

SOUTHCENTRAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

University of Alaska Fairbanks - Seward Marine Center

Seward

October 10-11, 2019

Invocation:

Gloria Stickwan gave an invocation.

Call to Order, Roll Call and Quorum Establishment:

The meeting was called to order on Thursday, October 10, 2019, at approximately 9:00 a.m. Council members Ed Holsten, Greg Encelewski, Daniel Stevens, Gloria Stickwan, Andrew McLaughlin, Dennis Zadra, Michael Opheim, and John Whissel were present in person. Council Member Eleanor Dementi resigned from the Council prior to this meeting. Diane Selanoff and Aaron Bloomquist were not present and were excused. With 8 out of 10 seated Council members present (Council has three vacant seats), the quorum was established.

Attendees:

In person:

Todd Eskelin	Kenai	Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Tom Whitford	Anchorage	U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Dustin Carl		Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC)
Carol Damberg	Anchorage	USFWS
Matte Piche		Native Village of Eyak
Jesse Hankins	Glennallen	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Bronwyn Jones		Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)
Jason Herreman	Homer	ADF&G
Barbara Cellarius		Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (NPP), National Park Service (NPS)
Milo Burcham	Cordova	USFS
Odin Miller		AITRC
Pat Petrivelli	Anchorage	Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
Nicole Farnham		AITRC
Dave Sarafin		Wrangell-St. Elias NPP, NPS
Darrel Williams	Ninilchik	
Francisco Sanchez	Seward	USFS
Scott Ayers	Anchorage	Office of Subsistence Management (OSM)

Jordan Rymer	Anchorage	USFS
Tom Evans	Anchorage	OSM
Ivan Encelewski	Ninilchik	
Dan Sharp	Anchorage	BLM
Tom Doolittle	Anchorage	OSM
Willow Hetrick	Moose Pass	
Christine Brummer	Anchorage	OSM
John Kinsner	Anchorage	USFS
DeAnna Perry	Juneau	USFS
Benjamin Pister		Kenai Fjord National Park (NP), NPS
David Pearson	Moose Pass	USFS
Amy Craver	Anchorage	Denali National Park, NPS
Chris McKee	Anchorage	OSM
Megan Klosterman	Anchorage	OSM
Hannah Vorhees	Anchorage	OSM
Robin LaVine	Anchorage	OSM
Wayne Owen	Juneau	USFS
Jeff Estes		

Via teleconference:

Suzanne Worker	Anchorage	OSM
Jeff Anderson	Kenai	USFWS
Mark Burch	Anchorage	ADF&G
Joshua Ream	Anchorage	NPS
Raeanna Wood	Juneau	USFS
Ben Mulligan	Anchorage	ADF&G
Jeff Bryden	Moose Pass	
Jeff Wells	Tok	ADF&G
Sue Entsminger	Mentasta	Eastern Interior RAC

Review and Adopt Agenda:

Motion made by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. Holsten, to adopt the agenda as read with the following changes:

- Add Request for Reconsideration 15-01 - Update as 10d under Old Business
- Add WSA19-08 Ptarmigan in Unit 13E - Special Action as 11a under New Business
- Add Ninilchik Traditional Council to 12 - Agency Reports, under Tribal Governments
- Add Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Update to Agency Reports
- Add Denali Subsistence Resource Commission Appointment Information
- Set a specific time for the Moose Pass agenda item

The motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion made by Mr. Holsten, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to approve the winter 2019 meeting minutes with the following modifications: On page 11 of the meeting book, change “court” to “council.”

The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member and Chair Reports:

Edward Holsten of Cooper Landing reported that his community had a mild spring and early snow melt with record dry temperatures, and it was very warm in April and May. There was a large infestation of spruce bark beetles that resulted in a tremendous amount of tree kill in the area. The first run of Sockeye Salmon in Kenai was great, and the majority of subsistence users got to participate in fishing the first run. Because of the Swan Lake wildfire, the air quality was poor and most businesses experienced adverse effects.

Greg Encelewski of Ninilchik reported that the Ninilchik subsistence fishery was awesome. A large number of permits were issued, and all were filled. It was dry, hot, and calm this year, and the fish went up in the inlet to deeper water. Over a million Sockeye flooded the Kenai River and probably resulted in over escapement. The commercial fishermen did not do well. There was an increase in the bull moose population in Unit 15c, and the moose harvest was good; many locals harvested moose so it was a good season.

Daniel Stevens of Chitina reported that his community saw a good run of salmon, both Kings and Reds. There was an abundance of rabbits. He has seen strange things recently: he observed a black wolf in his driveway and a silver fox nearby.

Gloria Stickwan of Tazlina reported that it was a hot and dry summer. There was a good run of fish this year, both Sockeyes and Kings. Many people harvested moose, which might be attributed to the wildfires in the area. She did not observe many caribou. She just attended a meeting of the Subsistence Resource Commission prior to this RAC meeting.

Dennis Zadra of Cordova reported that it was an unusual summer in his community (hot and dry). Despite decreasing salmon trends, he observed Kings and Reds coming back this year and that they were bigger, even though the recent trend showed they were decreasing in size. The hatchery runs came back strong, and the salmon are bouncing back. Bears were everywhere last year trying to find something to eat, but bear sightings were way down this year. Halibut fishing was good this year.

Michael Opheim of Seldovia reported that there were no berries in his area this year. No bears had been taken. A couple of goats were harvested. This was a dry season and the streams dried up with only small fish coming back. It was a good year for Kings with a small run of Silvers that were started from

transplants. The Tribe recently sent in a couple of proposals to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to expand the subsistence fishery.

Andrew McLaughlin of Chenega Bay reported that there were more bears this year than in recent years. Deer are bouncing back. Silvers showed up late in the season. The berry crop was good. The vegetation was short because of dry and hot weather. There was a moratorium on harvest of shellfish because of paralytic shell poisoning by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

John Whissel of Cordova reported that Sockeye Salmon came back this year after a poor Sockeye run last year. It was a tropical summer in Cordova with a good berry year, so the bears stayed out of town. It was a good season for subsistence Halibut. There was a fairly weak run of Cohos on the Delta this year.

Old Business:

The Council heard the status of these issues; however, no action by the Council was necessary:

- Wildlife Closure Reviews (WCR20-03, WCR20-41, WCR20-42)
- 805(c) Report
- Nonrural Determination Process – Moose Pass Proposal
- Request for Reconsideration 15-01

New Business:

WSA19-08: Motion made by Mr. Holsten, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support this special action regarding ptarmigan harvest in Unit 13E. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council felt that local users were seen as self-regulating and that there was a conservation concern due to the impact of hunting, predation, and other conditions. Council agreed that the reduction in harvest was necessary because it could prevent overharvesting.

Wildlife Proposals:

Regional Proposals:

WP20-18a: Revise the customary and traditional use determination for goat in Unit 7

Motion made by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support WP20-18a as modified by OSM. The Council felt that the analysis showed a clear customary and traditional use by the communities for goat and other resources as described in the OSM modification. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-18b: Establish a goat season in Unit 7

Motion made by Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Holsten, to support WP20-18b with modifications. Modifications included the OSM modification and Council's modification to make a hunter ineligible to get a permit for a billy for 3 years if one is harvested and 5 years if a nanny is harvested. The Council received a variety of explanations for the decline in this species and believes that these restrictions are

needed in the regulations instead of a stipulation under the permit conditions due to conservation concerns for the species and the way it is managed. This proposal will provide an opportunity for Federal subsistence users. If adopted, the delegation of authority letter will allow a more timely response within the Federal process. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-19: Revise the elder/minor sheep hunt in Unit 11

Motion made by Ms. Stickwan, seconded by Mr. Stevens, to support WP20-19. The Council wanted existing regulations to remain on the books and if this proposal is rejected by the Board, then the hunts provided under the existing regulation would continue. The Council did not agree with the Solicitor's opinion that this proposal is not permissible under ANILCA, as there is no reason to have a Section 804 to restrict harvest because there is no shortage of animals. In fact, it could be interpreted as the opposite when talking about sustaining a livelihood. This has a lot to do with passing knowledge from one generation to another, for which there is precedent. The Council was concerned that there may eventually be only 'special hunts' and did not want to run the risk of existing hunts being restricted. The Council opposed this proposal to maintain 'status quo.' The motion to support failed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-20: Restrict hunting/trapping in residential areas and mark trap sites in Unit 7

Motion was made by Ms. Stickwan, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support WP20-20. The Council felt that this proposal would make regulations more complex, be difficult to enforce, and users trapping under State regulations do not have such restrictions. Although the Council appreciated an attempt to reduce conflict between pet owners and trappers, it felt this proposal exaggerated the issue. The Council specifically noted that smaller buffers are more consistent with what is normally done. Marked traps would be more susceptible to disturbance by people and it wouldn't stop illegal trapping. The motion failed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-21: The Council took no action on WP20-21 as this proposal was withdrawn by the proponent prior to its presentation to the Council.

WP20-22a: Revise customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 15

Motion by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, to support WP20-22a as modified by OSM. The Council stated that the analysis makes it clear that the residents of the communities listed in the OSM modification have a clear history of traditional use of caribou in the area. The proposal makes sense since the population has increased and the communities listed should have the ability to utilize the resource now. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-22b: Establish a season and harvest limit for caribou in Unit 15

Motion by Ms. Stickwan, seconded by Mr. Stevens, to support WP20-22b. The Council stated that there needs to be opportunity for harvest by Federally qualified subsistence users and, to date, the majority of

harvest has been by non-Federally qualified users. The Council noted that caribou populations move around and the Council did not want restrictions about where Federally qualified subsistence users could hunt. Further, the Council stated that the evidence supports the recommendation because it would be beneficial to subsistence users without unnecessarily restricting other users. The motion passed with 7 votes in favor to 1 against.

WP20-23a: Revise the customary and traditional use determination for goat in Unit 15

Motion by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, to support WP20-23a as modified by OSM. The Council believes that there is a clear need for an opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to have access to resources where no access currently exists. The Council recognizes that it has been difficult for Federally qualified subsistence users to obtain a State drawing permit due to competition from the large number of non-local applicants. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-23b: Establish a season and harvest limit for goat in Unit 15

Motion by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support WP20-23b with modification. The modification prohibits the take of nannies with kids, the take of kids, and made a hunter ineligible to get a permit for a billy for 3 years if one is harvested, and for 5 years if a nanny is harvested. This restriction should be put in regulation. The Council stated that a drawing permit was too restrictive and wanted to ensure that Federally qualified users would have an opportunity to harvest this limited resource. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-24a: Revise the customary and traditional use determination and recognize the use of sheep by residents of Ninilchik

Motion by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. Stevens, to support WP20-24a. The Council believes that the people living closest to the resource should have first access to the resource. The Council believes that only the communities mentioned in the proposal should be addressed and not add additional communities. Other communities should submit their own customary and traditional use determination proposals. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-24b: Establish a season and harvest limit for sheep in Unit 15

Motion by Mr. Holsten, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support WP20-24b as modified by OSM. The Council feels that a Federal priority needs to be established to provide opportunity for Federally qualified users to harvest a sheep. With the declining population, it is important to establish this priority before harvest restrictions occur. Delegated authority will allow flexibility in how the hunt is managed and give the land manager the ability to be close the season if needed for conservation or other reasons. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Crossover Proposals:

WP20-50: Revise hunt areas, seasons, and harvest limits for moose in Unit 12

Motion by Ms. Stickwan, seconded by Mr. Opheim, to support WP20-50 with Council's modification. The modification was to maintain the harvest limit and season throughout Unit 12 remainder (8/20 – 9/20, one antlered bull) and create a separate hunt area for the RM291 hunt as described in the original proposal. The Council believed it should support a subsistence priority on Federal public lands, per ANILCA to assure that opportunities for local users are not limited. The Council was concerned that harvest opportunity would be reduced for local people and make it harder to harvest an antlered bull. The Council believed that the proposal was confusing for the user. The Council stated that this modification would provide for a subsistence priority and ensure opportunities for local users are not limited. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WP20-51: Revise the customary and traditional use determination for sheep in Unit 12

Motion by Ms. Stickwan, seconded by Mr. Stevens, to support WP20-51. The Council believed that use of Dall sheep resource has been demonstrated and the rural residents of Unit 12 have been using the resource for some time. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Statewide Proposals:

WP20-08: Require traps and snares be marked with a State identification

Motion by Mr. Whissel, seconded by Mr. Holsten, to support WP20-08. The Council believed that there should not be a standard for the whole state. It is an issue that should be addressed at the local level if there are conflicts/problems. Implementing a uniform regulation across the State of Alaska would place an unnecessary burden on Federally qualified subsistence users. The motion failed.

2020 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program:

Scott Ayers, OSM, provided information on the 2020 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. The Council took no action on this matter.

Identify Issues for FY2019 Annual Report:

- Ask the Board to keep the working group for Unit 13 caribou/moose in Unit 13, which was mentioned at the Federal Subsistence Board meeting in April, 2019
- Ask that an FRMP project include monitoring the Copper River to identify specific stocks, run timing, and escapement (pay more attention to Coho Salmon)

- Climate Change: continue observing climate change issues in terms of salmon and fisheries and research the stressors on salmon and effects caused by warming temperatures
- Research wildlife populations with a focus on parasites
- Provide an explanation of the nonrural determination process in more detail and how this will be dealt with in the future

Agency Reports:

- Ninilchik Traditional Council provided 2019 final reports on the Kasilof Subsistence Gillnet Fishery and Kenai River Subsistence Gillnet Fishery presented by Ivan Encelewski
- Native Village of Eyak project report presented by Matt Piche
- Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Update presented by Odin Miller, AITRC
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife updates presented by Jeff Anderson
- U.S. Forest Service updates on law enforcement, program and agency presented by Jordan Rymer, Milo Burcham, and Tom Whitford
- National Park Service updates on fisheries, wildlife, subsistence, anthropology and Denali Subsistence Resource Commission appointments and updates presented by Dave Sarafin, Barbara Cellarius, and Amy Craver
- Bureau of Land Management wildlife report presented by Jesse Hankins
- Office of Subsistence Management program updates presented by Tom Doolittle

Future Meeting Dates:

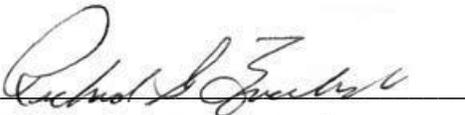
The winter 2020 Council meeting was set for the week of March 4 – 5, 2020, in Anchorage.

The fall 2020 Council meeting was set for October 7 – 8, 2020, in Anchorage; however, this location may be changed at the 2020 winter meeting based on agenda subjects.



DeAnna Perry, DFO

USFWS Office of Subsistence Management



Richard Greg Encelewski, Chair

Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its March 4 – 5, 2020, meeting in Anchorage, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes at that meeting.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript, and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call DeAnna Perry at 1-800-478-1456 or 907-586-7918, email deanna.perry@usda.gov.