

1 SEWARD PENINSULA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME I

8
9 Old St. Joe's Hall
10 Nome, Alaska
11 February 18, 2015
12 11:00 a.m.

13
14 Members Present:

- 15
16 Timothy Smith, Acting Chairman
17 Peter Buck
18 Fred Eningowuk
19 Louis Green - (Telephonic)
20 Theodore Katcheak
21 Amos Oxereok
22 Charles Saccheus

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28 Acting Regional Council Coordinator - Carl Johnson

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Nome, Alaska - 2/18/2015)

(On record)

VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Good morning.
I'd like to call the meeting to order, the Seward
Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. Can we have a
roll call, please.

MR. BUCK: Theodore Katcheak.

MR. KATCHEAK: Here.

MR. BUCK: Louis Green, Jr.

(No comments)

MR. BUCK: Tom Gray.

(No comments)

MR. BUCK: Joe Garney.

(No comments)

MR. BUCK: Amos Oxereok.

MR. OXEREOK: Here.

MR. BUCK: Fred Eningowuk.

MR. ENINGOWUK: Here.

MR. BUCK: Elmer Seetot, Jr.

(No comments)

MR. BUCK: Charlie Saccheus.

MR. SACCHEUS: Here.

MR. BUCK: Tim Smith.

VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Here.

MR. BUCK: And Peter Buck. We have
one, two, three, four, five, six.

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
2 quorum to start the meeting?
3
4 MR. BUCK: Yes.
5
6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We have a quorum?
7
8 MR. BUCK: Yes.
9
10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: And so we'll call
11 it to order.
12
13 I guess we'll go around and do --
14 welcome to this meeting. As you can see the weather is
15 not being very cooperative. I'm glad as many people
16 made it in as have. We're still waiting on two members
17 of the RAC, Joe Garney and Elmer Seetot, they're
18 standing by for weather. We also have at least one
19 other person coming on the new flight with Alaska
20 Airlines. That would be Pat Valkenburg, he was a
21 former deputy Commissioner with Fish and Game, and he's
22 been involved with caribou. His whole career has been
23 working on caribou and so he'll be able to help us with
24 our talk, deliberations on the proposal on caribou
25 hunting, and also on intensive management. And so
26 he'll be in at 12:00, hopefully, if the jet makes it
27 in. It looks like it should be able to.
28
29 So I think we'll just go around the
30 room first and introduce ourselves. Let's start with
31 the table here, Tina, do you want to start us off.
32
33 REPORTER: Me?
34
35 (Laughter)
36
37 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, introduce
38 yourself, please.
39
40 REPORTER: Okay. My name is Tina, and
41 I'm the court reporter for this RAC.
42
43 MR. KATCHEAK: Theodore Katcheak,
44 Stebbins.
45
46 MR. OXEREOK: Amos Oxereok, new RAC
47 member from Wales.
48
49 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'm Tim Smith and
50 I'm the vice Chairman standing in for Louis Green.

1 Louie, if you don't already know, Louie's son was
2 injured in an industrial accident in September. He
3 can't move anything from his neck down and he's down in
4 Seattle and Louie down there and he's been taking care
5 of him since.

6

7 We need to be sure to use the
8 microphones when we talk, this is all recorded and
9 transcribed and so we just need to be sure that we use
10 the microphones and speak into the microphones.

11

12 Go ahead, Charles.

13

14 MR. SACCHEUS: My name is Charles
15 Saccheus. I'm from Elim, Alaska and I represent the
16 Elim people. And it's good to see you all.

17

18 MR. BUCK: My name is Peter Buck from
19 White Mountain and I'm the Secretary for this Council.

20

21 MR. ENINGOWUK: Fred Eningowuk from
22 Shishmaref, representing Shishmaref.

23

24 MR. JOHNSON: Carl Johnson, Office of
25 Subsistence Management. I will be your friendly
26 Council coordinator for this meeting.

27

28 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Could you come up
29 and use the microphone for introductions and then we'll
30 have a record.

31

32 Ken.

33

34 MR. ADKISSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair
35 and Council members. My name is Ken Adkisson and I am
36 a subsistence program manager with the Western Arctic
37 National Parklands and based here in Nome, Alaska.

38

39 MR. SUMMERS: Good morning, Mr.
40 Chairman and Council members. My name is Clarence
41 Summers. I'm a subsistence manager with the National
42 Park Service in the Alaska Regional Office.

43

44 MR. MCKEE: Good morning. I'm Chris
45 McKee. I'm the Wildlife Division Chief for the Office
46 of Subsistence Management out of Anchorage.

47

48 MR. BROOKS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
49 members of the Council. My name is Jeff Brooks and I'm
50 with the Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage.

1 I work in the Division of Anthropology there and I'm a
2 social scientist and I've been assigned to the Seward
3 Peninsula Regional Advisory Council as your Staff. And
4 this is my first visit to Nome. I'm very pleased to be
5 here and I'd like to thank the people of Nome for
6 hosting us and I look forward to the next couple days
7 of working with you.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 MS. HUGHES: Good morning. My name is
12 Letty Hughes. I'm the assistant area wildlife
13 biologist for Alaska Department of Fish and Game for
14 the Game Management Unit 22, and I'm based here in
15 Nome.

16

17 MS. KOELSCH: Good morning. Jeanette
18 Koelsch, the Superintendent of Bering Landbridge
19 National Preserve here in Nome.

20

21 MR. KAHKLEN: Good morning. I'm Keith
22 Kahklen, I'm the Natural Resources Manager for the
23 Bureau of Indian Affairs in Juneau.

24

25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Would you like to
26 introduce yourself.

27

28 PUBLIC: Good morning. I'm a
29 subsistence fisherman and hunter here in Nome.

30

31 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is there anyone
32 on the phone that would like to check in.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is anyone
37 listening in on the telephone.

38

39 MS. DAGGETT:for Fish and Game
40 out of the Kotzebue Office, Board Support Section.

41

42 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I talked over
43 you, could you identify yourself again.

44

45 MS. DAGGETT: This is Carmen from the
46 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Board Support
47 Section in Kotzebue.

48

49 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Very good.
50 Anyone else on the phone.

1 MR. CRAWFORD: Drew Crawford. Alaska
2 Department of Fish and Game in Anchorage.

3
4 Over.

5
6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Hello, Drew.

7
8 Drew, one thing -- this is Tim Smith,
9 one thing that's going to come up later in the meeting
10 is some people have asked where the ACRs that affected
11 crab fishing in Norton Sound, what happened with those,
12 could you give us an update on that later on in the
13 meeting.

14
15 MR. CRAWFORD: That was ACRs affecting
16 crab fisheries in Norton Sound.

17
18 Over.

19
20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: There were two
21 ACRs and I don't remember the numbers but they were
22 going to set a harvest guideline for winter fishing and
23 also change the season dates for winter crab fishing
24 for Norton Sound.

25
26 MS. DAGGETT: Thanks for your question
27 and I'd be happy to address the results of the Northern
28 Norton Sound and Southern Norton Sound Advisory
29 Committee meeting minutes for both of those proposals.
30 They're not set for discussion before the Board of Fish
31 until mid-March.

32
33 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Well,
34 later on in the meeting we'll want an update on those
35 so that the RAC may want to comment on them.

36
37 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. Do you want to
38 have a presentation of them?

39
40 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: What's the
41 pleasure of the RAC, do you want to have a briefing on
42 those two regulatory proposals.

43
44 (Council nods affirmatively)

45
46 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Unless there's
47 some objection, yes, we would like a quick briefing so
48 that we can take a position on it if there's still
49 time. Do we still have time to get our comments in?
50

1 MS. DAGGETT: Yes.
2
3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Then we
4 would like a briefing later on in this meeting.
5
6 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. I'll see if I can
7 get a hold of Scott to do that briefing.
8
9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you. Is
10 there anyone else on the phone that would like to
11 introduce themselves.
12
13 (No comments)
14
15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Well,
16 Louie should be joining us sometime later today.
17
18 Okay, could we take a look at the
19 agenda now.
20
21 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair.
22
23 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, go ahead,
24 Carl.
25
26 MR. JOHNSON: So a few additions to the
27 agenda.
28
29 First, if you'll look under old
30 business C, Refuge's proposed rule on hunting, since
31 this Council really hasn't received a full briefing on
32 that before, I suggest we move that to new business.
33 And where a good place for it to go, we could probably
34 put it -- there's a couple discussions on wildlife, we
35 can put it after that and I'll make a specific
36 suggestion on that in just a second.
37
38 Another addition that was discussed
39 this morning, is under new business, after what is
40 currently B, call for hunting and trapping regulatory
41 proposals. We can add a new C, which would be Council
42 proposals, because there was discussion this morning
43 among Council members about desires to submit some
44 specific proposals. So I would suggest that that would
45 be a good place to put that after you receive a
46 briefing from Chris McKee on the call for hunting and
47 trapping proposals.
48
49 We could also put after that, the
50 Refuge's proposed rule on hunting.

1 Additionally, there's a desire to have
2 the intensive management briefing from Pat Valkenburg,
3 a suggested suggestion for that would be there's a
4 desire to have some more public participation on that,
5 so I would suggest that we have that this evening
6 before the 7:00 p.m., public meeting on the rural
7 determination. We could have a time certain on that of
8 6:00 p.m., so we could have more public there for that,
9 and then also that could be a broader discussion as
10 well on the submission of Federal regulatory wildlife
11 proposals and if anybody from the public had anything
12 they wanted to discuss or just to receive a briefing so
13 that they can understand how to submit those proposals,
14 that would be a good time for that.

15
16 Another addition under agency reports,
17 North Pacific Fishery Management Council is going to be
18 calling in and providing a briefing. So we'll have
19 that briefing, and I believe it'll be the same briefing
20 they're giving to several of the other Councils
21 regarding pollock bycatch and so that will be kind of
22 an update as to what the status on where the bycatch
23 issues are and the various proposals that have been
24 addressed or being considered by the NPFMC.

25
26 And, finally, there's also an addition
27 under new business, again, we can just for simplicity
28 sake put that at the end, regarding the Board of Game
29 Proposal 202 to address the Western Arctic Caribou
30 Herd. So we can add that as a discussion item for the
31 Council, but to assist the Council's deliberations and
32 discussion, immediately prior to that have the
33 presentation discussion with Jim Dau regarding -- he's
34 been giving a presentation to 20 or so communities on
35 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. You have a hard copy
36 of that in your supplemental -- your green supplemental
37 folder. So ideally review that proposal -- or
38 correction, review that presentation by Jim Dau and
39 then if the Council has any questions of Jim prior to
40 the discussion on Prop 202 that would be a good time to
41 have that so the Council has the most recent
42 information on the status of the Western Arctic Caribou
43 Herd prior to discussing Proposal 202.

44
45 And those are the additions I have for
46 the agenda.

47
48 Of course, anybody else who has
49 something to add this would be a good time.
50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Peter.
2
3 MR. BUCK: Mr. Chair. Could we move
4 the election of officers to this afternoon when we have
5 more members.
6
7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: You know I was
8 thinking maybe we should just put it off until Louie
9 can be here.
10
11 MR. BUCK: Okay.
12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: That might be the
14 best solution to that. That's what we've done before.
15
16 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair.
17
18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Carl.
19
20 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. On that point
21 it is preferred to have the Councils conduct their
22 elections in the winter meeting cycle because that's
23 when all of them are doing it. And then if you -- for
24 example, if you wait until fall you might elect a new
25 Chair who might be here for only one more meeting if
26 their term is expiring and they decide not to seek
27 reappointment, then they would only be Chair for one
28 meeting, whereas having the election in the winter
29 meeting cycle it allows a person to have a full year
30 serving in that position before we have our next
31 election.
32
33 So I agree that it'd be a good idea to
34 delay it until we have more participation.
35
36 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, we've done
37 this before. And, you know, I can appreciate, you
38 know, the potential problem but this is a special
39 situation, you know, where -- this is not something
40 that happens every day, I would -- I think -- I don't
41 know what the Council's preference is but I would
42 suggest we just delay it.
43
44 MR. JOHNSON: Well, Mr. Chair, it has
45 been done before but when it was done before it was
46 contrary how we do Council elections so the Council
47 should have its election this meeting so to be
48 consistent with the other Councils and consistent with
49 how we do elections.
50

1 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair. This is
2 Carmen with Fish and Game. If you are interested and
3 if the Board is interested in having the discussion
4 about those agenda change requests, I did get a hold of
5 Scott Kent and he said try to find a time to present
6 those two proposals.

7
8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We could fit it
9 in your agency report. your agency report would be a
10 fine place for that, wouldn't it?

11
12 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah, I just -- you might
13 want to ask Scott Kent for the best time, I know that
14 you had mentioned that Jim Dau had an agency report but
15 -- so Scott Kent under agency report then too.

16
17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, that would
18 be a fine place for that.

19
20 MS. DAGGETT: Okay, thank you.

21
22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're still
23 holding for weather, we've got two RAC members missing
24 and Pat Valkenburg will be a real asset to this
25 meeting. He's supposed to be here on the noon jet,
26 we'll see if it lands today, but that will definitely
27 change our schedule if that doesn't happen. What I'd
28 like to do on his presentation on intensive management,
29 would be to put it in this afternoon so that he can --
30 he has a PowerPoint prepared, and so we can do the
31 PowerPoint during the meeting, prior to 5:00 o'clock.
32 And then we have a -- what we tried really hard to do
33 at this meeting was to get public participation. We
34 really -- we went -- for one thing we're meeting in
35 this room, which is -- we thought would be a better way
36 -- Louie and I thought would be a better place for
37 getting the public, and so we want to give the public a
38 chance to participate in this issue, intensive
39 management, but we weren't going to do a formal session
40 at 6:00. We've invited the public to come in just as a
41 question and answer session. What I wanted to do was
42 get the Council briefed on intensive management so that
43 we can answer questions more knowledgeably. So if we
44 hear that prior to 5:00 then at 6:00 when the public
45 comes we'll be able to talk to them more knowledgeably.
46 I wasn't planning on having a formal presentation at
47 6:00. That will be -- you know, we can talk about
48 that.

49
50 One other thing is, we're planning a

1 supper here at 5:00 o'clock. There'll be some soup and
2 homemade bread. We can just have a little, you know,
3 spend an hour, 5:00 to 6:00 just having a meal.
4 Council members are invited, Staff's invited. We
5 weren't going to make it available to the entire
6 public, you know, because it would be just too much
7 clean up work so we're just going to recess at 5:00 and
8 go off the record until 6:00 and then we can get
9 something to eat, anybody who wants to go to the
10 restaurants can do that, and then we'll come back at
11 6:00 and be ready to have a question and answer session
12 on intensive management, and then at 7:00 go into the
13 rural determination discussion for the public.

14

15 What else was I going to say.

16

17 So hopefully Pat makes it. If not,
18 we'll do the best we can on intensive management.
19 That's something that RAC members, we've been talking
20 about it for years, it's in our annual reports, it's
21 time to get a briefing.

22

23 Louie and I went to the Federal
24 Subsistence Board this fall, specifically to ask for
25 that briefing because it's been such an important issue
26 for this region.

27

28 Yeah, go ahead, Carl.

29

30 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
31 forgot to mention also that one of the things we've
32 done with the other Councils, and I know has been very
33 helpful, is we moved the Council's discussion on rural
34 determination until the morning after the public
35 meeting and then that way you get a chance to hear
36 public comments at the public meeting and then that can
37 inform your deliberation on whatever recommendations
38 you have. So I would suggest that we move the timing
39 on the rural determination process review, which is
40 under Old Business Item A to first thing tomorrow
41 morning, after we have the public and tribal comment on
42 non-agenda items.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Very good. Do we
47 have any objections to making that change from the RAC.

48

49 (No objections)

50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Hearing no
2 objections then we'll do that.
3
4 We need -- Carl.
5
6 MR. JOHNSON: I was just going to say
7 if there are no other changes to be made to the agenda
8 then I would suggest a motion would be in order.
9
10 MR. BUCK: I'll make a motion to
11 approve the agenda as amended.
12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: With the
14 exception of the -- we're still going to talk about the
15 election of officers when the other two RAC members
16 arrive; is that the idea?
17
18 MR. BUCK: Okay, with that exception.
19
20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay, is there a
21 second.
22
23 MR. OXEREOK: I second.
24
25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Moved by Peter,
26 seconded by Amos. All in favor say aye.
27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.
29
30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: All opposed same
31 sign.
32
33 (No opposing votes)
34
35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Passes
36 unanimously.
37
38 Let's take a few minutes to read the
39 minutes from the last meeting.
40
41 (Pause)
42
43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Has everybody had
44 a chance to go over the minutes.
45
46
47 (No comments)
48
49 (Pause)
50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Ted.

2

3 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair, if I may,
4 this is Ted from Stebbins.

5

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Ted.

7

8 MR. KATCHEAK: Members -- I'm sorry,
9 let me go back here -- I kind of lost where I made some
10 notations on the proposed report.

11

12 There was a Board member report, or
13 Council member report from each Council member and Mr.
14 Scott Lockwood from St. Michael made a report on
15 subsistence resources on Page 6. And he mentioned
16 reindeer herds are larger and I note reindeer is not
17 subsistence resource or is it, even though the reindeer
18 meats are sold at local retail stores. I'm wondering
19 if this subsistence resource includes reindeer.

20

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, it's very
22 interesting that you should bring that up because
23 that's one thing that we're going to be talking about
24 at this meeting. Reindeer are not a wild animal in
25 Alaska but they have a big impact on subsistence so
26 it's not truly a subsistence animal, it's a private,
27 domesticated animal but it still has a big impact on
28 subsistence for a number of reasons. It provides an
29 alternate source of food and also reindeer were one of
30 the best buffers for predators and now that they're
31 gone the predators are eating other things.

32

33 And so I'm glad you brought that up and
34 we will definitely want to talk more about that during
35 this meeting.

36

37 One other thing that I noted is --
38 these are excellent minutes, by the way, Robert Larson
39 did a really good job when he filled in at our fall
40 meeting, these are really good -- the best minutes
41 we've had since I've been on the RAC. But the minutes
42 remind me that we started to write a letter about the
43 Pilgrim River counting weir and this was an issue for
44 Reggie Barr and Elmer Seetot and Joe Garney and so
45 somewhere in this meeting we need to finish writing
46 that letter and make sure it gets sent. We started to
47 write it and then we never completed it so I guess
48 we'll talk about that under old business, if it's okay
49 with the RAC, unless somebody has some objections.

50

1 (No objections.

2

3 MR. BUCK: Mr. Chair.

4

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Peter.

6

7 MR. BUCK: One comment on Page 9 at the
8 top of the status of the petition to extend Federal
9 jurisdiction, that's extraterritorial jurisdiction, and
10 the regulations won't be addressed until February 23rd
11 and I'd like to keep that on our agenda and make sure
12 that at our next meeting we get a report on that.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Very good. Maybe
17 we can get an update on what's been going on. There
18 was a briefing on extra-territorial jurisdiction to the
19 Federal Subsistence Board at the last meeting so maybe
20 we can get an update on that somewhere that, too. Can
21 we do that Carl.

22

23 MR. JOHNSON: So just to clarify, you
24 just want an update on the status of the Angoon
25 petition for extra-territorial jurisdiction, which is
26 what was addressed at the Board meeting.

27

28 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, there was
29 nothing else on the -- I don't think we want to hear
30 about Angoon, specifically, we want to hear about the
31 progress of extra-territorial jurisdiction and how it
32 might affect our issues here. How -- if anything has
33 happened, maybe nothing has happened.

34

35 MR. JOHNSON: Well, that's the only
36 current pending issue on a request for extra-
37 territorial jurisdiction relates to Angoon and
38 commercial salmon fishing in that area. There are no
39 other pending requests for extra-territorial
40 jurisdiction in the program.

41

42 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, it's
43 probably not been a formal request but there's been a
44 lot of talk about extending it to -- extending
45 jurisdiction over bycatch, I mean that's where that
46 discussion has been taking place. I doubt if there's a
47 formal request for it.

48

49 MR. BUCK: Also, Tom Gray made a
50 suggestion last time that the fish at the head of the

1 Fish River in Ninilchik go into Federal lands and here
2 is a thing about Federal jurisdiction, or the extra-
3 territorial jurisdiction for that area so I think this
4 issue needs to be hashed through some more, I think.

5
6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay, Peter, we
7 will definitely talk about it some more.

8
9 Any other corrections or amendments to
10 the minutes.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
15 motion to adopt.

16
17 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair, I move.

18
19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is there a
20 second.

21
22 MR. ENINGOWUK: Second the motion.

23
24 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Moved by Ted
25 Katcheak, seconded by Fred Eningowuk. All in favor say
26 aye.

27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29
30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: All opposed, same
31 sign.

32
33 (No opposing votes)

34
35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Passed
36 unanimously.

37
38 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman.

39
40 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, go ahead.

41
42 MR. GREEN: This is Louie, I just
43 called in a few minutes ago and I'm just in and out so
44 I'll be on the phone.

45
46 Good morning.

47
48 I just wanted to let you know I'm on
49 line at this point.

50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Good morning,
2 Louie, thanks for joining in. Do you want to introduce
3 yourself and give us a little -- we're at Council
4 reports anyway, why don't you take the floor and tell
5 us what's going on.

6
7 MR. GREEN: Well, I'm kind of caught
8 here, sorry, but I've got something else going on here
9 so I'll come back here shortly.

10
11 Mr. Chair.

12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay, Louie.
14 Well, we're going to go to Council member reports, do
15 you want to start us off, Ted.

16
17 MR. KATCHEAK: Probably just speechless
18 right now. I haven't got a detailed report at this
19 time.

20
21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: And I'm a little
22 negligent. For new members, the purpose of this is
23 just to talk about how things have been going with
24 regard to subsistence or anything you want to talk
25 about, for your area, for your community or anywhere on
26 the Seward Peninsula and so just, you know, if there's
27 any problems. If people have been having a hard time
28 getting one thing or another, or if things have been
29 abundant, just give us a report on what's been going
30 on.

31
32 MR. KATCHEAK: One thing I can report,
33 there's been hunters from Yukon, the Yukon River, all
34 the way from Kotlik up river to Marshall, Alaska and
35 these people that live in the river usually go toward
36 Unalakleet and the reindeer herd, they use that as an
37 excuse to hunt caribou and we know that there are not
38 -- there were -- hasn't been caribou coming down south
39 of Unalakleet for the last 30 years so it's kind of
40 disheartening to see that these hunters label the
41 reindeer as caribou when they butcher those, or hunt
42 them.

43
44 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Let me ask, is
45 there any -- is the Andraefsky Herd still viable at all
46 that's in your.....

47
48 MR. KATCHEAK: Stebbins, St. Michael
49 and my herd are combined and -- but they're scattered
50 all the way from south of Unalakleet all the way down

1 to Pilot Station, Marshall -- towards Marshall and all
2 the way toward Kotlik, Alaska. So it's -- the reindeer
3 herd is pretty widespread, probably numbering up to
4 five to 6,000 as some people mentioned to me, or
5 observed.

6

7

Thank you.

8

9

VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Amos, you want to
10 give us an update.

11

12

MR. OXEREOK: I'll start with the
13 ocean. It's really good to see -- we run into a bunch
14 of relatives when we're out there from as far south as
15 Nome. During the spring hunts we get boats from Nome,
16 from Teller and sometimes even from Diomedes, but mostly
17 from the Nome, Teller, Brevig region.

18

19

The walrus hunt was pretty good this
20 year. We've got a lot of seals. I was able to fill
21 four different freezers with my crew.

22

23

Whaling's been really tough. The last
24 couple of years we haven't gotten a whale. But there's
25 -- I think there's five registered crews in Wales this
26 year for bowhead whaling.

27

28

Fishing, I saw a lot of nets being
29 pulled in with a lot of fish and a lot of fish was
30 going around. I don't fish myself because there seems
31 like a lot of people give out their fish when they have
32 leftovers.

33

34

The salmonberries were really, really
35 delicious this year. My mom found a way to mix it with
36 Cool Whip, which is really yummy.

37

38

Let's see, it seems like the moose show
39 up in our area right before the season starts and then
40 we don't see them after the season opens. But I was
41 able to hop in a dry suit and help my uncle retrieve
42 one from the middle of a pond where it died.

43

44

So this year we had several muskox
45 coming into town. One muskox was -- a child was in the
46 road and the muskox was going towards this child and I
47 had to drive up and scoop the child up because the
48 child froze and it was grazing right by somebody's
49 house. And there's another YouTube video of another
50 muskox attacking a dog and then charging the people

1 that were filming it from behind the fourwheeler, so
2 that ended up being a DLP kill. So we're having to
3 deal with muskox coming into town more often nowadays.

4
5 It's good to see the reindeer around
6 town. I think our local herders are keeping the herds
7 closer. It's really cool to see them feeding nearby.

8
9 I've talked to some of the local moose
10 hunters and I'll deal with that at a different time in
11 the meeting.

12
13 But it's a really -- really an honor to
14 be here and thanks for appointing me to this Council.

15
16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, welcome to
17 the Council and looking forward to having you serve
18 here.

19
20 Go ahead, Charlie.

21
22 MR. SACCHEUS: Yeah, my name is Charles
23 Saccheus from Elim. And our weather wasn't too good in
24 Elim. We went out in warm weather last fall and it
25 still continued until today. The commercial fishing
26 season was super last summer and the Elim fishermen,
27 they got a lot of chums and a lot of pink salmon and
28 silver salmon, which was very good for our income for
29 Elim people and Elim fishermen.

30
31 Beluga hunting was good last spring.

32
33 And this fall we started to use whale
34 nets at Elim and we hardly go out and chase beluga
35 anymore because we get our nets from Kachemak Set (ph)
36 at Homer, like you get a thousand feet net for a good
37 price and hang it up and get a lot of beluga.

38
39 And our salmonberries was poor,
40 blueberries was poor.

41
42 Moose season was super, and they get
43 quite a few moose in our -- east of the Darbies, which
44 was pretty good and later on the caribou were late but
45 they come in like October but most of the people, when
46 they go out caribou hunting they take binoculars and
47 look at the caribou and most of the time they come home
48 with reindeer. I kind of think that the caribou right
49 now is declining. And I think that happens every so
50 often, every few years the caribou decline and they

1 rise up and that since time immemorial they've been
2 doing that. And when there was a village in Cape
3 Darby, the -- my ancestors used to go up to the Darbies
4 when they were on the tip of the Darbies and chasing
5 west side of the Darbies to that hardpacked snow and a
6 whole bunch of -- the Natives would chase them over
7 there and let them slide down and there'd be some
8 Natives waiting on the shore ice on the bottom and when
9 they slide down they just use their knives and kill
10 them, the caribou. And the caribou were abundant when
11 there was a village in Cape Darby before where my
12 ancestors were and when I go to the caribou meetings
13 they always say that the caribou is declining rapidly
14 today and it's been going on like that for centuries so
15 caribou hunting was good.

16

17 But, anyway, they're going to have a
18 coming up conference in Elim and I think it'll be real
19 big in March and whoever travels to Elim from Nome or
20 Nome area, they got to go up through the inland trail,
21 that old trail, if you go on to WallaWalla, it's kind
22 of dangerous to go through the ice because the
23 weather's been kind of warm in January -- the last part
24 of January and the first part of February this year.
25 So when you travel with a snowmachine you got to be
26 careful down in your area.

27

28 But, anyway, we're looking forward for
29 a lot of visitors in Elim for the conference. I know
30 they're going to come by airplane and a lot of like to
31 go Elim with snowmachines due to the prices of airfare
32 today. It takes an arm and a leg to go from Elim to
33 Nome.

34

35 But, anyway, I hope you all have a good
36 summer, good season this summer and I hope you guys are
37 successful on your subsistence way of life. I thank
38 you all that are here to come here and join this group
39 for our meetings and hope you have a good summer.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you,
44 Charlie.

45

46 Peter.

47

48 MR. BUCK: My name is Peter Buck from
49 White Mountain. And last summer we had a very poor
50 berry season. And the weather has been warm most of

1 the year but there is some snow.

2

3 The moose, we harvested our quota of
4 moose and the moose is mainly taken in the fall and in
5 January, and the quota was there.

6

7 The caribou has been coming in slowly
8 and there is caribou.

9

10 And the muskox quota has been okay in
11 the White Mountain area. We've met all the quotas for
12 muskox.

13

14 And due to the weather we got 40 below,
15 maybe 30 below for a couple days this year, and that
16 has barely -- that was barely enough for crabbing,
17 subsistence crabbing. My son-in-law set out a pot and
18 25 feet away is where the ocean is, all gone, so we --
19 the season has been warm for crabbing. We do get
20 crabbing but very, very close.

21

22 And I think that's about it, so that's
23 my report from White Mountain.

24

25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Very good. Fred.

26

27 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yeah, this is Fred
28 Eningowuk, Shishmaref.

29

30 Last spring we had a pretty poor spring
31 hunt on our oogruks, you know, we use that for dry
32 meat, seal oil. And I do believe that more than 50
33 percent of our hunters never get any oil, you know, for
34 oogruks because the ice went out very early last
35 spring, surprisingly and, you know, we've been having
36 very poor ice conditions for our spring hunting. It's
37 been leaving earlier and earlier every year. Some
38 boats have been having to go to Kotzebue Sound, you
39 know, just to get one or two oogruks, just so they can
40 have some dry meat and seal oil, you know, what we
41 subsist on.

42

43 Caribou are -- currently there's a lot
44 of caribou up there, I think there's thousands up there
45 and they're coming more west every year and hopefully
46 do a proposal to change the boundary for the caribou up
47 there. And sometimes I just think there must be more
48 than half of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd up there
49 right now but there's a lot of caribou right now.

50

1 Bears. We're still having problems
2 with brown bears breaking into cabins. There is --
3 they've been making their rounds up at Serpentine Flats
4 and the cabins, breaking into cabins, doing some
5 damage. I don't know if it's just one problem bear or
6 if it's several bears but we're still having problems
7 with the bears up there.

8
9 Berries. We had a lot of salmonberries
10 last spring, I mean last fall. A lot of people didn't
11 know there was lots up the Coast, too, so, you know,
12 those got overripe and nobody picked them, but we had a
13 lot of berries. Except for blackberries. First year
14 got no blackberries in the freezer, first time ever so
15 it was very poor for blackberries.

16
17 Otherwise, you know, we have a little
18 snow for our subsistence hunting right now. Some
19 people are fortunate enough to be going out hunting.
20 Been having to travel over niggerheads, you know,
21 chasing caribou is pretty rough on snowmachines and
22 yourself so, you know, there's some hunters that are
23 working to harvest some caribou right now.

24
25 So that's pretty much all I have for my
26 report from Shishmaref.

27
28 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Fred.

29
30 I've got a few things to say but I
31 think maybe we should take a lunch break now so I can
32 run out to the airport. We got -- you know, we're
33 still hoping to get a couple more mem.....

34
35 MR. JOHNSON: Well, perhaps, Mr. Chair,
36 if we could finish the member reports for who is
37 available now so we just have a conclusion on that and
38 then if you want to break for lunch.

39
40 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're all done
41 except for me. All the members have gone.....

42
43 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I think.....

44
45 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH:through
46 except for me.

47
48 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louie.

49
50 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Louie, were you

1 going to say something.

2

3 MR. GREEN: Yeah, I just got back to
4 the phone here. Are you guys getting ready to break
5 for lunch, did I hear that correctly?

6

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: That's correct.

8

9 MR. GREEN: All right, then I'll make a
10 comment here for my report.

11

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, go ahead.

13

14 MR. GREEN: I see that there's
15 discussion of predator control on social media that the
16 public over in Nome and people talk about doing their
17 share to kill bears, take bears, you don't have any
18 business taking a moose if you can't take a bear. I
19 think we're at this point in the discussion of
20 intensive management is probably where we're at
21 realistically. Because I don't think that, even with
22 all the opportunity we might have to go out there and
23 take a bear we're not taking enough. I think of the
24 whole Seward Peninsula, Unit 22, we got 100 bears on an
25 even keel per year, maybe a little more or little less
26 is an average number.

27

28 We have healthy sows -- the sows out
29 there with healthy cubs. I've had pictures of five
30 cubs as late as three falls ago in the Solomon area,
31 five cubs to one sow. Things are pretty good for the
32 carnivore. So if you can't eliminate the sows and the
33 cubs you're going to have a hard time taking a bear per
34 year and make any difference, even if it was 200 bears
35 a year I think it would still be problematic because a
36 lot of the times people are taking the larger boars and
37 we know that the larger boars are the natural predator
38 of cubs in the spring. Noted by Northern Norton Sound
39 Advisory Committee member in the past, I don't know if
40 he still is, but Wesley Perkins made that comment on
41 social media wise.

42

43 So predator control, they talk about
44 going out and doing their share. I say intensive
45 management is where the discussion lies. It's
46 important for the whole region to consider.

47

48 We have a decline of moose. I think
49 past times where moose was abundant on the Seward
50 Peninsula, it may have been up to 400 per year, and the

1 average take now 22C, or excuse me 22 -- Unit 22 this
2 year I think we were only allowed 67 and that would be
3 in A, B, C and D units is the total. I could be wrong
4 but that's pretty close. 67. That's not enough to
5 take care of people. Subsistence suffers when you
6 can't go out and adequately harvest the species that
7 you want.

8
9 Caribou. Caribou are long distance
10 hunts. I went all the way to Koyuk last year to have
11 my subsistence needs met. Pretty expensive. Long
12 trip. Successful but would it have been cheaper to go
13 to the store, it wouldn't have been as healthy. We
14 always talk about the necessity for subsistence foods
15 as healthy foods, you know, caribou is healthy, but the
16 herds are in decline. I think 235,000 counted as of
17 the last count.

18
19 These are serious things to consider
20 when we talk about intensive management. That
21 discussion is really important to us.

22
23 We're looking at muskox. I know that
24 people have problems with muskox. They talk about the
25 berry patches being minimal, they talk about the
26 threats in town against their dogs and now, as has been
27 pointed out, there was a child in the street in the
28 village; I understand all that. People have to realize
29 that there seems to be a correlation between predators
30 and ungulates. And, you know, we have muskox living in
31 Nome, it's all over the news. I had one in June in my
32 yard attacked to of my dogs. It came across from a
33 field -- across this field and charged my dogs and then
34 the only opportunity I had to defend the dog was to go
35 out there with a four foot stick and beat it with a
36 four feet stick to chase it off. I got it off of one
37 dog, it went over and tore up the other dog before it
38 left. A friend of mine from Koyuk assisted me in that
39 attempt, we were successful in running off the muskox.
40 We have to figure out how to live with them, they're
41 the only thing that we have left as far as meat, red
42 meat in the communities. They're around.

43
44 Reindeer. We know nothing about the
45 reindeer herds. Tim and I discussed that with BIA
46 members at the Board meeting in Anchorage a month ago.
47 We'd like to get a handle on that because reindeer play
48 an important part in protein in our -- on the Seward
49 Peninsula, they should be part of the discussion. You
50 know, if you're talking about intensive management,

1 reindeer are a part of that whole sequence of things so
2 it would be to the benefit of the region, the residents
3 of the area that reindeer be included in the discussion
4 when it comes to intensive management.

5
6 We have salmon runs, that continue to
7 struggle, especially in the Nome area. We have seven
8 rivers and yet we don't have -- the State says we have
9 plenty but they've aggregated all those rivers together
10 for a combined run of 24 to 35,000 salmon and they say
11 that they see that number in all the rivers together
12 then they say we have a healthy salmon streams. Well,
13 there might be 2,000 in one river and 5,000 in another
14 river (indiscernible) accessibility to those rivers and
15 how much it cost to get there. It's just like I said
16 about the caribou, how much does it cost to go hunt
17 caribou. We all know that gas is six to eight dollars
18 a gallon out there. So opportunity for subsistence is
19 getting to be more -- if you have money in your pocket
20 you can go subsist and for the people that don't have
21 money in their pocket the Quest card is becoming the
22 subsistence tool of the 21st century. Somehow we've
23 got to turn this around and speaking on all of this
24 stuff here at this forum is very important to get it on
25 record because there's got to be a way to turn this
26 around.

27
28 I'm not speaking for Sitnasauk Native
29 Corporation but I would say that I -- I wear many hats
30 in my community and one of them is I am the vice chair
31 in discussions that have come up. I have been talking
32 about the Sitnasauk, although my fellow members there
33 that since the '90s, since 1992 that it's important
34 that we, as a Native Corporation, we own the land, we
35 should be wanting to see healthy fish and game on our
36 lands and to other village corporations I would
37 encourage, and so like I said I'm not speaking on
38 behalf of Sitnasauk, I'm just letting you know that one
39 of my positions over there as the director as I'm the
40 chair of the land department, the land committee.

41
42 So in terms of management, folks, we
43 need to consider it very seriously on the Seward
44 Peninsula. I appreciate the time to talk here. It's
45 very hard for me to get on the phone on the
46 teleconferences because my time is limited, but thank
47 you very much Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Staff. And
48 I think you've got a couple of new members that I want
49 to welcome, Amos Oxereok and Joe Garney are the two
50 that have been selected, congratulations, and I've said

1 enough.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Louie.

6 I think we need to take a lunch break but is there any

7 member of the public that would like to address the

8 Council first. Dan, did you want to say anything at

9 this time.

10

11 MR. KOONUK: Good afternoon. I've been

12 a subsistence fisherman and hunter for over 40 years

13 and I have seen a lot of changes that are happening.

14 And I was wondering if subsistence users are being

15 protected compared to commercialization, you know, with

16 our fishing industry. You know, also there are many

17 different rivers in the Seward Peninsula that may have

18 lost population with the king salmon, is there a way

19 that we can help this population back to its original

20 population.

21

22 And also with the bears that are coming

23 close to town, is there a way that Fish and Game can

24 have, you know, synthesiz -- I mean put the bears to

25 sleep and transport them somewhere else. Because I

26 have a camp 10 miles out on our side of Cape Nome where

27 last year, year before, bears were breaking into my

28 fish rack and eating my hard work, you know, dry fish

29 and I know that bears are more active at night.

30

31 And also, you know, the muskox coming

32 into town and threatening and killing people's pets and

33 what not due to predation. You know, I don't know the

34 solution for this but I recall back in the caveman days

35 they used torches to move these animals, you know, kind

36 of drop off the cliff and what not, would this be

37 helpful. I know it's dangerous. But I think this

38 might be a solution but I'm not too sure. I'd like to

39 have some feedback on some of the issues that I brought

40 up.

41

42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43

44 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Before you --

45 before you go, do any of the Council members want to

46 ask any questions.

47

48 MR. KATCHEAK: Through the Chair, what

49 is your name, sir?

50

1 MR. KOONUK: Dan.
2
3 MR. KATCHEAK: Dan. I recall some time
4 back what you suggested or an idea transport animals, I
5 recall there was back in 1957 there were a lot of brown
6 bears at Kodiak and there were too many so they
7 transported, US Fish and Wildlife Service, I don't know
8 if some of you are aware of that, were transporting
9 nuisance bear from Kodiak to Anvik area and that is why
10 we have brown bears coming into our area. So I don't
11 know if transporting animals like bear somewhere else
12 will be helpful or beneficial.
13
14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any other
15 questions for Dan.
16
17 (No comments)
18
19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I just wanted to
20 point out we've been trying to kick some of these
21 issues affecting subsistence around on FaceBook and
22 Dan's been one of our more active participants in those
23 discussions and so we're trying to find a way to do
24 more of this stuff without having to have meetings like
25 this. Meeting's like this are hard. It's hard to get
26 people together, as we're seeing, and it's hard to get
27 the public involved so we're trying other ways and we
28 really appreciate your comments on those issues.
29
30 On king salmon.....
31
32 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louie.
33
34 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH:that's a
35 very -- that's a very important issue to this Council
36 and we'll be talking some more about that during this
37 meeting too.
38
39 Go ahead, Louie.
40
41 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I had.....
42
43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, Louie, go
44 ahead.
45
46 MR. GREEN:a question for Dan.
47
48 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, go ahead.
49
50 MR. GREEN: Oh, sorry. Dan, this is

1 Louie. Would you say that we have an abundance of
2 salmon in the Nome area or would you say we don't?

3
4 MR. KOONUK: Well, it depends on what
5 type of species you're talking about but I think the
6 population is very low for our king salmon. And the
7 other fish, like they have a good -- well, there's good
8 population for the other species of fish in this area,
9 but king salmon is the one that's hurting the most due
10 to predation. And I know man is the main predator
11 along with you got orcas, beluga whales, different
12 types of seals and so, you know, I think, you know,
13 bycatch too is -- that really takes a big toll on the
14 king salmon population.

15
16 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Dan. And I
17 agree with you on the toll of the total -- the
18 predation side of things along with the bycatch. I've
19 spoken towards that same idea like you just did about
20 the other species out there that eat a lot of salmon.
21 The trouble we're having is I keep hearing from other
22 areas, like Area M, or even the pollock industry saying
23 that we are doing our own damage on our own rivers.
24 Well, you and I have grown up in Nome for 55-plus years
25 and we've seen when the salmon runs were abundant, when
26 there wasn't trawlers, and the other one is -- like you
27 say, there's predators out there like killer whale,
28 orcas, beluga, seals and they're taking the toll on
29 these fisheries too, and we need to find out how to
30 resolve the idea that we have adequate numbers for
31 human consumption because we're part of the food chain,
32 other people like to believe we're not, the human being
33 is part of that and it's always been a part of that.

34
35 One thing that I did forget to
36 recognize was that the Nome residents, especially
37 Council, Niukluk and the Fish River drainages and also
38 the Teller and Brevig is being impacted by the Nome
39 residents. We have, I'm not -- I'm not saying that
40 everybody but there are certain people that have the
41 ability to have that money to be able to go out and do
42 these resource gatherings and it's almost to the point
43 where it's not a subsistence -- subsistence means I can
44 sit down on my doorstep at my cabin and wait for the
45 salmon to come, throw a net in the water and put my
46 fish away. I used to be able to live at camp and take
47 my moose right out in the back yard on the Pilgrim
48 River drainages, now it's getting to the point where I
49 have to travel several miles to do any of that and I'm
50 not the only one that's doing this. And limiting my

1 subsistence hunting and fishing activities because of
2 declines is real.

3

4 Again, I emphasize that we need to be
5 really seriously promoting some sort of intensive
6 management program on the Seward Peninsula.

7

8 Thanks. Thanks, Dan, for your
9 participation.

10

11 MR. KOONUK: You're welcome.

12

13 MR. GREEN: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
14 Chair.

15

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Louie.
17 Any addi -- any more questions.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thanks for coming
22 down, Dan.

23

24 I think we better take a lunch break.
25 I'm going to run out to the airport, can we come back
26 at 1:30.

27

28 MR. BUCK: Yes.

29

30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you. Okay,
31 and we'll just recess until 1:30.

32

33 MR. BUCK: One.

34

35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: 1:30. 1:30, it
36 takes awhile to get served in the restaurants.

37

38 (Off record)

39

40 (On record)

41

42 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'd like to call
43 the meeting to order again.

44

45 Which brings us to -- I was going to
46 make my report now.

47

48 Louie and I went to the Federal
49 Subsistence Board meeting this last time together,
50 which I think was a good idea. I would encourage all

1 the rest of the Council members to attend a Federal
2 Subsistence Board meeting. It's really a lot different
3 than the State system. Some things are better, some
4 things are worse. But it's how our government works
5 and it's a good idea to see it in action so I would
6 encourage others to go when you can.

7
8 But the reason we went, the reason I
9 went, too, is that we've been talking about intensive
10 management and it's something that the RAC's been
11 talking about, it's in our annual report -- our last
12 two annual reports, it'll be in this year's annual
13 report. We didn't necessarily use that term, but
14 that's the best term, that's the term en vogue right
15 now for what we're trying to do, what we're trying to
16 do is increase the numbers of prey species. And so we
17 have Pat Valkenburg with us now, he's a biologist, he
18 and I were grad students at UAF at the same time,
19 caribou -- Pat's studied caribou his entire career and
20 he's -- he also was heavily involved in the intensive
21 management program so we'll be hearing from him this
22 afternoon. But that's -- you know, clearly that's what
23 the public wants, the public wants to do something like
24 intensive management, something that will result in
25 more meat animals available for people to use for
26 subsistence and other purposes.

27
28 The -- we're going to get a report
29 later today about bycatch from the North Pacific
30 Fisheries Management Council, probably tomorrow, and
31 that's another big issue for this region.

32
33 Halibut took a tremendous dive all of a
34 sudden and, you know, our halibut quota here in Norton
35 Sound went -- commercial halibut quota went from
36 200,000 pounds to 53,000, it probably should be closed
37 completely. I mean the industry had this sprung on
38 them in June and they're going to continue a directed
39 harvest this year but that's an issue for subsistence.
40 Been an issue for -- for -- for us.

41
42 Our good friend, Harry Brower from the
43 North Slope, at the Federal Subsistence Board talked
44 about ecosystem management. And I think that's the
45 missing link here, and that's also been in our annual
46 reports. We've got all these jurisdictional issues,
47 National Marine Fisheries Service regulates whale; US
48 Fish and Wildlife Service regulates walrus hunting, for
49 example; Department of Fish and Game represents hunting
50 of terrestrial game; what happens with the reindeer is

1 regulated by private owners, and so we don't have
2 cohesive ecosystem management and you can't really
3 manage that way.

4
5 The subsistence law, both the State and
6 the Federal subsistence law talks about the
7 availability of alternate food resources and so marine
8 mammals, the reindeer are alternate food resources for
9 subsistence users but that doesn't factor into Fish and
10 Game management, it doesn't really factor into Federal
11 Subsistence Board management because of jurisdictional
12 issues and fish on the high seas, of course, are
13 managed by the North Pacific Fisheries Management
14 Council -- the National Marine Fisheries Service and
15 there's not an awful lot of communications. But if we
16 want to have a variety, a diverse variety of
17 subsistence resources we're going to have to manage on
18 an ecosystem basis as Harry Brower pointed out to the
19 Federal Subsistence Board; it's just something that
20 needs to be done. And somehow one -- one thing that
21 Pat and I were involved in from the very beginning was
22 this Federal -- this dual management system, because of
23 ANILCA, we -- we've got both Federal and State
24 management of the same species on -- depending on land
25 ownership patterns. And for years the State was -- has
26 been uncooperative with dual management, they always
27 assumed it would just go away, well here it is 2015 and
28 it hasn't gone away, doesn't look like it's going to.
29 Until we amend the Alaska Constitution to allow for a
30 rural preference for subsistence the Feds are going to
31 be here.

32
33 And so part of this meeting is just to
34 get the ball started in trying to make dual management
35 work, you know, we -- we -- the State is not going to
36 do intensive management out here, they don't have the
37 resources for it. They won't have the resources in the
38 near future. If it's going to happen, it's going to
39 require Federal funding. And so I know this issue
40 isn't easy, it isn't going to be easy to make this work
41 but if we really intend to manage subsistence resources
42 out here we're going to have to find a way. You know,
43 we have to try to manage on an ecosystem basis.

44
45 So that's my report.

46
47 We'll talk some more about what we're
48 going to do with intensive management later. And, you
49 know, we don't expect to solve all these problems in
50 one shot.

1 (Pause)

2

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, we've --
4 this brings us to old business and we've moved the
5 rural determination process review to a later section.

6

7 We started our -- one of the things --
8 old business we had -- dealt with was the Pilgrim River
9 weir and I think we should wait, if possible wait until
10 Joe and Elmer are here because that's really their
11 issue. So if we can just put that on hold and see if
12 they make it later today or tomorrow.

13

14 That brings us to customary and
15 traditional use determination, Southeast Council
16 proposal, so I guess that would be you Jeff.

17

18 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair.

19

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, sorry, go
21 ahead, Ted.

22

23 MR. KATCHEAK: I would like to add to
24 my report I made because it was just on reindeer and
25 caribou.

26

27 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Sure, go ahead.

28

29 MR. KATCHEAK: To add to my report from
30 Stebbins, there's a lot of moose in our area so people
31 are able to go out and moose hunt, and sharing,
32 sometimes with gas, and we go along as a team, and this
33 would be including St. Michael because we're all
34 related to each other.

35

36 Salmonberries were abundant along with
37 blackberries and cranberries. The vegetation both
38 looked healthy, wolves and wild plants, we had plenty
39 of chums, whitefish, silvers, cohos, tomcods, king
40 salmon, black fish.

41

42 And one of the things I noticed over
43 the years when the king salmon started to decline we
44 started catching jacks and it showed that the king
45 salmon run is tapering off but that doesn't mean that
46 there are no more kings. That's what we found out.

47

48 We have a lot of bears from -- brown
49 bears, there's a few black bears and wolves and other
50 predators. Predator.

1 Local birds, migratory and local --
2 okay, we're all able to catch both beluga and seals
3 which are plentiful to our area and very healthy.

4
5 A lot of the beavers in the lakes and
6 we have a lot of beavers, might be due to the warm
7 climate that some of these beavers are starting to go
8 down the rivers and for -- we don't trap beaver -- or
9 foxes anymore but you see a lot of them and we'll be
10 holding our week of March -- plenty of new dancers
11 which has happened since then. And there are --
12 because of -- that's our culture, we use those animals
13 as gifts to other people, visitors, something similar
14 to Barrow called, Kivgiq, and we have that.

15
16 I'd like to see more material printed
17 in the Yup'ik language when decisions are made so we
18 can have a little better understanding of how rules
19 will be implemented.

20
21 I'd like to thank each of you for
22 coming here along with the Board for this time to see
23 what is going on in Stebbins, Alaska and other villages
24 which are highly subsistence villages. We face a hard
25 time with our snow, not having enough snow because of
26 this rain, freezing rain and we have a lot of people
27 having a problem with their snowmachines to go out
28 subsistence hunting and a lot of the snowmachines break
29 down because of that, including mine.

30
31 The ocean froze late, like in December
32 and the last -- first part of January it finally
33 started to freeze on the Coast. It didn't freeze until
34 that time, end of December it started to freeze because
35 of this -- and the thickness of ice is very thin
36 compared to those years that I grew up in.

37
38 So I would like to add to those to my
39 report because I kind of -- everybody talking about so
40 many subsistence foods that they see in their villages.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Ted.

45
46 I notice that a couple more people
47 walked in. You just need to -- you know, I need you to
48 sign the -- you need to sign the sign-up sheet in back
49 and if you want to provide testimony we'd like you to
50 fill out one of those green cards, just so that there's

1 a record of who testified and who they're representing.

2

3 Okay.

4

5 And this moves us to the customary and
6 traditional use determination for Southeast Council
7 proposal.

8

9 Jeff.

10

11 MR. BROOKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 Members of the Council. My name is Jeff Brooks. Thank
13 you for your reports today. I work with the Office of
14 Subsistence Management and I'm in the Division of
15 Anthropology, I'm a social scientist there. And in my
16 introductory remarks today I mentioned that I was very
17 happy to be here and I thank the people of Nome for
18 inviting us and hosting the meeting.

19

20 I'd also like to tell you just a bit
21 about myself. I've been working in the state for seven
22 years in Refuges and Office of Subsistence Management
23 and most of my experience has been in the Northwest
24 Arctic and the North Slope area and a little bit in
25 Southcentral and down in Bristol Bay. This is my first
26 trip to Nome and I'm very happy to be here.

27

28 I live in Anchorage with my wife and
29 two children, Robin, James and Anna. And we really
30 enjoy living in Alaska and we're looking forward to
31 many more years of work here.

32

33 And I'm going to be giving you an
34 update/briefing on the customary and traditional use
35 determination proposal. It's part of the overall
36 Secretarial review and there was also a request put in
37 by the Southeast Council with some proposed language to
38 the regulation for making customary and traditional use
39 determinations. That Council, the Southeast, asked the
40 Staff at OSM to do an analysis/briefing on possible
41 effects of their proposed changes and we were supposed
42 to give them feedback and we have done that -- and we
43 will when their meeting comes up, but we also decided
44 to share some of that with all the Councils. So this
45 is not necessarily an action item for you today to act
46 on what the Southeast is putting forward. There was an
47 earlier request by OSM as part of the Secretarial
48 Review that asked for input and possibly Regional
49 Advisory Council action on a more general information
50 about changing regs.

1 Let me get into the briefing right now.
2 And I'm going to read a little bit more talking points
3 than I like to do, normally I would just like to talk
4 with you, but this topic is kind of complex and the
5 overall briefing is part of your supplemental
6 materials; it's not in the book. It is about 30 pages
7 long. Only 20 is the actual briefing or analysis, as
8 we call it, and the rest of it is appendices and it
9 covers a lot of the history and background on the
10 customary and traditional use proposed changes.

11
12 That handout is available on the back
13 table there behind me if you didn't bring yours. I was
14 told that it was mailed to you with your RAC books.

15
16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: It would be this,
17 I believe this one.

18
19 MR. BROOKS: Let me stress again that
20 this is not necessarily an action item and no
21 recommendation from the Council is necessary at this
22 time.

23
24 To get into the update, in April 2014,
25 Mr. Bertrand Adams, Sr., the former Chair of the
26 Southeast Alaska Regional Advisory Council sent a
27 letter to Mr. Tim Towarak, the Chair of the Federal
28 Subsistence Board. The letter requested an analysis of
29 the effects of possible changes to the customary and
30 traditional use determination process.

31
32 In response to the request, Staff at
33 the Office of Subsistence Management, primarily Ms.
34 Pippa Kenner, who is in the Anthropology Division, with
35 some input from myself and Robbin LaVine and our
36 leadership review, put together this briefing that you
37 have before you. Like I said it's rather long.

38
39 The purpose of this analysis is to
40 inform the Southeast Alaska Council and other Councils
41 of the possible effects of specific changes to the
42 determination process. It's also important to note
43 here today that this is not a regulatory analysis, the
44 formal proposal has not been submitted, it's basically
45 an extended briefing which attempts to describe
46 possible effects of changes.

47
48 Back to the update.

49
50 Mr. Adams, in his letter, which is

1 marked Appendix B in your briefing, begins on Page 32
2 of that full briefing and it has several attachments
3 found on Pages 34 to 38. Basically what they asked the
4 Office of Subsistence Management to do was to analyze
5 the effects on each region of:

6

7 1. Eliminating the eight factors from
8 the customary and traditional use
9 determination process.

10

11 2. Allowing each Regional Advisory
12 Council to determine its own process to
13 identify eligibility of rural residents
14 for the Federal Program.

15

16 3. Requiring the Board to defer to
17 Regional Advisory Council
18 recommendations on customary and
19 traditional use determinations.

20

21 Additionally, the first appendix,
22 marked Appendix A of that briefing, beginning on Page
23 21, provide the current status of the review process
24 and a summary of Regional Advisory Council comments and
25 actions in 2013 and 2014. You can find a summary of
26 your Council's comments starting on Page 14. And I've
27 taken the time to summarize yours into a one page
28 handout, which I'll pass out now.

29

30 (Pause)

31

32 MR. BROOKS: Mr. Chair. What you'll
33 find in that handout is basically what I'm going to
34 reiterate now. As of the end of the fall meeting
35 cycle, three Councils, in response to the Secretarial
36 Review, supported changes to the existing customary and
37 traditional use determination process. Three Councils
38 supported keeping the process as it is currently. And
39 four Councils postponed action until more information
40 was forthcoming. And that is the case for the Seward
41 Peninsula Regional Advisory Council.

42

43 Once, again, this is not an action item
44 and no recommendation from the Council is necessary at
45 this time. I am just here to keep you apprised of
46 where we are in the review process.

47

48 The review of the process and the
49 proposed language from the Southeast Council is
50 ongoing.

1 That is the end of my presentation.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair. And myself and
4 my colleagues from the Office of Subsistence Management
5 and possibly others from other Federal agencies will
6 try to answer any questions that you may have at this
7 time.

8

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Are there any
10 questions of Mr. Brooks.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: My reaction to
15 this when it first came out is I'm not really sure what
16 they're trying to accomplish and I think other people
17 feel the same about it. It's still not -- you know, I
18 have to admit I haven't studied this very thoroughly,
19 but it's still not clear to me exactly what they're
20 trying to accomplish.

21

22 What was wrong with the -- what's wrong
23 with the current eight criteria system?

24

25 MR. BROOKS: That's a great question.
26 And in that full briefing, if you turn to the first
27 letter in there, which is Page 23, the second page of
28 the letter, which is on Page 24, they have summarized
29 what their major problem is. And in a general sense,
30 they see the current customary and traditional use
31 determination process as restricting subsistence --
32 rural subsistence harvesters during times when there is
33 not a conservation concern.

34

35 If you look at the middle of the big
36 paragraph that starts the current Federal customary and
37 traditional use determinations, about midway down
38 there's a sentence that says, the current customary and
39 traditional use determination process is being used to
40 allocate resources between rural residences often in
41 times of abundance. This is an inappropriate method of
42 deciding which residents can harvest fish or wildlife
43 in an area and may result in unnecessarily restricting
44 subsistence users.

45

46 That is sort of their take on it, their
47 major beef.

48

49 Another thing that you'll hear is that,
50 although it is in Federal regulations, the eight

1 factors, as we call them on the Federal side, were
2 adopted from the State of Alaska and they're not
3 necessarily mentioned in ANILCA, Title VIII. ANILCA
4 Title VIII does not say anything about those. And that
5 is another thing that the Southeast Council finds to be
6 an issue.

7

8 Does that answer your question.

9

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Can you give me
11 an example of where subsistence users would be
12 restricted during times of abundance, I can't think of
13 one in this area, can you give me an example of where
14 that would happen.

15

16 MR. BROOKS: That's another good
17 question.

18

19 This briefing, the bulk of it, between
20 Pages 1 and 20, lists several examples of what these
21 changes would look like for all the regions. And we
22 can go over the one for your region that's in here
23 right now if you want but.....

24

25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, let's do
26 it.

27

28 MR. BROOKS:to answer your
29 question in general. I have not done a lot of C&T
30 analysis myself.

31

32 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Uh-huh.

33

34 MR. BROOKS: But there has been a
35 recent case that I worked on about a year ago down on
36 the Kenai Peninsula where one community was asking to
37 hunt, I believe it was moose, and I'm not sure,
38 exactly, this population, I don't believe there was a
39 conservation concern at all, but a community was
40 seeking customary and traditional use determination to
41 hunt moose in an area that was maybe 50 to 80 miles
42 away from their community and they were denied that
43 customary and traditional use determination and that
44 may be an example of where they were restricted when
45 there wasn't a conservation concern. Whereas if they
46 would have had a C&T for moose, you know, in that whole
47 game management unit, for example, they could go there
48 and hunt those moose under subsistence Federal
49 regulations.

50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I see.

2

3 MR. JOHNSON: I think a different
4 question would be, when times if a positive C&T
5 determination is made for a community, does making it
6 for that community restrict other subsistence users.
7 So that's at the heart of the Southeast concern. And,
8 that is, if you look at the regulation it says the
9 following communities have a positive C&T for moose in
10 Unit 22E, does that restrict other users, does that
11 mean they can't come in and hunt moose in Unit 22E.
12 And so I think that's the primary concern that
13 Southeast had.

14

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Under current
16 regulations, maybe if you could clarify that, if you
17 don't have C&T does that mean you're not eligible for
18 subsistence at all under any -- no matter how many game
19 animals there are?

20

21 MR. BROOKS: Well, you -- for the
22 Federal side if you're not in that customary and
23 traditional use determination you can't hunt on Federal
24 public lands under Federal regulations for that species
25 in that area or unit or zone, you would have to be part
26 of the C&T.

27

28 Now, the Federal -- the State
29 subsistence hunts, it's -- when things are going fine
30 it's open to all residents of Alaska.

31

32 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, I'm
33 starting to see the problem, though, I don't know that
34 their solution is really a good solution.

35

36 MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. I can just --
37 just for an example, it's not the use of the -- the use
38 of the resource isn't necessarily restricted to the
39 unit in which a person lives, we have several examples
40 where somebody might live in another unit but have C&T
41 for moose in a neighboring unit so it's all done by the
42 C&T determination, not necessarily by where you live.
43 So that's not always the case but it's -- sometimes it
44 is, so that's.....

45

46 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead Carl.

47

48 MR. JOHNSON: And, for example, Mr.
49 Chair, and for those on line, this is Carl Johnson,
50 Office of Subsistence Management.

1 The reason why -- whenever there is a
2 Yukon salmon fish proposal for Federal regulations
3 that's going to go before the Board, this Council
4 always hears it because the communities of Stebbins and
5 St. Michael have a positive C&T determination for Yukon
6 salmon. So were it not for that, since the Yukon
7 doesn't run through the Seward Peninsula region, the
8 Seward Peninsula wouldn't be considering those
9 proposals. But since there is that C&T determination
10 that's why this Council always provides recommendations
11 on Yukon River salmon proposals.

12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: More questions
14 from the RAC.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'm still a
19 little unsure of why this proposed solution would make
20 things better, but are there any questions from other
21 RAC members.

22
23
24 (No comments)

25
26 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is there anybody
27 on the phone that wants to comment on this issue.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead.

32
33 MR. BROOKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 Just on a last note, since the Seward Peninsula
35 Regional Advisory Council has postponed any action and
36 I think you're seeking more clarification or
37 information, you know, we could talk now or off record
38 on how to proceed. Would you like to, between now and
39 the next meeting cycle, would you like to get together
40 with your Council coordinator and Staff at OSM to
41 further discuss this, to do some type of training,
42 workshop, or a more simplified briefing, for example;
43 anything like that would be possible?

44
45 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Council members,
46 any preference.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is anybody

1 interested in having -- taking a position on this issue
2 today.

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I guess not. So
7 what about additional -- I mean I guess the starting
8 point would be, for me, just to read it more carefully,
9 I haven't done that yet. It's so far away I'm not sure
10 that it's worth the time to educate us on. I mean what
11 do you guys think.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: What would you
16 recommend, Jeff, what should we do?

17

18 MR. BROOKS: Well, I'd just like to
19 leave it open to the Council's desire and wisdom on
20 whether or not they would like more information and
21 help from OSM Staff before eventually making an action
22 in the future. I mean I'm not sure if you're going to
23 -- I mean I don't think we're ever going to force you
24 to make any action so like I said the review is ongoing
25 and we'd be willing to help any way we can.

26

27 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We'll be -- if
28 they change the C&T determination process, the whole
29 state will be affected, right; is that correct?

30

31 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, that's correct, it's
32 a state -- it'd be statewide but part of the proposed
33 language and this may or may not carry through to a new
34 regulation but right now it's suggesting that there be
35 some room in there, in regulation, for customary and
36 traditional use determinations to be made more on a
37 regional basis, so they could be -- there could be
38 differences from region to region since the regions are
39 difference and also, you know, right now the Federal
40 Subsistence Board generally, as a matter of policy,
41 defers to the RACs on customary and traditional use
42 determinations. That would go into regulations as they
43 would defer.

44

45 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: What's the --
46 what's the timeline, when do we need to get our
47 comments in if we want to be heard?

48

49 MR. BROOKS: I'm going to defer to Carl
50 on that because I basically have the timeline for the

1 rural determination process in my head right now and I
2 don't want to confuse myself or you.

3

4 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, so for the record,
5 Carl Johnson. So there's no timeline on this
6 particular issue, Mr. Chair, because the Southeast
7 Council is considering making a formal regulatory
8 proposal but at this time they just wanted a briefing
9 from anthropology Staff on some different consequences
10 of some of their different proposal they're
11 considering. So this is primarily informational for
12 them but in order to just kind of keep the dialogue
13 going with the Councils and to provide more opportunity
14 forfor Q&A, it was just determined to just share this
15 briefing with all the Councils but there's no timeline,
16 there's nothing pending, and so there's no need for the
17 Council to take action. And if the Southeast Council
18 does submit a proposal then all of the Councils would
19 be provided an opportunity to provide their specific
20 recommendations for action on that proposal.

21

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay, I guess is
23 there anything -- go ahead Amos.

24

25 MR. OXEREOK: You said you had
26 something to do with the Seward Peninsula that's in
27 this packet?

28

29 MR. BROOKS: Yes, I do, Mr. Amos -- Mr.
30 Chair, if that's all right with you.

31

32 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, go ahead.

33

34 MR. BROOKS: If you turn to Page 14 of
35 the full briefing, please, you'll see a short section,
36 subsection titled Seward Peninsula region. These are
37 examples put forth:

38

39 In Unit 22, Seward Peninsula region,
40 any rural resident may harvest coyotes,
41 beavers, Arctic foxes, red foxes,
42 hares, lynx, martens, minks and
43 weasels, otters and wolverines in
44 Federal seasons on Federal public
45 lands.

46

47 This is an example of what a new
48 customary and traditional use determination might look
49 like if proposed changes were adopted.

50

1 So in the regulation book it'll say all
2 rural residents for the customary and traditional use
3 determination. Now, that may be the case now or it may
4 be certain communities for those species, but I'm not
5 -- not positive, but more importantly it gets into,
6 there underneath the little table, it starts to talk
7 about examples of ANILCA Section .804 determinations on
8 the Seward Peninsula. And this is important to try to
9 understand because in the proposed regulations, the
10 proposed changes to the customary and traditional use
11 determination, one of the suggestions is that when the
12 eight factors are eliminated, that we would rely on
13 ANILCA, Section .804, which has three criteria for
14 determining, in times of conservation concern or
15 shortage, who among the qualified Federal users can
16 harvest from a population.

17
18 So this takes you through an example of
19 an .804, I believe it's for moose, and it's a very
20 short section, it goes over to the top of the next
21 page, and it shows you what the .804 determination
22 would be and it gives you the regulation.

23
24 But this is what's very complex and
25 confusing about this, because for every region there's
26 different land -- there's different amounts of State
27 and Federal land so the effects of these changes,
28 depending on what the State may do with their seasons
29 or what happens with the .804 process can be different
30 for the regions. When you normally -- normally when an
31 .804 analysis is done that means that all the State
32 seasons are closed on Federal land before that is, you
33 know, considered. And there's some exceptions to that,
34 that are confusing. Sometimes RACs have asked that the
35 State subsistence season be left open, only people with
36 the C&T would be able to hunt, it wouldn't be for all
37 State residents.

38
39 So this briefing, and it is very
40 important for the members of the RAC to take some time
41 to read it because it offers different scenarios and
42 examples of what might happen if this regulation was
43 changed.

44
45 But that, at the top of Page 15, and
46 the bottom of 14, is the example for the Seward
47 Peninsula.

48
49 MR. OXEREOK: Thank you very much.
50

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Jeff, the problem
2 I've got with this is it doesn't indicate what the
3 current situation is, it says what it would be under
4 the new regulations but it doesn't say what it would be
5 under the current situation and I'm having a hard time
6 telling how it would be different.

7
8 MR. BROOKS: Well, that is one of the
9 drawbacks of this particular analysis but you can look
10 it up in your regulation booklet. But really it's not
11 meant to -- it's not designed to compare what it is now
12 to what it would be, it's sort of designed to show you
13 would the effects of not using the current regulations
14 are. So if we were just operating under the .804
15 process and not the eight factors of the C&T
16 regulations, customary and traditional use
17 determination regulations, it shows you what that might
18 look like and these are hypothetical.

19
20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have any
21 more questions on this issue from the Council.

22
23
24 (No comments)

25
26 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I guess not,
27 Jeff, thanks for the report.

28
29 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

30
31 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I made a note,
32 Carl, by Refuge's proposed rule but it's so cryptic, I
33 can't understand what I meant.

34
35 MR. JOHNSON: That's fine, Mr. Chair,
36 that's what I'm here for. So we moved that down to new
37 business. Right now we have, B, call for hunting,
38 trapping proposals, and then we added C, the Council
39 will present its own, discuss its own proposals, and
40 then after that is when we will do the Refuge's
41 proposed rule on hunting.

42
43 So the next step on the agenda would
44 then be the Park Service.

45
46 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay, Jeanette,
47 are you going to do that for us -- Ken Adkisson.

48
49 MR. ADKISSON: Good afternoon, Mr.
50 Chair, and Council members. Ken Adkisson, National

1 Park Service.

2

3 What we want to do this afternoon is
4 just give you a very quick update on the so-called
5 horns and antlers collection and use issue.

6

7 For most of the Council members this is
8 really old business in the sense that you've had
9 presentations going over a period of several years on
10 the intent of the change to Park Service regulations
11 and kind of where we -- the long drawn out process of
12 where we are from constructing the EA, to getting
13 comments on it, to developing a finding of no
14 significant impact for it. And this may be news,
15 though, to some of the newer Council members so that's
16 basically what we're just going to quickly touch on.

17

18 The Park Service has nationwide
19 regulations that govern the collection and use of like
20 natural products, feathers, antlers, parts of animals
21 and so forth that are very, very restrictive. And
22 unfortunately those have applied over to Alaska
23 National Parks established under ANILCA and their
24 Preserves. And what the intent of these regulations
25 that, you know, we're working on is to basically get
26 Park Service regulations in Alaska to accommodate
27 traditional practices, so basically to bring the Park
28 Service into line with what people basically do and
29 use, the products they use.

30

31 For example the last Regional Advisory
32 Council meeting that we had, you actually commented on
33 some of these and prepared a letter to the Park
34 Superintendent with it with your comments, so basically
35 all we want to do today is kind of give you an idea of
36 where we're at in it. And, currently, we're plugging
37 along developing a draft regulation and that will
38 eventually be published for comment.

39

40 In your book, I believe it's on Page
41 14, you have a copy of just a little bit of what that
42 regulation could look like. And it's very simple, and
43 if you look at that page, basically you'll see the top
44 part of it is basically some definitional material and
45 you get halfway down the page to where it says Section
46 13.482 subsistence collection and use of parts and
47 you'll see that the regulation begins to lay out
48 conditions, for example, eligibility.

49

50 For example:

1 Local rural residents may collect wild
2 renewable byproducts of wildlife,
3 excluding migratory birds and marine
4 mammals for subsistence use in park
5 areas where subsistence uses are
6 allowed, provided that:
7

8 The resident has a Federal customary
9 and traditional use determination for
10 that species.
11

12 So what that means is that if a person
13 has a customary and traditional use determination for a
14 given species in that Park area they'll be able to
15 collect and use parts from that animal for subsistence
16 purposes, whether or not they harvested, so if you're
17 out in that Park and you have C&T for muskoxen and you
18 find a dead muskox and you want to collect the horns
19 for making arts and crafts and so forth, you can do
20 that. Under current regulations you cannot do that.
21

22 We also don't have very many provisions
23 for plants and this will add plants to that.
24

25 If you go further down you'll see that
26 an awful lot of what finally transpires is going to
27 depend on the Superintendent of each individual Park.
28 And.....
29

30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Could I stop you
31 right there Ken.
32

33 MR. ADKISSON: Sure.
34

35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Did you say that
36 it doesn't apply to marine mammals?
37

38 MR. ADKISSON: Correct.
39

40 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: So picking up
41 walrus ivory would still be a violation?
42

43 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah, if it's not a
44 provision of some sort of other Federal regulation,
45 like Fish and Wildlife Service or something, I mean you
46 should be able to scavenge those parts basically on
47 State lands if they're like, you know, below mean high
48 tide line and stuff, yeah.
49

50 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair.

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Ted.

2

3 MR. KATCHEAK: I'd like to make a
4 comment on the reindeer antlers that -- the reindeers
5 that shed their antlers within the wildlife Refuge
6 area, south of Stebbins and St. Michael. I've seen a
7 big pile of antlers, reindeer antlers all gathered up a
8 few years ago and these were people from the Yukon that
9 came around to gather those antlers, you know, big
10 bundle and for some reason they figured that it was
11 anybody's game or property that -- because it's within
12 the wildlife Refuge area, that they were -- they felt
13 that it was their right to go out and gather those
14 antlers for handicraft, I don't know, they -- they came
15 over and then they left with the bundle of antlers,
16 reindeer antlers and nothing was done about it. There
17 was no enforcement or reporting of theft or the use of
18 those antlers.

19

20 We -- the people of Stebbins and St.
21 Michael traditionally leave those antlers alone and
22 maybe that is a reason why those men from unknown
23 village came over and picked up all those antlers and
24 moved them somewhere else in Yukon. It's just kind of
25 a -- it kind of makes me think it's anybody's property,
26 once the antlers are shed from the reindeer that it
27 doesn't concern us, we have no enforcement ability to
28 charge these people that come around. And it seems to
29 be an ongoing thing right now and I hope somebody will
30 address it, either from the Village Corporation of
31 Stebbins and St. Michael or the tribes of Stebbins and
32 St. Michael.

33

34 MR. ADKISSON: Member Katcheak, through
35 the Chair. Yeah, that's a really interesting question
36 and I'm not sure how that would affect where we're
37 going with our regulations.

38

39 In the large parts of the Preserve, if
40 they just came upon some shed antlers it would probably
41 be pretty hard to tell whether it came from a reindeer
42 ultimately or came from a caribou. If you did find
43 piles like that that poses special other issues, for
44 example, whether those constitute, for example, if you
45 find large piles of them that's probably a human agency
46 that put them there and that could be an archeological
47 site or historic site under something like a cemetery
48 and historic site in which case we would probably want
49 to put some sort of protections on it. I don't know
50 whether many of the herders are still trying to sell,

1 you know, velvet antlers and things as medicinal
2 purposes in Asia or not but, you know, generally they
3 were cutting a lot of their stuff at handlings and so
4 forth. So, you know, I don't think it's going to be
5 much of a problem but it really is an interesting
6 question especially in your neck of the woods and I
7 guess it's something we would have to look for but I'm
8 not sure it would affect where we're going right now
9 for Bering LandBridge in terms of the regulations.

10

11 MR. KATCHEAK: In this instance I know
12 they were reindeer antlers, I'm fairly familiar with, I
13 grew up with reindeer antlers, reindeer.

14

15 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah, well, you would.

16

17 MR. KATCHEAK: So it's no question that
18 they were some other animal that had those antlers.

19

20 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah.

21

22 MR. KATCHEAK: So it's.....

23

24 MR. ADKISSON: I think we would try to
25 be sensitive to that kind of condition if we had
26 information from reindeer herders within our range that
27 would do that.

28

29 Keep in mind these are Park Service
30 regulations and they only apply on those Park Service
31 lands.

32

33 MR. KATCHEAK: The reason why I noticed
34 that is I have a cabin up river and my wife and I we go
35 out and fish salmon and catch salmon at the camp and
36 sometimes just go out to camp and spend our time there
37 and so it was very interesting, all of a sudden we had
38 a big pile of antlers and I don't think a big rain or
39 flood would cause that to -- for those antlers to
40 accumulate that close together, that it was some -- I
41 figure it was somebody from Yukon and they were gone a
42 few days later. It was just how -- peculiar how all of
43 a sudden there was a big pile of antlers and in a few
44 days they were gone.

45

46 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah, we'll also have
47 provisions for like, you know, commercial levels of
48 activity and stuff so those are the kinds of things we
49 would probably be looking for that might, in a certain
50 circumstance, constitute a violation of the

1 regulations.

2

3 MR. KATCHEAK: So other than those
4 antlers I noticed they were copper, because we have
5 some old abandoned steamboat little -- old steamboats
6 and I know what copper looks like and it just -- I mean
7 that's -- to me that's a theft.

8

9 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah.

10

11 MR. KATCHEAK: I don't know how you
12 would put it but that's, to me, that was stealing and
13 they knew where it was and they knew where to put it.

14

15 MR. ADKISSON: Right. Yeah, those are
16 the kinds of things we'd have to be looking for.

17

18 Like I said, though, the Superintendent
19 is going to probably have a great deal of authority
20 when this thing gets through and the Superintendent
21 could put restrictions on the amounts, the kinds and
22 materials that'd be collected, and restrict areas
23 where, for other reasons, the Park Service might want
24 to more tightly control the collections, for example,
25 in areas of historic sites or heavily visited Park
26 sites like Serpentine Hot Springs or something. But,
27 again, keep in mind that the purpose of this is really
28 to accommodate traditional uses where the regulations
29 currently don't allow for that.

30

31 So, you know, take a look at that, if
32 you have any comments later on, be glad to try to take
33 them but we're still a long ways from the package.
34 You'll notice that there isn't any discussion of plant
35 materials in the page that you've got in your book and
36 right now we're working on developing the rest of the
37 reg package in terms of like the informational material
38 that goes in front of the reg package like the history
39 of it and why we're doing this and so forth, like that,
40 what's called the preamble to a Federal regulation
41 publication. So this is to let you know that we're
42 kind of still moving on it and sort of an idea of where
43 it's kind of headed in terms of the stuff that's
44 actually going to be in the regs and the stuff that may
45 be addressed through a Park Service compendium for an
46 individual Park where we might have maps or we might
47 have lists of eligibles and the people or communities,
48 like, that are eligible to collect and that sort of
49 thing. And, then, of course, there's the problems of
50 education to people and communication of what they can

1 do and what they can't do and getting all that material
2 out.

3

4 So we're still a long ways from it but
5 it is chugging along but if you have any comments at
6 this point we'll be glad to take them.

7

8 And we'll keep you advised as the
9 process goes along.

10

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Fred.

12

13 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yeah, Ken, this is
14 Fred.

15

16 Just looking at these here and the list
17 of what you have, what we can utilize for our
18 handicraft and what I don't see is mastodon ivory
19 because we do have C&T, we do utilize -- you know, it's
20 been going on for years and years and years, we collect
21 them for our -- when we need to carve bracelets or
22 sometime to make money and I just don't see it on here
23 in collecting, you know, mastodon scraps of ivory, you
24 know, that washup or, you know, just laying there and
25 we do utilize those. And I heard some reports of some
26 individuals working with the Park Service and they
27 won't allow you to do that.

28

29 MR. ADKISSON: That is correct.

30

31 MR. ENINGOWUK: And you know these are
32 just, you know, scraps of ivory that we can use to, you
33 know, make handicraft out of it and I just don't see
34 that in here.

35

36 MR. ADKISSON: All I can tell you is
37 that perhaps it's unfortunate but that's the way it is
38 because those kind of -- that's actually considered a
39 paleontological specimen and it's not considered a
40 wild, renewable resource. We don't have any more
41 mammoths running around, they're not having mammoths
42 die and leave tusks out on the tundra anymore and so
43 that's not considered a wild, renewable resource and
44 it's considered more like an archeological
45 paleontological specimen and those are not covered
46 under these regulations, and they unfortunately, as you
47 describe, remain prohibited on Park Service lands for
48 that kind of thing.

49

50 It doesn't mean that you can't collect

1 them elsewhere, but technically it's prohibited on --
2 collecting them off of Park Service lands. And I just
3 don't see that changing. But that's not part of this
4 package. We're aware of the use of them out there but
5 there's nothing that we can really do about it at this
6 stage of the game.

7

8 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yeah, and, , you know,
9 I'm thankful that the private land we have up there or
10 corporation lands, and so I'm fortunate enough to be
11 able to collect whatever I need from our own land and,
12 you know, sometimes we're hunting, traveling many miles
13 and, you know, when we go beach combing sometimes and,
14 you know, we don't dig or anything, we just beachcomb,
15 we see it on top of the sand and, you know, we just
16 pick it up and just utilize it, you know, we don't go
17 digging for it or anything or destroy the land where we
18 look for these items.

19

20 MR. ADKISSON: Well, I think in all
21 honesty in a case like that I really doubt if you'd be
22 prosecuted for it, I doubt if we'd even be aware of it,
23 but it is illegal and if you were noticed making those
24 kind of collections you'd violate a regulation and
25 subject to a citation or whatever. You know that's
26 probably not, for the most part, a really terribly
27 serious offense, but if people are actually digging
28 material -- removing materials from say in a bank
29 along, you know, a river or something like that in the
30 Preserve, that kind of thing is, you know, much more
31 serious and, you know, we'd put a lot more effort into
32 trying to address it so, you know, it's just one of
33 those unfortunate things perhaps but it is not covered
34 and it remains illegal.

35

36 I can't tell you much else except that
37 like I said, in many cases like that I doubt if you'd
38 ever be prosecuted for it but, you know, the
39 possibility is there and if somebody would look at it
40 from a point of view of how serious of an infraction is
41 it and so forth but it's like a lot of things in life.

42

43 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair.

44

45 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Ted.

46

47 MR. KATCHEAK: Ken. Thank you, Fred,
48 for reminding me, we have a similar problem in Stebbins
49 and south of St. Michael. WE have a lot of mastodon
50 bones and tusks and sometimes we find a whole piece of

1 tusk, eight or nine feet long and these are sold to
2 different buyers, mastodon tusks and bones, so it's
3 kind of a prevalent thing that people come around from
4 other villages to gather these tusks and bones because
5 they're -- you could just kind of pick them from along
6 the coast and from the flats and they're, too me,
7 there's a lot of that -- a lot of those in our area.
8 So it just kind of -- who's property are those or how
9 do we prevent those people from coming around and
10 getting those bones and tusks and sell them because
11 it's in our corporation lands and in our wildlife
12 Refuge lands.

13

14 MR. ADKISSON: Mr. Katcheak, that's really kind
15 of a more complex question and outside the scope of
16 what we're doing, but most of those things are
17 recognized as valuable resources to some degree as a
18 public property resource. You know, it depends on
19 whose land you're on and what kind of laws and
20 regulations govern the use of that.

21

22 I know that we've had some Native
23 corporations in the past, village corporations in this
24 region, ask for assistance on how to like develop some
25 kind of land use ordinance for the corporation or, in
26 some cases, a tribal ordinance or something like that
27 that might govern the collection of those kinds of
28 materials off those lands.

29

30 You can always be willing to explore
31 with us options or we can offer you any technical
32 assistance or like point you towards the State historic
33 preservation officers. Officers somewhere like that
34 that you could get information on the legality or
35 whatever, what's allowed under State law and on what
36 lands. Some states vary. Some states consider just
37 like a subsurface resource that belongs to the
38 landowner. Some states consider it public property
39 and, you know, it doesn't matter whether it occurs on
40 your land or not. It still belongs to the state.

41

42 So it really differs and you'd have to
43 be familiar with what laws apply in your area. Then,
44 like I say, you can get assistance on how to try to
45 develop a tribal ordinance. A lot of villages are very
46 concerned with the loss of their local heritage through
47 that kind of activity.

48

49 The other thing I would point out about
50 this is we're talking about collecting these things and

1 then reselling them. That's not the intent of these
2 regulations either. The intent is to be able to find
3 this stuff, collect it and make a handicraft, do
4 something with it and then sell that. It's not to go
5 around amassing this stuff for basically commercial
6 resell to a dealer or something like that and that will
7 remain prohibited.

8

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Did you have
10 something to add?

11

12 MR. OXEREOK: Yes. On National Park
13 Service lands, when you take a muskox, do you have to
14 turn in the horn like you have -- like right now if we
15 hunt it near the village, we have to destroy the horn
16 and send that in and that doesn't come back to us to
17 use for traditional crafts.

18

19 MR. ADKISSON: That's true under State
20 regulations. That's not true under Federal
21 regulations. So if you take a muskoxen on Federal
22 public lands and you are Federally eligible, i.e.
23 meaning you have a Federal permit or you are Federally
24 eligible and are using a State permit on that Federal
25 public lands, you get to keep the animal as long as
26 you're taking it under Federal regulations.

27

28 Now that could be subject to change and
29 that's one of those kind of management tools that
30 wildlife managers use to kind of control demand or
31 whatever sometimes. It's not been an issue on the
32 Federal side that much, so we've resisted using that
33 technique, but that could change at some point in time,
34 but right now if you take that muskoxen on Federal
35 public lands under Federal regulations, the entire
36 critter is yours and you do not have to destroy the
37 horns.

38

39 MR. OXEREOK: Thank you.

40

41 MR. ADKISSON: Keep in mind though that
42 there are Federal regulations regarding to sale of
43 trophies. So if you take the whole head and try to
44 just go out and directly sell that, you're basically
45 violating both a Federal and State regulation.

46

47 MR. OXEREOK: Yeah, my uncle likes to
48 make artwork out of them.

49

50 MR. ADKISSON: You're good. You could

1 actually take the animal and give the horns to your
2 uncle.

3

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Council members,
5 any more questions on this issue.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I have one, Ken.
10 Is there some fundamental reason for not having marine
11 mammals covered by this?

12

13 MR. ADKISSON: I guess the only thing I
14 could say to that is very seldom are you going to find
15 a marine mammal carcass actually on the Federal public
16 lands. Most of them are going to be in those like
17 intertidal zones or below high tide where we don't have
18 any jurisdiction. If the thing has been there for 150
19 years or something buried in beach sands or something,
20 there's a good chance that it's not just, you know, a
21 carcass, that it's probably associated with an
22 archaeological site or something like that, in which
23 case it's not eligible either. But we basically don't
24 have jurisdiction over marine mammals.

25

26 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: But collection is
27 allowed for walruses, for example, under Fish and
28 Wildlife Service -- both Fish and Wildlife Service
29 regulations and National Marine Fisheries Service
30 regulations allow you to pick up whale parts within a
31 quarter mile of the beach, but within a quarter mile of
32 the beach would definitely be on Park Service land. If
33 you're a quarter mile away from the beach, you're no
34 longer on State land.

35

36 I'm just wondering. I think that's
37 going to be one of the more controversial parts of this
38 thing, is the marine mammal parts, and I'm just
39 wondering why they're excluded.

40

41 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah, like in Bering
42 Land Bridge I'm not quite sure where something like
43 that would actually come to apply because in most cases
44 you're looking at mean high tide line or something like
45 that and which goes right up to the shore.

46

47 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, see, the
48 carcasses get washed up by tides that are higher than
49 mean high tide, so they're no longer in the mean high
50 tide zone. When a storm comes along, it pushes them up

1 beyond that.

2

3 MR. ADKISSON: Yes, that's possible. I
4 really doubt if we would have much problem with that in
5 all honesty. I think that would be a more rare
6 occasion. I don't think we would be out looking for
7 that. I don't think we would be checking. It's sure
8 probably not going to be a volume kind of issue.

9

10 Like I said on the other hand, there's
11 all kinds of stuff in beach side archeological sites
12 and that is something we're concerned about, is removal
13 of those materials from those kind of sites. I don't
14 know that we're going to recognize that in the regs,
15 but I don't think, on the other hand, that
16 realistically, from what you're describing we would
17 have much of a problem with. Especially if it's covered
18 under Fish and Wildlife Service regs or whatever.

19

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Just to clarify
21 though, under these regs it wouldn't be legal to pick
22 up marine mammal parts off of a.....

23

24 MR. ADKISSON: That would be my
25 interpretation. I actually, in all honesty, would have
26 to do some additional checking with our folks in
27 Anchorage, but that would be my initial impression.

28

29 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is there anything
30 that can be done about that to include marine mammals
31 in the general allowance?

32

33 MR. ADKISSON: I don't really know but
34 I'll look into it.

35

36 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'm just thinking
37 if it is, that the Council might want to direct a
38 letter with that in mind because I think it would be an
39 issue for people out here.

40

41 Go ahead, Carl.

42

43 MR. JOHNSON: I think this gets back to
44 something that you mentioned earlier regarding
45 disparate jurisdictional management by different
46 agencies. Marine mammals typically, as noted, come
47 under other agencies' jurisdiction, so it wouldn't be
48 within the Park Service purview to issue regulations
49 about animals they don't have jurisdiction over.

50

1 Typically what we're talking about here
2 are animals that are commonly within the jurisdiction
3 of the Park Service, like caribou or moose, whereas
4 marine mammals are in the jurisdiction of either NMFS
5 or Fish and Wildlife Service. If there are existing
6 regulations that allow for the collection of those,
7 then those are the regulations that would govern,
8 whereas Park Service regulations would govern those
9 things that are within the Park Service jurisdiction.

10

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, it's the
12 situation, if I'm correct, is that collection is
13 allowed under NMFS and Fish and Wildlife Service regs,
14 but it would be prohibited under these regs if it's on
15 Park Service Land.

16

17 MR. ADKISSON: No. Normally when an
18 agency promulgates regulations like this that doesn't
19 necessarily supercede other regulations that are
20 applicable. Like Carl said, there's a pretty fine
21 clear line between the jurisdiction over marine mammal
22 parts and things compared to what the Park Service has
23 jurisdiction. I guess the basic answer to that is I
24 don't know that we would even worry about it if it's
25 legal under Fish and Wildlife Service regulations or
26 whatever for the collection of marine mammal parts.
27 We're not intending to change that.

28

29 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, I don't
30 mean to belabor this, but say there's a walrus head a
31 quarter mile from the beach, from the water line. It's
32 legal to collect it under U.S. Fish and Wildlife
33 Service regulations, but it wouldn't be legal to
34 collect it under this collection policy that we're
35 talking about here.

36

37 MR. ADKISSON: You're not collecting it
38 under our regulations, you're collecting it under Fish
39 and Wildlife Service regulations.

40

41 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, that should
42 be clarified somehow because I didn't realize that.

43

44 Go ahead, Charlie.

45

46 MR. SACCHEUS: If you own like 316,000
47 acres of private land, if the moose and caribou and
48 muskox drop their horns inside the 316,000 acres, how
49 do you take care of that? Does it belong to the
50 corporation?

1 MR. ADKISSON: If it's on private land,
2 it's not part of this either. That would be a matter
3 of talking, I think, to your corporation as to what
4 kind of uses they wanted on their land. But if it's on
5 private land, like an allotment or Native corporation,
6 village or regional corporation land, that's private
7 land. It isn't covered by these regulations.

8
9 MR. SACCHEUS: Thank you.

10
11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Anything else.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 MR. ADKISSON: Thank you Council
16 members and Chair.

17
18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: That concludes
19 old business and brings us to new business. We have a
20 number of wildlife proposals to look at. I guess we're
21 listening to Chris today.

22
23 MR. MCKEE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
24 Members of the Council. As you can see on the agenda
25 there, I have quite a few closure reviews to go over
26 with you. Before I start I just want to give a brief
27 overview of the wildlife closure review policy. It's
28 there in the booklet on Page 16. There are a couple of
29 typos in there that I will correct as I'm going along.

30
31 OSM is reviewing existing wildlife
32 closures to determine whether the original
33 justifications for the closures continue to apply. The
34 idea to keep in mind here is that when Federal public
35 lands are closed for whatever reason, usually because
36 of conservation reasons, these closures aren't intended
37 to exist in perpetuity. If conditions change, then
38 it's purposely meant for these closures to be lifted.

39
40 According to our policy, existing
41 closures are reviewed at least every three years.
42 Sometimes they are reviewed earlier if something else
43 happens to the regulatory process. For instance,
44 during the last wildlife cycle, if you'll remember, you
45 had several muskox proposals that came up. One of
46 which was in an area that had been closed to Federal
47 users, so we're not doing a review on that closure now
48 because it was addressed under a previous wildlife
49 proposal. Unless something like that comes along, we
50 are on an every three year review process.

1 The Federal Board is authorized to
2 restrict or close the taking of fish and wildlife by
3 subsistence and non-subsistence
4 users on Federal public lands and waters if necessary
5 for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and
6 wildlife, for the continuance subsistence usage of such
7 populations or also for reasons of public safety,
8 administration, or the continued viability of such
9 populations.

10
11 So, again, we are under a rule to
12 review these closures every three years. Some regions
13 don't have any this time around and others have maybe
14 one or two. For whatever reason, because of a variety
15 of reasons, the Seward Pen now has five closures for
16 you to review at this meeting.

17
18 A Wildlife Closure Review contains a
19 brief history of why a closure was implemented, along
20 with a summary of the current resource condition and
21 the OSM recommendation as to whether the closure should
22 be continued or lifted. Regional Advisory Councils are
23 asked to consider the OSM recommendation and share
24 their views on the issue. Input from the Councils is
25 critical to the development of regulatory proposals
26 needed to address adjustments to regulations.

27
28 After the Council reviews the closure
29 review, you basically have three options, and I just
30 want to make a point of clarification here that when I
31 give all of my overviews of the closure review, I
32 basically have three preliminary recommendations.
33 Either maintain status quo, initiate a proposal to
34 modify or eliminate the closure or some other type of
35 recommendation. So most of the closures being reviewed
36 by this Council on this cycle were last reviewed in
37 2011. In the booklet here it says 2008, but that's a
38 typo.

39
40 If the Council recommends to modify or
41 rescind a closure, they should submit a proposal as a
42 separate action item at this time. As you'll find out
43 from my briefing, with one exception out of the five
44 closure reviews I'm going to be presenting to you,
45 we're pretty much recommending maintaining the status
46 quo. When I get to the one that's the exception, I'll
47 go a little more in depth about that.

48
49 So the closures remain in effect until
50 changed by the Federal Subsistence Board and any

1 regulatory proposals that may result from this review
2 process will be considered through the normal
3 regulatory cycle. The current window for wildlife
4 proposals closes on March 25th of this year. At the
5 end there, that's another typo in there. So we had a
6 call for proposals beginning in January and again at
7 the end of March is when that window closes. So any
8 new proposals that come up either through the regular
9 process or because of closure reviews would have to be
10 submitted before that deadline.

11
12 I believe all these closure reviews
13 were given to you as a supplemental package. Do you
14 all have those in front of you here? Okay.

15
16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Council members,
17 they're in your yellow folder here. For the public,
18 there should be some -- there are some on the back
19 table?

20
21 MR. MCKEE: Yes, there are. Yes. So
22 the first one I'm going to go over with you is Federal
23 Wildlife Closure Review WCR14-11 and WCR14-12. These
24 are combined together as one analysis because 14-11
25 addresses the fall season and 14-12 addresses the
26 winter season.

27
28 The issue at hand is for moose in Unit
29 22B west of the Darby Mountains. The Federal public
30 lands are closed to the taking of moose except by
31 Federally qualified subsistence users hunting under
32 these regulations. I'm going to be repeating myself
33 several times, but just for issues of clarity I'll be
34 using the same language several times over the course
35 of my presentation.

36
37 This closure was initiated in 2002 when
38 the Federal Subsistence Board adopted WP2-34. Again,
39 that's a regular proposal submitted during the
40 regulatory cycle, which revised the moose season
41 harvest limit and also led to this restriction to non-
42 Federally qualified users in the affected area of 22B,
43 that is west of the Darbies.

44
45 The last time this closure was reviewed
46 was in 2010 under Closure Reviews 10-11 and 10-12. Now
47 understand the regulatory year in which the analysis is
48 started is where the number comes from, so it was
49 actually taken up by the Council at your winter meeting
50 of 2011.

1 Just kind of a brief background on the
2 moose population. The population of moose in the
3 Seward Peninsula grew rapidly in the 1960s through the
4 early 1980s and peaked sometime in the mid-1980s. In
5 1987, the moose population in Unit 22B west of the
6 Darbies was estimated just under 1,900 moose. Severe
7 winters and insufficient browse after that time led to
8 a decrease in the population to just under 500 animals
9 in 1999.

10
11 State management objectives for moose
12 in this area is to maintain a population of 1,000 to
13 1,200 moose. The most recent 22B west population
14 estimate was 767 animals and there continues to be low
15 recruitment in this area as well. Winter browse
16 habitat is no longer believed to be a major limiting
17 factor for moose at their current population levels,
18 but brown bear predation on calves is thought to be a
19 significant factor suppressing the moose populations in
20 Unit 22 as a whole.

21
22 Brown bear densities may have increased
23 over the last decade and moose recruitment rates have
24 also generally been low in Unit 22. In fact, a study
25 between 1996 and 1998 on calf survival indicated that
26 some 70 percent of calves died during the first month
27 with up to 75 percent of them dying by three months of
28 age. Additionally, wolves may also be a factor in
29 suppressing moose populations as wolf populations
30 become more numerous.

31
32 In terms of harvest history, since 2005
33 the reported fall harvest has ranged from 14 to 23
34 moose and the reported winter harvest has ranged from 2
35 to 6 moose. Local residents of Unit 22 accounted for
36 between 70 to 75 percent of moose harvested between '94
37 and 2004 and between about 80 to 90 percent since 2005.
38 Residents of White Mountain and Golovin are the primary
39 users of moose in 22B west of the Darbies.

40
41 Again, this will be the same for the
42 next several proposals, but our preliminary
43 recommendation is to maintain the status quo. That is
44 maintain this closure. The moose population in this
45 portion of 22B continues to be below State management
46 objectives with continuing a low recruitment. So
47 Federal public lands should remain closed to non-
48 Federally qualified users for the conservation of the
49 healthy population and to allow the continuation of
50 subsistence uses of moose as dictated of Section .815

1 of ANILCA during the fall and winter hunts.

2

3 I just want to stress one more time
4 that the necessity of the closure to Federal public
5 lands in this affected area and all the others that
6 I'll be talking about with you will be assessed every
7 three years per the Board review process that I
8 mentioned earlier or sooner if additional survey data
9 suggests that the closure should be lifted.

10

11 So, again, I just want to make sure
12 it's on the record to clarify that these closures don't
13 just exist in a bubble outside of the rest of the
14 universe. These aren't intended to stay closed forever
15 if resource conditions change.

16

17 So that's the first closure review that
18 I have for you. I certainly welcome any questions or
19 comments that you might have on it, but some of this
20 stuff is going to be similar. A couple different closure
21 reviews will be of very similar areas, so I'm not going
22 to repeat a lot of the same information that I already
23 gave you just for purposes of brevity because I know
24 you have quite a full agenda ahead of you.

25

26 If there's anything I can answer on
27 this one specifically, I'd be glad to at this time or
28 the policy or if you have any questions regarding it in
29 general.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Chris.
34 Council members, any questions.

35

36 MR. OXEREOK: Yes. This is Amos. You
37 said the population estimate, your latest estimate was
38 767. Can you give me the date of when you estimated
39 that population.

40

41 MR. MCKEE: That was in 2013.

42

43 MR. OXEREOK: Thank you.

44

45 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Did you want to
46 follow up?

47

48 MR. OXEREOK: No, that was it.

49

50 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Anybody else.

1 (No comments)
2
3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I've got to say,
4 Chris, this analysis is really nicely done. I
5 appreciate that. There's not much good news for moose.
6 We're going to need a motion on these proposals.
7
8 MR. BUCK: Looking over the estimated
9 number of moose, you said the last survey was done in
10 2013.
11
12 MR. MCKEE: Correct.
13
14 MR. BUCK: Okay. It looks like the
15 moose population is going up a little bit. The only
16 restrictions that we see is -- I mean the trouble we're
17 having is the weather. One year there's no rain, next
18 year too much rain, next year no snow and so those
19 variables, I don't know, it's hard to tell, but I hope
20 the population keeps going up.
21
22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Would you like to
23 respond to that?
24
25 MR. MCKEE: Was that a question?
26
27 MR. BUCK: No.
28
29 MR. MCKEE: Okay.
30
31 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Go ahead, Fred.
32
33 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yeah, looking at the
34 report 22E on page -- no page on here, but it seems
35 like it appears to be that in 22E the moose population
36 is well above what the State would like to have. It
37 appears to have a pretty healthy population in 22E. I
38 know not too many people are harvesting any moose up
39 there.
40
41 MR. MCKEE: Correct. That will be a
42 separate closure review that I'll be discussing with
43 you. That's the last of the closure reviews. That's
44 number five on the list of five to go through, so I'll
45 be getting to that in a little bit.
46
47 MR. ENINGOWUK: I'll take that back.
48 I'll get there. Sorry about that.
49
50 MR. MCKEE: No problem. So basically

1 what I need from you guys on each of these items is an
2 action item. So I need the Council to act.

3

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
5 motion then on WCR14-11/12. That would be Unit 22 west
6 of the Darby Mountains.

7

8 MR. BUCK: Make a motion to accept
9 WCR14-12 and WCR14-11.

10

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
12 second.

13

14 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. I would
15 suggest the motion language to be motion to maintain
16 the closure as recommended and then refer to the
17 closure numbers. Unlike a regulatory proposal, we're
18 not making a recommendation to either accept or reject
19 a proposal, but in this case we're trying to recommend
20 whether or not to maintain a closure.

21

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is that
23 acceptable to you, Peter.

24

25 MR. BUCK: I don't know. I didn't see
26 that.

27

28 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Take your time.

29

30 MR. MCKEE: You can see at the end of
31 each closure review you're given three options, either
32 maintain the status quo, rescind and modify or some
33 other recommendations. In this case, our
34 recommendation is to maintain the status quo, maintain
35 the closure, so the motion could be made in that
36 effect.

37

38 MR. OXEREOK: I'd like to give it a
39 shot.

40

41 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Shoot.

42

43 MR. OXEREOK: I'd like to make a motion
44 to maintain the status quo for the closure to WCR14-11
45 and WCR14-12.

46

47 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
48 second.

49

50 (No comments)

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Nobody wants to
2 second Amos's motion?

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 MR. JOHNSON: A point of order, Mr.
7 Chair. In the absence of a second, the motion will
8 fail and it will be recorded as the Council taking no
9 action.

10

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Is that
12 what we want to do?

13

14 (Council nods affirmatively)

15

16 MR. BUCK: Yeah.

17

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Motion
19 fails then. We'll move on to the next one. Do we have
20 a motion for WCR14-13 Unit 22D moose to maintain the
21 closure.

22

23 MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair, if I may.

24

25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes.

26

27 MR. MCKEE: It's certainly up to the
28 Council what you would like to do, but if allowed, like
29 I said, I have separate analyses for each of these, so
30 I can go through them if you would like just for
31 purposes of clarity and to get it on the record. It
32 would be nice.....

33

34 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We certainly
35 should do that. Thanks for reminding me.

36

37 MR. MCKEE: Okay. So WCR14-13 is
38 another analysis in your supplemental packet dealing
39 with moose in Unit 22D, that portion within the
40 Kougatok, Kuzitritin and Pilgrim drainages. Again,
41 Federal public lands are closed to the taking of moose
42 except by residents of Units 22D and 22C hunting under
43 these regulations. This closure was also initiated in
44 2002 and the last time the Council took it up was in
45 2010. So actually at your 2011 meeting in January the
46 Council was presented with this closure review and you
47 recommended at that time the closure be maintained.

48

49 The moose population in Unit 22
50 increased during the '70s and '80s, somewhere between

1 7-10,000 animals and declined following severe winters
2 in the late '80s and early '90s. Thought to be the
3 result of insufficient winter browse for the population
4 size. The population in Unit 22 declined between
5 5-7,000 moose during the '90s. As mentioned before,
6 predation on calves by brown bears is thought to be a
7 major factor limiting the current population.

8
9 The ADF&G management objectives for
10 moose in Unit 22D is for a population of 2,000 to 2,500
11 animals with a minimum bull/cow ratio of 30 bulls per
12 100 cows. The estimated moose population in the
13 Kuzitrin drainage remained around 1,000 moose from 2002
14 to 2011 and then experienced a 12 percent annual rate
15 of decline between 2011 and 2014. Some of this decline
16 was attributed to deep snowfall and Nome's history and
17 increased competition due to higher densities of moose
18 in the riparian areas.

19
20 The recruitment rates based on number
21 of calves that survive overwinter from the previous
22 fall in Unit 22D from 2003 to 2014 have ranged between
23 6 percent to 15 percent. Based on these numbers,
24 recruitment is most likely too low to reach the State
25 management objectives of 2,000 to 2,500 moose in Unit
26 22D.

27
28 Moose harvest by resident hunters
29 within the affected area remains relatively low and has
30 been between 2004 and 2013 as you can see in Table 2.
31 Federally qualified subsistence users harvested between
32 77 and 95 percent of the annual total fall harvest.
33 The population in the portion of Unit 22D within the
34 Kougarok, Kuzitrin and Pilgrim River drainages has
35 declined about 32 percent between 2011 and 2014.
36 Coinciding with the population decline and low
37 recruitment rates, the bull/cow ratio is also declined
38 from 33 bulls per 100 cows in 2008 to 23 bulls per 100
39 cows in 2014.

40
41 The population is below ADF&G
42 management objectives with a relatively small harvest,
43 which is generally by local residents due to the
44 Federal closure on public lands. The moose population
45 in Unit 22D we believe is currently too low to sustain
46 additional harvest on public lands by non-residents and
47 those rural residents without a positive C&T
48 determination. Therefore, public lands to remain
49 closed to all users except those local residents given
50 priority under Federal regulations.

1 So the OSM preliminary recommendation
2 is to maintain the status quo. Again, not to be
3 repetitive, but not to put too fine a point on it is
4 that, again, essentially the closure on Federal public
5 lands in the affected area will be assessed in three
6 years unless new information comes about to change
7 that. I just wanted to make sure I'm being very clear
8 on that matter.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 That's all I have.

13

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any questions on
15 this proposal.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Does anybody want
20 to make a motion to adopt. Amos.

21

22 MR. OXEREOK: Yes, I'd like to make a
23 motion to maintain the closure to WCR14-13.

24

25 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
26 second.

27

28 MR. BUCK: Seconded.

29

30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Seconded by
31 Peter. Do we have discussion.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: This is a very
36 disappointing thing for me. The first thing I did when
37 I came to the Seward Peninsula in the early 1980s was
38 study moose. The moose populations in 22D were
39 absolutely amazing. The Seward Peninsula had the best
40 moose hunting in the state at the time. Not many
41 people knew about it. This is where we are now. The
42 really disturbing thing about this is we really don't
43 know what's causing it, so you can't fix the problem if
44 you don't know what the problem is. So that's where
45 we're at.

46

47 Is there any more discussion on this
48 proposal.

49

50 (No comments)

1 MR. BUCK: Question.
2
3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: The motion is to
4 maintain the closure. All in favor say aye.
5
6 IN UNISON: Aye.
7
8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: All opposed same
9 sign.
10
11 (No opposing votes)
12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Motion passes
14 unanimously.
15
16 MR. MCKEE: Yes, Mr. Chair. The next
17 closure review is WCR14-14 and it is for moose in Unit
18 22D, that portion west of the Tisuk River drainage in
19 Canyon Creek. Again, I'm going to be repeating myself
20 from the last closure review because it was also
21 initiated in 2002 and last reviewed by the Council in
22 2011. None of the population data is going to change
23 from the last one except for the fact that specific
24 survey data is not available for this particular
25 portion of Unit 22D.
26
27 So most of the population data
28 collected on the population is from the Kuzitrin and
29 Kougatok River drainages, which has a higher quality
30 moose habitat than the Tisuk and Canyon Creek
31 drainages. Thus, population data, density estimates,
32 bull/cow and calf/cow ratios for Unit 22D are likely to
33 be greater than the area under this particular closure
34 review.
35
36 Also there's been no reported harvest
37 under Federal regulations for this portion of Unit 22D.
38 Again, we're at a point where the population
39 information is essentially the same. Nothing is
40 essentially different other than we don't have any
41 specific information for this particular area. Again,
42 our recommendation is no different from the last
43 closure review. That is, to maintain the quo.
44
45 I could have repeated myself, but for
46 reasons of brevity I've just decided to leave it at
47 that. Mr. Chair.
48
49 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Am I being
50 negligent by not following the procedures here for a

1 regular proposal?

2

3 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. This is not a
4 regulatory proposal. This is just to determine whether
5 or not you should maintain the closure. Now if the
6 Council were to vote to rescind the closure, then the
7 next step would be, if somebody wanted to, they could
8 submit a proposal to re-establish the season and then
9 that would be a proposal that the Council could vote
10 on.

11

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Very good. Do we
13 have a motion then to maintain this closure.

14

15 MR. OXEREOK: I'd like to make a motion
16 to maintain the status quo on the closure to WCR14-14.

17

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do we have a
19 second.

20

21 MR. ENINGOWUK: Second the motion.

22

23 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: A motion is made
24 by Amos, seconded by Fred. Do we have any discussion.

25

26 MR. OXEREOK: Is there a way to
27 describe where this location is on the map that we have
28 in front of us?

29

30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Actually the
31 booklet might even be better. Might have a better map
32 in it. Look under 22 in the reg book.

33

34 MR. MCKEE: The maps that you have on
35 the table here are essentially just a blow-up, I
36 believe, of the map in the regulation booklet.

37

38 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, this map is
39 better. So we're looking at this area here.

40

41 MR. OXEREOK: Thank you very much.

42

43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're still
44 discussing this motion. Is there any additional
45 discussion.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Are we ready to
50 vote on it? Do you have something, Chris?

1 MR. MCKEE: We need a second.
2
3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We do have a
4 second.
5
6 MR. MCKEE: Okay. I'm sorry.
7
8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're in
9 discussion. Is there any further discussion.
10
11 (No comments)
12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, then all in
14 favor of the motion -- the motion would continue the
15 closure. All in favor of the motion say aye.
16
17 IN UNISON: Aye.
18
19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: All opposed same
20 sign.
21
22 (No opposing votes)
23
24 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Motion passes
25 unanimously. Next one, Chris.
26
27 MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. The next one is
28 Federal Wildlife Closure Review WCR14-16. That is for
29 moose in Unit 22E. There is a typo on your closure
30 review I just wanted to point out. It has a January
31 season in there that doesn't exist, so that is a typo
32 so please ignore that. Again, Federal public lands are
33 closed to the taking of moose except by Federally
34 qualified subsistence users hunting under these
35 regulations.
36
37 The closure for this area was initiated
38 in 2003 and at its February 2011 meeting this Council
39 voted unanimously to -- you reviewed this proposal and
40 you actually voted unanimously to submit a proposal to
41 remove the closure. I looked all throughout the
42 transcripts and, sure enough, you guys did discuss it
43 fairly extensively and it was agreed that a proposal
44 would be submitted and then it just kind of seemed to
45 disappear in the ether somehow. There was no proposal
46 submitted for the following 2012 regulatory cycle. So
47 I just wanted to bring that up briefly.
48
49 State management goals for moose in
50 Unit 22E are to increase and stabilize the population

1 between 200 to 250 moose and maintain a minimum
2 bull/cow ratio of 30/100. Moose populations in Unit
3 22E have increased from 504 animals in 2003 to 701 in
4 2014, which is again well above the State management
5 goal for the population. The recruitment rate was 13
6 percent in 2014 with 16 calves per 100 adults.

7
8 Table 1 has a brief harvest history
9 between 2004 and 2013. The moose harvest in this area
10 has been relatively low, with the average annual moose
11 harvest being 14 moose in those years I mentioned.
12 Local residents of Unit 22 accounted for 53 percent of
13 the harvest in these years. The majority of local
14 harvest has been by residents of Nome and Shishmaref
15 during this time period. Non-local resident harvest has
16 been low and the annual non-resident harvest has been
17 between 1 and 2 moose between 2004 and 2012 until a
18 recent increase to 10 moose in 2013.

19
20 State and Federal regulations in Unit
21 22E for moose have been liberalized since 2008 with
22 both a longer fall and winter season and the moose
23 population has continued to increase since that time.
24 Harvest by both local and non-local residents has been
25 relatively low since then. The moose population in
26 Unit 22E has been well above the management goal for
27 the species since 2003.

28
29 The Board's closure policy states that
30 closures should be removed as soon as practicable, when
31 conditions that originally justified the closure have
32 changed to such an extent that the closure is no longer
33 necessary. Therefore, it is recommended by OSM that
34 the proposal be submitted to lift the closure.

35
36 As I mentioned before, the last time
37 this Council did discuss this, you did agree to submit
38 a proposal. So I just want to make sure if that's how
39 you want to go, that we make sure and get it submitted
40 this time. I'm just not sure what happened the last
41 time.

42
43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I don't remember
44 either, but we are aware that we need to be more
45 careful to make sure what we decide to do gets done, so
46 we're much more on top of that now.

47
48 Chris, can you explain what happened
49 with this big increase in non-resident harvest in 2013?
50 In 22E it went to 10.

1 MR. MCKEE: If I'm not -- I should have
2 gone over this a little bit more. I tend to gloss over
3 the regulatory history. The State opened up a non-
4 resident hunt in 2008, so I think that was probably the
5 major reason for that increase, but it was pretty
6 delayed. I'm not sure exactly why it was not until
7 2013 that that increase occurred. I don't have a good
8 answer for that question.

9
10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Do you know,
11 Fred? I suspect it's a guided activity, but I don't
12 know.

13
14 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yes, I see it on here.
15 Until a recent increase to 10 moose in 2013 since the
16 opening of non-resident hunt by the State in 2008. I
17 do believe there's been some guided hunting out of
18 Shishmaref with one of our guides up at Shishmaref
19 hunting moose.

20
21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Letty, can you
22 tell us? Do you know what the reason is?

23
24 MS. HUGHES: Good afternoon. This is
25 Letty Hughes with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
26 To the Chair and through the Council, can you repeat
27 the question, please.

28
29 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Why did we see an
30 increase in non-resident harvest in 22E in 2013.

31
32 MS. HUGHES: Okay. To the Council.
33 That area, I mean, is guided. The State issues 10 non-
34 resident registration permits each fall. One of the
35 guides, he just works out of 22E and 22D, so he guides
36 in both areas. It's just a matter of where he's
37 finding the moose. I also understand he also just kind
38 of moved his camp from one area to the next. So that's
39 what's going on there.

40
41 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Would these have
42 been moose that would previously have been taken in
43 22D? Is it the same guides that were guiding on the
44 American River?

45
46 MS. HUGHES: One guide that I know of
47 does guide up in 22D in the American area and then up
48 in E.

49
50 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Have they moved

1 their operation into E from 22D or are they hunting
2 both units now?

3

4 MS. HUGHES: It's right there on the
5 Continental Divide, so it's really a matter of where
6 that moose falls.

7

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you. Are
9 there any questions for Letty.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any further
14 discussion on the motion.

15

16 MR. ENINGOWUK: Yeah. The Native
17 Village of Shishmaref would like to submit a proposal
18 to reinstate the cow season and I think that would take
19 effect on this here Proposal WCR14-16 and that was one
20 of the proposals that Native Village of Shishmaref was
21 suggesting is to reinstate the cow season since the
22 population is pretty healthy up there and very few
23 people are harvesting moose up there because we have
24 caribou also up there too.

25

26 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: That's on the
27 agenda. We'll take that up next, but we need to deal
28 with this closure now. What I'm thinking is that the
29 closure is no longer needed.

30

31 MR. ENINGOWUK: I see here the OSM
32 recommendation is to initiate a proposal to modify or
33 eliminate the closure.

34

35 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: My feeling is
36 it's probably no longer needed. I think the management
37 goal is way too low, but even so it doesn't seem like
38 the hunting that occurs is preventing the population
39 from increasing. I guess I would be in favor of
40 eliminating the closure.

41

42 MR. BUCK: I just have a question. You
43 get 22E from January 1st to 31st and then you've got
44 another August 1st to March 15th and you're proposing
45 closing dates August 1st to March 15th. It seems like
46 the -- in my area, we like to get a moose in the fall.
47 That's when they're the best. This year you're going
48 from January 1st to January 31st.

49

50 MR. MCKEE: I said it before and I

1 apologize for this, but that winter date that you see
2 on that closure review is a typo, so it shouldn't be in
3 there. The existing Federal regulation is only August
4 1 to March 15th. That other date is an error.

5
6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any further
7 discussion. If we vote on the motion, the motion is to
8 maintain the closure. So if we -- go ahead, Carl.

9
10 MR. JOHNSON: Actually there's not a
11 motion on the table at this time, Mr. Chair.

12
13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: My mistake. Do
14 we have a motion to -- I thought we did that. Do we
15 have a motion to maintain this closure?

16
17 MR. OXEREOK: I was going to make a
18 motion to eliminate the closure.

19
20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I guess we could
21 do that since it's not a proposal. That's okay. The
22 motion is to eliminate the closure in 22E. Do we have
23 a second.

24
25 MR. OXEREOK: Can I formally make that
26 motion?

27
28 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, you can.

29
30 MR. OXEREOK: I'd like to make a motion
31 to eliminate the closure to WCR14-16.

32
33 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: A second.

34
35 MR. ENINGOWUK: Second the motion.

36
37 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: The motion is
38 made by Amos, seconded by Fred. Is there any
39 discussion.

40
41 MR. ENINGOWUK: I take it that we can
42 modify the proposal later on in the meeting.

43
44 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Your proposal is
45 a separate proposal, so we will do that later. Now
46 it's a motion to eliminate the closure. We probably
47 better develop some record with that. Is that
48 necessary?

49
50 MR. JOHNSON: (Nods affirmatively)

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, we probably
2 need to develop some record on why we want to do that.
3 The reason is that it's no longer needed for
4 conservation. It does impact subsistence users and
5 it's just no longer needed. What else can we do. Go
6 ahead.

7
8 MR. OXEREOK: Fred, I would like to
9 maybe combine our proposals because I also have another
10 proposal to increase the season by two weeks to start
11 our fall hunt a little bit earlier. So maybe me and
12 you can combine ours later on when we make a new
13 proposal.

14
15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, why don't
16 we talk about that during a break or something, but we
17 need to deal with this one now since we have a motion
18 on the floor. I don't think the closure can be
19 justified any longer by conservation and that should be
20 the primary reason that we're making our
21 recommendation.

22
23 If there's no further discussion, all
24 in favor of the motion which would eliminate the
25 closure say aye.

26
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28
29 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: All opposed same
30 sign.

31
32 (No opposing votes)

33
34 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you. Is
35 that the end of your presentation, Chris.

36
37 MR. MCKEE: That's the end of my
38 presentation on the closure reviews. For better or
39 worse, I'm still here on the next thing, I believe,
40 which is the discussion of wildlife regulatory cycle.
41 Am I correct, is that next on the agenda? Yes.

42
43 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: You're going to
44 be here tomorrow, aren't you, Chris?

45
46 MR. MCKEE: I will be, yes.

47
48 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: What I'd like to
49 do, if it's okay with the Council, is take a break now.
50 We need to go through this. Pat's only going to be here

1 today, so we need to do his presentation prior to the
2 meeting tonight. So I'd like to do that after the
3 break. And I had a little lead-in for it too. So I'd
4 like to step down as Chair and turn it over to Peter
5 for the rest of the day and then we'll recess at 5:00
6 for dinner. They're going to set up some food here for
7 5:00, so I'll turn the Chair over to Peter and we'll
8 take a break. When we come back, Peter will start and
9 then we'll do the presentation. I'll do a short
10 presentation on intensive management and Pat will
11 finish up.

12

13 Go ahead, Carl.

14

15 MR. JOHNSON: How long of a break, Mr.
16 Chair?

17

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: About 15 minutes.

19

20 (Off record)

21

22 (On record)

23

24 ACTING CHAIR BUCK: Are we ready to get
25 started. Can I call this meeting back to order,
26 please. I'll turn it over to Tim.

27

28 MR. SMITH: I want to do a lead-in for
29 Pat. You know, I've been working on the Seward
30 Peninsula for many, many years and seen a lot of
31 changes. Unfortunately, this projector is not very
32 bright, but when we're talking about ecosystem
33 management, we're talking about this. This is a nice
34 picture. This is a picture of the Seward Peninsula.

35

36 The primary production is what we are
37 really managing. This vegetation here supports
38 everything. The Seward Peninsula is an extremely
39 productive part of Alaska. There's a lot of diversity.
40 There's good climate conditions for growth for primary
41 production. It should be producing a lot more meat
42 than it is now. Intensive management is a way to make
43 that happen.

44

45 You can barely see the circle, but the
46 proposed area -- and this is all the initial talking
47 stages, but the area proposed for intensive management
48 is the area we just got done talking about closing for
49 moose hunting right there. It's a well-defined area.
50 We know quite a bit about it. We've got quite a bit of

1 baseline data on reindeer. There's enough moose out
2 there and muskoxen to be able to measure an impact if
3 we have one. The goal of this study would be to
4 acquire some information on how much impact predators
5 are having on moose, caribou, reindeer and muskoxen on
6 the Seward Peninsula. Right now we all have our ideas
7 on how important that is, but we really don't know.

8
9 When I was first starting out,
10 strangely enough, I did a study on Bennett's wallabies.
11 Graeme Caughley is a New Zealander who worked for CSIRO
12 in Australia. He had a big impact on me. This is his
13 definition of wildlife management. It's very simple.
14 Wildlife management means making a population go up,
15 making a population go down or harvesting at an optimum
16 sustained yield. I think it's hard to argue that we're
17 doing wildlife management for any species on the Seward
18 Peninsula.

19
20 I think the Seward Peninsula is an
21 example where predator control really worked. Wildlife
22 management worked on the Seward Peninsula. In the
23 1840s to 1930s, the wildlife populations were depleted
24 by over-hunting. There was marked hunting here.
25 Starting in the 1840s people lived off the land and a
26 lot of explorers came up, the whaling started, the
27 Yankee whalers came up here in the 1840s. People
28 killed everything to eat or just to get rid of it.

29
30 1891 to the 1930s reindeer were
31 introduced and one of the reasons they were introduced
32 was to compensate for all the marine mammals that had
33 been taken by the whalers earlier and Sheldon Jackson
34 came up and felt that we needed something as an
35 alternative food source for the local people. They
36 were protected from hunting and predation and increased
37 to a large, stable population, producing a large
38 sustainable harvest until fairly recently.

39
40 Between 1931 and 1959, Federal agents
41 and contractors under the Animal Damage Control Act
42 shot -- they used aerial gunning. They shot predators,
43 they trapped, they spread lots of poison baits and they
44 killed -- from TEK and from some of the reports that
45 are available, predators were extremely rare on the
46 Seward Peninsula up until Statehood.

47
48 Between the 1840s and 1959, it was just
49 a general policy of everybody that lived out here to
50 kill predators on sight and they were very effective at

1 it. Everybody I've talked to said that there were just
2 no predators here in the '50s and that's changed today.

3
4 In 1972, aerial wolf hunting was
5 prohibited in Alaska, but it wasn't really stopped.
6 The people who were aerial hunting out here in Western
7 Alaska kept doing it until the 1980s and nobody knows
8 exactly how many wolves they took, but they didn't just
9 stop because it was prohibited.

10
11 ACTING CHAIR BUCK: Mr. Chair. I'd
12 like to mention another thing about in 1849, 1890 when
13 they had the epidemic and we lost a lot of Natives.
14 The elders were the ones that were lost and then the
15 training for maintaining these populations of animals
16 was not passed on to them and that was a big factor.

17
18 MR. SMITH: Yes. What Peter points out
19 is a very important thing in this area. There was a
20 huge disruption caused by epidemic diseases,
21 particularly the Spanish Flu in 1918 that wiped out 75
22 percent of the population of Brevig Mission in two
23 weeks and that just caused all kinds of disruptions to
24 traditional ways of doing everything and traditional
25 knowledge. So we're still suffering the effects of
26 that today.

27
28 Predator control out here didn't just
29 end at Statehood, but it wasn't documented. It wasn't
30 necessarily legal, but there were some aggressive
31 people still doing it. Aerial wolf hunting was
32 practiced. I knew some of the guys that still hunted
33 wolves. They didn't just quit. Grizzly bear hunting
34 using aircraft. People spotted aircraft. Sometimes
35 they drove bears to hunters. So they were killing
36 bears, but none of that was documented.

37
38 Reindeer herders back in the '80s were
39 pretty aggressive about killing bears that were preying
40 on their reindeer, but enforcement actions put a stop
41 to that, put a real damper on that. It wasn't done
42 very vigorously after the '80s.

43
44 Trapping, snaring and poisoning. There
45 were some guys doing that. Guys that did it legally
46 just kept doing it. Shooting predators outside of
47 regulation or reporting system. Some people shoot
48 bears on sight, still do. So there's some informal
49 predator control action. Most of that ended in the
50 early 1980s just because it became too risky.

1 People still talk about shooting bears
2 outside of regulation and reporting system rules. We
3 really don't know how much of that happens, how many
4 predators are killed, but it's obviously not enough to
5 increase productivity of ungulates.

6
7 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
8 add during that time when that disease was prevalent up
9 here, it reached down to Stebbins and a village on the
10 north end of Stebbins, which is now Stebbins. It had a
11 population of over 300 people and a lot of them died by
12 their house or their mud sot house and that was when
13 that diphtheria was happening. So it affected Stebbins
14 area too.

15
16 MR. SMITH: Yeah. These are actually
17 wildlife management success stories. You remember back
18 the definition of wildlife management. This is what
19 we've done recently that was successful. In the 1960s
20 and 1980s, reindeer numbers increased because of
21 increasing antler price and State and Federal
22 investment. The university system put a lot of
23 investment into helping the reindeer industry and
24 improving the technology and numbers increased. In
25 1965, antlers were worth \$65 and the dollar was worth a
26 lot more in 1965 than it is today, so that made
27 reindeer very valuable.

28
29 Between the '60s and the '90s, a large
30 walrus, whale, and marine mammal harvest and incidental
31 kill left numerous beached carcasses. One of the first
32 things I did when I came up here was count walrus
33 carcasses on the beach for the Fish and Wildlife
34 Service. Those days it was typical -- between
35 Unalakleet and here there would be about 450 to 500
36 walrus carcasses. Between here and Wales there would
37 be about the same number and then another 500 between
38 Wales and Cape Espenberg. There was just a lot of
39 walruses on the beach. A lot of whale and other marine
40 mammal carcasses on the beach that were killed
41 incidentally to harvesting walruses and other marine
42 mammals and that provided a huge amount of food for
43 bears and artificially inflated the bear population.

44
45 1970s and '90s moose became naturally
46 established and increased by protecting from over-
47 hunting. We had very good compliance with hunting
48 regulations. People left the moose alone and let them
49 increase. Moose became very abundant up until the
50 early 1980s out here.

1 Between the 1970s and the 2000s,
2 grizzly bear populations were protected from over-
3 hunting and they had abundant food sources and those
4 populations greatly increased too. That was a
5 successful wildlife management program. Most people
6 don't think of it that way, but that was the intent of
7 the program.

8
9 People don't think much about ravens,
10 but for some animals ravens can be a fairly effective
11 predator. Reindeer fawns, caribou calves are preyed
12 upon by ravens and ravens eat a lot of other things
13 too. Our raven numbers were greatly increased by
14 landfills.

15
16 Joe Garnie, I wish he was here today,
17 he said ravens were really rare when he was a boy.
18 People destroyed their nests at every opportunity and
19 they were rare in the past. They're abundant now.

20
21 Between the '70s and the 2000s,
22 wildfire was suppressed progressively, which protected
23 lichen range, which made it attractive for caribou. In
24 1980s and 2000s, we got a big migration of caribou.
25 There were probably at least 200,000 caribou on the
26 Seward Peninsula. There were 60,000 caribou within 24
27 miles of Nome. They migrated way out onto the Seward
28 Peninsula. Again, that was a management success story.

29
30 In the '80s to 2000s, wolf populations
31 increased by protected from over-hunting and by the
32 high cost of hunting and by migratory caribou. Today
33 it costs more to hunt wolves than they're worth. If
34 aerial wolf hunting were legal today, it just wouldn't
35 pay off. People are finding the same thing hunting
36 from snowmachines. It's just too expensive to go out
37 from what you get out of it. So wolves have increased
38 because they've been protected by hunting.

39
40 The migratory caribou protect them by
41 making it hard to hunt. It's hard to see wolves if
42 they're mixed with caribou and it's hard to track them
43 when there's a lot of caribou in the area. So having
44 the caribou here on the Seward Peninsula made it a lot
45 harder to hunt wolves.

46
47 1986, the International Whaling
48 Commission came in and restricted strikes on whales, so
49 there was a lot less dead whales on the beach. People
50 were not only striking them with harpoons and darting

1 guns, they were just shooting them with rifles. So
2 whales were getting wounded and they were also ending
3 up on the beach as incidental kill and then also whales
4 killed by killer whales. The result is a lot of food
5 for bears.

6
7 Here are the recent events. I
8 apologize for this being so hard to read. Between the
9 1990s and 2000, moose numbers have decreased across the
10 Seward Peninsula and recruitment is extremely low, as
11 we've seen from some of the presentations we've had
12 today. 1990s to 2000s caribou numbers decreased. We
13 don't know where they're ranging really now, the extent
14 of their range, and recruitment of caribou is now low.
15 In 1990s to 2000, reindeer numbers decreased
16 dramatically and recruitment is low in reindeer too.

17
18 In 1998, Sildenafil was marketed and
19 that had a surprisingly big effect on reindeer. It's
20 Viagra. It really knocked the value of reindeer
21 antlers down. Also in the 1990s the Asian market went
22 through a crisis and almost the entire market was in
23 Korea, so the value of antlers plummeted and,
24 therefore, the ability to manage reindeer. In the
25 1990s, reindeer herding has been curtailed over lots of
26 the Seward Peninsula and places where reindeer herding
27 was practiced in the past. It no longer is.

28
29 In the 1990s to 2000s, Federal law
30 enforcement actions reduced the walrus harvest and seal
31 harvest and the associated incidental kill. You know,
32 you figure with walrus harvest you get about 50 percent
33 incidental kill, so half the walruses that are shot end
34 up on the beach and available for grizzly food.

35
36 Grizzly bear numbers are high and
37 recruitment is high. The observed recruitment is very
38 high. Three cubs is pretty common. I've seen as many
39 as five cubs.

40
41 Wolf sightings are increasing. We know
42 nothing about wolf numbers, but I think there's good
43 reason to believe that wolves are increasing. Raven
44 numbers and recruitment are high.

45
46 The increasing cost of living affects
47 the dynamics and the economics of subsistence.
48 Subsistence is primarily an economic activity. When
49 you have such a high cost of living in the villages,
50 there's a lot more incentive to take animals for food

1 naturally. So that has an impact on the numbers of
2 animals that get taken regardless of the regulations.

3
4 There's increasing cash value of
5 subsistence food. People can sell subsistence food
6 easily for cash and that's having an impact on
7 subsistence. There's increased reliance on store good.
8 People are not able to subsist because of the high cost
9 of hunting, so they're living more on store food, which
10 also has an impact on subsistence. There's more food
11 in the landfills.

12
13 Changing weather, as we all know, is
14 interfering with subsistence and making it harder to
15 harvest certain things. Then ice conditions reduce
16 marine mammals harvest and incidental kill. So you're
17 not only having less food for people, there's less food
18 for bears, so everybody is preying on what's left.

19
20 This is just some rough ideas. This is
21 a draft and this is just a guess, a shot at it, but
22 this is my idea of what's happened to subsistence
23 resources, what's available for people to eat. The
24 salmon population today provides the most meat, but the
25 harvest is down by 50 percent from what it was at its
26 peak. Moose are down 30 percent. Caribou down 50
27 percent. Walrus are about 10 percent of what they were
28 at the peak. Seals are less than 10 percent. Muskoxen
29 are less than 10 percent of what we harvested at the
30 peak. Belugas, we're probably harvesting as many as we
31 have in recent years. Reindeer is a fraction of what
32 it was, less than 5 percent. Halibut are less than 50
33 percent. Herring less than 5 percent.

34
35 So subsistence users have a lot less
36 food available to them. The hypothesis we'd be testing
37 in this proposal would be that some Seward Peninsula
38 prey population necessary for subsistence are being
39 squeezed between hunting, fishing and predation so that
40 either the combined mortality is unsustainable or the
41 population cannot produce an optimum sustained yield.
42 Most people believe that, but we don't have data to
43 support it and that would be the goal of this project.

44
45
46 I wish this was a little clearer, but
47 the list on the left is subsistence species and the
48 trend. As you can see, beluga and herring are
49 abundant. Everything else not so much. But if you
50 look at the species highlighted in yellow are our key

1 subsistence species. Almost everything that people
2 rely on for food is less than it was, the numbers are
3 lower, the trend is either down or unknown. They're
4 mostly prey animals.

5
6 Unfortunately, in the right section, we
7 don't have complete subsistence harvest information for
8 any of the species and we're going to talk about that
9 more today when we talk about Western Arctic Caribou
10 Herd. We don't really know how many caribou people are
11 taking on the Seward Peninsula.

12
13 This list on the right is non-
14 subsistence species. These are animals that are not
15 used extensively for food. As you can see, these are
16 almost all predators except for beavers and their
17 numbers are either abundant or common compared to the
18 prey species, the subsistence species that are
19 depleted. There isn't a great deal of quantitative
20 information for making these determinations, but I
21 think they're fairly reasonable and we can certainly
22 revise them if anybody thinks they should be. We're
23 talking about ecosystem management, so it's important
24 to consider all the things that people use for food.

25
26 Here's some of the road blocks to
27 ecosystem management for subsistence. We don't have
28 shared management goals. I mean one of the things I
29 wanted to talk about at this meeting is the Department
30 of Fish and Game is trying to make caribou numbers go
31 up at the same time the Reindeer Herders Association is
32 trying to make reindeer numbers go up. Those are
33 completely conflicting goals on the Seward Peninsula.
34 You really can't have both. We need to agree on our
35 goals or we really can't manage.

36
37 We have big disagreements on methods
38 and means. It's really ironic to me that we're
39 expected to use fair chase methods for management. It
40 just doesn't make any sense. Using the methods that
41 sportsmen find acceptable as fair chase when your goal
42 is to manage species.

43
44 We have international migratory species
45 treaties doesn't apply too much here on the Seward
46 Peninsula, but it affects things like king salmon that
47 cross international borders, it affects the Porcupine
48 Caribou Herd that goes into Canada. That's the highest
49 law of the land. International treaties have to be
50 complied with.

1 We've talked about this in our annual
2 reports many times. The complex jurisdiction and
3 authority makes management very, very difficult. The
4 fact that you've got one agency managing marine
5 mammals, another agency managing terrestrial mammals,
6 and a different agency managing whales, it just doesn't
7 work out, particularly when you have these migratory
8 species. You need to manage throughout the range of
9 the animals that you're trying to manage.

10

11 We've got State of Alaska versus U.S.
12 law. The State Constitution requires that resources be
13 distributed equally amongst citizens. U.S. law,
14 ANILCA, says that we need rural preference and those
15 two things are incompatible.

16

17 Land ownership patterns after ANCSA
18 make things very complicated, particularly for us on
19 the Seward Peninsula since we've got such a patchwork
20 of ownership. We've got this conflict between State's
21 rights versus Federalism. Some of the people on one
22 side of the subsistence debate feel very strongly that
23 the Federal government shouldn't be interfering with
24 management of Alaska resources and yet the Federal
25 government has a mandate to manage for subsistence on
26 Federal lands.

27

28 Rural preference, we talked about that.
29 That's a big issue in ANILCA. Tribal sovereignty is
30 creating complications. There is a proposal the
31 Interior Department is considering proposals to create
32 Indian country, basically trust country in Alaska, so
33 that would greatly complicate -- it would change
34 management if you had Federal trust land in Alaska. We
35 don't know how that's going to affect management.

36

37 The 1937 Reindeer Act made limited
38 ownership of reindeer to Alaska Natives. Most of the
39 provisions of that Act no longer apply, but some do and
40 so that complicates the issue of reindeer.

41

42 The Federal government established
43 reindeer for Alaska Natives and it still may have some
44 trust responsibilities for making that happen. I think
45 we're in a position where we aren't going to have
46 reindeer on the Seward Peninsula if we don't do
47 something fairly fast. Things are not looking good at
48 all.

49

50 You've got problems with regulation

1 compliance. A lot of people are hunting and fishing
2 outside the rules because they either don't understand
3 them or they don't agree with them. You've got very
4 limited law enforcement ability on the Seward
5 Peninsula. We've got a lot of unresolved reindeer
6 ownership and management issues that aren't being dealt
7 with that really complicate things with reindeer.

8
9 Reindeer are just not compatible with
10 caribou and predators. So if we're going to have
11 reindeer, if we're serious about having reindeer on
12 parts of the Seward Peninsula, we need to help the
13 owners protect their herds from caribou and predators.
14 Nobody knows exactly what can legally be done in
15 defense of life and property with regard to reindeer.
16 Can you kill caribou to protect your reindeer herds?

17
18 And then you've got nationwide
19 opposition, fairly well organized opposition to killing
20 predators for any reason. So when you try to do
21 something like intensive management, you can anticipate
22 that there's going to be some opposition to it just as
23 a matter of principal. I would say there isn't going
24 to be too much local opposition on the Seward
25 Peninsula. I haven't detected any.

26
27 This is it in a nutshell. I mean I
28 don't want to take up too much more time because we
29 really need to hear from Pat. In a nutshell, this is
30 what we're talking about. Intensive management means
31 making the animals in the list on the left go up,
32 making their numbers go up; moose, reindeer, caribou
33 and muskoxen. At the same time, making the animals
34 shaded red on the right go down; grizzly bear, raven
35 and wolf. We probably can't do much about raven.

36
37 That's, in a nutshell, what I was
38 thinking for intensive management. At this stage, it
39 wouldn't be a program, but it would be a study designed
40 -- an applied research project design to gather some
41 data to determine how much impact predators are having
42 on these prey species.

43
44 So, with that lead-in, I'd like to turn
45 it over to Pat. Maybe what we'll do is save the
46 questions for later. We're going to have just a social
47 session this evening and so maybe we can just sit
48 around and talk about it unless there's something
49 really pressing about what I've just said you want to
50 talk about.

1 MR. KATCHEAK: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
2 add what you said on the previous numbers of animals.
3 1992-93 I handled 1,800 reindeer on Stewart Island.
4 After that it peaked. The whole island was over-grazed
5 so we lost more than three-quarter of the herd. It
6 went down to 600 head. So it doesn't show here how
7 many reindeer we had at one time.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 MR. SMITH: Thanks, Ted. That's an
12 important point. I went over it a little too fast. In
13 recent times, there were probably at least 25,000
14 reindeer for a long time on the Seward Peninsula.
15 Maybe 35,000, somewhere in that range. It just shows
16 you what the potential is. Those animals produced a
17 lot of meat. Now I doubt very much if there's even
18 5,000 on the Seward Peninsula.

19

20 I'd be surprised.

21

22 ACTING CHAIR BUCK: What's missing is
23 the subsistence fishing population over the years and
24 the population of the fish after we started commercial
25 fishing. The herring population, we haven't heard
26 that. And the drastic weather changes that have been
27 happening over the years. The bear population and the
28 beaver population. Also not covered is the other
29 subsistence plants in the area. There has been no
30 study and I think a lot of the Natives know about it,
31 but I'd like to see a study on that.

32

33 MR. SMITH: We do know that it was down
34 from what it was. Again, as you say, plants. This is
35 what we're managing. We're managing the land and it
36 produces -- the primary productivity is in the plants.

37

38 Anyway, I'm going to turn this over to
39 Pat and we can talk about this more this evening.

40

41 MR. VALKENBURG: My name is Pat
42 Valkenburg. I worked for 25 years a caribou biologist
43 mostly studying caribou in the Interior, but also in
44 the Western Arctic Herd. Then I was the research
45 supervisor in the Fairbanks office for three years and
46 then over the course of my career I've also been
47 involved in most of the predator control programs and
48 intensive management programs in Interior Alaska either
49 as a biologist working on the programs or as a
50 supervisor designing and implementing the programs.

1 I retired in 2003 and then I came back
2 for two years and served as deputy commissioner of Fish
3 and Game in Juneau. I don't know that much about the
4 local situation on the Seward Peninsula, but you have
5 some pretty knowledgeable biologists here in the Nome
6 office and I think they have a pretty good handle on
7 what's going on with the species here, particularly
8 moose, muskox, most of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
9 stuff is done by Jim Dau in the Kotzebue office and
10 he's also very knowledgeable about Western Arctic
11 Caribou.

12
13 I will mostly confine my talk to
14 telling you what we have tried over the last 30 years
15 in other parts of the state, the kind of problems we've
16 tried to solve and what we've learned about intensive
17 management and more specifically about predator control
18 in a bunch of the other areas in the state. Maybe that
19 will help you think about what's possible to do here on
20 the Seward Peninsula if you get to the point where you
21 think you need to have one of these programs to help
22 with your wildlife management issues here.

23
24 You know, the basis for all of this
25 stuff is that there's a strong realization on the part
26 of the State that Alaskans depend on fish and wildlife.
27 In rural areas, obviously a really important food
28 source. In Alaska, we take about 25,000 caribou, 7,000
29 moose, 5,000 deer and then there are lots of other
30 urban Alaskans who prefer wild meat. It's an important
31 economic driver, particularly in places like Kodiak,
32 Alaska Peninsula, other parts of the Interior where we
33 have non-resident hunters coming and really provide a
34 lot of money in local economies.

35
36 The Subsistence Division over the last
37 30 years has done a lot of good work on how important
38 wildlife is to people. Those are the pounds of meat
39 that people eat in the various communities around the
40 state that have been studied. It's actually not all
41 that different to the amount of meat that people in the
42 Lower 48 and other areas eat.

43
44 That black line across there is the
45 amount of red meat consumed by Americans in the Lower
46 48. You can see in Arctic rural Interior Alaska,
47 Western Alaska, almost all of that is replaced by a
48 similar amount of red meat. When you get to places
49 like Kodiak and the coast, a lot of that red meat is
50 obviously replaced by fish. Then on the left side

1 there you can see there's a lesser amount of wild meat
2 that replaces the red meat in places like Fairbanks,
3 Anchorage, Juneau, et cetera.

4
5 One of the important things about the
6 Alaska Constitution is wildlife management is very much
7 enshrined in the Alaska Constitution. The Constitution
8 says -- there's no other constitution like it in the
9 United States. It says natural resources such as
10 wildlife shall be utilized, developed and maintained on
11 the sustained yield principal subject to preferences
12 amount beneficial uses.

13
14 The sustained yield principal is
15 central to Alaska's wildlife management program. The
16 Intensive Management Statute is a real interesting one.
17 It was passed by the Legislature in 1994 during a
18 democratic administration and it passed by about a
19 two-thirds vote. The governor, who was a democrat at
20 the time, that was Tony Knowles, didn't like it. He
21 vetoed it and the Legislature overrode the veto.

22
23 There was a lot of talk about what the
24 Intensive Management Statute really means and what it
25 does. It's actually a fairly simple statute. It just
26 makes it explicitly clear that it is the intent of the
27 Legislature that some populations of game animals will
28 be managed for high levels of human harvest. What that
29 really means is it is not okay for the Department of
30 Fish and Game to allow important populations of
31 wildlife to just continue to dwindle away to nothing
32 and not produce any harvest anymore.

33
34 It doesn't direct the Department of
35 Fish and Game to do anything. It directs the Board of
36 Game to consider intensive management and it makes it
37 clear that if the Board reduces harvest of game
38 animals, they have to direct the Department to
39 investigate why those populations are going down and
40 figure out if there's anything they can do about it.

41
42 Also the mission statement of the
43 Department of Wildlife Conservation builds on the
44 Constitution and the mission statement of the
45 Department of Fish and Game and it's to protect,
46 maintain, enhance and extend wildlife resources of the
47 state for the maximum benefit of the people.

48
49 What a lot of people don't realize is
50 the reason for the intensive management law. You

1 probably remember back in the 1980s up until in the
2 1990s there were various state administrations that
3 were really lukewarm about predatory control. There
4 was a lot of pressure from outside groups. There were
5 tourism boycotts and whatnot to try to stop any
6 predator control and we got into a situation where the
7 Department of Fish and Game was caught in the middle.
8 We had an administration, a governor, who really
9 opposed it and then a couple years later you get a new
10 governor and he was all in favor of it, so it was back
11 and forth and back and forth. The Legislature decided
12 to put some consistency in there and that's why they
13 came up with the Intensive Management Law.

14
15 Intensive management and predator
16 control are not exactly the same thing. Intensive
17 management means that not only the predators and the
18 wildlife populations, but the wildlife habitat should
19 be looked at and managed to improve the sustained yield
20 for people. In Alaska, the reality is that except in
21 Interior Alaska where fire is a really important factor
22 that rejuvenates habitat, predators have been found to
23 be the major limiting factor of most of the game
24 populations that we deal with.

25
26 It's not surprising that wolves have
27 long been viewed as competitors. Native people
28 practiced wolf control. People in Anaktuvuk Pass
29 practice wolf control. There's a long oral history of
30 wolf control there. What has changed is there is a lot
31 of new scientific information that has focused on the
32 importance of predators, particularly on predators of
33 moose, muskox and caribou.

34
35 Back in the 1970s, we really knew very
36 little about how important predators were as limiting
37 factors on game populations. Both the Department of
38 Fish and Game and the U.S. Geological Survey have spent
39 35 years of intensive study, spent a tremendous amount
40 of money and done a lot of work on trying to figure out
41 how important predation is, how it interacts with
42 nutrition and weather and whether or not predation and
43 other things can be managed to improve harvest.

44
45 We've done 25 calf mortality studies on
46 moose and caribou, three diversionary feeding
47 experiments to try to find ways to improve calf
48 survival in both moose and caribou by diverting
49 predators away from calving areas. We've had four bear
50 removal experiments. We've had over a dozen wolf

1 control experiments and we have established a statewide
2 program for monitoring body condition in moose and
3 caribou. We've also improved techniques for monitoring
4 bear and wolf numbers and we've engaged in several
5 long-term studies on moose and caribou and compared
6 hunted versus unhunted populations.

7

8 In the beginning, a lot of the
9 controversy revolving around predator management was a
10 scientific controversy, you know. In other words, is
11 there any compelling scientific evidence that predators
12 are important limiting factors of wildlife populations.
13 Now, after the last 35 years of work, there's
14 absolutely no question. There aren't any credible
15 scientists who dispute the fact that predators are a
16 major limiting factor.

17

18 This has resulted in a tremendous
19 amount of work. Since Alaska is mostly off the road
20 system, it's probably 50,000 hours of flying. We've
21 lost several biologists in plane crashes. The
22 investment in terms of money, staff time, effort is
23 pretty amazing.

24

25 I'll talk a little bit first about
26 moose. Where are we with moose and what do we know
27 about how predators affect moose. Probably the major
28 breakthrough we had was in the late 1970s where we
29 started to find that bears, as opposed to wolves, were
30 by far the most important predator of moose. It's
31 especially of moose calves. In one study in Eastern
32 Interior, grizzly bears were also major predators of
33 adult moose. So it shows it's not necessarily the same
34 everywhere.

35

36 Bears don't participate in surplus
37 killing, which is different than wolves. After about
38 three weeks, bears are not usually a problem for moose,
39 but the problem often is that by the end of three weeks
40 there are very few calves left, especially if you have
41 black bears and grizzly bears. They can get almost all
42 of the calves that are born within three weeks and
43 there are just barely enough calves to let the
44 population stay stable. It essentially eliminates any
45 possibility of having moose harvest for people,
46 especially harvest of cow moose. You can always take a
47 few surplus bulls out of the population, but there's
48 really not much available for harvest.

49

50 Grizzly bears, especially big male

1 bears in Interior Alaska are really effective
2 predators. They kill both cows and calves. This
3 particular bear was one of the big male bears we dealt
4 with at McGrath. That bear killed a cow and both of
5 her calves and fed on them for about six days and then
6 he walked about a mile and he killed a cow and her calf
7 and he fed on them for about six days. The thing about
8 these grizzly bears, when they kill both the cow and
9 the calf, it doesn't show up in the ratios. You
10 measure cow/calf ratio in the fall and both the cow is
11 dead and the calf is dead and you really don't see that
12 show up. The only way it eventually shows up is it
13 shows up as a very low density moose populations that
14 stay at real low levels and never recover or increase.

15
16 Black bears operate a little bit
17 differently. Most black bears will follow cows around.
18 Cows can sometimes successfully defend their calves
19 from bears and often a black bear will take just one
20 out of a pair of twins. But they can be very
21 persistent and they know if they spend enough time and
22 they'll spend days and days following a cow around and
23 eventually she lets her guard down and they'll get at
24 least one of the calves.

25
26 Coastal brown bears are often quite
27 different than Interior grizzlies. They can have a lot
28 of other food sources. They feed on marine mammals
29 washed up on the beach. Particularly with caribou, we
30 were surprised to find that you can have a calving area
31 with bears around and the calves survive pretty well
32 and the bears are really not all that interested in
33 killing lots of calves. They do take some. But those
34 situations are not necessarily stable because whatever
35 the bears are feeding on, and Tim mentioned feeding on
36 marine mammal carcasses on the beach, if all of a
37 sudden those marine mammal carcasses are not available
38 anymore, bears are looking for something else to eat
39 and protein is what they really want in the springtime
40 when they come out.

41
42 Wolf predation on moose is pretty
43 interesting. It mostly occurs in winter. In some
44 areas, particularly in low density moose populations,
45 the number of calves being killed by wolves is very
46 small. In fact, in some of these calf mortality
47 studies, we couldn't even detect it. Not a single
48 collared calf was killed by wolves.

49
50 Wolves are just a little too big for --

1 I mean moose are just a little too big for wolves to
2 effectively kill all adults, so what you find is a
3 moose younger than two are killed. Moose older than
4 seven are killed and most of the adults are really not
5 very vulnerable to wolf predation. When wolves are
6 feeding exclusively on moose, they're living on moose,
7 about seven to nine adult moose is what it takes to
8 feed one wolf for a year.

9

10 What we found in the Alaska Range is
11 the smaller packs, less than five, feed on sheep and
12 caribou. The packs bigger than five tend to specialize
13 in moose. Wolves do much better in deep snow, so
14 whenever there's a hard winter, wolves do really well.
15 They walk around in moose trails. They follow caribou
16 in caribou trails. They can end up surplus killing.
17 Pups survive really well. There's less dispersal, so
18 you end up having pretty big packs.

19

20 Moose do better around Fairbanks and
21 Anchorage because wolves are excluded from those areas
22 and so are bears. Right now the most spectacular moose
23 population we have in the state of Alaska is in Game
24 Management Unit 14B and that is in the Palmer area and
25 that has never been subjected to official wolf control
26 or anything. It's just that the human population in
27 that part of the state now is so big that they don't
28 tolerate having wolves and bears around everyone's
29 houses and that's where we have the best performing
30 moose population.

31

32 These various mortality studies we've
33 done all around the state, just kind of reiterating
34 there. In the Yukon Flats, 73 percent of all the
35 mortality was from grizzly and black bears. In the
36 Galena area, 60 percent grizzly bears, 60 percent black
37 bears and they were more important than wolves. In the
38 McGrath area, 67 percent black bears and wolves. There
39 were a few grizzly bears thrown in, but that's mostly a
40 black bear area. Then the Tok area, wolf predation was
41 more important than bear predation, 60 percent being
42 killed by wolves and grizzly bears.

43

44 The causes of death in a low density
45 moose population, 80 percent of the moose that die are
46 killed by bears and wolves. Mostly wolves killing
47 adults and bears killing calves. You can see there's 4
48 percent taken by humans. Even the non-predation causes
49 are lower than the number of moose being taken by
50 humans in harvest.

1 One of the more successful experiments
2 we did was in the McGrath area where we removed bears.
3 I designed that program, implemented that program. We
4 used our DeHavilland Beaver. We caught bears with
5 helicopter, we slung them into McGrath, I loaded them
6 in the back of the Beaver and we gave him a 200-mile
7 one-way ride out of the area. We almost doubled the
8 calf/cow ratio in the fall. We had another comparison
9 area nearby that was untreated where the calf/cow ratio
10 stayed the same. We did that two years in a row. Now
11 we largely solved that problem. People argued for
12 years about what the problem was there. It was obvious
13 that people were having a really difficult time getting
14 moose. The moose population now has more than doubled.
15 There's plenty of moose. People have all the moose
16 they need now and they're very thankful that we did
17 that.

18
19 If you look all around Alaska, at low
20 density moose populations and high density moose
21 populations, the low density moose populations with
22 normal predator numbers and the higher density moose
23 populations with low predator densities either because
24 they're around built-up areas, like I mentioned 14B or
25 Fairbanks or Anchorage or they have had wolves and
26 bears deliberately reduced, the number of moose that
27 can be taken out of those areas by hunters is much,
28 much higher.

29
30 Those areas in the darker blue around
31 Fairbanks, Anchorage, Delta, those are the areas that
32 have the higher moose numbers either because of wolves
33 and bears are naturally excluded from those areas or
34 because they are intensive management areas. The big,
35 extensive area in light blue are areas that had no
36 predator control. There's a little one right around
37 McGrath, but it's so small it hardly even shows up
38 there. That's where moose densities are really low.
39 What we find is that without predator management in
40 large parts of northern Canada, Yukon, Alaska, you'll
41 find moose stable at densities in the best habitat of
42 one moose per square mile and the poorer habitats one-
43 tenth of a moose per square mile. In the areas where
44 we have predators excluded, moose are commonly above
45 two moose per square mile.

46
47 Looking at the dynamics of a high
48 density moose population, this is the moose population
49 in 20A south of Fairbanks. It's one of the most
50 successful management experiments on moose probably

1 anywhere in the world. Certainly in North America. So
2 we start with a population of 12,000 moose, 3,720
3 calves are born and then a bunch of those animals go
4 away. Some to harvest. It's hard to see the black
5 number there. It's 600 go to harvest. A lot of the
6 others, like 2,200, still dying from predators.

7
8 Even though that's an intensively
9 managed population, predators are still taking three or
10 four times as many moose out of that population as
11 people are. That area has the highest wolf density of
12 any place in Alaska and it also has been subject to the
13 most intensive management. Two wolf control programs
14 over the years, but it still has more wolves available.
15 More wolves there than any other place in the state.
16 That's just because there's so much to eat.

17
18 You look at a low density moose
19 population in an area that's about 50 percent larger,
20 so instead of 12,000 moose you're starting with 3,000
21 moose. You actually have a higher percentage of calves
22 produced because the moose are in better physical
23 condition, so there's higher twinning rates, there's
24 more young produced per female, but predators are
25 overwhelming in those populations. They take most of
26 the calves that are born. You can only take 90 moose
27 out of that population instead of 600 moose. So that's
28 part of the reason why people are dissatisfied with
29 some of those low density moose populations. If there
30 are many people there, 90 moose doesn't go very far.

31
32 Looking at it another way, you have a
33 population of 10,700 adults, 4,800 calves produced.
34 Wolves get 900 of those, black bears get 600 of those,
35 grizzly bears 570, non-predation 200, humans and that
36 means -- that's not hunting. They get hit by cars,
37 they get caught by wolf trappers in wolf snares. Just
38 little odd causes of death like that. Then 760 go to
39 hunters of the adult population.

40
41 It shows that those intensively managed
42 populations you have a much higher number of moose for
43 harvest, but still most of the moose coming out of that
44 population are still going to predators.

45
46 So over the last 30 years what have we
47 learned about all these different studies. Most of the
48 scientific criticisms of predator control and predator
49 management were wrong. We got a lot of criticism
50 saying if you remove predators, the calves are going to

1 die anyway and, you know, the mortality is
2 compensatory. If a bear doesn't kill a moose calf,
3 then it's going to die for some other reason because
4 habitat is a winning factor. That turned out to be all
5 wrong. We didn't find any of that.

6
7 We found that predator control can
8 produce more moose for harvest. One of the
9 consequences of finding out all this information is
10 people know that the science is sound and they know
11 that predator control can produce more moose for
12 harvest, so that has resulted in an increased demand
13 for predator control.

14
15 I'll switch over to caribou a little
16 bit. In the Interior herds, caribou are a little bit
17 harder to generalize about because the small herds are
18 affected to a great degree by predation. Particularly
19 in the Interior, the small herds are really affected a
20 lot by grizzly bears. They're also affected quite a
21 bit by wolves and then golden eagles are surprisingly
22 important at killing caribou calves. In a large herd,
23 like the Mulchatna Herd, the Western Arctic Herd, when
24 those herds are at high levels, predation is
25 insignificant. There are so many caribou and there's
26 relatively so few predators that really predators don't
27 have much effect on those populations.

28
29 That was not the case in the mid-1970s
30 when the Western Arctic Herd declined to about 75,000.
31 We estimated at that time that wolves were taking about
32 20,000 caribou out of the Western Arctic Herd. As the
33 Western Arctic Herd declines now, it's likely that wolf
34 predation is going to become increasingly important.

35
36 Wolves are a little bit slow to get on
37 caribou calving areas. They don't come there right
38 away as soon as the first calves are born. When they
39 do find calves on calving areas, they tend to eat
40 everything. There's not that many calves around. As
41 calves become more abundant as calving goes on, wolves
42 are not as hungry anymore and they tend to just eat
43 selected portions. They'll eat the stomachs, eat the
44 milk curds out of the stomachs and then they start
45 caching parts of calves or they'll cut the calf in half
46 like that one in the top picture and they'll bury half
47 of the calf in one place and the other half somewhere
48 else.

49
50 Later in calving, when the nursery

1 bands form, wolves can be really important predators.
2 There's 17 calves in that picture to the left. They
3 were killed in about five minutes by two wolves on the
4 calving area of the Forty Mile Caribou Herd.

5
6 If wolves are living exclusively on
7 caribou, they will kill 20 to 25 caribou a year.
8 That's what it takes to support a single wolf for a
9 year. The same thing about mild winters. Wolves have
10 a tough time. Deep snow winters wolves do better. You
11 get big pack sizes. Pack sizes like this pack of 25
12 tend not to be very stable. It takes a lot of food to
13 support a wolf pack like that. So if winters are
14 pretty mild, there's not enough vulnerable prey around,
15 even a moose won't feed 25 wolves, so there's a lot of
16 strife. The younger wolves disperse and go off on
17 their own and you see those pack sizes kind of go back
18 down to a more normal level.

19
20 Deer are kind of an interesting one.
21 There's basically two kinds of islands. Deer are
22 mostly on the islands in Alaska. There's a few deer on
23 the mainland in Southeast Alaska, but not very many.
24 There's two kinds of islands. Basically there are
25 islands without wolves. Kodiak, Admiralty, Baranof,
26 Chichagof. And then islands with wolves; central
27 Southeast, Mitkof, Kupreanof, QU and then in southern
28 Southeast, Prince of Wales.

29
30 You find that on the islands without
31 wolves deer tend to be abundant. They're limited by
32 winter weather. They build up to high levels, get a
33 bad winter, then they decline. Within just a couple
34 years they're back again. On the islands that have
35 wolves, when you have those bad winters, deer can go
36 down to very low levels and it takes them many, many
37 years to come back. Down in Petersburg it took -- they
38 had a closed season on deer for 17 years after the bad
39 winters in the early 1970s and then they just had
40 another series of bad winters in 2007. Deer are not
41 hunttable in those areas anymore.

42
43 We've had Advisory Committees ask for
44 two IM programs for deer, but Fish and Game staff have
45 been reluctant to implement them. The staff in Fish
46 and Game were just not sure whether they could do any
47 good. In Southeast Alaska other foods are plentiful.
48 Really, you can get a lot of food from the ocean.
49 There's salmon and halibut and everything else.

50

1 Part of it is just personal bias on the
2 part of the staff against intensive management. I
3 think that's one of the realities of this situation.
4 If you run into a biologist who has a personal bias
5 against intensive management, you've got an uphill
6 battle trying to get a program implemented.

7
8 MuskoX. We still don't know nearly
9 enough about predation on muskoX. It's not nearly as
10 well understood as moose and caribou, but we're
11 beginning to learn a bit more. One of the real
12 interesting things is when the muskoX were introduced
13 to both the Seward Peninsula and to the North Slope
14 back in the late '60s, it was about 20 years before
15 there was any significant predation on muskoX calves.
16 Just about every single calf born in that North Slope
17 muskoX population was recruited into the adult
18 population. Then, during the early '90s, it became
19 apparent that grizzly bears had figured out that muskoX
20 were something good to eat and that behavior pattern
21 spread.

22
23 Some biologists don't believe it. The
24 information is not all that solid scientifically. We
25 don't have an open and shut case about it, but it's
26 pretty clear that something changed pretty dramatically
27 to the point where grizzly predation largely resulted
28 in elimination of the entire muskoX population from the
29 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

30
31 The Fish and Wildlife Service did
32 essentially nothing about that. Really didn't provide
33 their biologist any more money to study it. The State
34 was slow in studying it. Really never put much effort
35 into it. So that population of muskoX is gone. We
36 really can't say exactly why except we do know that
37 half of all the radio collared muskoxen were killed by
38 grizzly bears. The other half of the muskoxen died for
39 whatever reason and no one was able to figure out what
40 it was. They just were unknown mortalities, but
41 there's a pretty good chance that a lot of them were
42 killed by grizzly bears as well.

43
44 MuskoX are not an IM species, but that
45 doesn't mean that Fish and Game cannot help people
46 manage their muskoX populations. When we saw muskoX
47 completely disappeared from Unit 26C, which is the
48 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, we decided we were not
49 going to let that happen in the 26B on the State land
50 between the Canning River and the Colville. So we had

1 the staff in the Fairbanks office design a program to
2 at least try to find out why the muskox were going away
3 and then try to do something to alleviate bear
4 predation to test if that was something that would
5 help.

6
7 So from 2010 to 2012 bears that were
8 observed preying on muskox were removed both by hunters
9 and by ADF&G staff. There's the Haul Road corridor
10 there where firearms are not allowed and that's where
11 some of the muskox groups were. So we would tell
12 hunters that we knew were good bow hunters about these
13 bears. Actually those guys went up and they were able
14 to get two bears that were definite muskox killers.
15 Then Fish and Game staff took out seven other bears.
16 So just by taking seven bears out the muskox in 26B
17 calves survived a whole lot better and adult survival
18 was greatly improved.

19
20 The problem was even though muskox
21 calves survived a lot better initially for the first
22 couple of months, by the end of the summer the number
23 of muskox calves surviving wasn't all that different
24 than it had been before, so they were still losing
25 calves to bear predation later in the summer, which was
26 kind of a surprise because with moose, once you get the
27 calves through three weeks, they're pretty well safe
28 from bear predation, but that was not true with muskox.

29
30 One of the problems we had there, we
31 started out with 200 muskox remaining. The population
32 had been 400. It declined to about 200. We started
33 this program, removed these seven bears. The muskox
34 population was on track, it was increasing nicely, it
35 got up to 250 and then a group of 22 muskox fell
36 through the ice and went a long way to wiping out all
37 the extra muskox that we'd saved with this intensive
38 management program.

39
40 So, anyway, the thing we learned about
41 those groups of muskox up there is if there are no
42 bears around the group when the muskox are born, which
43 they're born in late April and May, all those calves
44 survived. The other thing that was interesting was
45 that it greatly improved the survival of adult muskox
46 and that was a little bit of a surprise.

47
48 The problem with the program up there
49 is it's really hard to have a biologist or someone stay
50 up there and babysit those muskox groups through the

1 whole time that they have their calves and for months,
2 so what we had is guys flying out of Fairbanks with a
3 fast airplane. They'd fly up there, check all the
4 groups. If there was a bear around, they'd fly all the
5 way back to Fairbanks, fly up with a helicopter, take
6 out the bear and then bring the bear hide and the skull
7 back to Fairbanks. As you can imagine, it's pretty
8 expensive doing that.

9
10 The other problem is, by the time you
11 figure out that there's a bear around the muskox group,
12 very often the bear has already killed a bunch of the
13 muskox. So you're closing the barn door after the
14 horse is already out. It would be a whole lot better
15 -- you know, here on the Seward Peninsula you wouldn't
16 have near that problem if eventually you decided that
17 you wanted to implement a program like that. It's
18 pretty close to town, you can kind of monitor those
19 groups all the time and might even be able to get some
20 enterprising young guy to live out there with the
21 muskox and kind of keep an eye on things.

22
23 Anyway, over the years we've had a
24 number of successes and failures with these programs.
25 Not all these intensive management programs work. 20A
26 has been very successful.

27
28 Unit 13 has been very successful.
29 Moose and caribou numbers have increased and we've
30 reallocated a lot of moose and caribou from wolves and
31 bears to people. Southern Alaska Peninsula worked very
32 well. The three bear removal programs, two of them
33 were really effective. The one at Sleetmute where we
34 took out 150 black bears and 20 grizzlies over two
35 years and that was aerial shooting bears from a
36 helicopter and everybody said, oh, that's going to be
37 really controversial. You guys will never be able to
38 do that. There was no controversy around that program.
39 It was pretty obvious that it was a major moose calving
40 area. There are a lot of Native people in the Yukon
41 and Kuskokwim or Lower Kuskokwim that really needed
42 those moose and there was really no opposition to that
43 program.

44
45 Anyway, with muskox we've seen some
46 success, but there's been some unforeseen factors that
47 reduce success. Any programs with muskox should be
48 considered experimental.

49
50 Other things we found out. We tried

1 non-lethal control. It did not work. We tried lethal
2 wolf control in areas where there were Park Service
3 lands. It did not work. If the land status makes it
4 so that a lot of area is off limits and you can't
5 operate there, the changes of success go dramatically
6 down. We had a wolf control program in Unit 21 that
7 didn't work at all. Unit 16, the predator control
8 program there has not worked. We'll probably terminate
9 that program. The access is poor. No matter what you
10 do with hunting regulations, we even allowed trapping
11 of bears. We could not get people to take enough
12 bears.

13

14 The main reason some of these programs
15 don't work is either land status prevents effective
16 predator removal. In some cases, political
17 interference, you get a change in State administration
18 and they terminate the programs prematurely. Probably
19 by far the most important reason these programs don't
20 work is it's just not possible to remove enough
21 predators. Too difficult and too expensive. Anyway,
22 just a little bit about compensatory and add it to
23 mortality. You know, that's why you have to work
24 pretty closely with your biologists that are in your
25 area.

26

27 If the animals are in such bad
28 condition nutritionally, there's a good chance that the
29 calves will die anyway and it doesn't matter if you
30 remove predators or not, the calves are going to die,
31 but in Alaska that's really rare. It doesn't happen
32 like that very much.

33

34 Nutrition is always important. The
35 high-quality populations produce more young, but
36 predation is mostly additive. Even in the real low
37 populations where there's heavy browsing, like 20A,
38 really low twinning rates and all that, most of those
39 calves will survive and they will be available for
40 hunters to take.

41

42 The surest way to learn more is to
43 conduct these management experiments. Biologists will
44 argue for years about what's going on in a population
45 and you can put radio collars on and you can do
46 everything you can to try to figure it out and
47 basically you will be no closer to figuring out if
48 that's a manageable situation unless you actually go
49 out there and do something. So if you're worried about
50 your low moose numbers on the Seward Peninsula or

1 problems with muskox, if you go out there and you try
2 to remove bears, no matter how you design the
3 experiment, hopefully you design it the best way you
4 can, but you're going to learn more by actually going
5 out there and trying it than you will by wondering
6 about it and studying it for the next many years.
7 That's one of the main lessons we've learned about all
8 that stuff.

9

10 Anyway, right now we have intensive
11 management programs on 10 to 15 percent of the state.
12 Many of those will be terminated over the next probably
13 five years, so that number will go down much lower.
14 Some of the ones are successful and we don't need to do
15 them anymore. Some of them are unsuccessful and
16 there's no point continuing them anymore, so that's why
17 they'll be ended.

18

19 Right now I think -- politically, and
20 as far as the controversy goes, the interesting thing
21 is the controversy about predator control in Alaska is
22 largely over. I never thought I would say that because
23 over the 30 years of my career it's been an ongoing
24 controversy. But the science is solid, the legal
25 challenges have all been exhausted.

26

27 A lot of the environmental groups that
28 were fighting Alaska for many years have left.
29 Defenders of Wildlife really isn't active in Alaska
30 anymore. The tourism boycott didn't work. The ballot
31 initiatives, they lost. So really the controversy is
32 over. Particularly when you talk about the importance
33 of things like moose and caribou for subsistence, even
34 environmental groups don't want to take that one on.
35 They realize they lose.

36

37 So the way it is now most Republicans
38 it's become politically entrenched. Most Republicans
39 support predator control. Most urban democrats don't
40 support it. The National Park Service and the Fish and
41 Wildlife Service oppose predator management on their
42 land even though theoretically the Fish and Wildlife
43 Service does do predator management for waterfowl and
44 whatnot and they could allow the State to do predator
45 management. They choose not to. BLM has always
46 remained neutral and has allowed the State to manage
47 wildlife on BLM lands. That's part of their national
48 policy and I don't see that changing.

49

50 On the Seward Peninsula you've got a

1 mix of BLM, State and private, so I think the land
2 status that you've got here is conducive if you need an
3 intensive management program, it will work. One of the
4 unexpected things we ran into though is on private
5 lands there are some unexpected things that happen.
6 We, in the project at Sleetmute, we kept getting
7 opposition from the Native corporation and we said,
8 well, wait a minute, you know, this is for Native
9 people. The board of the Native corporation was
10 unanimously in favor of the program.

11
12 It turned out they had a secretary who
13 was a white woman from Anchorage. She was personally
14 opposed to wolf control and she did everything she
15 could to stop the program. We would not have expected
16 that that would be one of the obstacles to be overcome.
17 She brought up all kinds of red herrings, like, you
18 know, it's a liability problem if we allow people to
19 shoot wolves on Native corporation land, somebody has
20 an accident, we'll get sued and it was all bologna. We
21 ran that by the State Department of Law and there's
22 nothing to that. There's no liability involved.
23 Anyway, that's some of the extra problems you can
24 occasionally run into unexpectedly on some of this
25 stuff.

26
27 I'll stop there and if you guys have
28 any questions, I'd be glad to answer them.

29
30 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: I guess I'd
31 suggest that we start helping ourselves to the food and
32 let's just talk informally. We've got an hour and then
33 we made a notice to the public that they can come and
34 just socialize with us, talk to the members of the RAC,
35 talk to the Staff. We'll see what kind of crowd turns
36 out. If there aren't any more questions for Pat, let's
37 just talk to him privately or talk some more about this
38 stuff.

39
40 MR. JOHNSON: So, Mr. Chair, the
41 Council will then recess for the evening and then
42 resume business at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow?

43
44 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, don't we
45 come back at 7:00 tonight?

46
47 MR. JOHNSON: The session this evening
48 at 7:00 p.m. will not be a Council session, but instead
49 a separate process where it will be a public meeting
50 where people can come and provide written or oral

1 comments and those comments are actually directly to
2 the Board. Whereas when the Council addresses this
3 issue in the morning, anybody from the public can also
4 attend that, of course, but then at that time they
5 would be providing their comments directly to the
6 Council as part of the Council's discussion on the
7 issue. So then at this point in time then the Council
8 would recess its business until tomorrow.

9

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SMITH: So we will recess
11 until tomorrow at 9:00 o'clock. Help yourself to the
12 food. There's some very good food over there.

13

14 (Off record)

15

16 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

