

1 EASTERN INTERIOR SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
2 PUBLIC MEETING

3  
4 VOLUME I

5  
6 October 5, 2004  
7 Redman Hall  
8 Eagle, Alaska

9  
10  
11 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- 12  
13 Gerald Nicholia, Chair  
14 Andrew Bassich  
15 Allen J. Stevens  
16 Philip Titus  
17 Virgil Umphenour  
18 Larry Williams  
19  
20 Regional Coordinator, Vince Mathews

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Eagle, Alaska - 10/5/2004)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you guys for coming here. I'd like to call this meeting to order, the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting in Eagle, Alaska, Redman Hall. I'd like to welcome everybody here to Eagle that made it. If there's any opening remarks, we got an elder here or anything, Vince?

MR. MATHEWS: No, I don't know, unless Andy has.

MR. BASSICH: No.

MR. MATHEWS: So it would be up to someone on the Council or someone else. The local chief, I was just talking to Andy, was supposed to be here but when I was talking to him yesterday he was indicating he had to travel.

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I'll ask Paul to.

MR. WILLIAMS:

(Prayer)

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: So Vince, you going to do roll call then.

MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'll go through roll call. Sue Entsminger, she called, her father has a heart condition and his condition has changed so she's got to go outside so she called in this past weekend. I'm just going down the list here. Trish Waggoner was hired for a new job in Anchorage so she was unable to make this meeting. Gerald Nicholia.

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Here.

MR. MATHEWS: Andy Bassich.

MR. BASSICH: Here.

MR. MATHEWS: Philip Titus.

MR. TITUS: Here.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Jay Stevens.  
2  
3 MR. STEVENS: Here.  
4  
5 MR. MATHEWS: Larry Williams.  
6  
7 MR. WILLIAMS: Here.  
8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Craig Fleener was  
10 planning on being here but was called up for National  
11 Guard Duty so he's not present. Virgil Umphenour.  
12  
13 MR. UMPHENOUR: Here.  
14  
15 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, you have six  
16 members with nine seat, because you have one vacant seat,  
17 so you have a quorum.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Vince. I  
20 guess we'll start with ethics. My name is Gerald  
21 Nicholia, I live in Tanana, I subsistence hunt and fish  
22 in the areas under consideration. I don't hunt in this  
23 area. I don't hold any commercial permits or conduct any  
24 business activities directly affected by any agenda items  
25 before this Council.  
26  
27 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, for the  
28 public, he's going through the ethic's disclosure which  
29 is now part of our process and I'm the designated Federal  
30 officer and let me grab my response. Well, why don't we  
31 do it this way, each person can do their own ethic's  
32 disclosures and then I can do it as one group, if that's  
33 okay with the Chair.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: (Nods affirmatively)  
36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Quickly for the  
38 newer members, I put a green sheet in front of you, on  
39 the back of it are some sample language on ethic's  
40 disclosures. Basically this is a common practice with  
41 different boards and groups to make sure there's no  
42 significant financial gain that may be associated if you  
43 participate in a certain proposal or item before the  
44 Council. Most of you would fall under number 1 on that  
45 back page. Others of you have done this for many, many  
46 other boards so I don't have to give you any advice on  
47 how to do that, but it makes it clear on the record that  
48 there's no concern that you may get some financial gain  
49 on this.  
50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

4

5 MR. BASSICH: My name is Andy Bassich. I  
6 live in Eagle. I subsist, hunt, fish and trap in the  
7 area under consideration at this meeting. I do not hold  
8 any commercial permits or conduct any business activities  
9 directly affected by any agenda items before the Council.

10

11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Jay.

12

13 MR. STEVENS: My name is Allen Stevens  
14 and I live in Stevens Village. I subsistence hunt and  
15 fish in the areas under consideration at this meeting. I  
16 do not hold any commercial permits or conduct any  
17 business activities directly affected by any agenda items  
18 before the Council.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Virg.

23

24 MR. UMPHENOUR: My name is Virgil  
25 Umphenour. I subsistence hunt and fish in some of that  
26 -- or in the region, however, I am a commercial fish  
27 buyer, I do buy fish in District 5 on the Yukon River and  
28 I buy fish, which is in the Eastern Interior's region,  
29 and I also buy fish on the Tanana River commercially.  
30 Two of the proposals will affect what comes up the river,  
31 or gets up the river if they were passed, which I don't  
32 think would affect any of the users in the area except in  
33 a positive manner, because only the harvestable surplus  
34 after subsistence needs are met are being -- are allowed  
35 to be sold commercially. I'm also a big game guide,  
36 however, there are no proposals addressing big game  
37 hunting in areas where I -- where myself and my son  
38 guide. I don't think I have any other -- I don't think  
39 any of the proposals before us that I have a conflict  
40 with.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Jeep.

45

46 MR. TITUS: My name is Philip Titus and I  
47 live in Minto and I subsistence hunt and fish and trap,  
48 there's no Federal land up around Minto.

49

50 MR. WILLIAMS: My name is Larry Williams.

1 I subsistence hunt, fish and hunt in the area up in  
2 Venetie. I do not trap in this area. I do not hold any  
3 commercial permits or conduct any business activities  
4 directly affected by any agenda items before the Council.  
5

6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince.  
7

8 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, we have  
9 reviewed the proposals internally as well as the  
10 background for all the members that have just spoken so  
11 as your designated Federal officer, I do not find any  
12 significant financial interest directly related to the  
13 matters before the Council at this meeting and all the  
14 members that have acknowledged themselves here may fully  
15 participate.  
16

17 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Vince.  
18 Introduction of agency, Staff and honored guests starting  
19 over there, starting over there.  
20

21 MR. NELSON: I'm Dave Nelson with the  
22 National Park Service in Anchorage.  
23

24 MR. GROSS: I'm Jeff Gross with the  
25 Alaska Department of Fish and Game out of Tok.  
26

27 MR. MILLS: Dave Mills with Yukon-Charlie  
28 Rivers National Preserve, Fairbanks.  
29

30 MS. FRIEND: Connie Friend with the  
31 Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge.  
32

33 MS. MCSWEENEY: My name is Ingrid  
34 McSweeney, I work for the Bureau of Land Management.  
35

36 MS. BROWN: Wennona Brown, U.S. Fish and  
37 Wildlife Service here representing both Yukon Flats and  
38 Arctic National Wildlife Refuges.  
39

40 MR. UBERUAGA: Rich Uberuaga, Office of  
41 Subsistence Management, Anchorage, fisheries biologist.  
42

43 MR. KRON: Tom Kron, Office of  
44 Subsistence Management.  
45

46 MR. ANDERSEN: Fred Andersen, National  
47 Park Service out of Fairbanks.  
48

49 MR. BOYD: Tom Boyd, Office of  
50 Subsistence Management.

1 MR. HAYNES: Terry Haynes, Alaska  
2 Department of Fish and Game, Fairbanks.  
3  
4 MR. KESSLER: Steve Kessler with the U.S.  
5 Forest Service in Anchorage, member of the InterAgency  
6 Staff Committee.  
7  
8 MR. EASTLAND: Warren Eastland, wildlife  
9 biologist with the BIA in Juneau. I'm a member of the  
10 InterAgency Staff Committee.  
11  
12 MR. BUE: Fred Bue, Fish and Game,  
13 Commercial Fisheries Division.  
14  
15 MR. HOLDER: Russ Holder, Fish and  
16 Wildlife Service, Fairbanks.  
17  
18 MR. TWITCHELL: Hollis Twitchell, Denali  
19 National Park and Preserve.  
20  
21 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Cliff Schleusner, Office  
22 of Subsistence Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
23 Service.  
24  
25 MR. WILLIAMS: Everybody know who I am.  
26  
27 (Laughter)  
28  
29 MR. WILLIAMS: Paul Williams from Beaver,  
30 RIT.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: And our court  
33 reporter.  
34  
35 REPORTER: My name is Tina, and I'm the  
36 court reporter.  
37  
38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, thank you.  
39 Regional Council members concerns and topics, the Chair's  
40 report. I'm not your Chairman anymore, but sticking in  
41 for Craig Fleener, I don't know what his report was but  
42 there's a few things that happened.  
43  
44 A good fish year. Moose hunting was  
45 terrible. That's all I could report. Do you any of you  
46 guys have concerns, stuff you want to express here, now  
47 is the time to do it.  
48  
49 Andy.  
50

1 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
2 Chairman. First of all, I just want to thank everybody  
3 for coming out here to Eagle and holding the meeting out  
4 here in Eagle. Hopefully more town's people will show up  
5 as the day progresses. Not too many early risers around  
6 Eagle.

7  
8 I do have a couple of issues that I have  
9 concerns about. They're longstanding and probably will  
10 continue to be longstanding, primarily fisheries related  
11 issues with quality of escapement. I think there's been  
12 some good improvements. I was very pleased to see the  
13 runs come in the way they did this year, but I think it's  
14 going to be an ongoing and continuing effort to ensure  
15 good quality escapements.

16  
17 Game issues, moose densities within 20(E)  
18 are a very big concern in this area.

19  
20 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thanks Andy. Virg.

23  
24 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes, at our last meeting  
25 we put in a special action request which now I guess they  
26 call petitions addressing the expansion of the Area M  
27 June fishery in Area M. I attended the Federal  
28 Subsistence Board hearing that was held, I think it was  
29 at the end of April, I can't remember for sure, that was  
30 held on this subject, it lasted -- I believe the meeting  
31 lasted two days, they were going to try to do it in one  
32 day but it ran over, about 80 people showed up to  
33 testify, there were nine RACs, I could be wrong a little  
34 bit on this, because I didn't study the record to make  
35 sure that I'm absolutely correct, but this is the best as  
36 my memory can remember. I think nine RACs showed up of  
37 the 10 in the state, the only one that didn't show up was  
38 the Anchorage RAC, well, it's not the Anchorage RAC, but  
39 it's the one that Anchorage is part of over to Valdez.  
40 Of the nine RACs that showed up, eight were in support --  
41 ended up being in support of our petition and some other  
42 RACs also joined in and had written a petition as well,  
43 such as the Bristol Bay RAC.

44  
45 Because there was so many people that  
46 came to testify they had to extend the meeting a day.  
47 What ended up finally happening though is that the  
48 Federal Subsistence Board recommended against extra-  
49 territorial jurisdiction and so that was their  
50 recommendation to the Secretaries, and so the Secretaries

1 didn't do anything. So nothing happened as far as our  
2 special action request goes which is very disappointing  
3 to me and I have the transcript with me and I have  
4 important parts of it highlighted if anyone wants to look  
5 at that. I've got it tabbed so that you can look at what  
6 was said.

7  
8                   But to me it was a travesty that the  
9 Federal Subsistence Board did not make the recommendation  
10 to the Secretaries to do something about the expansion of  
11 the Area M fishery. A lot of people think that because  
12 there were no subsistence restrictions in the Yukon River  
13 drainage this year, and I don't know what they were in  
14 all the other drainages, however I don't think Norton  
15 Sound did that good this year, but, because there were no  
16 restrictions that everything's wonderful, well, the last  
17 report I got from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
18 said, I believe, around 630,000 chum salmon is what their  
19 final analysis was that came into the Yukon, for the fall  
20 run this year, 630,000 under the management plan would  
21 not allow for any type of commercial fishery and I know  
22 we're not supposed to talk about commercial here but what  
23 it amounts to is that when you take the old spawning  
24 escapement before they redid all the spawning escapement  
25 goals and lowered them -- if you take the old spawning  
26 escapement, minimum escapement of 400,000 fall chum  
27 salmon into the Yukon River, and then you add the  
28 subsistence needs and, of course, a lot of people's  
29 subsistence needs, they don't rely on the fish as much as  
30 they used to because they're used to not getting enough  
31 fish but it was an extremely marginal run, it wasn't  
32 enough fish to allow for a commercial fishery and so to  
33 me, what that tells me, because of the information that,  
34 you know, sometimes as high as 15 percent of the chum  
35 salmon harvested in that fishery are bound for the Yukon  
36 River, what it amounts to is that those people get to  
37 have a commercial fishery, the Yukon River doesn't, if  
38 they would have caught maybe a few more fish in their  
39 commercial fishery then maybe our subsistence may have  
40 had to have been restricted, especially if they had not  
41 lowered the escapement goals like they did this last  
42 Board session.

43  
44                   But anyway, I'm really disappointed in  
45 that. I think we need to continue to look at it because  
46 there were issues brought up at this meeting, in fact, I  
47 brought up the issue that this is only one of the holes  
48 in the bucket, basically, this intercept fishery, that we  
49 also need to look at the hatchery and the competition in  
50 the marine environment and we also need to look at the

1 trawl fleet. So they used that as kind of an excuse to  
2 not do anything, but someone has to start the ball  
3 rolling to do the appropriate research and figure out why  
4 the productivity is so low on these chum salmon because  
5 we have not had hardly any exploitation on our chum  
6 salmon and when we're getting less than two to one return  
7 per spawner and in many cases less than one to one return  
8 per spawner on the Yukon with no directed fishery hardly  
9 at all, then something's happening to those fish.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 Well, I have the same concerns about  
14 quality escapement on the king salmon as Andy does but  
15 we'll address that later in the meeting.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Virg.  
20 Jeep, you have anything.

21

22 MR. TITUS: Nope.

23

24 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Larry.

25

26 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, one of the main  
27 concerns where I live in Upper Yukon Flats, Venetie area  
28 and Fort Yukon and to some extent, Beaver, it's the low  
29 moose population that we've been having over the last, at  
30 least, five years, and we've been talking about it and  
31 talking about it for years and years and no action has  
32 been taken as far as predator control or anything that  
33 will help the moose population go back up.

34

35 Like I said, we've been talking and  
36 talking and talk will get us nowhere unless action is  
37 taken on those talks. I'd like to see somebody come up  
38 to me or any one of the village leaders and say I'm so  
39 and so and let's talk about the predator control.  
40 Because I talked to a lot of hunters this fall, I went  
41 hunting this fall but unfortunately I didn't get a moose,  
42 and there's a lot of people in my area that did not get a  
43 moose because of the large bear population that we have.  
44 Every beach and every camping area they see bear tracks  
45 and wolf tracks, so that tells us that something needs to  
46 be done about the predators. And I'd like to see some  
47 action taken at some point ASAP to address that, to have  
48 some way of addressing that predator control instead of  
49 just talking, just do something about it.

50

1 Talking about fisheries up in my area,  
2 Venetie area, that's what -- talking to Craig Fleener  
3 over the phone, that people have been getting enough chum  
4 salmon anyway this fall, and for myself I've been getting  
5 a lot of spawned out salmon for dog feed and so I don't  
6 have very much concern in that area.

7  
8 Thank you very much.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, guys.  
11 Review and adoption of agenda. I always like to keep it  
12 a floating agenda, and what I mean by floating agenda is  
13 that people that come in and go out we'll always make  
14 room for them when the time arises, if they come in or  
15 leave early.

16  
17 But we could always make changes as we  
18 move along, too, because I don't really like to have a  
19 concrete agenda, if you guys could understand me.

20  
21 Vince.

22  
23 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, just to let you know  
24 there's some items in there that you need to know about.  
25 Because of the interest in the fisheries proposals, at  
26 10:30 we'll have a teleconference. When you start  
27 addressing the fisheries, so we'll have a teleconference  
28 at 10:30 and then we'll have another teleconference at  
29 4:00 if the Council agrees to move up the wildlife topics  
30 into today. The reason being is we only have access to  
31 the phone line in this building for today. If we need a  
32 phone line for tomorrow we'll have to relocate the  
33 meeting.

34  
35 So those would be two items. And then  
36 another one is when I.....

37  
38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince. Vince, how  
39 important are these teleconference participants, do you  
40 know?

41  
42 MR. MATHEWS: Well, the fishery ones I  
43 think is extremely important because one of the key Staff  
44 Committee people would like to understand how Eastern  
45 Interior addresses the drift net proposals.

46  
47 The one in the afternoon, if we were able  
48 to, your wildlife biologist may be available to listen in  
49 on that, that would be Pete DeMatteo, we're still trying  
50 to get a hold of him, but hopefully he will be available

1 at 4:00 to listen in when you talk about wildlife issues.

2

3 So those would be the reasonings behind  
4 the two teleconferences.

5

6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Who is the key Staff  
7 person on the fisheries issues?

8

9 MR. MATHEWS: Well, there's two that I  
10 know of, there may be more that have been made aware of  
11 this. One, would be Rod Simmons, Fish and Wildlife  
12 Service representative on the Staff Committee. And the  
13 other one would be the Division Chief for the Interior  
14 which would be Don Rivard. And I don't know if there's  
15 others, but those are the two for the 10:30  
16 teleconference. And then at 4:00 would be Don Rivard and  
17 Pete DeMatteo, if he's able to call in.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All right, thank you,  
20 Vince, yeah, we could probably swing that.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: There is one more thing on  
23 the agenda.

24

25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead.

26

27 MR. MATHEWS: When I typed this up I just  
28 had to guess at what the title of tonight's program would  
29 be and that has changed, so on Page ii, I put down the  
30 After Effects of Forest Fires on Wildlife Populations.  
31 The presenter Bruce Dale is going to -- his title that he  
32 would prefer would be Assessing Wild and Fire Effect on  
33 Caribou Herds. I did advise him that there'll probably  
34 be questions on the other species but he's mainly going  
35 to focus on the caribou herd. So I don't want people to  
36 be saying, well, I thought you were going to talk about  
37 all the wildlife. This agenda's generated like three  
38 months ahead of time.

39

40 So that's the only changes that I am  
41 aware of.

42

43 Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay. Do we have any  
46 disagreement that we have this as a floating agenda so we  
47 don't have to -- do we have to approve it and adopt it  
48 and everything?

49

50 MR. MATHEWS: No, I don't have any

1 problem with that, you made it clear on the record. The  
2 only thing that would help is if you agree with these  
3 little clarifications just so the record is clear.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any of you guys  
6 disagree with those recommendations or additions?

7  
8 (Council shakes head negatively)

9  
10 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, next. It's  
11 adopted.

12  
13 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, it's adopted, that's  
14 fine, just to make it clear when someone reads the  
15 transcript. Mr. Chair, that brings us up to the minutes,  
16 if that's okay with you. They're on Page 3 in your book  
17 -- now, do all the Council members have a book?

18  
19 (Council nods affirmatively)

20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. With that -- any  
22 time you do anything in a hurry sometimes things happen,  
23 I do have corrections to the minutes. They are  
24 significant enough that that's why I went ahead and made  
25 the copies here for you because they do -- they are  
26 significant enough, and I can go over those as you look  
27 at them.

28  
29 One of the key ones you'll see in there  
30 when you get it, when I have to do your vote total, I  
31 flip flopped the vote so that made it look like you were  
32 actually supporting the motion when actually you were  
33 not.

34  
35 So I'll leave that up to you to review  
36 the two. When you do get the correction sheet, you'll  
37 see I put arrows on the side to point into the ones that  
38 have been corrected.

39  
40 And that's all I have on the minutes.  
41 And I assume you all got copies in the mail that were  
42 mailed out earlier.

43  
44 (Council nods affirmatively)

45  
46 (Pause)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Is there a motion to  
49 approve the minutes of the Beaver meeting.

50

1 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, so moved.  
2  
3 MR. STEVENS: Second.  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved and  
6 seconded, do we have to adopt these changes into the  
7 minutes, Vince?  
8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think because I  
10 made that mistake on the vote total if someone comes back  
11 a year or two from now and looks at it, yeah, it would be  
12 wise on that one. It was just my fingers got too fast on  
13 one side of the keyboard. That would be the only one.  
14 It would help if you guys did adopt changes or  
15 corrections to the minutes.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Is that all right  
18 with you, Andy?  
19  
20 MR. BASSICH: Yes.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: So your motion would  
23 be to approve the Beaver minutes of February 27th-29th  
24 with the corrections from Vince Mathews?  
25  
26 MR. BASSICH: Correct.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.  
29  
30 MR. UMPHENOUR: Second.  
31  
32 MR. STEVENS: Question.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those in favor  
35 signify by saying aye, approval of the Beaver minutes.  
36  
37 IN UNISON: Aye.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, Vince.  
40  
41 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, that  
42 puts us a little ahead of the curve here with the  
43 teleconference at 10:30, holds us back in moving into the  
44 regulator fisheries proposals. So we can move up -- or  
45 wait a minute, maybe the State has -- Terry, maybe wants  
46 to make a presentation.  
47  
48 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if you do have  
49 some time, Jeff Gross can only be here today and if you  
50 do have some free time, he has to leave actually early

1 this afternoon and if you have some additional time that  
2 wouldn't take you off your schedule if you'd consider  
3 letting him have a few minutes.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

6  
7 MR. HAYNES: We'd appreciate that,  
8 whatever's convenient.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: How does that sound,  
11 Vince?

12  
13 MR. MATHEWS: It sounds great to me, the  
14 only thing is Jeff we will shut you down about 10:25,  
15 just so you know, and we have copies of some of the  
16 materials you might talk about if you need it, that's  
17 fine.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.

20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, to make it  
22 clear, it's your meeting, your agenda, I'm the one that  
23 just keeps track of the clock and make sure that we leave  
24 the room.....

25  
26 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I understand, Vince.  
27 Go ahead, Jeff.

28  
29 MR. GROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My  
30 name is Jeff Gross. I am the Tok, Alaska Department of  
31 Fish and Game biologist. I guess the only thing I really  
32 wanted to bring up to the committee, this is kind of  
33 impromptu, because I wasn't really thinking about talking  
34 here today, but I did want to make the committee aware of  
35 an upcoming proposal for the fall Board of Game, State  
36 Board of Game agenda, Proposal No. 69.

37  
38 Proposal No. 69 is proposing a predator  
39 management plan for wolves and bears, specifically  
40 grizzly bears in Units 12 and 20(E). And last spring,  
41 the Board of Game instructed the Department to develop a  
42 plan to address predation by wolves and grizzly bears on  
43 moose to address a chronically low moose population. And  
44 currently we've put together a proposal that's in the  
45 current Board of Game book and I guess what I'd like to  
46 do is go ahead and answer any questions you might have  
47 and offer up the idea that maybe it would be a good idea  
48 to potentially make some comments before the October 19th  
49 deadline to give to the Board of Game, whether or not the  
50 RAC supports it, what they feel should be done, et

1 cetera.

2

3                   Currently grizzly bear predator control  
4 is kind of -- it's well, in modern infancy, they did it  
5 with poison and so on back in the '50s and earlier in the  
6 century, but right now it's just kind of being developed.  
7 The Board of Game developed a policy on bear predator  
8 control at the last spring meeting, which addresses  
9 methods and means as well as other limitations and how  
10 the Department or how the predator control for bears was  
11 to be conducted, where, when, et cetera.

12

13                   Some of the means just to bring it up to  
14 the RAC that have been discussed include things from  
15 increasing bag limits beyond one bear a year. As perhaps  
16 the most liberal thing all the way over to non-selective  
17 snaring. Other things in between include baiting grizzly  
18 bears, same day airborne, allowing hunters to land in the  
19 spring, ridge tops and walk down to grizzly bears that  
20 they spot and harvest them. One thing that's important  
21 to point out here is, especially with the bears, is this  
22 is not hunting, this is a predator control plan, it's not  
23 a hunting season that's being proposed.

24

25                   For wolves, right now the things that are  
26 being discussed are the use of aircraft to harvest wolves  
27 under the plan. Currently we have good research in the  
28 southern half of 20(E) which is one of the requirements  
29 before the plan is going to be able to be implemented,  
30 and that's the area that the Department's suggesting use  
31 as our focus area -- or as the focus area of the plan.  
32 There are three major Federal entities, the Wrangell-St.  
33 Elias, the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge and the Yukon-  
34 Charley. And as I understand, of course, the Board of  
35 Game is the final say in this, but as I understand the  
36 intent is not to conduct these activities on those  
37 Federal lands. However, Federal subsistence corridors in  
38 the southern part of 20(E) would be where subsistence  
39 hunters would benefit. There's currently a longer season  
40 or a seven day season at the beginning of September prior  
41 to the main portion of the moose hunting season that  
42 allows subsistence hunters to harvest moose in those  
43 corridors, in those Federal corridors. So that's really,  
44 I think, from a subsistence standpoint where the Board  
45 would have some consideration of whether or not they feel  
46 the predator control would be beneficial to those  
47 subsistence users.

48

49                   And I'd be happy to answer any questions.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I have a question.  
2 You know, they did a -- I'm not against this predator  
3 control, I think it's really needed in some parts of the  
4 state here in Alaska, but on the bear part, you guys  
5 ain't going to try to relocate any bears, are you?  
6  
7 MR. GROSS: This predator control plan is  
8 aimed at lethal control, so, no.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: So you're just going  
11 to go out there and hire killers and kill them off or are  
12 you going to do it in a way that you don't have wildlife  
13 people up beating on your door?  
14  
15 MR. GROSS: I think if we're going to be  
16 killing bears we're going to have wildlife people beating  
17 on our doors. But the idea is that the Department is not  
18 going to be the one harvesting the animals. The  
19 Department is developing a plan, along with the Board of  
20 Game to allow hunters or Alaska residents, possibly non-  
21 residents to harvest the animals by allowing them  
22 additional tools. Such as for wolves, there are several  
23 places in the state in the past that have used airplanes,  
24 that's above and beyond hunting means. Something along  
25 those lines would be considered. For bears as well.  
26  
27 Again, it's really important to point out  
28 that this is not -- this predator plan is not hunting, it  
29 is specifically to reduce the predator population.  
30  
31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Virg.  
34  
35 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, just a little -- I  
36 was at that Board of Game meeting last spring and the  
37 Chair of the Fairbanks AC and retired biologist Bud  
38 Burris spent a considerable amount of time with the Board  
39 of Game. Those guys worked as kind of a committee to  
40 develop this predator control policy or whatever it is  
41 that the Board of Game adopted, but I just wanted to  
42 point that out.  
43  
44 As a person that spends a lot of time in  
45 the field hunting bears and wolves, I just wanted to  
46 point out that there's just three simple methods and  
47 means that would enable hunters to be much more  
48 efficient. These grizzly bears are primarily nocturnal,  
49 especially when there's a lot of human activity around,  
50 hunters in the field, such as during the fall hunting

1 season, they become nocturnal. We have a regulation that  
2 says you can't use artificial light or you can't use any  
3 night vision sites of any types. There's only -- there's  
4 two things that could make hunters super efficient at  
5 killing grizzly bears, that's using night vision devices  
6 and being able to communicate with a radio.

7  
8                   And hunting wolves, the simplest thing to  
9 do is allow same day airborne, but that's not shooting  
10 out of an airplane, that's just a pilot up in the air,  
11 hunters on the ground with snowmachines and be able to  
12 communicate by radio.

13  
14                   If you could do that, the regular public  
15 could be efficient at killing both bears and wolves.  
16 Those are the two simplest things to do. And all this  
17 other stuff they have in there, you know, they have just  
18 a giant laundry list from snaring to just about  
19 everything you can imagine, I don't know if they have  
20 those things in there but someone that spends a lot of  
21 time trying to figure out how to kill these bears, those  
22 are the two things that I know would work.

23  
24                   Thank you.

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

27  
28                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
29 Jeff, when predator control has been done in the past in  
30 other units what's the timeframe that it usually takes  
31 for there to be an effect, where you begin to see  
32 increase in game? How many years does it take for a  
33 program like this to begin to have its effects in a  
34 positive way or is it immediate?

35  
36                   MR. GROSS: It really is dependent on the  
37 level of control and the methods and the effectiveness of  
38 the program. In addition we're looking at multiple  
39 predator species rather than single predator species. In  
40 dual predator systems like we have in 20(E) with grizzly  
41 bears and wolves, both impacting the moose population,  
42 the thought is if we can effect both predator populations  
43 at the same time, we could potentially see rather a rapid  
44 effect. Perhaps the first year, a pretty significant  
45 increase in calf production for instance.

46  
47                   Other programs in the past that have had  
48 say limited control on a single predator in a dual  
49 predator system generally there's a lag time and it's  
50 more difficult to quantify, especially in low density

1 moose populations, it may take, three, four, five years  
2 to really see any kind of increase, and even then it may  
3 be a fairly mild increase.

4  
5                   As far as the period of time that most  
6 predator control programs in the past -- I'll kind of  
7 limit it to, oh, since about the early 1980s, generally  
8 the predator control programs are listed in the  
9 regulations or in the statutes as being five year  
10 programs, I believe, three to five years, I think is what  
11 the intent of this. I think we recommended up to five  
12 years on this particular plan.

13  
14                   The other aspects that influence the  
15 success of the program is -- and the response of wildlife  
16 population is what other programs are taking place, how  
17 the -- on a landscape level, how the predator populations  
18 are reduced. For instance, if potentially bears can be  
19 reduced significantly in areas where moose calve, we  
20 should see a significant increase in calf survival for  
21 moose, that's just one example. Another would be in  
22 winter time situations where moose concentrate in certain  
23 wintering areas. If wolf populations are decreased in  
24 those particular areas we should see an increase in adult  
25 moose survival, well, actually all age class moose  
26 survival in those particular areas.

27  
28                   So in the past, some of the predator  
29 control programs have been more of a shotgun approach and  
30 what the Board of Game has been trying to do, I believe,  
31 in recent years is take a more surgical approach to it  
32 and be more efficient. It's kind of a long answer, but I  
33 got a lot of wind.

34  
35                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince.

38  
39                   MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if you  
40 do need copies of the proposal that Jeff brought up we do  
41 have copies of it. Again, we do look -- you do look at  
42 Board of Game proposals, so that's appropriate. You are  
43 going to be appraised of the predator policy for the  
44 Federal Subsistence Program later, so anyway we do have  
45 copies of it just to let you know, because there's quite  
46 a bit in that proposal that supplement what Jeff is  
47 saying.

48  
49                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Jeff.

50

1 MR. GROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: What now, Vince.  
4  
5 MR. MATHEWS: Well, we have a couple  
6 options here, we can take a break and then come back on  
7 or we can move ahead. I don't really want to move ahead  
8 into the Fisheries Monitoring Program because they need  
9 your high attention on how that's put together because  
10 that's a package deal, you can't take it apart and pick  
11 it up later, or we can juts go ahead with fisheries  
12 proposals and then when we hit the time at 10:30 call  
13 those people.  
14  
15 So the coffee is ready, the stove has  
16 wood in it.  
17  
18 MR. TITUS: The coffee isn't ready, the  
19 coffee's empty.  
20  
21 MR. MATHEWS: The coffee's empty, so  
22 that'd be a good time for a break, too. But anyway, we  
23 can go ahead with fish proposals if you so desire.  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: What do you guys want  
26 to, take a break, or go through these proposals?  
27  
28 MR. TITUS: Take a break.  
29  
30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Take a break.  
31  
32 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, we could take a  
33 break.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, we'll take a  
36 break.  
37  
38 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, so then we'll take a  
39 break then?  
40  
41 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah.  
42  
43 MR. MATHEWS: All right, thank you.  
44  
45 (Off record)  
46  
47 (On record)  
48  
49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, we'll call the  
50 meeting back in order.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, basically the  
2 reason you got this yellow sheet in front of you is when  
3 we produced the book it didn't get printed in the book,  
4 this is the normal steps you take with your proposals.  
5 The only thing that's been added, if that's considered  
6 added, is there's that InterAgency Staff Committee  
7 comments, and I think to speed the process along on that,  
8 if they don't have any comments then you just move on. I  
9 think Steve has the comments here and then Rod Simmons  
10 when he gets on, if they have comments will voice them.  
11 That will save some time instead of, you know, waiting to  
12 see, do you have any comments, if they have some they're  
13 going to jump up. I believe Steve has got some.

14  
15 Mr. Chair, we're ready then to do fish  
16 proposals and we'll walk through the steps.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

19  
20 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Mr. Chairman, the  
21 proposals are found on Page 21 and Proposal 1 is your  
22 proposal that you withdrew from the process so I don't  
23 know if you want to talk about that or not.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Nope.

26  
27 MR. MATHEWS: No, okay. Then that  
28 advances us up to Proposal 2. Let me check with those on  
29 line, can you hear us fairly well there?

30  
31 MR. SIMMONS: Yeah, this is Rod Simmons,  
32 I hear you great.

33  
34 MR. MATHEWS: Okay.

35  
36 MR. RIVARD: This is Don Rivard, I can  
37 hear you fine.

38  
39 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Rod, I think you  
40 were off line when I explained to the Council that, you  
41 know, we're not going to -- the Council's not going to  
42 ask each time if the Staff Committee has comments, either  
43 Steve or yourself will just interrupt when it comes to  
44 that time on the agenda. Does that make sense?

45  
46 MR. SIMMONS: That would be fine.

47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. And that would be my  
49 job, just to stay are there any InterAgency comments and  
50 if we don't hear anything from you or from Steve then

1 they'll just move on.

2

3                   Okay, that moves us up to Proposal 2,  
4 which is found on Page 23 and that is, again, I just give  
5 the broad overview of it, Rich will be presenting the  
6 full analysis. This was submitted by the Association of  
7 Village Council Presidents and seven regional tribal  
8 Councils. In respect to those seven tribal regional  
9 Councils, I'm not going to attempt to read their names  
10 but they are found on Page 25. The proposal is to relax  
11 or lift the fishing schedules when runs permit  
12 irrespective of commercial opportunities.

13

14                   Mr. Chairman, Rich Uberuaga will be  
15 presenting the analysis and we have other information as  
16 we walk through the steps.

17

18                   Thank you.

19

20                   MR. UBERUAGA: Yeah, thank you, Vince.  
21 Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. Proposal 2 is  
22 discussed on Pages 23 through 32 of your Council book.  
23 This proposal was submitted by the Association of Village  
24 Council Presidents and seven regional tribal Councils.

25

26                   The proposal requests that the decision  
27 to lift the subsistence windowed fishing schedule not be  
28 linked to the consideration of a commercial fishery.

29

30                   Now, the windowed Yukon subsistence  
31 fishing schedule was put in place by the Alaska Board of  
32 Fisheries in 2001 with stipulations that it would be  
33 relaxed if there were sufficient numbers of fish to  
34 prosecute a commercial fishery. The windowed subsistence  
35 fishing schedule has helped to provide escapement and  
36 river wide subsistence fishing opportunities, however,  
37 the linkage of the windowed subsistence fishing schedule  
38 to the commercial fishery has been a stumbling block  
39 since 2001.

40

41                   Management of this fishery is an  
42 incremental process. There is no need to directly link  
43 relaxing the subsistence fishing schedule to the  
44 consideration of a commercial fisheries.

45

46                   The Staff's preliminary conclusion is to  
47 support this proposal with modification. The proposed  
48 modification provides the simple and straightforward  
49 wording to accomplish the fishing schedule. The windowed  
50 fishing schedule would be removed when there is an

1 assessment that the salmon run strength is sufficient to  
2 meet escapement objectives, subsistence uses and the  
3 US/Canada border passage commitments.

4  
5 We look forward to hearing comments from  
6 all three Councils, and at this time we'll entertain any  
7 questions you may have.

8  
9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Anybody have  
12 questions for Rich.

13  
14 MR. UBERUAGA: Or comments.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Or comments.

17  
18 You know I have a very serious -- I have  
19 a problem with this proposal because it gives them -- I  
20 don't think these runs are going to come back the way --  
21 just because we had a good year this year doesn't mean  
22 it's going to be good next year and if you guys make the  
23 wrong assessment of -- suppose the agency makes the wrong  
24 assessment and it shows a good strong first two pulses  
25 and then you guys drop the windows thing and those pulses  
26 just drop off or something, these up river people are  
27 going to be hurting just like before, and it gives them  
28 all the frosting on the cake when we just get the crumbs  
29 up river is what I'm trying to say.

30  
31 I'm very wary of kind of supporting  
32 something like this. If I could foresee a good run next  
33 year and a good run the year after next year I would  
34 support something like this, but the unpredictability of  
35 the world we live in today, I don't think we could  
36 support something like this -- I don't think I will be  
37 able to, but I could see where you guys could make your  
38 comments to this, but I don't know.

39  
40 MR. UBERUAGA: If I may comment. This  
41 proposal doesn't change a whole lot of how the fishery is  
42 managed, but what it does do is it provides clear  
43 direction, clear statutory direction -- or regulatory  
44 direction to the in-season managers. In-season managers  
45 are still going to make their decisions based on the best  
46 available information at that time so as noted in the  
47 justification, that the current assessment tools  
48 available, it's not likely that the schedule's going to  
49 be relaxed any earlier than it has been in recent years.

50

1                   So I don't see a lot of direct changes  
2 from adopting this proposal other than providing clear  
3 language to the Federal in-season manager.

4

5                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Virg.

6

7                   MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, with this language,  
8 I'm going to give you a hypothetical situation. The way  
9 the commercial fishery is managed and that's what this  
10 has been tied to since it's been implemented, is once a  
11 commercial fishery is implemented and they have an  
12 opening, then that has been the automatic thing that  
13 subsistence fishing then takes place seven days a week  
14 except for 18 hours before, during and 12 hours after a  
15 commercial period. Now, there's been -- just a little  
16 bit of background and then the hypothetical question.

17

18                   In '99 and 2000, the Department had  
19 commercial openings, the State did in the Lower Yukon,  
20 and I don't have the data before me, but I think in 2000  
21 they had -- well, I don't know how many openings they  
22 had, but they had several openings. And that was because  
23 the commercial manager thought he had enough fish for  
24 escapement and subsistence and everything else and they  
25 can have a commercial fishery, however, he was wrong,  
26 2000 was the lowest escapement they had had ever recorded  
27 on chum salmon, I know for sure, summer chums, and I  
28 believe that it was on kings as well. Super low. They  
29 should have never had a commercial fishery. The manager  
30 made a mistake in his assessment.

31

32                   So now comes the hypothetical question,  
33 because a number of people including myself was -- I was  
34 telling him, look, you need to shut this commercial  
35 fishery down, you do not have enough fish to meet  
36 escapement and have subsistence needs, reasonable  
37 opportunity for subsistence, we had a big argument over  
38 that. And so let's say the hypothetical thing happens,  
39 that next year the commercial fisheries manager for the  
40 State decides, well, we've got plenty of fish I'm going  
41 to have commercial opening, and what if the Federal  
42 manager is thinking, he's wrong, there's not enough fish  
43 and he opens it up, commercially, would this then give  
44 the Federal manager the authority to say, no, I believe  
45 that guy is wrong, there's not enough fish here, I'm not  
46 going to make the subsistence season go to seven days a  
47 week, I'm going to leave the windows in?

48

49                   That's my question.

50

1 MR. UBERUAGA: We've got the in-season --  
2 I'm going to let Russ, the in-season manager address  
3 that.

4  
5 MR. UMPHENOUR: And the reason I say that  
6 is every bit of the Lower Yukon is Federal waters, so  
7 bearing that in mind.

8  
9 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
10 Umphenour, this proposal would not provide any more  
11 authority than is already present in the Federal  
12 regulations.

13  
14 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, let me ask you the  
15 question then beings your the guy that's going to have to  
16 have this monkey on your back.

17  
18 If the State manager decides there's  
19 plenty of fish for a commercial fishery, I'm opening  
20 District 1 up, and if you firmly believe in your mind,  
21 that, no, there's not, because what they did in 2001,  
22 after 2001 for the first couple years they said pre-  
23 season we're not going to open the fishery up until we  
24 determine that we are at the mid-point of the run, in  
25 other words, half the king salmon have gone up the river,  
26 except now this last year they opened it up earlier and  
27 said we're going to go back to where it's 25 percent of  
28 the run's passed, and say they want to open it up at 25  
29 percent of the run and all your indices, that you're  
30 making your decision on on assessment of the run, you  
31 determine that it's a weak run and they're saying no it's  
32 just a late run, but bearing in mind that whenever it's  
33 weak, it looks late, would you -- do you think you would  
34 consider -- could you say, no, I disagree with the State,  
35 I want the windows to stay in even though the State is  
36 making a mistake in conducting a commercial fishery?

37  
38 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
39 Umphenour. Yes, I would have that authority to preempt  
40 the State regulations if for conservation concerns and to  
41 provide for the subsistence priority if necessary. But  
42 it would take, as you know, the information, we would  
43 both be looking at the same information and we're working  
44 very hard together to try to come to a consistent  
45 decision on when to allow commercial fishing to be  
46 implemented.

47  
48 MR. UMPHENOUR: Would making this change  
49 make your job any easier?

50

1 MR. HOLDER: In my opinion, no, it would  
2 not.

3  
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any more questions  
7 for Russ or Rich.

8  
9 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

12  
13 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
14 Not so much a question, as just a comment. The scenario  
15 that Virgil just gave has happened and has had  
16 devastating effects on the up river fishermen, especially  
17 the people in this area in the past and, quite frankly, I  
18 think the windows program is the best thing to happen not  
19 only to the Upper River people but also and more  
20 importantly to the fish. And anything that erodes at  
21 that, and people are going to continually try to erode  
22 that windows system because it's not convenient for them,  
23 and I would not support any proposal that will have any  
24 effect on weakening the windows system.

25  
26 That's just the way I feel. I think it's  
27 very important at this point in time. I think as the  
28 Chairman stated, if we're in a different regime where  
29 there were lots of years back to back strong salmon runs,  
30 I can see that there may come a time where we'd want to  
31 begin to address that, but at this point in time we're  
32 just beginning to rebuild, we don't have a good handle on  
33 what we're getting for returns from escapements, it's  
34 been all over the board. There has been no  
35 predictability over the last six years, and I don't think  
36 that it's appropriate at this time to do anything that  
37 would impact windows, adversely.

38  
39 Thank you.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Andy.  
42 There sure is a big difference between here and YK, who  
43 is the proposal, we're mostly for putting food on the  
44 table and I know what they're going to say, they need the  
45 commercial money to put food on the table there too. But  
46 to utilize fish resources at the detriment of the people  
47 up river, I don't think it's very fair.

48  
49 And everybody thinks there's going to be  
50 a good run, good runs are going to continue and I'm very

1 skeptical of that, but with that, I'd like to see if  
2 State, Terry or -- and if there's no more questions for  
3 these two, I'd like to see who is going to say something  
4 to this proposal for the -- Fred, State.

5  
6 MR. BUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For  
7 the record my name is Fred Bue. I'm with State of  
8 Alaska, Commercial Fisheries Division. I'm fall season  
9 area manager. What I've handed out are our preliminary  
10 comments to these proposals. As you know we're trying to  
11 work into the Federal process and take their lead, going  
12 to each RAC before make final comments on these proposals  
13 as they develop. And so these are preliminary thoughts,  
14 not actual positions, but some of our thoughts going into  
15 this process.

16  
17 We've had difficulties in the past with  
18 going to three different RACs and sending mixed messages,  
19 depending on who's there. We always don't have the same  
20 presenter.

21  
22 MR. MATHEWS: Fred, could you just hold  
23 off a second.

24  
25 MR. BUE: Yes.

26  
27 MR. MATHEWS: I think it'd be easier if  
28 we allow the students to find some seats, I think this is  
29 the part they really need to hear because this directly  
30 relates to their community. So if we could just hold off  
31 a second here for the students to come in.

32  
33 Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence, I  
34 haven't worked with you in awhile, but I think you  
35 usually try to encourage students, if they have  
36 questions, to come to the mic. So I don't know if the  
37 students have heard me yet, but this is a public meeting,  
38 this is your community, this Council is here to hear your  
39 concerns and to learn from you, so if you do have  
40 questions you need to be recognized by the Chair, that's  
41 Gerald right here in the middle here with the white hat  
42 on, and you're more than welcome to come to the  
43 microphone to ask your questions. We do go through a  
44 step process. Right now we're at the second step which  
45 is -- we already introduced the proposal, now we're  
46 getting comments from the State and then that will be  
47 followed by any comments from Federal, State or tribal  
48 agencies and then we go to InterAgency Staff Committee  
49 and then we go to Advisory Committee comments and then I  
50 step in with written comments and then it's open to

1 public testimony.

2

3                   Okay, so any time you have any questions  
4 just get the attention of the Chair and we'll work you  
5 into the system.

6

7                   Right now we're dealing with a proposal  
8 that was submitted by the Association of Village Council  
9 Presidents and seven tribal organizations which is down  
10 on the Delta, which is asking the fishery managers, which  
11 there are two present in the room, to relax the windowed  
12 schedule, this is when fishing is allowed for  
13 subsistence.

14

15                   And I think that should bring the  
16 students up to speed quick enough of where we're at, if  
17 not, ask questions -- well, practically everybody else in  
18 the room are Staff that are well aware of this if you  
19 don't want to get up to the microphone, just tap one of  
20 them on the shoulder and say, what's going on, you're  
21 more than welcome.

22

23                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Jeep.

24

25                   MR. TITUS: I got a question. You're  
26 asking for a bigger window?

27

28                   MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. Mr. Titus, no,  
29 they're not asking for a bigger window. As Rich  
30 explained, they're trying to remove the linkage between  
31 when you go -- when you relax subsistence fishing based  
32 on commercial fishing or based on just sheer abundance of  
33 fish, and they're trying to remove the tie to commercial  
34 fishing. In the past that was the common language in  
35 regulatory text that was commonly used. So, no, they're  
36 not increasing the window, it's not affecting how we  
37 manage, but it is changing the regulatory text.

38

39                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead, Fred.

40

41                   MR. BUE: Yeah, Gerald, as I was saying  
42 in an effort to be consistent with the three RACs, last  
43 year we had a tri-RAC, this year we have three separate  
44 RACs, what I'd like to do is read, for the record, these  
45 comments, so that we're consistent when we go to each  
46 different RAC.

47

48                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You're just going to  
49 read the one comment for each proposal?

50

1 MR. BUE: Correct.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

4

5 MR. BUE: Okay, so for Proposal 05-02,  
6 currently management tools are already in place to relax  
7 the subsistence salmon fishing schedule if run strength  
8 is strong enough to do so. There was confusion in 2002  
9 under regulations passed in January 2001 regarding  
10 relaxing the subsistence schedule once chinook salmon run  
11 strength was large enough to provide other uses above  
12 escapement and subsistence needs.

13

14 The Alaska Board of Fisheries addressed  
15 this issue in March 2003 and provided language necessary  
16 to relax the schedule in districts or subdistricts where  
17 commercial fishing would not occur.

18

19 Relaxing the schedule is not directly  
20 related to commercial fishing as several districts and  
21 subdistricts have not had commercial opportunity in 2003  
22 and 2004, but the subsistence schedule was relaxed to the  
23 pre-2001 subsistence salmon fishing schedule throughout  
24 the drainage.

25

26 A similar proposal to the Board of Fish  
27 was not adopted in January 2004. During the committee  
28 process there was not a consensus among users to support  
29 the proposal. Fisheries managers and users understand  
30 that the schedule will be relaxed when the in-season run  
31 strength is strong enough to do so. Existing State  
32 management plans and fishing regulations provide a  
33 reasonable opportunity, a meaningful preference, and  
34 priority to subsistence fishing.

35

36 This proposal wording would not change  
37 management actions, however, having differing State and  
38 Federal regulations may lead to confusion in the future.

39

40 Mr. Chairman.

41

42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Is there any  
43 questions for Fred.

44

45 Andy.

46

47 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
48 Fred, what are the triggers right now in place that  
49 managers are using to decide that they will relax  
50 windows?

1 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. I don't know  
2 that it really came out, but this proposal is addressed  
3 in the king salmon management plan, the fall chum salmon  
4 management plan already has definite triggers as you're  
5 aware, many of you worked on that management plan. For  
6 the king salmon management plan they're using the  
7 indicator is the run strength, the lower river test fish,  
8 the Pilot Station sonar, subsistence catch information.  
9 As you know, king salmon do not have a really good  
10 estimation track record at Pilot Station. Some years the  
11 sonar works better than other years, apportioning the  
12 sonar and sometimes just finding the location in the  
13 river early in the run to get accurate counts, so the  
14 combination of all the indices are they above average,  
15 tracking below, and such, based on historic  
16 relationships, is the run better or worse than other  
17 years with similar conditions. And so for king salmon I  
18 believe that's primarily how it's managed.

19  
20 MR. BASSICH: So what you're saying is  
21 you don't actually have a number, it's basically kind of  
22 best guess of what the run strength is? You don't have a  
23 number that you tie these indices to to say that you have  
24 so many fish, so many king salmon in the river, is there  
25 an actual number or are you just using these indices and  
26 comparing them with other years and other runs?

27  
28 MR. BUE: Correct. For king salmon as  
29 you know it's not like fall chum where we have a good  
30 estimation in-season and then we go to the spawning  
31 grounds and get pretty good coverage of what's actually  
32 there because there's so few actual spawning locations  
33 that we can do pretty good coverage on actual escapement.  
34 For king salmon, we use the indices and track to see how  
35 that related to escapement in specific areas up river and  
36 was that trend above or below average other years that  
37 are in people's minds are similar, did a similar run  
38 produce a good escapement, when did we fish, are early  
39 stocks going up river, where are they fishing, and just a  
40 whole mixture, is it a really strong pulse or a spread  
41 out pulse. There's a lot of different indexes and for  
42 sure king salmon is not that specific.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Does that answer your  
45 question, Andy?

46  
47 MR. BASSICH: Yes, it does.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any other questions  
50 for Fred.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, does the InterAgency  
2 Staff Committee -- Fred, you probably should just stay at  
3 the table, I think there'll be some more questions coming  
4 -- but does the InterAgency Staff Committee have any  
5 comments that they would like to share since the  
6 Committee did review this proposal analysis.

7  
8 Steve, is.....

9  
10 MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chair, this is Rod  
11 Simmons with Fish and Wildlife Service. And regarding  
12 FP05-02, the InterAgency Staff Committee had no strong  
13 opinion on this proposal. As the Federal in-season  
14 already has the authority to lift subsistence windows  
15 based on run strength.

16  
17 This may be more of a symbolic regulation  
18 to put into writing what the in-season managers currently  
19 do in practice.

20  
21 So I guess to summarize, the InterAgency  
22 Staff Committee was somewhat neutral on this proposal.

23  
24 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, this brings us up to  
25 -- I don't have any other comments from Fish and Game  
26 Advisory Committees, the State Advisory Committees and I  
27 believe last night the committee couldn't come to a  
28 conclusion because they didn't have a quorum.

29  
30 MR. BASSICH: Correct.

31  
32 MR. MATHEWS: Correct. So the record  
33 reflects at this point we have not received anything from  
34 any Advisory Committees.

35  
36 So with that, Mr. Chair, I can move up to  
37 public comments. There was one public comment submitted  
38 Mike Moses of Mountain Village. He supports this  
39 proposal, this proposal needs special attention to ensure  
40 that subsistence users on the Yukon are no longer  
41 listening for further instructions from Alaska Department  
42 of Fish and Game. We try to cry out in sovereign tone of  
43 voice to the State managers that are not listening to  
44 Alaska Natives. He proposes that this proposal be passed  
45 before finding ourselves with a rebellious crowd. And we  
46 have copies of his full letter. But anyways, Mike Moses  
47 is in support of this proposal.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Public testimony,  
50 does anybody want to speak publicly or testify publicly

1 to Proposal 02.  
2  
3 (No comments)  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: This is your chance  
6 to speak about lifting the window schedule on the Federal  
7 side.  
8  
9 (No comments)  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: If not then we'll go  
12 to Council deliberations. Anybody move to adopt this  
13 proposal or do you even want to take action on it.  
14  
15 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I would like  
16 to move not to support 05-02.  
17  
18 MR. UMPHENOUR: We should move to adopt.  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, move to adopt  
21 and we'll just vote it down.  
22  
23 MR. BASSICH: Okay.  
24  
25 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt.  
26  
27 MR. BASSICH: Second that.  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Discussion. Andy.  
30  
31 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, as I stated  
32 earlier, I don't think that we should be toying with  
33 windows at this point in time. I think it's a very  
34 positive thing for the fish runs.  
35  
36 As we hear the Staff InterAgency seems to  
37 feel that they're fairly neutral on this and managers  
38 don't feel that this really makes their job easier or  
39 really changes their management style or technique at  
40 this point in time so I don't see why we should be  
41 supporting something that really is not helping the fish  
42 and is not really helping the managers at this time.  
43  
44 Thank you.  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Andy. I  
47 could see where Mike Moses is coming from. There's a lot  
48 of commercial activity in YK region at the mouth. And  
49 it's just like Harry Wilde and John Hanson, they get a  
50 lot of their own people screaming at them, so I could see

1 their point, picture, but I don't see where -- try to  
2 support the up river people is where we have to bow to  
3 their needs when we're not meeting ours, and for that,  
4 you know, there's tools -- there's tools already in place  
5 to lift that and indexes to show if there's a strong  
6 enough run, especially king salmon.

7  
8 I don't think I would support this  
9 proposal to lift the windows when there's already tools  
10 in place to do that. So that's my discussion on this.

11  
12 Virg.

13  
14 MR. UMPHENOUR: I agree with the Staff's  
15 comments as far as having regulations that are differing.  
16 This would cause the Federal regulation to be different  
17 than the State regulation which leads to confusion among  
18 the users and we've had a number of court cases where  
19 there's been confusion among the users for people  
20 subsistence fishing, in fact, Dick Cook, that lived down  
21 the river from here died on his way to go to court  
22 because of a ridiculous citation.

23  
24 I feel that this proposal was put in in  
25 an attempt to somehow get the windows lifted earlier in  
26 the lower river, and I am definitely against it for that  
27 reason as well.

28  
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any further  
32 discussion.

33  
34 (No comments)

35  
36 MR. STEVENS: Question.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved by  
39 Virgil to adopt the proposal and seconded by Andy, the  
40 question has been called. All those in favor of the  
41 proposal signify by saying aye.

42  
43 (No aye votes)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed to  
46 the proposal signify by saying aye.

47  
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49  
50 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: The proposal fails,

1 Vince, by this Council.

2

3 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next  
4 proposal is found on Page 33. You are the proponent or  
5 author of this proposal, Eastern Interior Regional  
6 Advisory Council. Your proposal is to limit gillnets  
7 with six inch or larger mesh to 35 mesh maximum depth.  
8 And with that Rich is ready to present and then we'll go  
9 through our steps as we've already laid out.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead.

14

15 MR. UBERUAGA: Thank you, Vince. Mr.  
16 Chair. Members of the Council. Proposal 3 is discussed  
17 on Page 33 through 42 of your Council book. This  
18 proposal was submitted by your Council and requests that  
19 in the Yukon River drainage all gillnets greater than six  
20 inch mesh may not be more than 35 meshes in depth, and  
21 this would apply to both subsistence and commercial  
22 fishing.

23

24 There is currently no restriction in  
25 either Federal or State law concerning gillnet mesh depth  
26 for subsistence fishermen in the Yukon River. Mesh depth  
27 may, however, be restricted in-season for conservation  
28 reasons. State commercial fishing regulations specify  
29 that gillnets with greater than six inch mesh may not be  
30 more than 60 meshes deep in Yukon subdistricts 4 through  
31 6, and no more than 45 meshes deep in Yukon subdistricts  
32 1 through 3.

33

34 Local knowledge supports the contention  
35 that larger older female chinook salmon have a tendency  
36 to run deeper in the river. Deeper nets usually catch  
37 more chinook salmon, usually in the bottom half of the  
38 net. However, at this time there is no conclusive direct  
39 scientific evidence that female salmon are  
40 disproportionately harvested over males. Some escapement  
41 projects in the drainage have found sex ratio imbalances  
42 with a low percentage of female chinooks. In February  
43 1998, the US/Canada Joint Technical Committee reviewed  
44 the available age, sex, length information for the Yukon  
45 River salmon seeking to address whether a decrease in  
46 size of large females had occurred. Their analysis  
47 concluded at that time that the data did not indicate any  
48 sustained change in fish size for Yukon River salmon.  
49 They noted that the detection of change would take many  
50 decades of age, sex, length information.

1                   In response to the concerns of the low  
2 numbers of large female chinook on the spawning grounds  
3 and imbalanced sex ratios, the Office of Subsistence  
4 Management Fisheries Information Services began a study  
5 to conduct an age, sex, length analysis for the Yukon  
6 River salmon. This analysis is currently under way and  
7 is examining spawning escapement data trends over time in  
8 the age and sex composition and mean lengths at age  
9 focusing on age group statistics within tributaries in  
10 between tributaries.

11  
12                   This report will be coming to this  
13 Council this winter, we're in anticipation of that and it  
14 will be presented to you sometime soon.

15  
16                   Adoption of this particular proposal  
17 would create a divergence between State and Federal  
18 regulations, making the Federal subsistence regulations  
19 more restrictive than the State subsistence commercial  
20 fishing regulations. Management of such a fishery would  
21 be problematical and require an extensive outreach and  
22 education effort.

23  
24                   This proposal would require that some  
25 subsistence fishermen shorten their nets and it might be  
26 required that they fish longer to get the fish they need  
27 for their families.

28  
29                   Having uniform mesh depth requirements  
30 throughout the river could result in different harvest  
31 efficiency rates among the fishing districts since the  
32 depth channels change between districts. To make the  
33 Federal subsistence regulations more restrictive than the  
34 State regulations would seem inconsistent with the  
35 Federal subsistence priority in Title VIII of ANILCA.

36  
37                   The preliminary Staff conclusion at this  
38 time is to oppose this proposal. We look forward to  
39 hearing your input on this proposal and we'd like to  
40 address any questions you may have.

41  
42                   Mr. Chair.

43                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Question Virg.

44                   (No comments)

45                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any questions.

46  
47                   MR. UBERUAGA: Or comments.

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Jeep.

2

3 MR. TITUS: So where is these big females  
4 showing up if they're not being targeted, who's catching  
5 them?

6

7 MR. UBERUAGA: Well, I think the concern  
8 is that they're not catching them, they've been decreased  
9 to where they're not present in the returns but they're  
10 disappearing.

11

12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Virg.

13

14 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, the State when they  
15 do their test fisheries down at Big Eddy and Middle Mouth  
16 and these other places where they run their test nets,  
17 what the State always does is they say what the sex ratio  
18 was and the age class and then they sample it and then  
19 they do that on the commercial fishery when it operates  
20 and so they know what the sex ratio harvested in the  
21 large mesh fishery is, that's test net and commercial  
22 fishery in the Lower Yukon, and so my question is this:

23

24 When this analysis was done, because like  
25 this year they said it was over 60 percent females and  
26 they're saying that that is what the run is, but when I  
27 asked the question of the State managers, but you're only  
28 -- when you do this analysis and you say what this is,  
29 why don't you consider the fish caught in the six inch  
30 test nets as well, the six inch mesh test nets and use  
31 those two together. Why is it that when you do the age  
32 and the sex of the run because they're saying that there  
33 was, you know, one percent four year olds and 60  
34 something percent or 80 percent -- they were saying up to  
35 80 percent of the run was six year olds this year, so my  
36 question to the State at that point in time was why don't  
37 you use those fish, this is totally biased? This is only  
38 the fish that are caught in the eight and a quarter inch  
39 gillnets, all these four and five year old fish, or most  
40 all the four year old fish and a majority of the five  
41 year old fish just swim right through that net, they  
42 don't get caught because the net's too big, so you're  
43 really giving a false report, and they says well this is  
44 the way it's always been done, so my question to you is  
45 this:

46

47 Whenever Federal Staff analyzed this, did  
48 they obtain the data from the six inch mesh test nets and  
49 add it together so that you get a true proportion of what  
50 really is the different age classes that make up the

1 Yukon River king salmon run? Did anyone attempt to do an  
2 analysis of that?

3

4 MR. UBERUAGA: No. The answer is no. I  
5 believe that what we're waiting for is a more conclusive  
6 report from all available data that the FIS effort is  
7 going to provide, a more conclusive statistically valid,  
8 at least statistically examined report that will provide.

9

10 MR. UMPHENOUR: Now, let me ask you this  
11 question, because if all that data is going to be the  
12 same data and it's only from an eight and a quarter inch  
13 mesh gillnet and they're not going to use, you know, in  
14 their test nets, and they're not going to use the data of  
15 the size, age and sex of the king salmon that were caught  
16 in the six inch test nets, because they've been running  
17 both of them side by side for years or wherever they run  
18 them down there, then, again, we're not going to have  
19 what we ask for. Do you know, if, in this analysis, that  
20 that data is going to be included?

21

22 MR. UBERUAGA: No, I don't know whether  
23 that data will be included, but Cliff here will give you  
24 an explanation of what he's aware of. I know that there  
25 will be some tributary -- Canadian tributary data  
26 included -- let's let Cliff give an explanation of what's  
27 got going.

28

29 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman. Virgil,  
30 the report that you're waiting on is going to be looking  
31 at escapement data to get away from the biases of the net  
32 selectivity. So they're only going to be focused on  
33 escapement data from the Lower 48, we're trying to get  
34 some Canadian escapement data but we're having trouble  
35 getting that data from the Canadians right now.

36

37 But currently what we're looking at is  
38 escapement data in the United States, so the Andraefsky,  
39 the Gisasa, the escapement projects to try to get a more  
40 unbiased assessment of the run quality and the escapement  
41 quality.

42

43 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, so what they're  
44 doing is they're looking at weir data or gathering the  
45 spawned out fish on the gravel bar data?

46

47 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Primarily it's weir  
48 data.

49

50 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

2

3 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
4 Yeah, I have a couple of comments regarding the analysis  
5 here. First of all it seems to me -- maybe you could  
6 clarify for me when they're doing their studies on ASL,  
7 age, sex and length, are they studying percentages coming  
8 up the river of the ages or are they studying or trying  
9 to determine whether the fish are getting smaller for  
10 each year class of fish?

11

12 MR. UBERUAGA: You know, I'm not sure.  
13 Cliff, can you help me on that?

14

15 MR. SCHLEUSNER: The analysis that's  
16 currently being undertaken is looking at length at age,  
17 so basically they will be looking through time, through  
18 the data to see if there's been any change, noticeable  
19 change, either up or down at length of age of fish in  
20 these escapement projects, so basically looking at the  
21 same age fish through a time series and seeing if there's  
22 any statistical difference in the length at age and the  
23 overall composition through time, whether or not there's  
24 fewer older fish or fewer larger fish through time.

25

26 The problem that we have is the time  
27 series that we're working with on these escapement  
28 projects is pretty narrow, you know, there hasn't been 80  
29 years of escapement data collected in age, sex, length  
30 data but there has been that length of, you know,  
31 commercial fishing and subsistence fishing on the river,  
32 so you're trying to look for a difference in a data set  
33 that's less than 20 years whether the effect of this may  
34 have already been manifested on the population prior to  
35 this data being collected. So there's a lot of noise in  
36 the data, I mean there's a lot of variation and variables  
37 that make it hard to pull out trends.

38

39 MR. BASSICH: Yes, thank you. I do have  
40 a few more comments here, Mr. Chairman, if I could.

41

42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

43

44 MR. BASSICH: It seems to me the issue  
45 isn't whether the fish are necessarily getting smaller  
46 for each age class, the issue in my mind is are we losing  
47 the older, bigger fish and that seems to be the biggest  
48 issue for quality of escapement. We're losing seven year  
49 olds, we've lost eight year olds. That's the big issue  
50 here.

1                   The reason why, in my mind, why this is  
2 being proposed is to address that specifically, let's  
3 start getting some bigger, older fish back up to the  
4 spawning grounds.  
5

6                   Okay, it doesn't matter if a five year  
7 old fish has lost a half an inch in size or three pounds  
8 in weight, a five year old fish is a five year old fish,  
9 we don't have many sevens left and we have no eights left  
10 and that's the main issue of concern in my mind. So it  
11 doesn't matter what they determine in these studies as  
12 far as age and size as far as I'm concerned.  
13

14                   The other thing I'd like to bring up to  
15 the.....  
16

17                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I'd like to follow up  
18 on that. See, this is what the Eastern Interior has been  
19 hitting on, the return -- the quality of escapement of  
20 older fish, not the size and length of the fish, the age  
21 of the fish, what age fish have -- since I've been  
22 fishing for 40-plus years, started when I was about -- I  
23 seen eight year old fish, I seen fish bigger than me, I  
24 don't see that fish no more, this was a good year I seen  
25 maybe a 50 pound king salmon, but what we're trying to  
26 get back is what age class, there used to be a lot of big  
27 king salmon in this river so that's what this main  
28 proposal is hitting on. The protection of the bigger  
29 fish.  
30

31                   We might be going against YK again, but  
32 we want the big fish back on the Yukon River.  
33

34                   Go ahead, Andy.  
35

36                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
37 Another point I'd like to bring up, the last three or  
38 four years I've been involved in going to these meetings  
39 I keep hearing that managers want to hear more  
40 traditional knowledge, they want to hear from the users  
41 and the people who have been using this resource for many  
42 generations, hundreds of years, and it's really beginning  
43 to bother me that people up and down the river and  
44 especially people in the upper river have come testified  
45 and have said over and over again that fish are smaller  
46 now than when they were younger, and this is only 20  
47 years ago, and we're not listening to that.  
48

49                   If we're asking for their input and we're  
50 respecting that input and that observation, then how come

1 we're not taking it seriously when we're getting that  
2 input and I'm not putting the blame on anybody but I  
3 think it's time, if we're going to ask for that  
4 information, we need to seriously consider it and bring  
5 it into plans. And I just don't see it happening. It  
6 seems like there's a lot of lip service there when it  
7 comes to some of the traditional knowledge or it seems to  
8 be that some of it they like to listen to if it kind of  
9 goes along their way but if it goes against what they  
10 want, they just kind of put it under the rug, and that's  
11 really beginning to bother me.

12  
13                   And the other thing that I think this  
14 would do, this proposal would do, is we just finished  
15 talking about windows and you stated in your analysis here  
16 that it would increase the length of time that  
17 subsistence fishermen would need to fish in the lower  
18 river and believe me I understand that concern living up  
19 here, but what it would do is it would actually increase  
20 the efficiency of windows fishing by spreading the  
21 fishing time out in the lower river, we would be  
22 increasing the effects of harvesting fish throughout the  
23 entire run instead of harvesting at the early point in  
24 the run which we all know a lot of it is main stem  
25 Canadian bound fish. So this would also help to increase  
26 the effects of windows in a very positive way for the  
27 fish by spreading that fishing pressure out throughout  
28 the season. And I think that's very, very important.

29  
30                   Right now when I listen to  
31 teleconferences, most of the people in the lower river  
32 are only fishing two openings to get all the fish they  
33 need. That's not spreading out the harvest pressure on  
34 the run. If they can get all their fish in two 36 hour  
35 openings, that's not spreading it out throughout the  
36 entire run, and I understand they have weather conditions  
37 -- and I don't want to sound like I'm being adversarial  
38 to the Lower River people and their methods or timeframes  
39 for fishing, I understand that and I'm totally  
40 sympathetic to that, but if, in fact, we're trying to  
41 protect the fish by spreading out the harvest throughout  
42 the entire run on all of the genetics coming up the  
43 river, then this is another step to help improve that  
44 methodology.

45  
46                   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

47  
48                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Virg.

49  
50                   MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Going back to what

1 Andy just said about the age composition of the runs, so  
2 my question is this, is this study going to analyze  
3 whether there has been a change in the age composition of  
4 the total return of king salmon to the Yukon River, will  
5 this study show that?

6  
7 MR. SCHLEUSNER: The study will show --  
8 or look at whether there's been a change in the age  
9 composition of the escapement through time. As far as  
10 the -- we're assuming that the escapement represents the  
11 overall run strength and the monitoring projects that we  
12 have in place and that we have data for represent the  
13 population at that time, so as much as that is accurate  
14 and true, yes, it will answer that question.

15  
16 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. And how far  
17 back will this go, how old is the data set?

18  
19 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I think the largest data  
20 set is the Andreafsky and it's a little over 20 years  
21 worth of data.

22  
23 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. Mr. Chair.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Virgil. I  
26 know that I'm kind of -- I'm kind of -- I really support  
27 this proposal but it's really going to -- I know I have  
28 this thing with Harry Wilde and Ron Sam to where we're  
29 going to stick together, but in certain areas where we're  
30 always I'd say compromising the Eastern Interior to the  
31 benefit of the YK region, it's always going to be that  
32 way where they get the cream of the crop and the frosting  
33 on the cake and where we get the crumbs, it's always  
34 going to be that way no matter what, because they get the  
35 first crack at every fish that comes through the mouth of  
36 the Yukon River and then some of those fish don't make it  
37 this far up river, but when they hit the stocks that we  
38 rely on that go to Canada, Chandler, Porcupine or  
39 wherever, those are the runs that we want to see the big  
40 fish come back into.

41  
42 There's got to be more studies than this  
43 age, length being done, it just seems like we're just,  
44 what you say, lip service, following the winter meetings,  
45 just lip service to this public that we represent, that's  
46 why we're losing a lot of trust in the elders,  
47 traditional knowledge, is that, yeah, we listen to them,  
48 try to do something for them, I do, but you guys here it  
49 just seems like to them, like what Lester says, it goes  
50 in their ears and goes out the other side, deaf ear, you

1 don't listen at all, so he ain't going to say nothing to  
2 you guys anymore, he might not even talk to you. My  
3 other friend that passed away he didn't want nothing to  
4 do with you guys, because you guys eventually ain't going  
5 to do nothing anyway, that's what he said.

6  
7 But you guys got to start listening,  
8 listening to the needs of what we want as a Council done  
9 for this cycle of fish itself. We don't have the same  
10 mind set, no person has the same mind set in this room,  
11 but we all have one goal in mind, rebuild the fish  
12 stocks. The State has been ruining the fish stocks since  
13 statehood, it's overexploited it. I want them to  
14 publicly say that, because they did, it's no more  
15 brushing it under the rug and exploit another resource  
16 because there's no more resources to exploit in that  
17 region. I mean look at all the region, look at the  
18 history of the resources being exploited by the State and  
19 you could see what I'm talking about. And I don't want  
20 to see the Yukon chinook salmon go down the same roads  
21 that the State has been taking the resources of Alaska  
22 down.

23  
24 This is one RAC that always seems to have  
25 to take on the biggest problems that OSM and State has  
26 before any other RAC, the way I've been sitting on it,  
27 involved in the last six or seven years. It seems like  
28 we're always taking the brunt of things, it seems like on  
29 the river that we're always the ones that are trying to  
30 do something to making enemies instead of friends with  
31 the lower river, but sometimes we have to do that just to  
32 get our point across. Even if this proposal don't passes  
33 the other two Councils, but passes this Council, we want  
34 them to understand we want the older fish back and we  
35 want the historical, we won't get the historical numbers  
36 back but we want the older fish back and we want a chance  
37 to fish and we want some of the frosting on the cake  
38 instead of the crumbs.

39  
40 So I'm going to support this proposal.  
41 I'm still in support of this proposal. And I believe we  
42 never even listened to the Alaska Department of Fish and  
43 Game yet.

44  
45 Is there any more questions for these two  
46 or do you have further comment.

47  
48 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman, I  
49 appreciate your comment and in this study was in response  
50 to issues that were raised and have been raised by elders

1 and Councils, that's what we're trying to respond to.  
2 And I apologize for the length of the analysis, the data  
3 set was in bad shape it took us a long time to get the  
4 data and get it cleaned up. There's a lot of  
5 institutional knowledge with the people that collected  
6 the data so it limits the number of people that could  
7 actually do the data entry to get it into a format that  
8 we could actually analyze it in. There had to be a lot  
9 of error checking. So, again, hopefully this report will  
10 come out and provide some insight into this issue for  
11 this Council and the other two Councils on the Yukon.

12

13 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Jay.

14

15 MR. STEVENS: Just a quick comment,  
16 living in Stevens Village, which is probably halfway  
17 through the river there, I would love to be able to catch  
18 all my fish in two 36 hour periods. This summer, we  
19 fished for over a month and we still didn't get our  
20 allocation. For a month. I just wanted to make that  
21 comment.

22

23 Thanks.

24

25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

26

27 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
28 Can you clarify something, you stated earlier that you  
29 were trying to get some of the data from the Canadians to  
30 finish up this study; is that correct, and that you're  
31 having difficulties getting that data from them?

32

33 MR. SCHLEUSNER: We had asked if there  
34 was escapement data available and if we could get that  
35 and haven't been able to as of yet, get any information.

36

37 MR. BASSICH: Follow up. Mr. Chairman,  
38 for the last four years I've been asking DFO in Canada  
39 for their data collected at Sheep Rock and White Rock  
40 test wheels which are about 25 miles up river just across  
41 the border, for the last, almost 20 years they've been  
42 collecting data with their fishwheels which would lend  
43 itself to this age, sex, length, and I would just like to  
44 have that on public record that for the last four years I  
45 have asked for this twice a year from them and have not  
46 been able to get that data from them. I'm not asking for  
47 them to analyze the data or come up with any conclusion,  
48 I've just kind of asked for the data and in this day and  
49 age, with the technology and electronic email and  
50 everything else that we have I don't understand why this

1 is such a stumbling block, and I find it very  
2 frustrating. And it's very frustrating for me to hear  
3 that our managers are possibly asking for this same  
4 information and it's not being shared.

5  
6 Thank you.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred, you want to say  
9 something.

10  
11 MR. ANDERSEN: I think the fact that OSM  
12 has taken this study is an important first step and I  
13 applaud them for having done that. They've dedicated a  
14 lot of biometrician time and data entry time and time in  
15 meetings with Anchorage Comm Fish staff trying to pull  
16 this stuff together and are doing a very credible job  
17 with the data they have. I think the fact that the  
18 Canadian data has not been forthcoming for whatever  
19 reason is going to be in the end somewhat of an achilles  
20 heel in the study in that data is included -- that data  
21 analyzed in this study won't come from any main stem  
22 spawning tributary upstream from the Tozitna River, and  
23 the Tozitna River is at about Mile 670, and as you all  
24 know fish are subject to gillnet harvest for another 800,  
25 900 or even a thousand miles up stream from that point.  
26 And likewise the fish moving into those lower river and  
27 middle river spawning areas haven't been subject to that  
28 same gauntlet effect that the gillnets impose that these  
29 up river stocks have.

30  
31 So I don't want to prejudge any  
32 conclusions that this report might make but there's an  
33 important block of data that will not have been analyzed  
34 if, in fact, the Canadian data is not made available. So  
35 it's somewhat limited in scope, no fault of OSM or the  
36 State for that matter.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any further questions  
41 for these guys.

42  
43 (No comments)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred.

46  
47 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. Department  
48 comments on Federal Proposal 05-03, again, these are  
49 comments.

50

1                   Currently the State is working with Yukon  
2 River Drainage Fisheries Association, YRDFA, in  
3 collecting information on existing gear types used to  
4 analyze harvest age, sex, size, structure in similar data  
5 on the spawning grounds during the next two years and  
6 prior to the Board of Fish regulatory cycle. If this  
7 data is determined that a gear change was necessary in  
8 the future, the State would support a river-wide  
9 approach. Making a change in only applicable waters is  
10 not appropriate. Additionally, if a modification in  
11 gillnet gear is necessary, the State would work through  
12 the Yukon panel to make changes in Canadian fisheries.  
13 There would be little benefit to the resource if Alaska  
14 fishers changed gear but the Canadians did not.  
15 According to Canadian members of the Yukon panel, nine  
16 inch mesh size was used as a Canadian standard in the  
17 past.

18  
19                   Also the extent of discussion of  
20 potential concerns about fishing with large mesh gillnets  
21 seems inconsistent with the Federal Staff analysis  
22 provided in FP05-04 coming up, which is supportive of  
23 allowing a near gear type consisting of large mesh drift  
24 gillnets in applicable waters of the Yukon.

25  
26                   The Federal Office of Subsistence  
27 Management should analyze the analysis presented in this  
28 proposal to address biological concerns.

29  
30                   Also in discussing about the samples, I  
31 know that the State is also looking at the Yukon sonar at  
32 Pilot Station. In the past, you're right, we've used  
33 very selected nets, when we have used small mesh nets,  
34 they were targeting chum salmon in chum salmon type areas  
35 and so a lot of times we don't think that those small  
36 mesh nets are really representing what the king salmon  
37 are doing. With the idea of going into looking at what  
38 we can do at Pilot Station, we do drift a whole suite of  
39 nets, several different sizes, and so we're hoping that  
40 that gives us a better representative sample of what's  
41 entering the river, using that combined with the  
42 escapement samples, hopefully that will give us some of  
43 the pieces, the cause and effect that we're looking for.

44  
45                   Mr. Chairman.

46  
47                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred, in this age,  
48 length, sex studies, we've been asking for this study for  
49 a long time, and just one question I would like to -- I  
50 don't know if you could answer it, but I have a question

1 on this, too, there's different kinds of chinook salmon  
2 coming up the river, it's called a blue back or a  
3 whitenose, is it -- I heard that the blue back might be  
4 the Canadian something and the whitenose might be the  
5 Alaska fish, like around Chena or something, can you  
6 comment on that?

7  
8 MR. BUE: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, I apologize  
9 I'm not familiar with what we found out, but I do know  
10 that -- and maybe Russ knows, but the telemetry study, we  
11 have hired people in Russian Mission, Marshall, who are  
12 familiar with those morphological features and coloration  
13 and they do make notes on the telemetry when they're  
14 tagging those fish and the idea is to follow those tagged  
15 fish and see where they're going and if, in fact, they do  
16 show some sort of pattern. But I am not up on what they  
17 have found, I guess, that's the.....

18  
19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Why I asked that  
20 question is that Benedict Jones, Tommy Kriska and Micky  
21 Stickman told me that some fish run deeper than others  
22 and the fish that run deep do -- are Canadian bound  
23 stocks, or whatever, and the fish that do go on the top  
24 or whatever, they could be Salcha or the Chena River  
25 stocks.

26  
27 The reason being I'm king of hitting on  
28 this is I'm trying to give you guys an avenue to go down  
29 instead of just this Department view or stuff. When  
30 somebody gives you traditional knowledge it looks like  
31 you guys -- like I say, you look the other way, but  
32 there's a way to find out using that telemetry and test  
33 nets and stuff to intertwine all this information where  
34 you know where these fish -- these chinook salmon --  
35 these different chinook salmon are going to, designated  
36 spots. I don't like to hear that -- I know the Canadian  
37 and State governments are two different governments and  
38 where one government doesn't allow certain information to  
39 cross the border, but that's their problem, it's not our  
40 problem, but we need that information so it could be a  
41 little bit -- but what I'm hitting on is all I want to  
42 know before I ever get off this Council or before I die  
43 or pass away or something, I want to know before that  
44 time, where this blue back fish is going and where this  
45 whitenose fish is going. But for next year I'd like to  
46 know, so we could make some good sound choices,  
47 recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board on what  
48 we're doing or what we're trying to do to rebuild these  
49 stocks.

50

1                   Because I get a feeling after being in  
2 this thing for seven years, that is that we're just  
3 beating around the bush, just like we're saying -- like  
4 Andy said, we're doing lip service to the public. I'm  
5 getting a more so feeling of that. Because we may say  
6 good things at this meeting here, and after it everybody  
7 shakes hands and goes home and then it's just the same  
8 thing next fall, same thing last fall, same thing the  
9 year before. So I'd like to see more done to get where  
10 we're going unless -- if we don't do it now there ain't  
11 going to be no future for this king salmon and people who  
12 depend on it. There might be some for commercial but I  
13 just see it as doom's day, if we don't do nothing now,  
14 even if it looks good, it doesn't paint a good picture to  
15 me.

16  
17                   Go ahead.

18  
19                   MR. BUE: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I made a  
20 note of that and I can make a call after this and find  
21 out for you.

22  
23                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Cliff.

24  
25                   MR. SCHLEUSNER: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. In  
26 response to your question about the blue back and the  
27 whitenose, this Council in 2003 actually supported a  
28 research study through the monitoring program to look at  
29 that with YRDFA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
30 Genetics Lab and that report should be coming out. They  
31 actually had people out there trying to figure out if  
32 they could tell the difference between them and see if  
33 there was a genetic difference which would link them to  
34 Canada or a specific stock. So that report should be  
35 being completed and it might be available for a winter  
36 meeting presentation if that was the interest of the  
37 Council.

38  
39                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay. Go ahead,  
40 Andy.

41  
42                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
43 This is something for Fred, more of a comment than  
44 anything else. In your State Alaska Department of Fish  
45 and Game's response here they basically said in here that  
46 if there was a change in mesh size throughout the river  
47 only in Alaska, but not in Canada, it would have little  
48 effect, and I take exception to that. I think we fish in  
49 Alaska for over 1,200 miles and the Canadian fisheries,  
50 especially their commercial fisheries, about 95 percent

1 of it takes place within the first 60 miles of the  
2 Canadian Border as the Yukon River goes into Canada. And  
3 there's only 25 licenses in the entire Yukon Territory  
4 for commercial fishing and out of that 25 active, truly  
5 active fishermen, are down to about 12, so their impact  
6 on the fisheries, although they are much farther up  
7 river, and do have a little bit more of an effect,  
8 percentage-wise, I feel like getting a start in Alaska  
9 and setting the tone in Alaska of what we need to do is  
10 the right thing to do at this point in time, and I think  
11 that they would follow suit very quickly, I think they're  
12 very conservation minded over in Canada. They're very  
13 aware of the issue of quality of escapement there. So I  
14 do feel that that one statement in their response does  
15 not have much merit.

16

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Vince.

20

21 MR. MATHEWS: That brings us up to if  
22 there's any other Agency, State, Federal or tribe that  
23 have any comments at this time.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, seeing none then that  
28 brings us up to the InterAgency Staff Committee comments.  
29 I don't know if Steve -- okay, Russ -- or, I mean, Rod  
30 will have comments from the Staff Committee.

31

32 MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
33 is Rod Simmons. The InterAgency Staff Committee doesn't  
34 really have additional comments to add that haven't been  
35 covered in the analysis.

36

37 The Staff Committee supports the  
38 preliminary conclusion of the analysis for the reasons  
39 stated under the justification at the bottom of Page 41  
40 found in your Council book.

41

42 Having stated that, I do agree that the  
43 Council comments concerning your concerns with the loss  
44 of older chinook salmon is an important issue that needs  
45 to be kept alive before the Federal Subsistence Board,  
46 and I commend the Council for doing so. I think we need  
47 to find some mechanisms for keeping this issue -- to keep  
48 the Council both involved in updates of the analysis as  
49 well as sort of keeping this in the forum of the Federal  
50 Board.

1                   That's it for my comments.

2

3                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Rod, this is  
4 Gerald. I don't know if Cliff could answer this, but at  
5 present there is no sufficient data to show a  
6 conservation concern. And my concern is that there is a  
7 conservation concern, it takes more than one life cycle  
8 of the salmon to rebuild the salmon stock back to where  
9 we might want it, and to say that there's no concern just  
10 because this was a good year doesn't mean next year or  
11 the year next is going to be a good year and to have that  
12 written on this book for your OSM's justification is just  
13 not very fitting with me.

14

15                   Because if we have a good run next year  
16 at the start and you guys open the commercial and that  
17 run crashes, that's what I'm afraid of. And I'm afraid  
18 of, too, is that we're not getting our older fish back  
19 and we need those bigger females, we need those bigger  
20 males to breed and get our big fish runs back.

21

22                   By OSM not supporting this and taking the  
23 lead, I would say, and following behind the State it's  
24 more like you do it before I do it or it's like, I don't  
25 know, somebody has to jump and somebody has to step  
26 forward and do something besides sitting back and waiting  
27 for the other agency to do something. Somebody has to do  
28 something now before it's too late.

29

30                   I'm not going to be like my Uncle Gilbert  
31 and come to conclusions where it's going to be this or  
32 that. We could spend all day blaming each other and this  
33 and that, but we have to start working together and start  
34 taking some drastic steps now before it's too late and I  
35 see this as a first step, this proposal, 05-03, even  
36 though it may piss off YK. I'm trying to watch my  
37 language here. But even if it's going to split us up  
38 again, we have to start doing this stuff in order for us  
39 to rebuild these salmon stocks that these people rely on  
40 for food on the table, not for money in their pocket.  
41 There's a big difference here.

42

43                   I know YK, I deal with them a lot. I  
44 know that they say that the money in their pocket is food  
45 on the table, but I seen them by different things with  
46 that money in their pocket, I deal with them, they tell  
47 me -- I mean they could catch their catch in one hour,  
48 what they need for one winter, I had three people tell me  
49 that from down there. I'm not going to name them but  
50 they said they only need that 36 hour window, these other

1 people. They have a lot of people to deal with, that's  
2 why they get screamed at all the time. We hardly have  
3 anybody in our region. But this is a first step I see we  
4 need to take no matter what upper management or whoever  
5 say, but I believe we have to do something now before  
6 it's too late, because look at the Columbia River and  
7 look at the other rivers and compare it. It seems like,  
8 to me, we're the only ones in the USA that's really  
9 trying to take care of the Yukon River fish stocks  
10 compared to what happened to those other places in North  
11 America.

12

13 This is one step I think we need to take,  
14 is what I'm saying, and so I'm going to support it.

15

16 Vince.

17

18 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, as we  
19 mentioned earlier there were no local Advisory Committee  
20 comments on this proposal so that brings us up to the  
21 public comments. And, again, Mike Moses of Mountain  
22 Village commented on this, a summary of his comment is on  
23 Page 42.

24

25 He opposes this proposal. A large  
26 majority of the large Yukon king salmon swim well below  
27 the current 45 mesh depth nets. The Lower Yukon River  
28 has a very deep channel and with the changing environment  
29 the kings are staying in the cool waters of the deep  
30 channels. He recommended paying attention to what is  
31 happening in the shallow waters further up river.

32

33 So, Mr. Chairman, that's all the public  
34 comments that I'm aware of. That would bring us up to  
35 any public testimony, if there is any here, Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I don't see any.  
38 Public testimony.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

43

44 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, then that advances,  
45 as you well know into you guys deliberating and  
46 formulating a motion.

47

48 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt.

49

50 MR. BASSICH: Second.

1 MR. STEVENS: Question.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Virg, go ahead.

4

5 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 This proposal, I feel is super important. Now, part of

7 the Staff comments is that we'll have two major problems

8 here, the Staff has with this proposal.

9

10 The first problem being that this would

11 make a subsistence fishery have more restrictive

12 regulations than a commercial fishery. And the second

13 one is that the regulations between the State and the

14 Federal system would be different. There has to be a

15 starting point somewhere. The regulations are any time

16 -- either agency makes a regulation change then the two

17 agencies are going to have differing regulations, but

18 during the next time that same regulation is addressed,

19 then the regulations are changed. I mean what has

20 happened in the past is usually the State makes a

21 regulation change, such as when the windows were put in,

22 and then the following meeting cycle, then the other

23 agency, the Federal Subsistence Board adopts basically

24 the same regulation. And so I don't see that as a

25 problem.

26

27 And, in fact, the process for us to do

28 that, because it will be two more years before the State

29 Board of Fisheries addresses fisheries regulations, is

30 for this RAC at this meeting to have a motion and

31 hopefully pass it to send a petition to the State Board

32 of Fisheries for this exact regulation except make it for

33 all fishing and I can say, because I'm on the Fairbanks

34 Advisory Committee, and we did do this last year, I think

35 they will again do this. So that takes that argument

36 away about having different regulations and about having

37 a Federal subsistence fishery that's more restrictive

38 than a commercial fishery. That throws both those

39 arguments out the window if we do that, and I intend to

40 do that.

41

42 I'd like to have everyone look at Page 40

43 of our book at Table 1 at the top -- or Figure 1 at the

44 top. Figure 1 is Yukon River Canadian origin chinook

45 salmon border passage 1985 to 2003, now the escapement

46 for the years 1998, '99, and 2000 will be the parent

47 years for, I believe the five, six, and seven year olds

48 for the year 2005. I think the year 1999 is going to be

49 the parent year for the six year olds, which is the fish

50 that -- the six and the seven year olds are the ones that

1 get targeted the most and that's the ones we're trying to  
2 save, is these six and seven year old age classes. We're  
3 coming off the worst escapement since records have been  
4 kept or close to it. 1985 they had a low escapement.  
5 But anyway, the parent years is the worse escapements  
6 we've ever had, we need to exercise the precautionary  
7 principle, which means when you're in doubt, you don't  
8 have perfect science, but you can use common sense that  
9 if you take an action it's going to have a positive  
10 effect on conservation. That is what this proposal is  
11 all about. The precautionary principle.

12  
13                   And then to throw one other variable in  
14 there that everyone knows is going on, we've already had  
15 a study completed, a five year study on Ichthyophonus by  
16 Dr. Cosan from the University of Washington in which he  
17 found that the prevalence of the clinical signs of  
18 Ichthyophonus, that means they have sores and puss  
19 pockets inside their flesh, that the prevalence of the  
20 six and seven year old fish is much higher, and it's much  
21 higher in the female fish, up to over 50 percent. Now,  
22 I'm going to give some anecdotal information and that's  
23 representative Bud Fate has fished since I don't know  
24 what year, but Mr. Andersen probably knows, sometime in  
25 the '50s at the same locations on the Yukon River in  
26 District 5, he fishes about 35 miles down river from the  
27 Yukon River bridge, he told me and he is Chair of House  
28 Resources, although he is going to retire from the  
29 Legislature, currently, Mr. Fate told me that this year  
30 he fished for his subsistence needs, his and his family  
31 towards the end of the king run, he said he could not  
32 believe how bad the Ichthyophonus was. That the last few  
33 days he fished, that over 50 percent of the fish were  
34 unfit for human consumption because of Ichthyophonus,  
35 over 50 percent of them.

36  
37                   So that is another aspect of why we need  
38 to shorten the depth of these nets to allow some of these  
39 larger fish and especially the females, the six and seven  
40 year old age class which is the parent year, is the worst  
41 escapement ever recorded in the Yukon drainage, we have  
42 it right here in front us for the Canadian portion, which  
43 is about 50 percent of the king salmon that come into the  
44 Yukon, so what I'm saying is we need to exercise the  
45 precautionary principle and do whatever we can to get  
46 more of these fish up the river and still allow people to  
47 have reasonable opportunity for subsistence and put fish  
48 on the spawning grounds.

49  
50                   That's why we need to do it, two main

1 reasons.

2

3 One of the reasons, besides just getting  
4 the fish up there is that we don't know and the State's  
5 doing another study, they're going to restudy what Dr.  
6 Cosan has a final report on, on Ichthyophonus, they're  
7 going to restudy that but when you look at that  
8 Ichthyophonus report and you see that at times it's up to  
9 50 percent of the female fish have clinical signs of the  
10 disease it's really highly questionable that these  
11 severely diseased fish are going to successfully spawn,  
12 we need to take action now. We need to be proactive and  
13 not reactive.

14

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any more discussion.

17

18 MR. BASSICH: Question.

19

20  
21 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved, it's  
22 been seconded, question has been called for Proposal  
23 FP05-03, all those in favor of this proposal signify by  
24 saying aye.

25

26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27

28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those against  
29 this proposal signify by saying aye.

30

31 (No opposing votes)

32

33 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: This proposal passes.  
34 I think we'll take a lunch break.

35

36 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the  
37 school requested that we get up to there about 12:20 so  
38 this would be a good time to break to allow us to get up  
39 to the school. And then for Rod and Don, on line, I  
40 suppose -- I don't know how long it's going to take for  
41 lunch, so I don't know do you guys still want to  
42 participate this afternoon, I suppose is what I'm hmm-  
43 ha'ing around.

44

45 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: They're going to want  
46 to participate because the next proposal is the one they  
47 want to hear about.

48

49 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. All right, well,  
50 then we're going to have to -- Rod, are you at your

1 office at 3830?

2

3 MR. SIMMONS: Yes, I am, Vince, and I'll  
4 be here at my desk all afternoon.

5

6 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, we'll figure out a  
7 way to link with you. Don, it'd probably be best for you  
8 to call the -- both of you can call the 800 number, that  
9 should be provided in the information. My guess is we'll  
10 shoot for what, Gerald, 1:00 o'clock, 1:15 to start up.

11

12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: 1:15.

13

14 MR. MATHEWS: 1:15. So 1:15, you guys  
15 should call that 800 number to link in. Did you get  
16 that?

17

18 MR. SIMMONS: Okay, will do.

19

20 MR. RIVARD: Okay, will do.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, thank you. So then  
23 we're recessed until 1:15.

24

25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Uh-huh.

26

27 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, thank you.

28

29 (Off record)

30

31 (On record)

32

33 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Vince, I  
34 believe we're on Proposal 04.

35

36 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we're  
37 now going into Proposal No. 4. I hope Rod can hear me,  
38 can you hear my Rod.

39

40 MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

41

42 MR. MATHEWS: Did he say yes?

43

44 REPORTER: Yes.

45

46 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, I didn't hear him but  
47 Salena says he said yes. But anyway, this was submitted  
48 by Western Interior Regional Council. This is to expand  
49 the use of gillnets in the Yukon River subdistricts to  
50 include 4(B), 4(C), and District 5 and it's found on Page

1 43.

2

3

Thank you.

4

5

And Rich Uberuaga will be presenting the  
6 analysis for that and then we'll be going through the  
7 steps.

8

9

I suppose before we get to that I have  
10 one quick announcement. The program that we were  
11 scheduled for for tonight, the Effects of Wildfires on  
12 Caribou Herds, that presenter cannot make it in here so  
13 we will not have that presentation but you still will  
14 have a public session for the public to come in and share  
15 their concerns, that will be at 7:00. The covered dish  
16 meal will be here at 6:00 or around that time, right here  
17 in Redman Hall, so 6:00 o'clock for the cover dish, 7:00  
18 o'clock for public testimony which will be transcribed,  
19 and then that will be it for this evening.

20

21

Thank you.

22

23

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Rich.

24

25

MR. UBERUAGA: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.  
26 Members of the Council. Proposal No. 4 is discussed on  
27 Pages 43 through 60 of your Council book. This proposal  
28 was submitted by the Western Interior Council and would  
29 expand the use of drift gillnets in Yukon Subdistricts  
30 4(B), 4(C), and 5. The proposal specifies that drift  
31 gillnet fishing times would be no more than is allowed in  
32 the Lower Yukon River drift gillnetting area.

33

Drift gillnetting would be allowed two 36  
35 hour periods within the current subsistence fishing  
36 schedule in 4(B), 4(C), and 5. Drift gillnets in those  
37 areas would be no more than 35 meshes in depth and no  
38 more than 150 feet in length. There is some  
39 documentation of historic subsistence drift gillnetting  
40 in some areas of the Upper Yukon.

41

42

Legislative background on the  
43 Congressional intent of ANILCA does describe how new  
44 changes in technology and techniques for subsistence use  
45 of resources could be allowed.

46

47

Subsistence users were allowed to  
48 continue to use drift gillnets throughout the Yukon  
49 drainage until 1977. In December 1976, the Alaska Board  
50 of Fisheries had prohibited the use of drift gillnets for

1 subsistence fishing in Yukon Districts 4 through 6.  
2 Based on Alaska Board of Fisheries actions in 1981 and  
3 1995, subsistence fish drift gillnets were allowed back  
4 into the Yukon Subdistrict 4(A). Over the years there  
5 have been numerous proposals to reopen subsistence drift  
6 gillnetting in the Upper Yukon.

7  
8                   The current proposal is different than  
9 all prior proposals. Fairness in subsistence drift  
10 gillnet fishing time in the Yukon drainage is a feature  
11 of this proposal. The proposal would provide the same  
12 amount of drift gillnet fishing time to the Upper Yukon  
13 as already permitted or provided for in the Lower Yukon.  
14 This proposal would restrict both the length and depth of  
15 drift gillnets in these Upper Yukon subdistricts.

16  
17                   Allowing drift gillnetting in the Upper  
18 Yukon would not likely increase the overall harvest  
19 substantially. It's expected that a limited number of  
20 good snag-free sites will further limit their use.

21  
22                   Upper subsistence Yukon users have voiced  
23 their concerns for many years that they're either having  
24 a harder time meeting their needs or that they have not  
25 been meeting their needs. This prescribed use of drift  
26 gillnets may help to alleviate some of these concerns.

27  
28                   The Staff's preliminary conclusion is to  
29 support this proposal with modifications. Dates for the  
30 drift gillnetting are suggested. It's suggested that the  
31 drift gillnetting provided in 4(B), 4(C) and 5(D) be  
32 provided.

33  
34                   With that we look forward to your  
35 comments on this proposal.

36  
37                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38  
39                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Rich, just  
40 5(D), that's all?

41  
42                   MR. UBERUAGA: Well, there's a limited  
43 number of Federal lands in most of 5 except for 5(D), and  
44 some, I believe it's 5(A), isn't it, five miles in 5(A).

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: My other  
47 question.....

48  
49                   MR. ANDERSEN: Four or five miles into  
50 5(A) and 5(B), down below.

1 MR. UBERUAGA: Oh, and (B) also.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, I understand.

4 Another question, you think the resource can handle it?

5

6 MR. UBERUAGA: I think the harvest is  
7 going to be real limited by the amount of snag-free  
8 sites, I look at people traveling long distances right  
9 now to go down into 4(A) to fish that are coming from up  
10 river, so the conclusion of this analysis was that they  
11 didn't feel that the harvest would be substantially  
12 affected.

13

14 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I believe it would  
15 really adversely affect it, compared to fishwheels,  
16 because fishwheels only take about there to that place  
17 right there, 15, maybe 20 feet, but a net takes a 100 to  
18 150 feet, 80 feet and everything, I mean we were talking  
19 about gauntlet earlier. I think it will create a hell of  
20 a bigger gauntlet in areas and I wouldn't mind supporting  
21 this -- I would say I wouldn't mind supporting this if  
22 the resource could handle it. Looking back at the parent  
23 year escapement was pretty low, and the next -- the next  
24 two years, another thing -- I would still like the State  
25 and Federal government to take a more conservative  
26 approach and I wouldn't expect to expand this drift  
27 gillnetting fishery -- to gillnet driftnetting. It's  
28 very effective, highly effective and I think it will have  
29 a very devastating effect to what we're trying to rebuild  
30 or trying to put back into these waters.

31

32 I'd really like to support it but does  
33 anybody else have questions or comments.

34

35 MR. UBERUAGA: I would just submit that  
36 if this proposal were to pass there would be -- I think  
37 there would have to be a very close look at the harvest  
38 that did occur by allowing this to occur and remind you  
39 that, again, regulations are proposed annually and there  
40 would be a very quick opportunity to propose that it be  
41 disallowed.

42

43 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Anybody else.

44

45 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

46

47 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

48

49 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
50 hate to sound like a broken record but this does nothing

1 to ensure quality of escapement, in fact, it does the  
2 exact opposite. And once, again, I will always stand up  
3 for quality of escapement.

4  
5 The other issue that comes to mind for me  
6 in speaking and meeting with the people in the lower  
7 river is one of the major concerns that I hear from them  
8 is that their traditional way of life is going away, that  
9 they no longer have fish camps. Driftnetting is not  
10 conducive to going to fish camp. Driftnetting is set up  
11 for the commercial -- or I'm sorry, not commercial, for  
12 the weekend fisherman who has a steady job many times,  
13 who wants to go out and catch some fish quickly. It does  
14 not, in any way, enhance people wanting to go to fish  
15 camp and spending time in a traditional means of fishing  
16 on the Yukon.

17  
18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No more questions or  
21 comments for Rich.

22  
23 (No comments)

24  
25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, Fred.

26  
27 MR. BUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Fred  
28 Bue with Fish and Game.

29  
30 Federal Proposal 05-04. The Federal  
31 Subsistence Board and the Board of Fish carefully  
32 considered similar proposals in 2003 and 2004 and opposed  
33 them. There is nothing new in this analysis that  
34 provides a clear rationale to adopt the present proposal  
35 for a much larger geographic area.

36  
37 Current regulations are based on  
38 traditional fishing patterns and gear types used and  
39 subsistence fishing time is based on historical fishing  
40 time and gear types utilized. The current regulations  
41 clearly provide for reasonable opportunity and meaningful  
42 preference using the existing gear types. Allowing drift  
43 gillnets in applicable waters would create a patchwork of  
44 State and Federal regulations in Subdistricts 4(B), 4(C)  
45 and District 5 of the Upper Yukon drainage with greatly  
46 differing regulations that may radically change  
47 traditional fishing patterns.

48  
49 Fishing time is longer in upper districts  
50 such as the Koyukuk River and Subdistricts 5(D), both of

1 which already have subsistence fishing open seven days a  
2 week. If a more efficient gear type were allowed a  
3 fisheries manager must consider decreasing subsistence  
4 fishing time to account for increased deficiencies.  
5

6 Data is not indicating that reasonable  
7 opportunity and meaningful preference is not being  
8 provided by the current State regulations. The primary  
9 reason subsistence fishing -- subsistence needs were not  
10 met in 1998 through 2002 for some species was because of  
11 the low abundance of salmon, particularly fall chum  
12 salmon. When salmon abundance is too low, fishing time  
13 is decreased or fishing is closed in order to meet  
14 escapement and US/Canada agreement obligations.  
15

16 About 50 percent of the chinook salmon  
17 and 90 percent of the fall chum salmon subsistence  
18 harvest drainage-wide are already harvested under  
19 existing regulations under the existing regulatory  
20 structure in this area being proposed. A large abundance  
21 of chinook salmon has been available for harvest in  
22 recent years, with three of the four largest runs to  
23 Canada since 1981 documented in 2001, 2003 and 2004. It  
24 is equally likely that allowing a new and very effective  
25 gear type in a patchwork of Upper Yukon River waters will  
26 increase user group conflicts, not reduce them as the  
27 analysis suggests. The analysis fails to include the  
28 fact that chinook salmon are a stock of concern at the  
29 yield concern level.  
30

31 Again, the analysis seems at odds with  
32 the analysis presented in FP05-03 where there is  
33 extensive discussion and concerns associated with the use  
34 of large mesh gillnets.  
35

36 Although use of drift gillnets may or may  
37 not increase the overall subsistence harvest, this gear  
38 type will change the composition of stocks harvested.  
39 Stationary set gillnets and fishwheel gear likely harvest  
40 more local chinook stocks, while more mobile drift  
41 gillnet gear will likely harvest more Canadian origin  
42 chinook salmon. This observation is common TEK along the  
43 Yukon River and is presented as such on Page 38 of the  
44 analysis under Proposal 03. Drift gillnet gear may also  
45 shift the timing of harvest to earlier in the run than  
46 traditional gear is currently used, thus, also changing  
47 the stocks of chinook salmon harvested. A new gear type  
48 may change the harvest by increasing the harvest of one  
49 species and decreasing the harvest of another species.  
50 In addition Federal regulations allowing the sale of

1 subsistence caught salmon may result in increased harvest  
2 using a new gear type.

3  
4                   Allowing use of drift gillnet gear could  
5 also change traditional fish camp usage because of the  
6 difference in fishing compared to stationary gear. Drift  
7 gillnet gear is usually used from a village with the  
8 fishers boating to a drift location. This past summer  
9 through river-wide teleconferences, it was clear that  
10 drift gillnetting was more costly than stationary gear  
11 due to the high cost of gas prices. Fishers were paying  
12 up to \$8 a gallon for gas to travel and drift gillnet.

13  
14                   In summary the State is very concerned  
15 about potential changes in stock composition of harvest  
16 taken by a new gear type. We are concerned for potential  
17 user conflicts with a regulation that is only applicable  
18 to a patchwork of Yukon River waters. We are concerned  
19 for possible increased harvest and potential negative  
20 impacts of existing fisheries as also noted in ANILCA.  
21 And we are concerned for meeting the US/Canada agreement  
22 obligations. The State has a lot of experience in gear  
23 changes. Changing allowable gear types can result in many  
24 unforeseen impacts, which this analysis fails to  
25 adequately address.

26  
27                   Mr. Chairman.

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Fred. Any  
30 questions, comments for Fred.

31  
32                   MR. BASSICH: I have a question.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

35  
36                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
37 Fred, if this proposal was adopted, what would it do to  
38 either lessen or create a greater burden to you in  
39 management, would it make things more simplified or would  
40 it make things more difficult for you as a manager?

41  
42                   MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. As a manager  
43 this is a new gear type. We have ideas of what would  
44 happen, but it would take some learning, some time to see  
45 what the actual results are when you open up a gear type,  
46 what are people actually going to do. We suspect the  
47 fish that they are harvesting will be different than what  
48 they're currently are taking. What that means later on  
49 when the fish reach the spawning grounds, we don't know,  
50 and so there would be some trial and error in that.

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You're definitely  
2 going to have some user conflicts because I don't live in  
3 Federally-controlled waters and if they're driftnetting  
4 above me I'm certainly going to raise some cane about it.  
5 So I'm not going to sit lightly. And the people that do  
6 fish in Rampart, too, they're not under Federally-  
7 controlled waters and they're going to raise heck about  
8 it too just because of what the State did to the permit  
9 system.

10  
11 So I don't see -- that's just telling you  
12 like it is. I'm not going to beat around no bush.

13  
14 Any more questions or comments for Fred.

15  
16 (No comments)

17  
18 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Anything else to add,  
19 Fred.

20  
21 MR. BUE: No, Mr. Chairman.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: That's my comment.

24  
25 MR. MATHEWS: I don't know if there's any  
26 other agencies that want to comment on this, yes, I think  
27 Russ does.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead.

30  
31 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman. Council  
32 members. Attendees. My name is Russ Holder, I'm with  
33 Fish and Wildlife Service. Office of Subsistence  
34 Management Staff has provided you with a good overview of  
35 the issues associated with expanding a more efficient  
36 gear type into the upper portions of Districts 4 and 5.

37  
38 As part of the Federal fisheries  
39 management Staff I will be providing additional proposal  
40 information which we would like Council members to  
41 consider in development of your recommendation.

42  
43 Let me preface my comments by saying that  
44 the management Staff believes this proposal could be  
45 implemented but there are associated administrative,  
46 sociological and biological consequences which merit  
47 further comments.

48  
49 Administratively it is no small  
50 undertaking to place and annually maintain seven pairs of

1 regulatory markings by four different land managers,  
2 Innoko, Nowitna and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges  
3 and Yukon-Charley National Preserve, which would need to  
4 be installed and identify the Federal waters associated  
5 with this proposal.

6  
7                   This proposal is a significant departure  
8 from current State regulations thus requiring separate  
9 in-season Federal news release announcements.  
10 Implementing drift fishing windows within the present  
11 windowed schedule may seem logical but practical  
12 implementation is another matter. Administratively  
13 implementing a Federal permit requirement within District  
14 5, which already has a State ADF&G permit requirement for  
15 portions of it would be duplicative, confusing and time  
16 consuming. Fishers using multiple gear types would likely  
17 be unsure where to document their harvest. Fish caught  
18 in set nets and fishwheels would need to be reported on  
19 the State permit and those fish harvested using drift  
20 gillnet gear would need to be reported on a Federal  
21 permit, if permit requirements were adopted. If a Federal  
22 permit were not adopted, the harvest by gear type would  
23 likely go undocumented.

24  
25                   Sociologically, this does not equalize up  
26 river fisher gear opportunities throughout the Yukon  
27 River. Only up river residents within or adjacent to  
28 Federal waters would benefit if this proposal is adopted.  
29 Residents of Tanana, Rampart, Circle and Eagle would all  
30 have commutes to participate in drift fishing. It does  
31 not allow all subsistence users drainage-wide the use of  
32 the same gear type. Adoption of this proposal would  
33 produce mixed blocks of Federal, non-Federal waters with  
34 different gear regulations. Different regulations  
35 associated with different land status for potentially  
36 different periods of times will add significantly  
37 confusion for fishers and will likely cause law  
38 enforcement issues.

39  
40                   Extensive efforts have been made to  
41 ensure an alignment of hunting and fishing regulations to  
42 decrease public confusion over regulations and what  
43 applies where. Differing Federal/State regulations will  
44 require extensive public outreach by Federal and State  
45 field personnel to avoid potential law enforcement  
46 issues.

47  
48                   Biologically, as has been identified each  
49 time requests for a liberalization of drift fishing has  
50 come before the State Board of Fisheries the Yukon River

1 salmon stocks are fully allocated. This means that if a  
2 change in harvest occurs for one area there will be  
3 consequences for an area up stream of the change, usually  
4 decreased escapement or harvest opportunities.

5  
6 The analysis describes several times that  
7 if the proposed regulation were adopted as modified, it  
8 would be the most conservative regulation in place for  
9 subsistence drifting on the Yukon River. What is also  
10 true is that this would be a new efficient gear type  
11 which has the potential for changing the effort, location  
12 and harvest amounts. This very likely won't occur all at  
13 once but reviewing the change in harvest amount in  
14 Subdistrict 4(A) before and after drift gillnetting was  
15 allowed, which is on Page 53 of your analysis, confirms  
16 an increase in overall harvest amounts once drift  
17 gillnetting was allowed.

18  
19 Fishers have voiced concerns for the  
20 decreasing number of large female spawners no longer seen  
21 in up river locations, and Yukon River chinook salmon  
22 were identified as a stock of concern by the State Board  
23 of Fisheries in 2000 and the Board accepted this  
24 continued designation in January of 2004. Expanding the  
25 use of a more efficient gear type would be inconsistent  
26 with trying to address female escapement and rebuilding  
27 concerns.

28  
29 Fundamentally the issue is whether  
30 Federally-qualified subsistence users in this area are  
31 able to meet their subsistence needs during salmon runs  
32 of average strength. We have no doubt that during 1998  
33 and 1999 and 2000 up river subsistence harvesters had  
34 difficulties meeting their subsistence needs, fishers in  
35 the lower Yukon did too. The in-season and post-season  
36 reporting supports that as we have begun to see the Yukon  
37 River salmon stocks rebound since 2001 that up river  
38 subsistence harvesters have had less difficulty in  
39 meeting their annual harvest needs for 2003 and 2004.  
40 Most fishers were talked to were satisfied with their  
41 harvest.

42  
43 The challenge before you is to determine  
44 if the potential benefits outweigh the potential  
45 consequences.

46  
47 Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, thanks for the  
50 report there, Russ. Go ahead, Andy.

1 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
2 In a nutshell, what you're basically saying there is that  
3 you don't feel that this is something that would benefit  
4 the fish on the Yukon River; is that correct?

5  
6 MR. HOLDER: Correct.

7  
8 MR. BASSICH: Okay. And if I'm not  
9 mistaken Mr. Bue just basically mirrored the same  
10 response; is that correct, Mr. Bue?

11  
12 MR. BUE: Yes.

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: I guess the question I'm  
15 asking is if we have both of our managers from both State  
16 and Federal saying that they don't feel that this is a  
17 wise proposal to move forward on, why do we have a Staff  
18 recommendation supporting this.

19  
20 (Laughter)

21  
22 MR. BASSICH: I would really like an  
23 answer to that. I'm not being funny here. I want to  
24 know why we have managers telling us that this isn't good  
25 and we have the Office of Subsistence Management telling  
26 us that they're supporting this, where are they getting  
27 this information from and where are they making this  
28 determination from?

29  
30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Rich.

31  
32 MR. UBERUAGA: Yeah, I'd like to address  
33 that. First of all, I didn't prepare this analysis  
34 so.....

35  
36 (Laughter)

37  
38 MR. UBERUAGA: .....that will give me a  
39 little bit of an out. But with that being said, I  
40 believe this proposal is attempting to be responsive to  
41 some subsistence fishers issues that were raised in the  
42 middle river about not meeting their needs, about having  
43 to travel long distances, away from their homes, spending  
44 lots of money to go drift gillnetting down in 4(A).

45  
46 I believe that the conclusion of this  
47 analysis was that they did not expect a significant  
48 increase in harvest because of rather than intensifying  
49 effort in a particular area it would spread out effort  
50 more up stream, and that there were a limited number of

1 sites that would not see a big increase in harvest.

2

3 That's all I'll say on that, being's how  
4 I'm not that intimately familiar with all of the  
5 proposals. But, again, it was in response to a fairness  
6 issue in that they're not being allowed to fish in a  
7 manner that they wanted to fish and that they felt would  
8 meet their needs in a better fashion.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Council got any  
13 questions.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I'd like to add that  
18 with all the couple benefits to all the consequences that  
19 I know that's going to happen and from listening to an  
20 elder and another person that lives in that district and  
21 hearing what they said, it's most likely that and knowing  
22 that hardly anybody from Ruby hardly goes down there to  
23 4(A) unless you have somebody giving me a half a day  
24 because I went around there and asked this last fall and  
25 this last summer, they said that's too far and you catch  
26 just as much good fish here as down there, fishwheel.

27

28 I'm not going to support this. There's  
29 too many minuses, there's just two plus. And I'd really  
30 like to have upper management answer for Andy's question,  
31 too, even if it has to be in writing later, or this  
32 evening or pretty soon. I'd like to have an answer,  
33 because me and Craig, when we first started on here, and  
34 Chuck Miller, that we always got one response from the  
35 same Department and then a different response, like just  
36 what we found -- I never really had time to put it in  
37 words in those meetings, but Andy just hit it right on  
38 the nail, you guys are both from OSM. And thanks for  
39 bringing that light out Andy.

40

41 If anybody has more questions go ahead,  
42 fire away.

43

44 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman, I would like  
45 to address Andy's question. Basically I did talk to Mr.  
46 Berg regarding the analysis and I felt that the minuses  
47 weren't as fully incorporated or as clear as the plus  
48 that were developed in the analysis and if the negative  
49 side or the comments that I provided you had been fully  
50 explained in the analysis I wouldn't have to say

1 anything, but I feel it was my responsibility as a  
2 manager to lay out clearly my concerns with this  
3 proposal.

4  
5 Thank you.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I'd like to thank you  
8 for that, too, and you too Fred.

9  
10 MR. TITUS: Yeah.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No questions for you,  
13 I guess.

14  
15 (No comments)

16  
17 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: What Vince.

18  
19 MR. MATHEWS: It will be an interesting  
20 meeting in Anvik when I go there. Are there any other  
21 Federal agencies that have any comments or tribal  
22 agencies that may have comments at this time.

23  
24 (No comments)

25  
26 MR. MATHEWS: I believe the InterAgency  
27 Staff Committee may have comments.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.

30  
31 MR. MATHEWS: And I believe Steve has  
32 that as well as Rod, so I don't know who will handle  
33 that.

34  
35 MR. KESSLER: Rod, do you want me to do  
36 those?

37  
38 MR. SIMMONS: No, I'll try it from here  
39 if everybody can hear me, can you hear okay?

40  
41 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead.

42  
43 MR. MATHEWS: They're setting up the  
44 microphone, Rod.

45  
46 MR. UBERUAGA: Try it again.

47  
48 MR. SIMMONS: Yeah, can you hear me now.

49  
50 (Laughter)

1 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, great.

2

3 MR. SIMMONS: Okay, I'll go ahead and  
4 proceed, Mr. Chair. This is Rod Simmons with Fish and  
5 Wildlife Service. And I'd like to read my comments into  
6 the record on this particular proposal.

7

8 The InterAgency Staff Committee did not  
9 reach consensus on a recommendation for this proposal.  
10 Some members expressed the positive viewpoint that  
11 adopting this regulation would provide a more equitable  
12 gear allowance by allowing drift netting in Federal  
13 public waters throughout the Alaska portion of the Yukon  
14 River.

15

16 The members supporting the proposal  
17 believe that there will be a modest increase in total  
18 harvest since most families currently fish as long as it  
19 takes to meet their subsistence harvest targets and the  
20 river bed configuration will not permit use of driftnets  
21 in many areas.

22

23 The InterAgency Staff Committee expressed  
24 additional support to the proposal in that this gear type  
25 could provide a more efficient means for subsistence  
26 fishing and save on expensive fuel costs associated with  
27 traveling to and from fish camps or having to travel long  
28 distances to areas where driftnetting is currently  
29 allowed. The purpose of the subsistence priority is to  
30 ensure that subsistence fishing families meet their needs  
31 after providing for escapements. Adjustments in  
32 allocation should be made as necessary to provide for  
33 this priority.

34

35 Now, there were also a number of  
36 significant points or concerns raised by Staff Committee  
37 members, or at least some Staff Committee members and  
38 I'll proceed on with those.

39

40 Number 1 is adoption of this regulation  
41 would present a significant departure in State and  
42 Federal regulations. There are large portions of the  
43 Upper Yukon River outside of Federal subsistence  
44 jurisdiction providing little, if any opportunity for  
45 village residents residing in areas solely managed by the  
46 State.

47

48 Point 2 is the current windowed  
49 subsistence fishing schedule established by the Alaska  
50 Board of Fisheries was developed with consideration and

1 harvesting efficiencies in various portions of the river.  
2 If driftnetting becomes a popular fishing practice and  
3 harvest efficiency increases this will likely require a  
4 reevaluation of subsistence fishing time in upper river  
5 districts.

6  
7 Point 3. Yukon River subsistence  
8 fisheries management has largely been successful because  
9 managers have been working under the same basic  
10 management framework. Driftnetting windows within  
11 districts with windowed subsistence fishing schedules, in  
12 other words, windows within windows, will be confusing  
13 for the public and present significant challenges to  
14 monitor regulatory compliance. Separate news releases  
15 and management actions would be required by the Federal  
16 in-season manager. This approach of separate management  
17 actions was used in the year 2000 and created  
18 considerable confusion for subsistence users.

19  
20 And my final point, should driftnetting  
21 become popular within discreet fishing areas, it could  
22 lead to disputes and impact harvest deficiencies of  
23 traditional set net and fishwheel sites. This concern  
24 was expressed in public testimony to the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board last December during consideration of a  
26 similar proposal for allowing driftnetting in  
27 Subdistricts 4(B) and (C), which the Board rejected.

28  
29 Mr. Chairman, that concludes the Staff  
30 Committee comments on this proposal.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you. Anybody  
33 have any questions for Rod.

34  
35 Go ahead, Andy.

36  
37 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
38 I'm not sure if this is a question directly to you Rod,  
39 but I guess what's going on in my mind right now is as  
40 this is being presented to us, this Eastern RAC, is this  
41 same publication going to be going to Western RAC and the  
42 Lower Yukon in its present form?

43  
44 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chair. That will  
45 be to both Councils. Western meets next starting on  
46 Saturday and then YK meets next week starting on  
47 Thursday.

48  
49 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

2

3 MR. BASSICH: I guess I have a great deal  
4 of concern about that. If we're bringing to light that  
5 we do have these discrepancies and this is being  
6 presented to us and is not necessarily -- hasn't been  
7 unanimously agreed upon by all the Staff and managers,  
8 this is a really, really important proposal that could  
9 have a really adverse effect on salmon in the Yukon  
10 River, and not only biologically but also sociologically  
11 with the people and the conflicts that may come about  
12 because of instituting something like this. I'm not  
13 really sure what can be done about that to bring this to  
14 the other RAC's attention but I think some effort needs  
15 to be made to let them know that the Eastern RAC is not  
16 happy -- or at least I'm not happy about the way this has  
17 been presented and the positions taken, because they're  
18 basically saying that it's okay for this to happen, if  
19 they're going to be supporting it, and that's going  
20 against what many managers and other people who are  
21 experts in their own field are saying.

22

23 So I guess I just have a great deal of  
24 concern that they may not note that there are some  
25 discrepancies and it may just go ahead and pass in those  
26 areas in such a way that they may not realize what  
27 they're voting on or what they're supporting.

28

29 I just wanted to make that clear, I'm not  
30 really sure, Mr. Chairman, the course of action, but I  
31 really think that some effort needs to be made to clarify  
32 that to the other RACs.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, I understand  
37 your concerns there Andy. It looks like when the first  
38 introduction of this proposal came out, it looked like  
39 there's nothing going to happen, but after the two  
40 managers stepped up with their expertise I have -- my  
41 concerns for this grew greater. I'd sure like to thank  
42 you again, Russ and Fred, for your comments.

43

44 And I understand where you're coming from  
45 on that point of view there. I would sure like for the  
46 Western Interior proponent to fully understand that we  
47 are -- we're trying to rebuild a stock of concern here  
48 and that's mainly king salmon that this driftnet is going  
49 to effect, and we have to stay on that. A lot of people  
50 talk against me in my own region, but they have to

1 understand just because it's good one year doesn't mean  
2 it's going to be good next year. Even if it's good this  
3 next year and good after that year, doesn't mean it's  
4 going to continue to be good. There's too many adverse  
5 things happening to the salmon. Not only in the river,  
6 not only in the ocean, it's happening on the spawning  
7 grounds. Everywhere these salmon swim they're at a  
8 detriment to something, something's going to effect them.  
9

10 So we have a tough job here to try to  
11 rebuild this stock here. And what this proposal will do  
12 is it's just an adverse thing to do, it's not the right  
13 thing to do to what you're trying to rebuild. Sure I  
14 could agree with it if there was a billion chinook  
15 salmon, all eight year olds swimming up river, yeah, I'd  
16 agree, I'd vote for it, but that ain't so. It's not  
17 going to come back to what some people -- some supporters  
18 of this proposal, it's not going to be that day again. I  
19 had that spoken to me from my elders, my grandpa, it's  
20 not going to be. But we could try to do what we can do,  
21 now, like Virgil said, be proactive instead of reactive.  
22

23 And that's why I'm not going to support  
24 this.

25  
26 MR. ANDERSEN: May I ask a question.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Fred.

29  
30 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
31 Fred Andersen with National Park Service. In the last 10  
32 minutes or so we've heard the State and more recently Rod  
33 Simmons speaking on behalf of the Staff Committee say  
34 that if harvest increased as a result of adoption of this  
35 proposal or one would like it, there would have to be  
36 adjustments to the subsistence fishing schedule, and by  
37 adjustment I presume that means reductions. Given that  
38 both the State and Federal systems have a subsistence  
39 priority over other beneficial uses, my question is why  
40 would those adjustments come at the expense of  
41 subsistence users rather than the ongoing commercial  
42 fishery?

43  
44 I don't think that the Alaska Legislature  
45 or the crafters of ANILCA contemplated that those kinds  
46 of problems would be solved on the backs of subsistence  
47 users. There's a priority and subsistence is first,  
48 commercial and sport and personal use come later. My  
49 question for those spokesperson's, I guess, is why would  
50 the adjustments be made to the subsistence fishery rather

1 than the commercial fishery.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Anyone.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 MR. ANDERSEN: I guess I'll take my

10 answer off the air.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Who's next on the

15 list Vince.

16

17 MR. MATHEWS: Well, it would be --

18 there's no Advisory Committee that I know of who has

19 taken this up. Summary of written comments, Mike Moses

20 again, did submit a long letter, it's obvious by all

21 proposals.

22

23 He opposes the proposal. He feels that

24 drifting the shallow channels of the upper river do not

25 give king salmon a fair chance to make it to the spawning

26 grounds. He also thought about the dry fish and smoke

27 strip market that enabled someone to make money, more

28 money than commercial kind salmon on the Lower Yukon

29 Delta.

30

31 So again as you mentioned earlier, I do

32 see the three Regional Councils fracturing on the Yukon,

33 so I would have you think about your times when you all

34 three met together and see what we can work out. There

35 will be representatives of all three Councils at the

36 meeting with the Board in January.

37

38 MR. UBERUAGA: Mr. Chair, I'd just like

39 to mention that I will be presenting this proposal at

40 both the Western and the YK, and in addressing Andy's

41 concern, I will definitely make it a point that all sides

42 of this issue that you heard today, here, will be heard

43 at those meetings. And I'm not sure if Russ is going to

44 make it to both of those meetings, but if he doesn't I

45 will make those points that he made in the testimony.

46

47 So they will not be hearing anything

48 different than what you've heard today.

49

50 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I just wanted to make  
2 sure that.....  
3  
4 MR. UBERUAGA: They will be hearing  
5 everything.  
6  
7 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: If this proposal  
8 passes you're going to hear a lot of ruckus from Tanana.  
9  
10 Okay, any public testimony.  
11  
12 (No comments)  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Next.  
15  
16 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt.  
17  
18 MR. BASSICH: Second.  
19  
20 MR. STEVENS: Question.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved,  
23 seconded, the question has been called, all those in  
24 favor of Proposal.....  
25  
26 MR. UMPHENOUR: I.....  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.  
29  
30 MR. UMPHENOUR: I moved to adopt so I'd  
31 like to speak to the proposal.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Virg.  
34  
35 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, what Mr. Andersen  
36 said I've thought about a lot and I've been involved in  
37 this process for a long time.  
38  
39 Last year this RAC put in a proposal to  
40 lower the guideline harvest range for the commercial  
41 fisheries on the Yukon River, and when we discussed that,  
42 what we did is we took a look at what historically has  
43 been sustainable on the Yukon River and that was pre-  
44 statehood. The majority of the time from the time the  
45 commercial fishery for export, that means they got put in  
46 a can and shipped out of here, started in 1918 in the  
47 Lower Yukon, we went through and we had a discussion  
48 about Hudson going to Washington, D.C., and appearing  
49 before the House Commerce Committee on fisheries, and  
50 that caused the commercial fishery to be closed in the

1 Yukon River, commercial fishery for export that is, and  
2 then how the -- you know, you look at the history back in  
3 the '30s, they, for one year allowed them to go start  
4 commercial fishing for export, they went up over 100,000  
5 king salmon again for export and then the next year they  
6 shut it down again and they put it at 50,000 fish. Until  
7 statehood it stayed at 50,000 fish in the Lower Yukon was  
8 the maximum they could harvest for export. So our  
9 proposal last year to the Federal Subsistence Board was  
10 to lower the guideline harvest, instead of it being 60 to  
11 120,000 in the Lower Yukon, we wanted to kind of split  
12 the difference there and I don't remember the exact  
13 numbers we submitted, but I think our high end was going  
14 to be 90,000, we wanted to basically cut that in half.

15  
16 So this proposal addresses, and what our  
17 proposal, which was the previous one we just addressed,  
18 we're addressing a couple of subjects there, and one of  
19 them Mr. Andersen just brought up and that is that  
20 subsistence takes priority. Why should we worry about  
21 what the guy in his public comment says at the very last  
22 sentence, this is the key to it, this is why they're  
23 opposed to it, he says -- just read the last of it, the  
24 last part; that enables someone to make more money than  
25 the commercial king salmon market on the Lower Yukon  
26 Delta, that's the only thing they're worried about. Our  
27 job is not to worry about how much money those guys make  
28 down there selling king salmon.

29  
30 I remember reading an email yesterday  
31 where Gerald and my wife were emailing each other this  
32 summer and the Yukon Delta was advertising their king  
33 salmon for \$18 a pound in the Lower 48. It's not our job  
34 to worry about whether they get to sell their king salmon  
35 for \$18 in the Lower 48 and they got a half a million  
36 dollar grant from the government to do that this last  
37 summer, our job is to make sure:

38  
39 Number 1, that we maintain the genetic  
40 integrity and viability of the salmon coming up the Yukon  
41 River.

42  
43 Number 2, that we have reasonable  
44 opportunity for all subsistence users on the Yukon, not  
45 give the people in the Lower Yukon a big giant fat  
46 advantage not only that are making the greenback dollar  
47 but they can go out and catch all their subsistence fish  
48 in one or two hours that they need for the year while  
49 someone up here has been fit with a tin beak so they can  
50 go peck crap with the chickens, that's how the people up

1 here are getting treated.

2

3 I feel -- I'm going to vote yes on this  
4 proposal and that's the reason why, because we need equal  
5 treatment for all subsistence users in the Yukon. I know  
6 that there could be a few detrimental side effects, if  
7 there are, you don't shorten the subsistence -- take the  
8 opportunity away from the subsistence, you take profit  
9 away from the commercial users. That is what the law  
10 says we're supposed to do. Forget about restricting  
11 subsistence users, as long as there's a commercial  
12 fishery then the subsistence users are not supposed to be  
13 restricted, the commercial users are supposed to be  
14 restricted, and that is why I'm supporting this proposal.

15

16 Because if there's a problem with the  
17 fish stocks do what our proposal said to do last year,  
18 which was cut that commercial fishery in half what  
19 they're anticipating they can catch, what was sustainable  
20 from 1920 until statehood and then after statehood they  
21 went wild and they just let them keep hammering on those  
22 king salmon until we're in the position that we're in  
23 today, where we've lost the eight year olds and the seven  
24 year olds are about to be lost too. But that's what  
25 needs to happen, not restrict subsistence fishermen,  
26 restrict the commercial fishermen instead.

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, it's been  
31 moved, who seconded it?

32

33 MR. BASSICH: I seconded it.

34

35 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any further  
36 discussion.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 MR. BASSICH: Question.

41

42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved,  
43 seconded, question has been called, discussion is in  
44 place. All those in favor of this Proposal 05-04 signify  
45 by saying aye.

46

47 MR. UMPHENOUR: Aye.

48

49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed,  
50 same sign.

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: There you go Vince.

4

5 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, that brings  
6 us up to the last proposal, I believe, within the Yukon  
7 and then we go to your sister region Southcentral.

8

9 The next proposal is 05, which is on Page  
10 61, it was submitted by this Council here. It is to  
11 establish a six day fall chum salmon opening for  
12 Federally-qualified subsistence users only in Subdistrict  
13 5(D) and Rich will be presenting the analysis.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Rich.

18

19 MR. UBERUAGA: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
20 Council. Proposal 05 is discussed on Pages 61 through 70  
21 of your Council book. This proposal was submitted by  
22 your Council. The proposal seeks to establish a six day  
23 fall chum season opening for Federally-qualified  
24 subsistence users only in Subdistrict 5(D).

25

26 The Council submitted this proposal  
27 because of the history of fall chum subsistence salmon  
28 closures in Subdistrict 5(D) while other districts along  
29 the Yukon had harvest opportunities on those same fish.  
30 The Council stated that the proposal would ensure that  
31 remote families dependent upon subsistence resources and  
32 unable to participate in assistance programs would be  
33 given a reasonable opportunity to harvest fall chum  
34 salmon for personal consumption and use.

35

36 The Council noted that the adoption of  
37 this proposal would preclude the in-season manager's  
38 ability to restrict the fishery during this six day  
39 period.

40

41 Fall chum run strength was very poor in  
42 1993 and in 1998 through 2002 and subsistence fishing  
43 restrictions resulted. Subsistence harvest of Yukon fall  
44 chum salmon has been below the State's amounts necessary  
45 for subsistence in those years, 1993, 1998 through 2002.  
46 Subsistence fishing management is implemented according  
47 to the 2001 Alaska Board of Fisheries windowed  
48 subsistence fishing schedule which allows seven days per  
49 week, 24 hours per day in Subdistrict 5(D).

50

1                   This proposal seeks a guaranteed  
2 opportunity to fish for fall chum salmon in Subdistrict  
3 5(D) for those six days in September without regard to  
4 in-season indicators of run strength. Adoption of this  
5 proposal would take away the Federal in-season manager's  
6 authority to manage the subsistence fishing in the  
7 subdistrict during this period.

8  
9                   During years of low fall chum returns,  
10 subsistence harvest could remove fish from returns that  
11 may be below escapement requirements, thereby hampering  
12 stock recovery. There's also a concern with the  
13 inconsistency between this proposal and the existing  
14 US/Canada agreements for border passage for fall chum  
15 salmon.

16  
17                   With that the preliminary Staff  
18 conclusion is to oppose this proposal. We look forward  
19 to your comments on this proposal and those comments from  
20 the other two Regional Councils.

21  
22                   Mr. Chair.

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any questions for  
25 Rich at this point. Go ahead, Virgil.

26  
27                   MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, they say that it's  
28 inconsistent with the Treaty but one of the things that's  
29 in the Treaty is that the small scale traditional  
30 subsistence fisheries if at all possible will not be  
31 interrupted, was that taken into consideration, that part  
32 of the Treaty?

33  
34                   MR. UBERUAGA: No, it wasn't.

35  
36                   MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

37  
38                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any further questions  
39 or comments.

40  
41                   (No comments)

42  
43                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred.

44  
45                   MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman, Fred Bue.  
46 Regarding Federal Proposal 05-05.

47  
48                   For the State, during years of low fall  
49 chum salmon returns, subsistence harvest during this  
50 requested six day period could be detrimental to meeting

1 escapements thereby hampering stock recovery.

2

3 In addition this proposal requests a  
4 change in a preferential harvest for Subdistrict 5(D)  
5 when the fall chum salmon stock is weak which may require  
6 another region to further reduce their harvest.

7

8 The proposal would also be inconsistent  
9 with the US/Canada agreement for border passage fall chum  
10 salmon.

11

12 Fishing time is already longer in the  
13 upper river districts such as Koyukuk River and  
14 Subdistricts 5(D), which has seven days a week  
15 subsistence fishing. Adoption of this proposal would  
16 take away the Federal in-season's manager's authority to  
17 manage subsistence fishing and be in direct contradiction  
18 to the ANILCA .816(b).

19

20 The Department feels the current  
21 management approach provides a flexible and responsible  
22 strategy for providing for escapement and subsistence  
23 needs. In years of low run strengths fisheries managers  
24 must retain the flexibility to restrict fisheries in  
25 order to meet escapement objectives and the obligations  
26 of the US/Canada border.

27

28 Mr. Chairman.

29

30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

31

32 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
33 Fred, I know I'm probably catching you off guard here,  
34 but do you have any idea of what Fort Yukon's fall chum  
35 harvest for a 10 year average would be? Do they -- I  
36 guess what I'm getting at is do they harvest much of the  
37 fall chum for dog teams in Fort Yukon?

38

39 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. On average prior  
40 to the current low series, I'm assuming that's what  
41 you're referring to, where we had low production?

42

43 MR. BASSICH: (Nods affirmatively)

44

45 MR. BUE: Prior to that it was around  
46 10,000, between seven and 10,000 annual harvest for fall  
47 chum.

48

49 Mr. Chairman.

50

1 MR. BASSICH: And then currently?

2

3 MR. BUE: Currently it has increased the  
4 last -- this year and last year, we do not have the  
5 reports from this years, but they have increased. But  
6 what we're seeing is that those people that used to fish  
7 are not there and when wheels go away it seems like --  
8 and dog teams, they get out of the habit of fishing so I  
9 think there is probably less effort in those areas.

10

11 MR. BASSICH: And then could I get you to  
12 respond regarding Stevens and Beaver, same question to  
13 both of those villages?

14

15 MR. BUE: I think speaking with a few of  
16 those people, Jay, and Paul Williams and going out there,  
17 I went to the Gwich'n gathering this summer and spoke  
18 with several people and there's very few dog teams in  
19 those areas now days, so I think there is harvest and it  
20 is important, but it's a much smaller scale than it had  
21 been in the past.

22

23 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman. And  
24 representative from Yukon-Charley, can you tell me how  
25 permanent families live within Federal waters that this  
26 would benefit or not benefit -- or this proposal would  
27 benefit -- how many families live within the Preserve  
28 that would benefit from this proposal?

29

30 MR. ANDERSEN: One, that I know of.

31

32 MR. BASSICH: One, okay.

33

34 MR. ANDERSEN: One close by.

35

36 MR. BASSICH: Okay. I guess, Mr.  
37 Chairman, the point I'm trying to make is that dog teams  
38 and the use of fall chum has declined dramatically over  
39 the last 10 years, especially since 2000 when we had the  
40 fisheries crash, that the trend, and I feel very strongly  
41 that the trend is to further become reduced simply  
42 because it's becoming harder and harder for people to  
43 live out in the Bush. That's just the way things are  
44 changing out in the Bush environments. Many studies will  
45 show that people are moving into communities, that  
46 they're not living out in the remote areas anymore.  
47 Therefore, pressure in these areas that 10 or 15 years  
48 ago was quite high on fall chum is no longer a factor, or  
49 is at a much reduced factor.

50

1                   The second thing I'd like to point out is  
2 that in Units 5-Y-D, we've had complete closures of the  
3 fisheries for fall chum in 1993, 1998 severely restricted  
4 in 2000 -- I'm sorry, severely restricted in '98,  
5 completely closed in 2000, completely closed in 2002.  
6 That is not reasonable opportunity to fish. We're  
7 looking at about, on the average every two to four years  
8 we have a complete closure. And the way that impacts  
9 families that live and depend on a resource is  
10 astounding. It totally wipes them out. Many of the  
11 families who live, and there aren't many of them, that  
12 live out there don't have economic means to adjust to  
13 these closures. They rely on the resource as they have  
14 for hundreds of years. There's not that many of them  
15 doing it but I think it's our responsibility to protect  
16 their ability to live that lifestyle. I hear of a lot of  
17 people saying the lifestyle's going away, the culture's  
18 are going away, well, in my opinion this is one way to  
19 support the culture that's dying. Give it a chance.  
20 Give those people that are out there working hard a  
21 chance to take care of themselves. They're not looking  
22 for handouts, all they want is some sort of a reasonable  
23 opportunity to take care of themselves.

24  
25                   I estimate in the Eagle area, because  
26 people would have to go down into the Preserve down river  
27 to fish, very few people would make that effort unless it  
28 was absolutely necessary for them. A family that was  
29 brought up that lives down river takes less than a  
30 thousand fish a year. They're only maintaining five to  
31 eight dogs, they can't even move their entire family  
32 anymore. Since 2000 they can't even maintain a dog team  
33 large enough to move their family from down there  
34 anywhere on the river, they can't travel anymore because  
35 they can't maintain a big enough dog team to even move  
36 their small family of three people. That's a crime.

37  
38                   People that used to live out in the Bush  
39 were incredibly mobile and were able to take care of  
40 themselves and were quite proud of that. And I think  
41 it's the job of this organization to look after them,  
42 this is subsistence. This is a very small thing.

43  
44                   And I would also like to ask, Fred, do  
45 you feel that on a poor escapement year that a border  
46 passage being reduced by two to 3,000 fish is really  
47 going to affect future spawning or future recruitment?

48  
49                   MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. I couldn't tell  
50 you with certainty. I know that some years it will make

1 more of a difference than other years. Depending on the  
2 production regime we're in. As we talked before the 1999  
3 and 2000 were some of our poorest escapements ever, and  
4 although the last two years have not been good runs,  
5 they've certainly represented a significant improvement  
6 in production. And if production is at a reasonably good  
7 level like the two to one returns per spawner that is  
8 more common and, yeah, the harvest of a couple thousand  
9 probably isn't going to have that great of effect. But  
10 when we have, for some reason some unexplained change in  
11 production, just maintaining a base line escapement so  
12 that when production does turnaround -- I don't know, I  
13 guess that's a hypothetical and I cannot give you a  
14 guarantee on that, Andy.

15  
16 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
17 didn't really expect a complete yes or no. I realize how  
18 complex the management is. But the point I'm trying to  
19 drive home is it's pretty insignificant. If we've had  
20 poor escapement years and the past two years we've had  
21 actually fairly good recruitment, in fact, better than  
22 expected in many people's minds from such a poor year  
23 demonstrates that there's some things going on with the  
24 salmon that maybe we don't fully understand.

25  
26 And I think that maintaining the ability  
27 for a few families to be able to take care of themselves  
28 out there is not that big of a price to ask.

29  
30 The other thing I'd like to drive home to  
31 people is people who live out in the Bush don't have a  
32 lot of money. Think about yourselves, think about all of  
33 you sitting in the room here, how much money do you spend  
34 on gasoline a year to feed your car to go to work,  
35 thousands of dollars a year. What percentage of your  
36 income is that to take care and maintain a vehicle just  
37 to transport yourself around. What kind of a percentage  
38 is that. And then look at these people, what are they  
39 asking for, they're asking for a few thousand fish so  
40 that they can provide transportation for themselves, give  
41 them a little bit of stability, give themselves a little  
42 bit of pride, being able to take care of themselves.  
43 They can't afford to go out and spend two or \$3,000 on  
44 dog food. You can't feed a dog team on dog food and  
45 expect them to work for you. If you talk to anybody  
46 who's a dog musher, they'll tell you that, dogs need to  
47 eat meat if you really want them to perform.

48  
49 It's critical to these people. And I  
50 just can't help that -- I just really feel strongly that

1 we really need to start supporting people who live in the  
2 Bush, you know, there aren't a lot of them out there but  
3 they need our help. They're not asking for a lot but  
4 they need our help.

5  
6                   And I would disagree that this goes  
7 against ANILCA, I think ANILCA is designed to protect  
8 subsistence. Subsistence is changing, people are going  
9 into the communities now, but when ANILCA was adopted  
10 people were living out in the Bush at a much higher  
11 level. We heard Paul, from Beaver, talk to us last night  
12 at the Eagle AC and also at the meeting -- or at the  
13 potlatch last night of how it used to be and how people  
14 took care of them out in the Bush, well, there are a few  
15 people that still want to do that and we're not asking a  
16 lot. And I just feel like the way that the office is  
17 saying that they're going to lose their ability to manage  
18 the stocks; they have all summer long to manage the  
19 stocks, we're asking for five days at the end of the  
20 season when they normally relax subsistence fishing up  
21 and down the entire Yukon anyway. If you look  
22 traditionally whenever they open it up it's at the end of  
23 September, irregardless of what has crossed the border,  
24 they usually open up and say go for it because it's not  
25 going to matter anymore, and that's documented. That can  
26 be looked up and you can present that.

27  
28                   So we're not asking for anything they  
29 don't normally do, we're just asking them to put it in  
30 writing.

31  
32                   Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just can't  
33 help but say this is really important to people who live  
34 out in the Bush and if we really want to show support for  
35 subsistence users out in the Bush this is the kind of  
36 proposals we need to bring forward.

37  
38                   Thank you.

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Andy. Is  
41 there any other Federal, State, tribal agencies that want  
42 to make comments.

43  
44                   (No comments)

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No. Advisory  
47 Committees.

48  
49                   (No comments)

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: No Advisory Committees but  
2 there is one written public comment.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Vince.  
5

6 MR. MATHEWS: Again, Mike Moses of  
7 Mountain Village, he opposes this proposal. The work put  
8 out by the Yukon River Panel and the U.S. Fish and  
9 Wildlife Service to protect these Canadian bound stocks  
10 should remain in effect until such time that they feel  
11 protection is no longer needed. Protection of these fall  
12 chum salmon should also not end up as dog food. Dogs are  
13 able to eat other foods besides salmon. Be grateful you  
14 can receive fish without due expense.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Regional Council  
17 deliberation.

18  
19 MR. STEVENS: No, InterAgency Staff  
20 first.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: InterAgency Staff.

23  
24 MR. MATHEWS: Rod, did you have anything  
25 on the InterAgency Staff Committee?

26  
27 MR. SIMMONS: No, nothing specific. For  
28 this proposal and all remaining proposals, the  
29 InterAgency Staff Committee agreed with the preliminary  
30 conclusion of the OSM Staff.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Council deliberation.

33  
34 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt.

35  
36 MR. BASSICH: Second.

37  
38 MR. STEVENS: Question.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Virg.

41  
42 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, Andy's already said  
43 how he felt, I'd like everyone to turn to Page 65, and it  
44 has Table 1 there, Yukon River Fall Chum Salmon  
45 Management Plan, recommended management actions.

46  
47 I can remember back in, I think '95, I'm  
48 not sure what year it is, but Mr. Kron would know, when  
49 the State first made an OAG and they made it on Yukon  
50 River fall chum and they made it and now they've done it

1 all over the state. And the reason why they did that,  
2 they had a BEG prior to that where they wanted over  
3 400,000 fall chum salmon in the Yukon River drainage, now  
4 look at what it is, it's 300,000 or less.

5  
6 But the reason it was lowered back then,  
7 it was lowered to 350,000 as an OAG, was so that people  
8 would be able to have limited subsistence. Now, we heard  
9 earlier in the Staff comments that the Salmon Treaty with  
10 Canada, you know, we have an obligation to put X number  
11 of fish across the border, we do have that obligation in  
12 the Treaty but, however, also in the Treaty it recognizes  
13 the subsistence users on both sides of the border, except  
14 on the other side of the border they call it Indian Food  
15 Fisheries. And it says in the Treaty that whenever  
16 possible they would not like those fisheries to be  
17 disrupted. And so I think that has a bearing on this as  
18 well.

19  
20 And then you got to bear in mind what the  
21 Board of Fisheries just got through doing in Area M and  
22 we have GSI work that shows that maybe as high as 15  
23 percent of those fish at times that they're harvesting  
24 out there in that big commercial fishery would benefit a  
25 bunch of people in Seattle and processors that live in  
26 Seattle and processors that are foreign-owned by the  
27 Japanese, that somehow they've now got priority over  
28 these people that live here. I think we should go ahead  
29 and do this because we've had, oops management, where  
30 oops they caught too many in Area M but no one will  
31 hardly admit that but they damn sure know how many they  
32 caught down river and those guys had fisheries and the  
33 fishery totally gets closed, like Andy was saying.

34  
35 If it's a couple of thousand fish, it's a  
36 couple of thousand fish, I don't think it's going to --  
37 it's going to make that much difference and I don't think  
38 the Canadian's are going to have that much heartburn  
39 about it. Although I haven't talked to any of the  
40 Canadians on the panel about it but I'm going to support  
41 the proposal.

42  
43 But I wanted to point those, you know,  
44 just few things out.

45  
46 Now, the BEG is down to 300,000. We went  
47 all over the state and lowered BEG's and I think one of  
48 the main reasons the BEG's were lowered was politics so  
49 that they would be able to open the Area M fishery back  
50 up, the big commercial boys out in Area M, I think that

1 is why the BEG's got lowered in Norton Sound and also on  
2 the Yukon.

3  
4 But that's how I feel about it. If we're  
5 going to restrict the people up here, let's start  
6 restricting the commercial harvesters before you start  
7 restricting the subsistence harvesters. That's how I  
8 look at it.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Virg.  
11 Andy.

12  
13 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
14 Once again, I'm just asking you put yourself in the shoes  
15 of a person living out there who's looking for these  
16 fish.

17  
18 If, tomorrow, someone told you couldn't  
19 buy anymore gasoline to put in your car, you had to walk  
20 to work everywhere and then maybe you couldn't even get  
21 to work to earn the dollar to go out and buy the food you  
22 need to eat, I'll bet you'd be pretty panicked. And then  
23 sit back there, watch the news and hear about Area M  
24 fishermen that their by-catch is sometimes greater than  
25 the entire escapement on the Yukon River for fall chum  
26 and then see how you feel when you're just a little guy  
27 out there trying to mind your own business and do your  
28 own thing.

29  
30 Just put yourself in their shoes for a  
31 few minutes and really think about how you feel and how  
32 much equity there is in the system when that's what you  
33 see happening.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I'm going to say one  
38 thing about this. It seems like we're here, this  
39 program, OSM's program is here to protect the little guy  
40 and we're always -- it seems like we're protecting  
41 commercial interests than subsistence, you know, we're  
42 here to protect the little guy from the big guy. That's  
43 my belief in ANILCA. All those little writings and all  
44 the stuff is nothing. It doesn't mean nothing to me.  
45 What means something to me is having one person that has  
46 nothing else to turn to make it, that's why I'm going to  
47 support this proposal.

48  
49 MR. BASSICH: Question.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved,  
2 seconded and question has been called, and discussion  
3 took place. All those in favor of Proposal 05-05 signify  
4 by saying aye.  
5  
6 IN UNISON: Aye.  
7  
8 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed,  
9 same sign.  
10  
11 (No opposing votes)  
12  
13 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: We'll take a little  
14 break, Vince.  
15  
16 MR. MATHEWS: Okay.  
17  
18 (Off record)  
19  
20 (On record)  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, before we start  
23 moving along with the Southcentral proposals, I think  
24 Virgil wanted to make a motion to support a proposal.  
25  
26 MR. UMPHENOUR: I move to take our  
27 Proposal, which was Proposal No. 3, which was to limit  
28 gillnets with six inch or larger mesh to 35 mesh maximum  
29 depth, to modify it to include commercial fisheries gear  
30 and petition -- send that in the form of a petition to  
31 the State Board of Fisheries.  
32  
33 MR. TITUS: So you're amending that  
34 proposal?  
35  
36 MR. UMPHENOUR: No, I'm not amending the  
37 -- yes, what I want to do is amend the proposal but send  
38 it to the Board of Fisheries, State Board of Fisheries in  
39 the form of a petition. And I can speak to the motion  
40 after I get a second.  
41  
42 MR. STEVENS: I'll second it.  
43  
44 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, speaking to the  
45 motion that I just made. The procedure for the Board of  
46 Fisheries is that if it's out of cycle the only way you  
47 can bring something to them is either through a petition  
48 or an agenda change request. Agenda change requests have  
49 to be submitted within 45 days prior to their first  
50 meeting of the year which starts in October, so we can't

1 do that. Petitions can be submitted at any time,  
2 especially petitions dealing with subsistence and once  
3 they're received by the Board of Fisheries they have to  
4 take action as to whether to accept the petition and then  
5 schedule -- and if they accept it, they have to schedule  
6 it for a meeting or reject it but they have to do this  
7 within 30 days from the time they receive the petition.  
8 So that's the procedural part of it.

9  
10 And the reason I put the petition forward  
11 is because of the same reason that we had it as a  
12 proposal for the Federal Subsistence fisheries. However,  
13 the biggest harvester of king salmon normally are the  
14 commercial fisheries in the Lower Yukon, and so this  
15 needs to apply those commercial fisheries as well as  
16 subsistence fisheries and then that -- what that will do  
17 is take the objection away that our Staff had that we  
18 would have inconsistent regulations as far as the State  
19 and the Federal Subsistence Board has, we would then have  
20 the same regulation. All gillnets larger than six inch  
21 mesh could be no deeper than 35 meshes for commercial and  
22 subsistence fisheries entire -- throughout the entire  
23 Yukon River drainage.

24  
25 Thank you.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Further discussion on  
28 Virgil's motion. Was it seconded?

29  
30 MR. STEVENS: Yes, I did.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's just another  
33 form of this proposal that's going to go, instead of to  
34 the Federal Board, it will go to the State Board, too.

35  
36 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, I  
37 was out. Could I have the motion read to me, please?

38  
39 MR. UMPHENOUR: The motion is to amend  
40 our proposal, Proposal 03 to include all fisheries,  
41 commercial and subsistence and submit that in a form of a  
42 petition to the State Board of Fisheries.

43  
44 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Everybody understand.

47  
48 (Council nods affirmatively)

49  
50 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved and

1 seconded. Question.

2

3

MR. BASSICH: Question.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Question's been called. All those in favor of Virgil's motion signify by saying aye.

7

8

9

IN UNISON: Aye.

10

11

12

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed, same sign.

13

14

(No opposing votes)

15

16

17

CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, we'll go to Southcentral.

18

19

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50

MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we understand the petition. And I think Virgil would be in agreement with this, the original proposal did address subsistence and commercial fishing, so we're just basically submitting this Federal proposal as a petition to the Board of Fisheries.

MR. UMPHENOUR: (Nods affirmatively)

MR. MATHEWS: Virgil's shaking his head. I just wanted to make it -- he wanted to make it clear on the record that this was also addressing commercial fisheries.

MR. UMPHENOUR: (Nods affirmatively)

MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Now, we move to Southcentral. Now, the reason we're going to Southcentral is when you have a positive customary and traditional use determination for a species in another region then you have opportunity to look at those proposals. So that's why you're going to have to shift your thinking now away from the Yukon and kind of focus more on the Upper Copper River. And your representative for that area is not present here so anyways, Proposal 13 is on Page 71.

It was submitted by Ahtna, the Copper River Native Association and the Chitna Native Corporation. They would like to establish a certain limit on the amount of customary trade allowed in the Upper Copper River district. And I do have some new

1 comments that are from the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence  
2 Resource Commission that I'll hand out at that time. And  
3 the State just waved at me, too, so I believe they have  
4 comments, too.

5  
6 MR. HAYNES: I was at that meeting in  
7 case questions come up.

8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, it  
10 might be good to hear the discussions of what the  
11 Wrangell-St. Elias had on that since they are kind of  
12 your sister or brother advisory group for the Park  
13 Service lands that play an important role of giving you  
14 input as well as you giving them input on Federal  
15 subsistence regulations, so Terry's available.

16  
17 With that Rich is filling in for your  
18 regional anthropologist so he'll be presenting the next  
19 three proposals.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Rich.

22  
23 MR. UBERUAGA: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
24 Council. Fisheries Proposal 13 submitted by Ahtna  
25 Incorporated, Copper River Native Association and the  
26 Chitna Native Corporation and requests regional  
27 modifications to the customary trade regulations.

28  
29 The proponents request that customary  
30 trade of salmon to individuals other than rural residents  
31 be limited by dollar value and percentage of catch. That  
32 there be a reporting requirement and that the sales of  
33 processed salmon using customary and traditional methods  
34 be allowed. They request that customary trade between  
35 the rural residents be limited to no more than half of  
36 their catch, half of the annual household catch.

37  
38 The proposed changes to the customary  
39 trade in the Upper Copper River district would apply to  
40 both exchanges between rural residents and exchanges with  
41 individuals other than rural residents. Customary trade  
42 between rural residents would be limited to no more than  
43 50 percent of their annual household catch, and customary  
44 trade of salmon with individuals other than rural  
45 residents would be restricted to an annual limit of \$100  
46 per household and no more than half of the annual  
47 household harvest. And any sales would have to be  
48 recorded on a customary trade form for enforcement  
49 purposes.

50

1 Regional modifications to the customary  
2 trade regulations aren't new. The Bristol Bay Council  
3 has made a regional modification to the customary trade  
4 regulations in their area with setting dollar limits and  
5 providing requirements that sales be limited to  
6 individuals other than rural residents. So far they've  
7 issued six recording forms in their area.

8  
9 The dollar limit being proposed in this  
10 particular proposal is related -- is an attempt to  
11 prevent exchanges which could be considered excessive or  
12 abusive. And as many of you know the proposed sale of  
13 salmon using customary and traditional methods does fall  
14 outside the auspices of the Federal Subsistence Program.  
15 Food health issues including processing are controlled by  
16 the State of Alaska Department of Environmental  
17 Conservation -- Department of Environmental Quality -- in  
18 any case controlled by the State of Alaska. The portion  
19 of the proposed language of this regulation proposal to  
20 allow the sale of processes salmon could mislead users to  
21 think that they could sell processed fish, smoked fish  
22 without meeting State health requirements.

23  
24 Customary trade regulations right now are  
25 pretty challenging to understand and effectively  
26 communicate. There would be a need to focus outreach  
27 efforts to help reduce the existing confusion in this  
28 area of regulation. Users would need to understand that  
29 allowing customary trade is limited to salmon harvested  
30 with a Federal subsistence permit and that must remain  
31 within dollar limits and percentages of harvest, in this  
32 case no more than 50 percent of the harvest could be  
33 exchanged.

34  
35 The preliminary conclusion of the Staff  
36 was to support this proposal with modification.

37  
38 And those modifications would remove the  
39 portions of the proposal pertaining to monetary limit for  
40 cash sales between rural residents and cash sales of  
41 salmon processed using customary and traditional methods  
42 be allowed. The provision to have no monetary limit  
43 between rural residents currently is allowed under the  
44 customary trade regulations.

45  
46 The portion of this proposal that would  
47 allow sales of customary and traditionally processed fish  
48 falls outside the scope of the Federal subsistence  
49 program. Those food health issues, including fish  
50 processing are controlled by the State.

1                   Putting a limit on the dollar amount, the  
2 percentage of harvest that could be sold through  
3 customary trade provides control and accountability.  
4 Only a small portion of the customary trade practice in  
5 the Upper Copper River district probably complies with  
6 the existing health regulations. This proposal places  
7 the burden of recording customary trade exchanges on the  
8 seller for those transactions with non-rural residents.  
9 Without a recording requirement for sales between rural  
10 residents and a limit of no more than 50 percent of the  
11 annual household harvest of salmon, only large scale  
12 abuses could be enforced at this time.

13  
14                   The portion of the proposed language  
15 requesting that the sale of traditionally processed  
16 salmon could become legal could mislead people if they  
17 don't realize that they're required to comply with the  
18 existing health regulations.

19  
20                   Current customary trade regulations are  
21 challenging to communicate effectively and there is a  
22 need to focus outreach efforts to clarify any regulatory  
23 changes to the users.

24  
25                   Again, the recommendation from this Staff  
26 was to support the proposal with modification for no more  
27 allowable of 50 percent of the trade and a dollar limit  
28 on the exchange between rural and non-rural residents.

29  
30                   Mr. Chair.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

33  
34                   MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
35 Is there currently a limit on how many salmon these  
36 people can catch?

37  
38                   MR. UBERUAGA: In Ahtna region?

39  
40                   MR. BASSICH: Yes.

41  
42                   MR. UBERUAGA: I don't believe so -- yes,  
43 in the Copper River district there is a limit on the  
44 number of salmon that can be caught through  
45 subsistence.....

46  
47                   MR. BASSICH: Well, each household is  
48 limited to a number of salmon that are allowed to be  
49 caught, what is that number, does anybody know?

50

1 MR. UBERUAGA: That number -- there are  
2 two districts, I believe it's 500 in the Glennallen  
3 subdistrict -- well, there's Federal and State limits,  
4 okay. On the Federal limit, total combined annual  
5 harvest limits in the Glennallen and Chitna subdistricts  
6 for one person households, 30 salmon, including no more  
7 than five king salmon by dipnet and five king salmon by  
8 rod and reel. Upon request permits for additional salmon  
9 will be issued up to 200 salmon -- king limit doesn't  
10 change, those are red salmon. Household with two or more  
11 persons, which most of the households are, 500 total  
12 salmon. Again, the king salmon limit of five fish  
13 doesn't change.

14  
15 So there are initial limits of 30 and 60  
16 fish, depending on your household size but can be  
17 extended up to 500 fish for a household of two.

18  
19 Again, what this proposal is doing is  
20 establishing a limit on the amount of fish that can be  
21 sold between rural and non-rural residents in an attempt  
22 to limit any abuses.

23  
24 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

27  
28 MR. BASSICH: So as I understand it,  
29 currently there are no limitations on the sale of salmon  
30 by non-commercial fishers in that region; is that  
31 correct?

32  
33 MR. UBERUAGA: That's correct.

34  
35 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, thank you,  
38 Rich. Any other questions for Rich.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Do you have anything  
43 -- yeah, Jeep.

44  
45 MR. TITUS: I got a question, is there  
46 commercial fisheries up there or fishing permits or  
47 whatever?

48  
49 MR. UBERUAGA: No. The limit of 500 fish  
50 has been existence for quite a while, I believe, under

1 the State regulations also. Primarily harvested through  
2 fishwheels and dipnets, but I believe fishwheels more so.

3

4 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

5

6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Andy.

7

8 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
9 guess two questions. First one is for maybe a fisheries  
10 biologist, what's the status of the runs up there at this  
11 point in time? I guess how healthy are they, are they  
12 able to sustain this? And the second question would be,  
13 are there -- I know that there would be commercial  
14 operations in the lower river, certainly, and I would be  
15 really curious to hear any comments that they would have  
16 because it seems like this might be a -- could  
17 potentially be a direct conflict with their interests as  
18 well, so is there opposing -- or is there any kind of  
19 conflict right now between commercial fishermen in the  
20 lower sections and those that are fishing subsistence but  
21 yet selling under the customary trade provisions, at this  
22 time?

23

24 MR. UBERUAGA: In regards to the health  
25 of the stocks, at least, this year there was a large  
26 return of fish. There was a large commercial harvest in  
27 the lower river and in the Delta and escapement into the  
28 upper river was larger than many years past. I know  
29 escapement into the upper reaches of the Glennallen  
30 subdistrict was good in terms of the Batzulnetas fishery  
31 there were larger escapements than in the past several  
32 years.

33

34 In terms of conflicts between subsistence  
35 and commercial fisheries, I would address that to any  
36 State managers that would want to attempt a shot at that  
37 or anyone else? My experience has been that there's been  
38 a lot of contention in the past several years over  
39 allocations between subsistence and commercial fisheries,  
40 a lot of it based on the strength of the runs in the past  
41 several years. You know that is a large commercial  
42 fishery in the lower river and managed primarily through  
43 the use of a sonar system at Miles Lake, 17 miles up  
44 river of the Copper.

45

46 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred.

47

48 MR. UBERUAGA: Fred will probably have  
49 something for you.

50

1 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. I'm speaking way  
2 out of my area but just to -- a few of the things that I  
3 know about it is that the commercial fishery is primarily  
4 at the mouth of the river in the coastal waters and so  
5 the Miles Lake is actually -- the sonar at the mouth of  
6 the river is monitoring what fish have escaped the  
7 commercial fishery, those fish are passing on up to the  
8 subsistence fishermen.

9  
10 Also from what I understand is  
11 PWSAC, Prince William Sound Aquaculture Association, is --  
12 a lot of the funding is commercial interests. They do  
13 produce fish that are put into the Gulkana and pumped  
14 into the Copper River system. Those fish are harvested  
15 by subsistence fishermen but their support comes through  
16 commercial interests. So there is a complexity to that.  
17 There is a subsistence and a commercial trade off there.  
18 There is some hatchery stock that is harvested by  
19 subsistence fishermen. That subsistence fishery is  
20 supported through that.

21  
22 Mr. Chairman.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred, if we supported  
25 this and voted on it, what kind of disruption would we be  
26 putting on some kind of control from the rural to the  
27 non-rural -- non-rural resident, from him sending -- from  
28 the rural resident selling his subsistence caught fish  
29 that would process these salmon strips or anything --  
30 what kind of big disruption -- what kind of big upheaval  
31 would it create down there?

32  
33 MR. BUE: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, I'm not  
34 very well qualified again, but I do know that the up  
35 river section is road accessible, there is a great deal  
36 of tourist traffic through that area. I imagine there is  
37 opportunity to tap a lot of non-rural people as potential  
38 buyers.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I have a mind set to  
41 defer this to the home region but what does my Council  
42 think.

43  
44 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, I have a lot of  
45 history of being in the giant conflict between the  
46 commercial fishermen out of Cordova, they call theirself  
47 Cordova District Fishermen United, which about 45 percent  
48 of them are non-residents of this state, being greed-  
49 heads down there and they would like to see that fishery  
50 closed is what they would like to see. I think we should

1 support the local region's request in the form of  
2 actually supporting their proposal because those people  
3 are -- them and Area M fishermen are in bed with each  
4 other and those people absolutely hate subsistence users.  
5 They think that you should have to go -- in fact I've  
6 heard their president testify at a Board of Fisheries  
7 meeting that if the people that live in Fairbanks or  
8 anywhere else in Alaska want a Copper River salmon to  
9 eat, they can go to Safeway and buy it. I heard their  
10 president actually say that in public testimony.

11

12 So I would support the local subsistence  
13 users. I think we should just vote it up. Do what they  
14 want and support them in this, is what I think we should  
15 do and not defer it.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince, you wanted to  
20 add something.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: No, I didn't. I think it  
23 was -- you've changed direction on which way you were  
24 going with this. If you were going to continue into the  
25 biology I was going to give you my little spiel on  
26 customary trade, but no. We do have recommendations from  
27 Wrangell-St. Elias, which you do appoint a member to that  
28 you may want to hear their recommendation on this  
29 proposal before you act to defer or to take other  
30 actions.

31

32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Let's move on.

33

34 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. I don't know if that  
35 was Fish and Game, and Fred was brought up on his  
36 expertise on the Copper River, I don't know if Fish and  
37 Game has a comment on this proposal.

38

39 MR. HAYNES: (Shakes head negatively)

40

41 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, they don't have a  
42 comment. I don't know if other Federal agencies are  
43 present here.

44

45 It kind of puts me in a dilemma here  
46 because I wrote this up, where to put in Wrangell-St.  
47 Elias. Is there another agency that has comments -- oh,  
48 okay, I'm sorry.

49

50 MR. ANDERSEN: Yeah, thank you, Fred

1 Andersen with the Park Service. To try to address Andy's  
2 question of a few minutes ago. I was on the customary  
3 trade regulations task force about three years ago when  
4 this issue first surfaced and was being discussed. And  
5 at that time CDFU, the Cordova District Fishermen's Union  
6 had a great deal of angst about the possibility of sale  
7 of subsistence fish. Whether it's currently still on  
8 their screen and whether they still have problems with it  
9 I don't know, but a couple of year ago they did.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any further questions  
12 for Fred.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Does that answer your  
17 question, Andy, somewhat?

18  
19 MR. BASSICH: (Nods affirmatively)

20  
21 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved and  
22 seconded.

23  
24 MR. BASSICH: Question.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Question has been  
27 called.

28  
29 MR. UMPHENOUR: Did we move to adopt?

30  
31 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You did, didn't you?

32  
33 MR. UMPHENOUR: No, I didn't move to  
34 adopt.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You didn't.

37  
38 MR. MATHEWS: Tina.

39  
40 REPORTER: (Shakes head negatively)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Well, then.....

43  
44 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt the  
45 modified proposal -- or the proposal as modified.

46  
47 MR. TITUS: Second.

48  
49 MR. UMPHENOUR: The modification is as  
50 written in the book at the end of it.

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.  
2  
3 MR. UMPHENOUR: It says see proposed  
4 wording at end of analysis, that's what I move to adopt,  
5 is that wording.  
6  
7 MR. TITUS: Second.  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: That's on Page 80?  
10  
11 MR. UMPHENOUR: That's correct, on Page  
12 80 and 81.  
13  
14 MR. STEVENS: In bold.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been seconded --  
17 Philip, did you second that?  
18  
19 MR. TITUS: Yes.  
20  
21 MR. STEVENS: Question.  
22  
23 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman.  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Terry.  
26  
27 MR. HAYNES: I apologize for disrupting  
28 your discussion, I think it is important for you to take  
29 a look at what the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence  
30 Commission did. Number one, because your representative  
31 on the Commission was fully in support of what the  
32 Commission did.  
33  
34 But what the Wrangell SRC wanted to do  
35 was to increase the monetary limit on customary trade  
36 between rural and urban residents from \$100 to \$500, the  
37 feeling being that \$100 doesn't amount to very much  
38 salmon these days. In addition they wanted to institute  
39 a reporting requirement for customary trade between rural  
40 residents. And their feeling is that they agreed with a  
41 position that the State -- that the Alaska Department of  
42 Fish and Game has had all along and that is that there  
43 should have been a study documenting what kind of  
44 customary trade practices were occurring around the state  
45 before customary trade regulations were implemented so  
46 that there'd be some way of knowing what were the  
47 customary practices, what levels of customary trade  
48 occurred. And so what this Commission felt this would  
49 help to do is -- you've got to have a reporting  
50 requirement if you're going to know what's going on now

1 that currently isn't in place, they went another step and  
2 suggested that there be a study initiated of current and  
3 historic levels of customary trade just so there's  
4 information that would help to support whatever  
5 recommendations might be coming out of the regions for  
6 customary trade because if that can be tied to historic  
7 practices then it provides support for what Regional  
8 Councils in different parts of the state might be  
9 supporting.

10

11 So I didn't mean to disrupt your  
12 discussion but I felt you might want to know that that  
13 Commission which -- another member of the Commission is  
14 Gloria Stickwan who is also on the Southcentral Regional  
15 Council and I suspect that she would be explaining this  
16 recommendation at the Southcentral Council meeting coming  
17 up later this month.

18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20

21 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, thank you,  
22 Terry. I think we're just going to support the general  
23 concept of this. It's been moved, seconded, question has  
24 been called. All those in favor of Virgil's motion for  
25 supporting this proposal on Page 80 signify by saying  
26 aye.

27

28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29

30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed,  
31 same sign.

32

33 (No opposing votes)

34

35 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Move on to the next  
36 one Vince.

37

38 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, the next  
39 proposal is a C&T proposal. This is to determine who  
40 qualifies to take advantage of Federal regulations, and  
41 this is to revise that C&T determination for the Chitna  
42 subdistrict of the Upper Copper River district. This is  
43 submitted by Chickaloon Village Council. And again the  
44 Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission took  
45 this up and has a recommendation on that.

46

47 And I believe Rich is going to combine  
48 this with Proposal 15 in his presentation, I think, and  
49 that one is -- that would be the Glennallen subdistrict  
50 in addition to the Chitna subdistrict.

1 (Phone ringing)  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Take a break.  
4  
5 (Off record)  
6  
7 (On record)  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Looking at both of  
10 these proposals, 14 and 15, I think it's a home region  
11 proposal where they want to add Chickaloon. I think we  
12 should just defer both of these proposals to the home  
13 region, because Chickaloon, where is Chickaloon, you  
14 know. Right next to Palmer, I think is where it's at. I  
15 think that's way out of our scope of dealing with things.  
16 Since I've been around we haven't had that good a  
17 relationship with Southcentral for a long time, so I  
18 propose -- I'm the Chairman, but I would like to see a  
19 motion to defer 14 and 15 to the home region.  
20  
21 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to defer 14 and 15  
22 to the home region.  
23  
24 MR. STEVENS: Second.  
25  
26 MR. TITUS: Question.  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved to  
29 defer 14 and 15 to the home region and seconded and  
30 question been called. All those in favor of this motion  
31 signify by saying aye.  
32  
33 IN UNISON: Aye.  
34  
35 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
36 I'm just really interested in this, I agree with what  
37 just transpired here but I would really like to stay  
38 informed as to what some of the determinations are and  
39 what comes of these down there because I see kind of an  
40 image in the mirror of what potentially could take place  
41 and to a certain extent does take place within our  
42 region. So I would appreciate if our Staff could, at  
43 some point in time, let us know what these determinations  
44 are, what the outcome is of this.  
45  
46 I guess that's it, thank you.  
47  
48 MR. MATHEWS: You will get that back even  
49 though you moved to defer. Any proposal you take up and  
50 take action on -- I'll be doing later what's called the

1 .805(c) letter, it's from ANILCA, but it's a written  
2 response that the Board has to write in response to  
3 recommendations that they do not take from you. But  
4 we've expanded that to cover all the proposals you take  
5 up.

6  
7 So whenever we get done with this, I  
8 always get the cycles wrong, but you will get an .805(c)  
9 letter at your next meeting that will explain the actions  
10 that the Board took on these proposals.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you, Rich.

13  
14 MR. UBERUAGA: You bet, thank you.

15  
16 MR. MATHEWS: Well, Mr. Chairman, that  
17 puts us in a little bit of a time spot here, at 4:00  
18 o'clock we were going to do a teleconference on wildlife  
19 issues so Pete DeMatteo and Don Rivard and now Ruth  
20 Gronquist of BLM, because they were supposed to fly in  
21 today, no planes are coming in, at least as far as the  
22 plane she was supposed to be on, so they're going to be  
23 calling in at 4:00.

24  
25 Right now.....

26  
27 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I thought this is a  
28 fisheries meeting.

29  
30 MR. MATHEWS: This is a fisheries action  
31 meeting, but now you're starting the cycle for wildlife.

32  
33 So what we could do on the wildlife  
34 topics, which is pretty timely, is give you the .805(c)  
35 letter for the wildlife topics you took at your last  
36 meeting and see what the Board took and then at 4:00  
37 o'clock then would be the teleconference, which will  
38 basically an open discussion with these people, if you  
39 have any wildlife proposals you would like to explore as  
40 far as writing or considering. And Ruth, I think wants to  
41 talk a little bit, but I couldn't get it out of her on  
42 the phone conversation there, because it was hard to  
43 hear, she may want to talk to you a little bit about the  
44 effects of fire.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: How long is your  
47 presentation Cliff.

48  
49 MR. TITUS: 10 minutes.

50

1 MR. SCHLEUSNER: It's more than 20  
2 minutes.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.  
5  
6 MR. SCHLEUSNER: There's a couple of  
7 informational items at the end, I mean there's basically  
8 three agenda items in the Fisheries Information section.  
9 And the longest section is the 2005 draft Fisheries  
10 Resource Monitoring Plan, which is an action item for the  
11 Council in which you'll be making recommendations on  
12 funding the 2005 projects. The other two are just  
13 information updates.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, we can wait for  
16 you then if it's going to take longer than 4:00 o'clock,  
17 we could wait until later.  
18  
19 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Okay.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Let's get an update  
22 on the .805 letter, I guess, Vince.  
23  
24 MR. MATHEWS: If that's what you want,  
25 the .805(c)?  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, we could wait  
28 for him.  
29  
30 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I don't know his  
31 travel plans, that's the only reason I'm hesitating here.  
32 You're here through Thursday then?  
33  
34 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Uh-huh.  
35  
36 MR. MATHEWS: Okay.  
37  
38 MR. TITUS: No one's leaving Vince.  
39  
40 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, then we go to the  
41 .805(c) letter, that's Page 146 in your book. I quickly  
42 covered that but this is a very important document for  
43 Regional Councils. The Board has to respond to you in  
44 writing as to why they rejected your recommendations.  
45 Like I said earlier, we expanded it to all proposals.  
46  
47 I don't know how you want to handle this,  
48 I can go down each proposal or you can just look them  
49 over. You will be talking a little bit more about  
50 Proposal 1 because there's a request for reconsideration

1 which is on the agenda later from the State and I assume  
2 Terry will be talking about that, so Proposal 1 you'll be  
3 slightly revisiting today, and then the rest are there  
4 summarized. So I don't know how you want me to proceed,  
5 if you just want to look at them, if you have questions,  
6 we have Staff here that can answer those questions.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Why are they bringing  
9 Proposal 1 back to us when we already did make a  
10 recommendation, do they want us to change our mind or  
11 what?

12  
13 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I can't speak for the  
14 State. The State is asking for a reconsideration based  
15 on evidence that they have that the Board needs to  
16 address. It's called an RFR, anyone has that option.  
17 Once the Board takes its action, either when the  
18 regulation goes into effect or when it's published, 60  
19 days within that, people can submit an RFR, I believe  
20 this Council did once or twice in years past, saying to  
21 the Board we want you to reconsider your action on the  
22 sale of handicraft items from the fur of brown bear and  
23 the State has done that. It's in your book here and  
24 we're presenting it to your Council because it's part of  
25 our process to bring it back before the Councils. I'm  
26 drawing a blank here because I'm more focused on the  
27 Interior but I'm not understanding, I believe this is  
28 going before Southeast, I think, and it's going to go  
29 before Western. All those that were granted the sale of  
30 handicraft items, it will be before them.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I think we're just  
33 going around in circles right here if they're bringing it  
34 back to us. It should just be from the petitioner to the  
35 Federal Subsistence Board.

36  
37 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, Terry Haynes.  
38 I have no idea why it's in your book and I'm not prepared  
39 to -- this is something that the Federal Subsistence  
40 Board has not accepted yet. The State is appealing the  
41 brown bear handicraft regulation that allows the use of  
42 brown bear claws in making handicrafts in Southeast  
43 Alaska, Bristol Bay, and Eastern Interior regions. We  
44 believe there are issues associated with allowing that  
45 practice which is described in our appeal but the  
46 Federal Subsistence Board has not yet decided whether or  
47 not to accept that reconsideration, haven't determined  
48 whether it meets the test. There really isn't much I can  
49 tell you today, Regional Council Chairs have all been  
50 notified of this request for reconsideration and I assume

1 there'll be a mechanism for the Councils to weigh in if  
2 the Federal Subsistence Board proceeds.

3

4 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Well, from my point  
5 of view I don't think we have any change of opinion since  
6 our Beaver meeting, except for me, I was the only one  
7 that was -- we already made our recommendation to the  
8 Board is what I'm saying and why should it come back to  
9 us when you already know our recommendation. I don't  
10 think any of us is going to change our mind, that's why I  
11 said we're just going in a circle here.

12

13 MR. MATHEWS: I think Steve may have some  
14 input, I don't want to belabor this, this is an  
15 information item. We felt that you should be informed  
16 that there is this request for reconsideration. I may  
17 have mis-portrayed that you need to take action on it,  
18 that's not my intent, it's just to inform you that the  
19 State is -- it doesn't matter if it's the State, a person  
20 is asking for reconsideration and you were involved in  
21 that process so we're informing you of that  
22 reconsideration.

23

24 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: We're informed then.

25

26 MR. KESSLER: Mr. Chair, I'm Steve  
27 Kessler with the Forest Service. I was at the Southeast  
28 Regional Advisory Council meeting last week and I think  
29 that -- well, what they did was they put forward a  
30 wildlife proposal for this next cycle having to do with  
31 exactly the same proposal with bear claws, fur and  
32 handicrafts and I think that they mostly did that not  
33 knowing what the results of this reconsideration might be  
34 so that it would be on the -- be there as a Board  
35 proposal for next year in case something happened to it  
36 this time around.

37

38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thanks for informing  
39 us. Move on Vince.

40

41 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, well, now that we  
42 jumped over that one the rest of the proposals are laid  
43 out there. Basically the format is a sentence or two  
44 describing the proposal and who submitted it and it's  
45 followed by the Board's action. I mean I can go down  
46 each one, you were very busy at your last meeting so  
47 there's quite a few proposals there. But it might be  
48 better that you guys just look them over and if you see  
49 one that in particular that you didn't understand why the  
50 Board did what it did we can help explain that either in

1 the letter or Staff that were present at the Board  
2 meeting.

3  
4 (Pause)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Don't need no action  
7 or nothing?

8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: No, this is just  
10 informational.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.

13  
14 MR. MATHEWS: This is your -- and maybe I  
15 need to refine this down the road, not the letter, this  
16 is your report card back on the actions you took at your  
17 last meeting. When I worked for Fish and Game before  
18 what I used to do is give you guys percentages of your  
19 success but I'll be honest with you, the percentages of  
20 success on the side are fairly high, they do generally go  
21 with your recommendations. But this is your report card  
22 back, you should have received it in the mail back in  
23 July and it's just to get it on the record that you've  
24 been formally appraised of it. Sometimes it generates  
25 additional proposals like Steve has already pointed out,  
26 we're not saying it has to though.

27  
28 (Pause)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, cool, so we  
31 just got to wait for the teleconference here?

32  
33 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: The wildlife  
36 teleconference.

37  
38 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, I don't know what  
39 else we can take up because we're bouncing and I'm afraid  
40 then we'll start not fairly covering these topics if we  
41 keep bouncing around on the agenda.

42  
43 I'll put it this way, I'm sure I'm not  
44 going to do a fair job if we keep bouncing to keep track  
45 of this, so we could just stand down for 10 minutes and  
46 then we'll be at the teleconference. Again, the  
47 teleconference is going to be a little bit difference  
48 because the fact is they're wanting to hear from you if  
49 you have any wildlife issues.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No.

2

3 MR. MATHEWS: Well, you guys might, I  
4 don't know, Andy, last meeting had some potential  
5 proposals on -- I'm putting words in his mouth, so I'm  
6 cautious here, of windows for caribou passage along the  
7 highway system. There was talk up on the flats in Jay's  
8 area putting a permit system in 25(D) East, that's on the  
9 State side, but I don't know if that's going to be on the  
10 Federal side, so there's potentials. I'm not saying you  
11 have to take any actions on them, but there may be others  
12 that have in their pocket for wildlife because now we  
13 start the wildlife.....

14

15 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Well, I want to say  
16 this, Vince, you guys have any wildlife issues that you  
17 want to propose in this meeting before we get on this  
18 teleconference here because I don't want to be just like  
19 going around in circles here and that's what it seems  
20 like where we're headed on this.

21

22 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, the only one that  
23 I've heard people in our area talk about, we got more  
24 information, we couldn't establish a quorum last night,  
25 but the predator control in 20(E) is going to be probably  
26 a topic you're going to hear some public testimony  
27 tonight from people and I think some of them will  
28 probably be hoping that this Council here will make some  
29 kind of a stand or recommendation, either supporting or  
30 not supporting that. So just a head's up on that, that I  
31 think it's going to be a pretty important issue for  
32 people locally here in Eagle to talk about.

33

34 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, I kind of  
35 believe that this Council is known to support predator  
36 control, but the tools we have to use within the  
37 wildlife, especially what we found out, we weren't  
38 satisfied with, is what I'd say, for predator control,  
39 too, but I think we would support some kind of predator  
40 management program, these bears and wolves. If there is  
41 a known adverse effect on the resource such as moose or  
42 caribou, I think we would have some kind of support for  
43 that.

44

45 But I'd like us to be straightforward and  
46 get this done with and move on with the next thing,  
47 instead of just wasting all day on just one subject. So  
48 I guess we'll stand down.

49

50 Stand down Vince.

1 (Off record)

2

3

(On record)

4

5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Well, from speaking  
6 to the Council, Vince, it looks like we don't have very  
7 much wildlife proposals except support for some kind of  
8 predator management from this Council, not as a proposal,  
9 but that we verbally support some kind of predator  
10 management in 20(E), is all I think we could come up with  
11 right now.

12

13

MR. MATHEWS: Right.

14

15 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Unless Andy want's to  
16 say something.

17

18

19 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I think on that what  
20 you could do is you're welcome to comment on Board of  
21 Game proposals. We didn't pass out that Board of Game  
22 Proposal to you, we have copies floating around here,  
23 yeah, you're all right to do that and obviously we'll  
24 have to cover, I think Tom Kron will be covering that  
25 just so you understand the Federal side's policy on  
26 predator management.

26

27

28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No, we already  
29 understand that.

29

30

31 MR. MATHEWS: But you're welcome to  
32 comment on a Board of Game proposal. I just would  
33 encourage you to see the proposal in front of you and I  
34 don't know if Jeff caught a plane out of here or not,  
35 Jeff Gross, the area biologist because he presented it  
36 last night at the Advisory Committee, so it's your call  
37 on that. But this is basically a section for you if you  
38 had proposals, I don't know of any that have been  
39 submitted. I'm looking around the Staff if they've heard  
40 of any that have been submitted to date, probably there  
41 have been but they have not been widely distributed, so I  
42 don't know of any for your region.

42

43

44 And then Ruth, I thought, was going to  
45 speak a little bit on fire, but apparently she's not able  
46 to get thru.

46

47

(Pause)

48

49

50 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: What we're talking  
about here, Vince, is the Eagle AC wanted to come up with

1 some kind of predator control for 20(E) for methods and  
2 means and what we're directing you to do is write a  
3 letter to them to Eagle AC and say that we support any  
4 kind of predator management program they could come up  
5 with and methods and means. That's all we could do.

6  
7 Other than that -- go ahead Andy.

8  
9 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman. Yeah, I think the main concerns is that it  
11 needs to be recognized that moose density in 20(E) is  
12 very low, in fact, I think Jeff was quoted as saying  
13 second lowest in the state only to Fort Yukon region, .22  
14 moose per square mile and that needs to be recognized,  
15 and in so doing that this body and hearing some of our  
16 concerns in this region would be in support of any -- I  
17 shouldn't say any, but would be in support of management  
18 of predators to help increase moose and caribou  
19 populations within 20(E), and I believe it was also 13,  
20 but that's not so much of our concern.

21  
22 Thank you.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Tom.

25  
26 MR. KRON: Mr. Chairman. Council.

27  
28 REPORTER: Tom. Tom.

29  
30 MR. KRON: Mr. Chairman. Members of the  
31 Council. I passed out a number of copies of this, and,  
32 again, there are also copies in both the fish regulations  
33 and wildlife regs, but the deadline for submitting  
34 wildlife proposals is October 22nd, if you choose to do  
35 so, and just wanted to have it on the agenda so people  
36 could think about it.

37  
38 That's it, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

41  
42 MR. BASSICH: I know this is more of a  
43 State question, but it was also brought up at the AC  
44 meeting the possibility of exploring what it would take  
45 to open up State bounties again, is that a feasible  
46 option, legally at this point in time as a  
47 recommendation? Can it be done on a local basis or a  
48 unit-wide basis or does it have to be a State action?  
49 Maybe if I could just get a little more information on  
50 bounties and what would constitute legally appropriate

1 things to do in that realm?

2

3 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, Terry Haynes.  
4 I don't have an answer for you. I do believe there are  
5 some problems in State reinstituting a bounty, but there  
6 have been instances in the past of private organizations  
7 compensating hunters and trappers. You might remember  
8 for the -- when the Fortymile Caribou Plan was developed,  
9 there was a group out of Fairbanks that was paying  
10 trappers for wolves they were catching up here which  
11 added an important component to that plan, provided some  
12 additional incentive that was very important.

13

14 I guess in terms of whether making that  
15 type of recommendation would be a good formal comment,  
16 you might want to discuss that with Jeff first so that we  
17 could see if that would be good, and Jeff will be back  
18 over here after awhile so we can -- hopefully before you  
19 put together a letter, if having that type of  
20 recommendation in your letter would be a bad idea we'd  
21 like to let you know that, if it is an option that is  
22 viable then certainly if it's something that the Council  
23 is interested in and supports, then you'd certainly be  
24 free to say it. But we wouldn't want to -- if it's  
25 something that's just not going to happen, there's no  
26 sense suggesting that it be a tool that could be used.

27

28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Terry, if the  
29 State was to put a bounty on wolves, wouldn't it have to  
30 go through the Legislature or something?

31

32 MR. HAYNES: Well, it's not something the  
33 Department could do without some other steps being  
34 involved, and it may well take Legislative action, I'm  
35 not sure.

36

37 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince.

38

39 MR. MATHEWS: Well, I got some questions  
40 for Andy, because I understand from the meeting last  
41 night the deadline for comments on this proposal is  
42 October 19th?

43

44 MR. BASSICH: The 22nd, I think it might  
45 be, too, I'm not sure, so somewhere around there.

46

47 MR. MATHEWS: So the 19th or 22nd. The  
48 other thing is I reviewed the Council correspondence and  
49 I don't think it would be a problem to write a letter to  
50 the local Advisory Committee, that's not my point, my

1 point is that you can write comments directly to the  
2 Alaska Board of Game, and if this deadline is in there of  
3 the 19th, I'm fairly certain we can get it done, but your  
4 full team here is heading to Anvik and then parts of your  
5 team are heading to YK-Delta so you may want to consider  
6 sending your letter or a copy of your letter to the local  
7 Advisory Committee to the Board of Game to make sure that  
8 they're understanding the Council's thoughts on this.

9  
10 And, again, you don't have the same  
11 standing before the Board of Game but I'm sure they would  
12 be interested in hearing your comments.

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
15 would really like to hear what some of the people of  
16 Eagle give testimony to tonight before I would really  
17 want to take a position, personally, but I think maybe it  
18 would be appropriate to put together a small committee  
19 that, possibly before we adjourn tomorrow, after we hear  
20 what's spoken tonight and we might be able to draft a  
21 rough letter that could be sent to the Board of Game  
22 reflecting some of the comments locally and then also  
23 with our input. That might be a good course of action at  
24 this point in time.

25  
26 Thank you.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: I don't see no  
29 foreseeable proposals that are going to come out of  
30 Tanana. If you guys want to do a proposal, do a  
31 proposal, I'll support it if it's going to be -- a  
32 predator control here in 20(E), I think there's so many  
33 loopholes that you have to jump through on the Federal  
34 side, I think it's more better to work on the State side  
35 for predator control. I'm very disappointed with the  
36 predator control point of view -- trying to do predator  
37 control with the Federal, but I think it would more work  
38 with the State, and 20(E) that's a pretty good State  
39 chunk there.

40  
41 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I would be  
42 happy to volunteer to draft a letter, however, I would  
43 like some support from other Council members, maybe  
44 Virgil or other Council members that could give their  
45 input and expertise into this, would be very helpful.

46  
47 MR. UMPHENOUR: (Nods affirmatively)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay, Vince, got it,  
50 go ahead.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, I think  
2 that the objective of the wildlife section was to go over  
3 the .805 letter and we did do that, and then discuss  
4 potential proposals or concerns in the wildlife area. I  
5 don't know if any other Staff have any other wildlife  
6 concerns, and I don't know if Ruth got back on line.

7  
8 (Pause)

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 MR. MATHEWS: Nope. So then that would  
13 be what this section was for. And, again, the main  
14 motivation of the teleconference was that we had hoped  
15 Pete DeMatteo could be on line so he could get back up to  
16 speed with the Council here, but that wasn't able to  
17 happen, Pete DeMatteo.

18  
19 So with that, I'll ask Don if he wants to  
20 stay on line because I think now we're finally going to  
21 go to the FIS section and that way everybody can take me  
22 off their target. So Don did you want to stay on line  
23 for the section on Fisheries Information Service?

24  
25 MR. RIVARD: No, I think I'll sign off  
26 now.

27  
28 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, thank you, Don.  
29 Okay, so that would be the best thing to do.

30  
31 MR. RIVARD: Bye.

32  
33 MR. MATHEWS: And I apologize for Cliff,  
34 not understanding his earlier suggestion to cover some  
35 sections of his report, so I'll try to communicate better  
36 with my teammates.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Cliff.

41  
42 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Mr. Chairman. Council.  
43 There's three agenda items that I'll be covering this  
44 afternoon. The first one is the action item before the  
45 Council is the 2005 Draft Fisheries Resource Monitoring  
46 Plan and then we'll follow that up with a couple of  
47 informational updates, it should be pretty brief. The  
48 one on the Fisheries Information Service Strategic  
49 Planning, and final one would be on the Partners for  
50 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. We've had some

1 Staff changes and we'll get you up to speed on that.

2

3 What I'd like to do this afternoon is  
4 highlight the briefing materials that were provided for  
5 you on Page 97 of your Council books. I think the  
6 Council will want to consider these materials during your  
7 discussions on the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program  
8 and they're quite extensive, so I'll try to give you the  
9 highlights of them. If we could thumb through these  
10 together, Pages 98 through 102 provide a history and  
11 statewide perspective on the Monitoring Program. There's  
12 a series of tables on Pages 100 and 101 that summarize  
13 the 2005 Monitoring Program budget statewide. We'll go  
14 through these one at a time.

15

16 Table 1 shows the current funding  
17 guidelines by region, and you'll notice that  
18 approximately 20 percent of the Monitoring Program  
19 statewide is directed at the Yukon region. Table 2 shows  
20 the number of investigation plan that are under  
21 consideration statewide. For the Yukon region we  
22 received seven investigation plans, of which five of them  
23 are being recommended for funding under the Draft  
24 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program by the Technical  
25 Review Committee. And you'll hear me review to the  
26 Technical Review Committee as TRC and hopefully that  
27 won't be too confusing. Table 3 is the regional funding  
28 guidelines and the total dollar amount recommended for  
29 funding by the TRC regional funding guideline for the  
30 Yukon is approximately 416,000 and the TRC is  
31 recommending funding \$369,000 worth of proposals. On the  
32 top of Page 102 is a pie chart that shows the proposed  
33 funding distribution for the TRC recommendations. Under  
34 their recommendations, approximately 31 percent of the  
35 funding would be allocated for Alaska Natives, 55 percent  
36 of it would go to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
37 Federal agencies would receive approximately 10 percent  
38 and other NGO's approximately four percent, mostly  
39 representing universities.

40

41 Any questions on that section.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 MR. SCHLEUSNER: If not, Pages 103  
46 through 131 represent the regional overview for the 2005  
47 Yukon Fisheries Monitoring Plan. This section provides  
48 the Technical Review Committee's recommendation and  
49 justification for the seven investigation plans that are  
50 under consideration for 2005.

1 I'd like to spend a little time on Table  
2 1 on Page 105 and 106. This is provided to the Council  
3 as a history of the Monitoring Program. This lists all  
4 62 projects that have been funded since the inception of  
5 the program in 2000, at an approximate cost of 8.8  
6 million. You'll notice that there's two types of  
7 projects that we fund. They're listed as SST, which are  
8 stock, status and trends, those are your typical  
9 fisheries science-based projects, weirs, sonar, genetic  
10 studies, and then HM TEK, which are the harvest  
11 monitoring, traditional knowledge and this is the local  
12 expertise and knowledge that you spoke of earlier Gerald.  
13 And another thing to realize about the Monitoring  
14 Program, is that, since projects can receive funding for  
15 up to three years, of the 17 projects that this Council  
16 recommended for funding under the 2004 Fisheries Resource  
17 Monitoring Program, 14 of them will receive continued  
18 funding under the 2005 Monitoring Plan.

19  
20 So these important monitoring projects  
21 include the Tozitna River weir, East Fork Andreafsky  
22 River weir, Gisasa River weir, the Rampart Rapid fall  
23 chum abundance project, the Yukon chum genetics, the  
24 mixed stock analysis that's going on on the lower Yukon,  
25 the lower Yukon River drift test fishing, that's a fall  
26 chum test fishing project, Yukon River chinook telemetry,  
27 Kaltag chinook salmon ASL sampling, and then a TEK study  
28 of the Upper Yukon River salmon fishery, the Tanana  
29 Conservation Outreach Program, the YRDFA teleconference,  
30 TEK, customary trade of subsistence use in the Yukon  
31 River, and then a TEK Upper Tanana subsistence fisheries  
32 study and TEK radio telemetry of whitefish in Kanuti  
33 National Wildlife Refuge. Those are all continuation  
34 projects that will be part of the 2005 plan.

35  
36 So what we have before us today is  
37 summarized in Table 2, Page 107, and this is a summary of  
38 the budget information and it, again, breaks out the  
39 project costs by organization so you can see which  
40 portion of the proposed budgets are going to Alaska  
41 Native, State, Federal and other. And also in order to  
42 improve local involvement and leverage additional funds,  
43 we encourage local hire and matching funds. Table 3 is a  
44 summary of the local hire and the matching funds provided  
45 in the investigation plans.

46  
47 On Page 108 we have a map showing the  
48 distribution of the new starts that are proposed -- or  
49 the projects that are proposed in the 2005, just to give  
50 you an idea of what the distribution of the new projects

1 looks like in the Yukon basin. And then following that  
2 we have two tables that break these new proposals up by  
3 data type. The first one is the stock, status and trends  
4 and this gives the TRC recommendations for the stock,  
5 status and trends projects. Of the four projects that  
6 were submitted under this data type, the TRC has  
7 recommended funding all four of them. On the following  
8 page, Table 5 are the three harvest monitoring and  
9 traditional ecological studies that were received this  
10 year, and of this the TRC is recommending only funding  
11 Project 05-254, which is the Yukon River in-season salmon  
12 harvest assessment.

13

14 Before going into the specifics of each  
15 of these projects, I'd like to pass out a handout  
16 summarizing the action items before the Council.

17

18 Thanks, Vince.

19

20 (Pause)

21

22 MR. SCHLEUSNER: What this handout does  
23 is it basically lists all the projects in priority order.  
24 The Technical Review Committee in making the  
25 recommendation takes the stocks, status and trends  
26 projects in concert with the harvest monitoring projects  
27 and lists them in prioritized order to help them think  
28 through the funding guidelines and where their  
29 recommendations are. So what I've done is on Page 111 is  
30 that prioritized list, I've basically put all the  
31 projects in this number 1 -- or first section in this  
32 handout in that same prioritized list and put the TRC  
33 recommendations next to them.

34

35 With that we can go through the projects  
36 briefly one at a time and give you a little background  
37 information on them.

38

39 Project 05-208 is the Anvik River sonar.  
40 The proposal requests funding for the operation of the  
41 Anvik River sonar project. This project was initiated in  
42 1979. The project is the longest running summer chum  
43 escapement project in the Yukon River. The Anvik River  
44 is one of the top producers of summer chum salmon in the  
45 Yukon, historically accounting for one-third to one-half  
46 of the total production of summer chum. Approximately 74  
47 percent of the total subsistence harvest for summer chum  
48 salmon occurs in the lower river. And, again this was  
49 the number 1 priority by the Technical Review Committee.  
50 I'd like to say that the prioritized list is based

1 largely on comments received by the Federal and State  
2 managers in their review of these proposals. They set  
3 these priorities and work collaboratively to come up with  
4 a list.

5  
6 Project 05 -- oh, it says Aniak, I'm  
7 sorry, on your handout, there's a typo, it should be  
8 Anvik.

9  
10 Project 05-211, the Henshaw Creek weir.  
11 Henshaw Creek is located in the Upper Koyukuk River  
12 drainage within Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge providing  
13 run timing and escapement of chinook and summer chum  
14 salmon, this project was initiated in 2000 through OSM  
15 and has annually received funding through the Office of  
16 Subsistence Management. The capacity building portion of  
17 this study is excellent. The investigators have come up  
18 with a three year plan to have TCC take over the  
19 operation of this project from the Fairbanks Fish and  
20 Wildlife Office. It's a really great model for capacity  
21 building.

22  
23 Project 05-254, the Yukon River in-season  
24 salmon harvest assessment. This was the one HM TEK study  
25 that was recommended for funding by the Technical Review  
26 Committee. This is a three year project that would  
27 collect weekly in-season harvest assessment information  
28 in seven communities along the Yukon River. The  
29 communities are Emmonak, Holy Cross, Nulato, Huslia,  
30 Galena, Beaver and Fort Yukon. The information will be  
31 collected largely by resource information technicians or  
32 fisheries technicians hired by YRDFA and then the  
33 information will be reported out weekly in the YRDFA  
34 teleconferences.

35  
36 Project 05-210, is.....

37  
38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: What a minute. Andy.

39  
40 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Yes.

41  
42 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
43 Just a quick question, on the Yukon River in-season  
44 salmon harvest assessment, it appears that they are  
45 trying to spread that out throughout the Yukon, I'm just  
46 wondering why Tanana wasn't included in that as a  
47 monitoring, since they're one of the fairly heavier users  
48 of the resource, which would have a pretty big impact on  
49 what the salmon harvest is?

50

1 MR. SCHLEUSNER: I think that -- I'm not  
2 sure exactly why that wasn't included in there, but that  
3 certainly could be a recommendation of the Council to  
4 include that in this proposal. I think that would be a  
5 welcomed recommendation, actually.

6  
7 MR. BASSICH: Okay. I just -- my  
8 understanding of the fisheries is that that region,  
9 especially for fall chum, and I know this is probably  
10 more geared toward chinook; is that correct?

11  
12 MR. SCHLEUSNER: This.....

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: Is this for all species,  
15 this subsistence harvest assessment?

16  
17 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Actually we're fortunate  
18 and we have the author of this one. Russ, here can speak  
19 directly to this. This is one of our HM TEK studies and  
20 Polly Wheeler, our Staff anthropologist did the analysis  
21 on this one here so I'm not as familiar with this.

22  
23 But Russ.

24  
25 MR. HOLDER; Mr. Chairman. Mr. Bassich,  
26 your first question on why Tanana wasn't included in this  
27 is that we were trying to use those locations in which  
28 there was a Refuge information technician already hired  
29 to minimize the cost of doing the project and/or  
30 locations in which we didn't have very much information  
31 coming in on the teleconferences voluntarily. And Tanana  
32 has had good participation and information coming in from  
33 that location so it wasn't as high a priority to be  
34 included.

35  
36 Your second part on which species, yes,  
37 chinook salmon, because of the importance and priority  
38 that most locations on the river have for that species is  
39 what is primarily focused on but we do carry it into the  
40 fall season, but are having what -- it needs continued  
41 development and participation by the RITs later in the  
42 season. We haven't had as much success in the fall  
43 season as we'd like, but we are trying to carry that into  
44 the fall season also.

45  
46 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. I think  
47 this is a really good step. I think this is a really  
48 good program because I really strongly feel that in-  
49 season harvest is as equally important as in-season  
50 projections on run strength if we're looking at trying to

1 get fish across the border to meet those and we're trying  
2 to get fish to up river fishermen for harvest. So I  
3 really think this is a step in the right direction. I  
4 wholeheartedly support trying to gain more accurate  
5 information than what's been done in the past.

6

7                   So it's a good step, thanks.

8

9                   MR. SCHLEUSNER: All right. The next  
10 project on the list is the Tanana River fall chum salmon  
11 abundance. This proposal is requesting funding to  
12 operate the existing fall chum salmon mark/recapture for  
13 the Tanana River. The tagging project was initiated in  
14 1995 and expanded to include the Kantishna River in 1999.  
15 Although the most direct application of this information  
16 is for the management of District 6, fisheries outside of  
17 the Federal jurisdiction assessment of the Tanana River  
18 stock is necessary to assess run strength in the main  
19 stem of the Yukon River. The Federal and State managers  
20 rated this project as the third highest priority stock,  
21 status and trend project proposed for new starts in 2005.

22

23                   The final project recommended for funding  
24 is the 05-203, this is a coho salmon genetic study in the  
25 Yukon River. This project is a pilot study to examine  
26 the genetic diversity among nine populations of coho  
27 salmon in the Yukon River. This information would then  
28 be used to evaluate the power of genetic data in mixed  
29 stock analysis. Preliminary analysis shows good  
30 discrimination between samples which would suggest the  
31 ability to identify the origin of stocks harvested in  
32 mixed stock fisheries. Basically providing managers with  
33 a mixed stock analysis lower in the river. And one of  
34 the comments on this coho salmon genetic study was  
35 they're using existing collections for this and that's  
36 the reason the cost was so low. This is a \$30,000  
37 project.

38

39                   Then based primarily on technical  
40 concerns the TRC did not recommend funding the last two  
41 projects, and that's 05-252 and this was the subsistence  
42 fishing schedule impacts on traditional lifestyles. This  
43 project addressed an extremely important and timely  
44 issue, namely the impacts of the subsistence fishing  
45 schedule on the customary and traditional patterns of  
46 fishing. But the investigation plan had some serious  
47 technical methodological and staffing issues. Of special  
48 concern is that the investigators did not address how  
49 they would tease out the various causes for changing  
50 fishing patterns, nor do they explain how they intend to

1 evaluate the information gathered through the interviews.  
2 Staffing of this project was an issue as several of the  
3 investigators had left their positions since submitting  
4 the proposal. And while the TRC recognizes the  
5 importance of the issue raised, it's because of that  
6 importance that it is critical to have a well developed  
7 and thought out research plan to initiate this work. So  
8 it was not recommended for funding. This is one of the  
9 areas where a recommendation for developing a sound  
10 proposal might be an option for the Council if they chose  
11 to do that, you know, development through the next  
12 funding cycle.

13  
14 The other project, 05-253, the village of  
15 Grayling in-season salmon harvest monitoring project was  
16 a three year project that proposed to document  
17 subsistence harvest information in two communities along  
18 the Yukon, that was Grayling and Anvik. The  
19 investigators proposed to hire local technicians to  
20 conduct weekly surveys with fishing families in order to  
21 collect qualitative and quantitative information on  
22 salmon harvested by village residents. There was a  
23 concern that this could lead to an incredible burden on  
24 the fishers having these weekly interviews. Also the  
25 primary focus on in-season harvest assessment is a  
26 concern as the statewide subsistence fisheries harvest  
27 assessment working group, which was a project funded in  
28 2000 by this program specifically recommended that in-  
29 season monitoring of subsistence harvest occur only in a  
30 limited set of circumstances. The main concern in this  
31 was harvest burnout from this proposal.

32  
33 All right, with that that concludes, I  
34 guess, the summary on the individual projects. At this  
35 time I'd open it up to discussion by the Council of the  
36 TRC recommendations.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: If you guys --  
39 hearing no opposition from the TRC recommendations, then  
40 you guys want to speak to this.

41  
42 (No comments)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: This is one you need  
45 action on?

46  
47 MR. SCHLEUSNER: That's right, Mr.  
48 Chairman. If the Council wishes to make a recommendation  
49 to fund the projects as listed on this and as recommended  
50 by the TRC we need that action to take place. And then

1 this same list will be updated and be presented at the  
2 Western and YK Council meetings so that they can see the  
3 action that was taken by the Eastern Interior Council.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

6  
7 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I move to  
8 accept the TRC's recommendation for funding for Projects  
9 05-208, 211, 254, 210 and 203.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: And 702.

12  
13 MR. SCHLEUSNER: We haven't gotten to  
14 that one, Mr. Chairman.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay. Second anyone.

17  
18 MR. STEVENS: Second.

19  
20 MR. TITUS: Question.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved to  
23 support the -- moved and seconded to support the TRC  
24 recommendations to support.....

25  
26 REPORTER: Gerald. Gerald.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved.....

29  
30 REPORTER: Thank you.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah. It's been  
33 moved and seconded to support the TRC recommendation for  
34 the Harvest Monitoring Program, the question has been  
35 called. All those in favor of this signify by saying  
36 aye.

37  
38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed,  
41 same sign.

42  
43 (No opposing votes)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You got your action.

46  
47 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
48 There is one inter-regional proposal that came in this  
49 year that affects the Yukon region. The TRC has  
50 recommended this project for funding.

1                   This proposed investigation plan compares  
2 the structure of humpback whitefish and lake whitefish  
3 and will also develop genetic markers for sheefish, broad  
4 whitefish and humpback whitefish. The humpback whitefish  
5 c complex, Bering cisco, lee cisco and round whitefish  
6 and pigmee whitefish. The identification of basic stock  
7 structure for whitefish would improve management and  
8 assessment of these important subsistence species. And  
9 this project was supported by Federal and State managers  
10 on the Yukon and Kuskokwim.

11  
12                   The three objectives of the proposal, as  
13 mentioned were to evaluate the current classification of  
14 the humpback and lake whitefish complex and then to  
15 evaluate population structure of humpback from five  
16 regions in Alaska and within the Yukon River. And then  
17 to develop some genetic markers to ID whitefish to  
18 species. I mean the current management strategy is to  
19 manage whitefish as a group, not to break them out. So  
20 this is just some basic information that would provide  
21 more information to managers to better manage the species  
22 and again it was recommended for funding by the TRC and  
23 it's another action item before you today.

24  
25                   I'd open it up for discussion.

26  
27                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any discussion. What  
28 number is it?

29  
30                   MR. SCHLEUSNER: It's 05-702.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: 702, didn't we  
33 already include that in our first action?

34  
35                   MR. MATHEWS: No.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: We didn't, okay,  
38 Andy.

39  
40                   MR. BASSICH: Yeah, I guess more of a  
41 comment than anything else, I think projects like this  
42 are pretty important. It seems like a lot of money is  
43 being spent on salmon, understanding salmon, but as we  
44 all know it's a pretty diverse ecosystem out there and I  
45 think it's pretty important to start understanding some  
46 of these non-salmon species and what may be happening to  
47 them and just getting a better understanding so I am  
48 personally in strong support of funding research in these  
49 non-salmon species. I think it's going to prove to be in  
50 the long-run a very valuable data set to work off of.

1 Thank you.  
2  
3 And I guess if you'd like a motion I can  
4 give you a motion.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Go ahead.  
7  
8 MR. BASSICH: A motion to adopt the TRC's  
9 recommendation for funding of 05-702.  
10  
11 MR. UMPHENOUR: Second.  
12  
13 MR. STEVENS: Question.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: It's been moved and  
16 seconded to support the TRC's recommendation to support  
17 05-702, question has been called. All those in favor of  
18 this signify by saying aye.  
19  
20 IN UNISON: Aye.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: All those opposed,  
23 same sign.  
24  
25 (No opposing votes)  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Motion carries.  
28  
29 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
30 The third action item that I have for you is basically  
31 looking for ideas for project presentation for your  
32 winter Council meeting. One has already come up in the  
33 meeting today by Gerald, was the Project 03-105, the  
34 phenotypic characterization of chinook in the subsistence  
35 harvest, that was that bluenose whiteback study that we  
36 funded. You've got a list in your Council books that we  
37 looked at that shows all of the projects that have been  
38 funded to date, if there was specific issues that you  
39 wanted to have the investigators come in and discuss with  
40 you we can certainly try and arrange that at your winter  
41 Council meeting as we update you on the status of the  
42 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan.  
43  
44 So we're just looking for ideas or  
45 subject matter that is of interest to the Eastern  
46 Interior Council.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Vince.  
49  
50 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, you

1 noticed at the Wasilla meeting we experienced with  
2 posters also, I think that package is part of the deal,  
3 where there could be a real focused poster on these  
4 projects, too. Also as your coordinator, when we get to  
5 selecting a meeting location, that may also play a factor  
6 in these presentations also.

7  
8                   And as you told me earlier this is a fish  
9 meeting, the next meeting is a wildlife meeting so fish  
10 is covered then, I'm just telling you that you're going  
11 to have to allow fish to become a major topic while  
12 you're working on it at that time, just like you let  
13 wildlife here.

14  
15                   Thank you.

16  
17                   MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I can see for  
18 fishery related topics, two that would interest me and I  
19 think are going to be very valuable in the future is  
20 effects of Ichthyophonus on chinook salmon, we've already  
21 heard some comments as to the possible ramifications of  
22 that and I think that education getting out there is  
23 going to be really important. And along the same lines,  
24 sex ratios of juvenile and adult chinook salmon in the  
25 Kuskokwim and Yukon River, primarily Yukon River, I think  
26 is another important bit of information that needs to be  
27 gotten out there.

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay. Vince.

30  
31                   MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, I need to ask  
32 Cliff, these are suggestions from the Council, this is  
33 not a commitment that these presenters are going to be  
34 here, correct?

35  
36                   MR. SCHLEUSNER: Right.

37  
38                   MR. MATHEWS: So, you know, it's a wish  
39 list that most likely will be implemented but the next  
40 meeting it may not be pulled off because some of these  
41 scientists are spread across large areas.

42  
43                   Thank you.

44  
45                   MR. BASSICH: One other quick follow up,  
46 just looking at some of the things that are funded, I see  
47 two projects that are dealing with the effects of  
48 Ichthyophonus on chinook salmon being funded and I'm just  
49 curious how they differ. Just very briefly, I don't want  
50 to go into a long thing, but how they may differ, what

1 they're looking at.

2

3 MR. SCHLEUSNER: The two Ichthyophonus  
4 projects were both funding Dr. Cosan and the report was  
5 summarized and sent to all the Council members, you  
6 should have received it. But one was funding one year  
7 and then it was a continuation of the same project.

8

9 MR. BASSICH: Okay, thank you.

10

11 MR. SCHLEUSNER: Just a follow up, Andy,  
12 on that sex ratios of juveniles, that report may not be  
13 ready, the University of Idaho has been late in doing  
14 some of the research on that, that has been holding up  
15 the final report on that one so it may not be ready for  
16 the winter Council meeting.

17

18 MR. BASSICH: Okay, thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Is that all you have,  
21 Cliff.

22

23 MR. SCHLEUSNER: If, at any time you guys  
24 come up with ideas you're certainly welcome to pass those  
25 on to Vince and he'll make me aware of them and we'll try  
26 and work with you to get the information you're most  
27 interested in presented at the winter Council meeting.

28

29 With that, that follows up the action  
30 items -- or ends up the action items. There was two  
31 informational items and those are located at the end of  
32 this on Page 138 and 139.

33

34 The first of those is the strategic  
35 planning update. This section lays out how the Office of  
36 Subsistence Management intends to update and prioritize  
37 the resource goals, objectives and information needs  
38 associated with the Monitoring Program. Basically we're  
39 convening workshops statewide of fisheries experts and  
40 working with representatives from each of the Councils to  
41 prepare a strategic fisheries plan for Fisheries  
42 Information Services specifically and Federal subsistence  
43 management. These planning efforts are currently  
44 underway for Bristol Bay and Southcentral regions. And  
45 in order not to duplicate effort in existing planning  
46 processes, work on the Yukon will not begin until the  
47 completion of the AYK SSI and the JTC Salmon Research  
48 Plan. So we're hoping to build on the existing processes  
49 that are underway and bring those into our program to  
50 find out how the Monitoring Program can work

1 collaboratively with these other funding groups to  
2 maximize our funding.

3

4 The last update on Page 139 is the  
5 Partners for Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. This  
6 is a program that provides annually a million dollars to  
7 support six fisheries biologists positions and two  
8 anthropologists and eight interns in non-government  
9 organizations. Currently on the Yukon there is three  
10 fisheries positions, one with AVCP, one with TCC and one  
11 with CATG. The AVCP position is currently being  
12 advertised, they're trying to hire somebody right now,  
13 that advertisement's out, the position is open. For TCC  
14 we have Kim Elkin, who's been the fisheries biologist  
15 there for several years. And CATG just hired Gretchen  
16 Siderof (ph), I was hoping to be able to introduce her to  
17 the Council today but she wasn't able to attend. But a  
18 very qualified biologist and I think is going to be an  
19 asset to that region.

20

21 So that concludes the information  
22 updates. If there's any questions from the Council I'd  
23 be glad to answer them.

24

25 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Cliff, do you want  
26 support from us for these two things?

27

28 MR. SCHLEUSNER: These were just  
29 informational updates for the Council, there's no action  
30 required.

31

32 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you. So shall  
33 we recess until dinnertime, Vince, or whatever?

34

35 MR. MATHEWS: Well, Mr. Chairman, because  
36 we bounced around the agenda we just need to do a reality  
37 check here. We did move up wildlife topics. There is a  
38 major topic, I believe, on your agenda that's coming up,  
39 which is post-season review. So you could look at taking  
40 up post-season review tonight or have it tomorrow  
41 morning, it was scheduled for today, but we did bounce  
42 agenda items, and I don't know the preference of the two  
43 in-season managers, if they want to do it today or  
44 tomorrow.

45

46 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: How long is it going  
47 to take?

48

49 MR. HOLDER: Fifteen minutes for my part.

50

1 MR. BUE: About the same.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Come on, get it  
4 overwith. I thought that was what Terry was there for.  
5  
6 MR. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I was just  
7 going to say that Jeff Gross is back and if you had any  
8 questions concerning the predator control proposal before  
9 the Board of Game before you begin work, he's available.  
10 He'll be here part of tomorrow and maybe we'll be leaving  
11 if planes are going out, so.....  
12  
13 MR. GROSS: And then maybe we'll never  
14 leave.  
15  
16 MR. HAYNES: .....exploit him while you  
17 can.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, it was good,  
20 caught fish, but I never met the needs good enough,  
21 later, Russ.  
22  
23 MR. HOLDER: Vince, is handing out a four  
24 page handout.  
25  
26 Mr. Chairman. Council members. My name  
27 is Russ Holder and I'm the Federal Subsistence Board  
28 delegated fisheries manager for the Yukon River. The  
29 first two pages of the handout provides a written  
30 overview of the 2004 fishing season and I'll be going  
31 over that with you, the third page is an escapement  
32 summary information from the Federal salmon projects  
33 coordinated by the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field  
34 Office, and the fourth page is a figure which compiles  
35 some of the chinook salmon in-season harvest interview  
36 for five villages for this past season.  
37  
38 Beginning the overview, both Federal and  
39 State Yukon River fisheries managers entered the season  
40 -- pre-season with the hopes that the salmon runs would  
41 be similar or better than the runs experienced in 2003  
42 but with the uncertainty and the concern that the poorest  
43 salmon returns experienced since 1998 might continue.  
44 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Staff worked cooperatively  
45 with ADF&G Staff to develop the pre-season and in-season  
46 management approaches which were finalized and published  
47 with the assistance from the Office of Subsistence  
48 Management as the green information sheet 2004 Yukon  
49 River salmon fisheries. This sheet was mailed to all  
50 Yukon River subsistence and commercial fishing

1 households.

2

3 The summer season began with a very early  
4 ice break up and with two special action requests  
5 received in mid-May. One requesting the windows schedule  
6 be removed on the Yukon River from Holy Cross to the  
7 mouth of the Yukon River, the second requested the  
8 windows schedule be implemented earlier than the  
9 published May 31st starting date for District 1. The  
10 Federal managers response to both requests was that it  
11 was premature to change the conservative pre-season  
12 management approach agreed to by agencies, other  
13 organizations and fishermen without additional run size  
14 information.

15

16 As the season began, subsistence salmon  
17 fishermen were delaying their fishing effort due to high  
18 water, debris and unavailable or high gas prices. As the  
19 water level and debris decreased, as gas became available  
20 and fish abundance improved, subsistence fishing effort  
21 increased. Subsistence salmon harvest information  
22 collected during the second week of June by both ADF&G  
23 Staff and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in-season  
24 salmon harvest assessment project confirmed that lower  
25 Yukon subsistence fishing households were on track to  
26 meet their subsistence salmon needs. The in-season run  
27 abundance of chinook and summer chum salmon runs were  
28 based on the Lower Yukon set net test fishery, Pilot  
29 Station sonar and subsistence fisher harvest reports.

30

31 Approaching the middle of June, managers  
32 were projecting that sufficient chinook salmon had  
33 entered the river to provide for escapement including the  
34 Yukon Agreement border passage commitments to Canada and  
35 subsistence needs throughout the drainage with a surplus  
36 of chinook salmon available for other harvest including  
37 commercial.

38

39 Consistent with the pre-season management  
40 approach and after a teleconference with YRDFA Board of  
41 Directors and Coordinating Fishery Committee members on  
42 June 14th, ADF&G began implementing commercial periods in  
43 the Lower Yukon River beginning June 15th in District 2.  
44 Fishing Districts 3 and 4, which did not have commercial  
45 markets were liberalized to five or seven days per week  
46 subsistence fishing consistent with the pre-2001  
47 subsistence fishing regulations.

48

49 Assessment of summer chum salmon was  
50 primarily based on in-season subsistence harvest reports

1 and Pilot Station sonar because of the ADF&G summer drift  
2 test fish project was not funded. Summer chum salmon run  
3 strength appeared improved over the abundance experienced  
4 in 2002 and 2003 although the abundance of summer chum  
5 salmon would have allowed directed commercial periods, no  
6 commercial periods occurred for summer chum salmon  
7 because there were no commercial buyers. The by-catch of  
8 summer chum salmon in the chinook salmon directed  
9 commercial fishery did not negatively impact escapement  
10 goals or up river subsistence users.

11  
12 Overall, it appears that the summer  
13 season subsistence fishers were provided reasonable  
14 opportunity to fish on adequate numbers of fish and  
15 nearly all, if not all, fishermen who tried, met their  
16 subsistence salmon needs as documented by the weekly  
17 YRDFA teleconferences, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service in-season salmon harvest assessment project. The  
19 exception were coastal communities who reported  
20 difficulties harvesting their fish due to off shore winds  
21 which pushed the fish further off shore than normal.

22  
23 Post-season evaluation of the chinook and  
24 summer chum salmon escapement numbers and the chinook  
25 salmon border passage into Canada confirm that the 2004  
26 summer season management approach provided adequate  
27 numbers of fish for these upstream obligations.

28  
29 Moving into the fall season, ADF&G  
30 management Staff was projecting pre-season a fall chum  
31 salmon run size ranging between 350,000 to 670,000 fish  
32 with a weak Porcupine River stock component. This was  
33 updated as we entered the fall fishing season in mid-July  
34 with an outlook for return ranging between 500,000 to  
35 600,000 fall chum salmon which incorporated this year's  
36 summer chum salmon run performance.

37  
38 Consistent with the fall chum salmon  
39 management plan, windowed subsistence salmon fishing was  
40 implemented sequentially as fall chum salmon migrated up  
41 stream. Beginning in mid-August after the mid-point of  
42 the run, subsistence fishing time was relaxed to seven or  
43 five days per week as the projected run size was assessed  
44 as sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs.  
45 The outlook appeared consistent with in-season run  
46 indicators until very late in the season when an  
47 unexpected large pulse of approximately 100,000 fall chum  
48 salmon entered the river near the end of August, when on  
49 average more than 90 percent of the fall chum salmon  
50 would be in the river. This last pulse expanded the run

1 size to 610,000 fish and information -- I'm sorry, I lost  
2 my place there -- expanded to 610,000 fish and allowed  
3 ADF&G to provide for a small commercial harvest at the  
4 end of the season.

5  
6 Based on information collected in-season,  
7 it appears that subsistence needs were met and that a  
8 majority of escapement objectives were achieved with the  
9 exception of the Sheenjek River and that our Yukon panel  
10 agreed to fall chum salmon commitments were exceeded.

11  
12 This fall season the U.S. Fish and  
13 Wildlife Service Genetics Lab in cooperation with ADF&G  
14 and Canadian Staff began providing in-season genetic  
15 assessment information of fall chum salmon pulse passage  
16 samples collected at Pilot Station sonar. This is a new  
17 fall in-season assessment tool for managers. Like any  
18 new project information coming on line managers are  
19 cautious about implementing the information until we have  
20 several years to learn how to interpret this new in-  
21 season information in light of post-season results. We  
22 hope to have the project start July 1 next year to assist  
23 managers in assessing the percentage of fall chum salmon  
24 entering the river prior to the official July 16th fall  
25 chum salmon monitoring date.

26  
27 In summary, overall, I would characterize  
28 2004 as a successful fishing season in light of meeting  
29 escapement objectives, providing maximum subsistence  
30 opportunities consistent with regulations and ADF&G  
31 providing additional harvest opportunities.

32  
33 The outlook for 2005 will be prepared  
34 after escapement information and age composition analysis  
35 are completed over the next several months.

36  
37 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any questions for  
40 him.

41  
42 (No comments)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Fred.

45  
46 MR. BUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Fred  
47 Bue with Fish and Game. I know it's dragging on so I'll  
48 try not to cover a lot of what Russ had just spoken to,  
49 he summarized it very well.

50

1                   A little bit of what he did, assessment  
2 on the chinook salmon, the additional projects for both  
3 the Chena and Salcha exceeded their BEGs almost twice the  
4 goals, the goal for the Chena and more than twice the  
5 goal on the Salcha for chinook salmon.

6  
7                   Summer chum, the Anvik River escapement  
8 of 366,000 was within the BEG range. Also for summer  
9 chum, the Pilot Station sonar was within the OEG range of  
10 .8, 1.6 million fish, the estimated passage there was 1.3  
11 million.

12  
13                   For fall chum run assessment, this year's  
14 fall chum run size has been assessed at approximately  
15 630,000 based on the Pilot sonar and what we believe  
16 passes after the sonar's out of the water, that's roughly  
17 42 percent above the five year and 23 percent below the  
18 1974 to 2003 average.

19  
20                   Most tributaries are expected to attain  
21 or exceed escapement goals except for the Porcupine River  
22 drainage.

23  
24                   The coho salmon run abundance estimate at  
25 Pilot sonar indicates the coho run is roughly 50 percent  
26 above the recent average. Again, Pilot has just operated  
27 in the last 10 years, approximately eight to 10 years and  
28 so these represent the high end of the coho runs and so  
29 if we're above that average we're thinking it's a pretty  
30 good run.

31  
32                   As far as the fall season fisheries  
33 status, the poorer fall chum returns in recent years were  
34 produced from good parent year escapements. The fairly  
35 good returns in 2003 and this year were produced from  
36 some of the lowest escapements on record. With this  
37 year's strong three year old age class and the high  
38 juvenile chum catch in the Bering Sea, we're optimistic  
39 that fall chum salmon production will continue to improve  
40 in the Yukon River. At this time it appears the  
41 subsistence harvest of fall chum is significantly less  
42 than it has been drainage-wide in the last 10 years, even  
43 though there were few restrictions this year. And also  
44 the commercial market, as everyone knows, the interest  
45 has significantly declined.

46  
47                   Issues for fall chum, the revised Fall  
48 Chum Salmon Management Plan that was amended this year at  
49 the Board of Fish seemed to be successful in providing  
50 more opportunity for subsistence fishermen and most

1 escapement goals will likely be met. And that's on a  
2 moderate run, it's not a weak run but it's also not a  
3 strong run that we've seen in the past.

4  
5                   The Coho Salmon Management Plan, in  
6 application this year we found that it should also be  
7 considered for modification to be more coordinated with  
8 the Fall Chum Plan, so that management action thresholds  
9 are similar. And because the market conditions have  
10 changed, the coho salmon fishery is no longer a high  
11 impact fishery that it once was and so a lot of those  
12 concerns don't -- aren't really an issue.

13  
14                   Also I forgot to note that we do have a  
15 preliminary season summary for the summer fishery over  
16 there, also the fall fishery we have some tables and  
17 graphs that are simply an update.

18  
19                   Looking at -- oh, excuse me, I've got a  
20 handout for you.

21  
22                   (Pause)

23  
24                   MR. BUE: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Also  
25 looking at the focus of the meeting here is on  
26 subsistence harvest and trends and so I thought that I'd  
27 take a few moments here to review some of our assessment  
28 and bring you up to date on the trends that we've been  
29 looking at. What Vince is passing out is a summary of  
30 2003, our most recent data, it's still very preliminary  
31 and so on the first page it relates to -- on the bottom  
32 of the graph it shows how the trends of the harvest, the  
33 various species relate to each other over time.

34  
35                   The next two pages breaks out the 2003  
36 harvest of each species by community. And after that  
37 you'll find three figures for each, chinook, summer chum,  
38 fall chum relative to their 15 year average and their ANS  
39 range. And finally the bottom of the last page, labeled  
40 Figure 4 is a graph depicting the relative proportion of  
41 each salmon species harvested for the lower and upper  
42 river sections.

43  
44                   The annual subsistence harvest estimates  
45 include approximately 50,000 chinook salmon, 110,000  
46 summer chum, 110,000 fall chum and approximately 34,000  
47 coho salmon. Typically the chinook salmon harvest is  
48 split 50/50 between upper and lower river areas. The  
49 summer chum subsistence harvest are typically larger in  
50 the lower Yukon area. However, the upper Yukon area

1 typically has significantly larger harvest of fall chum  
2 and coho compared to the lower river area for  
3 subsistence. Since the early '80s the chinook salmon  
4 subsistence harvest has been fairly stable with a slight  
5 increase through time. Currently the average is, as I  
6 said, was 50,000 chinook salmon annually harvested in the  
7 Alaska portion of the drainage. Chinook salmon harvest  
8 decreased noticeably in 2000 due to an extremely poor  
9 return, in which, restrictive management actions were  
10 taken. In 2001 management actions taken conserve summer  
11 chum salmon included a restriction to eight inch or  
12 larger mesh for subsistence gillnets. This may have  
13 resulted in a larger harvest of chinook salmon. During  
14 2002 season fishermen reported being able to meet their  
15 needs and the run appeared better than the previous year.  
16 However, lower than average numbers were reported for all  
17 districts in 2002. This may have been due to under  
18 reporting of jacks, or diseased kings as part of the  
19 total harvest. Additionally, subsistence harvest  
20 patterns may be changing during these years of low salmon  
21 abundance because most salmon species have gone through a  
22 period of poor production.

23  
24 For summer chum, subsistence harvest of  
25 summer chum salmon in the early '80s through '97 were  
26 driven by commercial roe fisheries in the middle river.  
27 At this same time the carcasses from the roe fishery  
28 provided an ample supply of fish to feed sled dogs. It  
29 is difficult to differentiate between commercial by-  
30 product from the roe fisheries and what was used for  
31 subsistence in the late '80s. This salmon roe market  
32 began declining in '97 as a series of poor runs occurred  
33 from '98 through 2001. Fishermen in the middle Yukon  
34 area have not had a commercial fishery since '97 and say  
35 that it is not worth their time or gas money to deploy  
36 fishwheels for harvesting for chum salmon for subsistence  
37 in the absence of a commercial fishery. This has likely  
38 resulted in lower subsistence harvest since '97. In  
39 fact, today many of the fishwheels are no longer operable  
40 due to aging and it would take time to prepare for any  
41 fishery in this region.

42  
43 Some subsistence fishing restrictions  
44 were implemented in 2000 and 2001 to conserve summer chum  
45 due to low abundance. In 2001 for the first time since  
46 1931 no commercial fishery occurred during the summer  
47 season. In 2002 there were enough summer chum for normal  
48 subsistence, however, the harvest was still below  
49 average.

50

1                   Fall chum subsistence harvest have been  
2 greatly affected by extremely weak runs in recent years  
3 due to an observed decline in productivity. Subsistence  
4 fishery has been restricted or closed, along with  
5 complete closures in commercial fisheries in '93, '98,  
6 2000, 2001, 2002 in efforts to provide for escapements.  
7 In '99 the run was front end loaded and commercial  
8 fishers were initiated in the -- commercial fisheries  
9 were initiated in the lower river and then closed  
10 completely once the projection dropped below the levels  
11 necessary to continue that management course. The  
12 majority of subsistence harvest was taken in the late  
13 portion of the return and subsistence harvests were poor.  
14

15  
16                   Coho salmon run timing overlaps with fall  
17 chum. Coho salmon fisheries management and harvest are  
18 typically dependent upon the actions taken in the fall  
19 season. Subsistence harvest decline of coho is directly  
20 related to management actions taken to protect weak  
21 returns of fall chum. In some years harvest of coho  
22 salmon was allowed using time, area and gear to target  
23 coho. In these years attempts were made to supply salmon  
24 harvest to offset loss of fall chum, therefore the  
25 percentage of coho salmon does not reflect as poorly as  
26 it would have if the entire fishery had been closed.  
27

28                   The '94 to '97 information represents  
29 years with minimal subsistence.....  
30

31                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: You're beating this to  
32 death. I think you could go to the end.  
33

34                   MR. BUE: Okay, I can cut to the chase.  
35 In summary chinook salmon uses are being met most  
36 consistently except for 2000. Summer chum uses are being  
37 met most years except for fisheries restrictions in 2000  
38 and 2001. Subsistence harvests have decreased in upper  
39 Yukon areas because of the commercial summer chum salmon  
40 closures. Harvest of summer chum may increase if  
41 commercial harvest again influence the subsistence  
42 lifestyle. Fall chum salmon harvests have been in  
43 decline due to management actions taken to protect  
44 escapements. And coho salmon harvest have declined due  
45 to management actions taken protect fall chum.  
46

47                   And I'll just conclude there, Mr.  
48 Chairman.  
49

50                   CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: So in all it was a

1 pretty good season according to you, uh? Say yes or no.  
2  
3 MR. BUE: Yes.  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Yeah, Andy.  
6  
7 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
8 Currently right now what's your best guess on your border  
9 escapement for fall chum?  
10  
11 MR. BUE: Right now the Canadian tagging  
12 project is -- last I heard was projecting between 90 and  
13 109,000, I believe, that ball park.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Any more, Andy.  
16  
17 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, I guess one other  
18 quick comment.  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Okay.  
21  
22 MR. BASSICH: And a quick question here,  
23 under what Russ had given us here, he included  
24 percentages of female in the run and then it's got an  
25 asterisk that says preliminary in-season data percent  
26 female not weighted for passage, could you educate me on  
27 what not weighted for passage is?  
28  
29 MR. HOLDER: Mr. Chairman. Mr. Bassich,  
30 that when those samples are taken at a particular point  
31 in the run, say if you took it very -- if you took five  
32 fish early in the run there might -- the passage at that  
33 point in time, say might have only been five fish, but  
34 then if you took five fish as your sample and you had 100  
35 fish say towards the middle of the run, this table only  
36 is the raw data, basically the end sample, it -- it's  
37 just based on what was observed for the percentage. It's  
38 not weighted by the representation of the run passage  
39 during a particular, say, week.  
40  
41 MR. BASSICH: Okay.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: No further questions  
44 or anything.  
45  
46 (No comments)  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: Thank you. Are we  
49 going to recess until dinner time or are we going to have  
50 something going on this evening, Vince?

1 MR. MATHEWS: Well, this evening, as I  
2 mentioned earlier, the presenter Bruce Dale is not going  
3 to make it in due to weather, and other conflicts. So my  
4 understanding from Andy is that the community meal's at  
5 6:00 and then we have testimony and issue discussions at  
6 about 7:00. So we're going to need help moving these  
7 tables around for the meal portion and then help moving  
8 these tables back again so we can get public testimony on  
9 record.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: That's what you're  
12 here for.

13  
14 MR. MATHEWS: Thank you.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN NICHOLIA: So Vince we'll recess  
17 until tomorrow, uh, or this evening at 7:00?

18  
19 MR. MATHEWS: Recess until 7:00 tonight.

20  
21 Thank you.

22  
23 (Off record)

24  
25 (NO PUBLIC TESTIMONY FROM TOWN OF EAGLE)

26  
27 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )  
 )ss.  
STATE OF ALASKA )

I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 131 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the EASTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically by Salena Hile on the 5th day of October 2004, at Eagle, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 20th day of October 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph P. Kolasinski  
Notary Public in and for Alaska  
My Commission Expires: 03/12/2008 \_