

Federal Subsistence Board Tribal and Corporation Consultation Summary 1/26/21

Board members: Don Striker NPS; Wayne Owen USFS, Greg Siekaniec USFWS, Charlie Brower PM, Chad Padgett BLM, Tony Christianson PM, Rhonda Pitka PM, and Pat Petrivelli (representing BIA).

Orville Lind began by introducing the consultation process. Also stated how pleased he was about the locals call in to the consultation.

Mr. Anderson (Chignik Intertribal Coalition)- stated this is his first time to call in. He looks forward to being more involved in this process. There were Chignik closures in 2018, 2019 and 2020 due to disastrous salmon returns; these closures have been a huge concerns. They are requesting information on stock assessment, rebuilding and recovery plans. Thanks the FSB for this opportunity

Jaeleen Kookesh (Sealaska Corporation)- says she is happy to participate. The traditional way of life is important. Thanked the Board for helping Kake last spring with their COVID-19 Special Action request, and for help with all of the litigation from ADF&G since then. Sitka herring is a huge concern. Subsistence herring is in need of protections. Recent changes by ADF&G should help. We all need to work to protect subsistence herring. She thanked the Federal Board for their help to protect subsistence herring.

Karen Linnell (Ahtna Intertibal Resource Commission)- Thanked the FSB for the opportunity, and she stated she represents 8 Federally recognized Tribes. Interested in seeing the Board take action on the AITRC proposal for moose and caribou in Units 11, 12 and 13. She thanked the NPS, BLM and OSM for working with them. They have been working with the public on lot of education efforts leading up to the 2021 hunting season. It has been a long road; thanks to all for their help and time. She is saving her comments on their community subsistence harvest for later in the Board meeting.

Chairman Christensen replied that he is glad to see the board moving forward with this.

Mr Striker also thanked everyone for their hard work and said this has been a long process.

Tisha Coons sp and Evan Beve sp (Calista Corp.)- No comments.

Anthony Olick, Martin Nicholai, Nick Iyaponin (Kwethluk Inc.)- Mentioned that Kwethluk had submitted a food security Special Action, but it was denied. With low water in their region, some didn't get their subsistence moose, they also mentioned it is vital to their community to be able to get subsistence foods. They are concerned that everyone doesn't have what they need for subsistence foods. Thanked the Federal Board for the help. Caribou, moose, and fish are key subsistence resources for Kwethluk. It is a struggle every year for them to meet their annual salmon subsistence needs. Salmon restriction to depth and length for gillnets was a concern. Fish don't travel in low water upriver. Escapement is the concern. Kwethluk also supports lower and middle Kuskokwim River to use the same gillnet length and depth.

Mr. Ben Stevens (Stevens Village & Tanana Chiefs Conference)- The food security issue is a huge concern with COVID-19. Stevens Village was very disappointed that their COVID-19 related special action request for food security was denied. Criteria and guidance weren't well defined for these Special Action requests. Stevens Village wants to help OSM and Federal Subsistence Management Program better define this process for the future. They weren't able to provide for a family's needs with salmon fishing last summer. He believes that they will find a solution to this for the future. Actions for salmon management have been a concern. A lot of times, salmon haven't reach the Yukon Flats in the numbers needed for escapement and subsistence. Working with Tribes is incredibly valuable. A lot of people haven't been eating very well over the past decade along the Yukon Flats. He was very concerned that their request for food was put on hold due politics and wasn't supported by ADF&G or the Department of Interior. He is concerned that we are asking the wrong people and looks forward to discussion in the future. He appreciates the Federal Subsistence Board's work.

Chairman Christensen thanked Mr. Stevens for calling in and sharing those concerns with the FSB.

Public Member Rhonda Pitka asked Mr. Stevens if he had any report about salmon fisheries on the Yukon.

Mr. Stevens replied it is getting to the point that we cannot feed our people. We could not even feed enough people this winter. According to the data the fish are disappearing and we need to do things differently. Management decisions have

not allowed subsistence users above the Yukon River bridge to harvest fish. More considerations needs to be given to people up river.

Chairman Christensen again thanked Mr. Stevens for calling and sharing his regions concerns, and also stated that we do need to find a way to provide subsistence fish further up river.

Public Member Brower asked who approves these food security requests?

Mr Kron from OSM replied last spring there were over a dozen food security requests, however the State did not find there were any food security issues except the Kake request.

Anthony from Kwethluk stated they were denied and still trying to sort out why but going to see what happens next time. Grocery stores are very expensive and the Virus has made it difficult to go anywhere safely. We would like the FSB to give us opportunity to harvest.

Public Member Pitka asked the question of what is the most abundant food resource out there?

Anthony from kwethluk replied that caribou, moose and fish, also fish under ice. Caribou population is down, moose is ok but wolfs are killing lots, no small animals seen around.

Sue Detwilder ARD of OSM stated that the Board was directed by DOI and last administration to pause working on the food security requests. The new administration is now looking at whether to start looking at those again. OSM has not received any new Special Actions for Food Security since the first set.

Chief introduced Darrel Vent Sr. and Noraman Vertes sp (Huslia Tribal Corp.)-

Mr. Darrel Vent is a former WIRAC member. He mentioned they are having issues the same as Ben Stevens at Steven Village. Caribou were a concern earlier; there were no more caribou after the pipeline; the caribou lost their migration pattern. Now his people are having the same kind of issues with fish and moose. We don't have the large breeding bull moose. Predators are now a concern too. Are seeing lots of cow moose without calves standing in the water to avoid predators; grizzlies have been taking the calves.

Mary Martines (Chulista Corp.)- no comments

Brook Woods (Rampart Village)- no comments

Gloria Stickwan (Taslina Tribal Council) concerns about low salmon fisheries in the lower Copper River. Salmon runs and subsistence catches were poor last summer. We need to allow Chinook and Sockeye Salmon to get to upper Copper River. Costs of fuel is high and many cannot afford it. She thanked Orville and the Federal Subsistence Board for the opportunity.

Public Member Pitka asked if this year was low or if it is a trend?

Gloria replied that last year was bad, 2018 was OK, the forecast for next summer is bad, we are not getting our subsistence needs met.

Orville Lind added that most coastal villages he is hearing the same issues, and that's why its important to speak out in these meetings.

Robbin George (Gulkana Village)- Elders predicted two summers and two winters of no subsistence. She thanked all for listening.

Orville, Tony, Charlie, Rhonda and Don thanked all Tribal and Corporation representatives that called in. Subsistence food security is a real concern. People need subsistence food to survive, so food security/COVID-19 related Special Action requests are extremely important. Don noted that NPS has elevated food security Special Action requests as a critical issue.

Orville did let everyone know about the Board meeting starting at 1:30 PM today. This is another opportunity for people to provide comments.