

1 EASTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME I

7
8 Tanana, Alaska
9 October 10, 2005
10 9:00 o'clock a.m.

11
12
13 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

14
15 Craig Fleener, Chairman
16 Gerald Nicholia
17 Andrew Bassich
18 Sue Entsminger
19 James Nathaniel, Sr.
20 Philip Titus
21 Virgil Umphenour
22 Donald Woodruff
23
24 Regional Council Coordinator, Vince Mathews

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Tanana, Alaska - 10/10/2005)

(On record)

VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead Vince.

MR. MATHEWS: Okay, can you guys hear me?

(Council nods affirmatively)

MR. MATHEWS: Wow, we can hear. This is kind of the work session, we can kind of relax and go through it, it's on Page 1. To give you an idea, just a couple of items we wanted to cover and the work session will be a little bit more informal.

So has everybody got a book, I should check and see on that.

We would still use the microphone so that everyone can hear and then it can be recorded.

Okay, I'll go through some housekeeping things and then that will get us maybe up to speed here. I put a green folder on each of your areas that you're sitting at. We'll try to put materials in there that's being handed out. I obviously probably didn't put them in the order that the events are coming up but that would be a place to look when Staff comes up here to talk about an item.

You have two blue reports in front of you, there's not enough for each of you. The smaller blue report there is. But the bigger report there isn't, and this is from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council on modifying existing chinook and chum salmon saving areas. The real big thick one just came in and we didn't just have capacity to make more than like six or seven copies, but if you do want a full copy we can get you that, so that's why you have those blue books in front of you.

The Federal regulations for hunting and fishing are in front of you and somewhere we have State ones if we so need them.

The other housekeeping thing is the way we're doing meals is the way we did it in Beaver, for

1 those that went to Beaver. We contacted the tribal
2 councils and we're working all payments through the
3 tribal council and they hired staff to cook the meals and
4 buy the food. So I don't know where Pat is right now,
5 but Pat, Salena and I will be the ones that you need to
6 settle up with, we'll have a little cheatsheet that
7 you've eaten and then we'll go chase you around but it'd
8 be easier if you'd find us to pay. So it's breakfast at
9 \$8, lunch at 10 and dinner at 12 and it makes life a lot
10 easier if you pay up per day or per meal. Okay, and then
11 that way the tribal council and the cooks will be
12 properly reimbursed.

13
14 Handouts, well, it's a government meeting
15 we got a ton of handouts. They're in the back if you
16 need extra copies. And if not then we can find some
17 other way of getting them to you. I have a box of copies
18 and stuff like that so we should be okay.

19
20 Let's see what else in housekeeping, I
21 think that's it, for my part.

22
23 So then I'll go ahead into the review of
24 the meeting booklet, draft agenda and how topics will be
25 presented. Well, the meeting book is arranged in, you
26 know, the Staff will direct you to what page it starts
27 at. If there's confusion over that, then just, you know,
28 stop the Staff and say, well, I really can't find that
29 because sometimes the version they have and the version
30 you have might have different pages. I really doubt it
31 but it has happened.

32
33 So in the front of the book is your draft
34 agenda and then you're going to go into the other items.
35 You'll notice that the roster for your Council has been
36 truncated. We no longer can list your names and
37 addresses, we can only list your names and when you were
38 appointed and when your term expires. So if people want
39 to get ahold of you they got to get ahold of me for me to
40 get ahold of you. So it's a new process, hopefully that
41 will be worked out and that. And then on the back of
42 that that's your team, and this is the first time I've
43 looked at it in this format. But basically you have a
44 Staff team anthropologist, that's Polly Wheeler. Your
45 wildlife biologists are Pete DeMatteo and Laura
46 Greffenius. Pete no longer can really travel to these
47 meetings but he's doing the write ups and the background
48 work. If we do need to get him on phone we can make
49 arrangements. Fishery biologist is vacant. Rich
50 Uberuaga retired this year so that's pending figuring out

1 how that's going to go on.

2

3 Now, let's see who else am I leaving out.
4 I think that's it. You have wildlife biologist, fishery
5 biologist, anthropologist and I'm your coordinator. So
6 that's kind of there if you are wondering about something
7 you can turn to that page and find it.

8

9 I also made you -- Sue made a real good
10 point at the last meeting, I don't know what I did with
11 my copy but it's here. She wanted a cheatsheet sheet of
12 Staff so I put one of those in your notebooks, maybe
13 that's where I stuck mine, yes, I did. And when these
14 meetings are back to back it's hard to sometimes -- I
15 wanted to make this a different color, but I failed to do
16 that. Anyways, that is all the Staff that I thought
17 three weeks ago would be here. And then of course
18 there's other Staff that have come so it's kind of to
19 help you. Let Sue or I know if this works for you. If
20 it works, fine, if it needs to be improved, fine, we can
21 do that.

22

23 So for example, someone gets up there and
24 you can ask them who do you work for if you're not sure
25 and they say, oh, I work for Fish and Wildlife Service
26 and I work for Fisheries and then you could say, well,
27 are you Gerald Maschmann, and then Gerald would say, yes,
28 and so then you can get an idea of where they're from and
29 who they work for. I also added their phone numbers
30 there if you ever want to call them later. So that's the
31 purpose of that sheet. We'll see how it functions. But
32 there is a lot of Staff that come here and it can get
33 confusing and especially when we have new people hired.

34

35 Okay, so that's that.

36

37 How the topics would be presented is on
38 the back of your name tag. You'll see a list there, and
39 that is how we would like the proposals to be taken. And
40 let me borrow -- Philip, can you hand me your name tag,
41 hand it to Salena, because mine's buried away. I don't
42 get those rules. I'll have to get that corrected.

43

44 Anyways, why are we doing it this way
45 with those things back there, well, let's be honest we
46 have to have a real clean administrative record so when
47 your Chair or whoever, designee, goes to the Board, no
48 one can say, well, you didn't do this or did you do this,
49 you can actually say, yes, we followed this procedure.

50

1 So it'd be introduction of proposal which
2 would either be myself or the Staff person. They present
3 the analysis. You can ask them any questions on that, I
4 encourage you to engage on that presentation. And then
5 following that is agency comments and then you kind of
6 run down the list. Why go down the list, then it's on
7 the tape so no one could say well, how come Park Service
8 didn't speak up, well, there was no one there, we
9 announced it or whatever. And then you go to Advisory
10 Group comments. I do have your comments from Western
11 Interior and if any Advisory Committee's have met. But
12 this gives a chance for them to present their comments.
13 And then I do the summary of written comments, which is
14 behind your analysis. And then you open up the mic for
15 public testimony. And then No. 6 is where you develop
16 your recommendation. And if you can, try to answer those
17 questions there, then you'll have a very strong
18 recommendation.

19
20 So, for example, you say is there a
21 conservation concern, if someone would address that on
22 the record, that would help.

23
24 How will your recommendation address that
25 conservation concern. You guys have been very good at
26 that, but it empowers your representative at the Board
27 meetings to share exactly what you guys did.

28
29 Is your recommendation supported by
30 substantial evidence. That includes traditional
31 ecological knowledge. We're not expecting you guys to
32 come in with analysis and what were we doing last night,
33 Steve, positive correlation logic?

34
35 MR. KLEIN: It's all a blur now.

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: It's all a blur.

38
39 (Laughter)

40
41 MR. MATHEWS: But anyways, you don't have
42 to do that. You just got to have in the record kind of
43 what information you're using to come up with your
44 recommendation.

45
46 Okay, and how will your recommendation
47 address subsistence needs involved.

48
49 Will it be detrimental to subsistence
50 users. Prejudging you guys, that's the key question on

1 one of your proposals, on the 35 mesh depth. You need to
2 acknowledge that this is possibly detrimental to
3 subsistence users but then you go back up to is it a
4 conservation concern. So you see what you're doing is
5 making a case basically.

6
7 And then will your recommendation
8 unnecessarily restrict other uses involved, and then you
9 vote, and that can be unanimously.

10
11 These questions came out of Staff
12 Committee members that were at one of the meetings and I
13 worked with that Staff Committee person. These parallel
14 your .805(c) requirements where the -- if I can get them
15 right now, where the Board can reject your recommendation
16 if it's not based on substantial evidence; violates
17 recognized principals of wildlife conservation or is
18 detrimental to subsistence. So this was trying to put
19 that in the positive. So that's the procedure.

20
21 It's up to you to decide if you want to
22 follow that but it does help create a clean record.

23
24 Meeting time schedule. We had today
25 announced at 9:00 but obviously we had to set up the room
26 and stuff like that, it's published tomorrow at 8:30, but
27 we'll see, that's up to you guys if you want to try to
28 meet at 8:30. And then it's been announced on the agenda
29 and Gerald could probably tell us more if there'll be
30 people here for the evening session, which is at 7:00
31 o'clock here. Now, on that it would be nice for the
32 whole Council to be here for that session but if that
33 doesn't work out, then we'll just need a couple of
34 Council members here and, of course, Salena and myself to
35 capture the testimony and then give you a summary the
36 next morning on that. But it'd be nice if you're all
37 here because if people do show up they want to see their
38 full Council.

39
40 Any questions on meeting booklet, agenda
41 or topics.

42
43 MR. WOODRUFF: Do we have to make a
44 conflict of interest statement or something?

45
46 MR. MATHEWS: Make a what?

47
48 MR. WOODRUFF: A conflict of interest
49 statement.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: No, the conflict of
2 interest requirement has disappeared. We no longer have
3 to do that. But that does not mean that you guys are off
4 the hook. If you know, for instance, that there is a
5 financial conflict of interest, now it's on your
6 shoulders to say I may have a conflict of interest due to
7 the fact that I will financially gain from this adventure
8 or whatever issue is in front of you. And then I'd have
9 to analyze real quickly and say yes or no, but that whole
10 rigmarole of picking off of the back of the green sheet
11 is gone, you do not need to do a disclosure statement.
12 If you want to do it, well, you know, that's fine.

13
14 Again, the Board -- the issues you deal
15 with sometimes impact others and they will look to see if
16 there's any conflict of interest. But to my knowledge
17 none of the proposals or issues in front of you would
18 have a conflict of interest.

19
20 So thank you for asking that because that
21 is a change on the agenda.

22
23 The only other change that I can remember
24 is I added on the last page, but now it's gone, well,
25 we'll try to get it back on, well, that's strange it's
26 gone, well, that's the way things go.

27
28 I would like, if the Council would agree,
29 an open discussion, oh, there it is, it's on the bottom,
30 an evaluation of the meeting, logistics, things like that
31 and then an evaluation of my performance so we'll talk
32 more about that later. I was hoping to have a physical
33 survey for you but then it was discovered that that has
34 to be approved by OPM [sic] and that's gone, so we will
35 continue to work on that.

36
37 The reason I bring that up and I'll
38 explain it at the end again, is, I've been doing this for
39 quite a few years and I'm very concerned that I'm
40 overlooking things, you get into a routine. You know,
41 you turn on the light switch when you get up in the
42 morning, the same way every day but maybe it would be
43 better not to turn on the light switch and go to the
44 other room; that's what I'm looking for because I'm a bit
45 concerned that I may be missing something or need to do
46 something differently.

47
48 So that's the only newer things, or new
49 items that are put on the agenda that I am aware of.

50

1 And without Craig here I can't really
2 cover some of the other items. But there are some other
3 handouts that he requested to be here. When we get into
4 fish stuff then I'll probably make you aware of those
5 handouts because he requested they be present here.

6
7 So that's all I have on that number 1
8 under work session unless there's questions or other
9 items that need to be covered.

10
11 (Council shakes head negatively)

12
13 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, seeing none, then we
14 go up to customary and traditional use determination
15 process, overview discussion.

16
17 This is just to get an open dialogue on
18 C&T, customary and traditional use determinations. The
19 reason it's on your agenda is because you have a possible
20 pending proposal and things like that to deal with that
21 will deal with C&T.

22
23 MS. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. Council members.
24 For the record, Polly Wheeler. This is a work session
25 but it's still being taped so that's why we identify
26 ourselves.

27
28 Anyway, Vince asked me to do a brief
29 overview of the C&T process, customary and traditional
30 use determinations process, how we do the analysis. And
31 I guess what I would say is sometimes it's hard to think
32 about these things in the abstract and you do have a
33 proposal before you, Proposal 2, which looks to add
34 Chistochina and Mentasta to the existing C&T
35 determination for the Yukon for nonsalmon fish, and I'll
36 be presenting that analysis, too. So I'll just cover the
37 process that we use briefly and if you have questions now
38 go ahead and ask them and then if you think of something
39 while we're doing the proposal analysis, which something
40 may come up and you can ask it then.

41
42 Basically, just to give you some
43 background, we do these C&T analysis in large part
44 because when we assumed management authority for wildlife
45 and then fisheries in 1999, the thought at least when we
46 assumed wildlife in 1990 was that it was going to be a
47 temporary program; 15 years later I'm not so sure we can
48 say that. But in any event in 1990 it was thought to be
49 a temporary program so we pretty much mimicked the State
50 program to the extent possible so that as long as it was

1 a temporary program there'd be consistency in the program
2 and then when the State reassumed management authority
3 then there wouldn't be a lapse. Well, as I said 15 years
4 later we're still doing them.

5
6 If you've read ANILCA you know that they
7 don't call for C&T determinations, but, again, that's why
8 we do them because it's an artifact of State management.
9 When we assumed management authority, we, being the
10 Federal program, we adopted all of the State C&T
11 determinations. Again, for wildlife in 1990, for
12 fisheries in 1999. Over time those determinations have
13 changed.

14
15 How do they change, they change through a
16 proposal. Proposals are submitted by an individual, by a
17 community, whatever, and then they're analyzed by the
18 anthropologist in our program. We do the analysis by
19 community, we don't do them by individual, we do them by
20 community and we're looking at a long-term consistent
21 pattern of use, which is called for under ANILCA. We
22 have the eight factors under the State program, they're
23 called criteria, we modified them a little bit, now
24 they're called factors under the Federal program, but
25 functionally they all speak to a long-term consistent
26 pattern of use by a community.

27
28 We, the anthropologists do the analysis
29 using the existing information. Sources of information
30 include, you know, Subsistence Division technical
31 reports, EIS's if we have them, any kind of documented
32 ethnographic information. We also depend a lot on the
33 Council to fill in gaps if and when there are some, and
34 often times, as you know, the nature of the information
35 is sometimes fairly dated, sometimes spotty. We do the
36 best we can with the information that we have available
37 but we do look to the Councils to provide that additional
38 information.

39
40 When we do the analysis, we look to
41 things like, you know, things that are included in the
42 analysis include like characteristics. And people say,
43 well, why do you include community characteristics, well,
44 first and foremost we do the C&T determinations based on
45 a community, so you kind of want to know what's going on
46 with the community and often times, too, community
47 characteristics can speak sometimes to resource use.

48
49 Some of the more contentious issues are,
50 well, how many people in a community need to use a

1 resource to make it a pattern, and that's somewhat of a
2 subjective assessment actually. Because it's, you know,
3 is one person, probably not, is three people, well, it
4 sort of depends on the size of the community, what
5 resource we're talking about, how widely it's shared. So
6 we look at all those different factors when we're doing
7 the analysis.

8

9 I'm trying to think of some of the other
10 more -- that's probably the most contentious, you know,
11 what percentage of the community is using the resource in
12 order for it to be considered a customary and traditional
13 use.

14

15 There was a study done in the late '80s
16 by Bob Wolf with the Division of Subsistence that looked
17 to sort of the patterns of sharing in a community and he
18 came up with what he calls the 30/70 rule, which is about
19 30 percent of a community tends to harvest about 70
20 percent of the resources in a lot of communities. So,
21 you know, 30 percent of a community, is that a set in
22 stone rule, not necessarily. So, again, it's we make the
23 assessment we can based on the information available and
24 then we look to the Councils to provide additional
25 information.

26

27 The C&T that you have before you today,
28 as I said, is the communities of Chistochina and Mentasta
29 being added to the existing C&T determination for
30 nonsalmon fish in the Yukon drainage. It's fairly
31 straightforward, probably not all that contentious. You
32 might be interested to know that the C&T proposal that
33 you looked at last time around, which was adding
34 Chistochina for the existing C&T determination for moose
35 in Unit 12, that turned out to be somewhat of a
36 contentious issue for the State. The State did file an
37 RFR in August, a request for reconsideration, suggesting
38 that maybe the C&T determination for all of Unit 12 for
39 Chistochina was too broad and it should be shrunk down a
40 little. We tend to make our C&T determinations fairly
41 broad, that's sort of the first step. And, again, if we
42 get a proposal from a community we may reconsider the
43 whole area or adding that community.

44

45 I should say, too, if there is no -- just
46 to remind you, if there's no C&T determination then all
47 rural residents qualify. So when you do a C&T
48 determination you're more narrowly delineating the
49 communities that can harvest that resource. When you get
50 down to an .804 situation it's comparable to the State's

1 Tier II situation, which is you have to differentiate
2 from amongst all of the subsistence users. We haven't
3 had a lot of those in the Federal program.

4
5 But basically what the C&T determination
6 is doing is delineating the population of users.

7
8 So with that I'd open it up to questions.

9
10 Again, I recognize just kind of talking
11 about it in the abstract can be tough sometimes, but if
12 you have any questions ask them now or we can go over
13 them when we cover Proposal 2 and also I'll be available
14 during this meeting and other meetings if it comes up.

15
16 Mr. Chair.

17
18 MR. MATHEWS: Polly probably already
19 covered this, but when you do get into C&T discussions
20 and you start talking about, well, the moose population,
21 caribou population is doing this or that, I'll tend to
22 interrupt or Staff will interrupt, when you look at a C&T
23 it's who, it's just the who question. So there could be
24 a million moose per square mile or there could be zero
25 moose per square mile.

26
27 Now, I know that's difficult because you
28 guys are definitely true conservationists and you'll go
29 if we add these people in or whatever it's going to
30 impact that population; that's not the question before
31 you. That's a separate one. And we're not arguing with
32 you if you talk about that, we're just going to advise
33 you that you do not need to consider that. And that's
34 where, in other regions where I work, it gets difficult
35 for people to say, well, if we put those communities in
36 they are our brothers and sisters and that, but there's
37 not enough moose, we have to advise you that's not the
38 question before you.

39
40 MS. WHEELER: And another thing Vince
41 reminded me, he's right the status of the resource is
42 separate from the C&T determination because again with
43 C&T determinations we're looking at, you know, this long-
44 term consistent pattern of use, communities that are
45 reliant on this resource or have been reliant on this
46 resource over time.

47
48 The other thing, when we do our
49 analysis.....

50

1 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: You're going
2 pretty.....
3
4 REPORTER: Gerald.
5
6 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA:fast there and
7 I don't know if you guys.....
8
9 REPORTER: Gerald.
10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA:understand.
12 You're saying that a C&T determination.....
13
14 REPORTER: Gerald.
15
16 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: You're saying that
17 a C&T determination is supposed to be for the person
18 using the resource and not the resource, right?
19
20 MS. WHEELER: It's for the use, yes,
21 that's correct.
22
23 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, I'd like to
24 hear it more explained like that instead of using all
25 kinds of jargon because most of these people don't really
26 understand that, they're just listening -- they're
27 looking at you and pretending they're listening, kind of
28 come down to our level a little bit.
29
30 MS. WHEELER: Thank you. Yeah, we're
31 looking at the uses and we're looking at when we do these
32 C&T determinations we're looking at the communities that
33 have a long-term and consistent pattern of use. And the
34 eight factors that we look at describe that.
35
36 One of the things that we don't do is we
37 don't go through a checklist, we don't address each
38 factor specifically because we're looking at, again, this
39 pattern of use and the eight factors together address
40 this pattern of use but we try and have it in a
41 discussion matter so that we're describing this pattern
42 of use over time.
43
44 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, because.....
45
46 REPORTER: Gerald.
47
48 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I kind of known
49 over the years that when we do discuss C&T, we mostly
50 discuss like the fisheries and animals and stuff and I'd

1 like to see -- good to see that OSM's going somewhere to
2 streamline some of this so we could just know it's for
3 the person, or the rural resident using the resource and
4 talk about him and not the resource itself is what you're
5 really saying.

6
7 MS. WHEELER: Well, I think what Vince
8 was trying to say and what I may not have said very well
9 is that we're looking at the pattern of use, obviously by
10 the users but that's different -- you know a lot of times
11 when we do these C&T analysis and it may happen today
12 because I know people from Tetlin Refuge have some
13 concerns about some nonsalmon fish in the upper Tanana
14 region. They'll say, well, we've got concerns about the
15 populations and that's different than establishing --
16 than looking at who customary and traditionally uses this
17 resource.

18
19 You know if the resource is in trouble
20 then that's a separate issue and that's an .804, you
21 know, that's when we're differentiating from amongst the
22 most reliant -- people that are most reliant on the
23 resource. But when we're doing a C&T determination, it's
24 looking at this pattern of use, long-term pattern of use,
25 not the status of the resource.

26
27 Mr. Chair.

28
29 MR. WOODRUFF: Polly, you're mentioning
30 over a time customary use, can you give me some kind of
31 an idea of what that is, is it 20, 50, 100 years, what?

32
33 MS. WHEELER: Good question. Well, one
34 thing we don't do is look to the archeological so we're
35 not going way back in time but, you know, we figure
36 you're looking at least a generation. You know, ANILCA
37 was passed into law in 1981 and when ANILCA was passed it
38 was looking at, you know, long-term -- they speak to a
39 long-term and consistent pattern of use, they don't
40 define a number of years which is a long-term pattern of
41 use. But generally speaking, you know, 20, 30, 40 years.
42 I mean five years might not do it.

43
44 The one exception, I guess, is when you
45 have an introduced resource, which may happen in this
46 region I suppose with Wood Bison, it hasn't yet but it
47 may. But we do, do -- like for introduced species up on
48 the North Slope there's muskox and we have done C&T
49 determinations for muskox and kind of looked at the
50 pattern of use by the community of other resources and

1 brought that in.

2

3 But, again, can you say absolutely it's
4 30 years, no. But you're typically thinking of a
5 generation, at least.

6

7 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.

8

9 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Sue.

10

11 MS. ENTSMINGER: When you delineated the
12 difference between doing a C&T for the user and not
13 management, and you said that the State is challenging
14 the Chistochina for Unit 12, then in my mind they're
15 saying that -- they're looking at the animals or what on
16 that?

17

18 MS. WHEELER: Well, I've only read the
19 RFR once. But in looking at the RFR they're basically --
20 they're not challenging the fact that people in
21 Chistochina have used moose in Unit 12, what they're
22 challenging is have they used all of Unit 12. They're
23 saying that all of Unit 12 equates to, I think, 10,000
24 square miles and their argument is that the area that
25 they've used is a lot smaller than that, that it should
26 be a subpart of Unit 12. But, again, we've typically
27 made our C&T determinations fairly broad and I would
28 caution, you know, that some people would say that if
29 there's nothing written down then there's no evidence of
30 use. But a lot of times you have to go back to oral
31 history interviews and look at where people have gone and
32 there's pretty good evidence for people who, the
33 community, is Chistochina using a lot of Unit 12, which
34 is why the recommendation was for all of Unit 12.

35

36 But, again, we look at the -- I may have
37 misspoke, because we look at the uses. Our lawyer is
38 very clear, we look at the uses, not the users because
39 ANILCA speaks to all rural residents but we're looking at
40 the uses not the users but we do the C&T determinations
41 on a community basis.

42

43 MR. MATHEWS: Since Polly brought up and
44 it's been discussed about the request for
45 reconsideration, it's now going what's called a threshold
46 analysis, that's why we don't have copies of it here,
47 that's why we're not really briefing you on it.

48

49 The threshold analysis is to say is this
50 request for reconsideration a valid request. Is it new

1 information. Was the Board's interpretation provided to
2 the Board not a complete interpretation or may have other
3 aspects, and I can't remember the third thing that deals
4 with RFRs, that's what's going on now.

5
6 And then my assumption is, is if it
7 passes the threshold analysis then we do run it by the
8 Councils for your comments on it. So that's where we're
9 at now and I don't know where that threshold is at. So
10 just to keep you up to speed, we're not keeping something
11 from you, it's just that it first has to be proven to be
12 a valid request and then it comes out and we distribute
13 it to you guys.

14
15 MR. TITUS: I have a question.

16
17 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Jeep.

18
19 MR. TITUS: Does C&T, like you said long-
20 term, like the fish didn't come back for years and there
21 was not much effort to fish to conserve the wild stocks
22 and how about that time that's not spent fishing.

23
24 MS. WHEELER: That's a good question,
25 Council member Titus. ANILCA actually speaks
26 specifically to this long-term consistent pattern of use
27 and looks at use that would have occurred if there hadn't
28 been harvest disruption or some regulatory thing that
29 prevented people from harvesting the resource. So if
30 there's regulations that prevent people from harvesting
31 or, you know, a disruptive problem with the resource or
32 something else, we're still looking at the use that would
33 have occurred in the absence of that.

34
35 Mr. Chair.

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: Just don't be afraid when
38 the C&T issue is in front of you to ask the same
39 questions again. This is just to kind of give you an
40 overview to kind of flesh out some ideas.

41
42 The last topic for the work session, is
43 we're trying to streamline our travel process partially
44 to make it easier on all parties but, also we only have
45 one travel person doing travel for all regions, so rough
46 figures, that's 100 people's travel that has to be done,
47 so with that we've now gotten a process that when you get
48 your yellow sheet like you normally put down and you put
49 down travel on Sunday, October 9th, left at this time and
50 et cetera, et cetera, you don't need to do that anymore

1 if you just write on there, I am following travel
2 arrangements made by OSM and then sign it. Then you
3 just give me the sheet back, it goes to Anchorage and he
4 can start immediately working on it.

5
6 Now, that's the streamlined part. But if
7 you know that your travel's going to be a little bit more
8 complex or that it's going to have taxis and other
9 expenditures then maybe you want to keep this and fill it
10 out.

11
12 Philip already asked me this morning,
13 which is a very good question, what if I get weathered in
14 somewhere and I've signed this thing out, then you just
15 call me up on the 800 number and, you know, I'm stuck and
16 then we got to find lodging for you and the clock keeps
17 going for your per diem. So that would streamline it, it
18 would drop off two to three weeks. Because basically he
19 cannot move forward until he gets one of these. And so
20 if you guys get busy or whatever and the mail's delayed
21 two or three weeks, that's the only time he can start
22 processing it. So that's up to you to do that and then
23 if you do decide to do that, you know, traveling as
24 arranged by OSM, sign it, give it to me and then we'll
25 just take it back to Anchorage. And so that's the
26 streamlined part. And then I think Tom's gotten all of
27 your travel advances to you. They are all checks, I
28 believe, I don't know, let me see if I see Tom here.

29
30 MR. KRON: Yes.

31
32 MR. MATHEWS: So we need to work on that.
33 I'll try to be more diligent about that if you travel
34 through Fairbanks, maybe to get those checks there so we
35 can run to a bank, because a lot of the villages can't
36 handle that many checks from their post office or from
37 the local store.

38
39 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I could ask and get
40 some cash.

41
42 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. So any questions on
43 the streamlining, it's just basically signing off on it.

44
45 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, I got one
46 question, when do you.....

47
48 REPORTER: Gerald.

49
50 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA:when are you

1 guys.....

2

3 REPORTER: Gerald.

4

5 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Are you guys going
6 to give these guys a bigger per diem for having a meeting
7 on Columbus day.

8

9 MR. MATHEWS: Per diem is always a
10 challenge. But anyway so that's that process, if you have
11 any questions about your travel it'd either be myself or
12 if you have any questions about some of the other
13 paperwork travel, Tom Kron can help with that too. So
14 we'll keep working on this.

15

16 So that's all I had for the work session,
17 is just to get kind of like housekeeping stuff out of the
18 way.

19

20 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, we kind of
21 like have breakfast at 8:30 because I got those workers
22 going to work at 7:00 and lunch right around 12:00. I
23 thought I had help today but I'll probably take off and
24 go get it around after 12:00, it's kind of hard doing
25 everything by yourself but, yeah, there's still all that
26 food right there.

27

28 MR. MATHEWS: Right. I was just going to
29 announce that for the Staff, Staff that came in, the way
30 that we're running the meals here is we have an agreement
31 with the tribal council that they hire cooks and cook the
32 food and purchase the materials and so if you'd like to
33 partake in the breakfast, lunch and dinner, that's
34 perfectly fine. What we need to do is get your name on
35 the list and then the cost for breakfast is \$8, lunch is
36 10 and then dinner is 12, that way we can make sure the
37 tribal council and the cooks get reimbursed for their
38 expenditure. And that makes it easier for the meeting,
39 except for Gerald to haul the stuff instead of trying to
40 run around town getting food here.

41

42 So that's the deal and I have a checklist
43 here and I have some of the Fish and Game Staff on here
44 but I don't have all. There's plenty of food back there
45 but if you could help pay Tina or myself the money, per
46 day or per meal, that would be the best way to go.

47

48 And I failed to mention in the beginning,
49 there's a sign up sheet back there somewhere, I don't
50 remember if it got moved, but it's green in color, if you

1 could sign that, it helps with spelling your names, it
2 helps know who's here and again it goes to the
3 administrative record, and that record will be used
4 possibly down the road for another reason and it's good
5 to show that there was attendance by so and so and so and
6 so and so and so, so thank you.

7
8 MR. MATHEWS: Did you want to start going
9 regular into the meeting then.

10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Do we need another
12 table.

13
14 MR. MATHEWS: Just let them eat is what
15 you're saying?

16
17 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah.

18
19 MR. MATHEWS: Well, if you want to take a
20 break then we could then.....

21
22 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, we're going
23 to take a break.

24
25 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, I get it. All right,
26 so the proverbial 10 minute break that goes beyond 10
27 minutes.

28
29 (Laughter)

30
31
32 (Off record)

33
34 (On record)

35
36 MR. MATHEWS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think
37 we can get back on the record, off the work session, we
38 completed that and on to the meeting agenda which is on
39 Page 1. And since Craig Fleener's not here, then you'd
40 be the Vice Chair to start working through items under
41 meeting agenda.

42
43 So the first one would be to call it to
44 order and all that kind of stuff.

45
46 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay, I'd like to
47 call the meeting to order of the Eastern Interior
48 Regional Advisory Council here in Tanana. I'd like to
49 welcome you all here. It's kind of cold here.
50 Everybody's pretty much busy doing what they're doing

1 around town but I think there'll be a few people who show
2 up. I asked a few people to do an invocation and they
3 said one was sick and one didn't really feel up to it.
4 So I asked my buddy Paul if he wanted to do the
5 invocation for our meeting, by a local elder, I'll
6 consider him a local elder now. Paul, we'll do that
7 first.

8

9 MR. WILLIAMS: (Invocation)

10

11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Thank you, Paul. I
12 guess we'll have a moment of silence for my friend, John
13 Hanson, who passed away just recently this past spring.

14

15 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I
16 believe across the whole state at each agenda there'll be
17 a moment of silence for John. John Hanson who was a
18 valuable Council member for Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, but he
19 also served with you guys when you met as tri-Council.
20 He's a past Board of Fishery member. And he was I think,
21 as Ron Sam said at the last meeting, he was the voice for
22 rural Alaskans when he served on various boards. At the
23 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Council meeting there'll
24 be a plague presented at that meeting. They meet at the
25 end of this week in Bethel.

26

27 Okay, so I think at this time we would
28 just take a moment of silence for Mr. John Hanson, his
29 family and his community.

30

31 (Moment of Silence)

32

33 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, thank you. Mr.
34 Chairman, that brings us up to roll call and
35 establishment of quorum. So I'll just kind of handle
36 that if it's okay.

37

38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
39 affirmatively)

40

41 MR. MATHEWS: Sue Entsminger.

42

43 MS. ENTSMINGER: Here.

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: Donald Woodruff.

46

47 MR. WOODRUFF: Here.

48

49 MR. MATHEWS: James Nathaniel.

50

1 MR. NATHANIEL: Here.
2
3 MR. MATHEWS: Gerald Nicholia.
4
5 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Here.
6
7 MR. MATHEWS: Andrew Bassich.
8
9 MR. BASSICH: Here.
10
11 MR. MATHEWS: Philip Titus.
12
13 MR. TITUS: Here.
14
15 MR. MATHEWS: Allen Stevens pretty much
16 resigned from the Council due to different conflicts and
17 that so he obviously won't be here.
18
19 Larry Williams, it just didn't work into
20 his schedule so he's not present.
21
22 Craig Fleener's on the 1:00 o'clock
23 flight so hopefully that will work out or the 12:45
24 flight.
25
26 Virgil Umphenour.
27
28 MR. UMPHENOUR: Here.
29
30 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, that gives
31 you seven out of 10, or nine depending on his
32 resignation, so you defiantly have a quorum.
33
34 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
35 affirmatively)
36
37 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, then that would bring
38 us up to, and for the newer members this has been very
39 valuable for Staff, no, I'm sorry I missed a step here.
40 I will do the introduction of agency, Staff and honored
41 guests and you can determine which category you are.
42
43 But anyways, I'll go down a visual list
44 of who's in the room and then we encourage you, when you
45 get up to the mic to introduce yourself so there's voice
46 recognition as, you know, sometimes there's long
47 discussions it helps with getting the transcript
48 completed.
49
50 So with that I'll introduce, along the

1 wall in the back, we have Ruth Gronquist, the biologist
2 with Bureau of Land Management with Fairbanks District
3 Office. Ingrid McSweeny with the same office. Connie
4 Friend with Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge out of Tok.
5 Mike Koskey with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
6 Division of Subsistence. Paul Williams, Refuge
7 Information Technician out of Beaver. Wennona Brown, the
8 subsistence coordinator for Arctic, Yukon Delta and
9 Kanuti Refuges. Stan Zuray just walked in and he's with
10 local monitoring projects as well as community member.

11

12 On the far wall on the other side, I
13 didn't introduce myself to him, but it's Steve Hays with
14 Division of Commercial Fisheries, Alaska Department of
15 Fish and Game, Gene Sandone with the same agency,
16 Commercial Fisheries Division, and I don't know the
17 gentleman next to him.

18

19 MR. CLARK: Kevin Clark. I'm the
20 assistant area management biologist.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, when you get up to
23 the mic we'll have to capture that. And then we have
24 Gerald Maschmann with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services out
25 of Fairbanks. Barbara Cellarius with Wrangell-St. Elias
26 National Park. She works with the Subsistence Resource
27 Commission and that's your sister advisory group with the
28 Park Service. Laura Greffenius is your wildlife
29 biologist on your regional team. Fred Bue is the in-
30 season manager for State of Alaska, Alaska Department of
31 Fish and Game. And Steve Klein is the Division Chief for
32 Fishery Information Services, FIS, and you'll learn about
33 FRMPs today, it's a good acronym. And then Polly Wheeler
34 with Fishery Information Services also. And then Mike
35 Smith with Tanana Chiefs Wildlife and Parks. And then
36 behind him is Rod Campbell with the Office of Subsistence
37 Management, he's a person you need to get to know because
38 he's the liaison of this program with the Board of
39 Fisheries so I encourage you to talk to Rod and get to
40 know him because he's the bridge between our program,
41 your program and the Board of Fisheries. And then Tom
42 Kron with Office of Subsistence Management out of
43 Anchorage. And then Pat Petrivelli used to be with
44 Office of Subsistence Management, now she's the Staff
45 anthropologist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And
46 let's see behind there is Carl Jack, again, another very
47 important person to get to know. He's the Native liaison
48 so he's the right-hand person to Mitch Demientieff. He
49 serves for Mitch and then serves on the Interagency Staff
50 Committee. And then Salena Hile, Tina, is the court

1 recorder.

2

3 There'll be a whole bunch of other Staff
4 that will be coming in and out unless the planes don't
5 fly and so we'll try to get them introduced as they come
6 in so you're aware of them.

7

8 For Staff, I highly encourage you during
9 breaks, if you don't know the Council members, introduce
10 yourself, so they have a better idea so they know who to
11 call when they may have a question or clarification or
12 even a concern.

13

14 So, Mr. Chairman, that gets us through
15 the agency, Staff, honored guests.

16

17 That would bring you up to the Chair's
18 report, the Chair is not present here. Going by memory
19 now, it was, who, was it Sue who went to the last Board
20 meeting. It might be, if she so desires, I'm putting her
21 on the spot, just give a little bit of what she took away
22 from the Board meeting. It might be important. We'll go
23 over the details later unless she wants to go through the
24 details of the Board, but it might be good for her to
25 share with Council members how the Board meetings work
26 because Gerald has gone to them, Virgil has gone to them,
27 Craig, and now Sue, the rest of you, hopefully, at some
28 point we can get you to a Board meeting so you can
29 understand why we have all that stuff written on the back
30 of your name there.

31

32 But, anyways, maybe Sue has some comments
33 on the Board meeting she attended.

34

35 MS. ENTSMINGER: Thank you. That was the
36 first time I had gone to a Federal Subsistence Board
37 meeting since it began so it was quite a learning
38 experience for me because the set up of all the 10
39 Councils are set up, five on each side and then the Board
40 in the middle and the interaction between the Council
41 members and the Board was quite enlightening for me, we
42 actually got to say things, so that was pretty good for
43 us. A lot of the issues that were taken up were in Unit
44 12 and 13, and the bear proposal, the selling of bear
45 parts, which part of it was tabled.

46

47 Three of the Councils are allowing it and
48 then the claw issue became quite an issue at that meeting
49 so some of that stuff is still on the table, and I
50 believe some of it's here before us.

1 But I can't remember all the things that
2 happened. I do remember a little bit of frustration for
3 some of the Councils. It seems like sometimes they were
4 listening and then it seemed like sometimes that, for
5 what may be law or whatever, it seemed like you become a
6 little bit frustrated because things didn't seem to turn
7 out the way some of the Council members would have liked
8 to have seen. But it's quite an experience and I hope
9 you guys get to go, I highly recommend it.

10
11 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, and then that brings
12 us up into what I was leading into earlier. Council
13 member concerns. This, as part of your team, has been
14 very productive for us because then we have an idea of
15 what concerns you might have, and then possibly can weave
16 them into the agenda but at least then we can start
17 thinking more about them and possibly reacting to them.
18 So it may seem to you as not -- some of you, that it's
19 not a valuable session or part of the agenda but it's
20 extremely valuable because then we know that Virgil has a
21 concern about this or topic and then we can start
22 scrambling to put things together or put it on a future
23 agenda.

24
25 So that brings us up to Council member
26 concerns. And I don't know, Gerald, which way you want
27 to start with that.

28
29 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, start down
30 there with Andy then just kind of move this way.

31
32 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
33 I'll try and be fairly brief, if that's possible, but I
34 do have a lot of concerns at this point in time and
35 they're pretty broad in their range.

36
37 I'll start with, of course, salmon. One
38 of the things I'm interested and concerned about is
39 bycatch of salmon in the polluck fisheries and also Area
40 M as stated in other meetings. And I'd be real
41 interested if anybody in the room here has information on
42 progress being made on the salmon excluders that are
43 being developed for the polluck fisheries. I know that
44 that's an ongoing process and they were supposed to make
45 some changes and do some testing this year so if there's
46 any information on that I'd like to hear that.

47
48 Also with salmon, genetic integrity of
49 Yukon king salmon in the river. It's still a concern of
50 mine and will continue to be a concern of mine.

1 Another area that hasn't been talked
2 about much but is kind of real close to home is wildfire
3 management accountability. As you probably all know
4 we've had quite a few wildfires in the Eagle region the
5 last two years and I felt like, this year, in particular,
6 there was some practices taken on by the management that
7 got out of control and backfired on them and I'd really
8 like to try and get some information on who can be
9 contacted and what kind of accountability there is.
10 Because it seems to me if I was to go out and set a bunch
11 of wildfires and they got out of control, I'd be
12 accountable, and I don't see any process -- I have heard
13 of no process whereby you can contact these people or try
14 and make them accountable for their misconduct. So I
15 would like to get some information on who can be
16 contacted and what process there would be to file some
17 kind of a grievance towards these entities.

18
19 And finally and probably most important
20 for me is I'd really like to see this Council begin to
21 put a little pressure on OSM to develop a long-term plan
22 on where they want to go with this organization. I
23 really think that -- we have a potential for doing a lot
24 of good, and I think a lot of good things are being done
25 but I really don't see any long-term plan on what we're
26 trying to do as far as protecting subsistence. You know,
27 I see us reacting to fish runs, I see us reacting to low
28 wildlife populations but I don't see policies that are
29 long-term, in my view, being put into practice and I
30 think it's probably a good time to begin to look at what
31 direction OSM is going in and what we need to do for the
32 people that are relying on the resources out here. And
33 I'm speaking about people who are living out in remote
34 areas that are still living a traditional subsistence
35 lifestyle. And I stated this at a number of other
36 meetings and this concerns me a great deal and I think it
37 really needs to be addressed and some time needs to be
38 put into looking into what these needs are and make sure
39 these people's needs are going to be taken care of five
40 years and 10 years down the line because they're
41 disappearing quickly.

42
43 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

44
45 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: James.

46
47 MR. NATHANIEL: My name is James
48 Nathaniel from Chalkyitsik. The concern I have and the
49 concern from the local people, my community, fish run is
50 pretty good this summer, no problem there.

1 And our moose population is pretty good
2 this summer also. All the hunters that came back this
3 fall saying that there's a lot of cow moose, I mean cow
4 moose with calf or two. So that means moose population
5 is coming back up.

6
7 However, we do have a concern over black,
8 brown and even grizzly. We noticed this summer that
9 berries didn't grow in our country and residents usually
10 put away some berries for winter, not this fall, no
11 berries at all. And our people are concerned about the
12 bears, are they going to survive during winter, this
13 winter, or are they moving out, they want to know if a
14 biologist could step in there and find out how the bears
15 are going to survive.

16
17 So that's concerns that the people in my
18 community have at the moment.

19
20 That's all I have, other than that
21 everything is okay.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Sue.

26
27 MS. ENTSMINGER: Sue Entsminger, from the
28 Mentasta area.

29
30 The people in Unit 12 qualified to hunt
31 in the Wrangell St-Elias, the meeting process is getting
32 a little difficult because the SRC that meets for the
33 Wrangells, they didn't have a quorum, I was talking to
34 Barbara, it's two or three -- it's real hard to get the
35 user who's actually out hunting and doing that time of
36 year to meet during the hunting season when the meetings
37 are scheduled and I think I would highly recommend that
38 we think about when these meetings are, that people who
39 are utilizing the resource are part of it, and they can
40 actually attend the meetings. And I've had a lot of
41 people say to me that there's quite a bit going on in
42 September still, late September 22nd and 23rd when the
43 meetings were held. So it's something that people end up
44 chewing my ear on for quite a bit because I'm in the
45 process so I just wanted to express that sometimes it
46 looks like there's more government employees at a meeting
47 than there is any others.

48
49 So I just wanted to reiterate on that.

50

1 I want to keep the lines of communication
2 between everybody with the RAC members, that's real
3 important, when there isn't a meeting, that we're still
4 talking and you guys have the full-time jobs, we're
5 taking out of our time, you'll hear me say this over and
6 over and over again, it's very important that there's
7 communication from your side coming to us, and that's
8 improving. Barbara keeps me abreast of what's going on
9 at the Wrangells so I want to thank her for that.

10

11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Don.

12

13 MR. WOODRUFF: Don Woodruff from Eagle.
14 I think that one of the biggest heartaches I have is that
15 I'm not seeing any large king salmon in my nets anymore.
16 And I think that a 40 pound fish, people think that's a
17 big fish but 10 years ago it was average. And it's going
18 to come up over and over again if I have any say about
19 it. And we're going to try to initiate some action that
20 -- because the people are going to look back at us in the
21 future and say, well, why didn't we do something about
22 this if all of our genetic stock is gone. And so I have
23 to go along with Andy and say we need a long range plan
24 to look at why we're not seeing any large fish and very
25 few 40-pounders.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Virg.

30

31 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, my name is Virgil
32 Umphenour. I share that same concern. In fact our
33 proposal to the Board addresses that concern and so when
34 we deliberate on that I'll discuss that further.

35

36 But besides the lack of genetic integrity
37 in the king salmon, loss of the older age class, I have
38 concerns about the competition in the marine environment
39 still from the hatcheries. And then I see the State
40 Commission of Fish and Game made the exception to the
41 wanton waste statute again this year to allow the
42 hatcheries because they've over produced fish, to take
43 these hatchery fish, remove the roe from them so they can
44 sell the roe and pitch the fish back in the ocean and
45 that just aggravates me so much I can't stand it because
46 this went to court once when I was on the Board of
47 Fisheries and the State's attorney promised the judge in
48 Anchorage that they would never again do this and we've
49 changed Governors and they're doing it again. And so I
50 think some how we need to maybe direct our Staff to go

1 through the court system and do the paperwork because
2 it's a time consuming thing to get that court case out,
3 get our solicitor to get that court case out where the
4 State's attorney promised the court, the judge they would
5 never again do this and they backed down on it and I
6 think we should take legal action against the State to
7 keep them from doing that. Because those hatchery fish
8 that are only being raised for the eggs and being pitched
9 back in the ocean are competing with the wild salmon that
10 come up the Yukon River and all the other rivers because
11 they all compete for the same food in the Bering Sea.
12 And so that, to me, is a major concern and a terrible
13 waste for resource just to raise those fish so they can
14 take the eggs out and hatcheries can try to make a profit
15 and pitch the fish back in the ocean when they're having
16 a detrimental effect on the wild stocks. To me that's
17 criminal.

18
19 Another thing that is a concern to me is
20 the lack of the Federal agencies, and I know it goes by
21 each individual agency to do something about prevention.
22 And I know the Yukon Flats is in terrible shape but I
23 just come in from the field Saturday night, I've been out
24 hunting basically since the 15th of August, except for
25 five days I've been in the field, and of course most of
26 that was spent in the Western Council's area over in Unit
27 24 in the Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge where I guide,
28 but there's not that many moose calves out there, my
29 observation. The survival of the calves is not doing
30 that good and it's because of two reasons; wolves and
31 bears. And so I don't know what we have to do to get the
32 Refuges and BLM off the dime and take some action but
33 something needs to be done, and it needs to be
34 coordinated with the State so that something can be done
35 with methods and means and et cetera because if you get
36 caught chasing a wolf out there on a snowmachine they're
37 going to prosecute you and something needs to be done
38 because calves are just not surviving in many of these
39 areas.

40
41 But those are my two main concerns.

42
43 And I go along with Andy on the bycatch,
44 too. And I see this giant thing here from the Council
45 and it reminds me of when we had a joint Council and when
46 I say Council, I mean North Pacific Fisheries Management
47 Council and Board of Fisheries meeting about seven or
48 eight years ago and that Council wanted to do away with
49 the actual counting of the bycatch because when they
50 counted -- when they compared their sampling method, the

1 way they sampled the bycatch, and I'm talking about
2 bycatch of salmon and then compared it to what they call
3 a whole haul bycatch analysis where they dumped all the
4 fish out, all 200,000 pounds of them that they pull up in
5 the net at once and separated out the salmon and counted
6 them, that there was no correlation whatsoever between
7 their sampling method and what really was the bycatch and
8 so they wanted to do away with it. Well, the Board of
9 Fisheries objected to that. I haven't had an opportunity
10 to look at this thing but I see that one of their first
11 things is to just do away with the bycatch stuff and
12 allow the trawlers to be honest and report it, I imagine.
13 But remember they're motivated by one thing, they're all
14 out of Seattle, and it's called the greenback dollar and
15 they could care less whether people -- whether their
16 bycatch has an impact on people's ability to obtain their
17 subsistence needs met or not. So we need to take a good
18 hard look at that because you can't believe a damn word
19 that a commercial -- a big commercial fishing outfit that
20 are mostly national corporations is going to say, they're
21 not going to give you the honest truth on what their
22 bycatch is.

23

24 But those are my three main concerns.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Jeep.

29

30 MR. TITUS: Philip Titus. My concern is
31 the man-made fish that's introduced in the ocean and
32 putting the impact on the river, it didn't show up this
33 fall but I don't know where all the fish came from, I
34 don't think they came from hatcheries, something is going
35 on out there. I hope it continue. Later.

36

37

38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, thank you
39 guys.

40

41 I have a lot of the same concerns around
42 here, too, but one of my biggest concerns is always going
43 to be the moose population. It's good to see that a lot
44 of people got a lot of fish in this area. I don't know
45 about other areas, but one of my biggest concerns is that
46 there's always going to be predator control.

47

48 There's a lot of -- you see more bears,
49 we're getting rid of some of them bears but not all of
50 them, not the main ones. The main ones kill off all the

1 was a view -- it should just be the view of the
2 Subsistence Management Program to protect those practices
3 by the subsistence user.

4
5 And another thing, what Sue mentioned,
6 are we really here -- I mean there's more Federal people
7 -- I talk to like a lot of people about this, are we
8 really doing something for like to protect how much fish
9 they could catch down here or how much fish they could
10 catch up at the rapids or anywhere else in this Eastern
11 Interior region. We got to get back to the grassroots
12 level. It's not no more somebody in Washington, D. C.,
13 tell you guys what to do and tell you guys, retrain us
14 and how to think and what to say about some of the issues
15 we deal with. Sure we go -- reach out to the like Area M
16 because it has an adverse impact on our -- the bycatch.
17 Sure we attack the hatcheries because they're not
18 supposed to impact wild fisheries. Sure we would like to
19 do predator control but, no, there's no backbone for this
20 Subsistence Program, that's the way I put it. There's
21 backbone in the State program.

22
23 There's a lot of issues that's not being
24 brought out that's coming from the ground level, from the
25 local level except through this and we really don't
26 represent the whole region. There's places that's being
27 left out, Rampart, Manley, other places in our region.
28 There's got to be a way for us, through maybe more local
29 newspaper or something, radio, anything, to where we
30 could get the real ground level story of what's really
31 going on. It may be good now, but it's better to be
32 proactive than reactive. We could kind of see what's
33 coming down the line, see what kind of fish is, see moose
34 are, but I'm tired of being reactive. I've been in this
35 program too long to be beating around the bush no more.
36 IT's just no more man, it's just -- this top management
37 thing got to go away because it ruins the connection
38 between me to like the Federal Subsistence Board. I
39 don't even like to go to those meetings anymore. Just
40 like when we argue over fisheries proposals, we're good
41 friend, me and Jack Reakoff, we're just arguing against
42 each other, we're supposed to go to those meetings to
43 work together, work, things out, not be pitted against
44 each other like it was the last five or six years I've
45 been there. It's just like we're fighting against each
46 other out there and we're not supposed to do that. We're
47 supposed to be there to represent the subsistence user in
48 rural Alaska.

49
50 It's got to be brought back to our level

1 where we could represent the people that we represent, I
2 mean the rural users. They got to have -- right now they
3 think this is nothing, this program is nothing, it's not
4 really helping anybody. It can. We just got to relook
5 at it and go forward with what we got and we might have
6 to make a few changes, but in time, conservation of
7 things, it does have its points, good and bad points, but
8 we got to look at this whole program, are we really
9 protecting the practice of subsistence for the rural
10 user. That's a question that I'm going to put to
11 everybody. Because sometimes I feel like I'm sitting up
12 here for nothing, just appeasing D.C., or appeasing the
13 Federal Subsistence Board or some manager, we got to be
14 here for the people who we represent.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, we captured
19 all that and I think there's a couple items in there that
20 you may want to bring up when we talk about annual
21 report, and I tried to capture those. But for those that
22 brought up some when we get to the annual report, you may
23 want to think about considering them.

24

25 Okay, that would bring us up to review
26 and adoption of the agenda. Gerald and I have talked and
27 I've talked to a couple other members, but with Craig
28 Fleener's travel schedule resulting in him coming in,
29 hopefully in an hour or two, two hours, actually it might
30 be best not to go through the agenda as laid out, so with
31 that it might be easier, your policy has been to adopt
32 the agenda with -- I can't remember your exact words,
33 about flexibility and then allow us to move items up
34 until Fleener arrives and then go back to those action
35 items.

36

37 So with that I would suggest that after
38 you review and adopt the agenda and go through minutes --
39 well, this is a new item for Craig Fleener, so he's not
40 here, so we'll have to bring it up when he arrives but he
41 wanted to look at developing a consent agenda. But since
42 he's not here that might be a little difficult to pull
43 off. But anyways under fisheries we would move up the
44 Fishery Resource Monitoring Program, letter C, to allow
45 those fishery proposals to be on your table when Craig
46 Fleener's here.

47

48 So with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll turn it
49 back to you to decide how the Council wants to deal with
50 the agenda and then you can go forward to the minutes.

1
2 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Usually since we're
3 having meetings in having so much remote places there
4 Vince, usually I just like to propose a floating agenda
5 because that way we can move people in, whoever signs up
6 for public testimony or whoever has a flight to catch or
7 anything, or something that's what I would say.
8
9 MS. ENTSMINGER: Let's do it. You want a
10 motion.
11
12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Uh-huh.
13
14 MS. ENTSMINGER: I make a motion we have
15 a floating agenda.
16
17 MR. WOODRUFF: I'll second it.
18
19 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved and
20 seconded.
21
22 MR. BASSICH: Question.
23
24 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Question has been
25 called. All those in favor of a floating agenda signify
26 by saying aye.
27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.
29
30 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Opposed.
31
32 (No opposing votes)
33
34 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Vince.
35
36 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, with
37 that with the Staff that's present here sometimes you
38 have other Staff coming in, it'd be nice if you could
39 apprise them of where we're at in the agenda or get a
40 hold of one of the Council members. The floating agenda
41 is not to, you know, the floating agenda is to maximize
42 flexibility. So it would help if Staff would keep each
43 other informed of where it's at.
44
45 Okay, then that would bring you up to the
46 meeting minutes from your Fairbanks meeting, they're on
47 Page 7. Mr. Chairman, you may want to look them over and
48 decide what you want to do with that. If there's any
49 additions, corrections we can handle them. So they start
50 on Page 7 and go through Page 21.

1 (Pause)
2
3 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.
4
5 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Andy.
6
7 MR. BASSICH: Vince, I have a question,
8 is there going to be any point during this agenda, this
9 meeting, where we might be able to discuss the
10 possibilities of tri-Council meetings or the process that
11 it would take to do that when we have fisheries issues to
12 talk about. It's been brought up at a couple of meetings
13 and I really don't see anything specifically on our
14 agenda that gives us time to address the possibilities of
15 trying to make that a reality.
16
17 MR. MATHEWS: Well, the only way is the
18 same way you did it the last time is when we get down to
19 the end of the meeting and you guys decide where you're
20 meeting next for the next year. We've internally talked
21 about the tri-Council meeting and then your suggestion
22 about having a tri-Council meeting was shared with
23 Western Interior and I'm not sure if it was shared with
24 Yukon-Kuskokwim. Their feeling is, Western Interior was
25 not supportive a tri-Council meeting based out of the
26 outcomes of the Wasilla meeting. I don't know if YK was
27 asked. Their response, I should say, their response to
28 your request for YK. So back to your original question
29 that would be a time or possibly, not to add on to your
30 annual report, but maybe at that point where you're
31 talking about issues that aren't specific to a certain
32 action item, that might be a time, but there's not a --
33 there's not the support that there was before to have a
34 tri-Council meeting.
35
36 (Pause)
37
38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Anybody have any
39 corrections or is there anything from the meeting minutes
40 from Fairbanks.
41
42 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt the minutes
43 from the last meeting in Fairbanks.
44
45 MR. BASSICH: Second.
46
47 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved by
48 Virgil and seconded by Andy, is there a question.
49
50 MS. ENTSMINGER: Question.

1 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: There's been a
2 question. All those in favor of adopting the Eastern
3 Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting minutes from
4 Fairbanks for March 2005 signify by saying aye.

5
6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7
8 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: There you go Vince.

9
10 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. I wish Craig
11 was here because we had long phone conversations over
12 this develop a consent agenda but that's something when
13 he arrives you may want to talk about.

14
15 Briefly, my understanding is he wanted to
16 mirror what the Federal Subsistence Board, to streamline
17 the meetings, that if there is agreement on issues and I
18 assume that's proposals too across the board it would be,
19 meaning the Regional Council aligns with the Staff
20 recommendation, aligns with the State recommendations,
21 aligns with whatever other entities there, it would be
22 put on the consent agenda and then maybe just briefly
23 brought up on the record but not the full blown Polly or,
24 you know, Laura gets up there and goes through the full
25 analysis review. But without him here, that's my
26 understanding of it. And then that way you'd bring up a
27 motion at the beginning of the meeting and then you'd
28 pass that motion at the end of the meeting. So that's
29 something hopefully Craig will explain it better than I
30 am, but it is a meeting management tool, but it's under
31 the assumption, the Council members as well as the public
32 fully understanding what that means.

33
34 Okay, that brings us up to Fisheries, we
35 already talked about that. The change I forgot about is
36 the in-season managers, and I believe the State requested
37 this too, but they didn't to me directly, but Russ Holder
38 did saying, you know, it would be best to have a post-
39 season review before you guys review proposals so we
40 rearranged the agenda to have a post-season review before
41 you got into proposals, so that's a new change. And I
42 think that makes sense and the Staff is fully aware that
43 they can't use that post-season review to lobby for a
44 position on a proposal. You guys are swift enough if you
45 sense that to stop that, but that I'm sure will not
46 happen.

47
48 So with, then that would bring us up to,
49 since Craig's not here and I believe the Council is
50 willing to wait until he gets here to bring up the action

1 items on proposals, that brings us up to Polly Wheeler
2 with the Fishery Resource Monitoring Program. And,
3 Gerald, I will get back to you when Craig, on your
4 response, on is this program doing anything, I'm sure a
5 lot of Staff heard that loud and clear so I will be
6 responding to that because Craig assigned me a task that
7 I don't think will change your mind, but I think it will
8 give you another viewpoint on an answer to your question.
9 I shouldn't say question, you weren't questioning you
10 were sharing your concern.

11
12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
13 affirmatively)

14
15 MS. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
16 Council members. Again, for the record my name is Polly
17 Wheeler and I'm an anthropologist with the Fisheries
18 Information Services, which is within the Office of
19 Subsistence Management.

20
21 I just handed out a double-sided sheet of
22 paper with a chart on it, one side there's a nice picture
23 of a fish, on the other side there's two charts. The
24 first one is the Yukon River projects I'll be talking
25 about for the 2006 Monitoring Plan. And the table right
26 below that with one project is the interregional project.
27 And I'm just going to go through the materials in your
28 book, Mr. Chair, and Council members. If you have any
29 questions while I'm going through feel free to ask them
30 and then at the end I'll ask you to take the action item
31 of approving the projects or not, but getting your input
32 back to the Federal Board.

33
34 I should say, to my left here is Steve
35 Klein, he's my boss and the Chief of the Fisheries
36 Information Services, and he's going to speak to any
37 questions that you might have on some of the SST projects
38 for the Yukon and also he'll be speaking to the ASL
39 report later on that I know many of you are very
40 interested in.

41
42 The Fisheries Information Services
43 materials are in your book on Pages 83 to 114, and I
44 double checked them all so I'm pretty sure they're
45 correct. Oh, here's my name in case you forget it.

46
47 (Laughter)

48
49 MR. KLEIN: I'm not Polly.

50

1 MS. WHEELER: Yeah, Steve doesn't want to
2 be accused of being Polly.

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 MS. WHEELER: So the materials that I'm
7 going to cover in this section today is the draft, kind
8 of give you some background of the Fisheries Monitoring
9 Program because I know we do it every year but I know you
10 guys have a lot on your plate and you have a lot of
11 information put before you so I'll just give you some
12 background on that and then we'll get into the 2006
13 projects.

14
15 You probably remember, but if you don't
16 this will be a brief introduction. The Fisheries
17 Monitoring Program is within OSM. OSM basically has two
18 components. There's the regulatory component, with which
19 you're all familiar where you have the regulatory
20 proposals and then there's the research component. And
21 at this point, when we assume management authority for
22 fisheries we got monies to put directly towards fisheries
23 research. The goal of the program is to fund the
24 projects that provide information for Federal Subsistence
25 Fisheries Management. Generally speaking, we have usually
26 between five and \$6 million, give and take for the
27 program every year and that funds ongoing projects as
28 well as new projects. Those monies are divided up by
29 region across the state and also by data type.

30
31 So there's the standard biological
32 projects, the SST we call them, stock, status and trends,
33 and then there's the social science projects, the
34 traditional knowledge projects and the harvest monitoring
35 projects.

36
37 Again, the goal of the program is to fund
38 projects that address the highest priority subsistence
39 fisheries issues but we also look to funding projects
40 that are highly technically sound, projects that have
41 broad public support and projects that have a strong
42 capacity building component.

43
44 Speaking a little bit to the concerns by
45 Council member Bassich, we fund projects that provide
46 immediate information, in-season projects, typically weir
47 count, that sort of thing but also we fund the projects
48 that provide long-term information and those are
49 primarily the traditional knowledge projects, so they're
50 not necessarily addressing something that happens right

1 this second but they're establishing a baseline of
2 information that we can go to in the future.

3
4 In terms of getting at the important
5 issues, the Regional Advisory Councils are critical in
6 that process. As you probably remember from five year
7 ago, we relied on the Council members specifically to
8 address the high priority information needs for the
9 research program. Over time those have evolved. We
10 also, you know, if there's an immediate resource issue
11 that comes up we try and tailor it, you know, allow the
12 program to address those issues as well. We look to
13 managers also to come up with issues and this past year,
14 because we didn't have a huge amount of money we kind of
15 pinpointed a couple of key issues that have been of
16 concern. One was kind of what's going on with
17 subsistence harvest over time because we hear, you know,
18 well, subsistence salmon harvests are going up, they're
19 going down, they're flat, so we're kind of looking at
20 what's actually going on over time and what are some of
21 the factors that may be influencing those harvest levels.
22 Unfortunately we didn't have a proposal that addressed
23 that, but, hopefully this next year we will.

24
25 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

26
27 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: (Nods affirmatively)

28
29 MR. BASSICH: A quick question to you on
30 that Polly. What do you hope to be able to present to
31 the Councils in regards to what you were just talking
32 about. Is there any effort being made to have a
33 presentation with results from what you're learning or
34 what you're studying along the lines of how subsistence
35 use is changing, and what kind of a timeframe do you have
36 for getting that to us?

37
38 MS. WHEELER: Well, we didn't get a
39 proposal actually, unfortunately, that addressed that
40 particular issue. So I'm working on it, hopefully for
41 this next call for proposals, we will get a research
42 proposal that addresses that. And if we do get a
43 proposal that addresses that, it would start next spring
44 so probably a year or two or three down the line. We
45 could get some interim results but then if it were a
46 three year project it would be three years down the line.

47
48 But we recognize that it is a critical
49 issue because there's a lot of what ifs or we think this
50 is going on but we haven't really examined the question.

1 So I've actually been out trying to talk to researchers
2 that would be qualified to do something like this, and
3 it's a pretty complex analysis. And hopefully we'll get
4 a proposal that will address that issue in this next call
5 for proposals.

6

7 Mr. Bassich.

8

9 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

10

11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods

12 affirmatively)

13

14 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, I can understand how
15 that would be a pretty complicated study to do. It's
16 also my understanding, though, that there's been quite a
17 bit of information gathered in the previous 10 years
18 through ADF&G and probably through your entity as well as
19 far as interviews. I know there was work being done in
20 my region this year and I guess what I'm asking for is
21 there any way that some of this information can be pooled
22 together, you mentioned Dr. Wolf's study and that that
23 could be presented to us in a fairly short-term, and I
24 don't need a really super in-depth, but I sure would be
25 interested in seeing how some of the changes and trends
26 are changing, both demographically in the communities and
27 also subsistence harvest. And I know that data's already
28 been collected, so rather than reinventing the wheel on
29 all of this, I'd like to see some of the previous data
30 brought to us and put in a format that's, you know,
31 understandable.

32

33 I guess that's what I'd like to see
34 because I think it's already out there, a lot of it is,
35 it just needs to be pulled together and then presented.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 MS. WHEELER: Speaking of that
40 specifically and to this region, in particular, Member
41 Bassich, we do have a project with which you're familiar,
42 Dr. Dave Cruper (ph) with the Park Service is working on
43 a project in particular in the Upper Yukon region and it
44 might be a good idea, you know, we're always looking for
45 potential investigators to come and talk to you at the
46 winter meetings and that might be a good project. I know
47 Dave has been pulling together that information, it's not
48 Yukon wide but it's for the upper Yukon region, so I can
49 speak to Dave and see if he'd be willing to come to the
50 Council at the winter meeting because that might be a

1 good opportunity to -- he's not done with the project but
2 he's made sufficient progress that he'd probably be able
3 to give you an overview of what he's learned.

4

5 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

6

7 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
8 affirmatively)

9

10 MR. BASSICH: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Also
11 what's important to me is I want to hear what's going on
12 in other regions, specifically along the Yukon River with
13 the fisheries and lower river communities. You know I'm
14 familiar with what's going on in my own backyard but I'm
15 really interested in learning more about what's going on
16 statewide. So although I'd love to hear Dave Cruper's
17 report, it's not as important to me as finding out what
18 materials may have been gathered in other regions
19 affecting the Yukon River.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 MS. WHEELER: Duly noted, Mr. Chair. And
24 I'll see what I can do for the winter meeting.

25

26 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

27

28 MS. WHEELER: Along those lines, at least
29 for identifying information needs and obviously we've got
30 one that's a key need here, but we also are engaged in
31 the monitoring program, recognizing that every year that
32 goes by that monies are getting tighter and tighter and
33 it's more and more important that we spend our money
34 addressing the highest priority information needs. We've
35 started a regional strategic planning process so that
36 we're identifying the highest priority needs in each
37 region.

38

39 We've actually held off on the Yukon
40 region because there are several other planning efforts
41 that are going on. There's the AYK Sustainable Salmon
42 Initiative. There's Yukon/Canada planning that's going
43 on. So we're holding off until those planning processes
44 are complete and then we can hopefully dovetail, you
45 know, pick out the Federal Subsistence Board components
46 of those planning processes. But that should help to
47 address your concern that you mentioned earlier in your
48 comments, Andy, on kinds of identifying high priority
49 research needs to sustain subsistence salmon fisheries or
50 subsistence fisheries in general. I recognize that

1 that's only one part of the equation but it is a pretty
2 critical part, and that's what we'll be doing to address
3 that.

4
5 As far as criteria for project selection
6 under our program, and I should say, too, sometimes we
7 use Fisheries Resources Monitoring Program, sometimes we
8 use Fisheries Information Services, basically just to
9 clarify the distinction. Fisheries Resources Monitoring
10 Program or FRMP as some people call it is the program,
11 whereas Fisheries Information Services is the Staff to
12 the program and we have biologists on staff as well as
13 two anthropologists and a statistician and a data base
14 manager and some other people, too, but just to clarify
15 between FIS and FRMP.

16
17 As far as criteria for project selection
18 we, again, look to a strategic priority and it's got to
19 be, obviously a fishery that's under Federal jurisdiction
20 and there's a conservation issue, role of the resource,
21 local concern, all that goes into strategic priority, we
22 look to technical and scientific merit, so it's got to be
23 a project that addresses a high priority. It's got to be
24 a project that's technically sound. We've got to look
25 at, you know, can the investigators do it, how they have
26 performed in the past and then again capacity building;
27 is getting local people involved in the project at
28 different levels.

29
30 As far as the process for project
31 selection goes, we have a Technical Review Committee, and
32 on that Technical Review Committee we have
33 representatives of each of the five Federal agencies, as
34 well as representatives of three divisions within Fish
35 and Game, sportfish, subsistence and commfish. The TRC
36 makes their recommendations, they review all the
37 projects, they make their recommendations which are now
38 before you today. So the Technical Review Committee
39 makes their recommendations, all the Councils review
40 these recommendations and then they finally go to the
41 Federal Subsistence Board and that meeting will be in
42 January. So whomever goes to that meeting from this
43 Council will see these projects again. And I should say
44 Staff, myself and the other anthropologist and the four
45 biologists on staff, we draft the initial
46 recommendations, we review each of the projects and then
47 we draft the initial recommendations, those go to the
48 Technical Review Committee and from then on they're the
49 Technical Review Committee's recommendations. Sometimes
50 the Technical Review Committee goes with FIS Staff

1 recommendations and sometimes they don't. But at least
2 it gives it a starting point.

3
4 As I said this past year was a fairly low
5 money year. There was about a little over \$300,000
6 available for the Yukon region. The guideline model for
7 funding by region is on Page 86 in your books if you're
8 interested. And when this program was designed, they
9 recognized that the -- or the areas that had some of the
10 greatest concerns were the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, and
11 so those actually get the highest, proportionately they
12 get the highest monies dedicated to those two regions.
13 And we have about five percent of the funding on an
14 annual basis is put into what we call the interregional
15 category which, up until this point, has really funded a
16 lot of the projects that kind of cross the AYK, that are
17 kind of within the AYK region but they're not
18 specifically Yukon or not specifically in the Kuskokwim,
19 but five percent of the overall funding every year is put
20 into that category which is why every year when I come
21 before you, you get to vote on not only the Yukon
22 projects but also the interregional category. Because
23 even if it's a project that isn't in your region it's
24 still the overall project monies that are going into that
25 category.

26
27 Overall this year we had 20 projects
28 submitted for funding consideration statewide and there
29 were four of them for the Yukon and after the TRC met
30 they recommended 15 of those 20 projects for funding and
31 three out of the four projects in the Yukon.

32
33 So now to just turn to the Yukon region,
34 and the 2006 Yukon Fisheries Resources Monitoring Plan is
35 on Pages 89 to 106 in your books. And just so you know
36 since this program began in 2000, we're a relatively new
37 program, we funded 67 projects in the Yukon region. Most
38 of the projects as you might imagine are directed at
39 salmon, 53 of them and then 14 of them have been directed
40 at nonsalmon. And, again, these projects provide
41 information needed for Federal Subsistence Fisheries
42 Management to address the high priority issues.

43
44 On Table 1 in your book on Pages 91 and
45 92 are all of the projects that have been funded through
46 this program. And I'd just like to take a minute to
47 acknowledge Stan Zuray over there who's worked incredibly
48 hard on a number of projects that have been funded
49 through our region but in particular Project 01-199 and
50 then Project 04 -- help me out Stan, 263, is that it?

1 MR. ZURAY: I don't know.
2
3 MS. WHEELER: You don't know your
4 project.....
5
6 MR. ZURAY: I just kind of caught my
7 name.
8
9 MS. WHEELER: I caught you off guard,
10 okay, well, I don't mean to embarrass Stan but I just
11 wanted to acknowledge his work, excellent work, on behalf
12 or the Monitoring Program, 04-256, the Tanana
13 Conservation Outreach Project and I'd just like to
14 acknowledge his work and Tanana should be proud to have
15 his work. And I know there's others too but he has been
16 funded twice for a project through our program and I just
17 wanted to acknowledge that.
18
19 MR. ZURAY: Thank you.
20
21 MS. WHEELER: As far as the Yukon region
22 goes, there were four projects as I mentioned that were
23 -- or four investigation plans that were submitted.
24 There were two stock, status and trends projects and two
25 harvest monitoring and TEK projects. The Technical
26 Review Committee spent considerable time reviewing all of
27 these projects and in the end recommended one stock,
28 status and trends and both of the harvest monitoring and
29 TEK projects for funding.
30
31 The developed a prioritized list of
32 projects for the Yukon region and that can be found on
33 Page 95 in your books. And the three projects above the
34 line are recommended for funding. And I should say that
35 in your books on Pages 96 to 106 there's executive
36 summaries of each of the four projects and those
37 executive summaries give you the principal investigators,
38 the addresses of the principal investigators, the co-
39 investigators if there any and it just gives you a thumb
40 nail sketch of the project. And those can give you some
41 of the specifics but I'm just going to highlight a few
42 high points of each of the four projects that we're
43 talking about here.
44
45 06-205. Application of Mixed Stock
46 Analysis for Yukon River fall chum. And this project
47 addresses the issue of mainstem mixed stock analysis in
48 the lower Yukon River. This issue was specifically
49 identified in the 2006 call for proposal. This project
50 is a continuation of the two year feasibility study

1 conducting mixed stock analysis of fall chum sampled from
2 the Pilot Station test fishery and reporting the
3 information to managers in-season. The strategic
4 priority, the technical and scientific merit and past
5 performance of the project are all ranked high and this
6 project was recommended for funding by the Technical
7 Review Committee.

8
9 The next two projects are the 06-252,
10 traditional ecological knowledge and biological sampling
11 of nonsalmon fish in the Yukon Flats region, and then 06-
12 253 traditional ecological knowledge and harvest survey
13 of nonsalmon fish in the middle Yukon River region. That
14 first project is a project that I believe has five
15 partners. Some of them are here. Mike Koskey with the
16 Division of Subsistence is the principal investigator on
17 that project. There's also Wennona Brown the subsistence
18 coordinator for three Refuges, Kanuti, Arctic and --
19 Wennona?

20
21 MS. BROWN: Yukon Flats.

22
23 MS. WHEELER: Yukon Flats, how could I
24 forget, that's where the project is. And Ingrid McSweeney
25 is also on that project, and it's looking at -- it's
26 basically combining social science and biological methods
27 to contribute to contemporary knowledge of nonsalmon
28 species in the Birch Creek area by the residents of Ft.
29 Yukon, Circle, Central, Beaver and Birch Creek. Again,
30 it's looking at nonsalmon fish which may not be as sexy
31 as salmon, you know, as I said 53 of the 67 projects in
32 the Yukon region have been directed at salmon but a small
33 portion have been directed at nonsalmon and I would say
34 that these nonsalmon projects are really critical because
35 there aren't a lot of sources of funding for nonsalmon
36 projects and these species are typically fish that people
37 rely on year-round. They may not provide a real large
38 part of the overall subsistence harvest but because
39 they're fished all year-round they provide a really
40 important part. And most of those species are fish that
41 we don't know a whole heck of a lot about because they
42 haven't had the attention that salmon has had. So these
43 nonsalmon projects have been really key. And what we
44 found in some of them is, you know, as salmon populations
45 decline the importance of these nonsalmon species really
46 increases so they're really critical projects in my mind,
47 not that the salmon projects aren't but these nonsalmon
48 projects have been really critical.

49
50 And the people in these five communities,

1 you know, it's like three to 35 percent of the total
2 subsistence harvest in these communities is comprised of
3 nonsalmon fish so, again, not a huge part but a certainly
4 important part.

5
6 And as you well know in recent years the
7 Birch Creek area has been subject to increasing
8 regulatory scrutiny. There's been a number of proposals
9 that have come before both the Federal Board and the State
10 Fish Board and this project will help address some of the
11 issues that have been raised in those regulatory
12 proposals.

13
14 So that project, again, it's of high
15 strategic priority, it's technical and scientific merit
16 is high and the past performance, you know, the
17 investigators are all well-qualified to do the work.
18 It's also got a really solid capacity building component
19 in working with the Council of Athabascan Tribal
20 Governments and the tribal communities in those areas.
21 So that project was recommended for funding as well.

22
23 And then the other project is looking at
24 somewhat of the same issue in Kaltag, Nulato, Galena,
25 Tanana and Ruby. The PI on that project is Caroline
26 Brown with the Division of Subsistence. She's working
27 with Louden Tribal Council, among others. We've actually
28 funded a project for the Koyukuk River and then one for
29 Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross and this project
30 will kind of fit that gap between those two areas so that
31 we'll have a real comprehensive picture of nonsalmon
32 harvest and also traditional knowledge in sort of the
33 middle Yukon area. And that project, again, addresses a
34 strategic priority, it's technically sound, we've had
35 really excellent work with Caroline in particular, she
36 hit the ground running with the Division of Subsistence
37 and hasn't stopped yet and has just done a stellar job in
38 our program. She's been funded for a couple of projects
39 in our program and has done a stellar job.

40
41 So those are the three projects, Mr.
42 Chair, that have been recommended for funding by the
43 Technical Review Committee. There's one more project
44 that's on that chart and it has a no by it and that's
45 because it's not recommended for funding by the Technical
46 Review Committee. And that's Project 06-202 spawning
47 distribution of fall chum salmon on the Tanana River.
48 And that project proposes to use radiotelemetry to assess
49 the spawning distribution of fall chum salmon stocks on
50 the Tanana River, which, as you know is a significant

1 producer of fall chum salmon. The primary application
2 for the data collected for this project is to assess
3 impacts to spawning habitat from proposed development and
4 that's a use which is by policy outside of the purview of
5 the Monitoring Program.

6
7 The project is definitely technically
8 sound but the limited application of the information to
9 Federal Subsistence Management and as well as the
10 regional funding limit, which as I said is \$319,000
11 precluded the TRC from recommending that one project for
12 funding.

13
14 So, Mr. Chair, with that, I guess I'll
15 stop before I get into the interregional category, the
16 second chart on the bottom of that handout. That top
17 chart has each of the projects for the Yukon region, it
18 has the Technical Review Committee recommendation, it
19 also has the recommendation of the Western Interior
20 Regional Advisory Council because they met last week in
21 McGrath and they voted to support the recommendations
22 made by the Technical Review Committee.

23
24 So with that, Mr. Chair, I'll just stop
25 and if you have any questions and then I would ask for
26 the action item to be to take a look at the
27 recommendations of the Technical Review Committee for the
28 Yukon River projects.

29
30 Mr. Chair.

31
32 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, thank you.
33 Polly, most of these projects are multi-year projects; is
34 that correct?

35
36 MS. WHEELER: (Nods affirmatively)

37
38 MR. BASSICH: Is there plans for keeping
39 us updated on progress of those and how will that be
40 presented to us?

41
42 MS. WHEELER: Thank you. You may not
43 remember but at the winter meetings we actually give you
44 an update on each of the projects and usually what we do
45 is give you a handout. We ask for performance reports
46 from each of the project investigators in December and
47 then we kind of give you -- we take out the highlights of
48 those project performance reports and put them into a
49 handout for you at the winter Council meetings, and we
50 can talk, we'll be prepared, the Staff that's there,

1 it'll either be myself or Cliff Schleusner will be there
2 to talk about each of the projects. We also try and get
3 an investigator or two to come and give you an overview
4 of projects that has been funded through our program so
5 if you have any ideas about somebody that you'd like to
6 come to the winter meetings we're all ears, but that's
7 what we do at the winter meeting, we give you kind of a
8 summary of project status up until that point.

9
10 And one thing I will say is that when we
11 have projects that are funded for more than a year, every
12 May we, I could say request or I could say demand, but we
13 ask for annual report, which is usually pretty
14 comprehensive, kind of what's been going on with the
15 project to date and those are available electronically or
16 in hard copy so if you're interested in a particular
17 project I can provide those to you as well. We also have
18 them available on the web but I recognize that for a lot
19 of people it's kind of a burden to print out a long
20 report so I usually try to give them to people if there
21 are particular ones they're interested in.

22
23 MR. BASSICH: Quick questions.

24
25 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
26 affirmatively)

27
28 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman. Yeah, one of
29 the recommendations I'd like to make to people making
30 presentations, most of these presentations are in the
31 form of PowerPoint and I would really like to see them
32 show up with additional copies of their PowerPoint
33 presentation because quite frankly at these meetings it's
34 pretty hard to digest everything that's thrown before you
35 and for myself I would much prefer to be able to take
36 some of this information home as it was presented to me
37 and be able to review it. And I think it would be a
38 cheap, very affordable way to get that information to us
39 and we don't have to lug around pounds and pounds of
40 paper, but I would like to make that recommendation to
41 people giving presentations and then maybe that could be
42 something that could be as a regular process in the
43 future.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 MS. WHEELER: Just a question, Mr. Chair.
48 Do you mean an electronic copy or a paper copy?

49
50 MR. BASSICH: Electronic. On a CD or on

1 a DVD or whatever, you know, that's an easy way for us to
2 look at it and it's an easy way for me to keep files at
3 home and I don't have to carry tons of paperwork home.

4

MS. WHEELER: All right.

6

MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

8

MS. WHEELER: I got that, thank you.

10

VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Virg.

12

13 MR. UMPHENOUR: So Polly on this GSI
14 project on the fall chums, No. 06-205, so how many
15 different groupings, separate groupings do they have
16 identified right now?

17

18 MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman. For that
19 project they separate out summer and fall chum, and then
20 on the fall chum they break that out into, I believe it's
21 four stock groupings. And calculate those percentages
22 for the five groupings.

23

24 MR. UMPHENOUR: When did it become able
25 to break them out into four stock groupings in the fall
26 chums and what are the four stock groupings?

27

28 MR. KLEIN: This project has been going
29 on for a couple of years and they've been doing it for
30 the past few years. The exact groupings -- I don't know
31 the exact groupings for that project. Gene, can you help
32 us?

33

MR. SANDONE: Yeah, I can help you out.

35

36 REPORTER: Wait, you need to come up
37 here.

38

39 MR. SANDONE: My name is Gene Sandone,
40 I'm the regional supervisor for Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim
41 region, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

42

43 There are four groupings and I believe
44 that they are mainstem Canada, border Canada, U.S.
45 border, and Tanana. And there's probably a more of an
46 expert than I am, if Fred Bue's in the audience -- is
47 that right Fred?

48

49 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. Fred Bue with
50 the Fish and Game. As far as we're concerned at this

1 point it's still very preliminary. The Canadians have
2 different breakouts, State Fish and Game has different
3 breakouts, and Fish and Wildlife Service have different
4 breakouts. All that information is still preliminary,
5 they haven't gone through and cross-checked. And so some
6 of those groups will overlap and depending on their
7 developing the technique and matching across those. They
8 have some preliminary information but it's still isn't
9 very verified and we expect it to be developing and
10 getting better throughout the season.

11
12 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, thank you, Fred. So
13 basically what the project is doing is it's kind of in
14 its beginning as far as being able to separate out, say,
15 the Chandler, Sheenjak stocks and Porcupine stocks from
16 the mainstem that cross over at Eagle and the Tanana; is
17 that basically where they're at?

18
19 MR. BUE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That's the
20 idea is to start with the coarsest groups and get those
21 as close as you can and also what that study is doing is
22 trying to do it over time as the fish enter the river,
23 and so it's not just a total run but it's to see the
24 progression over time is the intent. And all these
25 things are developing at the same time, and initially
26 we'd like to get those coarse groups because that's part
27 of the impetus is with the US/Canada agreement and that's
28 where we have this big importance to get it going right
29 now for the TAC and such.

30
31 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you, that's good to
32 hear.

33
34 Mr. Chair.

35
36 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Mike, do you want
37 to get in on this.

38
39 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mike
40 Smith, Tanana Chiefs Conference. And, Virgil, I was a
41 little involved in discussion on this genetic project
42 because we had participated with the State and the Feds
43 and trying to get some money to study the Area M genetic
44 problem. In that effort we -- in a joint effort with the
45 Feds and the State we put together a proposal to Senator
46 Stevens to fund some genetic work. That money is
47 currently sitting in an appropriation bill in Congress
48 right now, in committee right now, and we had hoped, I
49 believe it's sitting at \$2.5 million. And the intent of
50 course is to try to develop the baselines for salmon

1 stocks in our region.

2

3 There was some concern between the State
4 and the Federal procedures on how to do this genetic
5 work. There is some conflict over which was the best
6 process to use, use micro-satellites or what are called
7 snips. They're two different genetic processes. The
8 micro-satellite stuff has been worked on in this state
9 and in Canada for a number of years and the snips stuff
10 is kind of just in its infancy.

11

12 It's my understanding and I may be a
13 little wrong on this but as far as the regional
14 distribution of the stocks go, the Feds and the
15 Canadians, last year, and this year did their own kind of
16 test and compared it and got accuracy rates way up into
17 the 90s so the Canadians and the Feds are pretty much
18 right on on their genetic baselines for chum salmon. And
19 it's my understanding and I may be a little off on the
20 numbers but it's something like 19 regional stocks that
21 they've developed already and are able to identify and,
22 you know, whether or not that's comparable to what the
23 State comes up with, I guess, you know, that's a conflict
24 that is a battle between the State and the Feds and the
25 Canadians over that right now.

26

27 The question becomes how much clarity do
28 we need. Are those 19 individual stocks sufficient for
29 management purposes or do we need to go even further than
30 that to individual tributary stocks. You know that's
31 something for the geneticists to argue about and stuff
32 but I just wanted to let you guys know that we are
33 involved and hopefully by this time next year we'll have,
34 in a joint effort with the Feds and the State \$2.5
35 million to do just genetic work.

36

37 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Jeep, you
38 wanted to say something.

39

40 MR. TITUS: I just got a comment for Mike
41 on this individual streams, we had a help get back from
42 Toklat and hardly anybody fished them stocks so I would
43 -- consider - make a note that people should be able to
44 fish, like nobody fished on them stocks up the Toklat but
45 the down river people should be able to fish them stocks
46 -- fish even if the fish in there are low, know what I
47 mean. There's no reason we should be concerned about
48 Toklat because nobody fish up there, hardly.

49

50 MR. SMITH: If I might comment. Yeah,

1 thank you, Mr. Titus. And I think that's the intent,
2 eventually the intent of genetic sampling and genetic
3 identification of individual stocks of fish is important.

4
5 The way they're trying to implement it in
6 Canada, for example, and I think Virgil is probably aware
7 of this, is in one of their trawl fisheries, for example,
8 their king salmon may have -- I forget the name of the
9 river, but it's broke out into 13 distinct tributaries
10 and at the beginning of the trawl season they take like
11 100 fish out of that season and they do the exact
12 percentage make up for each individual tributary of that
13 run. When they do that they can look at which is the
14 dominant tributary in that run at that time and if that
15 tributary is threatened or they're worried about the
16 number of fish they won't let them fish. They'll do the
17 same test in the next week and if that percentage has
18 dropped a little bit then they'll let them start fishing.

19
20 So that's hopefully where we'll end up
21 with this type of genetic stuff in the future and just
22 how we get there and stuff is kind of where we're at.
23 But that's exactly kind of what we would hope would
24 happen with that type of testing.

25
26 MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair.

27
28 MR. TITUS: But the fish don't even go up
29 the Yukon River and they weren't allowed to fish, you
30 know.

31
32 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
33 affirmatively)

34
35 MR. SANDONE: I just want to clarify
36 something, Mr. Umphenour's question was specifically for
37 this project and I answered it for this specific project.
38 I just wanted to say that this is a U.S. Fish and
39 Wildlife Service project and ADF&G has nothing to do with
40 it. We've asked for the data and we've asked for the
41 database to kind of look over what they've done and we're
42 in the process of receiving that information

43
44 But the four stocks, the four groupings,
45 as I understand it, Mr. Umphenour are Canada mainstem,
46 border Canada, which probably includes some portions of
47 the mainstem and also Canadian Porcupine, Sheenjak,
48 Chandler and then the Tanana, and that's how I understand
49 it.

50

1 Again, the accuracy classifications, U.S.
2 Fish and Wildlife and Canada, they say they have a
3 standardized database that they've exchanged samples and
4 conducted the simulations and they agreed that they are
5 standardized and they are in agreement with each other
6 and I assume, and I don't know this for a fact, but I
7 assume since they're breaking it out into four distinct
8 groupings, that their grouping is over 90 percent
9 accuracy.

10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Steve.

12
13 MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chair. We could ask the
14 investigators for this project to come to the winter
15 meeting and do a presentation on the project if that was
16 of interest to the Council.

17
18 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, I think it
19 would.

20
21 MR. KLEIN: And as Polly said we'll have
22 several presentations and this could be one. If you have
23 other ideas, let Polly or I or Cliff or Vince know and
24 we'll make sure we get some presentations at that winter
25 meeting.

26
27 MS. WHEELER: Okay, Mr. Chair. Again, I
28 guess we're back to the four projects in front of you, if
29 you have any other specific questions about those
30 projects, if I can't answer them I'll find someone who
31 can.

32
33 But I would ask if the Council would to
34 take action one way or the other on these projects, you
35 can do it as a group or you can do it individually. It's
36 your pleasure.

37
38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Well, could you
39 wait until after lunch?

40
41 MS. WHEELER: Mr. Chairman, for sure.

42
43 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay. I told them
44 at 12:00 o'clock, so I'll run down there and get lunch
45 and come back and we'll just resume after that there,
46 Vince.

47
48 MR. MATHEWS: Okay.

49
50 (Off record)

1 (On record)
2
3 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I'd like to call
4 this meeting back to order and we'll go back to where we
5 left off with Polly Wheeler, talking about the mixed
6 stock analysis of Dolly Varden or whatever.
7
8 Polly.
9
10 MS. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. It's your
11 choice. You can vote on the Yukon River projects as a
12 package, vote on them individually or I can talk about
13 the interregional project and then you can vote on the
14 whole package; it's up to you, Mr. Chair, however you
15 want to go about doing it.
16
17 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: We'll do it all in
18 one shot.
19
20 MS. WHEELER: Okay. So I'll just cover
21 the.....
22
23 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Well, wait, does
24 anyone have any heartburn on any of this -- if the
25 Council members really don't have no opposition or
26 heartburn on this, like I said, we'll just all vote on it
27 at one time, all these plans right here to support them.
28
29 (Council nods affirmatively)
30
31 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Seeing none, just
32 go ahead.
33
34 MS. WHEELER: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.
35
36 The last project on the bottom, the chart
37 on the bottom of that sheet is one project, it's the
38 interregional project. As I mentioned earlier the way
39 that the program is structured is there's percentages of
40 the monies that go towards each region regardless of how
41 much money is available, it's based on a percentage goes
42 towards each region. Yukon gets 20 percent, Kuskokwim
43 gets 20 percent, the interregional category gets five
44 percent.
45
46 So the reason why this project is before
47 you is it's five percent of the overall monies. While
48 this project isn't specifically in your region, it's five
49 percent of the overall monies available statewide so we
50 ask each Council to take a look at this project and say

1 whether or not they agree with the Technical Review
2 Committee recommendation.

3
4 This category.....

5
6 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I have one question
7 there.

8
9 MS. WHEELER: Sure.

10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Polly, if we
12 support this bottom project right here would it have any
13 way affect of funding for these other projects up here,
14 on the top of this?

15
16 MS. WHEELER: No, Mr. Chairman.

17
18 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay, thank you.

19
20 MS. WHEELER: The interregional category,
21 as I said, it gets five percent of the total project
22 funding. Since this program started there's been 12
23 projects that have been funded under this category and
24 some of you were involved with the statewide harvest
25 assessment working group, that was a project that was
26 funded under the interregional category. We have another
27 project that compiles subsistence fisheries harvest
28 numbers for every region in the state into one report,
29 and that's another project that's funded under the
30 interregional category. So it's a broad array of
31 different projects that are funded under this category.
32 And we currently have a database project that's going on
33 in the interregional category and there's a genetic
34 markers project differentiating among whitefish species
35 as well.

36
37 The one project that is before you today,
38 it addresses stock composition of Dolly Varden in the
39 Togiak, Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers. Mixed stocks of
40 Dolly Varden enter each of these rivers in large numbers
41 and sustain subsistence fisheries, and as we talked about
42 earlier before lunch these nonsalmon fish can be really
43 critical for subsistence fishers. The question in this
44 project is what portion of these returns that are
45 comprised of these three stocks. The project is
46 technically sound, and the TRC does recommend it for
47 funding, Mr. Chair.

48
49 So with that, again, you've got basically
50 five projects before you. Four on the Yukon River

1 category, one in the interregional category. And the TRC
2 has recommended three out of the four projects on the
3 Yukon for funding and they did not recommend Project 06-
4 202 largely because the nexus to Federal management is
5 weak. And then they did recommend the interregional
6 project for funding.

7
8 So with that, Mr. Chair, I'll give it
9 back to the Council.

10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Are there any
12 questions about this resource managing thing.

13
14 MR. BASSICH: Do you want a motion.

15
16 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yes.

17
18 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to
19 make a motion that we adopt the recommendations of the
20 TRC for funding for Projects 06-205, 06-252, 06-253 and
21 06-701.

22
23 MR. UMPHENOUR: Second.

24
25 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Discussion.

26
27 MS. ENTSMINGER: Call for the question.

28
29 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved to
30 adopt the recommendations by the TRC and been seconded
31 and the question's been called. All those in favor
32 signify by saying aye.

33
34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35
36 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: All those opposed,
37 same sign.

38
39 (No opposing votes)

40
41 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead.

42
43 MS. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
44 last item that I have for you today under the Fisheries
45 Resources Monitoring Program, and then I'll turn it over
46 to Mr. Klein here, is the Partners Program.

47
48 In your book on Page 113 and 114 there's
49 a summary of the Partners Program in your region, there's
50 actually three Yukon River biologists, one for the lower

1 river, one for the middle river, one for the upper river.
2 The middle river is Kim Elkin, she works with Tanana
3 Chiefs Conference. The position actually in the upper
4 river is now vacant, Gretchen Sideroff had that position
5 with Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments but she
6 recently resigned. So I don't know if Mike Smith wanted
7 to give a short update.....

8

9 (Laughter)

10

11 MS. WHEELER:on the, just a
12 qualifier there Mike.....

13

14 (Laughter)

15

16 MS. WHEELER:on the Partners
17 Program or what Kim Elkins is up to. But unfortunately
18 Kim's not here and so maybe Mike could speak a little
19 bit as to Kim's activities under the Partners Program,
20 and if not I could just refer you to the update in your
21 -- oh, he's walking up, I guess we're covered.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Polly, for that
26 invite.

27

28 (Laughter)

29

30 MR. SMITH: I appreciate that.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 MR. SMITH: As Polly mentioned, we've
35 been active participants in the Partners Program since
36 its inception. And I think, I'm not sure of it, but I
37 think we may be the longest employee.....

38

39 MS. WHEELER: You and Native Village of
40 Eyak.

41

42 MR. SMITH: Yeah. And Kim has been with
43 the program from the beginning and she is one of the few
44 biologists who has been in there since the beginning.

45

46 The program we're currently working on
47 right now, we have four projects that we're currently
48 working on. Kim is involved with a whitefish tagging
49 study up in the Kanuti. We just recently, this is the
50 first year of a three year project we have with U.S. Fish

1 and Wildlife Service to run the Henshaw Creek weir. We
2 also have a contract with the Tech Pogo Mine people to do
3 king salmon enumeration on the Good Pasture River, which
4 is a project we're really excited about and I'll go into
5 that a little bit more. We also had a joint project with
6 CATG, Department of Fish and Game and Tanana Chiefs for a
7 science camp that we've been putting on up in Ft. Yukon.
8 It started this year and next year will be our second
9 year for that and, while we've had some problems with
10 that project in the past, we hope to get those worked out
11 and we hope to have the camp next year as well.

12
13 The Good Pasture River chinook project is
14 actually, I think, a real exciting project for the
15 Partnership Program as well as TCC and king salmon in
16 general. The project kind of came to us as a result of
17 TechPogo's water quality permit. Part of that water
18 quality permit dictates that they have to monitor the
19 king salmon in the Good Pasture River. In the past it
20 was thought that the Good Pasture maybe did not have a
21 lot of king salmon going up and in fact the TechPogo
22 environmental study indicated that they had about 700
23 fish going up there. Fish and Game came in and said,
24 well, no, we think it's more than that and they said they
25 had thought they had about 1,400 king salmon going up
26 there. Well, last year our first counting project, last
27 year, we counted 3,700 fish going up there which is a
28 substantial number of king salmon far exceeding what was
29 anticipated. So the Good Pasture is, and hopefully we
30 think becoming a very good contributor to the king salmon
31 runs. We hope to expand that project -- it's anticipated
32 to be funded by TechPogo for about 10 years. In
33 conjunction with that we hope to develop some proposals
34 and projects that will couple that enumeration project
35 with some out-migration work and some smolt work.

36
37 There hasn't been a lot of smolt work or
38 juvenile work on king salmon in the Yukon tributaries as
39 of late and we hope to have -- if we could hook it up
40 with the enumeration project we hope to have a really
41 good long-term project that might be able to provide us
42 with some indexes as to spawners and survivability of
43 smolts.

44
45 In the past three years we've also
46 trained approximately 54 to 70 youth from our region in
47 various fishery projects. We're real proud of that fact
48 and we hope to do that every year and all of our projects
49 have a real big capacity building component.

50

1 And what we've kind of come to now is we
2 contract out to the local village councils to provide
3 labor for our projects and they are village council
4 employees, not TCC employees and that seems to be working
5 pretty well.

6
7 That's it in a nutshell.

8
9 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Virg.

10
11 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, I grew up in a
12 mining area in Arizona and the big problem there is the
13 seepage from the taylings and so I know that at Red Dog
14 what I predicted would happen happened and everything's
15 dead down stream from the taylings because the Ph is too
16 low, it's too acidic. And so my question is this, is
17 there any way that seepage from the taylings from this
18 mill, from the mill where they actually process the oar
19 will leak into the Good Pasture? And then my second
20 question is, is there going to be any monitoring of the
21 Ph of the Good Pasture River?

22
23 MR. SMITH: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
24 Chairman. Virgil, yeah, there is constant water
25 monitoring being done -- I believe that's being done by
26 the Northern Environmental Center, who is doing the water
27 quality monitoring. The seepage concern, it's my
28 understanding that the mine indicates that it should not
29 be much of a concern because of the methodology that
30 they're going to be using. Basically what they're going
31 to do is dump all that water back into the mine, and they
32 hope that with that water going back into the mine shafts
33 that will eventually filter out through the substraits
34 and if and when it does get to the water table it would
35 be filtered out already.

36
37 Whether or not that's going to work I'm
38 not sure. I'm not that much of a water quality expert.
39 But certainly part of their water quality permit is the
40 constant monitoring for the life of the mine.

41
42 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 MS. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. The next item
45 on the agenda for the Fisheries Information Services is
46 what you've all been waiting for, the Yukon, the chinook
47 salmon age, sex and length analysis report and Mr. Klein
48 here is going to be giving you an overview of that
49 report.

50

1 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
2 affirmatively)

3
4 MR. KLEIN: Thanks, Polly. Council
5 members. Mr. Chair. About a month ago we sent out a
6 draft report that Cliff Schleusner and Karen Hyer have
7 been working on for the Yukon chinook ASL project.
8 That's a draft report that we're finalizing. And
9 hopefully that will be completed in December and all of
10 you will be getting a copy of it.

11
12 Cliff Schleusner who is your biologist
13 for the Yukon and Karen Hyer who is a statistician on our
14 staff have been looking at ASL information for the Yukon
15 for about the past two years, both getting all the
16 information together which proved to be quite a task and
17 then analyzing the information and then getting a lot of
18 technical experts to review it. Unfortunately neither
19 Cliff nor Karen could make it to this meeting but I'll
20 try to do the report justice and what I have for you is
21 kind of a PowerPoint presentation that kind of boils the
22 report down to the basic results and what our conclusions
23 were from the research, and that's what I'm going to
24 present this afternoon.

25
26 So you all have a copy of the PowerPoint
27 presentation, and we were going to put it up on the
28 screen but it didn't project so well so if we could just
29 work through this handout and if you get lost of where I
30 am just say, Klein, where the heck are you or Polly give
31 me an elbow and I'll try to explain where we're at.

32
33 So by way of introduction, what really
34 prompted this research is kind of what we heard this
35 morning when you went over your regional concerns. That
36 the size of the fish is declining in the Yukon, there's
37 concern about that as well as the percentage of females.
38 We've also heard the same concerns about managers and one
39 of the potential causes could be gillnet selectivity and
40 we've had gillnets, as you know, operating for about the
41 past 80 years and if that's having a negative impact we
42 ought to be addressing that.

43
44 So what we did is, Karen and Cliff,
45 there's many different ways you can look at size and
46 percentage of females and Virgil's got even some
47 different ways but what we did is we said, well, let's
48 look at the spawning grounds, let's see what's happening
49 on the spawning grounds and look where we have a long-
50 term data set. So on the third slide down for

1 objectives, this is what we decided to look at.

2

3 The four questions we asked:

4

5 Is the proportion of female chinook
6 salmon changing.

7

8 Is the proportion of large chinook salmon
9 changing.

10

11 Also looked at the percentage of six and
12 seven year old chinook salmon, is there a
13 change in the percentage of the oldest
14 age fish.

15

16 And then we also looked at the length at
17 age.

18

19 Then on Page 2, in the middle there, see
20 the map there, those are the six systems that we looked
21 at. We looked at two systems in the lower river, and,
22 again, we're looking for areas where we have at least 10
23 years of data and then the lower river we had the
24 Andreafsky and the Anvik. We had three systems in the
25 middle, the Gisasa, the Chena and the Salcha, and then
26 one system in the upper Yukon and that was the Big Salmon
27 River, and that's what you see on your map there.

28

29 In the bottom slide on Page 2 you see a
30 graph which shows the seven data sets that we looked at.
31 So we got six systems on the Andreafsky, actually there
32 was a long-term data set with carcass sampling, and all
33 of the dark bars there are carcass samples, so this is
34 why they're going on the spawning grounds and collecting
35 carcasses and doing the age, sex, length analysis.

36

37 The two open blocks, those are weirs, and
38 there's a weir on the Andreafsky and one on the Gisasa,
39 and it shows the data. So looking at the data sets, the
40 data we had, it went from 1970 to 2004, so it ranged from
41 nine years in the Big Salmon to 28 years in the Salcha
42 River. Unfortunately for a clean data set to really draw
43 trends there's some things going on that you really don't
44 like, none of the data sets are complete, like they don't
45 all go from 1970 to 2004. Some might be, Gisasa and the
46 Big Salmon, they don't even overlap, they're covering
47 different time periods. And on the Andreafsky, we have
48 both weir and carcass.

49

50 But this is the best data we could have

1 where we're looking at the spawning grounds and what fish
2 eventually make it to the fisheries and to the spawning
3 grounds and these are the longest data sets that we have
4 available.

5
6 So turning to the results on Page 3. For
7 the first objective, again, we're looking at the
8 proportion of female chinook salmon and whether that
9 percentage changes over time. And then the blue boxes
10 there for three of the systems we didn't see any change
11 over time, and that was the two Andreafsky samples and
12 the one on the Gisasa. For three of the systems we did
13 see decreases. And on the Anvik, the Chena and the Big
14 Salmon we did see decreases. And then actually on the
15 Salcha River, the percentage of females actually
16 increased over the time period.

17
18 So there's kind of a mixed bag of
19 results.

20
21 For objective two, there we're looking at
22 the percentage of large fish and large fish, we're
23 looking at over 35 inches from mid-eye to fort(ph), and
24 there for three of the data sets we did not see a change,
25 for four of the data sets there were decreases and the
26 decreases were in the Anvik, the Chena, the Salcha and
27 the Big Salmon, these are decreases in the percent of
28 large fish and it ranged -- most of those decreases were
29 like two to four percent a year and the Big Salmon it was
30 even larger, it was averaging about seven percent a year.

31
32 Turning to Page 4, objective three, we're
33 looking at the percentage of six year old and seven year
34 old chinook. The top graph covers the six year old fish
35 and we're trying to see is the age of salmon decreasing.
36 And we had another mixed bag. For three of the systems
37 there was no change in the percentage of six year old
38 fish. For three of the systems we did see a change and
39 that was Andreafsky on the weir, although on the carcass
40 survey there was no change. The Anvik was at a small
41 decrease. The Big Salmon there was a fairly large
42 decrease. And the Salcha, actually the percentage of six
43 year olds actually increased over time.

44
45 For the seven year olds, which is the
46 middle slide there, for five of the data sets there's no
47 change, one of the systems, Big Salmon the percentage of
48 seven year old fish had actually increased and in the
49 Chena River we saw a decrease.

50

1 And finally for objective 4 we're looking
2 at the length at age for the oldest fish, six and seven
3 year olds and we looked at both males and females and
4 they were just trying to -- we're on the bottom slide
5 here for Objective 4, the lighter fish those are the weir
6 samples, and the solid fish are the carcass surveys. But
7 here you can see by the number of fish the common result
8 was really there was no change in the length at age. And
9 that's 17 of the 20 data sets there was no change for
10 either six or seven year olds, males or females.

11
12 And then for decreases, there were
13 actually nine cases where there was a decrease in the
14 length at age and one of the data sets showed an
15 increase.

16
17 On the next page we've summarized our
18 conclusions that we draw from the data.

19
20 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, let me.....

21
22 MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chair.

23
24 REPORTER: Gerald, your mic.

25
26 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, I was just
27 thinking -- I just have a question here, the length at
28 age seven and six year olds, is that just the length of
29 the fish not the size of it, you guys don't include the
30 size of the fish like if it was a big fish, long skinny
31 fish or a long fat fish?

32
33 MR. KLEIN: Good question, Mr. Chair.
34 Did not explain that analysis very well. For length at
35 age we're looking at over time is for six year old males
36 for example, is it are they getting bigger over time for
37 the six year old male component of the population or is
38 it getting smaller, and what the analysis showed whether
39 you're looking at six year olds or seven year olds, male
40 or female the most common result was the length over
41 time, they're not getting bigger, they're not getting
42 smaller. That's what we found in 17 of the 27 cases.
43 The Big Salmon, and especially there we did see a
44 decrease and so what the data's showing, is for that data
45 set, the six and seven year olds, both males and females
46 are decreasing in the Big Salmon River.

47
48 Does that answer the question?

49
50 MR. BASSICH: I think Mr. Chairman's

1 question, what he was asking doesn't relate to the
2 correlation in length at age, he's probably -- if I'm not
3 mistaken he's asking was there any data collected on
4 whether the fish have either a larger girth or were
5 heavier and I know that that would probably be a little
6 difficult to do because weight was probably not taken in
7 previous studies, girth or weight, but I think that's of
8 great interest to me anyway.

9
10 MR. KLEIN: That would be very
11 interesting, I agree. And, yes, unfortunately there was
12 no weight or girth measurements taken for any of these
13 data sets to my knowledge.

14
15 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Why I asked that, a
16 healthy fish is different than a -- a healthy well fed
17 fish is different than a starving one that most of them -
18 - the ones we're seeing now days compared to ones we used
19 to see. I would like to see that data included in this
20 report otherwise it's not what we asked for three years
21 ago, age, length, sex and size. It matters. Size of the
22 fish matters. Because if we look back in history since
23 commercial fishing started they selected the biggest fish
24 out of all of these stocks that we're dealing with. And
25 I was finding the material here that you guys could
26 probably see that size selection does matter over time,
27 so that's what we're hitting at, that's why it supports
28 our proposals here -- support all our proposals. I'd
29 like to see that included in there, these reports because
30 it makes a lot of difference. Because most of those fish
31 that got sold and then 20, 30 years ago were weighed,
32 they were weighed because the pounds of fish or their
33 weight mass but they were large fish, If I'm hitting on
34 something there, correct, Virg.

35
36 MR. UMPHENOUR: (Nods affirmatively)

37
38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Keep going.

39
40 MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
41 Continuing on on Page 5 are the conclusions that were
42 drawn from the data that we looked at.

43
44 So the first question of our objective
45 was, has the proportion of female chinook salmon declined
46 over time in the Yukon River drainage, and our conclusion
47 is no, there's no drainage wide pattern of decrease.
48 What the results showed was for three of the systems,
49 yes, there was a decrease but for four of the systems
50 there was either no change or an increase.

1 So at the tributary level, you know,
2 there are documented declines in the percentage of female
3 but no overall trend in all the systems.

4
5 And actually in the Chena and Salcha,
6 which are two systems that are close together although
7 different, the Chena we saw a decrease, in the Salcha we
8 saw an increase in the percentage of females over time.

9
10 And we did see -- actually there was a
11 fairly large decrease in the percentage of Big Salmon
12 females but unfortunately there's no data there for the
13 last 14 years, which I'll address in our recommendations.

14
15 The second objective we're addressing is
16 No. 2 on the middle slide. There we're looking at the
17 percentage of large fish and if we look at the pattern
18 there there is a decrease in the size of fish over time,
19 and we saw that in the Anvik, the Chena, the Salcha and
20 the Big Salmon, and in the Andreafsky and Gisasa there
21 wasn't a change but they weren't increasing. So there
22 our conclusion is, yes, that the size of fish is
23 decreasing.

24
25 For the third objective on the third
26 slide on Page 5, for the proportion of six and seven year
27 old fish and, again, this is the largest fish there was
28 really no discernible trends in either six or seven year
29 olds that were drainage wide. For the six year olds we
30 saw three of the populations where it had decreased, for
31 the other four data sets there was either no change or an
32 actual decrease. And for the seven year olds, the
33 percentage of seven year olds there was five cases where
34 there was no change, one increase and one decrease.

35
36 And then the final objective has the
37 length at age for the six and seven year old, both male
38 and female decline over time and there, again, we didn't
39 really see a pattern where there was consistent decreases
40 in all systems that -- or these six systems where we
41 sampled.

42
43 The Big Salmon, there, there's definitely
44 something going on. In the percentage of females there
45 was a sharp decline in the proportion of large fish there
46 was a decrease and at the length of age it actually
47 decreased for the six and seven year olds, both male and
48 females. But there, again, we don't have any data for
49 the Big Salmon for the past 14 years and, boy, if we had
50 that data set that would be a very valuable data set if

1 that had been continued over the last 14 years.

2

3 Continuing on to Page 6.....

4

5 MR. BASSICH: Excuse me.

6

7 MR. KLEIN: Yes.

8

9 MR. BASSICH: I guess I'm not fully
10 understanding that. You're saying you're not having --
11 you don't have data sets for the past 14 years so how do
12 you analyze that, what are you comparing when you're
13 saying there's been an increase or decrease, what are
14 your two data sets or whatever that you're comparing to
15 get these results?

16

17 MR. KLEIN: Member Bassich. Mr. Chair.
18 First I was kind of summarizing for all the systems
19 within the Yukon for overall trends. But what I just
20 brought up there was in the Big Salmon, the conclusions,
21 it relates to the time period that is covered, and for
22 the Big Salmon, that data set covered from 1980 to 1989.
23 So for that 10 year period we saw some significant
24 declines in the percentage of females, the percentage of
25 large fish and the proportion of six and seven year olds
26 over time.

27

28 MR. BASSICH: What were those two dates
29 again?

30

31 MR. KLEIN: For the Big Salmon, it's 1980
32 to 1989 -- excuse me, 1980 to 1990, and in 1986 there was
33 no collection.

34

35 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

36

37 MR. KLEIN: So, yeah, through that time
38 series if it continued on, I mean it was showing
39 decreases in both size and the percentage of females,
40 that would be a very valuable data set to have continued
41 because something, at least for that 10 year period up
42 until 1990 there was some very significant declines.

43

44 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

45

46 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
47 affirmatively)

48

49 MR. BASSICH: I'd just like to make on
50 comment and I think it's really important, this is the

1 data set that we normally would call mainstem salmon,
2 mainstem king salmon, just for clarification. All these
3 other ones are fish that don't progress far up the river,
4 generally speaking, as far up the river, so I just wanted
5 to make that point on record.

6

7 Thanks.

8

9 MR. KLEIN: Continuing on on Page 6, it's
10 kind of a summary of the application of this. There's
11 several things we wanted to stress. What we did was we
12 sampled the spawning grounds, so this is after they've
13 passed through the fisheries, it doesn't represent the
14 total run. If we sampled down at the mouth of the Yukon,
15 particularly in years where you had significant
16 fisheries, the run coming into the river would probably
17 reflect something different.

18

19 One of the impetuses for the study is
20 gillnet selectivity. Selecting out the largest
21 individuals and that's why we're seeing potential
22 declines in either size or females.

23

24 Selectivity, we know gillnets are
25 selective. If you change the mesh size you're going to
26 catch smaller fish. Is that what's causing these
27 declines, really you would need the pre-fishery data
28 before there was fisheries and know the size of the
29 population there or at least some older data to really be
30 able to shed insight on to that. And during these time
31 periods there's a lot of cycles within salmon populations
32 and certainly marine productivity and there's been some
33 fairly significant changes, especially recently, and
34 environmental conditions could cause declines as well as
35 selectivity and they could be operating in concert or
36 together or opposing.

37

38 In terms of recommendations, I mean the
39 data set in Canada as Member Bassich
40 referred to, that should really be a high
41 priority. There's no ASL data being
42 collected on the spawning grounds in
43 Canada. That would be our top
44 recommendation is to get data to continue
45 to monitor that.

46

47 Our second recommendation is to continue
48 these data sets that we have and continue
49 to look at trends in age, sex and length
50 over time and where possible even expand

1 them.

2

3 The third recommendation, we have
4 information from some of the spawning
5 areas. There is information from the
6 commercial fishery, there's really
7 nothing from the subsistence fishery and
8 it would be of value to have ASL
9 information from subsistence harvests.

10

11 And that's really what we got from those
12 seven data sets.

13

14 I'd be happy to answer any questions.

15

16 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: How far back do you
17 -- I know there's a lot of data on this age, sex, length
18 studies, I mean there's a lot of data back on -- how far
19 back would you guys consider matching the results you get
20 today to the -- like historical data, 1930s, 1940s,
21 1950s, I know the State managed fisheries, I want to find
22 out, you know, like the historical size of fish so we
23 have something to compare to, not just 14 years, but just
24 get a brief -- you know, a brief look at the size of
25 those fish they're counting and the size selection of
26 those fish. Because I think it really -- I think the way
27 to manage it -- the size selection of those fish caught
28 really did take a lot of big fish and it really did make
29 a big difference to the size of the fish that we're
30 dealing with now today.

31

32 MR. KLEIN: And there is more historic
33 data from the fisheries themselves. And actually Virgil
34 was going over some of the information he's had since the
35 mid-80s there and how the weights have declined. But
36 what we addressed here is specifically the best
37 information we have on the spawning grounds and none of
38 that goes prior to 1970.

39

40 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

41

42 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
43 affirmatively)

44

45 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
46 Yeah, under your recommendations, I think it would be
47 quite prudent at this point in time to begin to collect
48 weight and girth measurements where possible. I think we
49 would find that to be very valuable data to look back on
50 in the future and I would be a very strong advocate of

1 anywhere where ASL is being taken that either a weight or
2 a girth measurement be standardized in the collection of
3 that data.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Another one --
8 wait, Virg. Another one would be, too, is that, you
9 know, the health of the fish, too, has got to be taken
10 under consideration under these things too because I
11 wouldn't want to be supporting feeding ichtchyophonus
12 disease or any kind of diseased fish to like the rural
13 user or anything. It's got to be taken into
14 consideration because we're going to be providing for
15 rural people and supporting their practices of
16 subsistence fishing and we ought to do it right instead
17 of just hit and miss, hit and miss, just take the whole
18 thing at one time. So when you got the money there, I'm
19 feeling there's not going to be very much money for these
20 kind of things in the future.

21

22 Virg.

23

24 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, one of the things
25 that I -- I see what you did. You know, I had a number
26 of the reports or the results of these various projects,
27 you know, all the weir projects in the drainage several
28 years ago and I looked at them and then I got the brood
29 tables, which were made up primarily from the sampling of
30 the commercial harvest when they do the scale sample
31 analysis of the ages of the fish. And I know that -- I
32 think -- my memory could be wrong, but I don't think it
33 is, that as late as 1984 that 28 percent of the harvest
34 were seven year olds and I know that it's been down
35 around five percent in the last several years that they
36 had it, which would have been a couple of years ago, but
37 I do know that the weirs, and you have to consider and
38 look at the year 2001 when there was absolutely no
39 commercial fishery, the first year the windows went into
40 effect, and you look at the difference on the various
41 weir projects such as the Gisasa, Andreafsky and those
42 because you have to bear in mind how the commercial
43 fishery is prosecuted.

44

45 The Andreafsky River weir, the processors
46 hate buying Andreafsky River fish. Because buying an
47 Andreafsky River fish, even at Mountain Village is like
48 going half way up the Chena River and catching a king
49 salmon, that's the quality of them. I know because I've
50 bought down there before. And besides that there's a

1 closed area below the mouth of the Andreafsky River where
2 people can't fish period and they're later running fish
3 so they're never targeted. So to me when I look at
4 anything from the Andreafsky River that would be like a
5 controlled. And so to me Andreafsky River shows what an
6 unfished population or virtually unfished population
7 would be like whereas -- it's on the lower part of the
8 river, it's only about 100 miles up.

9
10 But then if you look at the rivers
11 farther up and we only have the one that's way how,
12 however the Chena and the Salcha, those fish get
13 exploited fairly heavily but then you look at the Tozitna
14 River, and I know that data's old enough, it's only four
15 or five years, but you look at what's getting through
16 that weir and what the percentage of six and seven year
17 olds are and then again you go back to the year 2001 when
18 there was no commercial fishery and windows throughout
19 the season and you look at what each weir project had,
20 the sex ratios and the sizes and ages of the fish, you
21 compare those and it shows what got through without this
22 commercial fishery and with the true windows, the two 36
23 hour periods per week in the commercial fishery, I look
24 at those things and it shows me what happens. But then
25 when you get to this data that Stan Zuray and I collected
26 this past summer, and then I -- I kind of hate it that I
27 didn't come to this meeting prepared like I wanted to
28 because I didn't get back from hunting until Saturday
29 night, but the data that Dr. Cosan collected, because
30 when he did his ichtchyophonous studies, he not only
31 measured how long the fish were and sexed them, but he
32 also weighed them. And so that's over 1,000 samples from
33 throughout the drainage to where the fish were measured
34 in length and they were weighed and they were sexed. And
35 what all this comes down to is that the older aged
36 classes, which are the larger fish, because they've been
37 targeted so much, that only about 20 percent of the fish
38 that are getting on the spawning grounds are six year
39 olds or olders. That's my big heartburn.

40
41 And then I talk to people like Fred
42 Andersen, that's retired, that worked 28 years or
43 whatever he worked, and was a manager on the Yukon, on
44 the upper Yukon for approximately 20 years and he tells
45 me that he has very little faith in carcass surveys
46 because as far as finding the proportion of the various
47 age classes, the smaller fish don't hang up on sand bars
48 and stuff as much as the larger fish, and then when I was
49 bear hunting in August over on the Dakli River right
50 after the salmon run and I see all these salmon

1 carcasses, but they're in deep pools, how the hell are
2 you going to measure those and take samples of those.
3 And I've never been up the Salcha on the spawning grounds
4 when the fish were done spawning and I assume it's
5 similar to that, and I was just hunting over on the
6 Unalakleet River where the coho are spawning and to try
7 to get an accurate count and measure, all these fish that
8 are dead down in these deep pools, you'd have to be in
9 scuba gear to go do it, and so that brings me back to
10 what Fred Andersen told me, that these carcass surveys to
11 him are not really that reliable, you need a weir or
12 something different. Because I know that these
13 biologists are not out there in wet suits and scuba gear
14 getting those dead fish out of those pools so that they
15 can get a real good count. You know a very small percent
16 of them end up on sand bars and stuff. And so that's why
17 I go along with what Fred Andersen told me, he has very
18 little faith in carcass surveys on spawning grounds and
19 so that leaves you the weirs such as the one that's up
20 here on the Tozitna and then you've got the Gisasa and
21 the Andraefsky. And like I said the Andraefsky is
22 basically an unexploited stock, the Gisasa is in the
23 lower river as well and I don't know the run timing on
24 the Gisasa but I suspect for some reason the Gisasa fish
25 must come in early and come in before the commercial
26 fishery starts. That's what I suspect.

27
28 But you compare all these various things
29 together, and what we asked for three or four years ago,
30 whenever we asked for it, you know, one of the things
31 that I kind of expected was that they were going to --
32 and was led to believe was that all the.....

33
34 (Power outage)

35
36 (Off record)

37
38 (On record)

39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, let me finish up
41 here real quickly.

42
43 Anyway one of the things that we kind of
44 anticipated was going to happen because we made this
45 request, I believe we were at the Nenana meeting when we
46 did it, but the Department has been taking scale samples
47 and measuring the length and sexing fish for years.
48 These were commercially caught fish primarily. So they
49 have all this data and I thought that one of the things
50 that was going to be in this report was an analysis of

1 that data which is what has actually been harvested and
2 what the age and the sex and the length, how much it had
3 changed over time. Because I know that that data's been
4 going on at least since 1980 and probably since
5 statehood, I believe, I don't know but maybe someone here
6 that's been with the Department a long time, maybe Tom
7 Kron would probably know that answer.

8

9 But they've been doing the scale sampling
10 and all that stuff forever, correct?

11

12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I think he's
13 looking at Tom Kron to answer that one. But I think you
14 kind of understand what we're asking for, you know, we're
15 glad to have that but I thought that we were going to
16 just what Virgil was hitting on. I was there and I
17 thought we wanted to match this data to like historical
18 data for what was caught because he knows the weight and
19 size when they're caught at the mouth. Is what I wanted
20 to kind of hit on, the size, selection of those fish of
21 that time, 20, or 30 years, 10 years of size selection
22 does cause crashes in fish.

23

24 MR. UMPHENOUR: I know for a fact that
25 they've been doing it for 20 years because I've been
26 processing fish for 20 years in the upper Yukon and I
27 know that in 1985 Bill Busher used to complain because he
28 was the guy doing it, that I made him do it in the cooler
29 and he had to where his winter gear to sample the fish.

30

31 MR. SANDONE: At least through 1981, I
32 know that because that's the year we started scale
33 analysis, so it's at least.....

34

35 REPORTER: You need to come over here.

36

37 MR. SANDONE:from 1981 and.....

38

39 REPORTER: You need to come up here.

40

41 MR. SANDONE:I assume earlier.

42

43 REPORTER: You need to be by a
44 microphone.

45

46 MR. UMPHENOUR: They want you to come to
47 the mic, Gene, and put it on record.

48

49 (Laughter)

50

1 MR. SANDONE: I know that we've been
2 collecting scale samples from chinook salmon harvest at
3 least through 1981, at least as far back as 1981 every
4 year and probably even before that. State management
5 took over in 1960 and I don't know how far we go back,
6 don't think the Feds ever collected scales when they were
7 in charge of the fishery. As to the weighing, we don't
8 weigh or we don't require the processor to weigh
9 individual fish so we might have an average weight but we
10 won't have individual fish weighed.

11
12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Virg.

13
14 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, one final question,
15 why did you guys pick 35.4 inches as the break off point
16 between a large fish and a small fish?

17
18 MR. KLEIN: It was 900 millimeters. We
19 were using 900 and then when you calculate it out in
20 inches it comes out to 35.4. In the report we used
21 millimeter, Cliff assured me that inches would make more
22 sense.

23
24 MS. ENTSMINGER: He's correct.

25
26 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

27
28 MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chair. These are all
29 very good suggestions and to me this isn't the end all, I
30 have more questions than when we started -- I mean I have
31 more questions now than when we started so there's
32 additional things we can look at and some of that data, I
33 know the Department and Karen have been working on to get
34 the fishery data cleaned up and ready. The decision I
35 made two years ago, right or wrong, was let's look at the
36 spawning grounds and see if something's going on there
37 and if there is, which there are some warning signs, the
38 Big Salmon, I mean there's some profound changes that
39 happened during that nine years, and then the one pattern
40 that we did see is that the size of fish, no matter where
41 you look, it's either not changing or it's decreasing.
42 And in the Big Salmon example quite a bit. So there's
43 some red flags out there, we're going to continue to
44 look.

45
46 You would think these data sets would
47 just be there, available and ready for analysis and it's
48 not, some of it's still in files, some of it's still
49 needs to be aged and we're not giving up, we're going to
50 still be continuing to pursuing this because if the

1 quality of your escapement is decreasing then that's
2 going to have an impact to subsistence users.

3
4 But I appreciate all of your comments and
5 I will take them back to Karen and Cliff and we'll
6 continue to seek your advice and continue looking into
7 this.

8
9 Mr. Chair.

10
11 MR. WOODRUFF: Steve, just to get on the
12 record the report says that 87 years of fishing and
13 selective harvesting could have impacted, especially the
14 upper river fish since they're hit the hardest and that's
15 why we're seeing the data now changing to smaller fish,
16 right? Would you agree with that?

17
18 MR. KLEIN: We know the size of fish is
19 decreasing since 1970 drainage wide. We can't attribute
20 that to gillnet selectivity though.

21
22 Mr. Chair.

23
24 But I know we could switch from, you
25 could go from eight inch to six inch mesh and you're
26 going to see bigger fish on the spawning grounds.
27 Gillnets are selective and if you're using smaller mesh
28 you would see the size and presumably the percentage of
29 females, that it would increase.

30
31 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: From my experience
32 with dealing with the YK elders, especially John and
33 Harry Wilde and them, no matter what you do, you know, I
34 mean no matter what size the mesh net you set out there,
35 if you set too small size mesh net for really big fish
36 you're going to have a lot of drop out and what we're
37 really hitting on around here is the depth of the net,
38 because that's the only thing that's going to matter
39 because those bigger fish swim deeper and they swim way
40 out and that's where those driftnets hit. They hit the
41 depth and they hit the middle of the river where all the
42 fish are at. And if we could get that changed, and I
43 believe, and what we've been working on for the last
44 three or four years is trying to do something about that,
45 the depth of the net, no matter how length or long,
46 because I know some of those nets are pretty long. But
47 if we could do something with that, the depth of the net,
48 and have this kind data that backs it up, from the
49 historical data, from what's been harvested, since
50 statehood or whatever, have that information then that's

1 the kind of information we're looking for, to back our
2 proposals up that we put forth to you guys.

3

4 That's what I want.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. When I was
9 talking to Craig Fleener about the agenda and about this
10 topic, he requested that you get copies of two things,
11 and some of you already have those, that article you
12 mentioned earlier, Conservation and Practice, Point of No
13 Return, if you've not gotten a copy, he also requested
14 because he had heard about the age, sex and length
15 composition of chinook salmon from the 2004 Kuskokwim
16 River, subsistence fishery and that I put in your green
17 folder in front of you because he felt that maybe there's
18 something that could be understood from another drainage
19 system. I don't believe we have Staff here if you have
20 any questions about that river, to talk about it, but you
21 do have the information. So that's why you have a
22 handout on the Kuskokwim even though your jurisdiction is
23 not the Kuskokwim.

24

25 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: So Vince, that just
26 brings us back to the fishery issue and what that's going
27 to be -- we're not going to deal with developing the
28 consent agenda item because Craig ain't here so we'll
29 just move right into the proposals.

30

31 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. And for
32 the other Staff, incorrect information was given, that
33 Craig Fleener.....

34

35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Well, do we want to
36 do that post-season thing, let's see was Fred or Russ
37 Holder supposed to be here, or was Fred doing that post-
38 season review or what?

39

40 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, we can do the post-
41 season review because we do have the in-season manager --
42 both in-season managers for the State and we have a
43 representative of the Federal in-season manger here so we
44 could do the post-season review and then start looking
45 at.....

46

47 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Didn't you mention
48 something like that, though, before we take on the
49 proposals.

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Yes.
2
3 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay.
4
5 MR. MATHEWS: This was a request from the
6 Federal in-season manager, which I believe he talked with
7 the State about that they wanted the post-season review
8 before you got into proposals. Your last agendas, for a
9 couple years we had it afterwards.
10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay. Yeah, break
12 time.
13
14 (Off record)
15
16 (On record)
17
18 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay, Vince, let's
19 go.
20
21 MR. MATHEWS: If people could take their
22 seats we'll give you an update real quick here. The
23 update is, again, you know, you write these agendas
24 months in advance and then things change, so we're trying
25 to be flexible. So to meet the best for the Council as
26 well as others, we're going to go to post-season review
27 which would be Gerald and Fred Bue, and Steve Hayes and
28 maybe Gene Sandone, and then we're going to go into,
29 because of the interest, not any other reason, we're
30 going to go down to Proposals 3, which is to start the
31 windowed schedule on May 15th and the Proposal 4, which
32 is this Council's proposal to deal with the depth of
33 gillnets. So Staff are kind of lining up for that.
34
35 Thank you.
36
37 (Pause)
38
39 MR. MATHEWS: And I think, Mr. Chairman,
40 if people in the community have questions on this summary
41 or proposals, they just need to get your attention
42 because they might have questions and the reason you have
43 to get up to the mic, it's the only way we can capture it
44 for the transcript, it's not to make you have an exercise
45 program, it's just the only way the transcript will work.
46 So we can put as many chairs up there as we possibly can
47 so don't be afraid of the mic just make sure you get
48 recognized by the Chair and go from there.
49
50 So Mr. Chair, they're ready.

1 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
2 affirmatively)

3
4 MR. MASCHMANN: Council, my name is
5 Gerald Maschmann, and I work for Russ Holder who's the
6 Federal manager on the Yukon River. I work for the U.S.
7 Fish and Wildlife Service out of the Fairbanks Branch.
8 The handout I have given you, I have a summarized version
9 that I will read for you.

10
11 Information from the in-season and post-
12 season assessment projects support that both summer and
13 fall season subsistence fishers were provided preference
14 to fish on adequate numbers of fish. The U.S. Fish and
15 Wildlife Service in-season salmon catch interview project
16 and the weekly YRDFA teleconferences indicated that most
17 of those fishermen were able to meet their subsistence
18 salmon needs this year. Overall 2005 was a successful
19 fishing season in light of meeting escapement objectives,
20 providing maximum subsistence opportunities and ADF&G
21 providing additional harvest opportunities.

22
23 The outlook for 2006 will be prepared by
24 ADF&G after escapement information and age composition
25 analysis are completed over the next several months.

26
27 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Staff
28 worked cooperatively with ADF&G Staff to develop the
29 preseason and in-season management approaches which were
30 distributed in May, as the salmon-colored information
31 sheet. This sheet was mailed by ADF&G to all Yukon River
32 subsistence households and commercial fishing permit
33 holders.

34
35 Both Federal and State Yukon River
36 fishery managers entered the season anticipating that the
37 chinook salmon run to be similar to the below average
38 2004 run and the summer and fall salmon runs were
39 anticipated to be average to below average. The strength
40 of the in-season run abundance of chinook and summer chum
41 salmon runs was based on the Lower Yukon River test
42 fishery, Pilot Station sonar and subsistence fisher catch
43 reports discussed on a YRDFA sponsored teleconferences
44 and collected through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
45 YRDFA in-season salmon catch interviews. Based indices
46 provided by these tools, managers projected that
47 sufficient chinook salmon had entered the river to
48 provide for escapement including panel established border
49 passage commitments to Canada, subsistence needs
50 throughout the drainage, which included liberalization of

1 the Board of Fish windowed fishing schedule to seven or
2 five days of week and a small surplus of chinook salmon
3 appeared available for commercial harvest.

4

5

6 Summer chum salmon run strength was
7 improved over the abundance experienced in 2003 and 2004
8 with a season Pilot Station passage greater than 2.5
9 million fish.

10

11 The preseason ADF&G fall chum salmon
12 outlook was for a run size of between 584,000 to 776,000
13 fish. This was updated entering the fall fishing season
14 in mid-July by incorporating this year's summer chum
15 salmon run performance resulting in an outlook for a
16 return near the upper end of the preseason range of
17 776,000.

18

19 Consistent with an above average outlook,
20 the windowed subsistence salmon fishing schedule was not
21 reinstated following the summer fishing season. The
22 liberalized subsistence fishing schedule of seven or five
23 days per week, which was in place at the end of the
24 summer season was continued into the fall fishing season.

25

26

27 The fall chum salmon Pilot Station
28 passage account was approximately 1.8 million which was
29 well above average.

30

31 Yukon River coho salmon returned this
32 season, continued the above average production trend with
33 over 184,000 passing through Pilot Station through the
34 end of August.

35

36 Based on information collected to date it
37 appears that all fall chum and coho escapement objectives
38 were achieved and that the Yukon River Panel Interim Fall
39 Chum Salmon Border and Escapement commitments were
40 exceeded.

41

42 In December of 2004 the Federal
43 Subsistence Board adopted a regulation that provided
44 Federally-qualified subsistence fishermen the opportunity
45 to use drift gillnets to harvest chinook salmon in
46 Subdistricts in 4-B and 4-C for the 2005 fishing season.
47 Participants were primarily residents from the villages
48 of Galena and Ruby. A total of 70 permits were issued.
49 Permits were available from Refuge Staff in Galena and
50 Huslia and issuing agents in Ruby, Koyukuk and Tanana.

1 Of the 23 permittees who reported their fishing activity,
2 18 did not fish, four of the permittees who did fish, a
3 total of 21 chinook salmon and zero chum salmon were
4 harvested. It appears that there was considerable
5 interest in this fishing opportunity but the low harvest
6 appears to reflect the verbal feedback that productive
7 drifting spots were not located by fishermen within the
8 Federal waters of Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C.

9
10 And I'd also like to point out the table
11 in your handout, it shows the 2005 preliminary escapement
12 information for the Federal projects. And the graphs on
13 the back page show the results of the 2005 in-season
14 subsistence harvest interviews for the summer season.

15
16 And that's all I have for the Council
17 right now unless there's any questions.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: No questions.
22 Thank you. Okay, that's it for Federal.

23
24 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chair, I didn't
25 know if Steve had any other additional information.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Well, then Mr.
30 Chairman, that brings us up to Proposal No. 3. And off
31 the top of my head that was a Western Interior proposal
32 that was looking at setting the windowed subsistence
33 season to May 15th.

34
35 Do you have more?

36
37 REPORTER: Fred Bue.

38
39 MR. MATHEWS: Oh, I'm sorry, that's who I
40 was forgetting and I apologize to Fred, Fred, did you
41 have anything to -- Fred Bue, did you have anything to
42 share with the Council about the fall season, that was my
43 oversight, I'm sorry.

44
45 MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. Fellow RAC
46 members. I don't have anything specific beyond the scope
47 of the subsistence, Gerald covered it pretty well. But I
48 think that with fall chum we did have expectations of an
49 improved run. We didn't know that it was going to be as
50 exceptional as it was. But preseason we were telling

1 people that we were expecting a better run and to be
2 prepared for it. Some people went with that notice and
3 others still sat back waiting to see what actually would
4 happen. I think what Gerald didn't go on to speak about
5 was the commercial fishing.

6
7 From the State side we did see that the
8 summer run was very productive and so we anticipated the
9 fall chum would also be the same. We did start
10 commercial fishing at the first quarter point in the
11 lower river, which has been -- commercial fishing hasn't
12 happened in a lot of years, but we had assurance that the
13 run was going to be good, markets were mixed. Even at
14 that first quarter point, many of you have noticed as the
15 fish ran up river how many summer chum were in the run
16 and so there were a lot of mixed fish. And so, yes,
17 there were a lot of fall chum moving early in the run,
18 but they were mixed with other summer chum and other
19 stock and so management maybe wasn't as precise but we
20 knew that fish were abundant at that point.

21
22 Commercial harvest on fall chum total was
23 175,000. fall chum and coho was 55,000.

24
25 I guess also as far as escapement, yes,
26 we know that what came into the river we're pretty
27 confident there but, yes, there are still a lot of
28 streams that are being surveyed on the spawning grounds,
29 fish are just getting there. And in fact, through
30 November we'll be counting fish in the Delta and the
31 Toklat. But we do expect those tributaries to be pretty
32 well, based on what we've seen.

33
34 I guess that is one of the main points,
35 is that, yes, for fall chum, the parent year was one of
36 the poorest and lowest on record that we have noticed and
37 it's produced an exceptional run this year. Explaining
38 that, it's difficult but we did see indications that it
39 was coming up, we saw summer chum, we saw Bering sea, we
40 saw habitat and the environment changing and so we did
41 look at that.

42
43 I guess that another additional item that
44 this committee may be interested in is that, and you can
45 let me know what you've heard in your areas, but the
46 subsistence harvest on a run of this side, what we've
47 been noticing is that the subsistence harvest of fall
48 chum has been declining. The last few years we've
49 relaxed subsistence quite a bit but we don't think that
50 we've seen the harvest returning as fast as -- to the

1 level that it was 20 years ago and we take that to mean
2 that the way people are harvesting, and reason for
3 harvesting or finding alternatives or doing other things,
4 that that is more of the reason that the subsistence
5 harvest is down rather than the low number of fish in the
6 river.

7

8 Mr. Chairman.

9

10 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chair.

11

12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods

13 affirmatively)

14

15 MR. BASSICH: Well, I was pleasantly
16 surprised this year. I know you kind of alluded to it,
17 maybe you haven't had time to talk, but does ADF&G and
18 U.S. Fish and Wildlife have any thoughts at this point in
19 time of where the heck all these fish came from?

20

21 (Laughter)

22

23 MR. BASSICH: I'm sure there's been talk
24 around the table, I'm not looking for an official
25 statement but I would like to hear any thoughts that you
26 may have discussed.

27

28 MR. SANDONE: Yes, good management.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 MR. SANDONE: No.

33

34 (Laughter)

35

36 MR. SANDONE: We've seen exceptional
37 returns to the Kuskokwim. I think ball park estimate, 4
38 million went into the Kuskokwim. Norton Sound went off
39 Tier II, it looked like there was plenty of chums up
40 there. Kotzebue had good numbers of chums. So it looks
41 like maybe ocean conditions played a major role in this,
42 and I just want to note also that it looks like the
43 ground fish fishery again is harvesting record numbers of
44 chum, which may mean we could have good numbers of chums
45 next year, too.

46

47 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

48

49 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods

50 affirmatively)

1 MR. BASSICH: More of a comment than a
2 question. Given the changes in the economics in the
3 villages, due to the high prices of gas and stuff I would
4 like to at least project at this point in time that I
5 predict the fall chum harvest will continue to increase
6 over the next five years or so. I know in our community
7 once you get your harvest calendars back from our
8 community you will see that harvest of fall chum
9 increased quite dramatically this year due to people
10 returning to dog teams. So it might be something to keep
11 a close eye on. And also be prepared for it because I
12 would envision that in other communities you might see
13 that same trend begin to take place.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 MR. BUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
18 Eagle, in particular, has had the replacement for dog
19 food for a few years and so are you anticipating harvest
20 may be larger than what was prior to the dog food
21 fishery?

22

23 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, I think
24 if you look at a 10 to 20 year average of Eagle, it's
25 usually right around 15,000 chum salmon and I would say
26 we will be back up to that and quite possibly more than
27 that. Like all communities, there's an ebb and flow in
28 how things happen as far as dog teams. But I think you
29 will begin to see an increase at least in that community
30 over the next four or five years and I think you will see
31 it in other communities in the lower river as well.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Anything else,
36 Fred.

37

38 MR. BUE: (Shakes head negatively)

39

40 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay. Go ahead,
41 Rod.

42

43 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. Mr. Chairman.
44 My name is Rod Campbell, I'm with the Office of
45 Subsistence Management. I will be providing the Staff
46 analysis for the Federal Fishery Proposals this
47 afternoon. The first proposal we'll look at is FP06-03.
48 That should be located, at least start on Page 39 of your
49 Council books.

50

1 This proposal was submitted by the
2 Western Interior Regional Council and requests that the
3 Federal windowed subsistence fishing schedule in the
4 Yukon River for the harvest of chinook salmon begin on
5 May 15th.

6
7 This proposal was submitted because in
8 some years subsistence harvest occurs on the early part
9 of that chinook run before the windowed subsistence
10 schedule begins. The proponent states that starting the
11 windowed schedule on May 15th would ensure the entire run
12 is protected and the burden to protect the early segment
13 of that chinook run would be shared more equitably by all
14 fishermen along the river.

15
16 The proponent further requests that the
17 proposal only affect chinook salmon gear net mesh greater
18 than six inches.

19
20 The windowed subsistence schedule was
21 implemented to provide closed periods for salmon to pass
22 through these sections of the river with reduced harvest.
23 The windowed schedule is implemented early in the season
24 to limit harvest when there's a much higher uncertainty
25 of the total run size to distribute the harvest
26 throughout thereby reducing the impact on any particular
27 segment of the run and to spread the harvest opportunity
28 among all subsistence users.

29
30 Federal and State in-season managers
31 developed the regulator subsistence fishing schedule
32 including the starting date in a preseason management
33 strategy each year prior to the fishing season, usually
34 in April. The windowed subsistence fishing schedule is
35 implemented chronologically consistent with migratory
36 timing as the chinook salmon move up stream.

37
38 For the five years from 2001 through 2005
39 that the windowed fishing schedule has been in place has
40 been implemented each year in District 1 between May 29th
41 and May 31st. The first chinook salmon generally arrive
42 at the Yukon River mouth shortly after the river ice
43 breaks up and moves out.

44
45 At the start of the fishing season effort
46 is normally low because fishermen are just trying to
47 catch a few fresh fish for dinner. Intensive fishing
48 effort usually occurs later after the fish camp
49 preparations have been made and salmon runs are well
50 underway.

1 The timing of salmon entering the river
2 depends on several factors, including run size, water
3 temperature, wind direction and probably many more. Many
4 subsistence fishermen believe that an early river break
5 up means the chinook run will also be early and when the
6 break up is late the chinook salmon come in late. The
7 average Yukon River break up at Alakanuk from 1983 to
8 2004 was on May 23rd. In 2005 the chinook run appeared
9 to have an average run timing and the first reported
10 chinook salmon harvest in 2005 was on May 25th. And as
11 of June 5th, subsistence salmon effort in the lower river
12 was still low due to high and fast water conditions.

13
14 If adopted, this proposal would increase
15 the effectiveness of the current windowed fishing
16 schedule if large numbers of chinook salmon were present
17 prior to the start of the windowed schedule. However,
18 the fishing effort and chinook salmon harvest in the
19 lower Yukon River during May is likely small, because
20 salmon are generally not abundant in the river until the
21 first of June. The high cost of gasoline is causing many
22 fishermen to wait until the chinook salmon run is fully
23 under way and fishing becomes more efficient and cost
24 effective. Fishing early in the season when the water is
25 high and the river is full of debris can result in lost
26 and damaged gear and a lower probability of success.

27
28 This proposal would start the windowed
29 subsistence fishing schedule on May 15th for Federal
30 users only and make fishing regulations in Federal public
31 waters more restrictive than in State waters.

32
33 The conclusion on this analysis is to
34 oppose the proposal. And the justification given is by
35 establishing the starting date for the Yukon River
36 windowed subsistence fishing schedule in regulations
37 earlier than the date that managers have been
38 implementing would have little effect on the schedule's
39 effectiveness. Only a small amount of chinook salmon
40 harvest is thought to occur before the schedule has been
41 implemented, at least in recent years, and numerous
42 factors combined to keep harvest to a minimum until the
43 fish run is well under way. And normally there's not
44 enough information available at the start of the season
45 to accurately assess the run strength and to justify
46 implementing an earlier Federal windowed subsistence
47 fishing schedule. And the average date of the Yukon
48 River break up over a 40 year period is close to the
49 recent opening dates that are set by the State and
50 Federal managers.

1 That concludes my report, Mr. Chairman.

2
3 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, that would
4 bring you up to agency comments. I believe Alaska
5 Department of Fish and Game has preliminary comments on
6 these proposals because they did share them at the
7 McGrath meeting last week. Again, these are preliminary,
8 they'll explain.

9
10 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
11 affirmatively)

12
13 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Council
14 members. My name is Steve Hayes, I'm with the Alaska
15 Department of Fish and Game, I'm summer season area
16 manager for the Yukon River.

17
18 Staff comments for Proposal FP06-03.

19
20 The Department with the fact that in some
21 years subsistence salmon fishing and
22 harvest occur prior to establishment of
23 the subsistence fishing schedule. It was
24 understood when developing the time
25 period for initiating the schedule that
26 there would be years with a relatively
27 small portion of the entire chinook
28 salmon run migrating before the schedule
29 went into effect as well as some years
30 where there would be no chinook salmon
31 running before the schedule started
32 depending on break up timing.

33
34 An important element in setting the
35 timing of the start of the schedule was
36 the desire not to have the schedule in
37 place for a long period of time when no
38 salmon present. Subsistence fishers do
39 target other species with large mesh
40 gillnets.

41
42 Conservation measures and providing for a
43 subsistence priority must be balanced.
44 It is understood that a traditional use
45 pattern exists whereby a number of
46 subsistence fishers harvest fresh fish
47 early in the spring and summer. During
48 early runs these fishers will have an
49 opportunity to harvest some chinook
50 salmon as they have traditionally done.

1 Clearly most subsistence fishers are
2 treated similarly as the schedule is
3 implemented chronologically such that
4 fishers along the river will have similar
5 opportunity based on migratory timing.
6

7 Although poor runs occurred from 1998 to
8 2000, the Yukon River chinook salmon
9 stocks are not classed as either a
10 conservation concern or management
11 concern. In all years except for the
12 very poor chinook salmon run in 2000
13 there has been reasonable opportunity for
14 subsistence fishers to meet amounts
15 necessary for subsistence. A majority of
16 escapement goals have been met or
17 exceeded since 2000. Specifically the
18 agreed to escapement objective for the
19 Canadian mainstem has been met every year
20 since 2000 with 2001, 2003 and 2005 being
21 the three highest spawning escapements
22 estimates on record. Escapement goals in
23 the Chena and Salcha Rivers have been met
24 or exceeded annually since 2000 with the
25 upper end of the goals doubled in the
26 Chena River in 2003 and doubled in the
27 Salcha River in 2001 and 2003 and 2004.
28 These three stocks combined represent a
29 majority of the chinook salmon.
30

31 At this time it does not appear necessary
32 to be more conservative in managing the
33 subsistence fishing time in the Yukon
34 River based on chinook salmon stock
35 status the past five years to provide a
36 subsistence priority.
37

38 That concludes my report, Mr. Chair.
39

40 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, I'll
41 see if there are any other agency comments from Federal
42 agencies.
43

44 (No comments)
45

46 MR. MATHEWS: Then it would be from
47 Native, tribal, village or other organizations like that.
48

49 (No comments)
50

1 MR. MATHEWS: And then we have on there
2 Interagency Staff Committee, they do review these
3 proposals and sometimes have questions for the Council
4 and they do not at this time.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 MR. MATHEWS: And so then that brings you
9 up to neighboring Advisory Group comments and that I do
10 have. There are none that I know of, Advisory Committees
11 that have taken them up. And there's no affected
12 National Park Service Subsistence Resource Commissions on
13 this proposal.

14
15 But the submitter of this proposal,
16 Western Interior did take up their proposal in McGrath
17 last week and their recommendation was to table the
18 proposal. And their discussion on that was basically
19 with the current salmon fish returns for 2005 this
20 proposal is moot, but in future years when the river is
21 clear of ice early in the season it results in an
22 inequitable situation for subsistence fishers across the
23 drainage having the windowed fishing schedule -- not
24 having the windowed fishing schedule implemented later
25 than May 15th.

26
27 What they're getting at there is
28 basically that it would be inequitable if the conditions
29 were right to allow fishing before the windows, to move
30 the window time would be better to have it earlier. The
31 Council felt the table motion would keep the issue of
32 equitable opportunity and conservation burden alive.

33
34 The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional
35 Council meets later this week so they have not taken up
36 any of the proposals before you.

37
38 So that completes all the Advisory Group
39 comments that I am aware of.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 MR. MATHEWS: I'm supposed to cover
44 summary of written comments, there are no written
45 comments. So that brings you up to public testimony if
46 there's any public testimony from people attending the
47 meeting on this proposal.

48
49 (No comments)

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, then that brings you
2 right into deliberation and you got kind of an idea there
3 of the questions we had. So that's where you're at on
4 Proposal 3.

5
6 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I was just
7 wondering why they even put this proposal out there when
8 the ice is still there, doesn't that have some kind of --
9 don't they have to wait until the ice go out, like I
10 never seen on there the ice went out after May 16th and
11 May 15th, I think that Western is asking to hit to close
12 to the bone or what?

13
14 MR. MATHEWS: Well, they were just
15 concerned that they were getting reports on different
16 teleconferences that lower river fishers were already
17 getting 100 percent of their subsistence needs met or a
18 very high percentage met even before the windows were put
19 into place.

20
21 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Well one of the
22 reasons that I really -- if you go down there and look at
23 their smokehouses and look at our smokehouses in
24 comparison, their smokehouses, some of them are just a
25 quarter of the size of ours and it's a big difference.
26 And they only fish one time, fish one swoop and they
27 catch all the fish they need. It takes us longer, so,
28 you know, they have more fishing opportunity than us, I
29 mean they get their fish, 100 fish in one swoop, no
30 problem or even 60 where it takes us all day, a couple
31 weeks to get that so that's one big myth in that YRDFA
32 teleconference, they don't know the smokehouse size or
33 the method or how much fish they're catching.

34
35 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt Proposal
36 FP06-03.

37
38 MR. WOODRUFF: I'll second.

39
40 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved and
41 seconded. Discussion.

42
43 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

44
45 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
46 affirmatively)

47
48 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
49 have to agree with the Staff's recommendation. I don't
50 think this is a good proposal, I don't think it's good to

1 have Federal regulations more stringent than State. I
2 don't think it's good to take opportunity away from
3 subsistence fishermen. In my mind I'm more concerned
4 with commercial harvest and the potential for heavy
5 commercial harvest on the run. A few fish taken on a
6 year when the ice might go out early, as far as I'm
7 concerned, good for the people down there if they can get
8 what they want or what they need early.

9
10 I think this is a classic example of a
11 kneejerk reaction and this is the kind of thing that I
12 don't want to see and I think we need to look long-term,
13 we need to look out for each other's rights along the
14 river and we need to kind of act in a more cooperative
15 manner. And so I will vote to oppose adopting this
16 proposal.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Virg.

21
22 MR. UMPHENOUR: I understand why they
23 brought the proposal forward because I've sat on the
24 teleconferences and heard commercial fishermen that
25 wanted the commercial season opened talking about
26 catching 140 king salmon in one day and people up river
27 wondering what does someone do with 140 king salmon they
28 catch at one time, and people actually catching lots of
29 king salmon prior to the windowed schedule being put into
30 effect by the Department. So I understand why they put
31 the proposal forward.

32
33 However, being's the proposer wants their
34 proposal tabled, I think we should honor that and take no
35 action.

36
37 So I would like to make the motion that
38 we take no action on this proposal.

39
40 Mr. Chair.

41
42 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Is that all right
43 with the second we can move that to take no action.

44
45 MR. WOODRUFF: (Nods affirmatively)

46
47 MS. ENTSMINGER: Call for the question on
48 no action.

49
50 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Vince.

1 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, when Western
2 took this action it rearranged my brain a little bit. So
3 the record will reflect that your action is to table it,
4 but you still oppose the idea of the proposal in case
5 this tabling is interpreted as something else down the
6 road.

7
8 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Don't put worms in
9 our bucket, we're just taking no action.

10
11 Virg.

12
13 MR. UMPHENOUR: Right. The proposer,
14 they voted to table it because they want the issue to
15 still be there but under Robert's Rules of Order, if you
16 table something, at the end of the meeting it's dead, you
17 may as well have voted it down, and so I suggest we just
18 take no action.

19
20 MS. ENTSMINGER: Right, we're not
21 tabling.

22
23 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: We're just not
24 doing nothing.

25
26 MS. ENTSMINGER: Right.

27
28 MR. WOODRUFF: Or we can vote it down.

29
30 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: That's it.

31
32 MS. ENTSMINGER: Do we need to vote on
33 it.

34
35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Vote.

36
37 MS. ENTSMINGER: I call for the question.

38
39 MR. TITUS: I have a question. What does
40 it matter if it's tabled by the originator of the
41 proposal and it's dead at the end of the meeting, what
42 are we discussing it for, we're wasting our time.

43
44 MR. UMPHENOUR: That's why I said take no
45 action, and not waste any more time on it.

46
47 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: You need a motion
48 on the thing on that Vince?

49
50 MR. MATHEWS: No, I need direction from

1 other Staff because there's been discussion at some point
2 the proposal becomes the ownership of the Board, and the
3 proponent then -- it becomes the property of the Board.
4 So I assume the Board would align with tabling but I
5 can't predict aligning or opposing so maybe other Staff
6 who have been privy to this discussion, when a proposal
7 no longer can be -- can be withdrawn or whatever from the
8 proponent.

9
10 MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman. I may not
11 be the one to answer that, Tom Kron maybe here, but I was
12 in those discussions, and if Tom wants to correct me or
13 someone else. My understanding was when we went through
14 this that once it actually went out to the Councils it
15 becomes the property of the Board. I mean you can't
16 withdraw it once it's here in the book and goes out to
17 the Council.

18
19 Tom may be able to clarify that or
20 correct me if I'm wrong.

21
22 MR. KRON: Mr. Chairman, my understanding
23 is the same. The Western Interior Council was
24 recommending to the Board that the Board table it.
25 That's my understanding; is that correct?

26
27 MR. CAMPBELL: Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

28
29 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. Okay, so I think we
30 got enough on record here to understand where you guys
31 are coming from. I just.....

32
33 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, what you.....

34
35 MR. MATHEWS: I just wanted to get it on
36 the record that.....

37
38 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Then knowing that
39 Vince you just wasted a half an hour of our time.

40
41 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. Anyways that will
42 bring us up to the next proposal, which is Proposal 04
43 which is found on Page 40 [sic] which is your proposal to
44 limit the net, the depth of the nets.

45
46 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, go ahead.

47
48 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, Mr. Chairman, Rod
49 Campbell again, OSM. As Vince mentioned, this proposal
50 FP06-04 starts on Page 46 [sic] in your Council book.

1 It's fairly familiar to you, this was submitted by your
2 Council requesting that in the Yukon River drainage all
3 gillnets with greater than six inch stretch mesh may not
4 be more than 35 meshes in depth.

5
6 And as you're aware of, this Council has
7 submitted this proposal as an agenda change request to
8 the Alaska Board of Fisheries for its October 2005 work
9 session. That work session will be this Thursday and
10 Friday in Girdwood and I will be attending that.

11
12 In the proposal, the Council expressed
13 concerns that the use of deeper nets target larger female
14 chinook salmon thereby reducing the overall size and
15 possibly altering the genetic make up of fish reaching
16 the spawning grounds and potentially increasing the
17 impacts of ichtchyophonous which is believed to have a
18 disproportional higher rate of infection in female
19 chinook salmon.

20
21 The Council also requests that the
22 proposed regulation apply to both subsistence and
23 commercial fishing gillnets. And since the Federal
24 Subsistence Management Program does not directly manage
25 any commercial fishing along the Yukon this analysis will
26 focus on the proposed regulatory changes that are under
27 Federal jurisdiction.

28
29 As was previously mentioned in the ASL
30 study by Steve Klein, gillnets are highly selective gear,
31 larger mesh size target larger chinook salmon, smaller
32 mesh are more effective for smaller chinook salmon and
33 other species. Mesh size regulations can significantly
34 alter sex ratio and age composition of chinook salmon
35 stocks. Traditional ecological knowledge contends that
36 the larger older female chinook salmon tend to swim
37 deeper in the river and there's little disagreement, I
38 don't think, that deeper nets catch more fish, in this
39 case more chinook salmon. But as far as we're aware of
40 there's no scientific evidence supporting that chinook
41 female chinook salmon are disproportionately harvested
42 over males with the deeper gear.

43
44 Lower numbers of larger, older female
45 chinook salmon is a concern by many users along the Yukon
46 River. In February 1998 the US/Canada Joint Technical
47 Committee reviewed the availability of the age, sex, and
48 length information for Yukon River chinook salmon trying
49 to determine whether a decrease in size had occurred.
50 Their analysis concluded that the data did not indicate

1 any sustained substantial change in fish size for the
2 Yukon River chinook salmon. And then in 2004, National
3 Park Service and also U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4 Staff requested further information of this age, sex and
5 length trends in Yukon chinook salmon by the Office of
6 Subsistence Management. And Steve Klein previously went
7 over that study where the OSM Staff followed up on that
8 request and analyzed some of this historical information
9 on the Yukon River chinook salmon on the spawning
10 grounds.

11
12 It identifies two trends, a small
13 decrease in large chinook salmon spawning in most
14 tributaries and also a marginal decrease in the average
15 length of older chinook salmon spawning in several
16 tributaries. And in that analysis it concluded that
17 gillnets are size selective for harvesting but the
18 analysis does not address the depth of the gear, that's
19 part of your proposal, and could not assign a specific
20 cause to identify these trends.

21
22 If adopted, this proposal would make the
23 Federal subsistence regulations more restrictive than the
24 State's commercial and subsistence regulations and result
25 in a checkerboard of State and Federal regulations
26 creating the potential for management and enforcement
27 challenges.

28
29 This proposal might increase the amount
30 of subsistence fishing effort needed to harvest chinook
31 salmon since people would have to fish longer with less
32 efficient nets to harvest a fish.

33
34 The proposed regulation would create
35 additional hardship on subsistence fishermen because they
36 would have to shorten up their gear to 35 meshes which
37 was brought out in previous meetings.

38
39 So the preliminary conclusion is to
40 oppose the proposal for the reasons previously mentioned,
41 including making Federal subsistence regulations more
42 restrictive than the State's commercial and subsistence
43 regulations, establish a checkerboard of regulations that
44 could potentially create management and enforcement
45 challenges and increase effort would be required to
46 harvest chinook salmon since people would be fishing
47 longer with less efficient gear.

48
49 That concludes that analysis, sir.
50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, that brings
2 us up to agency comments unless you have questions for
3 Rod.

4
5 MR. TITUS: I got a question.

6
7 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Jeep.

8
9 MR. TITUS: What's the chances of this
10 proposal passing since the Staff oppose it? Are we
11 wasting more time on a dead horse?

12
13 MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman. Member
14 Titus. We have no control over that. This goes to the
15 Board, the Board makes up their own decisions, they read
16 these same analysis and have the Interagency Staff
17 Committee that provide them with additional information,
18 they listen to all the Councils, as you know, and other
19 information that's brought in. So they make up their own
20 mind on these things, sir.

21
22 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: This is our
23 proposal. We've been trying to hit on this proposal for
24 the last, I don't know, about four years, that's why we
25 asked for this report three years ago in Nenana.

26
27 We believe, and I believe -- I still
28 believe that how long that we've been targeting the large
29 male and female chinook for too long and it's just
30 genetically messes up the genetics in the fish and then
31 what we're ending up with is smaller fish and that's what
32 I see today. I don't see the fish I seen a long time
33 ago. Not anymore.

34
35 You guys say that there's no numbers and
36 no numbers, and this, but you based it on the wrong
37 information, that earlier report. But I believe we
38 should support this proposal, it's got to start somewhere
39 even if it says we'll be more restrictive, this proposal
40 would -- this proposal that this Council is putting out
41 than what Western Interior did and we're here in it where
42 the heart is, we're trying to -- the larger fish being
43 targeted as they are targeted every since statehood,
44 they've been targeted and targeted and what we got is
45 smaller fish, we got to start with -- and this is a good
46 start I'd say.

47
48 Go ahead, Virg.

49
50 MR. UMPHENOUR: And as far as what the

1 Board will do, there's no way of knowing what the Board
2 will do. As Mr. Campbell said, they're going to make up
3 their own decision. I know that the Staff opposed the
4 proposal for the drift gillnet fishery last year for
5 District 4-B and C and the Board passed it, so there's no
6 way of knowing what the Board's going to do. They're
7 going to do whatever key members on the Board influence
8 other members on the Board to do, that's what they're
9 going to do. And so we need to do what we think is
10 right. So I think we should go on with our process here.

11
12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
13 affirmatively)

14
15 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, then
16 that opens it up to Alaska Department of Fish and Game to
17 share their comments on this proposal. And while
18 they're walking up, if there's any Federal agencies that
19 have separate comments.

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 MR. MATHEWS: Not seeing any, then we'll
24 keep moving along.

25
26 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
27 affirmatively)

28
29 MR. HAYES: Mr. Chair. Council members.
30 I have Staff comments for Proposal FP06-04.

31
32 Although poor runs have occurred from
33 1998 to 2000, the Yukon River king salmon
34 stocks are not classed as either a
35 conservation concern.

36
37 As I stated earlier in my comments in
38 Proposal 03, in all years except for the
39 very poor chinook salmon run in 2000
40 there's been reasonable opportunity for
41 subsistence fishers to meet amounts
42 necessary for subsistence. A majority of
43 escapement goals have been met or
44 exceeded since 2000. Specifically the
45 agreed to escapement objective for the
46 Canadian mainstem has been met every year
47 since 2000 with 2001, 2003 and 2005 being
48 the three highest spawning escapements
49 estimates on record. Escapement goals in
50 the Chena and Salcha Rivers have been met

1 or exceeded annually since 2000 with the
2 upper end of the goals doubled in the
3 Chena River in 2003 and doubled in the
4 Salcha River in 2001 and 2003 and 2004.
5

6 A decline in the proportion of seven year
7 old chinook salmon was observed in the
8 commercial harvest in the mid-1980s. But
9 this proportion has been increasing since
10 the mid-1900s. The decrease may or may
11 not be related to harvest as
12 environmental conditions can play a role
13 in determining age class composition of
14 the run and return.
15

16 Studies of the incidents of
17 ichtchyophonous in Yukon River chinook
18 salmon are ongoing. Presently while
19 females appear to be infected at a
20 slightly higher rate than males there
21 appears to be no identifiable impact on
22 spawning success.
23

24 Although this request may relate to the
25 conservation of a portion of the
26 returning Yukon River chinook salmon the
27 stock is not classified as either a
28 conservation concern or a management
29 concern. The depth of gillnets fished in
30 the Yukon River is a major issue and the
31 public will want to thoroughly discuss
32 this issue.
33

34 The Alaska Board of Fisheries cycle for
35 AYK region will come up after the next
36 fishing season, 2006/07.
37

38 That concludes my report.
39

40 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Don.
41

42 MR. WOODRUFF: Mr. Hayes, thank you. It
43 seems like everything you said really didn't address the
44 issue that we're trying to the initial step in
45 conservation of large salmon by shortening the mesh
46 sizes. Certainly it's going to be a contentious issue
47 and I know that Fish and Game doesn't really want to have
48 to deal with that and the enforcement issue of having a
49 checkerboard effect for enforcement but somebody has to
50 take a step forward and we're doing that to say that we

1 really believe that we need to take a positive
2 conservation measure.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods

7 affirmatively)

8

9 MR. SANDONE: This is Gene Sandone,
10 ADF&G. We had poor runs in 1998 through 2000, there's no
11 doubt about that. And we have had, in the past, as
12 evidenced by that Big Salmon escapement decreasing
13 numbers of older age fish and decrease in size. However,
14 since that time -- if you'll note during that time we've
15 had decreasing escapements into Canada and probably into
16 the Tanana. And since that time, in 1990, I believe,
17 US/Canada agreed to stabilize the escapement at 18,000
18 fish -- 18,000 fish, and then we started the
19 stabilization program and then we started a rebuilding
20 program, and we're doing very well, exceeding escapements
21 in the 28,000 range up through 1997, and then we had the
22 poor runs in 1998 to 2000 and then we set escapement
23 targets in Canada again and exceeded them greatly, as
24 much as three times as much as the stabilization number.
25 Also reducing exploitation which allowed increased
26 spawners on the grounds. We've also initiated the
27 windows which allowed blocks of fish to move through the
28 lower river unmolested.

29

30 So I think there have been steps taken to
31 address this apparent concern. So this may be enough to
32 reverse the trends and get them back to where they were.
33 We have good escapements in Canada, in Tanana. We don't
34 have the information from the escapements in Canada to
35 verify, which we believe to be true.

36

37 Mr. Chair.

38

39 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Thank you there
40 Gene. You guys been taking precautionary measures like
41 the windows schedule and everything but in my eyes those
42 are temporary fixes to the situation.

43

44 You know, those are just like, not a
45 step, that's just a shuffle, or something. What we're
46 trying to do is trying to set a precedence that's going
47 to protect the larger fish that will put the larger fish
48 back. Like I said earlier, we wanted the size of the
49 fish, the weight and the health of it, everything
50 pointing to, even though if it's a good run this year or

1 last year, everything's pointing to bad thing,
2 ichtchyophonus, smaller skinnier fish and not as many big
3 ones. And those fish are getting smaller.

4
5 And from this report, From the Point of
6 No Return, it says that selecting certain size of average
7 fish to bigger fish, we've been selecting the biggest
8 fish all the time for the last 30 years and they're
9 finding out in these reports, these scientists and other
10 people are finding out that over time it does genetically
11 -- those fish are genetically impacted by that size
12 selection. And before we can do anything, do anything to
13 reverse of the crash or be cut off from subsistence again
14 or anything, just as a long-term effect, where we'll let
15 some big fish by, the ones we want on the spawning
16 grounds. Maybe not the ones that you two departments
17 want on the spawning grounds, but we're thinking of the
18 long-run and we're thinking about the people that we
19 represent on who really rely to put the food on the
20 table, is what I'm mostly catching fish around here, I
21 don't really do commercial, it's pretty much dead in this
22 region, but I really believe this will have a long-term
23 effect and it's just not going to be a short-term little
24 fix them up deal.

25
26 Go ahead, Virgil.

27
28 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, in the Department's
29 report they said that there was no conservation concern
30 and no management concern, however there is a yield
31 concern, and I'd like to point out what the yield was
32 this year. The yield in the commercial fishery was
33 31,952 and I know that between, say, about 1978 and 1997
34 that the yield in the commercial fishery probably
35 averaged in excess of 120,000 rather than 31,900 and
36 something, so if you take 32,000 from 122,000, say,
37 you're going to end up with 90,000 fish that were not
38 harvested that had been the average harvest for 20 years,
39 you take that out of the picture and what would have
40 crossed the border into Canada and et cetera, and like --
41 I don't want to get into deliberations right now, I just
42 want to point out that it's still a yield concern, 31,952
43 is a far cry from what was harvested in the '80s and '90s
44 as far as the commercial fishery in the Yukon. And so it
45 still is a yield concern and it's still designated so by
46 the Board of Fisheries.

47
48 I just wanted to point that out.

49
50 MR. SANDONE: I agree that it's still a

1 yield concern but I think the way you calculated yield is
2 not how I calculate yield, yield to an allowable catch
3 would be a more appropriate than just taking the harvest
4 numbers because in most recent years we've exceeded the
5 escapement goals throughout the Yukon River drainage and
6 the yield would be making the escapement goals and the
7 leftover would be the yield, although we did not harvest
8 it. So there is a potential yield that you're not
9 including in your numbers.

10

11 Mr. Chair.

12

13 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Virg.

14

15 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'd like to respond to
16 that and not to be argumentative but the problem with
17 that yield is, is that 80 percent of those fish are five
18 year old and younger fish, 80 percent of them getting on
19 the spawning grounds, if you go by, say, the Tozitna
20 River weir, and if you go by, and I'm going to give you
21 this data here that Stan Zuray and I prepared, you'll
22 have it, I've already submitted it to the record, I've
23 got plenty of copies, is that those fish would not have
24 been caught in an eight and a quarter or larger mesh
25 gillnet, the majority of them would have passed through
26 it because they're too small to get caught in that size
27 mesh net. The majority of them would go through.

28

29 So those are mostly males, jacks, on the
30 spawning grounds is what they are, which contribute very
31 little to the productivity. It's eggs in the gravel that
32 count on the spawning grounds, not a bunch of immature
33 males on the spawning grounds.

34

35 And, yes, indeed, those are excess fish
36 that maybe a bunch of them should have been harvested but
37 they're not going to get harvested in large mesh gear and
38 because of the problem we've had with chum salmon, and no
39 market for chum salmon they're not going to get harvested
40 in small mesh gear because you're not going to have a
41 small mesh gear opening because buyers are not going to
42 buy the fish down there. So we're in the dilemma that,
43 yes, indeed, we did get excess fish on the spawning
44 grounds, the small males, however, we don't have the
45 ability to harvest those fish because the buyers are not
46 going to buy them. I mean they're not going to buy all
47 the chums that are going to get bycaught with the fish
48 that would get caught with the small mesh gear. And what
49 I'm saying, these fish that are less than 30 inches long,
50 these 655 millimeter fish, which are really only 25.79

1 inches long, but they're not going to get caught in that
2 large mesh gear.

3
4 So it's impossible to address that
5 situation, that's why we have put this proposal forward.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
10 affirmatively)

11
12 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, there
13 was no Federal agencies that had comments. Was there any
14 Native, tribal or village organizations that had comments
15 at this time.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 MR. MATHEWS: Seeing none, Interagency
20 Staff Committee.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 MR. MATHEWS: None have been shared with
25 me and I don't think any with Rod. Okay, so that brings
26 us up to Advisory Group comments. There was no local
27 Advisory Committees that I know of that met.

28
29 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Hey, hey.

30
31 MR. MATHEWS: Yes.

32
33 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Mike, you want to
34 say something.

35
36 MR. SMITH: I have no -- not a specific
37 position on this proposal. But in regards to the concern
38 expressed by this body we share those concerns and while
39 -- and we agree with those concerns. The conservation
40 efforts that were mentioned earlier, the windows, high
41 escapement numbers, things of that nature are all fine
42 and dandy but small fish beget small fish and I think
43 you're correct, all those efforts won't get us big fish
44 back if we don't put big fish back on the grounds.

45
46 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

47
48 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. So then that brings
49 us up to your neighboring regional Council that met.
50 Western Interior met last week. Their Regional Council

1 recommendation was to oppose the proposal for the reasons
2 that are shared in the justification. It'd be detrimental
3 to subsistence needs and more fishing effort would be
4 necessary.

5
6 But they discussed further that they are
7 very concerned about the decline and the size and age of
8 the returning salmon. Council members, this is their
9 Council members reported good returns of salmon this year
10 but as far as number of fish but they are not seeing the
11 large fish in the quantities that they did in the past.
12 The Council felt the decline of age and size of fish is
13 due to the commercial fishing. The Council directed a
14 letter to be sent to the State and Federal agencies
15 managing the fisheries sharing the Council's frustration
16 with the lack of action to resolve the decline in the age
17 and size of the returning salmon that are important to
18 Yukon River subsistence fishers.

19
20 So I have not had a chance to draft that
21 letter but they do want a letter drafted and they want
22 the managers to take action to address this issue.

23
24 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, move to adopt FP06-
25 04.

26
27 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.

28
29 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Hold on, there was
30 no public testimony there Vince.

31
32 MR. MATHEWS: Well, unless there's some
33 here, but I know of any.

34
35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay, go ahead.

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: And there was no written
38 comments either, Virgil, on this -- unless someone wants
39 to get to the mic.

40
41 MR. ZURAY: Stan Zuray, Tanana. A
42 comment on a couple of the justifications that I've
43 heard.

44
45 I think that not doing something because
46 it would throw us into conflict with another agency like
47 the State or create this checkerboard idea, you know,
48 what would happen if at the State meetings nobody did
49 anything because, you know, it would throw it into
50 conflict with the Federal regulations. I mean I think

1 that's just a bad way to look at things. You know you do
2 what you need to do and hopefully the other would follow
3 suit if it's really what needs to be done.

4
5 And the other thing is these
6 restrictions, although, you know, I'm not really sure
7 what's the right way to go about addressing this problem,
8 and hopefully maybe we can come up with something better
9 in the future. I like Andy's idea of -- I talked to Andy
10 Bassich about an idea where you -- instead of selling
11 fish by number you allowed a certain number of pounds and
12 then you reduce the mesh net size and you did it in a way
13 where you would be actually be possibly increasing the
14 harvest to the lower river but at the same time you're
15 reducing the impact on the larger fish. I mean if we
16 could sell something like that, you know, you'd be
17 helping subsistence and commercial users and you'd be,
18 you know, maybe doing something with this, you know, lack
19 of large fish on the spawning ground problem.

20
21 But with that said, I think that these --
22 one thing that I'd like to point out that these
23 restrictions that we're talking about right now are
24 restrictions on the most effective fishing gear on the
25 Yukon River. You know this would be affecting the most
26 effective fishery, there's a far cry from, you know,
27 using drift gillnets on the lower river to harvest your
28 fish and say, you know, a fishwheel up at Eagle. And so,
29 you know, I mean it is a restriction but it's a
30 restriction on the most effective method of fishing which
31 is only allowed in the lower river, you know, being drift
32 gillnets.

33
34 That's all I have.

35
36 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Jeep.

37
38 MR. TITUS: All these comments we heard
39 nobody said they see big fish, are there even fish to
40 protect or are we just wasting our time some more.

41
42 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, I think we
43 should go ahead with this proposal and just go from where
44 Virgil left off.

45
46 MR. UMPHENOUR: What I'd like to do is
47 I've handed out a handout and I handed it out to part of
48 the Staff, we have some more here for other Staff that
49 would like to go through it because I'd like to go
50 through this handout. It was prepared by Stan Zuray, the

1 guy that just got through speaking.

2

3 If you'd turn to the third page it kind
4 of describes what we did. It says brief description of
5 chinook sex, length sampling method.

6

7 Fish were taken from a variety of
8 subsistence fishermen in the rapids area. Net caught
9 fish were not used because of nets obvious inability to
10 catch jack and a very large chinook at rates similar to
11 the chinook population of the river. Sampling only took
12 place at well known chinook sites as opposed to chum
13 sites which traditionally catch jack heavy.

14

15 As opposed to the ichtchyophonous
16 sampling, those samples were allowed from catchers of
17 some fish were missing from a days catch and some were
18 given away or already processed.

19

20 All student data taking was overseen by
21 Jeff Johnson, a science teacher presenting teaching in
22 Huslia hired through the Fish and Wildlife Service,
23 Fairbanks office or Stan Zuray, project manager.
24 However, the samples in the first two pages were all from
25 the commercial fishery. And July 3 and July 9. And if
26 you look at the back of this and the fishermen didn't
27 care, their names are actually on there, who caught the
28 fish, how many pounds each fish weighed and they were
29 weighed with a certified electronic scale, my scale, Stan
30 measured them with a student helping him and then we had
31 students recording the numbers.

32

33 And so I'm going to just kind of go
34 through it. We had two openings in the July 3rd through
35 July 9th, that's July 6th and we fished -- well, we
36 actually fished from 6:00 o'clock at night until 6:00
37 o'clock in the morning on July 5th and 6th, then we're
38 off 12 hours and then six in the evening until six in the
39 morning again, and then we were off, I think 48 hours or
40 something, and then fished another 12 hour period and
41 that was basically the commercial fishery.

42

43 But what we did is Stan measured these
44 fish, middle of eyeball to fork of tail and then I
45 weighed them, we recorded it, he split them all open to
46 determine the sex and so we were extremely accurate in
47 what we did and this is the results of it.

48

49 And if you just look at it it tells you
50 what they were. It says large males, 269 of them. And

1 their average length in centimeters was 75, that's 750
2 millimeters. Then we went to the females 145 females,
3 81.9, that's 819 millimeters, and then the jacks 56.5 was
4 the average length and that's the fish that were under
5 655 millimeters. But you go down to the weight and this
6 is what gets me. The average weight of the jacks was
7 seven pounds. The females 16.9 pounds and the large
8 males 13.1 pounds. But then when you combine them all,
9 you know, the weights of all the males, that's jacks and
10 the ones over 655 millimeters, 11.4 pounds. And then the
11 average weight of all the kings put together 12.9 pounds.
12 That's what they weigh. That's on the first two
13 openings.

14
15 You go to the second page you can do the
16 same thing.

17
18 The important thing is to go back here to
19 where it says July 7th, Charlie Campbell, the first one,
20 and count how many fish he had over 20 pounds and then
21 count how many he had over 30 pounds and look at the size
22 of the fish. Just go through each one of them.

23
24 I bought 1,444 fish in those three days
25 of fishing, two weighed over 40 pounds. One was 40
26 pounds and one was 41 pounds. They were both caught with
27 fishwheels, not setnets. And there were maybe -- I
28 haven't added it up, I wish I would have before I came
29 here but I didn't but nine or 10 fish weighed over 30
30 pounds, that's all. But you could just look at any one
31 of these fishermen here and look at how many fish they
32 caught and see how many of them weighed over a certain
33 pound, like Stan Zuray July 7, he caught 76 king salmon,
34 I believe, yeah 76, that's about the third from the back
35 page, just open it up and look at it, and see what size
36 those fish are. I mean it's pitiful. Absolutely
37 pitiful.

38
39 Just go through and look at how many of
40 them even weigh 20 pounds, hardly any. This is what has
41 happened -- what's happened to the large fish? What's
42 happened to the large fish, is they've been selected out
43 and caught in large mesh gear down river and everyone
44 knows and you can say there's no scientific evidence, but
45 there is scientific studies, Larry Ingle, former Board of
46 Fisheries member went to the University of Washington
47 back int he early '60s they did a study where they took
48 jacks and bred them to large females and the reason they
49 did this was to see if a whole bunch of jacks would
50 return and a fisherman could make more money by catching

1 a large number of smaller fish versus a smaller number of
2 large fish. They actually did an experiment and the
3 small jacks begot more small jacks, that's what happened.

4
5 Ricker did work on that and I see that
6 he's referenced in here in your work. Ricker did this,
7 the guy that made the Ricker model that I hate, he did
8 this. The same thing. Came to the same conclusion.
9 Small fish on the spawning grounds are going to result in
10 more small fish on the spawning grounds.

11
12 We have to take a positive step to
13 address the conservation problem. It doesn't meet the
14 conservation in the Sustainable Salmon Policy. It
15 doesn't meet that definition unless you consider, you
16 know, because we're getting all these jacks on the
17 spawning grounds, so we're meeting the escapement goal,
18 but are we really meeting the escapement goal with eggs
19 in the gravel; no, we're not. What we're meeting, what's
20 happened and the director of Commercial Fisheries
21 admitted this to myself and the guy that's Chair of the
22 Fairbanks Advisory Committee, whenever the Board of
23 Fisheries denied our proposal, or our petition on this
24 issue, he admitted that the eight year old king salmon
25 are extrapated, he admitted the seven years are almost
26 extrapated and he said it's a social decision, however,
27 the public was never informed that this social decision
28 was going to be made to extrapate all the large king
29 salmon to benefit a small number of commercial fishermen
30 at the mouth of the river at the expense of all the rest
31 of the users on the river and at the expense of the king
32 salmon themselves. That violates every principle of
33 conservation there is to wipe out the older age classes
34 of king salmon, and that is the concern that we are
35 addressing in our proposal.

36
37 And everyone knows that those larger fish
38 are stronger, they can swim in swifter water and deeper
39 water and so you shorten the nets up and what do those
40 fish do when they hit the net, if they don't get gilled,
41 they're going to dive is what they're going to do. Fred
42 Andersen -- even chum salmon do this -- told me about two
43 occasions when he worked in Southeast Alaska, out of
44 Ketchikan for Carl Roser when he first started work for
45 the Department, one guy was out poaching chum salmon,
46 chum salmon sound when they hit a net, what'd they do,
47 the poacher, seined up a whole bunch of chum salmon, they
48 sounded and jerked his boat over sideways and sunk him
49 but king salmon do the same thing, they sound, they
50 either try to go around the net or under net. If the net

1 goes all the way to the bottom they can't get under the
2 net. Shortening the depth of the net up is going to give
3 some of those larger king salmon the opportunity to get
4 under the net and get to the spawning grounds, and that
5 is why we've put this proposal in. And to say, well,
6 it's going to be in cycle in a year, well, why wait a
7 year to take a positive change. And this windows was not
8 done by the Department it was done by the Board of
9 Fisheries -- it was debated by the Board of Fisheries
10 [sic] in 2001 and the Board of Fisheries passed the
11 windows, because Larry Ingle and I were trying to figure
12 out how in the hell are we going to do something about
13 these large king salmon, we can't restrict -- can't make
14 small mesh gear because they're going to catch too many
15 chums and we have a real conservation problem with chums,
16 so the only thing we can do is shorten the depth of the
17 nets.

18
19 But I think that's -- I wanted to hand
20 this handout out and I've got more information that I
21 will have to present to the Federal Board because I
22 weighed all the fish that I bought on the Tanana River as
23 well, I bought only about 450 but out of 450 fish none of
24 them weighed 30 pounds, the largest fish was 27.8 pounds.

25
26 And I also have frozen, because this is
27 something I haven't said yet, all the data the Department
28 of Fish and Game has been putting out says that 655
29 millimeter king salmon weighs 14 pounds or more and one
30 that's smaller than 655 millimeters is 14 pounds or less
31 than 14 pounds. Well, I have a 13.8 pound king salmon
32 frozen whole and a 14 pounder and they're both over 800
33 millimeters long. And the 655 millimeter king salmon
34 I've got frozen weighs about 6.5 pounds. And so I'll
35 take those and send those down to the meeting as well so
36 they can physically see what a 655 millimeter king salmon
37 looks like and what a real 14 pound king salmon looks
38 like that's over 800 millimeters.

39
40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: I believe we're on
43 Regional Council discussion now, right?

44
45 MR. MATHEWS: (Nods affirmatively)

46
47 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Go ahead, Andy.

48
49 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
50 guess, I share all of Virgil's same thoughts here and

1 have been for a number of years. And I guess one of the
2 questions I want to ask is we're spending a lot of money
3 on TEK and we're spending a lot of money on going out and
4 interviewing people and everybody keeps saying the same
5 thing, fish are getting smaller, that's all you hear when
6 you get into the upper river regions. From this point,
7 farther up river, that's all you're going to hear. You
8 go into Canada, you're going to hear from everyone too.

9
10 So I guess the question I'm asking is, we
11 need to do one of two things, we either need to start
12 listening to some of this and reacting to it or we need
13 to quit spending money on going out and getting this
14 information because we don't want to believe it. It's
15 one or the other. Because I sure don't want to be
16 interviewed anymore and tell people that I'm not seeing
17 any good quality fish anymore. I'm tired of telling
18 people that and nothing being done about it and Federal
19 dollars and State dollars being spent to collect that
20 information and then just because they don't like to hear
21 what I have to say nothing's done about it.

22
23 That's a real issue we have to think
24 about. If we're going to collect this data, if we're
25 going to put some kind of emphasis on TEK, on what the
26 users are learning, what the users know, then let's do
27 something with it, and they're all saying the same thing
28 so when are we going to stop being an ostrich, pull our
29 head out of the hole and acknowledge the fact that we
30 have something we really need to look at closely.

31
32 And that's all I have to say right now,
33 thanks.

34
35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, let's not go
36 on a bum note here. I know this is a very important
37 issue and what we're doing here I really believe is the
38 first step in protecting the conservation of the large
39 old chinook salmon that have a better -- that would have
40 a better way of conserving the chinook stock, because
41 nothing is getting better. There is too high a demand on
42 it, there's too high demand on the fish itself from
43 everything. There's too much pressure against it. And
44 what we do right now, what we do today, this Council does
45 today, our recommendation to the Board, I believe we
46 should support our own proposal because I believe it's
47 going to be the first step in the right direction of
48 conservation of the big fish.

49
50 From all the information I've been

1 getting I believe we should move forward.
2
3 MS. ENTSMINGER: Do we have a motion?
4
5 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes, we have a motion.
6
7 MR. WOODRUFF: I seconded it.
8
9 MS. ENTSMINGER: I call for the question.
10
11 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved,
12 seconded and question has been called. All those in
13 favor of supporting this proposal, Fish Proposal 06-05
14 [sic] signify by saying aye.
15
16 IN UNISON: Aye.
17
18 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: All those opposed,
19 same sign.
20
21 (No opposing votes)
22
23 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Motion carries.
24
25 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, that
26 would get us back to Proposal 1 which I believe Polly
27 will be presenting, which is a proposal dealing with --
28 it's more of a housekeeping proposal.
29
30 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Is this going to
31 take too long.
32
33 MS. WHEELER: (Shakes head negatively)
34
35 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay.
36
37 MS. WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
38 the record it's Polly Wheeler with the Office of
39 Subsistence Management and I am presenting the analysis
40 for Proposal 1. It can be found on Pages 26 to 29 in
41 your book, it's the first proposal there. Just for the
42 record I didn't do the analysis for this proposal, Helen
43 Armstrong did with the Office of Subsistence Management
44 but she couldn't be here for this meeting so I am
45 presenting the analysis.
46
47 But as you probably remember from your
48 winter meeting, this proposal actually the idea behind it
49 came out of the bear for handicrafts proposal because in
50 reviewing our regulations we realized that we didn't have

1 a provision for making handicrafts out of the nonedible
2 byproducts of subsistence harvested fish. So it's a
3 natural segue for me to be presenting this proposal as
4 well.

5
6 This proposal was actually submitted by
7 the Office of Subsistence Management, again, in
8 recognizing that we had a hole in our regulations, I
9 guess, for lack of a better term.

10
11 The proposal requests that Federal
12 regulations permit the sale of handicrafts made by rural
13 Alaskans from the nonedible byproducts of subsistence
14 harvested fish or shellfish.

15
16 As I said Federal regulations don't
17 provide for the sale of handicraft articles made from
18 fish or shellfish, this is basically a housekeeping
19 proposal, it's correcting an administrative oversight in
20 our regulations.

21
22 This proposal would provide the same
23 opportunities to Federal subsistence users as are being
24 proposed under State regulations, and I'll get to that in
25 a minute.

26
27 The proposal affects all area of the
28 state and it doesn't change seasons, harvest limits,
29 methods or means or customary and traditional use
30 determinations.

31
32 The existing Federal regulation can be
33 found on Page 26 in your book, just underneath that
34 there's the proposed Federal regulation, it's fairly
35 straightforward.

36
37 Interestingly when we started looking at
38 this after the bear issue we did bring it to the State's
39 attention that their regulations didn't fully allow for
40 this so they've got an ACR going. They submitted an ACR
41 to the Board of Fish which I guess they're going to be
42 dealing with this week at the Board of Fish meeting to
43 decide whether or not to accept the ACR and if so when
44 they're going to deal with it.

45
46 Just so you know we've never received any
47 proposals regarding the sale of handicrafts made from
48 nonedible fish byproducts, but, again the bear issue did
49 raise this. And just to remind you, as the argument that
50 we made for the bear handicraft proposal, is that, ANILCA

1 basically calls for the animal to be harvested for
2 consumption and after that you can make the handicrafts
3 for sale, this is a similar thing, where you're catching
4 the fish for harvest and then you can make wallets or
5 baskets out of the skin or other byproducts.

6
7 They had talked at the Western Interior
8 meeting last week about baskets and boots, fish skin
9 boots that people make.

10
11 The effects of the proposal is on Page
12 28. Adopting the proposal would benefit subsistence
13 users by providing for existing practices, again that's
14 what we're looking for, we're not looking for creating
15 new uses. And there's no known conservation concerns
16 regarding the use of nonedible byproducts for subsistence
17 harvested fish or shellfish.

18
19 The preliminary conclusion on Page 28 is
20 to support the proposal, Mr. Chair, and the justification
21 is that adopting this proposal would provide for existing
22 practices, would allow the same opportunities to
23 subsistence users under Federal regulations as the State
24 is proposing under State regulations. It would basically
25 correct an administrative oversight of a practice
26 described in ANILCA, but which is not currently allowed
27 for under our regulations. Adopting the proposal doesn't
28 provide for additional opportunity because current
29 salvage regulations require that the harvest be primarily
30 for consumption.

31
32 And that's it, Mr. Chair.

33
34 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
35 affirmatively)

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, that
38 brings us up to Agency comments. And I don't know if
39 Steve will have that or not, and then I do have comments
40 from elsewhere. So I don't know if another Fish and Game
41 Staff will share their comments on this proposal.

42
43 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Just go.

44
45 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, I'm not sure they'll
46 -- okay, thank you.

47
48 MR. CLARK: Hello, Mr. Chair. I'm Kevin
49 Clark with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The
50 assistant area management biologist for the handicraft

1 River summer season.

2

3 For Proposal FP06-01, the Department has
4 submitted a similar proposal to the
5 Alaska Board of Fisheries to provide for
6 sale of handicrafts made from skin and
7 nonedible byproducts of subsistence
8 harvested fish and shellfish.

9

10 That's all I got.

11

12 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods

13 affirmatively)

14

15 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, I don't
16 believe there were any other Federal agency comments.
17 Again, stand up if there are. I don't want to get back
18 in the office to find out I rode over somebody.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: Anybody.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 MR. MATHEWS: Anyways, any Native, tribal
27 or village have any comments.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MR. MATHEWS: Seeing none, Interagency
32 Comments.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MR. MATHEWS: No, there was none from
37 them. Neighboring Regional Councils. Yes, Western
38 Interior took this up, they support the proposal as
39 written. They support the proposal because traditionally
40 people within the region made various items out of fish
41 skins, in particular, fish skin boots and it goes on and
42 on, but basically they acknowledge that this is a
43 traditional practice. And recently a cultural camp was
44 teaching youth how to make different items out of fish
45 skins.

46

47 I don't remember, I believe
48 Kodiak/Aleutians supported this proposal, yes, Tina,
49 they're the only ones that have met.

50

1 REPORTER: Bristol Bay has met and
2 Northwest Arctic also met.
3
4 MR. MATHEWS: Bristol Bay and Northwest
5 Arctic, did they also support them?
6
7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.
8
9 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, okay, so the other two
10 Councils that met.
11
12 Okay, in addition the National Park
13 Service -- I mean the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence
14 Resource Commission did meet but they weren't able to
15 have a quorum so these will be shared basically as
16 comments, but the members of the Wrangell-St. Elias
17 Commission who were present forwarded this proposal and
18 supported it and felt it was a good proposal.
19
20 And I don't know of any other groups that
21 have met. So all the comments from other have been in
22 support.
23
24 So with that I can move into written
25 comments which are on Page 29 of your book, and there's
26 three of them. And basically I'll cut to the chase, all
27 three supported the proposal because they mirrored
28 traditional practices and you can read the comments that
29 are present there.
30
31 So all the checklists have been checked
32 off and that leaves you up to, in case somebody has
33 public testimony. If they do it really would help to get
34 on the record that they know of fish skin use and et
35 cetera, it just completes the package.
36
37 Thank you.
38
39 (No comments)
40
41 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: (Nods
42 affirmatively)
43
44 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. That's all we have,
45 Mr. Chairman.
46
47 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt Proposal
48 FP06-01.
49
50 MR. BASSICH: Second.

1 MR. TITUS: Question.
2
3 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: It's been moved by
4 Virg, seconded by Andy and the question been called by
5 Jeep. Discussion.
6
7 MR. TITUS: Question's been called for,
8 vote.
9
10 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: All those in favor
11 of this proposal signify by saying aye.
12
13 IN UNISON: Aye.
14
15 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: All those opposed,
16 same sign.
17
18 (No opposing votes)
19
20 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Motion carries. I
21 think we'll -- do you mind if we save a couple of
22 proposals for tomorrow?
23
24 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, it's your
25 call. We're not that far behind on the agenda so
26 it's.....
27
28 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Okay, then.....
29
30 MR. MATHEWS:your call.
31
32 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, because I
33 think it's after 5:00 here and I don't want to leave the
34 door open, the girls left at 5:00 and dinner's probably
35 ready.
36
37 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, and dinner will be
38 coming here then?
39
40 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Uh-huh.
41 (Affirmative)
42
43 MR. MATHEWS: Okay. So, again, for those
44 Staff, there's been Staff coming and going, it's \$8 for
45 breakfast, \$10 for lunch, \$12 for dinner. Pat
46 Petrivelli, Salena or myself are the ones that are
47 checking you in and out if you've eaten, so we will be
48 hounding you, but, no, seriously the whole thing is is
49 the tribal council is fronting this, we are guests here
50 at their community, we need to reimburse for that

1 expenditure.

2

3 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: There's another
4 thing I wanted to add. I don't know, but the Tanana
5 Traditional Dancers wanted to perform for you guys, and I
6 told them by 6:00 so right there, a little bake sale or
7 whatever.

8

9 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, I'm glad you brought
10 that up, and then at 7:00 o'clock we need to have Council
11 members here and Salena and I at a minimum in case people
12 want to testify. Again, you're a guest in this
13 community, if you can, all Council members it'd be good
14 to be here at 7:00 so, you know, they can see your
15 Council.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, we'll be back
20 here tonight.

21

22 MR. MATHEWS: So what time do you want us
23 to come back tomorrow morning?

24

25 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Ask Craig after his
26 plane comes in.

27

28 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, okay, but tentatively
29 it'd be 8:30/9:00, somewhere around there?

30

31 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, we'll eat at
32 8:30 to 9:00 because that's what I kind of have set up
33 for the cooking.

34

35 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, so hopefully
36 everybody caught that.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 (Off record)

41

42 (On record)

43

44 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Hello there, let's go
45 ahead and get this thing back under way.

46

47 (Pause)

48

49 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: So if anybody has
50 public comment to make I see that there are blue forms

1 somewhere, Vince, would you point to where they are.

2

3 MR. MATHEWS: They should be back there
4 but we could just recognize people that need to come up.

5

6 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: And we can do that as
7 well. But if anybody has a blue form, give it to this
8 smiling man right here or the smiling gal right next to
9 him.

10

11 Okay, let's call this meeting back to
12 order and Vince take it away.

13

14 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, we do
15 have some people that want to testify. The people that I
16 know that wanted to testify, one is, of course, Charlie
17 Campbell, and then I believe Stan wanted to speak. You
18 don't really need to fill out the form.

19

20 REPORTER: Yes, he does.

21

22 (Laughter)

23

24 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, Salena said he's got
25 to fill out the form.

26

27 (Laughter)

28

29 MS. ENTSMINGER: We all need to sign in.

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 MR. MATHEWS: And then Stan Zuray and
34 then who else am I missing, he must have left the room,
35 there was another gentleman that wanted to speak. So
36 those would be the three. Since this is the first one in
37 my hand then Charlie Campbell should probably come up and
38 share his comments and run the microphone.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you.

43

44 MR. CAMPBELL: Hi. I just wanted to keep
45 it short.....

46

47 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Hold on one second,
48 for anybody that comes up and speaks, can you please make
49 sure you give your name, and what else do you need, where
50 they're from?

1 REPORTER: (Shakes head negatively)
2
3 (Laughter)
4
5 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Address?
6
7 REPORTER: (Shakes head negatively)
8
9 (Laughter)
10
11 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Zip code?
12
13 REPORTER: (Shakes head negatively)
14
15 (Laughter)
16
17 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Telephone number?
18
19 REPORTER: (Shakes head negatively)
20
21 (Laughter)
22
23 REPORTER: Name.
24
25 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Just your name,
26 thanks.
27
28 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay, yeah, Charlie
29 Campbell, I'm a fisherman, commercial and subsistence
30 here in Tanana. But my wife and I and family have been
31 fishing here since about 1988, '87. And as a rule I
32 don't put a whole lot of stock in hearing things like,
33 oh, the snow used to be way bigger when I was a kid or it
34 used to be much colder or anything like that, but with
35 the size of the king salmon, the size of the fish
36 themselves, not the runs, I can't help but conclude that
37 they are getting smaller as a rule.
38
39 It used to be that 45, 50 pound fish, you
40 know, it was common to get at least 10 or 12 of those
41 during the course of the season, if not more and in the
42 last several years it's unusual to even get a 40 pounder.
43 This year the biggest we got was 35 pound.
44
45 So I haven't been here during the meeting
46 today and I know this is something you guys have been
47 dealing with but I just kind of wanted to add my two
48 bits, that I do think the fish are getting smaller so
49 this year in particular.
50

1 That's all I had to say.
2
3 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Charlie.
4 Are there any questions.
5
6 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.
7
8 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Andy.
9
10 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
11 Thank you, Charlie. Charlie, could you tell us what type
12 of gear you use and how long you've been using that, have
13 you been using the same type of gear in the same spot for
14 that period of time, so if you could maybe enlighten us a
15 little bit about some of the history.....
16
17 MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah.
18
19 MR. BASSICH:of your fishing.
20
21 MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah, okay, sorry about
22 that. Yeah, I'm a fishwheel fisherman and I've been
23 fishing the same spot since basically 1989. And using
24 exactly the same size fishwheel, basically I bought a
25 fishwheel from a guy and used that as a model to make the
26 next one and I used that one to make a model of the one
27 that I'm using now. So I'm in exactly the same spot, use
28 exactly the same cable length, so that's been very
29 uniform.
30
31 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.
32
33 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Go ahead, Andy.
34
35 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Mr. Chairman.
36 And it's my understanding from talking to some of the
37 local fishermen here that there are two basic areas that
38 people fish in. It was explained to me that some people
39 run what they call chum wheels and some people run what
40 they call king wheels and that some people are focusing
41 more on chum or put their wheels in areas where chum are
42 present in greater numbers and some people focus a little
43 bit more on the king salmon fisheries and I'm just
44 wondering if that is the case with you or if you could
45 maybe explain a little bit more about the type of fish
46 you're targeting primarily or what your wheel was
47 designed to.....
48
49 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay.
50

1 MR. BASSICH:try and target. Thank
2 you.

3
4 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. The wheel is
5 located in rapids. It's the spot right at the chute
6 there, and it dips 16 feet so it's a big wheel. It seems
7 like you need to have a wheel that size in order to catch
8 fish in rapids, you have to dip deep. The current is
9 very swift. That's the spot that happens to be quite a
10 good king spot, quite a good king spot but a super chum
11 spot. And we target both of them, we fish -- we fish
12 king salmon, you know, to cut strips for commercial and
13 we use chum salmon for our dogs and we also cut some of
14 them into people food, too.

15
16 But when we fish for kings, I mean we're
17 there, you know, basically as soon as the run starts and
18 we're fishing continuously through the summer. We don't
19 go back and forth to town that much, we basically stay in
20 camp so we're pretty consistent from year to year about
21 how we're doing that.

22
23 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Any more questions.

24
25 MR. UMPHENOUR: Mr. Chair.

26
27 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Virgil, go ahead.

28
29 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah, Charlie last year I
30 don't remember how many fish you caught but I have part
31 -- I don't know if you remember but last year what we did
32 is on your fish and a couple of other of the fishwheel
33 fishermen, we weighed each one of your fish individually
34 and then Stan and the high school students that were
35 working with him and the school teacher from Huslia, they
36 measured and sexed the fish and you said that the biggest
37 fish you caught was 35 pounds, was that during the
38 commercial fishery or the subsistence fishery?

39
40 MR. CAMPBELL: That would have been --
41 let's see, you're talking about 2004?

42
43 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'm talking about this
44 year, 2005.

45
46 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay, this year, 2005.
47 Boy, I couldn't say for sure. I think it was during the
48 commercial season, though.

49
50 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, but one of the

1 things that's been concerning me, and I think it's
2 concerning you, too, is that the number of small fish
3 that are getting caught and what some people would call
4 maybe medium size, I'm saying 12 to 14 pound fish, do you
5 seem to be catching more of those?

6
7 MR. CAMPBELL: Oh, yeah, definitely. I
8 mean proportionately it's not like the, I mean let's put
9 it this way, we're still able to meet subsistence needs
10 or whatever but it's almost entirely with these small and
11 medium size fish.

12
13 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. And when you first
14 started fishing, you mentioned earlier that you -- you
15 know, you'd catch 45 to 50 pound fish and maybe catch a
16 dozen of them or more a year.

17
18 MR. CAMPBELL: Uh-huh.

19
20 MR. UMPHENOUR: And this year the 35
21 pounder was the biggest you caught, do you remember when
22 you really noticed a difference when the big fish were
23 gone?

24
25 MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah, it's been sort of
26 incremental, but I'd say, you know, from about four years
27 ago we began to really remark it but I would say it's
28 probably been a little earlier than that and the reason I
29 think so is it takes you awhile to notice something like
30 that, you know, year to year unless you keep good
31 records. But it's been at least four or five years that
32 it's been going on, you know, it's getting to the point
33 where you can't really ignore it.

34
35 I mean I'll tell you one concrete way I
36 know, too, is our smokehouse, you know, the poles are at
37 a certain height and I'm pretty tall, it used to be I had
38 to do a lot of ducking and weaving to work around in
39 there and now I can almost stand up when I want to so
40 that's one indication is sort of something concrete.

41
42 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Any more questions.

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: None. Okay, thank
49 you, Charlie.

50

1 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay, thank you.
2
3 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Who's next? Vince, do
4 you have any names?
5
6 MR. MATHEWS: No, I thought Stan was
7 going to possibly be one.
8
9 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Stan, come forth.
10
11 MR. ZURAY: All right. Okay.
12
13 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Please state your
14 name.
15
16 MR. ZURAY: Stan Zuray, fisherman from
17 Tanana.
18
19 Let's see when the Federal government
20 took over management of the fisheries it was -- you know,
21 I'm probably off on some of this stuff but it seems to me
22 that the idea was that they -- and I'm speaking, you
23 know, a lot of you guys on the Advisory Council are, you
24 know, fishermen and people just like me, and I'm more
25 speaking to you, to OSM, and the Office of Subsistence
26 Management. But anyway, to go on, it seems like the
27 Federal government took over management of the fisheries
28 in Alaska because subsistence was not -- they felt that
29 subsistence was not being properly protected by the State
30 government. And, you know, that as it may be, true or
31 not, to whatever extent it's true, what I see sometimes
32 is the Federal government now has just taken over and is
33 just as reluctant to protect subsistence, you know,
34 there's just this incredible bureaucracy now, all this
35 money and all these people working and a lot of them
36 working really hard, and I know a lot of them and a lot
37 of them are my friends but, you know, it's just this
38 incredible bureaucracy and for all that I don't feel
39 that, you know, we're seeing -- for all that money I
40 don't think we're seeing a corresponding amount of
41 protection. And it's not just on fisheries issues, it's
42 on a lot of issues, you know.
43
44 But OSM is -- you know, one area is like
45 at a fisherman's level right now we have problems like
46 just surviving and keeping these fish camps going. I
47 mean, you know, nobody's going to starve, you know, we
48 could all probably go find jobs if we wanted in other
49 places, but this lifestyle, just trying to continue the
50 subsistence lifestyle, you know, I feel that there's this

1 constant push to try to redefine our lives and redefine
2 what subsistence is. And like subsistence is some elder
3 putting up some fish to put in their freezer so they can
4 eat some fish that winter, period, that's it, you know.
5 And like all these traditional ways that fish camps
6 survived in the past, you know, I mean how many times
7 have we gone before boards to protect our rights to feed
8 dogs, you know, over and over that keeps popping up. You
9 know how much protection do our smokehouses have, you
10 know.

11

12 The Federal government took over
13 subsistence from the State because they felt the State
14 wasn't protecting it right but yet they're afraid to do
15 anything about State DEC regulations, you know, I mean
16 it's like customary trade they'll protect our right to
17 sell whole fish, but probably the one thing that any --
18 that no fisherman can ethically or legitimately ask for
19 is the right to sell whole fish, you know, through using
20 customary trade and no protection for what keeps all
21 these fish camps going, all these traditional fish camps
22 in this area and I know a lot of the smokehouses down on
23 the lower river because every time I go down there, you
24 know, I got people coming up to me with bags of fish
25 trying to sell them or something like that, you know, and
26 stuff like that so I know that stuff goes on down there,
27 too. And the thing is, is without those kind of
28 protections, without the ability to continue that kind of
29 thing it'd be like 90 percent of the fish camps that are
30 left around here because we've probably lost two-thirds
31 of them in the last 15 years. We probably lost two-
32 thirds of the fish camps in this area, we're going to
33 lose 90 percent of the rest of them, you know.

34

35 And there's so many uncertainties and
36 lack of protections and regulations and everything on
37 this whole subsistence life that you just don't see young
38 people getting involved in it anymore. I think we
39 figured out a few years ago the youngest person to run a
40 fish camp around here, and he doesn't really even run it
41 that consistently is somebody in their 30s, you know.
42 And when I came here in 1973 along with myself who was
43 like 23 or something there were a whole bunch of other
44 people who were in their early 20s and they were the
45 primary runner of a number of fish camps and then there
46 were people in their 70s ready to keel over, you know,
47 and stuff, you know, but it was the whole spectrum and
48 now you don't see any young people getting involved in it
49 anymore.

50

1 And I'm not saying, you know, some of
2 that isn't an effect of times changing, but a lot of it
3 is the lack of protection, the lack of care and thought
4 into protecting -- I mean there's always stuff going into
5 protecting fish, well, to me the users are just as -- or
6 almost and maybe more endangered, and what's everybody
7 going to do when there's no fish camps anymore, you know,
8 and the only people that are going to fish camps are
9 people that have got jobs working for, you know, like a
10 school or an organization who have got enough money to
11 buy boats and basically they go to fish camp and, you
12 know, it's almost like a vacation type thing. Get out of
13 work, you know, I mean what's going to happen when it
14 becomes like that. There's not going to be any more
15 subsistence. And I'd just like to see a more active -- a
16 little more guts in protecting subsistence.

17
18 Right now it just seems like, you know,
19 and I've talked about this to a lot of people, it just
20 seems like it's becoming a cycle of illegal activity,
21 that's what my subsistence lifestyle is, it's one illegal
22 activity after another. It's going out to my illegal
23 trapline cabin to use the illegal outhouse to be on the
24 unregistered trapline because I don't want to pay for the
25 helicopter to come in here and look at my approved
26 outhouse which isn't approved because it's in a flood
27 plain which all trapline cabins are out in the bush
28 because that's where the trees are. I mean it's just one
29 thing after another.

30
31 It's just like fishing is illegal. I'm
32 in State waters so my old smokehouse is illegal. I can't
33 even give my mother-in-law who's a Native elder, I can't
34 even give her, according to DEC regulations, I cannot
35 give her a strip out of my smokehouse to eat because she
36 is not a part of my immediate family as defined by DEC.
37 I mean it's just like everything in my -- it's just one
38 thing after another.

39
40 Trapping, you know, the Federal
41 government, all the trapping regulations, you know, stuff
42 they put on us years ago, in 1979, flew into all the
43 Interior villages with a bulletin saying if you ship off
44 any more fur without all these permits on things you're
45 going to be -- your fur is going to be confiscated and
46 fur already has been, which was a lie, they told us at
47 the time, because fur hadn't ben confiscated at that
48 time. And one year prior to that the Native Council in
49 their survey of trapping had 20 people, I believe, all
50 the way from the guy who got two wolves to the person who

1 got 200 marten and 20 wolves, you know, the whole
2 spectrum of trappers, there were 20 people who sold fur
3 out of the village of Tanana and there hasn't been
4 probably that many legal sales, five legal sales of fur
5 out of the village of Tanana since that year. That fall
6 the News Miner came in here with cameras and reporters
7 looking at everybody's fur that was just laying around
8 not doing anything. I can still remember when my friend
9 Freddy Jordan threw away all the wolves that were hanging
10 on the front of his thing because they were all six years
11 old and all ratty, you know, it's just like -- and so
12 what do we do, we sell fur illegally, you know, for a
13 whole bunch a number of years.

14
15 So it's just one illegal activity after
16 another and nobody is protecting the subsistence acti --
17 nobody's really protecting our subsistence lifestyle,
18 that's what I'm getting at. And I'd just like to say
19 that and I don't know what good it's going to do but
20 thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Stan.
23 Wait, don't go anywhere. Are there any questions.

24
25 MR. BASSICH: Mr. Chairman.

26
27 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Go ahead.

28
29 MR. BASSICH: Stan, how would you like to
30 be classified as a stock of concern?

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 MR. ZURAY: Hey that sounds -- maybe I'd
35 get something out of it, some free something.

36
37 (Laughter)

38
39 MR. ZURAY: No, I don't know.

40
41 MR. BASSICH: I guess the reason I asked
42 that is because it seems like it's almost like you have
43 to create another bureaucracy to deal with the
44 bureaucracy and it's kind of an ironic thing, really.
45 But I think you make a very strong point for what I've
46 been trying to say for the last year or so, that there
47 isn't the protection out there and that people who are
48 living out in the bush are an endangered species almost
49 more so than the game which they rely on.

50

1 But thank you very much for your
2 comments.

3
4 MR. ZURAY: Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Any more questions.
7 Hold on, Stan, I've got one if nobody else does. I just
8 want to give everyone else a chance.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Okay. I think you
13 have basically laid out a problem that we're all very
14 concerned about, something that we -- anyone that lives
15 in rural Alaska in a small village, even in some of the
16 larger villages, have all experienced and I think we all
17 have the same sort of question and that is what do we do
18 about it?

19
20 You know, I have the same exact problem.
21 I talk to State and Federal managers all the time and
22 basically tell them that these sets of rules that they
23 brought with them to impose on us and the rules and
24 regulations that are constantly being made, adjusted, the
25 laws that are being passed, the lawsuits that are going
26 on, basically don't protect our subsistence in the way
27 that we think it should be protected.

28
29 And I have my own opinions, which many
30 people have heard many times but what's your opinion
31 about how we could fix that problem or those many
32 problems that you've presented?

33
34 MR. ZURAY: Well, we need somebody -- I
35 mean we need people who will stand up for us. And, you
36 know, it's like I say, OSM, this may not be true but, you
37 know, they -- like I say, they took over management from
38 the State because they felt -- the idea was that the
39 State wasn't protecting our subsistence rights so I mean
40 that was the whole thing and so protect our subsistence
41 rights. Don't try to redefine us. Don't try to turn a
42 bunchy of us people who make a couple thousand bucks
43 selling some fish strips and spend more on gas, you know,
44 in a year, you know, don't -- you know, don't try to
45 redefine subsistence as being the sale of whole fish, you
46 know, I mean that -- I mean look what came out of all
47 that.

48
49 I mean the beginning of that whole issue
50 was illegal sales of whole fish in the lower river. I

1 mean that's what started that whole thing, you know, and
2 look at what they ended up protecting and what do we have
3 for our smokehouses.

4
5 So we just need enough people in say an
6 organization to just step forward and say enough is
7 enough, you know. I mean the State could do that, too.
8 Any number of people can do it. The Governor could do
9 it. You know, look at what the State does to us. I mean
10 it's like, you know, you got the hatcheries, well over a
11 \$100 million subsidized fishery in Southeast Alaska, the
12 hatcheries are leased at a dollar a year. Our buyer, the
13 only one in the Interior pays \$1,500 a month rent and
14 this year they told him you either buy the building at an
15 exaggerated price or you get out. That's how they treat
16 our fishery, you know.

17
18 Wanton waste. They allow them to just
19 strip the fish out of the, you know, strip the eggs out
20 of the fish and sell them right on board those boats.
21 There's no sanitary thing going on there. You know, but
22 all those chum salmon went up river this year, our whole
23 District 5, this district couldn't even think of having
24 anything to do with that fishery because DEC won't let us
25 -- the same organization, DEC, won't let us strip the
26 eggs out of the fish, you know, and put them in buckets
27 and ship them off to Virgil or somebody, you know, and
28 it's just like we just -- we need somebody to step
29 forward and say this isn't fair, you know, this is not
30 fair what's going on.

31
32 And I wouldn't mind like if we -- if our
33 price of eggs and all that sort of stuff went down, you
34 know, because of fair competition. You know, then I'd
35 say, well, that's just fair competition, that's just the
36 way it is, you know, you just live with that, you know.
37 And those are the kind of things -- that's what's
38 supporting our lifestyle, that is our subsistence and it
39 just drives me nuts to hear this new word, subsistence,
40 and a huge organization trying to redefine what our
41 lifestyle is. And, you know, turn it into something that
42 it never was.

43
44 And, you know, so we just need people
45 just to step forward and subsistence is much broader than
46 Office of Subsistence Management-type subsistence, you
47 know, subsistence is keeping people out there, helping
48 them, you know, and I don't know. Throw it in their
49 faces and just maybe see if you can get a kneejerk
50 reaction and some help.

1 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thanks, Stan. Gerald.

2

3 VICE CHAIR NICHOLIA: Yeah, thank you,
4 Craig. That's what I brought up earlier about dual
5 management and everything.

6

7 It seems like every court case that came
8 up, that everything that happens between the State or
9 whatever State's suing Feds over some little thing or
10 some having a disagreement, the only ones that suffer
11 when that happens is the subsistence user. And when they
12 started creating it and looking for something, it seems
13 like the only one that gets picked on is the subsistence
14 user.

15

16 And what I believe and what I said
17 earlier, what's going on, is just over micromanagement
18 the subsistence users, why don't you guys just take a
19 look at what you're really doing. Are you just out there
20 telling them what to do like you manage and we cooperate,
21 I don't know, I thought we got rid of that a couple years
22 ago or four years ago.

23

24 And it's like he said, we need people to
25 come out there and say something for you, stick up for
26 you, I've been doing that for quite a while, I really
27 voice my opinion and you got to take it through the
28 heart, there's a lot of people that come up and talk to
29 me, there's a lot of issues, I want to say as a public
30 person but not as a Council member, is that a lot of
31 elders around here worry about all the -- like a lot of
32 people this year and last year and year before here
33 didn't get a lot of moose meat, and they see all these
34 boats going up river and antlers and stuff and wondering
35 where the moose is at. One of my elder ladies said they
36 should just drop it off down here and they have a couple
37 times but, you know, we didn't like the results of giving
38 away rotten meat with maggots and stuff in there.

39

40 There's a lot of issues.

41

42 There's a lot of issues os other people
43 leaving trash in people's places, and disrespecting
44 traditional hunting grounds, that's a big issue around
45 here.

46

47 You got to know we put this out, the
48 tribal council office has been posting a lot of signs
49 over this country, we've been letting public people know.
50 We even got rid of a few guides, outfitting guides, we

1 don't want them around here because they're just
2 exploiting the resources that we depend on.

3

4 And what Stan Zuray's hitting, I think
5 there's abuse of power by both agencies exploiting their
6 power to the detriment of the subsistence user. As I
7 look I'm lucky because I have a job, I could go out and
8 get the things that I need. If I didn't have a job I'd
9 be struggling. I'd be struggling to put food on the
10 table. There's no jobs around here. There's no economy
11 for us around here except what we create. And we really
12 rely heavy on what we get, moose, fish, everything.

13

14 Instead of picking on the subsistence
15 users every time something happens big, why not just take
16 the State and Feds, let them duke it out or whatever, and
17 just leave us out but protect our practice of utilizing
18 these natural resources on this land.

19

20 That's all we ask, man.

21

22 You know, don't give us CITES fees, don't
23 over-regulate us, let us do what we've been doing for a
24 long time. That's the thing you got to protect, not your
25 high pay, high office paying job and everything. You
26 guys sit there and try to visualize our life and
27 everything, you guys should try to come live it, it's not
28 easy.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Gerald.

33 Andy.

34

35 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
36 It occurs to me that part of what's contributing to the
37 problem is that subsistence is defined very broadly and
38 subsistence practices and techniques is extremely diverse
39 and it's very regional.

40

41 People in the lower river practice
42 subsistence living in a very different way than people in
43 the middle Tanana region or maybe down in Galena
44 practice. And the people practice their subsistence
45 living in a very different way here in Tanana than they
46 do in up Eagle or that they do in other areas farther
47 north.

48

49 And so to have such a broad definition,
50 it almost dilutes the ability to protect because it is so

1 diverse and it goes from one end of the spectrum to the
2 other. And so I don't know what the answer is but it
3 occurs to me that that's part of what the problem is,
4 it's hard to protect all of the different techniques
5 because sometimes they're almost opposite of each other.

6
7 The way the people in the lower Yukon
8 River subsist is by commercial fishing, and the way we do
9 it up here -- at least where I live is there's absolutely
10 no commercial fisheries. And so it's almost like mixing
11 apples and oranges.

12
13 And so maybe what needs to happen as a
14 starting point is to be able to define regional
15 differences, regional uses and practices and then set up
16 protection for regions and that might be something to
17 think about and maybe have some more dialogue about or,
18 you know, I don't know if we want to create another level
19 or whether that would, but it seems like you have to be
20 able to define what it is you want to protect before you
21 can protect it, and it's too broadly defined in my mind
22 right now.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Andy. Mr.
27 Woodruff.

28
29 MR. WOODRUFF: One thought, Stan, is that
30 the empowerment of young people is what I would feel, you
31 know, would maintain the subsistence from generation to
32 generation and I understand that you had some high school
33 kids helping you with a project, and didn't that give
34 them the feel that subsistence is not just an inanimate
35 thing that people talk about, but that they're actually
36 doing and experiencing in the projects that you worked
37 on?

38
39 MR. ZURAY: Yeah, I think it definitely
40 did. Some of those kids, you know, were fish camp kids
41 to begin with but, you know, most of those kids were kids
42 that probably don't get the opportunity to, as they're
43 growing up, to get out at fish camps that much. A lot of
44 them were anyway, you know, that way, and, you know, I
45 think it definitely worked. Just the amount of young
46 people wanting to work at projects around here, whether
47 it be Tozitna weir or the tagging project up at the
48 rapids, I mean before you couldn't get anybody local to
49 work and now you have probably more than they can handle,
50 you know, and I think that's largely a function of the

1 OSM project that -- the kids camp project that we've been
2 running. You know, that's a function -- I'd take credit
3 for some of that, you know, change.

4
5 So I think there's an awareness -- I mean
6 I don't even think a lot of people even realized what was
7 going on in their backyard, you know, prior to that and
8 now they're up there tagging chum on a Federal tagging
9 boat, you know. And a lot of it was because I realized
10 like a lot of these kids aren't going to be running fish
11 camps and we wanted to give them an opportunity to do
12 something on the river, even if, you know, subsistence is
13 kind of dying naturally, you know, I think it's being
14 accelerated by the abuse of power or whatever you call
15 it, or lack of help or whatever, that I was talking about
16 before. I think that's -- but I think some of it may be
17 cultural changes, you know, modern days, changes a little
18 bit, too, but I think a lot of it is the other, but I
19 think -- you know, you got to recognize that times
20 changes too and I just -- we thought that that project
21 was a way to bring young people, you know, why do they
22 all have to go to Fairbanks to get jobs in an office, you
23 know, why can't they be our future fisheries managers,
24 and, you know, so that's why we started doing it.

25
26 And all the data they collect is, you
27 know, all that data came from us looking at what were the
28 most talked about things at all the meetings we went to,
29 ichtchyophonous, sex, length and weight data, the annual
30 controversy over the arrival of fall chums in the lower
31 Yukon and the -- you know, what are you going to call
32 them, summer or falls, you know, and 50,000 one way or
33 the other could shut down subsistence if you got a low
34 run. It's a big issue. It's every year.

35
36 So those issues, that's why we had the
37 kids doing that, you know, and that project is now over.
38 We're not -- funding's over so I don't know what we're
39 going to do next year, it's not going to happen, you
40 know, we don't have a funding source for next year so
41 it's too bad to see. I mean I don't want to see the
42 ichtchyophonous, it's the only disease rate -- monitoring
43 project even though some people say, oh, it's just kids
44 doing it, you know, I think that's a lot of crock, you
45 know, because it's not just kids doing it, it's people --
46 a lot of those kids worked with Cosan for three years,
47 you know, and I've worked with him for those years and
48 we've got a science teacher working with them and we had
49 Joe Sullivan come in here and Simon Jones from Canada and
50 say the methods we were using were exactly what they

1 would use and their rates were identical to ours for the
2 time they were at the rapids, so I think it's good data,
3 you know.

4
5 And I think that that's the kind of
6 things that these kids could maybe do in the future even
7 if they're not going to run their own fish camp, you
8 know, get the young people on the damn river, you know,
9 but like I say there was a funding shift or something in
10 OSM and that's not going to happen next year.

11
12 MR. WOODRUFF: But isn't that one of the
13 criteria for the funding is that it empowers people?

14
15 MR. ZURAY: Yeah, capacity building,
16 priority data being taken, monitoring, I don't know --
17 all I can say is I had a lot of help from within OSM to
18 try to get my project reconsidered and Polly, Steve
19 Klein, a lot of people, you know, wrote -- tried to help
20 me write letters and stuff like that and it just from
21 someone -- I forget, I don't know exactly what went on
22 but the project is not being taken for consideration. I
23 wasn't even allowed to put a full proposal in.

24
25 MR. WOODRUFF: Try again.

26
27 MR. ZURAY: Maybe. It's a lot of writing
28 and we'll see. We'll try to do something, we'll see if
29 it happens again.

30
31 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah.

32
33 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Any more comments or
34 questions.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Okay, thanks, Stan.

39
40 MR. ZURAY: Thanks very much for
41 listening you guys.

42
43 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: I just wanted to say
44 as you're going back to your seat that I think you laid
45 out very passionately some of the concerns that we all
46 have and I wish more people would express these types of
47 concerns, because it's exactly how I feel. And the one
48 thing that I would actually caution against is actually
49 saying we think the government can help us and going to
50 the government to help, and it's not that I hate the

1 government but the idea of the government solving our
2 problems, I think, is something we need to take out of
3 our vocabulary and out of our mind set.

4
5 The government, the Constitution, you
6 know, it wasn't established to meet the needs of all
7 people. People have to meet their own needs.

8
9 And I think the reason I asked you how
10 you think we can solve this problem and you put your
11 finger on it, you were close, and that is we have to get
12 people involved. And I think if we're going to really
13 have an impact on how salmon is managed or any of the
14 other species are managed that impact our lives that we
15 have to get involved, and that means every single one of
16 us who depend on the resources that are here in the
17 Tanana area, the Yukon Flats, Tanana Flats, wherever you
18 live, if you're going to have an impact you have to be
19 involved, you can't just sit around on the outskirts, you
20 can't just whisper in your buddy's ear and you can't just
21 send the occasional letter or sit back at the AC and
22 complain, you've got to get involved, you have to make
23 statements, you've got to come up and sit at this table
24 and tell us and tell the rest of these State and Federal
25 employees that are sitting here, and then beyond that you
26 have to go to the Boards of Game and Fish and you have to
27 go to the Federal Subsistence Board meetings and beyond
28 on that you have to sit on these boards and councils and
29 committees and beyond that you've got to throw your name
30 in the hat and become a State legislator if you want to
31 make changes.

32
33 I mean people think it's funny but really
34 the only way you're going to make change is by getting
35 involved, putting one foot in front of the other and
36 taking action. Sitting back and hoping something gets
37 changed is not the way to get it changed. The only way
38 to get something changed is to get involved. And so I
39 would encourage anyone that has a problem with the way
40 that these things are managed, get involved.

41
42 How many seats do we have coming open on
43 this Council, Vince, three?

44
45 MR. MATHEWS: Yes.

46
47 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you. We got
48 three seats coming available on this Council. How many
49 applicants do we have so far?

50

1 MR. MATHEWS: Well, we haven't opened up
2 the application period but.....

3
4 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: All right, we have no
5 applicants, that means that.....

6
7 (Laughter)

8
9 CHAIRMAN FLEENER:we need some
10 applicants. And if you want to have say on how these
11 animals are being managed, at least, on the Federal side,
12 get your application in here.

13
14 And don't just hope that the people
15 sitting behind this table are going to represent our
16 viewpoint, you know, we'll do the best we can but to be
17 honest with you the reason I got up here is because I was
18 concerned about my own viewpoints. Now, having worked
19 with people in all of the communities that I've been to
20 over the past, I don't even know how many years now, I've
21 heard a lot of concerns and they're very similar and then
22 I've taken up some concerns that weren't mine initially.
23 But for the most part I came here because I was concerned
24 about things that were impacting me, just like Stan. He
25 got up here because he's concerned about things that are
26 impacting him. And so I would encourage you folks to get
27 involved at every level possible, and you're not going to
28 make any change if you sit back and say and do nothing.

29
30 And so don't wait for the government to
31 fix your problems. The government isn't here to fix
32 your problems, the people fix their problems. If you
33 have a problem you've got to fix it so get involved.

34
35 Masetcho (ph).

36
37 Next person, Vince.

38
39 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, that's all I
40 know unless there's some others that have come in.

41
42 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Have we stirred
43 anybody else that wants to say something?

44
45 MR. MATHEWS: There may be one more.

46
47 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: We got a couple hands
48 in the back. Who's first, this gentleman over here?

49
50 MR. MATHEWS: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Come forward. Please
2 state your name.

3
4 MR. TARNAI: My name is Alex Tarnai. I
5 lived here for 28 years. I am a trapper from the Nowitna
6 River and also a registered guide.

7
8 And I would like to bring -- and Fish and
9 Game regulations to the Board's attention, it's not
10 exactly a subsistence issue but it will affect
11 subsistence moose harvest along the Yukon River. Last
12 year the Fish and Game came out with new regulations for
13 this area involving Unit 21(B) that also involves the
14 Yukon River drainage from Tanana down to Ruby and what
15 they did is they created a Nowitna Refuge -- a corridor
16 from the Nowitna River, and east of the Nowitna River to
17 Tanana, moose hunting for -- it became by registration
18 only and for trophy hunters or people, sporthunters, they
19 have to apply for a permit, and they give out, I think
20 about 65, 64 permits for this part and about 55 permits
21 for the Nowitna to Ruby, the down river part. What
22 happens is this permit situation created an adverse
23 affect on moose harvest because people can apply for a
24 permit from the Lower 48 or a friend can, you know, put
25 them in and they don't understand that there's absolutely
26 -- I mean maybe a five percent chance to get into the
27 lands, there's no access to these areas. It's a huge
28 chunk of land between Tanana to the Nowitna River, it's
29 90 miles, and subtract, you know, like two and a half
30 miles or the five mile corridor. There are two or three
31 small rivers flow in from the Nowitna part, which are,
32 during the moose hunting season is not accessible. The
33 only way people who get the permit can get into the area,
34 if they hire a float plane and fly into a lake where
35 they're going to stay for seven days or 10 days and
36 nobody is doing that so far.

37
38 So what happens when these people receive
39 a permit, they want to come here and they hunt along the
40 Yukon River which is unusual pressure on the local
41 subsistence harvest, or local hunters.

42
43 I have, as a registered guide, I received
44 two applications -- not applications, inquiries from
45 hunters who drew permits and they wanted to rent boat
46 from me or they want me to help them to arrange a trip
47 where they can hunt. One drew a permit between the
48 Nowitna and Ruby and he wanted to go to Deer Creek, which
49 is maybe 25 miles outside of Ruby. I told him that, you
50 know, I can't help him, I don't want to help him, and I

1 explained that these areas along the river, the local
2 people, you know, they get their meat for the table and
3 they should be left alone. And as a matter of fact as a
4 registered guide I'm working here and I never shot a
5 moose along the Yukon River in my entire life because my
6 cabins are -- my first cabin is 100 miles up the Nowitna
7 so that's where I hunt and very few people.....

8
9 So my concern is just bring this issue to
10 the Board's attention and maybe just so if there will be,
11 in the future, support for changing the regulations, to
12 remove that permit hunt only.

13
14 When you're talking about a permit hunt,
15 it's that there will be -- this is an 80 mile by 80 mile
16 section land and there's going to be only 50 hunters, it
17 becomes an attraction without -- people would never think
18 to come over here.

19
20 So that's the issue I would like to
21 raise.

22
23 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Alex. And
24 can you spell your last name for me.

25
26 MR. TARNAI: Tarnai. T-A-R-N-A-I.

27
28 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you. Are there
29 any questions.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: I have one question
34 before you leave. I'm just trying to be kind and give
35 everyone else a chance.

36
37 MR. TARNAI: Right.

38
39 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Have you submitted a
40 proposal form to change this?

41
42 MR. TARNAI: No, not yet. I would like
43 to work on it and I will probably be talking to the
44 local, you know, Fish and Game Advisory also -- members
45 of that.

46
47 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: And you had a comment,
48 Vince.

49
50 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, it'd be best to get a

1 hold of the wildlife biologist for Fish and Game because
2 what you're talking about, it falls under the Board of
3 Game, which is the State one.

4

5 MR. TARNAI: Yes.

6

7 MR. MATHEWS: And I would encourage you
8 to talk to Glenn Stout, who's out of Galena, but you can
9 also get a biologist out of Fairbanks. And I encourage
10 you to talk to the Refuge Staff at Nowitna. Right now
11 who comes to mind is Geoff Beyersdorf. Because I
12 understood what you said, but as you open up the scope
13 there's a reason why that permit hunt was there. So I
14 don't want to discourage you from submitting a proposal,
15 you got to know the bigger picture, which I think you do
16 know, why that permit was set up.

17

18 But anyways, that's December 1, I
19 believe, for the Board of Game. So you got some time,
20 it's great that you're going to run it through the
21 Advisory Committee, which is super, but even if they
22 don't meet or don't care to take it up, you still have
23 the right as an individual, building on what Craig
24 Fleener said, to do that, and then go that way. But it
25 is best to work through your Advisory Committee. Here,
26 the Tanana/Rampart and then try to touch base with Ed
27 Sartin, who's the Chair of the Ruby Advisory Committee
28 because that's somewhat their backyard, too.

29

30 MR. TARNAI: Yes.

31

32 MR. MATHEWS: They pretty much more go
33 down river, though.

34

35 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Vince.
36 Sue.

37

38 MS. ENTSMINGER: I'm just curious, in our
39 area there's State land and BLM land where registered
40 guides are not limited to the area that others can move
41 in. In the area where you work, I notice there's some
42 BLM land here, too, do you notice an influx of
43 nonresident guides in your area?

44

45 MR. TARNAI: Nonresident guides?

46

47 MS. ENTSMINGER: Yes.

48

49 MR. TARNAI: No, not in this part of the
50 country unless they do it illegally and I'm sure it

1 happens. It happens that, you know, there are people
2 bringing up a friend, you know, and every year they bring
3 up a different friend from the Lower 48 or something and,
4 you know.

5
6 But I ran into -- on the Nowitna Refuge I
7 ran into guides from Michigan, that they were guides back
8 home and they just come up and bring in hunters, like one
9 person brings in one hunter a year and what they do is --
10 well, we don't know what kind of -- if money is exchanged
11 or not, but they just come on a float hunt as two
12 buddies, you know.

13
14 MS. ENTSMINGER: Uh-huh.

15
16 MR. TARNAI: You know, I saw this one
17 person like two different occasions, two different years
18 with different persons and I assume he was guiding. But
19 they are -- they fly in with an air service, they get
20 dropped off, they have their own gear and they do a float
21 hunt and how much they charge or if there's money
22 involved, we don't know that. As a matter of fact, you
23 know, that's a suspicion what I'm talking about.

24
25 MS. ENTSMINGER: Uh-huh.

26
27 MR. TARNAI: But because I am on the
28 Nowitna Refuge, I have two Federal areas now permitted to
29 me and on those two areas I hold the exclusive rights,
30 and I also -- I just got my BLM permit, but I have a
31 State permit for a long time and the State is -- you
32 know, anybody.....

33
34 MS. ENTSMINGER: Right.

35
36 MR. TARNAI:you know. I don't know
37 if that answers your question.

38
39 MS. ENTSMINGER: I think you might have
40 some enlightening things that's happening here that I
41 think might be happening statewide and it will affect
42 subsistence.

43
44 MR. TARNAI: Well, I just would like to
45 let you know that the reason I spoke up to get some
46 advice, where to go and how to go about it.

47
48 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: You don't have to
49 explain to him, you could say anything you want in here.
50

1 (Laughter)
2
3 MR. TARNAI: All right.
4
5 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: All right, any more
6 questions or comments.
7
8 (No comments)
9
10 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: This is our show.
11
12 MR. TARNAI: All right.
13
14 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: He just helps us.
15
16 (Laughter)
17
18 MR. TARNAI: Okay.
19
20 MR. MATHEWS: But I mean if you do need
21 -- use my 800 number, I'll connect you with Fish and
22 Game. What I'm trying to say is what Craig was saying,
23 is you've got to get -- know the playing field that
24 you're on.
25
26 MR. TARNAI: Right.
27
28 MR. MATHEWS: I laid out the players to
29 you and then to Sue, if he's hunting or guiding within
30 the Refuge, those are controlled guiding areas.
31
32 MS. ENTSMINGER: Yeah, I know.
33
34 MR. MATHEWS: So I might as well just say
35 it on the record, if this other person you said was
36 performing this activity you need to report that because
37 if he doesn't have a permit for a guide area within the
38 Refuge then he is illegal. So, again, the check station
39 at the mouth of the Nowitna, et cetera.
40
41 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you for that
42 Vince.
43
44 MR. TARNAI: Thank you.
45
46 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Alex. If
47 there are no more questions or comments.
48
49 (No comments)
50

1 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Next person. Somebody
2 put your hand up, come on. You have to push the button
3 on there.

4
5 MS. ROBERTS: Okay.

6
7 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: State your name,
8 please.

9
10 MS. ROBERTS: Julie Roberts and I am the
11 president of the Tanana Tribal Council. And I'd just
12 like to welcome everybody here to Tanana today and for
13 tomorrow and thank you all for coming here.

14
15 I wasn't really looking at the
16 regulations that hard, Craig, but, you know, I have a
17 concern about the timing of the opening of the moose
18 hunting season. Everybody knows that the weather has
19 been changing lately and so when it comes time for the
20 season to open, a lot of the moose are still eating. And
21 so it's kind of hard, you know, for people to go out and
22 get their moose like they used to a long time ago when
23 moose started moving a lot sooner.

24
25 And so I was just wondering if there was
26 any kind of, perhaps, studies that could be done to see,
27 you know, what kind of effects the weather is having on
28 the population of moose, you know, just for maybe because
29 the regulations could be changed in the future to a
30 little bit later date.

31
32 So that was just one of my concerns that
33 I had.

34
35 And the other one is on the fishing. I
36 fish up at the rapids with my husband and we're next to
37 Stan's camp and Charlie Campbell's across the river from
38 us. And I know that the program that Stan does is an
39 excellent program, and I know that it's really helping,
40 you know, getting people involved more so in the
41 fisheries now. I see a lot more people fishing and
42 putting away fish lately than a few years ago and so
43 that's really a good thing. And so I would like to see
44 funding continued for programs like that. Because I know
45 that, you know, way up in the upper Yukon, I was up in
46 Old Crow this summer and I know that, you know, they
47 really would like to see more of the fish go back to
48 their areas. And I think these programs that we have, I
49 think that it's giving us some really good information on
50 really what's taking place with all the different data

1 that we're gathering for these fisheries, and so I really
2 think it's important to continue to fund studies,
3 especially from Tanana on up. You know, even from Tanana
4 on up towards the Tanana River is important also.

5
6 But with the Treaty, you know, we have an
7 obligation to make sure that fish is getting across the
8 border and so I really would like to see the studies
9 continued.

10
11 I'd also like to talk about the Tozitna
12 River study with the salmon that goes up there. I think
13 it's been about over five years that we have been doing
14 this program now and I think, you know, those little
15 rivers they give us some good information, too, not only
16 on the health of the fish but the population of the fish.
17 And so I think every study, you know, that's done, I
18 think is really important and we need to continue to fund
19 these studies for our programs.

20
21 And I just wanted to say thank you for
22 being here, and, thank you Gerald for inviting the
23 subsistence Council here. And I'm really glad to see,
24 you know, these Councils come to the villages because it
25 really gives people the opportunity to speak and to give
26 advice on their own areas. And it was really good to go
27 up to Old Crow to see exactly what they're dealing with
28 that way. I mean it was really an eye opener for me.
29 Even up to Stevens Village this summer, too. So I think
30 it's really good to go out to the different areas.

31
32 So thank you for all of you being here.

33
34 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, very much.
35 Are there any questions -- hold on, Vince has a question.

36
37 MR. MATHEWS: No, I just need to provide
38 Julie some information. Western Interior, in its annual
39 report is going to be addressing the climatic training
40 and they also submitted a proposal, it's not for this
41 area, except for 21(D), to extend the closure date for
42 the moose seasons in light of the climatic changes. So
43 there is some action.

44
45 MS. ROBERTS: Okay.

46
47 MR. MATHEWS: That's not studies, per se.
48 But there is some actions, if I can remember correctly we
49 had three special actions addressing that issue, two
50 emergency orders going to the State that I believe all

1 were denied but both processes encourage people to submit
2 proposals to look at these changes in moose patterns. So
3 there is some action in that direction.

4

5 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, Vince. And
6 before you go, I just wanted to add to what I said a
7 little while ago and sort of twist it towards moose and,
8 that is, if I was you I wouldn't wait for any studies. I
9 think you probably have studied this issue long enough
10 yourself and you're probably surrounded by people who
11 have studied this issue in a lot more detail than any of
12 the researchers that we could be inviting, not giving any
13 slight to moose biologists in any way, I love them,
14 they're all wonderful people.....

15

16 (Laughter)

17

18 CHAIRMAN FLEENER:but I think that
19 you have plenty of information in your own community. If
20 you could get together with the 10 elders and hunters
21 from Tanana, call some folks in Ft. Yukon, and call the
22 tribal council and say, hey, get together with 10 elders
23 and hunters and then get together with some folks in four
24 or five other villages around here, get 50 elders and
25 hunters to get together -- not necessarily get together,
26 but get the information together and just document
27 whether or not they see things changing.

28

29 And I can tell you that the answer is,
30 yes. In Ft. Yukon we've seen things changing. Even in
31 my extremely short, young life.....

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 CHAIRMAN FLEENER:I've seen
36 changes. And when I used to go hunting with my uncles
37 when I was a young fellow, we would have ice that we
38 would have to chip off of the side of the boat in the end
39 of August and we haven't had ice even up through
40 September, even -- I'd say that our boats don't ice up
41 until October now, and that's just one sign of the
42 changing times.

43

44 And it's exactly right, your ability to
45 kill a moose is -- if you want to go out on September 1st
46 through the 10th, like the State regs for our area you're
47 not going to be able to see one because moose aren't
48 moving. And so it's steadily being pushed further and
49 further into winter, probably much like it is here. And
50 so if a wee young fellow like me knows that, I'm sure

1 that you have 10, 15 other hunters and elders around
2 here, and I would just write down what they have to say
3 and I would present that information as your traditional
4 scientific findings and make your own proposal.

5
6 That's my recommendation.

7
8 MS. ROBERTS: Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: And you can back it up
11 with the scientific information in two or three years
12 when that study is done.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 (Laughter)

17
18 MS. ROBERTS: Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Mike.

21
22 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23
24 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: What's your name?

25
26 MR. SMITH: Mike Smith.

27
28 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Okay, Mike.

29
30 (Laughter)

31
32 MR. SMITH: In light of all of the
33 discussion that's been going on I just couldn't keep
34 sitting down over there anymore.

35
36 And a couple of things I'd like to
37 comment on, I think first of all the comments concerning
38 the effectiveness of Federal protection. I think Stan is
39 correct, they came in and they didn't want to come in,
40 they were forced to come in, we forced them to come in to
41 protect subsistence rights and I think I would agree that
42 it's hard-pressed to see where any protection has
43 occurred.

44
45 As a matter of fact we now have windows
46 since Federal management. And a number of things like
47 that, that I agree, I'm not sure how much protection has
48 been afforded to us. And I think you're right, I think
49 Stan is correct in stating that it's just a lack of
50 wanting to confront the State and fight with the State

1 over biological issues. Instead of doing that they often
2 acquiesce to the State's wishes and desires.

3
4 And I think that there are some things
5 that exemplify that. I'm sure many of you just recently
6 got a memo from the Feds saying and reminding us that if
7 you do not turn in your harvest reports you don't get a
8 permit next year and the Feds are going to go along with
9 that. The other idea and I'm not sure if they're going
10 to go along with this, but this will be a question that I
11 will present to them at the Board of Game -- Subsistence
12 Board meeting, and I'm not sure if you folks are aware of
13 it. But every year the State does a subsistence harvest
14 report and it outlines, you know, what subsistence
15 harvest of salmon was in the drainage and stuff and those
16 reports are a couple of years off. But they just
17 recently released the 2003 report. And in that 2003
18 report, they made a rather dramatic statement and I'm
19 curious as to whether or not the Feds are going to go
20 along with that report as well.

21
22 In that report, if you remember those
23 reports, they talk -- they say things like, you know, 67
24 percent of the people have met their subsistence needs
25 for king salmon; 62 percent have met their needs for chum
26 salmon, and that all sounds good and dandy but then you
27 go to the end of it and it says that a successful
28 subsistence fisherman is one who has met 50 percent of
29 his needs.

30
31 Now, when the State -- I'm sure when the
32 State decided that that was a successful fisherman and
33 that satisfies the subsistence statute but apparently
34 they have. Now, whether or not the Feds go along with
35 that or not I'm not sure yet, but it's certainly going to
36 be asked of them whether or not they agree with that
37 statement. If they do agree with that statement then I
38 would definitely agree they are not protecting
39 subsistence rights. If they do not agree with that
40 statement, then I'd fully expect them to undertake
41 efforts to assure that that other 50 percent is met.
42 Whether or not that happens, I guess we'll wait and see.

43
44 In returns -- in regards to the moose
45 migration issue, Vince is correct, there's been a number
46 of emergency order requests and petitions to the Federal
47 Board sent in this year to extend that season and all of
48 them been declined. And why they were declined is a
49 rather strict interpretation, I believe, of the relevant
50 statutes and regulations. And primarily they were

1 declined because there were no biological emergency.
2 Well part of the Federal responsibility, and this is
3 outlined in a Federal court case as well, is that their
4 protection extends to the subsistence way of life, it's
5 not a number of fish we need for ANS amounts, it's not a
6 moose for -- you know, 20 moose for the village of Tanana
7 and it's not a date on a calendar, you know, it extends
8 well beyond the beginning of the hunting season -- well
9 before the beginning of the hunting season and well
10 beyond after it and to try to limit it and to say that we
11 cannot extend the season because there's no biological
12 emergency is, I just think, wrong.

13

14 Their mandate is to protect a need, and
15 that is the needs of the people in the rural areas to
16 provide for their subsistence, that need is not dictated
17 by a calendar. And it certainly is dictated by
18 environmental considerations, and those type of
19 considerations have no place in the Federal and State
20 management schemes right now as far as these type of
21 requests go. And I think that that is certainly
22 something that we need to undertake and the concept of
23 it, developing proposals to effectuate that would be --
24 will be interesting.

25

26 The State biologist's concern is that it
27 extends into the rut, well, my comment is, well, most
28 people I know in rural areas ain't going to take a bad
29 moose, and they generally have a pretty good idea if a
30 moose is going to be good or bad and that is kind of
31 smokescreen that is thrown up there, I think, to assume
32 that we'll take a bunch of rutting moose and throw the
33 meat again. Well, I just don't think that happens very
34 much.

35

36 In regards to the permits, if the Feds --
37 Federal government wants to go along with the State
38 permitting requirement, you know, that we will not even
39 get a subsistence permit next year if we don't dot all
40 our T's and cross all our T's and dot all our I's, I'm
41 sorry, we're not going to get a permit, we're not going
42 to be able to subsistence hunt I think is just going to
43 make criminals out of a bunch of people in rural areas
44 and we're going to run into nothing but problems. As a
45 result of that, we are batting around the concept of
46 possibly Federal permits. Now, the Federal government
47 hates that concept, most people probably hate the
48 concept, but the protection being afforded to us by the
49 State -- by the Federal government acquiescence to the
50 State restrictions, I think, forces our hands in some of

1 these areas and I would agree with Stan that we need a
2 champion, Stan, and I just don't think we have it.
3
4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5
6 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Don't go anywhere,
7 thank you. Are there any questions.
8
9 (No comments)
10
11 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: You got off the hot
12 seat easy.
13
14 MR. SMITH: Yeah, good.
15
16 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Thank you, very much.
17 Anybody else.
18
19 (No comments)
20
21 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: I thought Dr. Wheeler
22 was going to come forth.
23
24 (Laughter)
25
26 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Anyone else have any
27 comments they'd like us to consider.
28
29 (No comments)
30
31 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: We're just getting
32 started here. I'm just getting the juices going. It's
33 like I just started this meeting, oh, that's right, I
34 did.
35
36 (Laughter)
37
38 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: I'm fresh game.
39
40 (Laughter)
41
42 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: All right, no more
43 comments, what's next Vince.
44
45 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman. This was
46 just a session for public testimony, it's your call. If
47 you want to do anymore work, I think your Council members
48 are not indicating that but.....
49
50 CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Anybody want to work

1 anymore?

2

3

(Council Shakes heads negatively)

4

5

CHAIRMAN FLEENER: I see no yes nods.

6

7

MS. ENTSMINGER: Besides the fresh one.

8

9

CHAIRMAN FLEENER: Besides the fresh one,
10 yeah. All right, let's adjourn until tomorrow morning at
11 what time Vince.

12

13

MR. MATHEWS: Gerald was indicating about

14

15

16

MR. NICHOLIA: Breakfast is at 8:30.

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

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CHAIRMAN FLEENER: So let's start at 9:15
or thereabouts.

MR. MATHEWS: Okay.

(Off record)

(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 143 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 10th day of October 2005, beginning at the hour of 9:00 o'clock a.m. at Tanana, 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 23rd day of October 2005

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