that, Ron?

32  
33 MR. SAM: (Shakes head negatively)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have that same  
36 concern. I feel that the Federal Program should be --  
37 the special action tool has not been really well  
38 received by the Federal Board but if we have management  
39 concerns, I think the Federal Board should be more  
40 receptive to the Council's use of the special action  
41 tool because we are on a two year cycle. So I think  
42 that would help in our concerns about timely response  
43 to issues that come up.

44  
45 And so I talked to Robert Walker on the  
46 phone and he said he couldn't make the meeting but he  
47 did tell me about some of his points down there in  
48 Anvik and so I'd like to -- I took a couple notes here  
49 and I went over some of his positions on the proposals  
50 and he also told me what happened down in Anvik.

1                   They got about 20, 25 moose, they got a  
2 lot of larger bull moose down there. A lot of people  
3 from Grayling had to come down river around Anvik to  
4 hunt because of the low water, really hard hunting with  
5 low water around there.

6  
7                   There was lots more bear, they've got  
8 big bears in their dumps. That's something that they  
9 hadn't seen before is large grizzlies coming into their  
10 dumps down there. He has concerns about the numbers of  
11 bears and they're seeing very few calves.

12  
13                   Another concern was that there's all  
14 these air taxi's that are hunting just outside the  
15 controlled use area so he's very concerned about the  
16 numbers of air taxi's hunting very close to the  
17 controlled use areas and right on the borderline. And  
18 he also questions the moose population estimate of  
19 7,000 moose for the Innoko. He's concerned that that  
20 may be an elevated figure and he's concerned that the  
21 statistical areas may be targeting too many moose and  
22 the extrapolation across -- throughout most of the area  
23 is not -- he just basically is questioning the  
24 calculation because they're just not seeing those  
25 moose.

26  
27                   And we just had a lot more people show  
28 up on the late plane and so I'd like to go back through  
29 and welcome our additional honored guests and Staff.  
30 And so those who just arrived, if you could hold your  
31 hands up and Vince will go through and identify  
32 everybody. I'm bad with names. I know Polly and  
33 Brandy, but, go ahead Vince.

34  
35                   MR. MATHEWS: Well, yes, for the record  
36 Polly Wheeler is here, the Division Chief for  
37 anthropology for OSM.

38  
39                   We have George Pappas who is the  
40 subsistence liaison with the State. I encourage you to  
41 get to know him because he's going to be your contact  
42 -- key contact besides your area biologist.

43  
44                   And Tom McLain, he's with the Federal  
45 Fish and Wildlife Service Fishery Program. He's  
46 filling in for Russ Holder.

47  
48                   Dani Everson. I hope I pronounce it  
49 right.

50

1 MS. EVENSON: Evenson.  
2  
3 MR. MATHEWS: Because I -- anyways,  
4 Evenston always comes to mind, I'll explain that later.  
5 But, anyways Dani is with the Alaska Department of Fish  
6 and Game, Commercial Fisheries, she'll have an  
7 excellent program for you later by PowerPoint.  
8  
9 And then we have Brandy Berkbigler with  
10 Tanana Chiefs. I don't know if she's still a Partner  
11 Biologist but she'll explain that later, she's their  
12 fish biologist.  
13  
14 MS. BERKBIGLER: And Lisa's here too.  
15  
16 MR. MATHEWS: What?  
17  
18 MS. BERKBIGLER: Lisa Kangas, my  
19 fisheries intern is here as well, she should be coming  
20 in just a minute.  
21  
22 MR. MATHEWS: What, Lisa, I'm not.....  
23  
24 REPORTER: Lisa Kangas, her intern.  
25  
26 MR. MATHEWS: Oh, coming in later, Lisa  
27 Kangas, okay.  
28  
29 MS. BERKBIGLER: Yeah.  
30  
31 MR. MATHEWS: And then I don't know  
32 your name.  
33  
34 MR. VOKE: I'm Eric Voke with the  
35 Commercial Fisheries Division, Fish and Game.  
36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. And you're doing  
38 the mesh presentation -- mesh study?  
39  
40 MR. VOKE: No, Dani's going to be doing  
41 that.  
42  
43 MR. MATHEWS: That's it.  
44  
45 REPORTER: Someone else has come on  
46 line.  
47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: And then there was  
49 someone else that beeped on line there so I don't know  
50 if they want to acknowledge themselves on the

1 teleconference, who joined us.

2

3 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, this is Charlie  
4 Campbell. I'm a commercial and a subsistence fisherman  
5 from Tanana. And I'm calling because I'd like to  
6 testify before the RAC. I have about a four minute  
7 thing I'd like to say and I would like to know when you  
8 would hear from me here.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have an  
11 estimate on that, Vince.

12

13 MR. MATHEWS: Well, when Charlie and I  
14 talked we talked about 10:30, doing that, because of  
15 his time schedule, so I don't know, it's your call on  
16 it. He has a time constraint so that's why we're  
17 trying to plug him in on that, so that's your call. I  
18 told him about 10:30 but.....

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we've got a  
21 couple more things on our agenda and then we'll be  
22 going into these fisheries issues. We have to review  
23 and adopt the agenda and we have to approve our minutes  
24 from our March '07 meeting. So at this time I'd like  
25 to ask the Council's opinion about the agenda that we  
26 have before us.

27

28 MR. SAM: Mr. Chairman.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ron.

31

32 MR. SAM: Move to adopt the agenda as  
33 presented.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any  
36 assertions that other Council members would like to  
37 see.

38

39 Mickey.

40

41 MR. STICKMAN: Only the ones that are  
42 going to be coming from the middle Yukon.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have an idea  
45 where that could be, under wildlife issues?

46

47 MR. STICKMAN: Well, there's one under  
48 fisheries because there's a proposal to extend the  
49 driftnet for the Galena residents.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.  
2  
3 MR. STICKMAN: From where it's  
4 presently at to -- all the way up to the Yuki. And  
5 then there's a winter moose hunt proposed by the middle  
6 Yukon and then there's also another one for an  
7 extension for five more days of moose hunting in the  
8 fall that's coming from the middle Yukon Advisory  
9 Committee.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll try and  
12 get to those when we're on those agenda points. You  
13 got some addition, Vince.  
14  
15 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. As we talked  
16 earlier, we were going to set a time specific to talk  
17 about the issue that Ron brought up concerning the  
18 moose hunting in the Allakaket area. And so I think  
19 what time specific would mean is that we just set a  
20 time and then I would remind you of that and then we  
21 would stop the other action and allow that to come  
22 forward. We discussed possibly 4:00 o'clock or  
23 whatever, we can set a time on that, that way people  
24 can target that and that will give us time to cover it  
25 and then there's the back up of the next day if needed,  
26 but I don't know if that will be needed.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And is that  
29 an appropriate time for you, Mike?  
30  
31 MR. SPINDLER: (Nods affirmatively)  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll set a  
34 time for that and basically we'll call it the  
35 enforcement issues of the Federal hunts for 4:00  
36 o'clock p.m., today. And so any additional agenda  
37 insertions?  
38  
39 Seeing none.....  
40  
41 REPORTER: You need a second first.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
44  
45 MR. STICKMAN: I second.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We had a  
48 motion and a second to adopt.  
49  
50 MR. MORGAN: As amended.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: As amended by the  
2 various input we had here. Any further discussion.  
3  
4 (No comments)  
5  
6 MR. SAM: Question.  
7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's been  
9 called. Those in favor for adoption of the agenda  
10 signify by saying aye.  
11  
12 IN UNISON: Aye.  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.  
15  
16 (No opposing votes)  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The agenda is  
19 adopted. The approval of the March '07 Aniak meeting  
20 minutes. Does anybody have any discrepancy with the  
21 minutes.  
22  
23 (No comments)  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have we reviewed the  
26 minutes.  
27  
28 MR. STICKMAN: I move to adopt the  
29 minutes.  
30  
31 MR. SAM: Second.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded  
34 to adopt the minutes. A moment for review.  
35  
36 (Pause)  
37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: While we're in  
39 review here I see additional guests arriving and I  
40 would like to welcome those various guests and we have  
41 to have your names for the record here. We have a  
42 distinguished elder that's just arrived, so if we could  
43 get an introduction, go ahead, Vince.  
44  
45 MR. MATHEWS: I think I'll ask Boomer  
46 to help with the introductions, I don't know the elder  
47 that's arrived and I don't want to make a mistake.  
48  
49 MS. BRYANT: Her name is Lillian Olin,  
50 she's from Galena.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Additional Staff that  
2 came in from Bureau of Land Management is Tim Craig,  
3 and I don't know if there's someone else from BLM that  
4 came with Tim.

5  
6 MS. JACOBSON: We're both from BLM.  
7 I'm Shelly Jacobson and this is Bob Karlen.

8  
9 MR. KARLEN: Bob Karlen.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. People keep  
12 trickling in. And so we're back on the minutes from  
13 the March '07 meeting, anybody have any comments on  
14 those.

15  
16 (No comments)

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl.

19  
20 MR. MORGAN: Hearing none I call for  
21 the question.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's been  
24 called on our minutes from the March '07 meeting.  
25 Those in favor of adoption signify by saying aye.

26  
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.

30  
31 (No opposing votes)

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The minutes are  
34 adopted. We're on to fisheries issues, subsistence  
35 fisheries post-season review, the Yukon River. Got an  
36 overview on this procedure, Vince.

37  
38 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, the way we've done  
39 this is there'll be a summary that will be provided by  
40 Federal fisheries Staff and then that will be followed  
41 by reports from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
42 and there'll be PowerPoint presentations and we'll work  
43 through that and then at 10:30 or approximately that  
44 time, then ask Charlie for his comments.

45  
46 So at this point it would be Tom McLain  
47 would give, I'm struggling with the title, Overview of  
48 the 2007 Yukon River Salmon Season. And I will be  
49 handing out copies for you.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

4

5 MR. CAMPBELL: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman,  
6 Mr. Reakoff or Mr. Mathews, this is Charlie Campbell  
7 again and I'm having a hard time hearing here but was  
8 there a certain time when you wanted me to call in with  
9 comments. I'm sorry to interrupt but I can barely hear  
10 you and I just don't want to miss the time and I will  
11 call back at that point if you have a time.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to get  
14 an overview of the Yukon and then how about -- how long  
15 is your presentation, Tom.

16

17 MR. MCLAIN: It shouldn't take more  
18 than five minutes.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And then  
21 maybe because of your time constraint we can take your  
22 comment immediately after that, how would that be  
23 Charlie.

24

25 MR. CAMPBELL: That would be great. I  
26 appreciate it and, yeah, I can hear much better with  
27 you having spoke up that way. I'll just hang on the  
28 line until you're ready.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead,  
33 Tom.

34

35 MR. MCLAIN: Good morning, Jack. My  
36 name is Tom McLain and I'm the assistant branch manager  
37 to Russ Holder, the Yukon River Federal fisheries  
38 manager. I've provided you with a handout which is  
39 entitled the Overview of the 2007 Yukon River Salmon  
40 Season. I have additional copies here if Board members  
41 would need additional copies.

42

43 In summary the summer season was  
44 difficult to manage due to chinook salmon run size  
45 returning significantly less than expected and the  
46 above average abundance of summer chum salmon returning  
47 earlier than normal. The fall chum salmon run was late  
48 and not as strong as projected, while the coho salmon  
49 run was early and above average in run strength.  
50 Managers have heard that subsistence fishers had to

1 work harder than usual to achieve subsistence harvest  
2 goals for chinook salmon and in some cases may have not  
3 achieved their goals. Overall 2007 was a challenging  
4 fishing season in terms of managing for escapement  
5 objectives, providing preferential subsistence  
6 opportunities and for ADF&G to provide commercial and  
7 other harvest opportunities.

8

9 Pres-season, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
10 Service Staff worked cooperatively with the ADF&G Staff  
11 to develop the pre-season and in-season management  
12 approaches which were distributed in May as the golden  
13 colored information sheet, I've got a copy of that  
14 here. This sheet was mailed by ADF&G to all Yukon  
15 River subsistence households and commercial fishing  
16 permit holders. Managers entered the season  
17 anticipating that the four primary Yukon River salmon  
18 runs would return with sufficient abundance to meet  
19 escapement objectives, provide for normal subsistence  
20 harvest and provide for additional harvest  
21 opportunities. The chinook salmon run was anticipated  
22 to be average to below average and similar to the 2006  
23 run. The summer chum, fall chum and coho salmon runs  
24 were anticipated to be average or above average.

25

26 Run strength assessment of the in-  
27 season abundance of chinook and summer chum salmon was  
28 based on the lower River test fishery, Pilot Station  
29 sonar and subsistence fishermen catch reports. The  
30 summer season began with near average ice break up in  
31 the lower river, low water levels and low fish  
32 abundance.

33

34 The first pulse of chinook salmon was  
35 observed in the ADF&G lower river test nets projects on  
36 June 14th to 17th, with subsequent chinook salmon  
37 pulses occurring on June 20th through 24th and June  
38 27th to 28th. Chinook salmon entry timing was about  
39 one day later than average and finished with a below  
40 average cumulative CPUE as measured by the Fish and  
41 Game lower river test net project. The preliminary end  
42 of season Pilot Station sonar estimate was  
43 approximately 125,000 chinook salmon, as compared to  
44 the 2006 passage of 169,000 fish.

45

46 Summer chum salmon run strength was  
47 above average and improved over the abundance  
48 experienced from 1997 to 2004 but not as strong as 2000  
49 and 2006. The 2007 in-season passage of 1.7 million  
50 fish was greater than the average of 1.5 summer chum

1 salmon.

2

3

4 Most subsistence salmon fishermen  
5 delayed their fishing effort due to high gas prices and  
6 low fish numbers early in the season. The windowed  
7 subsistence salmon fishing schedule was initiated on  
8 May 28th in District 1 and was implemented  
9 chronologically up river as the run progressed up  
10 stream. Subsistence salmon in-season harvest  
11 information collected by both U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
12 Service and ADF&G indicated that most fishermen were  
13 able to obtain their subsistence harvest goals except  
14 for some fishers in the Koyukuk River drainage if they  
15 started fishing prior to or during the first pulse of  
16 fish. However the below average chinook salmon run and  
17 atypical decrease in abundance during the middle of the  
18 run made catch rates poorer than average and increased  
19 the amount of time needed to catch fish. Many  
20 fishermen reported fishing one to two weeks more than  
21 average. Many fishermen reported fish -- the high  
22 water temperatures in the upper portion of the drainage  
23 made checking nets and wheels more often an important  
24 factor and fishermen commented this increased the  
25 effort and time spent fishing. Combined with high gas  
26 prices, subsistence fishing for chinook salmon was  
27 challenging this year with many fishermen commenting  
28 that they anticipated making their immediate family  
29 subsistence salmon harvest goals, however many families  
30 commented that their harvests were not enough to share  
31 with extended family like they normally would.

31

32

33 The subsistence salmon fishing schedule  
34 was liberalized in the lower river districts to 7 days  
35 per week, 24 hours per day fishing beginning in  
36 District 1 on June 18 when 33 percent of the run had  
37 passed. Subsistence fishing time was liberalized up  
38 river with similar chronological timing. Additional  
39 liberalizations to the subsistence salmon fishing  
40 schedule were provided in District 4 to address  
41 difficulties local fishermen described in harvesting  
42 their subsistence chinook salmon including the Federal  
43 drift gillnet fishery in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C.

43

44

45 In December of 2004 the Federal  
46 Subsistence Board adopted a regulation that provided  
47 Federally-qualified subsistence fishermen the  
48 opportunity to use drift gillnets no more than 150 feet  
49 long and no more than 35 meshes deep to harvest chinook  
50 salmon in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C. In 2007 a total of  
51 12 permits were issued by the Koyukuk Nowitna National

1 Wildlife Refuge Complex Staff to rural residents,  
2 mostly from Galena. Of the seven permittees who have  
3 reported their fishing activity three reported fishing  
4 with 13 chinook salmon harvested in 18.5 hours of  
5 fishing. It appears there remains some interest in  
6 this fishing opportunity but Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C  
7 fishermen have not reported finding productive drifting  
8 spots within Federal public waters.

9  
10 For the fall season, the fall 2007 fall  
11 season had an unusually late entry of fall chum salmon  
12 and an in-season run size well below the preseason  
13 projection of one million fish. Based on sonar  
14 cumulative passage estimates, historical average run  
15 timing, preliminary genetic information and Mountain  
16 Village test fishery catches, the 2007 fall chum salmon  
17 run was estimated to be between 600,000 and 700,000  
18 fish as of September 1. The fish entered in three  
19 significant pulses on August 6th to 8th, August 12 to  
20 13, and August 24 through 26th. Post-season the 2007  
21 fall chum run size appears to have been near the pre-  
22 season projection based on up river assessment project  
23 information. The coho salmon run began early and it  
24 appears that the run size was above average for the  
25 season.

26  
27 The outlook for 2008 will be prepared  
28 by ADF&G after escapement information and age  
29 composition analysis are completed over the next  
30 several months.

31  
32 On Page 3 of your handout identifies  
33 the salmon assessment projects coordinated by the  
34 Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office, their 2007  
35 counts and how those counts compare to historical  
36 information.

37  
38 On Page 4 graphically displays the  
39 delay in chinook salmon harvest timing and potential  
40 unmet harvest goals for both lower Yukon villagers in  
41 the upper figure and upper Yukon villagers in the  
42 bottom figure as documented by the U.S. Fish and  
43 Wildlife Service in-season catch interview project.

44  
45 This concludes my presentation. I  
46 believe Steve Hayes with ADF&G has additional  
47 information to provide regarding the 2007 season.

48  
49 Thank you.  
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council member  
2 questions on the Federal overview of the 2007 salmon  
3 season.  
4  
5 MR. HONEA: I do.  
6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.  
8  
9 MR. HONEA: Yeah. You're, Tom, right.  
10  
11 MR. MCLAIN: Yes.  
12  
13 MR. HONEA: Yeah, on the first  
14 paragraph here it says the fall chum salmon was late,  
15 was that -- is that -- I mean according to the papers I  
16 thought that the fall run salmon that got to the Tanana  
17 River and such was -- exceeded their expectation, I  
18 mean is this a typo?  
19  
20 Thank you.  
21  
22 MR. MCLAIN: Well, the run was late and  
23 it did not come in as strong as anticipated, but the  
24 run was, what, Steve, about seven days late?  
25  
26 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Council  
27 members. The run was late. Early on it was expected  
28 that with the late run timing that the run was weaker  
29 than we anticipated but as it continued to come in it  
30 was better than what we originally thought. Timing of  
31 Tanana stocks seemed to be on this year even though it  
32 was later run timing on early on in the run.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further  
35 questions.  
36  
37 (No comments)  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your mic's on there,  
40 Tom -- your mic is on.  
41  
42 MR. STICKMAN: Jack.  
43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.  
45  
46 MR. STICKMAN: You know I was  
47 wondering, did we -- you know, we always have a goal to  
48 meet for the border passage for Canada, did we meet the  
49 border passage for Canada? Because in your report, you  
50 know, there's all kinds of illusions as to the small

1 fish and like for me, well, I had to fish a lot harder  
2 to meet my subsistence needs, but still with that I  
3 caught a 100 best kings than last year so I didn't even  
4 get anywhere close to -- I couldn't say I got anywhere  
5 close to meeting my needs.

6  
7 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
8 Stickman. I guess your question is referring to  
9 chinook salmon for the goal?

10  
11 MR. STICKMAN: (Nods affirmatively)

12  
13 MR. HAYES: I will be covering that  
14 information in the brief report that I'll be giving. I  
15 can answer it now or I can continue with this.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You can provide that  
18 in your report and any questions to the Federal  
19 managers at this time.

20  
21 (No comments)

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, you  
24 want to give your presentation, Steve.

25  
26 MR. HAYES: Okay. Mr. Chairman.  
27 Council members. I do apologize, there may be some  
28 redundancy in this report from what Tom gave.

29  
30 But as Tom indicated earlier the 2007  
31 run was expected to be average to below average and  
32 similar in abundance to the 2006 run. We anticipated  
33 pre-season run would provide for escapement, support a  
34 normal subsistence harvest and a below average  
35 commercial harvest. The 2007 pre-season outlook  
36 projected a commercial harvest of approximately 30,000  
37 to 60,000 chinook salmon. The 2007 summer chum run  
38 outlook was for an average to above average run, which  
39 would provide for escapement, support a normal  
40 subsistence harvest and a surplus for commercial  
41 harvest. The commercial harvest was projected to be  
42 from 500,000 to 900,000 summer chum salmon and, of  
43 course, this was depending on salmon market conditions.

44  
45 And as Tom said earlier, this year's  
46 chinook run was slightly later than average and not as  
47 strong overall as anticipated. The summer chum run  
48 appeared near average both in run strength and run  
49 timing. Our lower Yukon test fishery cumulative CPUE  
50 of 19.16 for chinook salmon was below the 1989 through

1 2006 average of 22.99. The first quarter point, mid-  
2 point and third-quarter point were on June 16th, June  
3 22nd and June 28th respectively. The Pilot Station  
4 sonar project cumulative passage estimate from May 31st  
5 to August 8th was approximately 125,000 chinook salmon  
6 and this was 19 percent below the average of 154,000.  
7 The first quarter point, mid-point and third-quarter  
8 point were on June 19th, June 24th and July 1  
9 respectively.

10

11 And similar to the management strategy  
12 that we utilized in 2006, the Department scheduled a  
13 short commercial, early commercial period based on the  
14 pre-season projection. This opening was intended to  
15 foster early commercial interest. The first commercial  
16 fishing period in the lower river occurred in District  
17 Y2 on Friday June 15th for three hours with  
18 unrestricted mesh size gillnets. The commercial  
19 harvest was approximately 2,100 chinook and 150 summer  
20 chum salmon. And on the handout that I provided the  
21 season summary, this refers on Table 1 of that will  
22 show the commercial harvest by period, by district.

23

24 The Department's test nets observed the  
25 first and largest pulse of chinook salmon from June  
26 14th through June 17th. The Department delayed opening  
27 the next commercial period targeting chinook salmon  
28 until June 18th in District Y1, which was two days  
29 after the first quarter-point at the lower river test  
30 fishery. During the second pulse from June 20th  
31 through June 24th it appeared that chinook salmon were  
32 entering the river at a slow, steady rate rather than a  
33 typical pulse pattern and the run was not as strong  
34 overall as anticipated.

35

36 And, of course, a strong first pulse  
37 followed by a weaker pulse is very unusual. During  
38 poor runs in 1998 and 2000 test fishing CPUE and the  
39 Pilot Station sonar estimates were lower than average  
40 throughout the entire run. Due to the uncertainty  
41 about the chinook salmon run strength after the second  
42 pulse, management of the chinook commercial fishery was  
43 conservative in order to meet escapement and  
44 subsistence needs and Canadian border passage  
45 obligations. After June 25th no additional  
46 unrestricted commercial periods targeting chinook  
47 salmon were taken during unrestric -- I'm sorry, after  
48 June 25th no additional unrestricted commercial periods  
49 targeting chinook salmon were allowed in the lower  
50 river districts. A total of 23,000 chinook were taken

1 during unrestricted mesh size openings in Districts 1  
2 through 3. Three commercial periods directed at  
3 chinook were allowed in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C with a  
4 total harvest of 1,241 chinook salmon.

5  
6 In 2007 there was market interest for  
7 summer chum salmon and based on the projected near  
8 average run estimate for summer chum, the Department  
9 initiated short commercial periods restricted to six  
10 inch maximum mesh size in the lower districts directed  
11 at chum salmon beginning in District 2 with a two hour  
12 commercial period on June 19th. And because of the  
13 uncertainty about the chinook salmon run strength only  
14 restricted mesh openings were allowed after June 26th.  
15 Additionally we did attempt to schedule chum directed  
16 commercial periods when chinook abundance was low.  
17 Approximately 9,000 chinook were incidentally harvested  
18 in these restricted periods which were approximately 70  
19 percent males. Additionally, three commercial periods  
20 were established in Subdistricts 4-A and seven periods  
21 were established in District 6, all of which were  
22 directed at summer chum salmon. This was the first  
23 commercial harvest in Subdistrict 4-A since 1997.

24  
25 The summer season total harvest for all  
26 districts combined was approximately 33,600 chinook and  
27 198,200 summer chum.

28  
29 All of the biological escapement goal  
30 and sustainable escapement goals were met in Alaska.  
31 We did conduct aerial surveys of the Andreafsky, Anvik,  
32 Nulato and Gisasa Rivers and all of these index rivers  
33 met or exceeded their sustainable escapement goals for  
34 chinook salmon.

35  
36 So in summary it appears the 2007 Yukon  
37 River chinook salmon run was approximately 60 to 70,000  
38 fish less than projected pre-season. And something of  
39 noteworthy is that the chinook runs in the Kuskokwim  
40 and Nushagak Rivers were approximately 100,000 fish  
41 less than projected pre-season in 2007 in each of these  
42 systems. In all three of these large river systems  
43 preliminary information indicates that more than one  
44 age class was less than expected pre-season and of  
45 course the cause of this discrepancy is unknown.

46  
47 Summer chum escapements were generally  
48 good in the East Fork Andreafsky, Anvik River and in  
49 the Koyukuk River drainage. The Anvik River sonar  
50 based escapement count of approximately 460,000 summer

1 chum salmon was within the biological escapement goal  
2 range of 350,000 to 7000. The estimated escapement of  
3 approximately 70,000 summer chum salmon for the  
4 EastFork Andreafsky River was within the BEG range of  
5 65,000 to 135,000.

6

7 And for Canadian fisheries in 2007,  
8 based on the projected total U.S. catch of Canadian  
9 origin chinook salmon and the harvest sharing  
10 arrangements in the Canada/U.S./Yukon River salmon  
11 agreement it was expected that the total border  
12 escapement would be at least 45,500 chinook salmon as  
13 measured by the mark/recapture program and the Canadian  
14 allowable chinook harvest would be approximately 12,500  
15 fish. However, there was a shortfall in the run into  
16 Canada. The mark/recapture spawning estimate was  
17 approximately 23,000 chinook salmon this year. The  
18 Eagle sonar estimate passage was 41,200 chinook salmon.

19

20 Because of the low run strength the  
21 Canadian commercial and domestic fisheries were not  
22 allowed in 2007 for chinook salmon. The daily catch  
23 limit in recreational fishery was reduced and  
24 subsequently closed. No restrictions were placed on  
25 the First Nation fishery and the total season projection  
26 is estimated to be around 5,000 chinook salmon.

27

28 So in summary the chinook run was below  
29 average and not as strong as the 2006 run. Despite the  
30 lower than anticipated run strength the 2007 chinook  
31 salmon run appeared to provide adequate subsistence  
32 harvest although fishers did have to work harder to  
33 meet their needs. Escapement goals were met in the  
34 U.S., however, the chinook salmon run fell short of the  
35 Canadian border passage and spawning escapement goal.

36

37 Summer chum run timing was near average  
38 with a season total run estimate of 1.7 million fish  
39 past Pilot Station sonar. The summer chum run provided  
40 for escapement and subsistence uses and a moderate  
41 commercial harvest.

42

43 And at this time it's likely that  
44 commercial fishing will be delayed next year until the  
45 mid-point in the run to be more conservative after what  
46 we saw this season.

47

48 And, Mr. Chairman, that concludes my  
49 report.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Do we have  
2 any comments from the Council, questions for the State  
3 presentation.

4  
5 (No comments)

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see none. And so  
8 we'll be going through some various proposals and we'll  
9 be needing State Staff here and so Charlie, you're on  
10 line there and a time constraint, so we'll listen to  
11 your presentation comments on this season, this Yukon  
12 River run this year.

13  
14 Go ahead.

15  
16 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay, can everybody hear  
17 me okay, is this loud enough?

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're hearing  
20 you loud and clear.

21  
22 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay, thank you. Yeah,  
23 my name is Charlie Campbell. I'm a commercial  
24 fisherman, a commercial wheel fisherman up here in  
25 District 5-A, I also fish subsistence both wheel and  
26 nets, and I appreciate this chance to testify before  
27 the Western RAC. I would like to urge you guys to  
28 support Proposals No. 13/14 restricting mesh size.

29  
30 Over the past several years wheel  
31 fishermen in our district have seen a steady decline in  
32 the size of the chinook through various measures. I  
33 don't think there's a wheel fisherman in our district  
34 who would disagree with this. A sampling project run  
35 by Stan Zuray at Rapids on the Yukon also confirms kind  
36 of what we're seeing with our own eyes.

37  
38 Virgil Umphenour has noticed it at his  
39 commercial fish plant, the steady decline in the  
40 average size of commercial caught kings.

41  
42 YRDFA had a fish size meeting about a  
43 year or so ago and it was clear at that point that  
44 nobody really wanted to hear this news. In a way it  
45 would have almost been entertaining to hear the  
46 Districts 1, 2 and 3 fishermen scramble for any  
47 explanation to what we were saying, which was that the  
48 fish were, the chinook were shrinking, except for the  
49 obvious one, and that is that all of us fishermen were  
50 selecting for the big females with our large mesh nets

1 and that we were, in fact, seeing the beginning of the  
2 end of the era of the big Yukon kings just the way it  
3 happened on the Columbia River. Of course in reality  
4 it wasn't entertaining at all but, instead, depressing  
5 to watch fishermen, what I thought was sort of a  
6 willful disregard of the clear warning signs and it was  
7 as depressing to watch Alaska Department of Fish and  
8 Game's more sophisticated political, sort of soft-shoe,  
9 which is really a state of denial since to say it  
10 aloud, to admit it aloud that the -- in fact that there  
11 was something to this decline in the size of the  
12 chinook, would involve taking some responsibility for  
13 the situation. I think this is particularly shameful  
14 on ADF&G's part, since as fishery managers they know  
15 full well about the correlation between mesh size and  
16 sex and size selectivity. This isn't anything new.

17  
18 I have right here in front of me a  
19 report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries in January of  
20 1981. What it was was a review of gillnet mesh size  
21 selectivity studies as related to chinook salmon  
22 fisheries in Cook Inlet, Alaska. Like I say, 1981. We  
23 get to a section on Page 9 that says, effect of mesh  
24 size on sex ratio and then the first paragraph, which I  
25 quote:

26  
27 Fishery biologists have long recognized  
28 that actual mesh size utilized by  
29 gillnet fisheries affects the result  
30 and sex ratio of chinook salmon  
31 populations on the spawning grounds.

32  
33 So this is cited in this 1981 report as  
34 something that's kind of like Gospel or Constitution,  
35 whatever you might call it, but it's certainly not new.

36  
37 But now in this situation, here in  
38 2007, we've already gone through three Board cycles  
39 with no action to address the problem, except  
40 currently, as you see before you, you know, the  
41 Department's recommendation is that we defer it, defer  
42 action for two more years, for what, I'm not sure.

43  
44 Here's how I see the situation sort of  
45 politically speaking.

46  
47 To begin with lower Yukon clearly has  
48 demonstrated that they have a vested interest in  
49 keeping their large mesh nets. They don't want to part  
50 with them and I don't believe they can be depended on

1 to see beyond their own short-term gain, at least at  
2 the moment. The upper Yukon fisheries sees the problem  
3 but is in the uncomfortable position of having to be  
4 the voice in the wilderness. We're the ones saying,  
5 you know, wake up, wake up, the fish are shrinking.  
6 That puts you guys, the middle river, the Western RAC  
7 in the position of kind of being the swing vote.  
8 Obviously you have a vested interest in large mesh nets  
9 as do we, I mean I use them too and lower river  
10 fishermen do as well. But I'm kind of hoping that you  
11 guys can perhaps be a little bit more objective about  
12 what is happening and perhaps a little less inclined to  
13 sort of discount what you hear or just say, well, it's  
14 just some oddity of the upper river fishery.

15  
16 In closing, something I thought was  
17 very interesting, is that this year when the  
18 subsistence survey lady came around to interview me, I  
19 was chatting with her and she mentioned that this year  
20 several District 1, 2 and 3 fishermen had reported --  
21 had complained of smaller fish size in chinook and I  
22 thought to myself, finally, outside the context of a  
23 fish meeting where, of course, everybody is told to  
24 adhere to the party line, finally some admission that  
25 perhaps there's a problem.

26  
27 I really would hope that you guys could  
28 gather up your courage to do something that we know is  
29 going to hurt for all of us but that is necessary to  
30 save for us the situation of having to tell our  
31 grandkids, in my day we caught 40 pound kings all the  
32 time, I mean I see that coming. And so I ask you guys,  
33 please, to do the right thing but the uncomfortable  
34 thing, and recommend that the Board adopt Proposals 13  
35 and 14.

36  
37 So, anyway, thanks for hearing me out,  
38 I appreciate it.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks a lot,  
41 Charlie.

42  
43 Any questions from the Council to  
44 Charlie.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, none. The  
49 other people on line there you'll be available for the  
50 deliberation of these proposals. Could I get an

1 affirmative from the people on line.  
2  
3 MR. UMPHENOUR: This is Virgil, I will  
4 Jack.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
7  
8 MR. HAMILTON: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, this  
9 is Ted Hamilton, I will.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
12  
13 MR. ZURAY: And, Jack, you cut out  
14 there a little on my phone, what was the affirmative  
15 that you wanted?  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to know if  
18 you'll be on line for our deliberation on these  
19 proposals? Can you still hear me Stan?  
20  
21 MR. ZURAY: Yeah, go ahead, you said  
22 something about deliberation, what was that again.  
23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I say are you going  
25 to be available on line for the deliberation of these  
26 proposals before us?  
27  
28 MR. ZURAY: No, probably about noon  
29 time, I'm flying about 2:00 o'clock this afternoon to  
30 the YRDFA meeting in Anchorage, so about noon time's my  
31 limit here, I'll have to start getting ready.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
34  
35 MR. ZURAY: I could wait a little while  
36 here until you guys start talking about it but I'll  
37 have to give my say here before noon.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If it pleases the  
40 Council I would like to have Stan present right now so  
41 that he can get on with his business.  
42  
43 (Council nods affirmatively)  
44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so go ahead,  
46 Stan, we'll let you go since you've got time  
47 constraints.  
48  
49 MR. ZURAY: Okay. All right. What I'm  
50 going to -- Charlie said a lot of the things that I

1 would have said, Charlie Campbell, when he spoke. So  
2 what I'm going to do is I'm just going to go and run  
3 through a couple of things here.

4  
5                   And one is the paper that I sent into  
6 Vince to have put before you, it's labeled Rapids  
7 Research Center chinook sampling and basically what  
8 this is, is a little bit of anecdotal information on  
9 how the size of fish that we're catching now has been  
10 going down. It speaks of a sample size over a period  
11 of four years of 4,007 chinook salmon and how out of  
12 those 4,007 chinook salmon there hasn't been -- there  
13 has been one 49.5 pound king salmon caught and the next  
14 largest, I believe is about a 36.5 pound king salmon.  
15 And, you know, so like I say this is not a trend over  
16 20 years or 30 years of time, this data is kind of  
17 meant for -- more to be looked at by fishermen who  
18 could look at these numbers, the weights of these fish  
19 on these charts and stuff and just, you know, as a  
20 fisherman who's used to catching fish, just take a look  
21 at what we're catching now. We were very careful in  
22 sampling these fish to make sure that the catches were  
23 randomly sampled. There was never any data allowed to  
24 be taken from any of these fish, you know, if some of  
25 the fish were already used out of the fisherman's catch  
26 -- they are taken from -- all from fishwheels, there  
27 wasn't any allowed to be taken from nets and the  
28 reasons for that was because of a net's obvious  
29 inability to catch small and large chinook at rates at  
30 all similar to, you know, what's in the river.

31  
32                   I'd like to -- let's see I'm skipping  
33 around here, like I said I had basically something to  
34 say very similar to what Charlie said and so I'm -- and  
35 I'm not going to just repeat what he had to say.

36  
37                   There's a paper before you also  
38 preliminary comments to the Regional Advisory Council  
39 and that's, you know, on the Fisheries Proposals 13 and  
40 14, and one thing I'd like to just impress on you is  
41 that this problem -- this -- trying to bring this  
42 problem forward, it has been through, as Charlie  
43 Campbell said, three Board cycles, that's nine years, I  
44 believe, of Board cycles and every time it gets brought  
45 up the -- what happens is, is that somebody decides  
46 that they need to study this some more and while, you  
47 know, I believe in studies and all that sort of stuff,  
48 if anybody doesn't say -- I mean because at this point  
49 I think it's foolish to think that we are not capable  
50 on this river of damaging this chinook run. And while



1 perspective on how these declines are -- and using two  
2 different gear types and their association of a size  
3 differential is very interesting.

4

5 And so any comments from the Council.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, thanks,  
10 Stan. So at this point how should we proceed, Vince.

11

12 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think at this  
13 point then we'd go to the presentations that were  
14 planned. I don't know if you want to take a break,  
15 that's up to you, but that would be the next phase, and  
16 then if a break is allowed we can make sure the  
17 computer's all functioning to get those PowerPoints  
18 because I think Dani has PowerPoints.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, well, that  
21 sounds like where I thought we should be going and I  
22 just heard a beep, and I think that was Stan leaving.  
23 I think we should take about a five, 10 minute break  
24 and then we'll look to these presentations coming back.  
25 So we'll break until -- I've got 10:47, how about 11:00  
26 o'clock or 11:05.

27

28 (Off record)

29

30 (On record)

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Could you return  
33 your seats now.

34

35 (Pause)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me, could you  
38 return to your seats now we're going to start this  
39 meeting.

40

41 Vince, you got something for me here,  
42 go ahead.

43

44 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, a quick housekeeping  
45 thing. If those that want to partake in the lunch of  
46 Indian Taco's, Indian frybread, et cetera, et cetera,  
47 et cetera, it's \$10, you need to come up here and give  
48 your name to Tina so we can call it in and then the  
49 food would be served at the place where the Council  
50 members are staying, Yukana Building, it's big enough

1 to house everybody but we need to get an order over to  
2 Shirley to know how many to make. So if you want, it's  
3 \$10 a person, and then give a name or count to her and  
4 then please do pay the \$10, Shirley's going out on a  
5 limb with this and I'd like to come back to Galena.

6

7

(Laughter)

8

9

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You can send  
10 that list down the table here and we'll sign up so  
11 we'll continue on with the State's presentation.

12

13

Go right ahead.

14

15

16

17

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49

50

A little bit about methods.

We began the study on June 15th, 2007  
and we hired four fishermen and two alternates and they

1 were to collect harvest and sampling data during a test  
2 fishery using the three different mesh sizes. So  
3 there's a lot of variability in this study and what we  
4 did is we chose two sites that were heavily used during  
5 the commercial fishery, one on the north bank and one  
6 on the south bank and we did this two times a day and  
7 we had the fishermen alternate between sites and times  
8 of day so we could make all those comparisons and they  
9 each would use the different mesh sizes and alternate  
10 which mesh size they fished with first. So we were  
11 trying to control for as much variability as we could,  
12 that is, keeping the location constant, differences  
13 between Fisherman A and Fisherman B and their skill  
14 levels and then the end gain was to look at the  
15 differences between those mesh sizes. So these were a  
16 maximum of 30 minute drifts and they had a 20 minute  
17 mandatory break time in between their drifts to allow  
18 the fish to replenish.

19

20                   So we hired technicians on each boat to  
21 help gather the data and keep everybody honest and when  
22 they pulled in a particular net each fish was  
23 automatically tagged, immediately tagged with a floy  
24 tag, that's a colored plastic tag and we had a  
25 different color for each mesh size so we knew when we  
26 got to the dock which mesh size that fish in particular  
27 had come from. If you look real closely you can see  
28 them in the dorsal fins. We tagged them in the dorsal  
29 fins so that we didn't injure the fish in any way or  
30 the quality of the meat. So we lined them up when we  
31 got back to the dock according to mesh size and then we  
32 took measurements, we took scales.

33

34                   Here is a photo of our technician Tracy  
35 pulling scales from the fish and examining their  
36 quality, and you can kind of see those little orange  
37 tags sticking up, those would be the floy tags and we  
38 also sampled for weight, girth, and we cut the fish as  
39 much as possible to do sex identification by visually  
40 examining the gonads rather than looking at the fish  
41 which you all know is difficult. The other thing that  
42 we did was we also collected catch per unit effort data  
43 while on the boats.

44

45                   Okay.

46

47                   So here's a map of the lower Yukon  
48 River, in red you can see Emmonak and then that is the  
49 area of the test fishery, both our lower Yukon test  
50 fishery and the site for this study. The area above

1 that line is the entire Y1 commercial fishery is --  
2 that's the whole district Y1 above that line, and  
3 that's our middle mouth and Big Eddy test fishery is in  
4 yellow and then you can see that the fish enter in  
5 three different mouths of the river. Typically what we  
6 see is that the fish enter in the south mouth first and  
7 then as the run progresses they move to the other two  
8 mouths of the river.

9

10 This year what was unusual is that the  
11 entry pattern was quite a bit different, chinook salmon  
12 didn't predominately enter the south mouth in the early  
13 or middle part of the run but, in fact, they entered  
14 the middle mouth and the north mouth, which was very  
15 strange.

16

17 So getting into the results and there's  
18 a reason I mentioned that -- getting into the results,  
19 our target size was 400 chinook per mesh size. As you  
20 can see we fell way shy of our goals. We got a total  
21 of 456 chinook salmon for the season and 605 chum  
22 salmon, so roughly one-third of our goal. Of those you  
23 can see that 7.5 inch mesh caught the most chinook  
24 and.....

25

26 MR. RIVARD: Dani, just a second.

27

28 MS. EVENSON: Okay.

29

30 MR. RIVARD: For those that are on line  
31 would you please mute your phone by doing star 6 and  
32 then if you need to speak then you need to go back to  
33 start 6.

34

35 MS. EVENSON: Thank you.

36

37 So as you can see most of the chinook  
38 were caught in the 7.5 inch mesh and the most chum were  
39 caught in the 7 inch mesh, no big surprise there.  
40 However, the overall sample size was low and we  
41 attribute that to, one, the low run that came in this  
42 year and also that our study was in the south mouth and  
43 unfortunately this year the fish all decided to come in  
44 through the middle mouth and the north mouth.

45

46 Because the sample goals were  
47 inadequate, the preliminary results that I'm presenting  
48 should be interpreted with some degree of caution.

49

50 So this is a graph on top of chinook by

1 mesh size and daily chum by mesh size and the colored  
2 bars represent the size of the mesh so everything you  
3 see in blue is a 7 inch mesh, what you see in yellow is  
4 a 7.5 inch mesh and the red is the 8 inch mesh and the  
5 axis is just number of fish.

6

7                   So you can see that roughly one-third  
8 of our sample size was caught on one day so that kind  
9 of messes with the results a little bit. In a perfect  
10 world we would have seen a little more -- even catch  
11 throughout the run.

12

13                   So -- and overall during the 12 days  
14 the study was conducted, 120 separate drifts were made  
15 representing a cumulative mean fishing time of about 71  
16 hours.

17

18                   Getting a little further into results,  
19 this is the chum to chinook ratio and we also added  
20 here -- so, again, in blue, yellow and red are the  
21 three meshes from the mesh size study, the 7 inch, 7.5  
22 and 8 inch but we also added in data from our  
23 restricted commercial fishery, that's a chum directed  
24 fishery with a 6 inch maximum mesh size and on the far  
25 right is the unrestricted commercial which is typically  
26 between 8 and a quarter or 8 and 3/4 inch mesh is what  
27 we believe.

28

29                   And so you can see that the chinook to  
30 -- the chum to chinook ratio was highest in the 6 inch,  
31 that's what we would expect to see, that a 6 inch mesh  
32 is going to catch more chum and less chinook and then  
33 kind of went lower down the line. For some reason the  
34 7.5 caught a few less chum and I'm not sure why the  
35 nomin -- anomaly, but it can vary substantially within  
36 the season and among seasons depending upon the  
37 relative abundance and the timing of the runs. And the  
38 ratio typically increases during the season as chum  
39 salmon predominate.

40

41                   Okay, chinook harvest by mesh size.  
42 This chart shows age and sex percentage by mesh size  
43 for six data sets so we did add one data set in here  
44 and that is -- so we had the restricted, the 7, 7.5, 8  
45 inch that we've talked about in the last couple slides,  
46 and this one here is an 8.5 inch set gillnet, it's part  
47 of our test fishery, it's in the same general location  
48 that we ran this study in and we just added it in for  
49 comparison.

50

1                   Some feedback I received from this  
2 presentation at the Eastern Interior RAC meeting from  
3 one of the Council members was that he wanted me to  
4 point out that the set gillnet was only 29 meshes deep  
5 whereas all of the other meshes were 45 meshes. So  
6 everything here is a drift gillnet 45 meshes deep  
7 except for -- where's my mouse -- sorry, I don't have a  
8 laser pointer today so you'll have to bear with me --  
9 except for this data set here. And even though --  
10 let's go back -- and even though that's 29 meshes deep  
11 it still did catch a significant amount of larger age  
12 -- older age fish. So what we see here is this time  
13 the white bars represent the percent female, you can  
14 see that pretty much, you know, increases slightly as  
15 the mesh size increases and then the colored bars in  
16 this slide represent the age classes of the fish with  
17 blue being Age 4, yellow is Age 5, red is Age 6 and  
18 whatever that grey color is is Age 7. So you can kind  
19 of see that the Age 6's increase for the lower mesh  
20 sizes and then kind of stay a little bit more constant  
21 for the 8, 8.5 and the unrestricted commercial.

22  
23                   Okay. And in this graph we have  
24 chinook average length and girth and it's the same data  
25 sets. You can see again here that is the restricted  
26 openings, the three from the mesh size study and then  
27 the Big Eddy test fishery and in the green is the  
28 unrestricted commercial harvest and just like you would  
29 expect they sort of go up a little bit from each mesh  
30 size. And that's the average length for the average  
31 girth. We only have four data sets because in the  
32 commercial fisheries we do not collect girth  
33 information. And, again, you can see slight increases  
34 with mesh size.

35  
36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have one question.

37  
38                   MS. EVENSON: Question.

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I have one  
41 question. At that point do you have an overlay of the  
42 age classes in girth, do you have an idea of what age  
43 classes are what girth measurements or was that a  
44 consideration as to age class compared to girth, what  
45 you're targeting?

46  
47                   MS. EVENSON: We haven't looked at the  
48 girth versus age class, it's something that we can do  
49 in the future. We typically look at age and length  
50 together but it is something as we develop these girth

1 data sets that we can do and look into doing in the  
2 future.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment would be  
5 that that's an integral part to the study is the girth  
6 measurements for the various age classes as to the  
7 selectivity of age class in this study and so I would  
8 encourage that girth measurements and correlation to  
9 age class be incorporated.

10

11 MS. EVENSON: Thank you. We'll take  
12 your comments under advisement. I always appreciate  
13 the feedback I get.

14

15 Okay.

16

17 This next graph, it takes a little bit  
18 more in-depth look at length. These charts show length  
19 of chinook salmon by location and gear grouped into 25  
20 millimeter bins. So the X axis label is the upper  
21 bound of the bin. For example, 800 includes all  
22 lengths from 776 through 800 millimeters and the Y axis  
23 is number of fish. And the left three charts show the  
24 relative length frequency from the 7, 7.5 and 8 inch  
25 drift gillnet study and the 850 length bin was the most  
26 frequent in all. So you can see that's the 850 length  
27 bin that's highlighted there. And fifty (ph) percent  
28 of all the fish sampled in the study were between 826  
29 and 850 millimeters.

30

31 And the three right charts show the  
32 restricted and unrestricted commercial harvest and the  
33 8.5 set gillnet. The abundance harvest and historical  
34 percentage of large fish is of interest to research,  
35 management and users of the resource and for the  
36 purpose of this I am defining large fish as those with  
37 a length greater than 900 millimeters, and the reason  
38 is that that's been used in other studies throughout  
39 the basin so just to keep it constant with what other  
40 people have looked at, it's sort of an arbitrary number  
41 but better than nothing. So therefore, large fish are  
42 in the length bins 925 and above and those are shown  
43 right there what each one is catching in terms of large  
44 fish.

45

46 And looking at large fish in greater  
47 detail, this chart shows the percentage of large fish  
48 from commercial periods, the mesh size study and the  
49 8.5 inch set gillnet. From left to right the mesh size  
50 increases. The first six values here, P4 through P10

1 are from the 6 inch or less restricted commercial  
2 harvest in District 1. The P stands for period as P4  
3 is Period 4. And the average for these six periods was  
4 the lowest overall at 4.9 percent. The next three  
5 values are from the mesh size study and the overall  
6 average about 6.2 percent, and that's -- where did my  
7 mouse go -- these three in here. And moving on the  
8 second highest percentage of large fish was from the  
9 8.5 inch set gillnet at 12.5 percent. As expected the  
10 unrestricted commercial harvest had the highest  
11 percentage of large fish. The last three values, P1  
12 through P5, are from this harvest, the average is 21.8  
13 percent.

14  
15                   And moving on to small fish. And, of  
16 course, this is going to change each year, the year  
17 class strength varies so what we see as the dominate  
18 age class might change on a year to year basis and this  
19 is stuff that we also see changing within a season.

20  
21                   Looking at small chinook and for  
22 purposes of this study we define them as less than 655  
23 millimeters, it's what we consider jacks, and this  
24 chart is identical to the last except for the  
25 percentage of the small chinook is shown. And as  
26 expected the percentage is greatest in the 6 inch or  
27 less restricted commercial harvest with an average of  
28 about 35 percent. And the smallest percentage was in  
29 the unrestricted commercial harvest, a three percent  
30 average. The small fish in the mesh size study range  
31 from about 8.5 to 3.6 percent. A decrease with larger  
32 mesh, of course.

33  
34                   Next, moving on to females chinook.  
35 This chart shows the percentage of females by mesh size  
36 and commercial harvest period similar to the last two  
37 slides.

38  
39                   And the percentage of females does  
40 appear to increase through the season with the  
41 restricted commercial harvest, that's P4 to P10 here.  
42 You could see that the percentage of females has  
43 increased with time. And as noted the percentage of  
44 females increases with increasing mesh size in the mesh  
45 size study, and that's -- I need a pointer -- it's  
46 these three here.

47  
48                   Next, a little look at chinook average  
49 weight. And this, again, has the restricted and the  
50 unrestricted harvest as well as the setnet and you can

1 see that in the 6 inch restricted had the lowest, which  
2 is what we would expect and that was an average of  
3 about 3.1 pounds. One thing to mention here is that we  
4 take individual weights in the mesh size study and from  
5 our set net from the lower river test fishery but in  
6 the commercial harvest these are batch weights, so  
7 they're not individual fish. Just something to bear in  
8 mind when you interpret these. But you can see that  
9 the weights kind of went up with the mesh size, 17.1  
10 was the average weight for a 7 inch mesh, 18.5 for a  
11 7.5 inch mesh, 18.9 for the 8 inch mesh, and then we  
12 see that the setnet for some reason had the highest  
13 average weight, and bear in mind that that is 29 meshes  
14 deep and everything else is 45 meshes deep.

15  
16 And that's about all I have for  
17 results. Planning ahead, this is the first of a three  
18 year study. We plan on continuing the study in 2008  
19 and 2009 and it's very important to have a minimum of  
20 three years of data as a percentage -- as I mentioned  
21 earlier, the percentage by age can vary widely between  
22 years and also the run strength which was a problem  
23 from this years, not having enough fish, to really draw  
24 strong conclusions.

25  
26 And, with that, I'd be happy to take  
27 any questions and I thank you for your attention.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do Council members  
30 have questions on the presentation.

31  
32 (No comments)

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see any  
35 Council members that have questions at this time. My  
36 question is are you going to change where you're -- or  
37 make an assessment on where fish are entering and  
38 adjust your fishing locations or are you going to  
39 maintain the same fishing locations basically in the  
40 south mouth throughout the project?

41  
42 MS. EVENSON: At this point we have no  
43 plans of changing them. We tried to tweak them a  
44 little bit in-season but -- so we can have the data  
45 sets to be comparable through time, number 1.

46  
47 Number 2, our setnet is right there and  
48 having them in the south mouth, we have a field office  
49 there so it allows me a greater deal of control over  
50 what's going on out there so I can always jump on a

1 boat and go with the fishermen or, you know, check in  
2 on the techs and then the fish get brought back to our  
3 dock. And as you can imagine when you pull in fish  
4 from three different mesh sizes it can be very  
5 confusing very quickly so it allows us to do that kind  
6 of data control.

7

8 And, you know, there's always that  
9 hindsight's 20/20 thing, if we moved to the middle  
10 mouth next year, the fish would probably all come in in  
11 the south mouth so Murphy's Law.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.

14

15 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, I guess you said  
16 this is going to be a three year project, I guess after  
17 three years you'll have what we would naturally call  
18 baseline data to support what the fishermen have been  
19 saying all along for the last three years, so I guess  
20 maybe in 2009 we'll have scientific data to back up  
21 what the fishermen have been saying for the last three  
22 years already?

23

24 MS. EVENSON: Well, I think that the  
25 concern is a little -- or the goal of the study is a  
26 little different than that. We want to make sure that  
27 if we do a mesh size change that we've got the right  
28 mesh size, so you want to still maintain a viable  
29 subsistence fishery and a viable commercial fishery and  
30 allow these large fish to pass up river but you don't  
31 want to catch too many chum. And it's a trade off  
32 between those things.

33

34 And, you know, just looking at the  
35 preliminary data from this study and data from Pilot  
36 Station is shows 7.5 inch mesh is going to catch more  
37 chinook per unit effort. So, you know, that catches  
38 more chinook of all age sizes.

39

40 So looking at this will give us a  
41 little data to think about those things and think about  
42 which mesh size is best. Maybe it's 7 and 3/4, maybe  
43 it's 8 and a quarter, maybe it's 7, we don't know. And  
44 so this is sort of a look at that. Because one thing,  
45 you know, that I think would be tragic is if we went to  
46 7.5 inch mesh and found out that that was not an  
47 appropriate mesh size and people had to buy new meshes  
48 and switch again.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One of my concerns  
4 was the marketability factor in this study and how did  
5 that -- when we're strictly regarding a resource issue  
6 and how does that enter into this selectivity study,  
7 this marketability issue, that's the bycatch of chum,  
8 is that what you're talking about?

9

10 MS. EVENSON: No, that's been the  
11 tricky one to get at. But the processors get a premium  
12 price for fish headed and gutted in certain weight  
13 classes and so when they get above a certain weight the  
14 price goes down, they don't get the premium price and  
15 when they get below a certain weight and I don't know  
16 off the top of my head, it's something like 10 pounds  
17 headed and gutted, they don't get that premium price,  
18 so how do you keep them in range as well. So in other  
19 words, they're not necessarily after the largest fish  
20 but how do you look at what the catch is in that mesh  
21 size and how that relates to a price as a tertiary  
22 objective of the study.

23

24 I hope that answers your question.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that kind of  
27 answers my question. And my additional question is the  
28 CDQ group as one of your partners on this project,  
29 doesn't that kind of taint and this marketability  
30 issue, doesn't it kind of taint this question, the  
31 question is the sustainability of older age class fish.  
32 That's the driving force of this issue and so my  
33 concerns are that the CDQ group has got too much say in  
34 the marketability point and we're not cookie-cuttering  
35 this resource into a marketability. I would be -- I am  
36 happy to see this study. I do feel that there has been  
37 other studies done, but this marketability issue, this  
38 is something I don't like to -- don't feel is  
39 appropriate to be incorporated into this. The market  
40 itself, let the chips fall where they be. We're  
41 managing for sustained yield management of the Yukon  
42 chinook run and if they have to eat some jacks well so  
43 be it.

44

45 So those are my concerns about the CDQ  
46 group partnering on this project and this marketability  
47 issue.

48

49 And so any other comments from the  
50 Council.

1 Ron.

2

3 MR. SAM: Yeah, again, just a comment.  
4 I can see and I recommend that you don't move your test  
5 sites simply because of comparison issue and I would  
6 recommend that you keep them all there because if you  
7 do move them you probably would just throw your tests  
8 all to heck and I would recommend that you keep them  
9 there for comparison issues. And that's the only way  
10 that this test will bear fruit.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Ron, I agree  
15 with you there. Another question is, is that  
16 understood that there are larger fish in the early  
17 portion of the run in the south mouth and the fish go  
18 to a -- change, basically, age classes throughout the  
19 run or is there a differential in the pulse on age  
20 class or has that been understood or documented in the  
21 difference entrance of the Yukon mouths?

22

23 MS. EVENSON: We don't really see a big  
24 difference in the age class that I know of in the  
25 different mouths but we do see slight changes as the  
26 season goes on. It's believed that, for example, that  
27 males come in earlier in the season and then we see  
28 more Age 6's and more females as the season goes on.  
29 And for the purposes of this study we tried to  
30 encompass the middle portion of the run, you know,  
31 essentially from quarter point to quarter point.

32

33 And addressing your previous concerns,  
34 you know, I understand and respect that you have  
35 concerns about CDQ being the funding source of this  
36 project but I want to make it clear that they let us  
37 design the project and they have not had an active hand  
38 in how this project has run. We've hired technicians  
39 through them but we were responsible for the hiring and  
40 that's as far as it goes. They were a funding source,  
41 and a generous funding source at that, and they have  
42 not tried to influence our decisions or our study  
43 design in any way, shape or form. And also with the  
44 marketability of the catch, we took the fish to all the  
45 buyers down there, not just the CDQ group and, you  
46 know, we kind of wanted to see them as part of it,  
47 showing them what we're doing and getting them on board  
48 with this, this is the fish we caught through 7 inch  
49 mesh, what do you guys think, you know, and the fish  
50 this year looked healthy and they were good fish. And,

1 so, that's really more of a qualitative objective as  
2 well.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right, okay, I  
5 appreciate that comment. Ron.  
6  
7 MR. SAM: Yeah, just for my information  
8 who is CDQ?  
9  
10 MS. EVENSON: CDQ is the Yukon Delta  
11 Fisheries Development Association.  
12  
13 MR. SAM: (Nods affirmatively)  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.  
16  
17 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, can we go back on  
18 your information and look at the -- I wanted to see the  
19 correlation of the mesh size and the percentage of  
20 females caught.  
21  
22 MS. EVENSON: There it is. Okay, so  
23 the females are.....  
24  
25 REPORTER: Wait, Dani, Dani.  
26  
27 MS. EVENSON: I'm not on. Having all  
28 sorts of technology difficulties today. Okay, so the  
29 females are the clear bars and the age are in the  
30 colored bars for this graphic. And one of the things I  
31 haven't had a chance to do is the statistics on this to  
32 see if there are significant differences in a  
33 statistical context between these different mesh sizes.  
34 But this gives you a good view of this.  
35  
36 You can see that the yellows, which are  
37 Age 5, decrease with mesh size, whereas the Age 6  
38 increase with mesh size up to a point, they kind of  
39 seem real similar between 8 and 8.5 and unrestricted as  
40 does the Age 5 class.  
41  
42 MR. STICKMAN: I just thought it would  
43 be a good idea for the Council to look at this because  
44 if you look at the numbers, everything above 6 inch  
45 it's more than 50 percent females and once you get down  
46 to that section it gets down to probably 30, 35.  
47  
48 MS. EVENSON: Yeah, and, again, this is  
49 preliminary results. This year we didn't get our  
50 sample size so like I said you should interpret these

1 with a degree of caution. I don't know that we would  
2 see those if we had -- this year we had 80 percent 6  
3 year olds coming in at the mouth from the unrestricted  
4 -- you know, looking at our historical data sets it was  
5 well above average what we saw was 6 year olds. And if  
6 you saw a higher percentage of 5 year olds next year  
7 you might see a completely different break down by mesh  
8 size. Probably similar general trends but a different  
9 break down.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions,  
12 Mickey.

13

14 MR. STICKMAN: No, that's all I had.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One last question  
17 for me is on these various mesh size and -- so you had  
18 bulk catches, did you weigh comparison between gear  
19 sizes on a daily basis, so like in 7.5 you caught 250  
20 pounds of -- or 800 pounds of chinook and 7 inch, what  
21 was the bulk catch for chinook for that daily catch;  
22 are there comparisons on biomass harvest by gear size?

23

24 MS. EVENSON: That's an interesting  
25 question actually and, no, we haven't done that yet,  
26 but that's something that might be worth doing or  
27 looking at average weight by day, you know, in the  
28 catch as well to see if there changes over the season.  
29 And this year it was particular difficult just because  
30 it was a shear numbers game and we weren't getting  
31 those volumes so you would see if you just went with  
32 the bulk catch, that one day that i showed you that we  
33 caught one-third of our sample size would be off the  
34 charts and then there would be other days that were  
35 close to zero. But it would be worth, maybe, looking  
36 at the average weight per day.

37

38 Thanks for your suggestions.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that would be  
41 a consideration of the fishers is they're going to  
42 catch the amounts of fish for the amount of biomass or  
43 the amount of poundage for effort. And so those --  
44 your pictures of those fish lined up there, it looked  
45 like there was different gear types with different size  
46 -- numbers of fish and so it looked like there's a huge  
47 biomass discrepancies -- are those each by gear type,  
48 each one of those rows there?

49

50 MS. EVENSON: Yes. Those are each by

1 mesh size. I would think -- we usually have the -- I  
2 think we had the 7 inch was closest to the water and  
3 then the 7.5 in the middle and the 8 inch. And, again,  
4 some of that had to do with what order the mesh was  
5 fished in too, you know, so each day we would rotate  
6 the meshes. So on day one you'd fish 7 inch first and  
7 then you'd wait 20 minutes and then you'd fish 7.5 and  
8 you'd wait 20 minutes and then you'd fish 8, Day 2  
9 everybody fishes with 7.5 inch first, so sometimes that  
10 affects it too.

11  
12 So, but you can see here the 7.5 inch  
13 mesh clearly caught more on that day or during that  
14 shift.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that's a very  
17 graphic picture and so that's why I wanted to see that  
18 consideration as to biomass and that data should be  
19 accumulated to be presented to the Board of Fisheries  
20 in the future because that's one of the integral  
21 questions is, do we want to spend -- my feeling is that  
22 7.5 inch gear is harvesting across the board and that's  
23 what I've been a proponent of is to harvest throughout  
24 the spectrum and not strain the waters. And so that  
25 picture there also shows that the catch per unit of  
26 effort is maximized for the subsistence users and so  
27 that's what I'm seeing there.

28  
29 So any further questions on this  
30 presentation.

31  
32 (No comments)

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see any  
35 other questions at this time. I really appreciate  
36 that, that was a great presentation, I enjoyed that.  
37 And so we have other presentations, Vince.

38  
39 MR. SAM: Thank you.

40  
41 MS. EVENSON: Thank you for your time.

42  
43 MR. MATHEWS: I don't -- I'll just turn  
44 it over to Fish and Game if there was other  
45 presentations. I know that the Federal Staff have made  
46 their summaries so I don't know if there's any  
47 presentation is there. And the other ones with Partner  
48 Fisheries are later on the agenda, this is in  
49 preparation for reviewing proposals so I'd leave it up  
50 to Fish and Game if they had any other presentations.

1                   They're signaling no.  
2  
3                   And I don't think we have a post-season  
4 summary for the Kuskokwim.  
5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So what point  
7 are we at here, we're on the Yukon.....  
8  
9                   MR. MATHEWS: Well, we would be a the  
10 post-season review. And then there's the item that you  
11 brought up at the last meeting on the decline of salmon  
12 over time, of course, that's part of the mesh study  
13 there, too. And then that's it. I mean I think that  
14 would bring you up to an item that we can talk about,  
15 consensus building, but.....  
16  
17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm seeing on our  
18 size decline, this chinook/chum salmon size comparison  
19 and I had requested this of Russ Holder in discussion  
20 of some proponents of the size decline on the Yukon,  
21 have stated that we have a marine system issue and  
22 salmon are declining in response to atrophic level of  
23 the marine system and I say, well, that doesn't prove  
24 through in the chum salmon. The chum salmon are  
25 maintaining a size, that we don't see a size decline in  
26 the chum salmon throughout the spectrum so I requested  
27 information comparisons on chinook salmon size decline  
28 and have an overlay of the chum salmon, what their  
29 sizes are in the same timeframes. And so do we have  
30 that data to be presented, Russ Holder was to present  
31 that.  
32  
33                   MR. MCLAIN: Jack, I don't have.....  
34  
35                   REPORTER: Wait, wait, wait, come.....  
36  
37                   MR. RIVARD: Come on up here, come on  
38 up here.  
39  
40                   MR. MCLAIN: Okay. Mr. Chairman. I do  
41 not have the data from Russ directly. We did have a  
42 conversation yesterday relative to the comparison  
43 between the chinook and the chum. We're actually  
44 dealing with oranges and apples. We're dealing with  
45 different life histories, different sizes, different  
46 feeding habits in the ocean so it's really -- the  
47 thought we have is that it is not something that you  
48 can give an easy comparison to.  
49  
50                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My position is, that

1 if -- I don't care what the atrophic levels are, the  
2 life cycles of each species, if there's atrophic level  
3 decline there will be an across the board reaction in  
4 the per species in size. I used to commercial fish  
5 down in Bristol Bay, and in '97 the fish started coming  
6 in really small and skinny and they were really weak  
7 and it was showing atrophic, that was the precursory of  
8 the whole atrophic decline in the marine system and the  
9 crashes in the AYK stocks, and so it was graphic, to  
10 me, to see those fish -- the sizes of the fish. They  
11 eat on the top of the -- bottom of the food chain, so  
12 to speak, the sockeye, so those atrophic levels are  
13 presented by species if you have atrophic decline. So  
14 the position of some proponents is that we have  
15 atrophic decline and that's the reaction of the chinook  
16 salmon in size, they get smaller because of atrophic,  
17 but I don't believe that. The chum salmon are showing  
18 a static size return and all's we're seeing with  
19 chinook salmon is a selectivity issue and over  
20 harvesting by selectivity. And we're not -- with 6  
21 inch gear on chum salmon you're not damaging the  
22 genotypes and the number of -- the amount of directed  
23 fishery at the chum salmon has also not been so  
24 intensive as this high demand chinook salmon and so  
25 that's why I wanted that data. I disagree with Russ on  
26 that issue, that you will see atrophic decline by  
27 species in sizes if it is truly atrophic issue and so  
28 that's why I wanted that data.

29  
30 I talked to Russ last winter about  
31 that. He doesn't agree with me. He doesn't want to  
32 even look at the issue. Well, I think that the issue  
33 needs to be looked at. That there is not a decline in  
34 the chum salmon.

35  
36 MR. MCLAIN: Yes. I will work with  
37 Russ to get that information to you. I don't have it  
38 in front of me right now so we'll work on that.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I talked with  
41 Russ post-Aniak meeting about this data presentation  
42 for this meeting and so I'm -- and then I talked to him  
43 this summer and I reiterated that position. And I  
44 would, at least, like to look at the chum salmon data,  
45 what the weights are and so forth in time, over line  
46 with the timeframes that we're looking at chinook  
47 salmon, I think it's part of the equation, part of the  
48 data gathering -- part of the knowledge that we need to  
49 have here.

50

1 Did you have something, Dani.

2

3 MS. EVENSON: Yes. Dani Evenson, area  
4 research biologist for Fish and Game. That's something  
5 we do have data on and it is something we can work with  
6 Russ on to get that to you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I'd appreciate  
9 that. Do you have something, Don.

10

11 MR. RIVARD: Yes, Mr. Chair. Vince  
12 reminded me a couple of times about your request and I  
13 also looked at your transcripts from your last meeting  
14 and I did look into this issue.

15

16 And I've got graphs here that basically  
17 confirm what you've stated previously. And the problem  
18 is, is I've got information from the commercial catches  
19 throughout the state, all the way to 1970, and the  
20 trend lines -- this is looking at weights, the average  
21 weight of commercially caught chinook and chum salmon.  
22 The problem with comparing year to year -- there is a  
23 -- first of all, it's pretty steady for chum, the  
24 average weight has not changed much since 1970, okay,  
25 there is a trend downward for chinook, the problem with  
26 comparing it and others can confirm this is that  
27 there's a year to year variation because commercial  
28 catches are being done in a variety of ways with  
29 different mesh sizes that change from year to year,  
30 from the difference in the percentage of fish being  
31 caught by various types and various locations, so  
32 there's a lot of variability.

33

34 But it is consistent no matter where  
35 you look in the state that there is a trend downward in  
36 the average weight of commercially caught chinook  
37 salmon from 1970 on. This is the graph statewide.  
38 Okay.

39

40 That's statewide from 1970. And the  
41 top line, that's chinook on the top and chum on the  
42 bottom, their average weights. You can see the  
43 variability and the trend lines are there in black and  
44 they are trending downward, that's for the whole state,  
45 from 1970.

46

47 And then I looked at Bristol Bay from  
48 19 -- this is all State data that you can get on line,  
49 is where I got this, okay. So it's already been looked  
50 at. And this is Bristol Bay from 1980 to 2005, it's

1 also showing the same trend. Okay.

2

3 I looked at commercially caught Yukon  
4 River -- the only stuff I can get on line is from 1994  
5 to 2006, chum remain pretty steady, there's a slight  
6 downward trend on chum, average weight commercially  
7 caught.

8

9 Kuskokwim, same time period -- well,  
10 this is from 1994 to 2006, Kuskokwim it's the same  
11 trend, okay.

12

13 And I looked at the same timelines for  
14 the whole state as of for the Yukon, 1994 to 2006, and  
15 this is for the whole state of Alaska, it's still  
16 showing the same trend and Bristol Bay for that same  
17 time period is also showing the same trend. So it is  
18 going down for chinook, it's staying steady for chum.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's exactly the  
21 data that I wanted to see and I appreciate that Don  
22 that you've brought that forward, exterior of the  
23 fisheries, and -- from the OSM side. And so that's  
24 exactly what my position is, is the data set for the  
25 Yukon is fairly short for the chum and all's you're  
26 doing is encapsulating that atrophic decline and the  
27 AYK decline on the Yukon River, showing a slight, ever  
28 so slight decline of the chum salmon in comparison to  
29 the chinook salmon, and that graph was -- that  
30 comparison was graphic as to the issue.

31

32 And so I'm a strong believer that we  
33 have a selectivity issue here and it's not a marine  
34 decline. And you can cloud the issue all you want but  
35 that graph right there shows exactly what is occurring  
36 and the selectivity on the chinook is hurting the  
37 salmon and so that's why I wanted to see that graph,  
38 and I appreciate that Don, for bringing that graph and  
39 showing it before the Council.

40

41 So we see the next steps on our agenda  
42 here, the next steps, the Federal Subsistence Board,  
43 what does that mean Vince?

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: I'm going to draw a blank  
46 on that. I'm not sure what that meant. I'm thinking  
47 that we were anticipating -- or I was anticipating in  
48 this agenda your response on the comparison of chinook  
49 and chum, so I don't think there's anything there. I  
50 think your direction, if I anticipate correctly, is

1 going to be handled in your reaction to Proposals 13  
2 and 14 and the other subsequent proposals.

3

4                   And to help you move along, these  
5 agendas are made months in advance, No. C, which is  
6 drainagewide consensus building, I think that would be  
7 better to talk about after you deal with the proposals,  
8 I'll remember that, because I think you want to have an  
9 interaction with the leadership of Eastern Interior,  
10 and then maybe if Virgil has the time he can share what  
11 they've done, I have a summary of that, too, on  
12 consensus building. So that would bring us up, if you  
13 agree to that and your Council agrees to that, up to  
14 proposal review.

15

16                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we're up at  
17 proposal review and recommendations. We're at  
18 approximately noon, should we go about a half an hour  
19 on these proposals, when's our timeframe for the lunch,  
20 Vince.

21

22                   MR. MATHEWS: I didn't see the Staff  
23 come back from Shirley's so I don't know if he survived  
24 or not, but my guess is the way the meal, she laid it  
25 out, I don't think there's a time crunch on it, I think  
26 if you push beyond 12:30 -- the only problem with doing  
27 part of it 13 and 14, it's a major presentation, it'd  
28 have to be truncated. I don't know, Don can share that  
29 but it is a lengthy -- not lengthy, it's a very  
30 thorough presentation on it so it might be better not  
31 to truncate it. It's your call, though. And maybe Don  
32 has input on it, I don't know.

33

34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What's your input on  
35 that Don, I don't want to cloud this issue, these are  
36 very important proposals, I don't want to cloud this  
37 proceeding and so.....

38

39                   MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. Don Rivard.  
40 In the two Councils that I've presented this, 13 and  
41 14, too, and I think it's especially important because  
42 I understand not everybody got their books until this  
43 meeting, is that correct?

44

(Council nods affirmatively)

45

46                   MR. RIVARD: So you haven't had a  
47 chance to look it over?

48

49                   (Council shakes head negatively)

50

1 MR. RIVARD: I've gone through the  
2 presentation of this and it's taken anywhere from 30  
3 minutes to 45 minutes just for me to lay it out and I  
4 think that would be important that I do so again  
5 because of the fact that some Council members did not  
6 get a chance to even look this analysis over. So that  
7 would be my recommendation. I would think we'd  
8 probably want to do this all in one block and not stop  
9 in the middle.

10

(Council nods affirmatively)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'm seeing a  
13 lot of nods from the Council. I think it'd be a good  
14 time to break and then we'll come back to the  
15 presentation on Proposal -- the proposals before us,  
16 and so at this time we'll break until about 1:00 p.m.,  
17 1:00 to 1:15?

18

(Council nods affirmatively)

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 1:15 would be an  
21 agreeable number it would seem. Okay.

22

(Off record)

23

(On record)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'd like to bring  
26 the meeting back to order, if you could return to your  
27 seats please.

28

(Pause)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I've got 1:18 on  
31 the clock on the back of the wall and I got 1:13 here  
32 and so we're coming back to order at approximately  
33 1:15.

34

(Laughter)

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I'd like to  
37 have people return to their seats, and I need my  
38 various Council members here. Let's see we need Don  
39 and Jenny.

40

(Pause)

41

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Where'd they go.

42

43

1 MR. MATHEWS: Jenny, my understanding  
2 was getting stuff ready for tonight's cover dish so she  
3 should be here any minute.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

6  
7 MR. MATHEWS: And I think Don is -- I  
8 don't know where Don is.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Yeah, I  
11 thought he was here -- there he is.

12  
13 (Pause)

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Don Honea has  
16 just returned and we'll give Jenny a couple minutes to  
17 show up. I wanted to come back on line because we told  
18 the teleconference that we'd be back here at 1:15 and I  
19 guess I should have checked on that so what do you  
20 think we ought to do here, Vince.

21  
22 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think what we can  
23 do here, most of you have gone through this before, but  
24 the back of your name thing is a procedure. The  
25 procedure is not to limit you, it's to expand your  
26 ability to make sure you have the strongest  
27 recommendation to carry forward. For the Staff in the  
28 room you may not have seen this or you may have seen it  
29 so I'll just go over it real quickly and it's in the  
30 agenda if you have a copy.

31  
32 The proposal is introduced and then the  
33 analysis is presented.

34  
35 The Chair can ask then for questions on  
36 the analysis and that can go back and  
37 forth and make a clear understanding.

38  
39 Then we go to agency comments, and  
40 that's when Fish and Game gives their  
41 comments.

42  
43 Then he'll ask if there's any Federal  
44 agencies to give comments. And  
45 everybody asks why do we have that  
46 there, there can be differences of  
47 opinion and different data or later  
48 more current data that a Federal agency  
49 may have that OSM Staff in the analysis  
50 did not have, so that's where that

1 goes.  
2  
3 And then he'll ask Native tribe,  
4 village and others if they have any  
5 comments.  
6  
7 And then the last one is, and it seems  
8 hollow, but it's not, the next one is  
9 InterAgency Staff comments. The  
10 InterAgency is the next step in this  
11 process, they may have some questions  
12 or comments to share with the Council.  
13  
14 The third one comes up is Advisory  
15 Groups, and then I'll summarize the  
16 Regional Council recommendations, the  
17 local Fish and Game ones that I know  
18 of. I don't know Middle Yukon, so I  
19 hope Mickey will bring forth Middle  
20 Yukon. Ruby, if they took up these  
21 proposals or have some comments would  
22 be also. And if there's any other  
23 committees here they'd do that.  
24  
25 And then for those that are not  
26 familiar with this, the National Park  
27 Service has Subsistence Resource  
28 Commissions. They may have taken up  
29 these proposals. Actually Wrangell-St.  
30 Elias did, but they didn't have a  
31 quorum and it's not on this proposal.  
32 But Jack is on the Subsistence Resource  
33 Commission for Gates, if they took up  
34 these proposals, they may share.  
35  
36 Then we go to summary of written  
37 comments.  
38  
39 Then Jack will open it up for public  
40 testimony.  
41  
42 And then finally the Council starts its  
43 deliberation and justification.  
44  
45 Anyways the real thing I was trying to  
46 get to, this is a series of questions that they can use  
47 or not use. But when they get into discussion and  
48 justification it'd be nice if they touched -- anyways  
49 there's questions here that they can use or not.  
50

- 1 1. Is there a conservation  
2 concern. So they answer that  
3 question.  
4
- 5 2. How will you recommend -- your  
6 recommendation address this  
7 concern. This Council's been  
8 very good at doing that, but  
9 these are questions that are  
10 there to help them.  
11
- 12 3. Is your recommendation  
13 supported by substantial  
14 evidence, including traditional  
15 ecological knowledge. What  
16 that means is, is what evidence  
17 do they have, and that  
18 traditional ecological  
19 knowledge could also be part of  
20 that evidence.  
21
- 22 4. How will this recommendation  
23 address the subsistence needs  
24 involved and will it be  
25 detrimental to subsistence  
26 users.  
27
- 28 5. And then the last question I  
29 got down here is, will the  
30 recommendation unnecessarily  
31 restrict other uses involved.  
32

33 That's what they have in front of them,  
34 they can elect to use this process to go through this.  
35 They pretty much have followed that through the years  
36 so that when this recommendation goes before the  
37 Federal Subsistence Board the Board has similar  
38 requirements to take a Regional Council recommendation,  
39 and I won't go through all those but they're here.  
40

41 Anyway, sorry to belabor that, but for  
42 some people who have not gone to our meetings it's  
43 going to look like that I or others are trying to  
44 restrict the Council in their discussions and that, no,  
45 this is to make sure that it's the record -- this is  
46 the same one that Eastern does and others do.  
47

48 So anyways that's that. If Staff or  
49 others want copies of this I have it in another format.  
50

1                   So hopefully that brings you up to  
2 speed and we just need to know who's on line.

3  
4                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'd like to  
5 know who's on the teleconference, there was some  
6 connection technicality problems so go ahead, who's on  
7 line there.

8  
9                   MR. DUBEY: Yeah, Bob Dubey from YRDFA.

10  
11                  MR. UMPHENOUR: And Virgil, this is  
12 Virgil, I'm back on in Fairbanks.

13  
14                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Virgil. It  
15 said there were three people on line, is there a third.

16  
17                  MR. RIVARD: That's us.

18  
19                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh that's us, okay.

20  
21                  (Laughter)

22  
23                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so we're  
24 coming around to presentation of the proposals and so  
25 we're on the Yukon northern area proposals, Proposal  
26 FP08-13, and so presentation of the proposal, are you  
27 doing that Don?

28  
29                  MR. RIVARD: Yes, Mr. Chair. Don  
30 Rivard with the Office of Subsistence Management. I'm  
31 one of the Staff fish biologist there.

32  
33                  This proposal starts on Page 46 in your  
34 books. Because there's a lot involved with this and  
35 the controversial nature of it to some extent, I'm  
36 going to give quite a comprehensive presentation.  
37 Usually I summarize it with some talking points but I  
38 think it's worthwhile, it's also to be consistent with  
39 what I did in front of two other Regional Councils this  
40 round so I want to make sure I'm consistent with that,  
41 too, and present basically the same information.

42  
43                  Proposal FP08-13 submitted the Eastern  
44 Interior Alaska Regional Council requests that all  
45 gillnets with greater than six inch stretch mesh be  
46 restricted to not more than 35 meshes in depth in  
47 Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage.

48  
49                  Currently there is only one gillnet  
50 depth restriction for subsistence uses in the Yukon

1 area, that's the Federal drift gillnet fishery in  
2 Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C which is restricted to no more  
3 than 35 meshes in depth.

4  
5                   Based on current State of Alaska  
6 regulations commercial gillnets with greater than six  
7 inch mesh in Districts 1, 2 and 3 can be no more than  
8 45 meshes deep and in Districts 4, 5 and 6 no more than  
9 60 meshes deep.

10  
11                   Proposal FP08-14 also submitted by the  
12 Eastern Interior Alaska Regional Advisory Council  
13 requests that the maximum gillnet mesh size be  
14 restricted to 7.5 inch stretch mesh for subsistence and  
15 commercial salmon fishing in Federal public waters of  
16 the Yukon River drainage.

17  
18                   In its proposal the Eastern Interior  
19 Council points out that recent studies as well as  
20 discussions Council members have had with researchers  
21 show that 7.5 inch stretch mesh nets is the most  
22 efficient net size to harvest chinook salmon while  
23 still allowing the passage of larger fish, which are  
24 generally females, and allowing the passage of smaller  
25 fish which are usually -- generally chum salmon.

26  
27                   The reduction in mesh size would be  
28 phased in over a three year period for subsistence  
29 users to reduce the economic burden and match the  
30 useful life of most nets, which the Eastern Interior  
31 Council identifies as three to four years.

32  
33                   Long time Yukon River fishers  
34 particularly from the upper river frequently cite  
35 declining fish size, decreasing occurrence of 50-plus  
36 pound chinook salmon, extrapolation of age eight fish  
37 and loss of age seven fish, the decreasing percentage  
38 of female chinook salmon and more slender fish.  
39 Although these views are not unanimous fishers are  
40 concerned about genetic impacts to chinook salmon,  
41 long-term effects to subsistence users, loss of  
42 subsistence lifestyles and a lack of response by State  
43 and Federal managers.

44  
45                   Some fishers have expressed their  
46 belief, in other words, traditional ecological  
47 knowledge, that the larger, stronger fish migrate in  
48 the deeper waters. A variety of net depths are being  
49 utilized by fishers in the Yukon River with deeper net  
50 meshes used for deeper fishing sites to increase

1 harvest effectiveness.

2

3                   The Eastern Interior Advisory Council  
4 is requesting changes in allowable gillnet  
5 specifications in the Yukon River salmon fishery to  
6 address its concern that the average size of returning  
7 adult chinook salmon is declining and because of its  
8 belief that the existing allowable gillnets, in other  
9 words, unrestricted size and deeper than 35 meshes  
10 disproportionately harvest large size female chinook  
11 salmon over males.

12

13                   The Eastern Interior Regional Advisory  
14 Council's intent is to apply these regulatory changes  
15 to all users in Federal public waters.

16

17                   And I'll turn your attention to the map  
18 on the wall over there, that's the Federal jurisdiction  
19 map regarding fisheries in the green there for the  
20 Yukon River.

21

22                   Most of the commercial fishing and over  
23 half of the subsistence harvest takes place in Federal  
24 public waters in the Yukon River drainage. The Federal  
25 Subsistence Board has the authority to close Federal  
26 public waters to Federally-qualified and/or non-  
27 Federally-qualified users for the conservation of  
28 healthy populations of fish and wildlife resources and  
29 also has the authority to impose methods, means, time  
30 and harvest restrictions on all users fishing in  
31 Federal public waters, these options which are less  
32 restrictive than closures.

33

34                   This is the third year that the  
35 proponent has submitted at least one proposal to the  
36 Federal Subsistence Board to limit net depth and/or net  
37 mesh size to address its continuing concern with the  
38 declining average size of returning adult Yukon River  
39 chinook salmon.

40

41                   Over the past two years the Board has  
42 taken active steps to address the issue outside of the  
43 regulatory process including recommending and endorsing  
44 the formation of and providing support for the Yukon  
45 River Drainage Fisheries Association led salmon size  
46 working group. The group held four meetings in late  
47 2006 and early 2007 during which participants heard  
48 presentations by fisheries managers and researchers,  
49 they shared observations, they discussed possible  
50 causes of the size decline and brainstormed possible

1 solutions and strategies to address the issue.  
2 However, no consensus was attained regarding whether  
3 there really is a declining size, possible causes if  
4 there is a size decline and the possible changes to  
5 management strategies and/or regulatory actions to  
6 address the issue.

7  
8           The views, perceptions and opinions  
9 differ mainly between down river, Districts 1 through 3  
10 and up river Districts 4 through 6 fishers. The  
11 working group also utilized some fairly recent studies  
12 and papers addressing the declining size of the Pacific  
13 and Yukon River chinook salmon which are listed in  
14 appendix A. And just a side line here, Appendices A  
15 through D are the meeting notes from those four  
16 meetings with YRDFA group and I thought it was  
17 important to include that in this analysis so that  
18 everybody sees all the data that was discussed in those  
19 meetings.

20  
21           This analysis and Appendix E will refer  
22 to and summarize the findings of these same studies as  
23 well as the meeting notes of the YRDFA salmon size  
24 working group, which I just told you about, Appendices  
25 A through D.

26  
27           Now, the existing Federal regulations  
28 are on Page 47 in your book, and then the proposed  
29 regulations are on Page 48 and we took -- what I did  
30 was I put -- as you look at the top of Page 48 you'll  
31 see the proposed regulations, one for each proposal  
32 there. There's also the existing State regulations,  
33 are on Pages 48 and the top of 49.

34  
35           Kind of a side note, in the Kuskokwim  
36 River, this is the Kuskokwim now, commercial fishers  
37 have been required to use gillnet mesh sizes of six  
38 inches or less since 1985. The directed commercial  
39 fishery for chinook salmon was discontinued in 1987 due  
40 to depleted runs and the importance of this species as  
41 a subsistence food. The incidental harvest of chinook  
42 salmon continues to occur during the June and July  
43 commercial fishery that targets chum salmon. During  
44 its January 31st through February 5th, 2007 meeting,  
45 the Alaska Board of Fisheries discontinued the stock of  
46 concern designation for Kuskokwim River chinook and  
47 chum salmon based on chinook and chum salmon runs being  
48 at or above the historical average each year since  
49 2002. At that same meeting the Alaska Board of  
50 Fisheries took action that allows the use of large

1 mesh, 8.5 inch mesh, to target chinook salmon via  
2 emergency order delegation to the local area manager.

3  
4 Now, the extent of Federal public  
5 waters is outlined there on Page 49 and the customary  
6 and traditional use determinations is also on Page 49.

7  
8 I'm going to talk a little bit about  
9 recent regulatory history here.

10  
11 In March of 2005, the Eastern Interior  
12 Council submitted Proposal 06-04 which requested all  
13 gillnets with greater than 6 inch mesh be not more than  
14 35 meshes in depth, and again this is 6 inch mesh. The  
15 Council previously submitted a similar proposal to the  
16 Alaska Board of Fisheries in November 2004 as an  
17 emergency petition which was rejected. During its  
18 January 2006 meeting, the Federal Subsistence Board  
19 listened to substantial public testimony and thoroughly  
20 discussed the proposal. In particular, the Board  
21 discussed the need for a coordinated effort to the  
22 issues raised by the proposal. The Board then rejected  
23 the proposal. Board members noted conflicting  
24 recommendations from the three affected Councils and  
25 that the information and evidence presented was not  
26 definitive or conclusive. However, the Board made a  
27 commitment to keep the Yukon River chinook salmon size  
28 issue on the forefront and to look for processes and  
29 solutions to ultimately bring the issue to resolution.

30  
31 In March 2006 the Eastern Interior  
32 Council submitted four proposals which were 07-01  
33 through 04 to address the declining chinook salmon size  
34 issue. These proposals were deferred by the Federal  
35 Subsistence Board early in the regulatory process  
36 before analysis had been conducted. At the time it  
37 deferred these four proposals, the Board endorsed the  
38 YRDFA led process as a means of addressing the  
39 declining salmon size issue. Again, this working group  
40 held meetings in late 2006 and early 2007 with no  
41 consensus obtained. In March 2007 the Eastern Interior  
42 Council submitted Proposals 13 and 14 before you now  
43 and requested that the Board withdraw its four  
44 proposals submitted in 2006, which the Board did, they  
45 granted this request.

46  
47 Now, on the State side, the Alaska  
48 Board of Fisheries meets every three years to consider  
49 and take action on Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim fisheries  
50 proposals. In January 2001 the Alaska Board of

1 Fisheries rejected Proposal 272 which requested the  
2 elimination of gillnets greater than 6 inch stretch  
3 mesh in the commercial and subsistence Yukon River  
4 salmon fisheries because of potential impacts to summer  
5 chum salmon which had been designated as a stock of  
6 concern that same year.

7  
8 In January 2004 the Alaska Board of  
9 Fisheries rejected Proposal 136, this is on the  
10 Kuskokwim now, which requested an increase in the  
11 allowable gillnet gear mesh depth from 35 to 45 meshes  
12 in the nearby Kuskokwim River because an increase in  
13 the depth of gillnets would increase the efficiency and  
14 harvest rate of king salmon, which is a stock of  
15 concern and undermine the objectives of the Kuskokwim  
16 River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan.

17  
18 In February 2007 the alaska Board of  
19 Fisheries considered and rejected Proposals 163 and 165  
20 which were also submitted by the Eastern Interior  
21 Regional Council addressing the salmon size issue.

22  
23 Now, you can't follow this directly but  
24 I'm now on Page 53 and going to talk a little bit about  
25 current events.

26  
27 Again, the YRDFA led salmon size  
28 working group met four times between October 2006 and  
29 January 2007. These meetings were held to provide an  
30 opportunity for the people who fish and/or manage Yukon  
31 River chinook salmon to discuss the declining salmon  
32 size and related issues. Approximately 80 people  
33 attended the first meeting from the United States and  
34 Canada. Participants included subsistence and  
35 commercial fishers from the length of the Yukon River,  
36 fishery scientists and representatives of non-profit  
37 organization, State of Alaska Fish and Game Advisory  
38 Councils, Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory  
39 Councils and fishery and resource management agencies.  
40 The objectives of the working group were:

- 41  
42 1. To share local and scientific  
43 knowledge about Yukon River  
44 chinook salmon size and other  
45 information about the  
46 fisheries.  
47  
48 2. Identify if there is agreement  
49 on aspects of the issue; and  
50

1                                   3.        Develop next steps for  
2    drainagewide work on the salmon  
3    size issue.  
4

5                                    An immediate goal of the group was to  
6 see if they could reach consensus on a proposal or  
7 proposals addressing the salmon size issue for the  
8 Alaska Board of Fisheries to consider during its  
9 January/February 2007 Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim Fisheries  
10 meeting. YRDFA had submitted a placeholder proposal  
11 which was 167 entitled modify commercial fishery to  
12 address changing size of king salmon. Because no  
13 consensus was reached YRDFA was unable to provide the  
14 Alaska Board of Fisheries with any specific proposal to  
15 consider, therefore, no action was taken on 167.  
16

17                                    I'm now towards the bottom of Page 53.  
18 The declining salmon size and mesh size selectivity,  
19 what is known. Chinook salmon grow larger with age and  
20 females are generally larger than males of the same age  
21 from about age five on. Bales in 2007 showed that at  
22 the Pilot Station test fishery in 2005 Age 7 fish  
23 averaged 100 millimeters more in length than Age 5 fish  
24 for both sexes. The average length of Age 5 females  
25 was 62 millimeters greater than Age 5 males, and the  
26 average length of Age 7 females was 87 millimeters  
27 greater than Age 7 males.  
28

29                                    There is reliable documented evidence  
30 from adequate long-term data that Pacific salmon, in  
31 general, and Yukon River chinook salmon in particular  
32 are decreasing in size and some possible causes of  
33 decline related to harvest methods.  
34

35                                    Jack Helle of the Auke Bay Laboratory,  
36 Alaska Fisheries Science Center for the National Marine  
37 Fisheries Service presented the YRDFA salmon working  
38 group with information regarding the Pacific coast-wide  
39 trend in salmon species and pointed out that changes in  
40 size, weight and age at maturity are occurring in  
41 salmon populations up and down the Pacific Coast,  
42 including in Western Alaska chinook salmon, that  
43 includes both the Yukon and the Kuskokwim Rivers.  
44 Bigler, in his study in 1996 examined the average adult  
45 size at majority for 47 North Pacific salmon  
46 populations and found decreasing average body size for  
47 45 populations comprising five species from North  
48 America and Asia. The analysis did not separate  
49 commercial catch weights for restricted and  
50 unrestricted openings. The abundance of North Pacific

1 salmon nearly doubled during the period, from 9175 to  
2 1993, but there was a corresponding decrease of about  
3 17.5 percent in the average size of commercially caught  
4 Yukon River chinook salmon from an average of 23 pounds  
5 down to an average of 19 pounds. The authors propose  
6 that this indicates a limitation to the salmon  
7 sustaining resources the ocean, and that if these  
8 trends continue productivity of salmon populations may  
9 decrease as fecundity, egg size and age at maturity  
10 changes in response. Since 2000, and this is after  
11 this study, the average weight of commercially caught  
12 chinook salmon has ranged from 18.6 to 20.9 pounds.  
13 Jeff Hard of the Conservation Biology Division of  
14 Northwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine  
15 Fisheries Service told the YRDFA meeting participants  
16 that most fish harvest methods are size selective and  
17 disproportionately harvest larger fish. The larger  
18 size is linked to older age at maturity and higher and  
19 fecundity. Harvesting larger fish can reduce  
20 population productivity.

21  
22                   Size selective fishing is not the only  
23 factor that affects long-term fish sizes in fish  
24 populations. Environmental factors such as climate  
25 change, ocean conditions, density of fish, competing  
26 for resources in the marine environment and other  
27 factors may also cause or contribute to size declines.  
28 Distinguishing the cause or causes of declining size in  
29 fish populations is very difficult.

30  
31                   Size selective fishing is a potentially  
32 powerful agent of evolutionary change in fish  
33 populations. Some species can show this change quite  
34 quickly. This is especially true for fish species with  
35 short generation times such as Atlantic silver side  
36 which has been used as a laboratory test species for  
37 selectivity effects.

38  
39                   Size selective harvest may affect  
40 chinook salmon growth rate, size and age at maturity.  
41 Since fish size and age at maturity affect the number  
42 and size of eggs produced, reduced population  
43 productivity may result. In chinook salmon, length,  
44 age at maturity and growth rate are all heritable  
45 characteristics. They are relatively highly influenced  
46 by the genetic make up of the fish but are also  
47 strongly influenced by the environment. Age and size  
48 are tightly genetically linked. The vulnerability of  
49 chinook salmon to size selective fishing is complex.  
50 The late maturation at large size and the typically low

1 population growth rate of chinook salmon may increase  
2 their vulnerability to size selective fishing effects.  
3 However, the age structure may provide a buffer to  
4 impacts.

5  
6 Now, the salmon size subcommittee of  
7 the Joint Technical Committee of the Yukon  
8 River/U.S./Canada Panel, the JTC, recently summarized  
9 the findings of prior investigations and the scientific  
10 literature on factors that influence salmon morphology.  
11 Evidence that the morphology of Yukon River chinook  
12 salmon has been altered over time is limited but  
13 suggestive. Existing analysis document a decrease in  
14 the mean weight of commercial harvest, a reduction in  
15 the prevalence of the largest fish and the apparent  
16 near disappearance of Age 8 fish.

17  
18 I'm going to direct your attention to  
19 Page 55 and look at the figure there, Figure 1.

20  
21 For Yukon River chinook salmon passing  
22 into Canada the Joint Technical Committee found that  
23 the percentage of Age 7 and 8 fish ranged from 28 to 29  
24 percent for brood years 1979 through 1982 and then  
25 declined after 1982 with percentages ranging from two  
26 to 16 percent for brood years 1983 through 1997.

27  
28 Karen Hyer and Cliff Schleusner of our  
29 office, in 2005 examined chinook salmon escapement data  
30 from the Andrefsky, the Anvik, the Gisasa, the Salcha,  
31 the Chena and the Big Salmon Rivers, all tributaries to  
32 the Yukon. The available data sets were examined for  
33 changes in one, proportion of female chinook salmon; 2,  
34 the proportion of large chinook salmon; 3, the  
35 proportion of 6 year old and 7 year old chinooks, and  
36 4, the average length of older chinook salmon. It was  
37 found that the relative abundance of large and greater  
38 than 900 millimeters, which is the same definition that  
39 Dani used earlier, that significantly decreased basin-  
40 wide over time in four of the seven data sets. At the  
41 most upstream sampling site in the Big Salmon River in  
42 Canada carcass surveys during 1980 through 1990  
43 revealed a four to 10 percent annual decrease in the  
44 estimated odds of sampling chinook salmon greater than  
45 or equal to 900 millimeters and an annual decrease of  
46 eight to 11 percent in the estimated odds of sampling  
47 female chinook salmon. No basin-wide changes were  
48 found in the proportion of female, older fish or length  
49 at age in the Yukon River escapement data sets.

50

1 In 2005 Jeff Bromaghin's study  
2 evaluated gillnet catch data from the lower Yukon River  
3 collected from 1990 to 2003 in conjunction with the  
4 Pilot Station sonar study. His results were based on a  
5 data set of almost 90,000 complete records of which  
6 7,261 were for chinook salmon, he found that gillnets  
7 tend to have a peak efficiency for salmon with a length  
8 equal to approximately 3.8 times the stretch mesh size,  
9 however, any size mesh can catch a fish of nearly any  
10 size.

11  
12 Gillnets with the largest mesh sizes,  
13 6.5, 7.5 and 8.5 inch mesh caught the most chinook  
14 salmon, over 5,000 out of the 7,200 we're talking  
15 about, with the 7.5 inch mesh having the greatest catch  
16 rate, they caught 2,000 out of the 7,200 and the 6.5  
17 and the 8.5 inch mesh having almost identical catch at  
18 about 1,570 fish apiece. And I think that kind of is  
19 very consistent with what Dani showed you earlier.

20  
21 Selectivity curves based on data from  
22 the Pilot Station sonar project on the Yukon River show  
23 that larger mesh gillnets tend to capture longer and  
24 that's measuring from mid-eye to fork of tail so  
25 capture longer chinook salmon, although each mesh size  
26 captures a wide range of sizes.

27  
28 6.5 inch mesh gillnets were most  
29 efficient in capturing chinook salmon of 634  
30 millimeters or 25 inches long, 7.5 inch mesh gillnets  
31 ere most efficient in capturing chinook salmon of 732  
32 millimeters or 39.8 inches long and 8.5 mesh gillnets  
33 were most efficient in capturing chinook salmon of 829  
34 millimeters or 32.6 inches long.

35  
36 There is evidence that large mesh  
37 gillnets are highly selective for female chinook  
38 salmon. In 2004 8.5 inch mesh gillnets used at the Big  
39 Eddy test fishery captured 59 percent females whereas  
40 7.5 inch mesh gillnets captured 42 percent females.  
41 That same year variable mesh gillnets used at the Pilot  
42 Station sonar site captured 35 percent females and up  
43 river weirs, the Gisasa, the Henshaw and the Tozitna  
44 Rivers sampled for sex ratio captured 18 to 30 percent  
45 female, and two test fish projects in Canada captured  
46 14 and 23 percent females.

47  
48 Doug Molyneaux of the Fish and Game in  
49 2005 compared age, sex and length data collected from  
50 -- this is the Kuskokwim River chinook salmon --

1 harvested during the 2004 fishery to characterize the  
2 composition of the harvest from the lower river  
3 reporting area. Differences in the age composition of  
4 chinook salmon estimated from the subsistence harvest,  
5 commercial harvest and tributary escapements were  
6 attributed to gillnet size selectivity, fewer young and  
7 more of the older chinook salmon were harvested in the  
8 subsistence fishery using mesh sizes of 8 inches or  
9 greater, Age 4 male chinook salmon accounted for 13.8  
10 percent of the subsistence harvest, 34.5 percent at the  
11 escapement projects and 57.8 percent from the  
12 commercial harvest from District W-1 where mesh size is  
13 restricted to 6 inches or less. Older chinook salmon  
14 ages 6 and 7 accounted for 48.7 percent of the  
15 subsistence harvest, 31.8 percent at tributary  
16 escapement projects and 15.2 percent from the  
17 commercial harvest. Female chinook salmon comprised  
18 32.5 percent of the subsistence harvest, which was  
19 considerably higher than the 11.6 percent of female  
20 average from District 1 commercial harvest and the 25.4  
21 percent female average from escapement projects.

22  
23                   Again, I'll just point out that there  
24 are other studies and findings that have been done and  
25 you can see those in Appendices A through D, including  
26 a brief description on Dani's project that she  
27 presented earlier today.

28  
29                   Now, I'm on Page 56 and I'm going to  
30 talk a little bit about the declining salmon size and  
31 mesh size selectivity, what is being done or proposed.

32  
33                   Several recent ongoing and proposed  
34 studies and research projects are or will be directly  
35 addressing the salmon size issue. The Federal  
36 Subsistence Board, through the Office of Subsistence  
37 Management continues to provide funding to the Alaska  
38 Department of Fish and Game and other organizations for  
39 studies and research projects, many of which are based  
40 on the prioritized information needs for the Yukon  
41 region. This declining salmon size issue has been  
42 identified by the three Councils on the Yukon as well  
43 as other groups, Alaska Native organizations, the U.S.  
44 Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Fish and  
45 Game and partner agencies and organizations as one of  
46 the primary concern information needs.

47  
48                   Additionally the U.S./Canada Yukon  
49 River Salmon Joint Technical Committee and the Arctic  
50 Yukon Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative are or

1 will be investigating the declining salmon size issue.  
2 So I think it's fair to say it's on the radar screen of  
3 a lot of people and a lot of organizations. And  
4 Appendix E, again, describes these other studies if  
5 you're interested in knowing what they are.

6  
7 Talking about mesh depth selectivity,  
8 I'm on Page 56 now.

9  
10 Many fishers have expressed that the  
11 larger, stronger fish migrate in the deeper waters and  
12 therefore nets of deeper mesh harvest more of these  
13 larger fish. The scientific literature is sparse on  
14 the connection between mesh depth and harvest of larger  
15 fish, however, there are a few studies that show  
16 chinook salmon migration trends.

17  
18 In the Kenai River, Burwen and Bosch,  
19 in 1998 found that most early run chinook salmon  
20 migrated off shore 15 to 20 meters from the left bank  
21 and 40 to 45 meters from the right bank. Late run  
22 chinook salmon migrated 15 to 20 meters off shore from  
23 the left bank and 25 to 35 meters from the right bank.  
24 Fish were bottom oriented during both runs. In Candy  
25 and Quinn's study in 1999 found that chinook salmon  
26 that migrated deep, and that's greater than 200 meters  
27 were significantly larger than fish that remain near  
28 the surface from 87 versus 77 centimeters in upper  
29 Johnson Strait in British Columbia.

30  
31 Now, I'm going to go to the effects of  
32 these proposals if they're adopted. That starts on  
33 Page 57.

34  
35 Adoption of these two proposals would  
36 follow recognized principles of fish and wildlife  
37 conservation by providing measures to conserve and  
38 possibly restore large size fish in the Yukon River  
39 chinook salmon run. These proposals, if adopted, would  
40 standardize gillnet mesh size and depth specifications  
41 throughout the Federal public waters of the Yukon River  
42 where most of the commercial fishing and over half of  
43 the subsistence harvest takes place. The use of 7.5  
44 inch mesh gillnets, no more than 35 meshes in depth  
45 would likely result in fewer of the largest and older  
46 age female chinook salmon being harvested with the  
47 expectation that more of these fish would reach the  
48 spawning grounds to reproduce and pass on to their  
49 offspring desirable genetic traits. Female sex ratios  
50 would likely increase, particularly in Yukon River

1 tributaries where sex ratios are often two males to one  
2 female with a likely corresponding increase in  
3 fecundity and productivity, the ages of Age 7 and 8  
4 chinook salmon would likely increase preserving genetic  
5 integrity and increasing population resiliency which  
6 would fulfill the State of Alaska sustainable salmon  
7 fisheries policy by affording protection to all age  
8 classes. Chinook salmon is the only fish species  
9 listed as a stock of concern by the ADF&G in the Yukon  
10 River. Stabilizing Yukon River chinook salmon stocks  
11 and preventing a further decrease in their average size  
12 is consistent with sound management principles and the  
13 conservation of healthy populations of fish.

14  
15                   With the use of reduced mesh sizes,  
16 harvest of summer chum salmon will likely increase.

17  
18                   Bromaghin, in his study in 2005 found  
19 that the most efficient gillnet mesh size for catching  
20 summer chum salmon was 6.5 inch mesh. When gillnet  
21 mesh size is decreased from 8.5 to 7.5 inch mesh  
22 Bromaghin found that the chum salmon catch would  
23 increase about 66 percent. When gillnet mesh sizes  
24 decreased from 8.5 to 6.5 inch the chum salmon catch  
25 would increase by 427 percent. A 7.5 inch mesh size  
26 strikes a balance between maximizing chinook salmon  
27 harvest and minimizing chum salmon harvest.

28  
29                   In 2007 there was renewed market  
30 interest in summer chum salmon and nearly 200,000  
31 summer chum salmon were harvested in commercial  
32 fisheries.

33  
34                   Adoption of these proposals would  
35 restrict all users, both Federally-qualified and non-  
36 Federally-qualified in Federal public waters.

37  
38                   Again, the Board has the authority to  
39 close Federal public waters to Federally-qualified and  
40 non-Federally-qualified users in Federal public waters.  
41 Again, the Board has the authority to both close these  
42 waters to all users, but also has the authority to do  
43 less restrictive things, and that's including imposing  
44 method, means and time and harvest restrictions on  
45 users.

46  
47                   If adopted, the proposals would likely  
48 pose an additional financial burden on some, if not all  
49 affected users, since they would either have to buy new  
50 nets and/or modify existing gillnets to 35 meshes deep.

1 This burden is mitigated somewhat by the proposed phase  
2 in period. If modification includes cutting the nets,  
3 there likely would be an increase in maintenance, time  
4 and cost because once a net has been cut down in size  
5 it usually becomes more susceptible to tearing on  
6 snags.

7  
8 Adoption would also likely reduce the  
9 number of fishable locations and/or increase the need  
10 to relocate to other sites.

11  
12 Adoption of these proposals would  
13 create a greater differences between Federal and State  
14 regulations. Commercial and subsistence users fishing  
15 in State managed waters under State regulations would  
16 still be able to use the larger mesh and/or deeper mesh  
17 gillnets. As a result of these differences, public  
18 outreach and judicious enforcement will be necessary to  
19 inform all users of these changes.

20  
21 So, Mr. Chair, members of the Council,  
22 the Office of Subsistence Management's preliminary  
23 conclusion, you can see it on Page 58, is to support  
24 FP08-13 with modification to include wording that the  
25 nets will be fishing from the surface of the water to  
26 no more than 35 meshes deep in the water column, and  
27 that the regulations will apply to both subsistence and  
28 commercial gillnets in Federal public waters.

29  
30 For Proposal 14, the OSM preliminary  
31 conclusion is to support the proposal.

32  
33 And I'll wrap this up with some  
34 justification on this.

35  
36 Based on the presentations during the  
37 YRDFA led salmon size working group meetings and the  
38 studies and projects cited in this analysis, there is  
39 reliable documented evidence that the average size of  
40 returning adult Yukon River chinook salmon is  
41 declining. While there may be several factors  
42 contributing to the decline, restricting gillnet size  
43 to 7.5 inches and 35 meshes deep are appropriate  
44 actions the Federal Subsistence Board can take to at  
45 least slow down, if not stop the trend. These  
46 restrictions would likely result in more of the largest  
47 fish, especially the older age female chinook salmon to  
48 reach the spawning grounds to reproduce and pass on  
49 desirable genetic traits with potential benefits of  
50 increased fecundity and productivity. Female sex

1 ratios would likely increase as well particularly in  
2 the Yukon River tributaries, the number of Age 7 and 8  
3 chinook salmon would likely increase preserving the  
4 genetic integrity increasing population resiliency.  
5 Stabilizing Yukon River chinook salmon stocks and  
6 preventing a further decrease in their average size is  
7 consistent with sound management principles and the  
8 conservation of healthy populations of fish.

9  
10 Now, we know that this is an important  
11 issue for people of the Yukon River. The analysis  
12 that's before you was very much a group effort by the  
13 Office of Subsistence Management fishery biologists and  
14 other Federal biologists including the in-season  
15 manager. We believe addressing the declining salmon  
16 size issue through the proposed changes to legal  
17 fishing gear in Federal public waters is not only the  
18 right actions to take but the right actions to take  
19 right now.

20  
21 We also recognize that there may be  
22 alternative management measures that could be effective  
23 in accomplishing the intent and conserving more of the  
24 larger chinook salmon for passage up river and to the  
25 spawning grounds in the Yukon River drainage and we  
26 encourage people to provide their views so that we can  
27 hear any alternatives during your deliberations.

28  
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Don. Any  
32 questions from the Council on that OSM presentation on  
33 the proposals.

34  
35 MR. HONEA: I have a question.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
40 Mr. Rivard, I just -- I'm just -- I guess what I'm  
41 still kind of wondering about during all the studies  
42 that they've had and stuff, there's no overriding  
43 factor or anything that why the fish are as they are,  
44 so actually this proposal would -- is just -- is a step  
45 -- I mean is one way of trying to determine if it's  
46 right, am I right there, I mean all the studies that  
47 we've gone through there's no one factor that we can  
48 pinpoint why the chinook salmon sizes are declining.

49  
50 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. Mr. Honea.

1 Yes, that's correct. There's a lot of potential  
2 factors involved. And as I've pointed out, these  
3 steps, these management steps that can be taken is  
4 something that we can do and we can do right now to  
5 address this issue as much as we can.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions  
10 for Don.

11

12 MR. STICKMAN: Jack.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.

15

16 MR. STICKMAN: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I  
17 was just wondering, if this was adopted and it had  
18 passed, how soon would you have to -- how soon would  
19 the fisher, the fisherman, the fisherwoman, how soon  
20 would they have to change out their gear type. I mean  
21 I know there's a lot of people that have 45 mesh fish  
22 nets right now and maybe even deeper, I was just  
23 wondering because at some point in time, maybe this  
24 year, I was planning to buy a new fish net, but I was  
25 just wondering how soon this regulations are -- well,  
26 if they do get passed.

27

28 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. Mickey. The  
29 proposals state that there would be a three year phase  
30 in period for subsistence users and commercial users  
31 would have to be a one year so there would be a little  
32 bit of time. With the idea that nets have to be  
33 replaced periodically anyways so if you just bought a  
34 brand new one maybe you could wait a couple three years  
35 before you'd have to change over, but if you're at the  
36 point now where your net really needs to be placed then  
37 you would buy it with these restrictions in mind.

38

39 MR. STICKMAN: One last thing, Mr.  
40 Chair, for the record, this came up at Middle Yukon  
41 Advisory Committee yesterday and it failed.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions.

44

45 Ron.

46

47 MR. SAM: Yes. What's the average cost  
48 of a 35 mesh deep net versus a 45 mesh deep.

49

50 MR. RIVARD: I may need help from Steve

1 Hayes on this because he's probably much more familiar  
2 with it dealing with it on probably a daily basis  
3 during the fishing season.

4  
5 MR. UMPHENOUR: This is Virgil in  
6 Fairbanks, I can answer that, Mr. Chair.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, give us a  
9 brief analysis of that Virgil.

10  
11 MR. RIVARD: Go ahead, Virgil.

12  
13 MR. UMPHENOUR: Stan Zuray and I talked  
14 to Donaldson's Net Company in Anchorage, and what they  
15 told us was to replace the webbing on the net would  
16 cost for a 300 foot long net, which is what the lower  
17 Yukon uses, approximately \$300, a dollar a foot, that's  
18 for a 35 mesh net, 7.5 stretch mesh, and, of course, if  
19 you were buying it for the upper Yukon, where the nets  
20 can only be half as long it would be \$150 and it would  
21 be about \$20 to mail it out.

22  
23 Thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
26 Virgil.

27  
28 MR. RIVARD: I've got something on  
29 that.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead, Don.

32  
33 MR. RIVARD: I did do some research on  
34 this just to point out real clear what Virgil just  
35 spoke about was just replacing your net with the  
36 assumption that you're keeping your lead lines and your  
37 float lines and reattaching them to your new net, now  
38 if it's a brand new net, I think it's somewhere -- a  
39 300 foot net, it doesn't matter the stretch mesh size,  
40 it could be anywhere from \$1,200 to \$1,600; is that  
41 right, Steve?

42  
43 MR. HAYES: (Nods affirmatively)

44  
45 MR. RIVARD: Steve's nodding yes. So  
46 we're looking and depending on how people do it, it's  
47 anywhere from \$300 to maybe \$1,600.

48  
49 Thank you.

50

1 MR. HAMILTON: This is Ted Hamilton  
2 from the Emmonak Tribal Council.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got a couple  
5 Council members here, can you hang on there, Ted?

6  
7 MR. HAMILTON: Yes, sir, I also got a  
8 comment on how much it cost down here to replace  
9 webbing.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I'll take you  
12 after -- I got two Council members that were comment.

13  
14 MR. RIVARD: Two Council members first,  
15 then we'll get to you.

16  
17 MR. HAMILTON: Thank you.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Jenny.

20  
21 MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
22 guess I was going to say that you have to take the  
23 length into consideration also when you're buying a new  
24 net. And I wish I could find a net for \$300 somewhere.

25  
26 But my concern is changing gear, it's  
27 not easy as it sounds because I, myself, I always mend  
28 my nets and I don't, you know, and there are a lot of  
29 people that do that, you just can't afford to go out  
30 and buy a net every three years or so so we have to  
31 mend our nets and we try to keep it up. And I'm  
32 concerned about this mesh size, the whatever you call  
33 it, mesh, I guess, and the depth. If you lock yourself  
34 into one size is there -- how can you get out of that,  
35 is it with the fish -- if you get more fish you can  
36 make another change again.

37  
38 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. I'm not sure I  
39 fully understand the question. But the proposal is to  
40 change the stretch mesh size from 6.5 -- or excuse me,  
41 8.5 or larger to restricting it only to 7.5 inch mesh.  
42 So if you've got larger mesh net right now that you're  
43 using then you would have to purchase a new net to get  
44 down to the regulation size of 7.5 if this proposal's  
45 passed. If you have a smaller mesh size, 6.5 inch, you  
46 could continue to use that because it's smaller than  
47 7.5 inch mesh. You could still use the smaller mesh  
48 size but you can't use the larger mesh size if these  
49 proposals were passed, at least if the one proposal  
50 were passed.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Mickey.  
2  
3 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, I was just  
4 thinking about the -- you know, you talked about -- I  
5 mean Virgil talked about Donaldson's and, well, to buy  
6 a new net, just a complete net, just ready to fish  
7 with, I think it's somewhere around 550 bucks right now  
8 for one that's 150 feet by 35 meshes. And I think for  
9 one that's 45 meshes, it's about 580 or maybe a little  
10 over 600.  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's with cork  
13 line, lead line and hung.....  
14  
15 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and shipped?  
18  
19 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then shipping  
22 for.....  
23  
24 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, the.....  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....probably 45, 50  
27 bucks.  
28  
29 MR. STICKMAN: .....shipping fee, yeah.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Okay,  
32 Vince.  
33  
34 MR. MATHEWS: Sorry to interrupt there.  
35 But, Jenny, did you get your question answer that if  
36 you wanted to go to a bigger net size in the future  
37 what, how you would get to that.  
38  
39 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah.  
40  
41 MR. MATHEWS: I can answer that unless  
42 Steve wants to answer that. It's the same way that's  
43 happening now to get it smaller, you would have to  
44 submit a proposal and it would be looked at its merits,  
45 both biologically as well as human impact. So say this  
46 passed and it was 7.5, you could submit a proposal in  
47 the future to, say, to go to 8.5, 8 and a quarter or no  
48 restricted and then it goes through the process.  
49  
50 So does that answer your question,

1 Jenny.

2

3 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah.

4

5 MR. MATHEWS: Also you need to know  
6 that the managers that I've talked to are very  
7 concerned, that when they make this change, not to make  
8 another change rapidly after that. So it -- you know,  
9 you would have to look at this in that light, you know,  
10 you just couldn't automatically just change it in a  
11 year because it's already in effect, so hopefully that  
12 clears it up.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Vince.  
15 And then, Ted, you got a comment on gear purchasing, go  
16 ahead.

17

18 MR. HAMILTON: Yes. With -- you know,  
19 I'd like to buy a brand new net from Donaldson's but  
20 unfortunately I don't have the credit to work with  
21 Donaldson's so I have to go through the local fish  
22 processors here so as a result they charge us a little  
23 more. To replace my webbing it would cost me anywhere  
24 from \$450 to \$500 depending on what type I want and  
25 what kind of material I want to use and then it's not  
26 only just replacing the webbing there, it's also time  
27 put into the net and who's going to pay for it, if it's  
28 going to be me and I'm going to be doing the work,  
29 it'll be X amount of hours before I even get my net  
30 done with a certain kind of twine that we have to use  
31 down here and it's -- while it's not impossible it will  
32 create a hardship for some.

33

34 There's some right now -- some of the  
35 commercial fishermen down here do not have the funds  
36 available to even make a purchase of a brand new net or  
37 brand new webbing, for example. So, you know, it's  
38 like one year, I think we're going to need a little bit  
39 more time than one year to make a change like this, if  
40 it was recommended that we do so. And it's going to  
41 take us more than one year. If we were going to be  
42 forced to make this decision just to conserve our  
43 commercially caught kind, our subsistence caught king,  
44 I think three years would be more of an appropriate  
45 time to do so.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, thank  
50 you, Ted. Ron.

1 MR. SAM: Yes, I was going to ask you  
2 this earlier Don but what exactly does that word  
3 fecundity mean.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

6  
7 MR. RIVARD: Fecundity is related to  
8 both the amount of eggs and the size of the eggs. So  
9 larger females -- the larger the female in general the  
10 more fish eggs they're going to have and they're  
11 probably going to be more robust, bigger eggs. So  
12 that's part of it.

13  
14 When you start losing that, the larger  
15 fish -- basically you could think of it this way,  
16 larger fish beget larger fish. So smaller fish beget  
17 smaller fish.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another term would  
20 be productivity. The productivity of the animal are  
21 stopped.

22  
23 Carl.

24  
25 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, just a question for  
26 you for my clarification. We're dealing with two  
27 proposals right now, 13 and 14.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

30  
31 MR. MORGAN: 13 comes up first which  
32 deals with the 35 mesh deep, then we go to 14, which  
33 we'll have to deal with the 7.5. I don't think we're  
34 discussing too much on the 35 mesh deep and I think  
35 numerically we deal with 13 and then 14, so which one  
36 -- it's got to be two separate votes, right.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, two separate  
39 votes on the proposals but we'll go through the data  
40 presentation and discussion simultaneously because both  
41 -- all interests seem to want to have it that way. And  
42 so we will deal with them on their own merits.

43  
44 MR. MORGAN: Okay.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further  
47 questions for Don.

48  
49 (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see none. So I  
2 see the agency comments would be next on the analysis  
3 of this proposal. So the Alaska Department of Fish and  
4 Game would be presenting next.

5  
6 MR. PAPPAS: For the record my name is  
7 George Pappas, Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence  
8 Liaison Team. I represent the Commercial Fisheries and  
9 Sportsfisheries Division for Fish and Game. I'm not  
10 the actual liaison, they're hiring a new liaison right  
11 now to replace Sarah Gilbertson, who you probably met  
12 last year, hopefully we'll have somebody on board to  
13 run the program here fairly shortly.

14  
15 What I'll be doing is presenting the  
16 Department's preliminary comments and you can find the  
17 preliminary comments for Proposals No. 13 and 14 on  
18 Page 85 of your green Western Interior RAC book. I'll  
19 move right along. I've been instructed to read these  
20 into the transcripts.

21  
22 MR. MATHEWS: Sorry to interrupt, but  
23 we've had at least three or four beeps on the phone and  
24 maybe it's time to do a reality check.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we want to  
27 know who's on teleconference at this time. Vince has  
28 detected additional activity and who would that be.

29  
30 (No comments)

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have we had people  
33 leave the teleconference.

34  
35 (No comments)

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there  
38 Virgil.

39  
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes, I'm still here.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Ted are you  
43 still there.

44  
45 MR. HAMILTON: Yes, sir, I'm still  
46 here.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And is there a third  
49 person.

50

1 MS. ROBBINS: This is Becca Robbins  
2 with YRDFA, I'm here as well.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
5  
6 MR. DUBEY: And you have Bob Dubey with  
7 YRDFA also.  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And is there  
10 anybody else.  
11  
12 (No comments)  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I guess that's it  
15 now. Okay, so we'll continue with the State's  
16 presentation.  
17  
18 MR. PAPPAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
19 FP08-13 will limit all gillnets with a stretch mesh  
20 size greater than 6 inch to a maximum of 35 meshes deep  
21 for all users, for subsistence and commercial in the  
22 waters of the Yukon River where Federal subsistence  
23 regulations apply.  
24  
25 FP08-14 will restrict all gillnets  
26 fished in waters where Federal regulations apply to a  
27 maximum of 7.5 inch stretch mesh size phased in over a  
28 three year period for subsistence fishers and a one  
29 year period for commercial fishers.  
30  
31 Proposals similar to Proposal FP08-13  
32 were submitted to the Federal Subsistence Board twice  
33 before and the Board took no action or opposed these  
34 proposals.  
35  
36 Proposals to restrict either gillnet  
37 mesh size or depth were submitted to the Alaska Board  
38 of Fisheries February 2007 regulatory process for the  
39 AYK region were not adopted. Both the Federal and  
40 State proposals were thoroughly reviewed in an open and  
41 public process.  
42  
43 The State intended -- intent for both  
44 proposals -- excuse me, the stated intent of both  
45 proposals is to reduce the catch of large female  
46 chinook salmon in the Yukon River gillnet fisheries, if  
47 either proposal is adopted the gear restrictions would  
48 apply only to participants in the Federal subsistence  
49 fisheries on the Yukon River. The Federal subsistence  
50 users would potentially be required to fish longer

1 hours to harvest the same number of fish with less  
2 efficient nets and would need to purchase new nets.  
3 Those who could not afford new nets would have to  
4 significantly -- have the significant additional fuel  
5 cost to travel to waters where Federal regulations do  
6 not apply or they may not be able to meet their  
7 subsistence needs. Gear used under the State regulated  
8 subsistence and commercial fisheries would not be  
9 affected unless the Federal Board seeks to close waters  
10 where the Federal government claims jurisdiction to  
11 non-Federally eligible participants creating a conflict  
12 -- conflicting patchwork of waters under State and  
13 Federal regulations.

14

15                   Upper Yukon Federal subsistence use of  
16 fishwheels would not be affected. Adoption of these  
17 proposals could reallocate the harvest of larger  
18 chinook salmon from gillnet users to fishwheel  
19 operators.

20

21                   The Department's recommendation is to  
22 oppose both of the proposals and -- or defer for two  
23 years when the Alaska Board of Fisheries reviews the  
24 results of a three year study mesh size studies. Until  
25 those studies are completed there is little hard  
26 information or specific data upon which to judge the  
27 potential effect of the proposals. If it is determined  
28 that the gear change is necessary in the future the  
29 State would support a riverwide approach and a thorough  
30 review of the data, options and specific management  
31 objections with the public to gain their input and  
32 concurrence. Making a change in only Federal  
33 regulations would be costly to subsistence users, apply  
34 only in some areas and may not have the desired effect.  
35 Making a gear change now may mean subsistence users  
36 would have to change gear again, depending upon the  
37 results of the mesh size studies which would be an  
38 unnecessary hardship for most.

39

40                   If a modification in gillnet gear is  
41 necessary, the State would also work through the Yukon  
42 River Panel to make the changes to the Canadian  
43 fisheries.

44

45                   Some of the public and one Regional  
46 Advisory Council has expressed concerns that the deeper  
47 nets or nets with larger net size may take more of the  
48 larger female fish. To help address this issue the  
49 public needs to see a thorough summary of results of  
50 current studies regarding fish size and gear. The

1 status report for the projects in progress. Existing  
2 data does not adequately address the effects of the  
3 proposed mesh size and depth changes on gillnet catch  
4 composition. For instance while data exists for  
5 various mesh sizes from the Pilot Station sonar  
6 project, commercial fishermen typically hang or fish  
7 their nets differently. Thus catch composition from  
8 the Pilot Station nets is not directly transferable to  
9 expected catch compositions of the lower Yukon River  
10 commercial fishery.

11  
12                   A decline in the proportion of seven  
13 year old chinook salmon was observed in the commercial  
14 harvest in the mid-1980s and the proportion has  
15 remained low but stable since the mid-1990s. An  
16 analysis of chinook salmon age, sex and length from  
17 selected tributaries by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
18 Office of Subsistence Management concluded that there  
19 has been a small decrease in large spawning fish in the  
20 four out of seven tributaries evaluated. No clear time  
21 trends were found in proportions of either female or  
22 older chinook salmon or for the length at age of  
23 chinook salmon. At this time it is not possible to  
24 determine whether size selective harvest or variation  
25 in environment or combination of these factors is the  
26 cause of these trends. Other studies are under way to  
27 determine trends in size or age of fish.

28  
29                   Currently the State is working with the  
30 Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association on a  
31 comparative mesh size study, which Dani talked about  
32 earlier. The goal of the project is to gain  
33 information about catch composition from 7, 7.5 and 8  
34 inch stretch mesh drift gillnets from a test fishery in  
35 Districts Y1 near Emmonak. Of particular interest is  
36 the effect of the mesh size on the size of chinook  
37 salmon caught and the number of incidentally caught  
38 non-target species such as summer chum salmon and the  
39 marketability of catch from these three mesh sizes.  
40 This information may provide insight into ways of  
41 implementing management strategies and regulations to  
42 sustain Yukon River chinook salmon while continuing to  
43 maintain subsistence, commercial and sport fisheries.

44  
45                   The U.S./Canada -- Canadian -- or  
46 Canada Joint Technical Committee has directed a  
47 subcommittee to address this issue. The U.S. Joint  
48 Technical Committee salmon size subcommittee compiled  
49 relevant literature and existing analysis pertaining to  
50 these trends and potential cause of these trends and

1 their potential causes of size trends in the Yukon  
2 River chinook salmon populations reports. This  
3 information summary -- excuse me, informational summary  
4 was divided into six sections:

- 5
- 6 History of the Alaska Yukon River  
7 chinook salmon harvest and finding  
8 [sic] sampling;  
9
- 10 History of the Canadian, Yukon River  
11 chinook salmon harvest;  
12
- 13 Summary of prior age, sex and size  
14 investigations;  
15
- 16 Summary of Yukon River gillnet  
17 selectivity;  
18
- 19 Herital traits and potential effects of  
20 selected fisheries; and  
21
- 22 And ocean influences on salmon size.

23  
24 The evidence that Yukon River chinook  
25 salmon have undergone phenotypic alteration over time  
26 is limited but suggestive. Analysis, document a  
27 decrease in the weight of commercial harvest, a  
28 reduction in the prevalence of the largest fish and the  
29 appearance -- apparent -- near dis -- disappearance of  
30 Age 8 fish, though Age 8 fish were never a large  
31 component of the run which was typically less than one  
32 percent.

33  
34 Whether the changes observed within the  
35 Yukon River chinook salmon have resulted from  
36 environmental or fishery induced selected pressures or  
37 a combination of both is difficult to determine with  
38 certainty. The Department is committed to continuing  
39 monitoring of size and age trends of the Yukon River  
40 chinook salmon populations and will use this summary  
41 report as a means to develop a hypothesis for further  
42 study.

43  
44 Although poor runs occurred from 1998  
45 to 2000 the Yukon River chinook salmon stocks are not  
46 classed as either a conservation concerns or a  
47 management concern. The Yukon River chinook salmon  
48 stock is currently classified as a yield concern. In  
49 all years, except for the very poor chinook salmon run  
50 in 2000, there has been reasonable opportunity for

1 subsistence fishers to meet amounts necessary for  
2 subsistence. A majority of the Yukon River drainage  
3 escapement goals have been met or exceeded since 2000,  
4 specifically agreed to escapement objective for the  
5 Canadian main stem has been met every year since 2000,  
6 with 2001, 2003 and 2005 being the three highest  
7 spawning escapement estimates on record. Escapement  
8 goals for the Chena and Salcha Rivers have been met or  
9 exceeded annually since 2000 with escapement levels  
10 twice that of the upper end of the goal in the Chena  
11 River in 2003 and in the Salcha River in 2003 and 2004.

12  
13                   The 2006 salmon chinook salmon  
14 escapement in Salcha was 10,400, the upper end of the  
15 goal being 6,500, and the 2007 chinook salmon  
16 escapements were within the spawning escapement goal  
17 ranges in the Chena and Salcha Rivers. Although  
18 commercial average weights have decreased there is no  
19 evidence that the size at age of chinook salmon has  
20 changed and the age class compositions of the brood  
21 year return has remained relatively stable since the  
22 mid-1980s. The exploitation rate on the Canadian  
23 origin stock by Alaska fishers has gone from an average  
24 of about 74 and 70 percent in the 80s and 90s  
25 respectively to an average of about 47 percent from  
26 2001 through 2006.

27  
28                   Although subsistence harvest continues  
29 to remain stable near 50,000 chinook salmon annually  
30 commercial harvests have decreased over 60 percent from  
31 average of 100,000 fish annually, from '89 to '98, to  
32 the recent five year average, 2002 through 2006 of  
33 nearly 40,000 fish. This has been dramatic decrease  
34 but does not totally reflect run size.

35  
36                   Harvest has been foregone in a number  
37 of recent years because of conservation -- conservative  
38 management since 2000. Record escapements were  
39 recorded for the Canadian main stem stock in 2001 and  
40 2003 and escapement goals in the Tanana River have been  
41 exceeded in most years since 2000.

42  
43                   The Department is planning to develop  
44 escapement goals based on five year old and older  
45 chinook salmon during the next two years. These  
46 escapement goals will be more directly relate -- or  
47 will be direct related to older fish and aimed at  
48 assisting in sustaining chinook salmon runs.

49  
50                   Salmon may be harvested under the State

1 regulations for the majority of the Yukon water shed,  
2 including a liberal subsistence fishery. Gear types  
3 allowed are gillnets, beach seines, hook and line  
4 attached to rod and pole, handline and fishwheels.  
5 Although all gear types are not used or allowed in all  
6 portions of the Yukon River drainage, drift and set  
7 gillnets and fishwheels harvest the majority of the  
8 fish taken by subsistence uses. Under State  
9 regulations the subsistence is the priority consumptive  
10 use, therefore, State subsistence fishing opportunities  
11 is directly linked to the abundance and is not  
12 restricted unless the run size is inadequate to meet  
13 escapement needs. When Yukon River salmon run size is  
14 below average, the State subsistence fishing periods  
15 may be conducted based on scheduled implemented --  
16 excuse me, a scheduled implemented chronologically  
17 throughout the Alaska portion of the drainage, which is  
18 consistent with migratory timing as the salmon run  
19 progresses up stream. Federal regulations under State  
20 [sic] special actions to restrict Federally eligible  
21 users have been rare and duplicate the State in-season  
22 actions necessary to meet escapement goals except for  
23 where State and Federal regulations differ in  
24 Subdistricts B-4 and 4-C. The amounts reasonably  
25 necessary for subsistence chinook salmon by State  
26 regulation as determined by the Alaska Board of  
27 Fisheries have been met in the Yukon River drainage  
28 eight of the last 10 years.

29

30 And for jurisdiction issues:

31

32 The maps are needed showing the  
33 specific boundaries and areas where Federal regulations  
34 are claimed to apply and the justifications for  
35 claiming those boundaries.

36

37 A large percentage of the lands along  
38 the Yukon River are State or private lands where  
39 Federal subsistence users cannot use gear types illegal  
40 under State regulations.

41

42 The Federal Subsistence Board has no  
43 authority to adopt gillnet mesh size regulations that  
44 would apply to State commercial and subsistence  
45 fisheries.

46

47 I appreciate your time, and several of  
48 these sections in this proposal will also apply towards  
49 the future proposals and I'll skip over those to save  
50 time, sir. I'm prepared to answer your questions.

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, thank  
4 you. And do we have Council members that would like to  
5 question the State's presentation.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Council  
10 comments.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. So we had Stan  
15 Zuray comment that the wheels actually caught smaller  
16 fish and the nets were catching large fish and so your  
17 allegation that the wheels would have a reallocation  
18 towards these larger fish, I don't see why you're  
19 making that statement.

20

21 MS. EVENSON: For the record again my  
22 name is Dani Evenson with Fish and Game.

23

24 And to respond to your question, Mr.  
25 Chair, one of the things with fishwheels is they're  
26 highly variable based on the water conditions, the  
27 water level. And they're also highly variable by what  
28 other species are in the run, for example, if there's a  
29 lot of summer chum. And so it's hard to compare that,  
30 it's sort of a year by year basis. And as the  
31 fishwheel operators maintain up river and we hear from  
32 them continually about this is that fishwheels catch  
33 large fish and small fish. They just haven't seen them  
34 that much recently. And so it isn't unreasonable to  
35 believe that if a lot of larger fish are allowed to  
36 pass through the lower districts for which ever reason  
37 that they would end up in those -- some of those at  
38 least would end up in fishwheels.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, they would be  
41 apportionate to the biomass, so I still don't see how  
42 it's reallocating these large fish towards these  
43 wheels. That's a very vague statement in your  
44 presentation. So I don't -- it would be as represented  
45 in the population and so I don't think that the wheels  
46 would be a reallocation towards the -- from a gillnet  
47 to a wheel fishery, I don't see that line of thought  
48 myself.

49

50 Any Council members comments on that.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, you've got  
4 something.

5

6 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Council  
7 members. I guess if I can clarify a little bit on  
8 that. Steve Hayes, Fish and Game.

9

10 What we're trying to portray is that if  
11 you're conserving fish in the lower river commercial  
12 fishery and your ultimate goal is to get larger fish to  
13 the spawning grounds, to only restrict lower river  
14 fishery and you still have fishwheels fishing as they  
15 normally would, you have Canadian fisheries that are  
16 still using the large mesh gear. The ultimate goal is  
17 to get those fish to the spawning grounds so you would  
18 want to afford protection all the way to the spawning  
19 grounds.

20

21 And that's where we said, at the end of  
22 the three year study and if the Board of Fish does  
23 decide to make changes that we would support a  
24 riverwide approach to this, that everybody would share  
25 in the conservation to get larger fish to the spawning  
26 grounds.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I can kind of  
29 see that line of thought. But all fish are harvested  
30 by gear -- in any net, and that's kind of a given and  
31 so there would still be large harvest of fish if there  
32 was a gear size restriction and so I still feel it's  
33 not a reallocation issue.

34

35 And your presentation says it's  
36 suggested there's phenotypic alteration of the runs on  
37 the Yukon but it's fairly graphic as to the size  
38 decline of these chinook salmon, so it's not suggested,  
39 I would consider that this is a real issue. And I feel  
40 that the data set that the Department is using is  
41 fairly limited in that it only goes to the '80s when  
42 intensive harvest was taking place and not taking into  
43 account the use of large mesh gear previous to the data  
44 set and so the previous alteration of the run and so I  
45 don't think that, you know, the data set that was used  
46 in the selection analysis -- it's somewhat finite in  
47 that the large mesh gear was used for a longer period  
48 of time and there was probably in progress alteration  
49 of this run.

50

1                   Any comments on the length of time of  
2 the studies that they've been using by the Council.

3  
4                   (No comments)

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the State have  
7 a response to that.

8  
9                   MS. EVENSON: Having looked at some of  
10 these issues and done some analysis with those data  
11 sets, yes, I tend to agree with you that, you know,  
12 we've been using large mesh gear more than we have data  
13 so the use of those gear types predates what we have  
14 information on and there's information that suggests  
15 that there was overharvesting in the early 1900s  
16 something that resulted in the fishery being shut down,  
17 I believe in 1924, I might be a little bit off on that  
18 year.

19  
20                   So, you know, the period of record we  
21 have to look at, for example, for chinook weights is  
22 1973, actually, no, I'm sorry, the mid-1960s to the  
23 present time we can look at commercial weights. We  
24 have age, sex, length data from there. The Hyer and  
25 Schleusner study which were referred to in particular  
26 was looking at data on the spawning grounds and they  
27 chose the locations where we had the longest term data  
28 sets, we don't have data sets that are longer than 22,  
29 23 years. So that's -- we're looking at what we can  
30 look at.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

33  
34                   MS. EVENSON: And that is a concern.

35  
36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

37  
38                   MS. EVENSON: We don't know what it was  
39 prior to those years. And what you will see as far as  
40 the weights go is that we saw high average weights in  
41 the beginning of the data set and we have no idea what  
42 it was before, but after four years it dropped off and  
43 it's been fairly stable in the last 10, 15 years, but  
44 we don't know what it was before that period of record.

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any comments on that  
47 by the Council.

48  
49                   (No comments)

50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It would appear that  
2 you've already set in motion the phenotypic returns as  
3 of those spawning grounds analysis, the 22 years of  
4 data, it's already been in place by the long history of  
5 the large mesh use and so I call into question, you  
6 know, that these data sets are just far too short and  
7 you missed the boat on acquiring data previously.

8  
9                   And so I have -- I see that your  
10 presentation is really touting the Tanana run, the  
11 Tanana run strength are very high, I live on the  
12 Koyukuk River, I have yet to see a chinook salmon on  
13 the Jim River this summer. I see some terrible returns  
14 coming into the Koyukuk system. And quarter-point, and  
15 half-point commercial openings, heavy openings is  
16 hammering the tar out of these Koyukuk stocks and these  
17 northern drainages and so I call into question, you  
18 know, the spotlighting and this border passage this  
19 year is fairly weak. And so I'm not decrying your  
20 presentation but it's got a lot of high points,  
21 ignoring some of these huge cavernous valleys and some  
22 of the return strengths for the whole Yukon system.

23  
24                   So any comments on the Koyukuk and  
25 other drainages on the Yukon by the Council.

26  
27                   (No comments)

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the State have  
30 a response for that.

31  
32                   MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Council  
33 members. In reference to the Tanana River, what we're  
34 trying to stress to people is we have met or exceeded  
35 escapement goals in Chena and Salcha since 2002. We've  
36 had record border passage into Canada. And that's all  
37 been a result of our conservative management since  
38 2002.

39  
40                   And, I guess, it brings it to light  
41 that we are doing something at this point. In other  
42 words we've reduced our commercial harvest by 60  
43 percent since 2002. As was stated earlier by George in  
44 his presentation, our Canadian harvest -- or the  
45 percentage of Canadian fish that we were catching,  
46 we've gone from like 70 to 74 percent down to 47  
47 percent so we have reduced harvest and we are doing  
48 something, at this point, to put more fish on the  
49 spawning grounds. And that's what we're trying to  
50 stress here when we're referencing the Tanana River.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I'm  
2 happy that the Tanana has had good runs. But I feel  
3 that some assessment needs to be done by CommFish on  
4 targeting which components of that run, the targeting,  
5 and certain drainages seem to be getting hammered right  
6 and left and heavily harvested where other components  
7 of -- are not -- or can be more utilized and so I would  
8 -- my concerns are that certain drainages are being  
9 harvested heavily and with this type proposal before  
10 us, those stocks could have irreparable damage because  
11 they're whittled to such low numbers and so their  
12 representation are ultra recessives at that point.

13

14 And so any comments on those.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These Bering Sea  
19 bycatch numbers are climbing astronomically and those  
20 are -- is there data being accumulated on where these  
21 bycatch and age structure of the bycatch, does the  
22 Department look at that as to where missing components  
23 of your run may be and being caught in the high seas?

24

25 MS. EVENSON: We have been looking into  
26 it as has YRDFA and a number of groups. And one of the  
27 things that's been of recent concern is.....

28

29 MR. RIVARD: Your name.

30

31 MS. EVENSON: I'm sorry, I'm Dani  
32 Evenson, again, for the record.

33

34 Is that this year we were about -- we  
35 had a fairly poor run and we were 70,000 fish off in  
36 the Yukon from what we projected to be there. Not only  
37 did we see this in the Yukon but in the Kuskokwim, they  
38 were about 100,000 kings -- 100,000 chinooks shy of  
39 what they expected to get. And in the Bay, in the  
40 Nushagak, they were 100,000 fish shy of what they  
41 expected, again, this is all chinook. And that can't  
42 be explained by the bycatch but it certainly is raising  
43 those concerns.

44

45 And recently we have been looking at  
46 those data, there aren't a lot of data available to us  
47 on the age structure of the catch or where they're  
48 from. The most recent data was several years ago and  
49 it shows that, I believe, Becca, correct me if I'm  
50 wrong, 50 percent are from Western Alaska and of those

1 50 percent, I think half of those are from the Yukon;  
2 is that correct, Becca, are you still on the line?

3  
4 MS. ROBBINS: It's 56 percent from  
5 Western Alaska and 40 percent of those are from the  
6 Yukon River so that's about 25 percent overall and  
7 that's from the Kate Myers study which was of the '97  
8 to '99 bycatch in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery.

9  
10 MS. EVENSON: Thank you. And that was  
11 Becca Robbins from YRDFA. So that is stuff we've been  
12 looking into. We've done -- the data is fairly scant  
13 so we've done what we can with the data, and one of the  
14 things we've been seeing is not only are they  
15 harvesting more numbers than they have in the past but  
16 what we used to say is well, they're harvesting more  
17 numbers, wow, there must be more fish out there. But  
18 it appears as though, in recent years, they're  
19 harvesting at a higher rate so they're taking more of  
20 the fish out there that are available for harvest.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

23  
24 MR. PAPPAS: Clarification. George  
25 Pappas for the record. Mr. Chair. A clarification on  
26 your Canadian -- the comment about the Canadian  
27 information about border passage, these are preliminary  
28 comments, we'll take it under advisement. These were  
29 prepared for the August 28th meeting, I'm not sure if  
30 the information was available. All the Yukon RACs have  
31 looked at the same comments. As we find mistakes or  
32 more information's requested, we'll take that under  
33 advisement and we'll put something in this for the next  
34 step of the process, sir.

35  
36 Thank you.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
39 Thanks for the clarification.

40  
41 MR. PAPPAS: Very good point, sir.

42  
43 MR. STICKMAN: Mr. Chair.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Mickey.

46  
47 MR. STICKMAN: Okay, thank you, Mr.  
48 Chair. I was just wondering, we have a number of  
49 fishermen out here in the audience out here now that  
50 came in over the time that we've been discussing and I

1 was just wondering if they were going to be able to  
2 come up and have their opinions heard.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. I was going to  
5 finish off this State presentation and comment and then  
6 I would like to rearrange the Federal agencies,  
7 prioritize towards Native and village presentation and  
8 I see elders here that want to speak and so I would  
9 like to have them up next.

10  
11 MR. STICKMAN: Okay. Because Gilbert  
12 Huntington, he's been a long time member of YRDFA and  
13 he was co-Chair and he was on the AYK, so he has an  
14 opinion.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we're going to  
17 take those comments.

18  
19 Is there any further questions for the  
20 State.

21  
22 Don.

23  
24 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
25 just had a question, maybe you could tell me why, I  
26 mean why the justification for opposing this, I see  
27 it's like -- I mean it's understandable, I could see  
28 where you'd put a burden on fishermen having to replace  
29 their gear or whatever, but is that the -- you know,  
30 overall I don't see any main justifications for  
31 opposing it by the State, do you have a response to  
32 that.

33  
34 MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Honea. If  
35 you look in the -- well, basically you are correct, we  
36 don't have a list of justifications here. The State  
37 would like to see the completion of this project, the  
38 project that's going on, the study that's going on, and  
39 the information that would come from that study, the  
40 conclusions would be presented to the Board of  
41 Fisheries and if the study does show 7.5, 7, 8,  
42 whatever the study comes up with, the Department's  
43 going to be fully in support of the results of that  
44 study and present that to the Board of Fish. So at  
45 this time we want to wait to -- that's part of it, we  
46 want to wait to defer for two years, as it states in  
47 the book here, until the study's complete, sir.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Steve.

50

1 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman.  
2 Additionally, as George said at the end of this three  
3 year study that we're doing, I mean the results will be  
4 presented to the Board of Fishery, in the  
5 justification, I mean we do state that -- well, it's  
6 been stated that we don't want fishermen to have to  
7 change their gear now and then in two years we  
8 determine that it's 7 inch mesh that's the best and  
9 then they have to change their gear again. If this is  
10 passed by the Federal Subsistence Board you have the  
11 divergence of regulations between State and Federal  
12 which is very confusing for fishermen.

13  
14 We've stated that fishermen in Federal  
15 waters would come into State waters and if they have  
16 different size meshes they may be legal in State  
17 waters. So there are several issues with this.

18  
19 And as George said it's -- at the end  
20 of the project cycle, what data we have will be given  
21 to the Board and we would support this if it shows the  
22 results were 7.5 inch mesh.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any further  
25 questions by the Council.

26  
27 Carl.

28  
29 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, just a quick  
30 comment. Now, you got the State waters and the Federal  
31 waters, who's going to be enforcing these, are you  
32 going to have a problem now with enforcement or do you  
33 got two different agencies enforcing. I can see the  
34 7.5 mesh, they can go into the State waters because  
35 you'll still be under 8 inch, it's just that the State,  
36 when they fish in the State waters, if they're fishing  
37 8 inch, they couldn't go into Federal. But I think if  
38 they went through the Federal -- they still could fish  
39 in the Federal and State waters, but I think we're  
40 looking at a big jurisdiction problem here and  
41 enforcement.

42  
43 Are we giving more money to enforcement  
44 in the Federal side, who's enforcing it now?

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Carl. Go  
47 ahead, George.

48  
49 MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Morgan.  
50 My assumption is the Alaska Bureau of Wildlife

1 Enforcement, ABWA or recently named Fish and Wildlife  
2 Troopers do enforce the commercial, subsistence and  
3 sportfish regulations in all waters of Alaska. I'm not  
4 sure exactly where the jurisdiction for the Federal  
5 rangers and enforcement officers is, you'd have to talk  
6 to one of the Federal agencies.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
9 That brings up my last comment of my own is that we got  
10 two different presentations, we got the Federal  
11 presentation that said that the Federal Subsistence  
12 Board could close Federal waters to commercial harvest  
13 and would have jurisdiction to do that and the State is  
14 contending that they don't and so I would like a little  
15 bit of a clarification on that.

16

17 Is this a court case in the making.

18

19 (Laughter)

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Vince.

22

23 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think others will  
24 assist from the Staff Committee, but your word,  
25 closure, and I'm not putting words in the mouth of the  
26 State, I don't think they disagree on closure, they  
27 disagree on managing of the commercial fisheries, and  
28 that has been determined by our solicitor that the  
29 Federal Board has the authority on Federal waters to  
30 manage commercial fisheries.

31

32 Before we instructed you that there had  
33 to be a biological emergency that would cause for  
34 closure of the Federal lands and I assume for waters,  
35 and then just subsistence is allowed. This is -- yeah,  
36 this is a new ball game.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the solicitor has  
39 now interpreted that the Federal Subsistence Board can  
40 restrict, not open or close, not -- well, -- but  
41 restrict non-subsistence users.

42

43 MR. RIVARD: Mr. Chair. Don Rivard  
44 again. Yes, you hit the nail right on the head. That  
45 if the Federal Board has the authority, and we do, the  
46 Federal Board does, not me, I'm not included in that,  
47 to do an on and off switch basically, then it's been --  
48 the solicitor said that we can do less than just an on  
49 and off switch, that there are measures in between the  
50 on and off switch that we can go to. And the State

1 agrees with the on and off switch, they don't agree  
2 with in between.

3

4                   So that's just a basic disagreement  
5 between the State and the Feds. So at some point it  
6 would probably end up in court, that's just my  
7 estimation. Now, we -- the Federal system realizes and  
8 would like to see the State take the lead on this for  
9 the reasons that they just stated, because they do  
10 manage commercial fisheries but we feel that the issue  
11 is at a point now where we can no longer wait.

12

13                   We had these internal discussions quite  
14 a bit before this analysis was even written because we  
15 had to know which direction we were going to go and we  
16 talked with the solicitors and all the biologists and  
17 the solicitor has made it real clear that we do have  
18 more than just the on and off switch otherwise we  
19 probably wouldn't have gone in this direction knowing  
20 that this puts it into a situation we really don't want  
21 to see but the biology and the conservation of healthy  
22 fish populations has brought us to this decision to go  
23 this route, the recommendations that we've made.

24

25                   Thank you.

26

27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
28 clarification. That's a completely different ball  
29 game, too, and I agree with the solicitor, ANILCA says  
30 that they can restrict and they use the terminology  
31 restrict, and that's an ANILCA term and I would agree  
32 with the solicitor on that issue. And so there is now  
33 a restat, a way of dimming the issues, and so if -- any  
34 further comments to the State on the presentation.

35

36                   (No comments)

37

38                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see none from the  
39 Council -- you've got one more final comment there,  
40 George, go ahead.

41

42                   MR. PAPPAS: Yeah, a very easy comment.  
43 The State preliminary comments were in the RAC book,  
44 they are available on line for a short time on the  
45 Office of Subsistence Management -- or excuse me,  
46 Federal Subsistence Board web site and I also placed  
47 like 15 copies of each on the back table there.

48

49                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
2 All right, at this time, go ahead, Vince.

3  
4 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, Jack, and to the  
5 State, we're just trying to shift gears here to  
6 accommodate elders. I think the Council is not asking  
7 you to leave the table when there's further  
8 discussions, you're just going to come back up --  
9 there's just a couple of elders that we're trying to  
10 get their testimony in right now so it's not like  
11 you're done -- well, I don't know, Jack can clarify  
12 that, but I think it's not -- there may be other  
13 questions.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, as we go  
16 through deliberation we will be relying on State input.  
17 Okay, at this time we might go for about a 10 minute  
18 break on the clock on the back of the wall, that will  
19 be at about five after 3:00 and then we'll come back to  
20 order and then we'll hear what the elders have to say  
21 to us.

22  
23 So thank you.

24  
25 (Off record)

26  
27 (On record)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to  
30 come back to order, can I have people return to your  
31 seats, please.

32  
33 (Pause)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have an elder  
36 that's going to speak to us at this time, well, we've  
37 got a couple elders here this afternoon. We also have  
38 the Galena Senior Class, I guess, here visiting, and  
39 appreciate you attending, you'll be our future Council  
40 members. And so it's good to learn what's going on now  
41 because it's getting tougher in rural Alaska and  
42 subsistence resources are very important to people  
43 living, and continuing their life ways here. So Lucy's  
44 going to speak to us, so if you could speak to us for  
45 just a couple of minutes, few minutes Lucy, we're all  
46 ears, so go right ahead.

47  
48 Can you hear us.

49  
50 Lillian, excuse me.

1 MS. OLIN: Good afternoon ladies and  
2 gentlemen. I'm Lillian Olin. I have lived in many  
3 villages from Kaltag all the way to Tanana.

4  
5 So I've been explored to the different  
6 cultures, different places which has given me a good  
7 background to understand our Native people.

8  
9 I was born and raised up in the Dalbi  
10 River. But our hometown was in Ruby. My mother's from  
11 Kaltag. My father is part Russian from Nulato.

12  
13 So it gives me a great pleasure to  
14 speak to you and I'm expressing this from my elders,  
15 who had concern.

16  
17 We started the Native -- the Danakanaga  
18 back in 1980 and I served on the board for 10 years.  
19 It's an elderly group that formed the organization and  
20 we include all ages, especially the youth. We've  
21 always said our younger generation is our future  
22 leaders for tomorrow so we get them to be involved as  
23 guest speakers then they choose a delegate who would  
24 speak on their behalf, and it has grown.

25  
26 My concern is growing up in Nulato and  
27 Koyukuk for most part of my years from a child. And  
28 during the summer when we traveled by the river there  
29 is fish camps all along around every bend, there's a  
30 fish camp. Families, relatives, friends, in that camp.  
31 There was no fishing regulations then. Now, my elders  
32 say there's too much regulation.

33  
34 Back when we were in camp Saturday the  
35 wheels are shut down because we're traveling to Nulato  
36 for Sunday. Sunday night we come back up the river and  
37 we didn't have an inboard motor, we put three dogs in  
38 the boat and the dogs towed the line back up the river.  
39 My mom is sitting back there steering the boat, my dad  
40 is sitting in the middle, us children is sitting in  
41 between. One of my brothers would walk along the beach  
42 with the dogs. If there's a snag they would put the  
43 rope over and there's times that when we get tired of  
44 sitting in the boat so us children get out and run  
45 which gives us good exercise. That's our way of living  
46 back then, which was very beautiful.

47  
48 My point is back then the wheels run  
49 and everybody in the fish camp along the way, down  
50 below the camp, up this way, there is fish racks. Each

1 family have a rack. There's one for the dogs, one for  
2 the family. And they have several smokehouse. Every  
3 fish that gets in the wheel is being saved and used.  
4 Whitefish. The silver. King salmon. Everything gets  
5 used. If we get too many, if one of the person below  
6 us or above us is not getting enough fish they have --  
7 they're invited to come get some fish. That's what it  
8 was like years ago.

9

10 So people had enough fish for the whole  
11 winter and in the spring.

12

13 And there was no commercial dog food  
14 back then so the dogs had plenty to eat for the whole  
15 year.

16

17 Now, we be lucky if we get some fish in  
18 the freezer. People's been real generous. They share  
19 what they get and I was able to cut the fish myself and  
20 put it up. Preserve it for canning and drying some and  
21 then we make our salted fish in the barrel, which is  
22 preserved for the winter. That you can soak it and get  
23 the salt out of it and cook it many ways.

24

25 Right now with the fishing regulations,  
26 our elders when they started the fishing regulations,  
27 our elders, they couldn't go out there and attend to  
28 their net and get it out before 6:00 o'clock, if they  
29 didn't they would lose their net and that was very  
30 upsetting for them and all of us because they were  
31 doing it for themselves. But now I'm not able to go out  
32 and do that and I have friends what they couldn't use.  
33 I've saved some in the freezer, I canned some, I canned  
34 some and jarred some and it, I used to share with my  
35 children, I'm a mother of 12. My children do not live  
36 here in town. Right now I have two, one daughter and  
37 one son. The rest is living in the Lower 48 in the big  
38 cities where there is a good job.

39

40 So I came back to the village due to  
41 employment. I was living in Fairbanks and I was  
42 working but with the pipeline beginning to boom rent  
43 was going to go up, I was working at the University. I  
44 did whatever I could do to make ends meet. But I had  
45 to decide to move back to the village and I did and I'm  
46 glad I did. I told my children no matter how much I  
47 pay for rent I would never be able to own land, not  
48 even the size of a stamp. Now, I had moved back to the  
49 village, I own my own home, I own my lot that I'm  
50 living on. Whereas my friends had remained in the

1 city.

2

3 Living here in Galena, we all look out  
4 for one another and we group together. In order for me  
5 to come I had to consult someone and say I was going to  
6 come over and say what I had to say, would it be all  
7 right to with her to say what I had to say because I  
8 didn't want to say anything and then be confirmed  
9 saying, you shouldn't have said that, that is not our  
10 way. We get permission from someone to back us up.

11

12 Another thing that concerns me is that  
13 the hunting, please I wish they would reinstate where a  
14 person that does not have a job and has a large family.  
15 If -- during the winter especially where we live in the  
16 remote, many of our people in small villages, they  
17 cannot go to the store and buy meat to cook and put on  
18 the table. They could go out and set snares but  
19 there's times that it's -- there's no -- rabbits not as  
20 abundant as used to be. Where the person would go out  
21 and is able to get a moose with a large family, he'll  
22 bring it back, he would keep a portion of it but he  
23 shares some with other people in the village. Now,  
24 they cannot do that. Someone did that. They were  
25 having hard time and a large family, he went out and he  
26 got a moose. Back then there were game wardens flying,  
27 they saw that he had gotten a moose, they confiscated  
28 his gun, took the meat and left him with nothing. He  
29 tried to explain he's a father with a large family,  
30 didn't make any difference, and that's wrong.

31

32 And another thing is that living in  
33 Nulato 1931, they used to, men folks, from in January  
34 they go out and get their pine tree, they work it down  
35 to make little tiny flimsy, oh, gosh, boards like to  
36 build a trap, fish trap, they go out and get the  
37 willows, bring it back, thaw it out in the house and  
38 we, as children, if our dad had some, we would sit  
39 there and we would peel it for him and then he would  
40 take it himself and take the outer bark off so it's  
41 flexible and he rolls that up and put it away so it  
42 will dry. But when he's going to use it, he puts it in  
43 the water to soak it so it's flexible and doesn't  
44 break. Now, people cannot put fish traps in the water,  
45 they put a stop to that. And when they had the trap  
46 and were able to use it, all the men folks would help  
47 putting a trap in the ice and that's not easy. And  
48 then a day or so, maybe two days they let it stay in  
49 the water, then they go back and take it out and the  
50 thing is packed with fish, variety of fish. They bring

1 it back to the village and pass it around to everybody  
2 for a meal, and that was great. That's how people  
3 helped one another. Now, they no longer can put the  
4 trap in the ice.

5  
6 1934, we were living up above Koyukuk,  
7 dad, my mother, my sisters and my brothers. My dad  
8 made a small trap and as small as we were we were able  
9 to help him. To put the lead in because that was hard.  
10 Where they picked the water is in an eddy, he says  
11 that's where the fish would be going. Well, when he  
12 goes back, we follow him, the whole family, except my  
13 sister stays home with my younger sister and brother  
14 but we children that was older, a little older would be  
15 able to go and help. Got the variety of fish. After  
16 dad takes the fish home he takes them over to Koyukuk  
17 and share it with the elderly people to give them  
18 something to eat and they appreciated that.

19  
20 We used to get black fish and there's  
21 this little tiny whitefish, they look like smelts, we  
22 used to get that in the lake, they used to put fish  
23 trap in the lake. If one lake is connected to the  
24 other and there's a little channel there where the fish  
25 passes through, they put the trap there and they get an  
26 abundant of that fish and that fish is very rich. But  
27 of the fish. One is a black fish, you could freezer it  
28 and they'll die but you'll bring it in -- you bring  
29 enough in to thaw it out in the water and pretty soon  
30 you hear them coming alive, the water's splashing, mom  
31 would wash it, take moose fat, chop it up, spread it  
32 all over on the top with dehydrated onions, that's the  
33 type of vegetables we had back then. Nothing was  
34 fresh. Even your potatoes were dehydrated. And she'd  
35 back that in the oven and that was very delicious.

36  
37 There was some boys here in Galena  
38 several years ago, they got some and I said -- they  
39 came and brought me a rabbit and chicken and I said you  
40 boys are trapping beaver, you see any black fish and  
41 they said, oh, yeah, there's lots back there, you eat  
42 that and I said, yes, and I said I'll promise you I'll  
43 prepare some when you bring it. I'll let you know when  
44 I cook it, you can come to my house and we'll share it.  
45 You season your flour and cornmeal and then you take  
46 that fish, coat it, then you cook it in butter or  
47 shortening and it's very, very tasty. You just peel --  
48 you do not cut the fish -- you just peel it off and eat  
49 it and it's very tasty. Those boys said, gosh, that's  
50 so different, very delicious. Well, those boys had

1 moved from the village to a city for employment.

2

3                   This is what it was like. So I really,  
4 really wish they would reinstate that to let a family  
5 go out and get a moose when hard time arrive.

6

7                   And another thing is that the -- what  
8 do you call them, like we're allowed to get -- catch  
9 the wolves and try -- to get depleted because they get  
10 our moose, caribou, everything like that. And the  
11 people that's -- activist about animals, they do not  
12 live in Alaska, they're out of state and, yet, they're  
13 trying to tell us how to live. You go out into the  
14 small village in the Interior, look, see what they have  
15 on hand, you cannot buy any meat there. Those people  
16 depend on that moose or caribou out there and whatever  
17 they get they'll bring it back and keep a portion of it  
18 for their family but they'll share.

19

20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lilly, we're kind of  
21 running out of time so we got to have some other people  
22 comment to us, do you have any comments on the  
23 proposals about these mesh -- the net sizes and so  
24 forth that we've been talking about, do you have a  
25 position on that?

26

27                   MS. OLIN: Yes. Because some of my  
28 elders, they were talking. They said we didn't know  
29 that they had regulations on the sizes of the fish net  
30 that we had to use. So people are putting in the fish  
31 net for their own use, that's the least they could do  
32 for themselves and if you're going to regulate the fish  
33 net and sizes, fish net, back when I was small was not  
34 bought it was made from scratch.

35

36                   Flour sack. They'd rip it out and  
37 twist it and they had a little twirler there to twirl  
38 it so it would get the string tightened and make it  
39 useable. Everything was made from scratch. A lot of  
40 people do that today but they cannot use the net  
41 because they're regulated on what size of net to use.

42

43                   So it ties up the people, they cannot  
44 afford to buy the fish net.

45

46                   Last time I bought a fish net it was  
47 almost \$400 for whitefish net. And if a person had to  
48 buy the net, all the different sizes in order to catch  
49 fish they cannot afford it, our elderly people, you're  
50 putting them in a bind.

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Lilly, we have  
4 to -- there's other people we need to talk to you here  
5 and I'm sorry to cut you off but I got Sidney that's  
6 chomping the bit to speak also and we've got a lot of  
7 other people here so we very much appreciate all of  
8 your comments and enlightening us on how people caught  
9 animals and so forth. And this Council's going to be  
10 trying to work towards, trying to give local people as  
11 much opportunity to get moose or fish as we possibly  
12 can. And so we have a lot of stuff to do today so we  
13 have to keep moving on with this agenda..

14

15 MS. OLIN: Yes.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So appreciate your  
18 comments. Thank you.

19

20 MS. OLIN: Thank you. And another  
21 thing is that the boundaries they put up, because I  
22 don't know if the people understood where the  
23 boundaries were. My elderly was complaining to me the  
24 other day at the AFN meeting, her son got caught  
25 because he was just a few yards out of the boundary.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 This is my concern of my elderlies not  
30 only mine.

31

32 Thank you for allowing me to express my  
33 thoughts with you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

36

37 MS. OLIN: Thank you.

38

39 (Applause)

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, Sidney.

42

43 (Pause)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Sidney's  
46 adjusting his earphones so he can hear what we're  
47 saying and we're anxiously awaiting what Sidney's got  
48 to say because when Sidney speaks everybody listens.  
49 So he's a very respected elder here.

50

1 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: I can't even get  
2 the damn thing on.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 MR. HUNTINGTON: Just to explain, the  
7 reason I'm here is if there's questions or comments  
8 I'll write them down so he could read them and respond.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

11  
12 MR. HUNTINGTON: But his hearing is  
13 pretty well shot so he may not hear a word you're  
14 saying.

15  
16 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: I just heard what  
17 you said.

18  
19 (Laughter)

20  
21 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: Well, to start with  
22 I'm Sidney Huntington. I'm considered a pain in the  
23 butt around here. I've known all you guys for about 20  
24 years or more. I wasn't coming up to your meeting but  
25 I was really concerned with some of the proposals,  
26 especially one pertaining to the elders.

27  
28 I'm not going to give you a little  
29 history of early fishing in Alaska because it pretty  
30 much was in the past. we're lucky to have fish right  
31 now. My wife she's 81 years old she was raised in  
32 Koyukuk and she often told me about how fish, king  
33 salmon used to be, they spent the whole summer fishing  
34 king salmon in Koyukuk across the river with a  
35 fishwheel and fish net and did not fill a 100 pound  
36 flour sack with king salmon so there was very  
37 (indiscernible) fish. If you all remember the  
38 regulations years ago they had to stop the commercial  
39 harvest for fishing on the Yukon and close the king  
40 salmon period before the salmon -- it took over 20  
41 years to rebuild them stocks. Now, what happened  
42 there's abundance of fish compared to those days.

43  
44 But personally is your proposal that  
45 concerning the elderlies being allowed to fish  
46 anywhere, any abundance in any water no matter when,  
47 closed or open. We have lots of abuse in the resource  
48 already. The resource is being abused. I have 40  
49 grandchildren. They could build me a boat with a TV in  
50 it, nice bed and this one takes me down river to fish

1 any time I wanted to and they each could have us a load  
2 of fish, where and how long would that practice last.  
3 How long would the fish last. That's only me I'm  
4 talking about. There's others could do the same thing.  
5 After you get 62 years old, you got some grandkids,  
6 they could go out and abuse the resource, that's not  
7 management, that's abuse of the resource, we don't need  
8 that. We absolutely don't.

9  
10 Right now I go out there and fish like  
11 anybody else, with my grandkids, I can't handle a net  
12 but they take me out and make one trip or two, maybe  
13 I'll catch 25 fish and stuff, I need 50 to feed my  
14 grandchildren around the village and what not, we do  
15 that. I mean I got a number, I don't need no more.  
16 Clear and enhance my kids to take me out fishing, only  
17 prepares the worst kind of abuse that we have now. I  
18 just come from Fairbanks the other day where they have  
19 quarts and quarts and jars of king salmon right in  
20 front of the AFN, and bags of salmon strips and stuff  
21 like that, all subsistence caught fish, where in the  
22 hell did the commercial fisheries go. It cost me  
23 \$139,000 to build a fish camp up here to comply with  
24 the subsistence -- with the resource commercially to  
25 sell salmon strips, when they opened subsistence  
26 harvest on the Yukon, I could not compete with the  
27 subsistence harvest. I had to build a smokehouse to  
28 comply with the regulations put out, now, I can put a  
29 cover on my toilet -- I had to build it 200 feet away  
30 from the smokehouse while working, now I can put a  
31 cover on that toilet and smoke my fish right there and  
32 sell it in Fairbanks, nothing illegal about it at all.

33  
34 That's what you call abuse from the  
35 subsistence category and now we add on more by saying  
36 well every elderly fish whenever he wants and wherever  
37 he wants. How could I handle a boat and a 100 foot net  
38 or whatever it takes, I'm 97 years old, I passed my  
39 elderly stage, I'm going to my second childhood for  
40 cripes sakes.

41  
42 (Laughter)

43  
44 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: And you ask me to  
45 do this. You already messed with the destroying king  
46 salmon. Your salmon net depth, well you know why the  
47 Feds right now have open -- open season for drifting on  
48 the Yukon, you almost have to be half crazy or don't  
49 care what you do to fish on there. I've seen some  
50 people come home without their \$800 net because it got

1 tangled in nothing but snags between here and Koyukuk,  
2 and so why would you put a net in the river, well, you  
3 maybe lower the depth so you won't go down and catch  
4 them but it's not the place to drift. So you make a 25  
5 mesh net for there, isn't there any way that you can  
6 comply, make regulation where the State coinciding with  
7 you -- how did -- -- maybe they want a 48 mesh, maybe  
8 you should take a drive by or put me to go over there  
9 and say 35 is right on the head, no, I don't think so,  
10 or hundred of so, no, I don't think so, I think when  
11 you go around 100 or so feet, 150 feet you're doing  
12 pretty fairly good, of course, I don't fish that much  
13 and nobody else fishes really that much only for -- for  
14 king salmon, only we catch our harvest what they  
15 need, that's mostly what happens. We're doing pretty  
16 good right now.

17

18 But with the oversize depth of fish  
19 nets and the large king salmon net right now you very  
20 rarely catch a decent king, they're all little scroungy  
21 things about 18 -- if you got a 20 pounder you got a  
22 big fish, there is no more big fish. And so we cut the  
23 mesh down now, now we're going to wipe out the small  
24 ones now. Who's done the studying as to what we should  
25 be doing. When you say you can harvest subsistence  
26 fish, you go ahead and load your damn boat up, nobody  
27 -- there's no law to stop you. If there was some  
28 regulation as to the amount we can catch and who's  
29 going to enforce the law on when you can fish and when  
30 you can't. I don't see no sense in making a God-damn  
31 regulation to pit one person against another person,  
32 fish two different regulations, I don't go for that at  
33 all.

34

35 And that's mainly the reason I come up  
36 here.

37

38 And then when you cut down your sizes  
39 of net, some people use 8 inch mesh, that's what I got.  
40 Who's going to give me \$600 to change my mesh, what am  
41 I going to do with my net, it's brand new. Somebody  
42 got to reimburse me for that \$600, I guess I'll hold  
43 out my hand to the Welfare people, I'm elderly I need a  
44 new net. I'm only one, there's many, many people on  
45 the Yukon with 8 inch mesh that can't hardly afford --  
46 we make a net last maybe four or five years, a matter  
47 of fact one of my nets is 21 years old today, you know  
48 that, bought it in Japan for 2,000 bucks.

49

50 How much longer are we going to be able

1 to fish. Our salmon abundance is going down. The size  
2 is going down. The temperature change worldwide, it's  
3 warming up. Who knows if we're going to have any  
4 salmon on the Yukon 10 years from now, there might not  
5 be any and boy we better be careful of how we manage  
6 the resource.

7  
8 And really, me, I'm against the  
9 subsistence category in many respects. I was on the  
10 Board of Game for 20 years and I said then when we  
11 passed it -- when we accepted the subsistence law, then  
12 feeling that we could probably change it to establish  
13 some good guidelines on it but that never happened. I  
14 said when we adopted it, 20 years from now we're going  
15 to come back to the Board of Game and there'll be a  
16 bucket of worms on that Board, that will be the  
17 subsistence issue unsolved and that's what it still is  
18 today in my respect. It's fine. Years ago when we  
19 were on the Board of Game, the old Board of Game, we  
20 still cared these people in these villages, we made  
21 specific allocations so they could have it and stuff  
22 like that. Right now with the subsistence category,  
23 you got people in the Kenai Peninsula on the  
24 subsistence then come here for the five day early  
25 season, come out with a little scroungy calf moose, is  
26 that what we want to do with our resource, I don't  
27 think so.

28  
29 Another thing I wanted to speak on the  
30 State Advisory Board from Galena or whatever, Middle  
31 Yukon, they passed a resolution the other day not to  
32 adopt the regulation that said you could go ahead and  
33 expand the -- narrow it down so the airplane could land  
34 and take the moose outside the controlled use area in  
35 the Koyukuk. That thing's been working for over 20  
36 years, why interrupt something when it's been working  
37 so good for the people, to bring it in so it would take  
38 the big moose out. If it wasn't for those big moose we  
39 wouldn't have any down there. So I commend those  
40 Koyukuk River Advisory Board for adopting the passage  
41 that they do not allow that.

42  
43 And that's why I got the thing off my  
44 back and I sure hope you don't adopt the elderly  
45 subsistence thing. I got my Social Security and I got  
46 these guys to help me catch fish so I'm okay.

47  
48 Thank you.

49  
50 (Applause)

1 MR. HUNTINGTON: If there's any  
2 questions I'll write them down for him and after I got  
3 them written down I'll give them to him and he'll be  
4 able to respond.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council members  
7 have questions for Sidney.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see any  
12 Council questions. I really appreciate you coming down  
13 here Sidney and giving us a thorough thrashing as  
14 usual. We need to have your input, it gives us a  
15 perspective that we need to have. And so I don't think  
16 the Council has any questions for you though, I think  
17 you made your point very clear.

18  
19 Thank you.

20  
21 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: Well, thank you for  
22 growing up.

23  
24 (Laughter)

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I used to live down  
27 here in Galena.

28  
29 MR. S. HUNTINGTON: He used to be a  
30 little baby like this.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I used to live here  
33 in Galena and knew Sidney when I was a little kid, I  
34 used to shoot little birds and he used to chew me out  
35 about that.

36  
37 So do we have any other elders that  
38 want to speak at this time.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so where are we  
43 at here, Vince.

44  
45 MR. MATHEWS: You'd be back up to if  
46 there were any Federal agencies that had comments on  
47 Proposals 13 and 14.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Okay, so.....

50

1 MR. STICKMAN: Jack.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey.  
4  
5 MR. STICKMAN: Are you going to give  
6 Gilbert and some of the other fishermen a chance.  
7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Does the  
9 Council want to hear other comments from the local  
10 people at this time.  
11  
12 MR. STICKMAN: Right now would be nice.  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's  
15 probably a good time. Yeah, that's right, Mickey.  
16 Gilbert, you want to say something to us.  
17  
18 MR. G. HUNTINGTON: Thank you, Mr.  
19 Chair.  
20  
21 Concerning your proposals, restricting  
22 gear, like the old man and maybe others said it's  
23 really beyond unreasonable to expect everyone on the  
24 Yukon to buy new gear especially when some of the  
25 villages on the Yukon -- as YRDFA co-Chair, we had a  
26 study done up to 70 percent of the adult male  
27 population and the majority of the villages on the  
28 Yukon live below the poverty level. This is just  
29 totally unreasonable to expect everyone to buy new  
30 gear. That's just got to be out of the question.  
31  
32 And I think that this Committee cannot  
33 stress that deeply enough. That that's just  
34 unreasonable.  
35  
36 As a member of the Yukon River Panel  
37 and part of the Advisory Group that negotiated with  
38 Canada, I did it for 12 years, I think. We worked all  
39 those years to get these numbers and an agreement, as  
40 far as the border passage and more importantly method  
41 and means. Basically what come up with, along with  
42 Fish and Game and more recently with Fish and Wildlife  
43 with their limited participation in the last couple  
44 years, is the method of the windows schedule. That is  
45 the only reasonable thing we can do as far as managing  
46 the salmon resources on the Yukon or any river for that  
47 manner. You cannot expect everyone to buy new gear.  
48 You cannot expect everyone to change their gear, that's  
49 unreasonable. You have to limit their time. That's  
50 the only thing we could come up with, all these years,

1 and that's where the window concept come up from.

2

3                   We fish now here in Y4, B and C, it's  
4 two 48 hours per week. Down river I think it's five  
5 days, I'm not positive, maybe up river. I worked for  
6 years and years, 10 years, before, in fact, we got the  
7 Koyukuk River to open up seven days a week, 24 hours a  
8 day because it's unreasonable for people on the Koyukuk  
9 River to fish on the same schedule similar to anyone on  
10 the Yukon because the opportunity of harvest is not the  
11 same, equal time is not equal opportunity, wherever you  
12 are on the river. And that is especially true the  
13 farther you go down the river. In my opinion, the  
14 lower Yukon commercial fisheries are conducted totally  
15 wrong.

16

17                   At present and actually from the get  
18 go, since 1917, I think they started, when they used to  
19 harvest up to 200,000 kings on the Yukon, they killed  
20 everything, and they still do up to a certain extent.  
21 They have limited openings, I think 6 inch mesh and  
22 then what they consider unlimited openings where it's  
23 standard practice to use 8.5 and 8 and 3/4 inch mesh.  
24 What we are doing is killing, we're targeting specific  
25 fish, specific part of that stock, we're killing the  
26 big fish. Now, you hear from Fish and Game and the  
27 lower river people, and everyone say there's a big run,  
28 there's a big run, bang, they open commercial fishing  
29 in the lower Yukon. You can bet any time they open  
30 commercial fishing with the modern technology and  
31 everything, it used to take them up to 48 hours to  
32 catch 30,000 fish, now they can catch 20,000 in six  
33 hours, it's changed.

34

35                   You take this 20,000 fish, as you  
36 stated earlier, you're targeting possibly specific  
37 stocks, they don't know that, we don't know that. It  
38 can be a good guess though, like you said there's one  
39 river on the Koyukuk that has no fish. Why? It is  
40 absolutely wrong that management conduct commercial  
41 fisheries, large scale fisheries on stocks they have no  
42 idea where they're going. It might be today that  
43 they're going to Tanana River, no problem on the Tanana  
44 River, but they don't know if, in fact, they are going  
45 to Koyukuk River. I firmly believe that there should  
46 be some type of moratorium or extreme restrictions on  
47 the commercial fisheries on the lower Yukon until they  
48 find out what they're killing. That's the bottom line.

49

50                   You don't manage anything. You don't

1 go moose hunting and kill anything there, you know, you  
2 have to have a specific management objective for that  
3 specific stock you're targeting, whatever you're going  
4 to kill, to not adversely affect the species. Right  
5 now we're not doing it. We have tried and in my  
6 opinion, the windows schedule has not had enough time  
7 to work, we've only had it for, what, six, seven years,  
8 that's only one life cycle in chinook salmon. You  
9 know, I've studied it in my small mind and ways and  
10 method and the years of data I've gone through, I mean  
11 spent months working on this stuff and the nearest I  
12 could come up with, in my opinion anyway and I'm far  
13 from being a scientist, but I would think that you  
14 would need at least five life cycles to get a handle on  
15 what your management practices are doing. Like I say  
16 I'm not a scientist but that's my opinion, it doesn't  
17 happen in one life cycle.

18

19 I mean we've just now got a return on  
20 what our management practices have started, of just a  
21 few years ago, and there's been some success. I think  
22 some would agree that we did have an increase in size,  
23 to a limited extent on the chinooks last summer. There  
24 was some pretty good kings. I'm not saying there was  
25 enough but there was some good fish.

26

27 So I firmly believe that what we did a  
28 few years ago with the windows schedule is helping.  
29 And like I say you need to give it time.

30

31 I think it's important to remember  
32 where these type of proposals are coming from. Really  
33 it's from up river people. And it's natural, too,  
34 because really they get the last choice of what's going  
35 up the river. Just like you live way up the Koyukuk  
36 River, you are the last one fishing on these stocks,  
37 and it's very important that we listen to these people,  
38 but we also have to remember that there are commercial  
39 fishermen and buyers on that Eastern Interior RAC.  
40 They are generating these proposals, they are looking  
41 for monetary benefit in my opinion, so we do have to  
42 take that with a grain of salt.

43

44 But I'll stress again that it's very  
45 important that we continue to work with what we have  
46 tried for the past six, seven years, and that's the  
47 window schedule. But I would urge the Committee to put  
48 what pressure you can on the Federal Subsistence Board  
49 to limit the commercial fisheries in the Yukon because  
50 like I say they don't know what they're killing. They

1 could be killing the last of your upper Koyukuk River  
2 fish. They could be killing the last of the fish from  
3 Tanana, some little stream in the Tanana River or in  
4 Canada, we don't know. We absolutely don't know.

5  
6                   There have been studies and YRDFA was  
7 the one that instigated it to try -- well, I don't know  
8 that's 15 years ago now, I haven't even seen the data  
9 on it, well, I take that back, last year I seen the  
10 data as far as the genetic stock ID. And from the  
11 people I talked to it will take a number of years  
12 before they can get an actual handle on that for in-  
13 season management to use it, in-season management, it  
14 will take, the way I understand it, a number of cycles  
15 again, you know, but do we have -- like the old man  
16 said, do we have that time. We certainly don't have  
17 five cycles like in my mind that we need to really get  
18 a handle on it, it takes action now. We cannot afford  
19 to knock out 20,000 fish in a few hours in the lower  
20 river and believe me I supported the lower Yukon for  
21 years. I have a commercial fishing permit as well and  
22 I want to fish commercially, I want to make a living,  
23 you know, just like they do, but it's proving, at least  
24 in my mind, that we're going about it wrong, we need to  
25 do it right. And I would urge you all to put the  
26 pressure where it's needed to try to get it right.

27  
28                   Thank you.

29  
30                   (Applause)

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do any Council  
33 members have questions for Gilbert.

34  
35                   (No comments)

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Let me understand  
38 your position then on the proposals, 13 and 14, are you  
39 proposing that this Council adopt the commercial  
40 component and exclude the subsistence component for re-  
41 tooling or re-gearing.

42  
43                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: I don't have  
44 the.....

45  
46                   REPORTER: Gilbert. Gilbert.

47  
48                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: .....proposal in  
49 front of me.....

50

1                   REPORTER: Gilbert, wait.....  
2  
3                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: .....I don't have  
4 my glasses either. Sorry.  
5  
6                   REPORTER: Thanks.  
7  
8                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: I don't have the  
9 proposal in front of me and I don't have my glasses to  
10 read it.  
11  
12                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you weren't here  
13 for the presentation.  
14  
15                  MR. G. HUNTINGTON: No.  
16  
17                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The proposal is to  
18 limit the -- the two proposals, the combined proposals  
19 are to limit to 35 mesh depth for gear used on Federal  
20 waters and 7.5 inch stretch mesh size, and that would  
21 be implemented for the commercial fishery and the  
22 subsistence fisheries on the Federal waters. And so  
23 you were stating that the commercial fishery has an  
24 issue and you felt that the subsistence fishers could  
25 not afford to re-tool.  
26  
27                  MR. G. HUNTINGTON: I'm in opposition  
28 of any gear changes, commercial or subsistence.  
29  
30                  MR. STICKMAN: Jack, maybe you could  
31 just read it for him, that way he'll have a clear  
32 understanding of what you're talking about.  
33  
34                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I'll have  
35 to.....  
36  
37                  MR. STICKMAN: It's on Page 43.  
38  
39                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, yeah, we went  
40 through this big long analysis of these proposals.  
41  
42                  The proposals, basically FP08-13  
43 requests that all gillnets with greater than 6 inch  
44 stretch mesh be restricted to not more than 35 meshes  
45 in depth in Federal public waters on the Yukon River  
46 drainage. And 08-14 requests that the maximum gillnet  
47 mesh size be restricted to 7.5 inch stretch mesh for  
48 subsistence and commercial salmon fishing on the  
49 Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage.  
50

1                   And so you're opposed to both  
2 proposals?

3  
4                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: Yes.

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So there's no -- the  
7 windows in your mind suffice, even though the archival  
8 data showed -- and the telemetry data on the Yukon  
9 River chinook showed that as the salmon moved further  
10 up river they had a disproportionate swimming rate of  
11 33 to 50 miles per day and so those windowed boundaries  
12 actually begin to blur and so there's really no  
13 protection as you move up the drainage.

14  
15                   MR. G. HUNTINGTON: I do agree there's  
16 less and less protection but it is protection in my  
17 mind, although like you said it is limited and at a  
18 reducing rate as you go up river.

19  
20                   You got to remember most of the harvest  
21 is farther down river. Really most of the king harvest  
22 is from Galena on down, Galena to Kaltag is only like  
23 14 percent of the actual harvest or maybe not even  
24 that, I think subsistence, it's really small compared  
25 to the bulk of the harvest, which is in the lower  
26 river, and so that's where you need the protection, is  
27 where the bulk of the harvest is.

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: See with -- I read  
30 the newspaper and I read where the lower river was  
31 being built as its own product, the lower river chinook  
32 salmon for the Yukon was being built up, and so do you  
33 really feel that the Department is going to be self-  
34 constraining to maintain these windows and the  
35 timeframes that would be appropriate to -- I don't  
36 think that the Federal Board -- has been very reluctant  
37 to pull the throttle on the State managers, our in-  
38 season manager has never yet to override an in-season  
39 management decision by the Alaska Department of Fish  
40 and Game, so I'm very reluctant to go with the status  
41 quo, that's my concern on the Yukon. Because this  
42 product is being built up as an economic priority and  
43 so the Federal Board, I have to deal with the Federal  
44 Board, they're very reluctant to be constraining to the  
45 State system.

46  
47                   And so those are the issues that I'm  
48 bringing, you want to talk about management and how the  
49 windows is going to fix it all, well, it's not fixing  
50 it, we're still seeing a decline in the salmon, they've

1 yet to arrest, they've yet to show any -- we lost the  
2 eight's, now we're losing the seven's and it just keeps  
3 going down hill, we're not seeing a rectification, even  
4 with the windows. I'm a proponent of the windows,  
5 don't get me wrong here, but I do see that it blurs and  
6 there's some real management concerns about building  
7 this product, and the Bering Sea bycatch issue is  
8 compounding this. So that's what my discussion should  
9 be revolving around, is the status quo going to  
10 actually fix this problem.

11  
12 I recognize a problem, a size decline  
13 problem in the Yukon River chinook salmon and I feel  
14 that something needs to be done sooner or later.

15  
16 You got a response, Gilbert.

17  
18 MR. G. HUNTINGTON: That's why I  
19 mentioned the commercial fishery in the lower Yukon  
20 River, that's something we can do now.

21  
22 Establish some type of management  
23 method to determine when we'll actually harvest. Let's  
24 say there's 100,000 fish coming into the Yukon River,  
25 if, in fact, Yahoo River on the Koyukuk is a stock  
26 that's in real danger find out when those stocks are  
27 there, right now you talk to anyone, management, when  
28 are the fish -- when is the Tanana River fish going in,  
29 oh, we think they're coming in late, hmm, we're pretty  
30 sure they're coming in late, uh, yeah, that's what  
31 we've always believed, something to that effect.  
32 There's nothing concrete.

33  
34 So like I say they need to know. I  
35 mean they could be killing some of these rivers because  
36 that's the way it happens, bang, it's 20,000 fish. I  
37 mean it's more limited in the last few years. But  
38 that's what we need to do.

39  
40 And, yes, it's economic impact, but far  
41 less than what we've felt here in the middle river, we  
42 haven't even had a commercial fishery in the past,  
43 what, 12 years, I mean as little as it was then. And  
44 so -- and plus the fact on the lower river, anyway, and  
45 many of the coastal communities, they have these CDQ  
46 groups basically keeping them afloat. I mean their  
47 commercial fishery right now is subsidized, and the  
48 item you talked about, about their product development  
49 and marketing, that's subsidized by the CDQ group,  
50 which, in fact, I don't know if you folks understand

1 that guess where that comes from, the CDQ group is paid  
2 by the very people that are catching Yukon and other  
3 salmon species as bycatch, they're the ones footing the  
4 bill, \$20 million several years ago for the -- the  
5 Yukon Delta Fisheries, I think it is, Cooperative or  
6 whatever, they're paying the bill. They're basically  
7 buying them off, you know, I mean 20 million bucks for  
8 them to catch -- I don't know what it is now, you  
9 mentioned 70,000 salmon, I don't know if that's kings  
10 but five years ago I testified at the NMFS meeting.  
11 The only individual there non-government, or non-profit  
12 that was testifying against several billion dollar  
13 pollock fishery, you know, to try to get them to shut  
14 down because at that time they were like 350,000 kings  
15 they were harvesting annually, and we did get them to  
16 -- I forget what they call their -- they got their  
17 little area they can fish in, hot spots or whatever it  
18 was that they settled on, but, you know, that's the key  
19 though, the lower river, that's the only thing we can  
20 do right now.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Well, I  
23 agree that the largest harvest is in the lower river  
24 and people up river are continuing to see a size  
25 decline and these types of proposals have been coming  
26 before the Board of Fish and the Federal Subsistence  
27 Board and so we have to move on in this agenda, I  
28 really appreciate your comments, Gilbert.

29

30 MR. G. HUNTINGTON: Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And.....

33

34 (Applause)

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we have any  
37 other local comments, fishers from this area. State  
38 your name please for Salena.

39

40 MR. F. HUNTINGTON: My name's Fred  
41 Huntington. I've been fishing here all my life. I  
42 fished with both Gilbert and the old man.

43

44 And last 10 years or so I noticed the  
45 stock, the fish were getting quite a bit smaller, and I  
46 look at the graph they put on the -- the report they  
47 put on the screen this morning and it looks good, but  
48 they didn't have nothing in there that got a 5 inch  
49 mesh net to test to compare what fish that's coming up  
50 the river.

1                   This summer there were a lot of small  
2 fish coming up the river and I tell you I got some five  
3 -- I got some 12 pounders in my 8 inch mesh net, and  
4 that's kind of unusual and the only reason I was doing  
5 that was because there was an awful lot of small fish  
6 going by. The guys in the boat next door to me were  
7 using some silver nets and they come home with 50 or 60  
8 king salmon where I come home with about eight or nine  
9 and I compared the fish and their fish is way smaller  
10 than what I'm getting.

11  
12                   So when you put up on the screen like  
13 that to make you believe that we're going to be saving  
14 the fish by putting the smaller net mesh in the river,  
15 I think you better look at the idea that us fishermen  
16 right here are going to be targeting the smaller fish,  
17 I mean we're going to start wiping out the stream by  
18 taking all the fish out of the river.

19  
20                   Right now we're able to use the 8 inch  
21 net and a lot of the smaller ones are going by so any  
22 time you start a restrict -- or you start to change  
23 your fishing gear it's going to affect a lot of people  
24 and the fish also.

25  
26                   So I'm really opposed -- I know you  
27 guys are working hard at doing this thing and you're  
28 doing a study and there's money being poured into it  
29 but you got to look at the picture of what's going to  
30 happen, is the smaller fish is going to away and pretty  
31 soon there'll be no fish up the Yukon.

32  
33                   That's about all I got to say.

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does anybody  
36 got any questions for Fred.

37  
38                   (No comments)

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred.

41  
42                   MR. STICKMAN: Jack, yes, I have  
43 something.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Mickey.

46  
47                   MR. STICKMAN: Oh, no, I don't have no  
48 questions for Fred but, you know, when Gilbert was  
49 talking earlier he talked about the -- you know the CDQ  
50 groups and the \$20 million that they get from the

1 pollock fishing industry and I was just looking at this  
2 salmon bycatch and Alaska pollock fishery and it looked  
3 like for 2007 they caught over 100,000 chinook that  
4 possibly could have come up the -- well, come up the  
5 Yukon.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mickey, that data  
8 presented was by the apportionment of what they catch  
9 and so forth, that could have been as many as 25,000  
10 Yukon chinook, approximately.

11

12 Yeah, Vince.

13

14 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think in respect  
15 -- if Becca is still on line, what Mickey is looking at  
16 is the handout, that if she spoke, that would be handed  
17 out. So I don't know if Becca's still on line, she's  
18 the one that's been monitoring, as well as other Staff,  
19 on these numbers and what percentage breakdown. So it  
20 might be best if she's still on line, to do that.

21

22 And this is on the bycatch fishery, and  
23 then if not we can -- Don's been attending those  
24 meetings and we can do our best, but if Becca's there  
25 she's on top of it.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It's getting  
28 a little bit tangled but we'll -- I'd like to -- let's  
29 hear what Becca's got to say on this bycatch  
30 interception of chinook stocks for the Yukon. Are you  
31 there Becca.

32

33 MS. ROBBINS: Hi, I heard my name but I  
34 couldn't hear what the request was.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The request is do  
37 you have a short presentation on bycatch of chinook  
38 salmon for the Yukon River drainage and the numbers of  
39 bycatch primarily and their apportionment as to what  
40 would be destined for the Yukon River.

41

42 MS. ROBBINS: Okay. Very briefly the  
43 bycatch numbers in the pollock fleet so far this year  
44 are right above 100,000 as of last week so it's  
45 probably a little higher than that now for chinook  
46 salmon. And using the data I mentioned earlier which  
47 was from the Kate Myers study, that was from '97 to  
48 '99, about 25 percent of those fish are bound for the  
49 Yukon, so that would be about 25,000 and then you  
50 figure not all of those probably would have survived in

1 the marine environment so just down a little bit from  
2 there.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

5

6 MS. ROBBINS: Do you want me to go into  
7 what's going on at the North Pacific Fishery Council  
8 right now or do you want to save that for later.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we can save  
11 that, there was questions as to this interception rate  
12 for the Yukon River.

13

14 MS. ROBBINS: Yeah, that's the numbers  
15 currently.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

18

19 So what would be the most expeditious  
20 proceedings at this point, Vince.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think the most  
23 expeditious, I think we've covered, and please correct  
24 me, from the audience, the Department of Fish and Game  
25 have shared their comments, there was no comments from  
26 the Federal agencies, then that leaves you Native,  
27 tribal and village, I don't know if there's any  
28 additional there. And then I believe the Staff  
29 Committee member has a comment from their discussion,  
30 I'm not sure if that's still.....

31

32 MR. BERG: (Nods affirmatively)

33

34 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. And then we'll just  
35 keep walking down the list, that may be the expeditious  
36 way to go.

37

38 While, Jerry's getting up there, I  
39 think Jerry's going to have that, Jenny, I didn't get a  
40 chance to talk to you about when this covered dish  
41 would be, I know it's in the future, but what time was  
42 published.

43

44 MS. PELKOLA: I think they have it set  
45 for 5:30.

46

47 MR. MATHEWS: Well, there's your  
48 timeline.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So, all

1 right, Jerry.....

2

3 MR. SAM: Mr. Chairman.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....you got -- oh,

6 Ron.

7

8 MR. SAM: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, don't we  
9 have someone on line there that wanted to testify or is  
10 that.....

11

12 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, I think you still  
13 have Ted Hamilton, Virgil Umphenour and possibly some  
14 others but we're not at the public testimony section  
15 yet.

16

17 MR. SAM: Okay. All right.

18

19 MR. MATHEWS: They've been very

20 patient.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Jerry, go ahead.

23

24 MR. BERG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 Members of the Council. For the record my name is  
26 Jerry Berg, I sit on the Interagency Staff Committee  
27 for the Fish and Wildlife Service. And I actually had  
28 Mickey ask me just a little bit ago what my role was  
29 now and so for some of you that might not know, there's  
30 an InterAgency Staff Committee that will meet in  
31 between now and the Federal Subsistence Board and Vince  
32 will be there and Don will be there and there's  
33 InterAgency people on each Federal agency and the State  
34 will be there and we kind of get together and discuss  
35 about what your Council took action on and what the YK  
36 Council did and the Western Interior [sic] Council and  
37 we try to pull things together and then we advise our  
38 Federal Board members before they vote on issues.

39

40 But, anyway, we did meet and discuss  
41 this issue once already and I thought one thing that we  
42 discussed that certainly you guys are already aware of  
43 but I think it needs to be emphasized is that -- and  
44 you've discussed it already a little bit, is that this  
45 would be the first time that the Federal Program has  
46 stepped into a gear mesh -- or a gear restriction of  
47 any sort into a commercial fishery and, you know, we've  
48 closed Federal lands to certain hunts and fisheries in  
49 the past, it's rare, but it has occurred, but this  
50 would be sort of a test case, we've never stepped into

1 commercial fishery management with a gear type  
2 restriction like this. So that certainly would be  
3 precedent setting and we always, as you know, try to  
4 work as closely as we can with the State.

5  
6 And I think a couple of other issues  
7 that I think will be discussed at the Board level that  
8 you guys may want to discuss as a Council, is the phase  
9 in period that's part of this proposal, you know, it  
10 says for one year for a commercial fishery and three  
11 years for the subsistence. Well, so for one year for  
12 the subsistence -- or the commercial fishery, basically  
13 that won't be implemented until a year from this coming  
14 season and so basically you could having this similar  
15 discussion next fall if you wanted to somehow modify  
16 your recommendation at that point to the Federal Board.  
17 I think the Federal Board is going to have that  
18 discussion about, well, what does that mean, do we  
19 really have to make a decision right now if we're  
20 really not going to phase it in for another year and I  
21 think it just raises that question. And it also allows  
22 the flexibility to think about it maybe for another  
23 year before you come up with, you know, Dani showed  
24 some numbers this morning that showed 7.5 inch mesh as  
25 being the most efficient and then we just heard from  
26 Gilbert and Fred saying, well, you know, do we -- if  
27 you go to 7.5 inch gear, that's the most efficient, you  
28 know, what impact is that going to have on the five and  
29 six year old's now. And those are questions, I think  
30 are valid questions, and we're going to be wrestling  
31 with it as a Staff Committee, I think, and then the  
32 Federal Board will.

33  
34 So I just wanted to point those --  
35 bring up those points for the Council to think about in  
36 your deliberations.

37  
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jerry.  
41 Anybody got questions for Jerry.

42  
43 (No comments)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you have a  
46 comment Vince.

47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: (Shakes head negatively)

49  
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the InterAgency

1 Staff Committee's comments were heard. So we've got  
2 Advisory Group comments, neighboring Regional Council  
3 recommendations that were passed. Go ahead, Vince.

4

5 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Three  
6 Councils have met to take up these proposals, 13 and  
7 14, and I'll try to sort them out because they did take  
8 them up sometimes in joint actions and we'll work on  
9 that. And then if Virgil is still on line I think you  
10 may want to hear what his Council did, we do have a  
11 summary here and et cetera, that's been approved by the  
12 Chair, but it might be in deference to the vice-Chair.

13

14 Anyways, Seward Peninsula Regional  
15 Advisory Council took up Proposal 13 and 14.

16

17 And what they did is they opposed the  
18 proposal unanimously.

19

20 Their justification is that the lower  
21 Yukon fishermen have already made many  
22 sacrifices to protect king salmon, the  
23 evidence isn't compelling yet and there  
24 is not justification for this level of  
25 action at this time. King salmon  
26 subsistence and commercial fisheries  
27 are very important to the people of the  
28 lower Yukon. There is concern about  
29 the impact that high sea fisheries are  
30 having on king salmon number, age and  
31 size. There are significant impacts on  
32 the king salmon populations before the  
33 king salmon reach the mouth of the  
34 river.

35

36 So Seward Penn opposes 13 and 14.

37

38 And the Yukon Kuskokwim also  
39 unanimously opposed 13 and 14. And  
40 I'll read it into the record but it's  
41 pretty much the same justification.

42

43 Yukon fishermen have already made many  
44 sacrifices to protect the salmon,  
45 evidence isn't compelling yet that  
46 there is a justification for this level  
47 of action at this time. King salmon  
48 subsistence and commercial fisheries  
49 are very important to the people of the  
50 lower Yukon. There is a concern about

1 the impact that high sea fisheries and  
2 there are significant impacts on the  
3 king salmon populations before those  
4 salmon reach the mouth of the river.

5  
6 So their justifications are basically  
7 parallel.

8  
9 And with that the third Council was  
10 Eastern Interior Regional Council, and I don't know if  
11 Virgil is still on line.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there,  
14 Virgil, did you want to inform our Council on what you  
15 performed on these two proposals.

16  
17 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'm still here. Our  
18 Council supported the proposals unanimously and, of  
19 course, they're our proposals.

20  
21 We had one Council member that  
22 originally was not going to support it until after she  
23 heard all of the testimony and the Staff presentations  
24 and then input from the other Council members. But  
25 everyone from the Eastern Interior supported both  
26 proposals.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
29 Vince.

30  
31 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, and all respect to  
32 Virgil because he has not seen this summary, they  
33 passed it with modification which aligns with the Staff  
34 recommendation which is:

35  
36 The float lines and floats of the  
37 gillnets must be floating on the  
38 surface of the water while the net is  
39 fishing unless natural conditions cause  
40 the net to temporarily sink. The top  
41 of the line of the net shall be tied  
42 directly to the float line.

43  
44 So I know Virgil knows that, he wanted  
45 to get the main points across to you but they went with  
46 the Staff recommendation, which is a modification to  
47 the proposal -- to their proposal.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
50 clarification on that Vince.

1                   So there's been three Councils making  
2 recommendation, two in opposition, one in support. And  
3 so we got Local Fish and Game Advisory Committees, did  
4 someone from Middle Yukon, Mickey was at that meeting  
5 and your Committee made what recommendations, again,  
6 Mickey.

7

8                   MR. STICKMAN: No, we did not make a  
9 recommendation at the Middle Yukon, the proposal  
10 failed.

11

12                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And was there a  
13 unanimous or split vote on that.

14

15                   MR. STICKMAN: Oh, no it was unanimous.

16

17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other Advisory  
18 Committees make recommendation to this Council on these  
19 proposals.

20

21                   MR. MATHEWS: No, not to my record and  
22 I don't think Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk has met.  
23 Virgil can speak for the Fairbanks Advisory Committee  
24 and you attended the Koyukuk River and I have not seen  
25 the minutes of the Koyukuk, but I don't believe they  
26 took these up.

27

28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Koyukuk did not  
29 take them up. Has the Fairbanks Advisory Committee  
30 taken a position, Virgil, on these proposals?

31

32                   MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes, they have. The  
33 Fairbanks Advisory Committee took it up and they voted  
34 unanimously for the Staff modification.

35

36                   And I might also add that at the Board  
37 of Fish meeting, the Tanana/Rampart/Manely Advisory  
38 Committee, which Stan Zuray is the vice-Chair of, and  
39 also the Eagle AC had proposals forward, you know,  
40 before the Board of Fisheries at the meeting in  
41 February as well as the Fairbanks AC and the Eastern  
42 Interior RAC and we all got together at that meeting,  
43 the Board of Fish meeting and decided to amend our  
44 proposals to what is before you right now and they all  
45 supported that at that time.

46

47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. There's no  
48 other Advisory Committee's that we're aware of.

49

50                   MR. STICKMAN: Ed Sarten from the Ruby

1 Advisory Committee.

2

3 MR. SARTEN: Yeah, we don't have a.....

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ruby does not.....

6

7 MR. SARTEN: .....position on this.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....have a  
10 position, has not taken this issue up. And so the  
11 Koyukuk River Advisory Committee did not regard these  
12 proposals.

13

14 Any other -- Ron, you got a comment.

15

16 MR. SAM: Yeah, Koyukuk River keeps  
17 coming up and we did not deliberate on these proposals  
18 but as far as the fish up there are concerned. All I  
19 know is that all the dog mushers were getting as much  
20 as they needed and the only thing that I forgot to  
21 mention was the die off, we had early die off, as well  
22 as most of the chums, they were dying off right and  
23 left, you could see them on the beach before they  
24 reached all the spawning grounds and that was the other  
25 concern.

26

27 But as far as I know and as far as I am  
28 concerned, the Alatna/Allakaket people got some salmon,  
29 they were cutting down some of their catches due to  
30 time constraints.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I was at that  
33 Koyukuk River Advisory Committee meeting, there was  
34 quite a bit of discussion by some members from Huslia  
35 and Allakaket about the size of the fish, Pollock Simon  
36 was talking about they used to catch big kings by the  
37 mouth of the Southfork and don't catch those anymore  
38 and the numbers of fish, the fish were -- it was really  
39 and warm water and the fish were hard to catch this  
40 year. And so we've expended this Advisory Committee  
41 category.

42

43 So we're at the National Park Service  
44 Subsistence Resource Commissions. I'm on the Gates of  
45 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and we have  
46 not met and will not meet until November 7th and 8th,  
47 in a few days and so we haven't taken this issue up.

48

49 Is there any other Subsistence Resource  
50 Commission.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There is not  
4 according to Vince. And so we need a summary of  
5 written comments on these proposals.

6

7 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, I'll do that very  
8 quickly, they're found on Page 89 and 90. There were  
9 six in opposition and one in support. Again, if you'd  
10 like to see the full letter I have them on the lap top  
11 that's here if you'd like to see the full letter.

12

13 The Association of Village Council  
14 Presidents opposes this proposal. They  
15 are concerned with the recurrence of  
16 proposals that are aimed at  
17 handicapping the lower river fisheries  
18 and their families. Present fisheries  
19 are different from the past with their  
20 commercial fishery, a fraction of what  
21 it once was and their subsistence  
22 fishery is hampered with scheduled  
23 openings. The schedules do not waiver  
24 because of weather, ill or absent  
25 fishers or processors or equipment  
26 breakdowns.

27

28 AVCP stands firm that the lower Yukon  
29 River fishers have carried the burden  
30 of conservation for years and cannot  
31 afford any more restrictions. Any  
32 further restrictions to subsistence  
33 and/or commercial will have a negative  
34 impact on the people of the AVCP region  
35 economically, culturally and socially.

36

37 The Native Village of Alakanuk  
38 Traditional Council also opposes it  
39 because areas of fishing across the  
40 Yukon drainage are not the same.  
41 Passage of this proposal will cause  
42 even greater hardship for fishers that  
43 rely on commercial fishing to sustain  
44 their subsistence livelihood.

45

46 The Council opposes 14 because there is  
47 no hard data to support a smaller net  
48 mesh size.

49

50 Their elders mention that using smaller

1 mesh gear for harvesting chinook will  
2 be hazardous, it will kill bigger fish  
3 that they are trying to save or let  
4 pass up river to spawn.

5  
6 More damage will be done with reducing  
7 the mesh size for harvesting chinook  
8 salmon.

9  
10 The Lower Yukon Fish and Game Advisory  
11 Committee -- I apologize, I said no  
12 earlier, another Committee did meet,  
13 and that is the Lower Yukon Fish and  
14 Game. They oppose both proposals. And  
15 suggested that the Eastern Regional  
16 Council should apply these regulations  
17 to the region prior to requesting they  
18 be applied to other regions.

19  
20 Districts Y1, Y2 and Y3 only have  
21 commercial fishing for their economic  
22 base, these proposals will increase  
23 animosity between up and down river  
24 users. There needs to be a better  
25 understanding of the use of these  
26 resources.

27  
28 Jack Schultheis of Wasilla opposes the  
29 proposal.

30  
31 These proposals will have a profound  
32 effect on the lives of people living on  
33 the Yukon River. These proposals are  
34 designed to place further restrictions  
35 on traditional long established  
36 commercial fisheries that thousands of  
37 Native families depend on for their  
38 livelihood and food.

39  
40 These proposals are similar to previous  
41 proposals rejected by the Alaska Board  
42 of Fisheries based on current  
43 scientific data and overwhelming public  
44 testimony against them.

45  
46 There is concern with how these  
47 proposals were developed and allowed on  
48 the Federal Subsistence Board's agenda.  
49 False statements were given when the  
50 Eastern Interior Regional Council

1 approved these proposals, and there is  
2 a questionable procedure involved with  
3 the development of these proposals.  
4 These proposals should be stricken from  
5 the Federal Subsistence Board agenda.  
6

7 The Emmonak Tribal Council also opposes  
8 this.  
9

10 The Eastern Interior Regional Council  
11 should try this proposal out in their  
12 region before recommending it for other  
13 regions. The proposal is aimed at  
14 fishers in Y1, Y2 and Y3 where  
15 Eastern Interior holds no authority,  
16 nor do they have any direct experience  
17 with these fishing districts.  
18

19 The proposal will not be accepted by  
20 the lower Yukon River communities  
21 because it is based on unsound  
22 research.  
23

24 The proposal will increase animosity  
25 between up river and down river  
26 communities.  
27

28 They also oppose FP08-14 because it's  
29 easy for those that are not directly  
30 dependent on commercial fishing to pick  
31 on those who are dependent on  
32 commercial fishing. Y1, Y2 and Y3  
33 districts residents do not have other  
34 exports, they only have salmon. This  
35 proposal is based on unsound research  
36 and will increase the animosity between  
37 up river and down river fishers.  
38

39 John Thompson, Sr., of St. Mary's also  
40 opposes this proposal.  
41

42 The Yukon River salmon migration is  
43 like a pipeline with the end of the  
44 pipe being an agreed upon escapement  
45 between United States and Canada before  
46 commercial fishing can begin. He  
47 recommended that there should be one  
48 proposal for the entire Yukon River  
49 except for the Koyukuk River instead of  
50 four proposals. With the entire river

1 having 36 hour opening for the first  
2 year and then 42 hour drainagewide for  
3 the next year and then 48 for the  
4 following year and so on and so on.

5  
6 He wondered if there are different  
7 proposals for parts of the river, are  
8 we trying to maintain people or  
9 maintain the fish. If we are to  
10 maintain the fish then there should be  
11 one proposal for uniform drainagewide  
12 fishing hours.

13  
14 If people attack the net size and depth  
15 then we should get rid of all  
16 fishwheels and use only nets on the  
17 same net, mesh and depth.

18  
19 He encourages people to think it over  
20 and work together.

21  
22 There is one written comment in  
23 support, that was from the Alaska Outdoor Council.

24  
25 Yukon chinook salmon have had lower  
26 return numbers and have been declining  
27 in size for the last decade. Enough  
28 data and anecdotal information has been  
29 gathered to support Federal Subsistence  
30 Board action on the conser -- on the  
31 conservative side of this long going  
32 debate.

33  
34 Section .815 of ANILCA clearly states a  
35 mandate in Federally-controlled waters  
36 for healthy populations of subsistence  
37 resources. Whether or not genetic  
38 viability of the species is being  
39 threatened by harvest of one size group  
40 of chinook salmon need not be decided  
41 by the Board at this time, but  
42 declining returns should be addressed  
43 from subsistence harvest conditions and  
44 spawning beds throughout the Yukon  
45 River drainage.

46  
47 Mr. Chairman. That's all the written  
48 comments I'm aware of. When I left the office there  
49 was no additional ones that I'm aware of. If Staff  
50 knows of any they could share them at this time.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I don't see  
4 any Staff with any additional written comments.

5

6 And so we're at the point of public  
7 testimony and so these guys that have been sitting on  
8 this teleconference all day should have first pick  
9 here, and so we'll go with Virgil, you've been waiting  
10 all day, so go ahead Virgil.

11

12 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you, Mr.  
13 Chairman.

14

15 The first thing I'd like to do is  
16 address the stuff that the Department is doing.  
17 Proposal 13 is to limit gillnets larger than 6 inch  
18 mesh to no deeper than 35 meshes. And in the  
19 Department's study that they're doing, and I assume  
20 that the lower Yukon CDQ is paying for it being's  
21 they're the partner that the nets they're using are 7  
22 inch, 7.5 inch and 8 inch mesh gillnets, 45 meshes  
23 deep. The commercial fishery, according to Ms.  
24 Evenson, uses nets between 8 and a quarter inch and 8  
25 and 3/4 inch and I know that the common is 8.5 inch,  
26 they're not using a gillnet that is the size of the  
27 commercial fishery is currently using, they're only  
28 using 7, 7.5 and 8 inch mesh and they're not using one  
29 that's 35 meshes deep. So the Department wants this  
30 proposal, according to their handout that they gave to  
31 you, the same one they gave to the Eastern Interior  
32 RAC, what they would like to happen is they would like  
33 that the proposal either be rejected or put off for two  
34 years until they finish the study. Well, the study is  
35 not even addressing the two proposals because it's not  
36 addressing the depth issue whatsoever and it's not  
37 addressing the size that the commercial fishermen are  
38 currently using and so the study is useless.

39

40 And so what I'd like everyone to do is  
41 pick up their Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
42 Division of Commercial Fisheries Preliminary Yukon  
43 River Summer Season Summary, and if you turn to Page 4  
44 at the bottom, it says age and sex composition and the  
45 very last two sentences it gives the age composition of  
46 the chinook salmon that were harvested in the six  
47 unrestricted commercial fishing periods. And if you  
48 turn the page it tells you that the average percent of  
49 females is 52.2 percent, 2.1 percent were Age 7 fish,  
50 78.1 percent Age 6 fish, 16.9 Age 5, you turn over to

1 the top of Page 5 and it gives it for the restricted,  
2 15 restricted periods of the six inch or smaller mesh  
3 and it shows you the difference. The females only 27.7  
4 percent were females, 4/10ths of a percent Age 7 fish  
5 and only 33 percent Age 6 fish. So that shows what the  
6 difference was between the six inch mesh and the  
7 unrestricted mesh, which is usually 8.5 inch.

8

9

Okay.

10

11 And then you go to Page 6 where it says  
12 Canadian fisheries. It says, however, there was a  
13 shortfall in the run into Canada, the final  
14 mark/recapture estimate is 23,000 chinook salmon, the  
15 goal was 45,500 so they only made about half of it.  
16 And then it goes on to say, Canadian commercial and  
17 domestic fisheries were not allowed in 2007 for chinook  
18 salmon.

19

20

The next page and this is an important  
21 one because we're talking about the size of the fish  
22 and the ages of the fish. Page 7, it gives -- it's  
23 preliminary summer season commercial harvest summary  
24 and the part that's interesting in this or that you  
25 need to look at is to what happens when you fish with  
26 large mesh gear. You go to District 1 and you see  
27 where it says chinook salmon and it lists the 12  
28 periods they had. You can see the large mesh periods  
29 were Period 1, the average weight of the king salmon  
30 was 20.4 pounds and the next period was small mesh  
31 gear, 13 pounds and then you got a large mesh 20.7 and  
32 20.5, you go down to District 2 and the weights are a  
33 little bit smaller on the unrestricted mesh periods but  
34 yo need to then turn the page over to Page 8 and look  
35 at what happens up river after they've been filtered  
36 through the large mesh gear. You've got Subdistrict 5-  
37 B and 5-C, average weight 14.6, 14.1 and 14.3, about  
38 half of those fish are caught with large mesh gillnets  
39 and about half with fishwheels. Then you go to  
40 District 6, and you have to remember in District 6,  
41 which is the Tanana River, that there was no directed  
42 king salmon fishery so these fish were caught in a  
43 fishwheel and they were caught after escapement was  
44 made on the Chena River because they didn't get to fish  
45 until after they made escapement on the Chena River for  
46 the second year in a row. Now, look at the average  
47 weight of these fish 7.9, 8.1, 12 and 12.1.

48

49

And that's from the Department's report  
50 that they gave to you.

1                    Now, you need to pick up the thing that  
2 Stan Zuray sent to Vince, Rapids Research Center  
3 Chinook Sampling 2004 to 2007, and I think you all have  
4 that. But if you look down at the bottom of this  
5 written part, it says Table 1, 2004 to 2007 chinook  
6 weight features, now, Stan in his presentation said  
7 that out of 4,007 fish caught in the last four years,  
8 one weighed 49.5 pounds and one weighed 36.5 pounds,  
9 that was the two largest fish. But you need to look at  
10 how many total weight samples. Go to 2005, 927 fish,  
11 average weight 11.4 pounds. Total number over 30  
12 pounds, only seven fish out of 927 were over 30 pounds  
13 in 2005. In 2006 out of 737 fish only six over 30  
14 pounds. In 2007 1,230 fish only 10 over 30 pounds and  
15 this is a project that Stan -- you know Stan runs the  
16 project with the kids and they weigh and measure all  
17 the fish and everything but they do this under the  
18 supervision of both the Department of Fish and Game and  
19 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that's very good  
20 information that Stan has.

21  
22                    And so that brings me to what is  
23 actually happened. Now, you don't have this  
24 information but it's part of what the Fairbanks  
25 Advisory Committee submitted to the Board of Fisheries  
26 in their petition. And that is, that the 6 year old  
27 chinook salmon in the commercial harvest have decreased  
28 significantly between 2003 and 2006, that's a four year  
29 period. In Y1 the 6 year olds have went from 65  
30 percent in 2003 to 49 percent in 2006; Y2 60 percent to  
31 43 percent; Y5 52 percent to 21 percent. And the 7  
32 year olds, this is what's really depressing, the 7 year  
33 olds are down to 8/10ths of a percent in District 5.  
34 This was 2006. In District Y1 they've decreased down  
35 to two -- less than one percent last year and two  
36 percent this year.

37  
38                    Now, I obtained a copy of a report to  
39 the Board of Fisheries dated January 1981. And Jack  
40 has the copy. On Page 14, and I'll read what the  
41 study's called. A Review of Gillnet Mesh Selectivity  
42 Studies as Related to the Chinook Salmon Fisheries of  
43 Cook Inlet Alaska. I'm going to read their conclusion,  
44 their recommendation;

45  
46                    It is the recommendation of the Alaska  
47 Department of Fish and Game that  
48 maximum legal mesh size for any  
49 additional gillnet fisheries of Cook  
50 Inlet be six inches.

1 This management strategy will help  
2 ensure maximum protection from chinook  
3 salmon reproductive populations as well  
4 as assist in protection of genetic  
5 integrity of the stocks.

6  
7 That's on Page 14 of that report that  
8 Jack has.

9  
10 And then in the appendix, Appendix 4,  
11 they talk about the Stikine King Salmon Gillnet Mesh  
12 Selectivity Study done in 1976 and then one done on the  
13 Taku River in 1975. I just want to read a couple of  
14 sentences from it.

15  
16 The 8 inch and larger mesh gillnets  
17 which have been fished during king  
18 season on the Taku and Stikine Rivers  
19 are highly selective to chinook from  
20 660 to 900 millimeter mid-eye to fork  
21 length, over 98 percent of the female  
22 segment of the Taku and Stikine chinook  
23 populations are within this size range  
24 while only from 16.6 to about 25  
25 percent of the males are, thus the  
26 large mesh gear harvest a  
27 disproportionately high percentage of  
28 the females and low percentage of the  
29 males.

30  
31 Selective breeding studies have  
32 indicated that chinook that mature at a  
33 younger age have a tendency to pass  
34 that trait to their progeny.

35  
36 Therefore, by annually allowing the  
37 escapement of large number of small  
38 males the egg size and reproductive  
39 potential of the run will decrease.

40  
41 This study has.....

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Virgil.

44  
45 MR. UMPHENOUR: .....8 appendixes in  
46 it.

47  
48 MR. RIVARD: Hold on Virgil.

49  
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Virgil, we're

1 getting away from the Yukon River and.....

2

3 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'll wrap it up here.  
4 These appendixes all reference size selectivity and so  
5 my point.....

6

7 MR. RIVARD: Hold on, Virgil, Virgil,  
8 Jack needs.....

9

10 MR. UMPHENOUR: Go ahead.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're getting  
13 off of the Yukon River there and so if you could wrap  
14 up with final comments we're coming down on the end of  
15 the day here and I need to get these final comments off  
16 the teleconference here so can you make a final  
17 statement.

18

19 MR. UMPHENOUR: My final comments. In  
20 this same study they studies -- I'll just read from the  
21 report:

22

23 In the Yukon River the sex ratio of  
24 chinook salmon sampled with 5.5 versus  
25 8.5 inch gear has averaged 310 male to  
26 100 female, 150 male to 100 female  
27 respectively during the years 1969  
28 through 1979. It can be estimated that  
29 the average female chinook caught in 6  
30 inch mesh would have an average  
31 fecundity of 5,218 eggs whereas the  
32 average female chinook caught in 8.5  
33 inch mesh would have an average  
34 fecundity of 7,905 eggs, about 50  
35 percent higher reproductive potential.

36

37 And so the whole point of bringing up  
38 all these studies is that the study the Department is  
39 doing that they're wanting to base rejecting these  
40 proposals on, their study is flawed because it is not  
41 addressing Proposal 13, which is 35 meshes deep and  
42 it's not addressing what the commercial fishermen are  
43 using now, plus it's not addressing Proposal 14, which  
44 would be a 7.5 inch mesh net that's 35 meshes deep and  
45 there have been countless studies done on the  
46 selectivity of gillnets, which, in the Staff  
47 recommendation from the Office of Subsistence  
48 Management, they've pointed out.

49

50 So all they're wanting to do is have a

1 stalling tactic which is what they've done as was said  
2 by Stan Zuray and Charlie Campbell for the last three  
3 Board cycles. We need to take action now because right  
4 now those numbers I read about only 30 -- over 30 pound  
5 king salmon in District 5, only having less than one  
6 percent of them be over 30 pounds is absolutely -- and  
7 the average weight down to right at 12 pounds, we are  
8 losing the reproductive potential of our king salmon  
9 and we need to get those female king salmon and the  
10 large ones on the spawning grounds.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.  
15 Appreciate those comments from vice-Chair of the  
16 Eastern RAC. And so we have about 40 minutes until  
17 dinner time and we've got other comments on  
18 teleconference, are you still there, go ahead. Ted.

19

20 MR. HAMILTON: Yes, sir, this is Ted  
21 Hamilton from the Emmonak Tribal Council.

22

23 Yeah, I wanted to ask some questions  
24 before I really got started. How deep is it over there  
25 in the Eastern Interior and the Western Interior in the  
26 depth of the Yukon River. You know I heard some guy  
27 saying, well, if we go out there with a 35 mesh deep  
28 net we'll go out there and lose our lead due to snags,  
29 well, to me that sounds like with a 35 mesh deep  
30 fishing right around 22 feet, and if it's that shallow  
31 up there then that sounds like the Yukon River is very  
32 shallow up there.

33

34 Well, down here along the lower river  
35 we have places where it averages in over 90 feet deep  
36 and the deepest hole I've ever found is 110 feet deep  
37 and that's very close to Emmonak right above the mouth  
38 of Kwethluk, just three miles above Emmonak there's a  
39 place where it goes for a half mile where it's 100 foot  
40 deep and this is right below the Y where the driftnet  
41 fishery of ADF&G uses their test net gear. And it kind  
42 of don't make sense to be using very shallow mesh nets  
43 to attempt to restrict the commercial harvest even  
44 more.

45

46 Well, this year was one of our weird  
47 years also and it kind of sounds like nobody's going to  
48 answer how deep it is over there in the upper Yukon, in  
49 the middle Yukon because I don't hear anybody  
50 answering, so I'm going to continue.

1                   This last year we found out that the  
2 temperature of the Yukon River was very warm, well, as  
3 a result none of us were catching very much fish  
4 because the fish were swimming too doggone deep, 45  
5 mesh deep don't -- it don't work, not if I'm going to  
6 be catching fish. This year in Y1, I fished a total of  
7 18 hours unrestricted, that hurts.

8  
9                   How am I going to feed my family. I  
10 got others depending on me too, how am I going to feed  
11 them.

12  
13                   And this is like one right after the  
14 other.

15  
16                   The main thing we should be looking at  
17 right now is the sale of subsistence caught salmon. I  
18 just came back from AFN, too, and I saw those guys over  
19 there, there was some guys from Galena, too, and it  
20 hurt to see that because I didn't want to see it and it  
21 just hurt. And it's like when is it going to stop, you  
22 know, over here if I wanted to get into the sale of my  
23 subsistence caught salmon it's going to cost me a  
24 pretty penny, 50 cents a pound to send it out of  
25 Emmonak. Over here we work too doggone hard to even  
26 want to sell our fish. And we're just like the up  
27 river communities where when one family works and  
28 harvests a little bit more we pass it on.....

29  
30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on the -- say,  
31 Ted.....

32  
33                   MR. HAMILTON: .....to our other  
34 brother than don't.....

35  
36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted.

37  
38                   MR. RIVARD: Hold on, Ted, Ted hold on,  
39 Jack wants to say something.

40  
41                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're getting on to  
42 customary trade and that's not what our proposals are  
43 on, our proposals are on these net depth and the 7 inch  
44 gear, 7.5 inch gear proposal. Can you stay to those  
45 comments, please.

46  
47                   MR. HAMILTON: Oh, yeah, they're  
48 related, so let me continue on with, I don't support  
49 these two proposals at any rate [sic], form at this  
50 time, not until after we get some more years of study

1 into our belt.

2

3 Now, this year we got mixed up with  
4 using small mesh gear, six inches or less, well, we  
5 were -- down here we're very concerned about the drop  
6 out rates and maybe that's why you guys up river saw a  
7 whole bunch of jacks in the area because we were using  
8 smaller mesh gear, large fish got caught and then where  
9 we couldn't pick them up out of the nets so they  
10 dropped off and died. Now, these fish on the lower  
11 river are not like the ones over there at the  
12 Kuskokwim, so one shoe don't fit all rivers.

13

14 And it's -- we're very afraid that what  
15 we're having further up river and we don't have no  
16 proof of it is the sale of roe, illegal caught roe of  
17 king salmon. It used to be for chums, that's why we  
18 went down under really quick a few years back, now it's  
19 happening with kings.

20

21 These two proposals having to deal with  
22 35 mesh deep, 7 inch or less, if they -- it's like  
23 we've -- we've given up very much down here around the  
24 lower river, I can't even make 10 grand anymore, I  
25 barely even made five, I was lucky, I was one of the  
26 better fishermen, too. And it doesn't make sense over  
27 here to continue on with this guessing game of what's  
28 going to really happen, let's pick on down river, only  
29 down river. We need to really be looking at someplace  
30 else, the bycatch issue is one of them. We should be  
31 working together but these proposals are aimed at the  
32 -- aimed at directly splitting the up river vote and  
33 the down river vote so we couldn't even come to  
34 consensus on figuring out what we're going to do about  
35 bycatch, and that's the one we really should be  
36 concentrating on.

37

38 Just a couple of weeks ago or actually  
39 last week when I got information bycatch rate was down  
40 around 50,000 now it's over 100,000 to-date with  
41 approximately 25,000 that are Yukon River bound.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted.

44

45 MR. HAMILTON: And that's like, whoa.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted. Ted.

48

49 MR. RIVARD: Ted. Ted, hold on.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted, you're  
2 reiterating information.....  
3  
4 MR. HAMILTON: But I'm.....  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....that this  
7 Council's already listened to and you heard that on  
8 this teleconference so we take it.....  
9  
10 MR. HAMILTON: Yeah, Mr. Umphenour was  
11 reiterating a bunch of information, too, so I thought I  
12 could do the same thing.  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, he was  
15 purporting information that related to the two issues  
16 and so this Council has heard the bycatch issue, we're  
17 very concerned about the bycatch issue also.  
18  
19 So you're opposed to both proposals and  
20 you've given very good reasons why you are opposed to  
21 those, other than the 7.5 inch gear, my question to you  
22 is, does anybody there use 7.5 inch gear for  
23 subsistence or commercial fishing.  
24  
25 MR. HAMILTON: No, sir.  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So your average gear  
28 size would be 8.5 like Virgil said.  
29  
30 MR. HAMILTON: That's the majority of  
31 what people are using.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
34  
35 MR. HAMILTON: And there is some that  
36 are using 8 inch gear and there might be a few that  
37 might be using 7 and 3/4's but those are very rare and  
38 hard to get. You know with the reports that we're  
39 given today I sure wouldn't mind trying it out just for  
40 my own purposes within these next couple of years of  
41 research that are being done.  
42  
43 There is no way I'm going to agree  
44 right now, I want to wait until the research is done.  
45 I don't think ADF&G is stalling, I think they're doing  
46 the best job that they can. I think you, as Fish and  
47 Wildlife Service ought to step up to the plate and  
48 really try some research down here.  
49  
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

1 MR. HAMILTON: And, you know, what  
2 happened with the mark/recapture -- not the  
3 mark/recapture program but the radio telemetry program  
4 it didn't even come down here and try and see where  
5 these fish are swimming. You know it's very much  
6 deeper down here than it is up there in the middle and  
7 upper Yukon, we're just 20 miles from the coast over  
8 here and we've.....

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

11  
12 MR. HAMILTON: .....got 100 foot areas  
13 and in depth of the Yukon.....

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, Ted,  
16 Ted.....

17  
18 MR. HAMILTON: .....for a long ways and  
19 it's like gee whiz.....

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted.

22  
23 MR. HAMILTON: .....I can't even reach  
24 them now.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ted, we've given you  
27 time to speak your peace there so we hear you loud and  
28 clear, you're opposed to these proposals but we have  
29 other people that want to make comment so appreciate  
30 your comments, and we're taking notes here on what  
31 you're saying so thanks a lot.

32  
33 MR. HAMILTON: Thank you for allowing  
34 me to speak in this meeting.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
37 do we have any other comments on the teleconference  
38 right now.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I kept hearing that  
43 thing beeping on and off and nobody else seems to be on  
44 teleconference and so we'll come back to real time here  
45 in the room.

46  
47 (Laughter)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any  
50 further comments from the public here in Galena.

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see any. And  
4 so we're to the point of Regional Council  
5 recommendations and motions on the proposals.

6

7 We'll take these proposals up one at a  
8 time and deliberate their merits. And so the first  
9 proposal that we'll deliberate will be FP08-13 to  
10 include wording, there's Staff Committee [sic]  
11 modification wording that would require the:

12

13 6 inch stretch mesh used for  
14 subsistence and commercial fishing in  
15 Federal public waters may not be more  
16 than 35 meshes in depth and the float  
17 line and floats of gillnet must be  
18 floating on the surface of the water  
19 while the net is fishing unless natural  
20 conditions cause the net to temporarily  
21 sink. The top of the line of the net  
22 shall be tied directly to the float  
23 line.

24

25 And so do I have a motion to adopt this  
26 proposal to get it on the floor.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: As the proposed  
31 proposal or the modified proposal, is there a Council  
32 member -- does the Council want to deliberate this  
33 proposal at all.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My Council is  
38 balking at this proposal. If I don't get any motion to  
39 adopt or a second the proposal would die on the floor.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead Vince.

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, if there's no motion  
46 and that then the actions of the Council would be that  
47 they took no action on Proposal 13.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, there's no  
50 action on Proposal 08-13.

1                   And so taking up the second proposal of  
2 the combined would be the FP08-14;

3  
4                   Yukon River the maximum gillnet mesh  
5 size is 7.5 stretch mesh for the  
6 subsistence and commercial fishing in  
7 Federal public waters with a three year  
8 phase in period for subsistence fishers  
9 and one year phase in period for  
10 commercial fishers.

11  
12                   Do we have a motion to adopt.

13  
14                   (No comments)

15  
16                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Again, the Council  
17 is indicating a stoic.....

18  
19                   (Laughter)

20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....rejection of  
22 this proposal or no action on this proposal.

23  
24                   (No comments)

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Council is  
27 indicating that no action is to be taken on this  
28 proposal either.

29  
30                   And I would like to make personal  
31 comment on this proposal.

32  
33                   My personal opinion about the two  
34 proposals are that the 35 mesh depth is -- I would not  
35 be willing to go for the 35 mesh in that the comments  
36 from the lower Yukon indicate that there's deeper  
37 waters down there and I fished for chinook salmon and  
38 when the wind blows real hard the fish come on top so  
39 35 meshes isn't doing any good, I've caught kings right  
40 under the cork line, big ones right under the cork line  
41 when it's windy so 35 mesh doesn't suffice when it's  
42 real windy like that.

43  
44                   And so it's not a cure all for not  
45 catching large chinook.

46  
47                   That data that was presented by the  
48 Department of Fish and Game and all of the statistical  
49 data that's been presented on 7.5 inch mesh is graphic  
50 as to the users of the fishery are doing some --

1 causing a decline in the size of the fish so I could  
2 see that those studies -- that's going to be the up  
3 shot of the study. The size of the fish is declining,  
4 it's graphic as to why that is and in reality deep mesh  
5 gear and harvesting the largest biomass that's present  
6 is advantageous to the subsistence users. When they  
7 showed that picture of all those fish laying there on  
8 the dock caught in 7.5 inch mesh gear, I consider that  
9 as beneficial to the subsistence users. So these  
10 subsistence criterias, some of those are the economy of  
11 time, effort and expense. So in reality spending a lot  
12 more time to harvest the few, and the declining number  
13 of large fish is not advantageous to the subsistence  
14 users but harvesting throughout the spectrum is more  
15 advantageous to the subsistence users and to the  
16 resource.

17  
18 I would like the Department to hear me  
19 loud and clear. I feel strongly that the preliminary  
20 data and previous data sets show that we have a real  
21 management concern.

22  
23 I agree with Gilbert that there's  
24 targeting of specific stocks on the Yukon, those  
25 commercial harvests in-season that target large  
26 components with fish finders and the kinds of  
27 technologies that are available now. And I used to  
28 fish with guys from the lower river down there in  
29 Bristol Bay, those guys are good fishermen, they can  
30 hunt down any fish, they know exactly where they're at.  
31 And so there's management concerns about targeting  
32 specific stocks on a mixed stock fishery. There's  
33 concerns -- I have personal concerns that this mesh  
34 size thing is going to come to a head. The  
35 implementation period might have to take a while for  
36 re-tooling but this is -- for the health of this  
37 fishery this is what's going to have to happen.

38  
39 And so this Council has taken no action  
40 on it but I felt I had to speak my peace after hearing  
41 all this data presentation all day.

42  
43 So you have a comment, Ron.

44  
45 MR. SAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We  
46 are the only two districts, I believe, that are  
47 operating under self-imposed restrictions as far as the  
48 35 mesh deep and that's 4-B and 4-C, if I am correct,  
49 is this correct, Don?

50

1 MR. RIVARD: Yes, for that one fishery,  
2 that's the way your Council recommended that to the  
3 Board and that's the way the Board passed for that  
4 drift gillnet fishery.

5  
6 MR. SAM: Yes. And hearing one of our  
7 elder's comments that -- it gave me some mixed messages  
8 but that 35 mesh deep restriction was self-imposed.  
9 And at some time I'd like to revisit it.

10  
11 And as far as Proposal 14 goes, I would  
12 like to see more results from the study, whether it is  
13 designed for redesigning or reintroducing these  
14 proposals, that's another story, but I would like to  
15 revisit that at some point in the future, at least, in  
16 two years, too, I believe that's what I would like to  
17 see.

18  
19 My feelings on that proposal is that if  
20 it was looking for a balance in the harvest between  
21 chinooks and chums, I would go for that, but then I  
22 would like to see the final results of that study and  
23 that was why I didn't take action to introduce these  
24 proposals for discussion.

25  
26 It is one of these proposals that  
27 Western Interior would be stuck again right in the  
28 middle, shot down from both sides, Eastern and YK-Delta  
29 Subsistence Councils. We were slaughtered at our Tri-  
30 Council meeting at Wasilla, and we thought we had the  
31 best arguments all the way around, it did not work, I  
32 don't think it will work, and that's one of the reasons  
33 I more or less took no action on this because we were  
34 damned if we did and damned if we don't. Because if we  
35 moved one way or the other on these proposals,  
36 animosity will -- animosity is already there anyway so  
37 it wouldn't have mattered, but that was one of the  
38 reasons that I didn't take no action on this.

39  
40 And those are heartfelt feelings.

41  
42 Thank you.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
45 you bringing forth your thoughts on this issue, Ron.  
46 You've been Chair on this Council for many, many years  
47 and I like to hear how people are thinking on this  
48 Council.

49  
50 So you have a comment there, Carl.

1 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, another -- one of  
2 the reasons, too, I didn't want to take any action, all  
3 it did was create more confusion between the State and  
4 the Feds, and we've been working too hard and too many  
5 times in the past and trying to align, trying to make  
6 it more -- trying to make it less confusing for our  
7 users, and this would just really confuse them all to  
8 heck.

9  
10 And another reason I had a hard -- I'm  
11 just -- I sure wish Bob Walker was here to give a point  
12 of view on what the GASH did, because that's another  
13 important part of the river that we haven't heard from.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl, I did talk to  
16 Robert on the phone and he said that the GASH tribal  
17 chiefs had -- were opposed to this implementation  
18 period, it was the primary reason, they felt that re-  
19 tooling, just like Gilbert said, the re-tooling issue  
20 is a big issue for people, and so we've heard that  
21 fairly loud and clear.

22  
23 So further comment, Carl.

24  
25 MR. MORGAN: And, you know, it would --  
26 re-tooling would be a good expense with the climbing  
27 rate of gasoline, it's not going down any place in the  
28 future, looks like it's going to keep on going up.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further  
31 comments from the Council.

32  
33 Mickey.

34  
35 MR. STICKMAN: Thanks, Mr. Chair. You  
36 know, well, I just think at some point in time there's  
37 just going to have to be absolutely no commercial  
38 fishing of any kind in the lower Yukon, I mean it  
39 doesn't make any sense.

40  
41 I mean even though Gilbert said that  
42 the windows has made a difference and I believe they've  
43 made a difference, too, but whenever the fishermen on  
44 the lower Yukon are fishing and they say they have met  
45 100 percent of their subsistence needs, the State of  
46 Alaska, the Department of Fish and Game immediately  
47 open it up for commercial and as soon as they do that  
48 I'm saying, hey, wait a minute, I haven't even caught  
49 one fish yet for subsistence needs and I start  
50 complaining on the YRDFA teleconferences, saying, hey,

1 you need to open it up a little bit more and so they  
2 liberalize the windows and so the fish are being hit  
3 twice as hard, well, because the lower Yukon has  
4 already met their subsistence needs, they're commercial  
5 fishing, I'm getting them to open up the windows more  
6 so, you know.

7  
8 I just feel at some point in time the  
9 Feds are going to have to take complete control of the  
10 river and say, hey, the State is mismanaging the  
11 chinook run and it's time for us to take over.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Mickey.

14  
15 You got a comment Don.

16  
17 MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
18 Yeah, you know in every situation whether it's in our  
19 tribal meeting or something we like to reach consensus  
20 with all board members and such and I just feel -- I  
21 don't feel comfortable voting on something that's  
22 before us that we don't feel comfortable about voting  
23 on. And I believe with three members absent and Robert  
24 Walker's really knowledgeable in fishing and I believe  
25 Ray Collins also, and I believe that with these members  
26 gone I just don't feel comfortable about burdening this  
27 whole thing. I'm not trying to shirk our duties as a  
28 RAC Committee, but I just feel when important things  
29 come up be it whether in our tribal meetings or whether  
30 it's on the RAC Committee here, I believe we should  
31 have the full Board vote on important issues and that's  
32 where I stand.

33  
34 And I also agree with Gilbert, that  
35 instead of having people do away with their nets or  
36 whatever, or fishing gear that they have now, and  
37 completely buy, I believe that probably the easier way  
38 would be -- I don't know, I mean I'm not really into  
39 fishing and stuff, would be to set some regulations on  
40 the windows, I mean I don't know what else there is. I  
41 mean we're kind of stuck in between a hard place here,  
42 and a rock, and that's why I -- this is my opinion.

43  
44 Thank you.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Did  
47 you have any comments, Jenny.

48  
49 MS. PELKOLA: Well, I agreed with what  
50 Gilbert said about the windows. I'm just beginning to

1 understand a little bit about what's going on as I said  
2 I'm only a first grader on this Board here. But I also  
3 think that getting a new net or whatever and like he  
4 said, 70 percent poverty level on the Yukon, it is a  
5 lot of money. I mean, you know, you're working hard,  
6 and it is hard work, you know, I always say when these  
7 people come around my camp, at Bishop Rock, they come  
8 around and they say, well, you can't do this, you can't  
9 do that and I say, well, why don't you come and help  
10 me, you know, and then they'll see how hard it is to  
11 get your fish.

12  
13 But the reason why I didn't take any  
14 action is because I was against changing my gear. And  
15 the 35 mesh deep, that's pretty -- to me that's -- you  
16 need a larger gear, I think, I mean a longer depth, and  
17 like this guy that was on the -- that testified before,  
18 he said the waters, you know, there's different depths  
19 in water and I agree with him, because in my camp in  
20 front of Bishop Mountain, right in front, it's about 89  
21 feet deep and that's the deepest right there and the  
22 fish they swim way under, you know, they stay -- they  
23 like that cold so they stay way under and we don't get  
24 a lot of fish that -- the people up here, you know,  
25 above us, get their fish before we do because I think  
26 the fish are swimming right up the middle of the river.  
27

28 So my stand was just to remain neutral  
29 like Ron said, we have to deal with two other Councils  
30 and being stuck in the middle is pretty, you know,  
31 you're always being pulled this way and that way, so I  
32 think for now I'll just say I'd like to remain neutral  
33 for this one time.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, the Council  
36 has spoken on these two proposals and their reasons for  
37 no action.

38  
39 I think that the State study does show  
40 the data comparison, it's just not marked correctly as  
41 to what the gear size on the unrestricted commercial  
42 harvest would be. Those should have a gear size range  
43 of -- or the average gear size range of 8 and a quarter  
44 to 8 and 3/4 or whatever, that needs to be presented  
45 differently for understanding that that's kind of what  
46 the commercial harvest gear size is. So that was  
47 presented, it was just not apparent.

48  
49 And, so, Mickey.  
50

1 MR. STICKMAN: Yeah, and, you know, for  
2 the guys doing the comparison, to give us a true  
3 comparison, I think they should be using the nets that  
4 the commercial fishermen use also.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's true that a  
7 true comparison would be an 8.5 inch gear size would be  
8 an actual gear comparison, you're utilizing the  
9 commercial harvest as that component. But I think that  
10 various individuals on this Council would have more  
11 appreciated a reflection of what the actual gear, the  
12 normal gear size is.

13  
14 Any other comments on these two  
15 proposals.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I don't see  
20 any other comments from the Council itself. And so at  
21 this point we're coming down on the cover dish and  
22 Vince has probably got additional stuff to clean up  
23 before dinner, so go ahead Vince.

24  
25 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, two things. One, if  
26 you want to have lunch tomorrow, we need to have your  
27 name and all that, I don't know what she's going to be  
28 cooking, but she needed a list tonight. It is  
29 Halloween tomorrow and she has a family, so she's  
30 really squeezing us in and so I really want to come  
31 back to Galena so please sign up to get to her. She's  
32 been very gracious.

33  
34 The other thing is it's our practice  
35 when we're in villages that we put out a donation can  
36 and Jenny will take care of whatever, that money that's  
37 collected, but Staff and that please help out, and that  
38 goes to charities or programs within the village.

39  
40 And to sign up you need to get a hold  
41 of Tina and we'll collect the money tomorrow for lunch.

42  
43 So with that maybe Jenny can tell us,  
44 either off the record or on the record, how to  
45 rearrange the room, we may need some help with that,  
46 with Salena and that, to set up tables and stuff, and  
47 that's 5:30.

48  
49 MS. PELKOLA: Okay, I think what's  
50 going to happen is if you can sort of move all your

1 gear to maybe to one table, you know, so you don't have  
2 to put everything in a box, we can probably set up the  
3 tables, they'll probably put their food on the table  
4 when they come in, and it might not get started until  
5 6:00 but it will get started.

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 MS. PELKOLA: So I guess that's all.  
10 So you can leave your chairs out if you want.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so at this point  
15 I think the Council will break for dinner, we'll have  
16 an evening session after dinner and that's on our  
17 agenda for 7:00 o'clock. So this Council likes to hear  
18 what local input for people who are out working and  
19 want to come back and make comments in the evening, and  
20 so we'll open the session and hang around for as long  
21 as people wanted to talk. So we'll be here for awhile  
22 after 7:00 o'clock.

23

24 And so tomorrow morning, what's our  
25 starting time, again, Vince.

26

27 MR. MATHEWS: Well, we had it published  
28 as 9:00 but you can set it differently.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I think  
31 probably 9:00 o'clock's -- for people who want to be on  
32 teleconference, we'll be reconvening here at 9:00 a.m.,  
33 on the other proposals that we have to go through.

34

35 And so, okay, now we're going to break  
36 for evening meal.

37

38 Thanks.

39

40 (Off record)

41

42 (On record)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can I get your  
45 attention. I told people 7:00 o'clock, it's 10 after  
46 7:00 and I would like to see if there's any local  
47 people left here that would like to make comments, and  
48 I don't really see anybody that hasn't already spoken.  
49 And so this Council likes to have these evening  
50 meetings for people who are working and have issues

1 that they would like to bring before the Council.

2

3                   So we listen to the elders here, we  
4 listened to some of the fishers this afternoon that  
5 were present and so we have this timeframe for local  
6 input. And so do we have anybody, I don't see anybody.  
7 So we're going to maybe wait for.....

8

9                   MR. SAM: Yeah, wait a few minutes.

10

11                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....about 10 or 15  
12 minutes and that will have given opportunity for what  
13 we've published in our agenda.

14

15                   Did you want to say anything, Ed, about  
16 what -- any points from the Ruby perspective at this  
17 Council or did you just want to wait.

18

19                   MR. SARTEN: Well, basically on that  
20 fish net thing, we're trying to make the best choice  
21 because we're hearing, oh, well, it doesn't really  
22 matter about the size, it could be different factors,  
23 da, da, da, all this stuff and then at the same time we  
24 want to protect the resource, so I'm still in doubt  
25 whether or not, after hearing all this evidence whether  
26 the size of the mesh is going to make that big a  
27 difference or not until I see more. Maybe I'm just not  
28 seeing enough, maybe our Committee's not seeing enough.

29

30                   I, personally, use a 7 inch net, mesh,  
31 and I'm happy with that. That's just me personally.  
32 And it works, I don't catch big fish, but I catch a  
33 little bit of everything, and that's fine, that's fine  
34 for my family, that's good enough.

35

36                   So that's my way of dealing with this,  
37 you know, on a personal level, I use a 7 inch. Besides  
38 the 8 inch stuff, it's heavier gear, it's more to deal  
39 with and all that stuff, it's just simpler for me to  
40 use a 7 inch mesh and catch a different variety of  
41 fish.

42

43                   So I guess the reason we haven't gone  
44 either way on it is we're not sure, I mean Don and I  
45 have talked about it, we've talked about it before, you  
46 know, different people and stuff and with all the  
47 evidence that's been presented, I'm still -- and Don's  
48 -- we're still kind of confused, we don't want to make  
49 any hasty decisions.

50

1                   At first glance I say, yes, because I,  
2 myself, I use 7 inch net for that reason, I think I'm  
3 doing my part, I hope.

4  
5                   And I don't want to mess with 8 inch  
6 anyway, I don't need big fish or whatever, if that's  
7 what's really happening.

8  
9                   I've caught some pretty big fish with  
10 my 7 inch net so I'm not really concerned myself.

11  
12                  Go ahead.

13  
14                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question, since  
15 you do use that 7 inch gear size, where are you  
16 catching those big ones, on the face, wound up on the  
17 end of the nose or do you actually gill those?

18  
19                  MR. SARTEN: I get them in the mouth  
20 mostly. It's where they get hung up and they're just  
21 kind of hanging there, when you get those, you better  
22 get them quick or they might fall off, I get those  
23 ones. But the rest are pretty much medium size kings  
24 and I get my chums and whitefish and sometimes I get a  
25 sheefish this big, you know, and a pike, and I like  
26 that variety too, you know, to have different things on  
27 the table. But I use 7 inch and I'm happy with that.

28  
29                  But after listening to all the evidence  
30 and all the people against it with logical  
31 explanations, I'm still not sure which way to go on  
32 this and I don't think Don is really is real sure  
33 either, I mean what's your.....

34  
35                  MR. HONEA: Do I know you, sir?

36  
37                  (Laughter)

38  
39                  MR. SARTEN: This guy's already giving  
40 me a hard time, he always will give me a hard time.

41  
42                  (Laughter)

43  
44                  MR. SARTEN: Well, come on Don.

45  
46                  MR. HONEA: No, I'm fine.

47  
48                  (Laughter)

49  
50                  MR. SARTEN: He just loves to irritate

1 me. But pretty much that's -- does anybody have any  
2 other questions.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

5

6 MR. SARTEN: I mean that's basically  
7 the way I see it and our Committee and everybody.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

10

11 MR. SARTEN: We're not sure.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

14

15 MR. SARTEN: And after listening to all  
16 this evidence, now I'm even more unsure.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

19

20 MR. SARTEN: But like I say my first  
21 tendency is to think, you know, a smaller mesh would  
22 work but how much trouble is that going to cause.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

25

26 MR. SARTEN: How many people are going  
27 to not follow that rule, how much, you know, what's  
28 going to happen.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

31

32 MR. SARTEN: So that's why we just  
33 haven't made a decision. We want to. I want to see  
34 the fish make it, I want to see bigger fish, you know,  
35 I'm willing to go with a 7 inch.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

38

39 MR. SARTEN: Just to see if it works or  
40 not. But that's where I'm at with this.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so you've met  
43 all your needs with 7 inch gear?

44

45 MR. SARTEN: Right. So somebody that  
46 has a larger family or whatever, maybe it's more of a  
47 concern to them.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Did you  
50 catch as much fish as other people fishing big gear?

1 MR. SARTEN: Yeah. I caught like 20  
2 kings and a few silvers and a bunch of chums and some  
3 sheefish and pike and a beaver.

4  
5 (Laughter)

6  
7 MR. SARTEN: It tore my net up really  
8 good. Spun it all up, chewed the ropes. I got to my  
9 net and it's all messed up and I see it floating around  
10 and I said what is going on and so like this, I go,  
11 wow, I get down there and it was near the shore and  
12 here's this beaver all wrapped up in there.

13  
14 (Laughter)

15  
16 MR. SARTEN: So they can really mess  
17 your nets up.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I know. Okay,  
20 well, thanks, Ed.

21  
22 MR. SARTEN: Thank you.

23  
24 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Ed. I believe  
25 -- I mean just to comment on that, I believe that's why  
26 we made the decision or non-decision and that's why  
27 we're where we're at.

28  
29 MR. SARTEN: Exactly.

30  
31 MR. HONEA: And I'm not confused.

32  
33 MR. SARTEN: I wouldn't want to put  
34 ourself in a position to where we realized, oh, no, we  
35 made the wrong choice and then three years of the wrong  
36 choice goes by, you know, that would be tough to live  
37 with especially after hearing all the pros and cons,  
38 like I say I'm more undecided now than I was before.

39  
40 So that's where I'm at and I think  
41 that's where our Committee's at too.

42  
43 Thank you.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we got anybody  
46 else back there, Percy, got anything from Koyukuk.

47  
48 MR. LOLNITZ: Is this the only time  
49 we're going to be able to speak?

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, it won't be the  
2 only time, it will be the other proposals you could  
3 speak on other proposals.

4  
5 MR. LOLNITZ: I can wait until  
6 tomorrow.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so we're  
9 going to wait a couple three more minutes, there might  
10 be somebody else trickle in. But we did state 7:00  
11 o'clock and we'd wait a little while.

12  
13 Patty was supposed to come down, did  
14 somebody say that?

15  
16 MR. SAM: He said he might.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He might.

19  
20 MR. SAM: I talked to him earlier.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay. Yeah, I  
23 guess we should have had comments during dinner. So  
24 we'll just kind of hang on here and if somebody shows  
25 up we'll come back on again. So maybe about 10  
26 minutes, five minutes or something and then we'll just  
27 go home.

28  
29 (Off record)

30  
31 (On record)

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're at 7:27 now  
34 and nobody's showed up and so I think we could just  
35 turn these mics off and reconvene at 9:00 a.m., all  
36 right, and so thank you.

37  
38 (Off record)

39  
40 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )  
 )ss.  
STATE OF ALASKA )

I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 159 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically by Salena Hile on the 30th day of October 2007, beginning at the hour of 9:00 o'clock a.m. at Galena, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 6th day of November 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph P. Kolasinski  
Notary Public in and for Alaska  
My Commission Expires: 03/12/08