

BRISTOL BAY SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Curyung Tribal Council Office

Dillingham

November 2, 2022

Invocation:

Richard Wilson provided an invocation.

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Quorum Establishment:

The meeting was called to order Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 8:35 am. Council members Norman Anderson, Nanci Morris-Lyon, Dan Dunaway, and Richard Wilson were present in person. Lary Hill attended via teleconference for half of the day due to phone issues. William Trefon, Jr. was not present and was not excused. With five out of six seated Council members present (Council has four vacant seats) the quorum was established.

Attendees:

In person:

- Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA): *Gayla Hoseth and Cody Larson*
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): *Rosalie Debenham*
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): *Sara Boario*
- Katmai National Park and Preserve: *Troy Hamon*
- Lake Clark National Park and Preserve: *Liza Rupp and Susanne Fleek-Green*
- National Park Service (NPS): *Dillon Patterson*
- Aniakchak National Monument: *Mark Sturm*
- Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (NWR): *Andy Aderman*
- Curyung Tribal Council: *Courtenay Carty*
- Office of Subsistence (OSM): *Lisa Grediagin, Katya Wessels, Jarred Stone, Leigh Honig, and Pippa Kenner*
- Alaska Peninsula and Becharof NWR: *Bryce Woodruff, Susan Alexander, and Phil Smith*
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G): *John Landsiedel, Chance Wilcox, and Evelyn Lichwa*

Via teleconference:

- USFWS: *Jill Klein and Jon Gerken*
- Bureau of Land Management: *Walker Gusse*
- OSM: *Robbin La Vine, Kendra Holman, Jason Roberts, and Scott Ayers*
- ADF&G: *Amy Vandervoort and Mark Burch*
- Curyung Tribal Council: *Desi Bond*

- Togiak NWR: *Pat Walsh*
- Trustees for Alaska: *Geoff Toy*
- NPS: *Eva Patton*

Review and Adopt Agenda:

Member Anderson requested that an executive session be added to the agenda in the event the Council may want to discuss items off the record. Katya Wessels, OSM Council Coordination Division Supervisor, provided information on the process of requesting a closed executive session, explaining that under the Federal Advisory Committee Act an executive session may be requested prior to the meeting and must be approved by the Designated Federal Officer. Member Anderson requested that members receive the draft agenda prior to the meeting for review to see if any topics may warrant the addition of an executive session.

Motion by Member Dunaway, seconded by Member Wilson, to adopt the agenda as read with the following changes:

- Add Alaska Peninsula and Becharof NWR under Agency Reports USFWS section

The motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Member Dunaway, seconded by Member Wilson, to approve the winter 2022 meeting minutes with the following modifications: add the date, February 8, 2022, and replace “bear” with “beaver” on page 11.

The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member and Chair Reports:

Richard Wilson of Naknek reported that it had been a busy year; there was an abundance of fish and game coming back. Ptarmigan population levels are starting to recover. Folks were able to have moose and see caribou on occasion. He even had a caribou in his yard. He looked forward to the discussion with the Council on bycatch issues.

Dan Dunaway of Dillingham reported that the red (Sockeye) salmon returns were phenomenal in the Dillingham area. In King Salmon, the returns were not as good and is a concern. He heard from folks that the moose season was good. People in the community had been harvesting smelt recently.

Norman Anderson of Dillingham reported that he couldn't participate in subsistence activities due to some health issues. He received a Tier II caribou permit and plans on hunting during the winter.

Lary Hill of Iliamna apologized he couldn't make the meeting in person. There was interference on the phone making it difficult to hear his report.

Nanci Morris-Lyon of King Salmon reported that the Sockeye Salmon run was incredible. She was humbled and honored to be able to witness a run of that size, depth, and width. The rainy summer presented some challenges. Folks in her area were able to fill their freezers with moose and salmon. Ptarmigan and spruce grouse numbers seem to be improving. She has concerns over king (Chinook) salmon and feels that hard decisions are going to have to be made here soon to protect the species. She invited the Regional Director of USFWS Sara Boario, who was present at the meeting in person, to share a few words.

Director Boario expressed to the Council she was happy to be able to attend the meeting in person and understood how difficult it was for the Council to conduct business remotely the past two years. Before becoming Regional Director, she had worked eight years with USFWS, and prior to that she had spent nine years with the U. S. Forest Service. The first seven months as Regional Director had been spent connecting with people throughout the state as places have started to open back up. The ability to meet people in person has created meaningful connections and has been fulfilling. She looked forward to hearing the Council discussions.

Old Business:

The Council received presentations on the following topics:

- ***Federal Subsistence Board (Board) 805(c) Report summary*** presented by Council Coordinator Leigh Honig.
- ***Board FY-2021 Annual Report Replies summary*** presented by Ms. Honig. Member Dunaway spoke about the concerns of increased bear populations. He noted the season was already liberal and inquired about the ability of making it easier to sell bear hides. Member Dunaway will work with OSM staff on proposal development to bring back to the Council to discuss. Ms. Hoseth with BBNA and Chair Morris-Lyon discussed the turnover in agency staff and the Board and requested training be provided to ensure ANILCA is being followed and prevails over agency specific regulations.
- ***Council Expenses for Fiscal Year 2022*** presented by Ms. Honig.
- ***Council Correspondence update*** presented by Ms. Honig. The Council wrote a letter to the Board expressing concerns over HR4716 that sought to prohibit the use of body gripping traps within the NWR system. The letter was sent to the Secretary of the Interior, the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the Alaska Governor, and the Bristol Bay region representative in the Legislature. The bill was introduced in the House of Representatives and had not been taken up by Committee. USFWS provided technical assistance and worked with Representative Nadler of New York to include an exemption of Alaska's Refuges from the bill.
- ***Deferred Wildlife Proposal WP22-40: Deferred WP22-40 wolf and wolverine, Units 9B, 9C, 17B, 17C, allowing the use of snowmachines for positioning animals, was presented by Pippa Kenner, Anthropologist with OSM. The Board, at the request of the Council, deferred the proposal from its April 2022 meeting to allow the Council time to formulate language that would***

encompass the traditional harvest methods the Council was seeking. A working group met in September of 2022 to discuss the proposal further. At the Council meeting, public testimony from subsistence users in the region supported the working group's recommendation as it incorporated traditional harvest practices.

Motion made by Member Dunaway, seconded by Member Wilson, to amend the regulatory language and the Council's recommendation on WP22-40 to read "in Units 9C, 9B, Unit 17A, 17B, 17C, on open Federal lands a snowmachine may be used to approach and pursue wolves and wolverine but may not come in contact with a live animal. An approach and pursuit under this paragraph is not driving, herding, or molesting under §__.26(b)(5) Subsistence taking of wildlife. The motion as amended passed on a unanimous vote.

New Business:

Fisheries Proposals and Closure Reviews:

Regional:

FCR21-13: Review closure to subsistence harvest of salmon in Russel Creek and Nurse Lagoon – Waters of Russell Creek and Nurse Lagoon and within 500 yards outside of the mouth of Nurse Lagoon.

Motion by Member Dunaway, seconded by Member Wilson, to support the OSM conclusion on fisheries closure review FCR21-13. The Council motion to rescind the closure passed on a unanimous vote.

The Council agreed with the recommendations of the Kodiak Aleutians Regional Advisory Council and supports following Title VIII of ANILCA when resources are limited. Sport fishing should not occur when subsistence fishing is not permitted.

FCR23-13: Review closure to subsistence harvest of salmon in Trout Creek and within 500 yards outside its mouth.

Motion by Member Dunaway, seconded by Member Wilson, to support the OSM conclusion on fisheries closure review FCR23-13. The Council motion to rescind the closure passed on a unanimous vote.

The Council agreed with the recommendations of the Kodiak Aleutians Regional Advisory Council and supports following Title VIII of ANILCA when resources are limited.

2024 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP)

Jarred Stone, OSM Fisheries Biologist, led the discussion on the 2024 notice of funding opportunity for the FRMP and the development of priority information needs, the first draft of which was worked on by volunteers from the both the Kodiak/Aleutian and Bristol Bay Councils over the summer. The Council was in support of the priority information needs that were developed. Member Wilson requested a priority

information need be further developed to also include harvest monitoring of Chinook Salmon by user group in the Bristol Bay region. The Council also added another priority information need, “All-encompassing regional study of sharing networks, particularly with communities in need (e.g., Chignik and Yukon communities).”

Motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Dunaway, to adopt the priority information needs with Member Wilson’s addition for submission to the 2024 FRMP. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program

Mr. Stone provided the notice of funding opportunity for the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program that seeks proposals through a competitive grant for Alaska Native and rural nonprofit organizations to strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in Federal subsistence management. The grant, in addition, provides funding for science and culture camps and paid student internship.

Harvest of Wildlife for Sport Purposes in National Preserves

Susanne Fleek-Green, NPS, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve Superintendent, provided a report on the proposed wildlife rule that would affect sport hunting in National Preserves. At the time of the meeting, the proposed rule had not been published in the Federal Register. In 2015, the NPS finalized a rule that limited sport hunting activities such as hunting of black bears with artificial light at den sights, bear baiting, hunting and trapping wolves and coyotes including pups during denning season, and shooting caribou while swimming in National Preserves. In July 2020, under direction of the Department of Interior, the rule was rescinded. Coming full circle, under the direction of Secretary Deb Haaland, NPS has been tasked with revising the 2015 rule. Once the rule has been published, NPS staff will consult with Tribes and the State of Alaska and will review the rule to ensure it incorporates hunting practices that are consistent with legal and policy framework applicable to sport and non-subsistence harvest in National Preserves.

Joint meeting: North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in May 2023

Lisa Grediagin, OSM Wildlife Division Supervisor, provided an announcement about the conference that will be held in Anchorage from May 8 – 12, 2023. The meeting will bring together an international group of managers, researchers, and indigenous and local knowledge holders who want to share their knowledge of caribou, muskoxen, Dall sheep, moose, and reindeer. The conference will include plenary sessions on co-management, the global status of caribou, integrating western science and indigenous knowledge and the effects of climate change on caribou. The Council provided feedback on possible topics to discuss during a “State and Federal ungulate management in Alaska” symposium, including the effects of climate change, predator control, overgrazing, and disease on ungulate populations. The Council also discussed the importance of hearing what has been happening on a circumpolar level to gain perspective on how Alaska’s caribou concerns may also be of concern to other countries. In addition, the Council discussed

caribou demographics and the possibility of managing resident herds as a separate population, specifically the herd near Kokhanok.

Motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Anderson, to nominate Member Dunaway to attend the conference with Member Anderson as an alternate. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Call for Regional Advisory Council appointments for Aniakchak Subsistence Resource Commission

Dillon Patterson, NPS Subsistence Program, provided the call for Council appointments to the Aniakchak Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC). The SRC provides local subsistence users an opportunity to inform the management of subsistence resources in Aniakchak and the surrounding area in Unit 9E. There are currently two vacant Bristol Bay Council seats on the Aniakchak SRC. Members of the Council or the Local Advisory Council (AC) who live and participate in subsistence uses in the Monument area are eligible for the appointment. The Council did not take any action on the call for appointments, as the Council at the time of the meeting did not have any names to put forward. The Council suggested that the Lower Bristol Bay AC may have names to put forth for appointment and hoped to appoint someone at their winter 2023 meeting.

Council Member reimbursement for telephonic/internet expenses related to Council teleconference meetings

Ms. Honig provided the Council with the information on how to request reimbursement for telephonic/internet expenses during the period the Council meetings were held via teleconference. Council members can request reimbursement for internet and phone charges that are more than their normal bill. Council members may submit documentation showing the excess charges to their Council Coordinator or mail to OSM in Anchorage.

Fall 2022 Council application/nomination open season:

The 2023 Council application period will run from September 13, 2022 – February 21, 2023. Incumbent seats that expire on December 2, 2023 are encouraged to reapply during the open application period. At the request of the Board, OSM will engage the help of the Native Liaisons of Federal agencies to assist in soliciting more applications during the appointment cycle. The Council discussed reaching out to SRCs to see if someone from the SRC may be interested in applying to the Bristol Bay Council. Mr. Hamon with NPS in King Salmon reported that it has been a topic of conversation, but the SRCs are also having a difficult time filling their seats. The Council would like to see representation from the Ekwok, New Stuyahok, Koliganek, and Togiak areas. The Council also discussed reaching out to the Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC) to help spread the word on Council recruitment. BBNC is working on recruiting people from the ages of 18-25 for leadership positions and this could be a good avenue to recruit younger folks to the Council. The Council requested that OSM provide a letter explaining the

Council application and nomination process that could be sent to Tribal and borough entities to be shared at their monthly meetings.

State of Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals:

The proposals that were before the State of Alaska Board of Fisheries did not affect any subsistence uses, so the Council did not discuss any specific proposals.

Identify Issues for FY2022 Annual Report:

- Request that appointees to the Board be informed that ANILCA's mandates supersede agency-specific regulations
- Concerns over increased bear populations
- Communicating with local SRCs on filling vacant Council seats

Motion made by Member Anderson, seconded by Member Wilson to write a letter to the Board expressing the Council's concern over bycatch and intercept fisheries and the harmful effects on local fisheries within the Bristol Bay region. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Reports:

- North Pacific Fishery Management Council report presented by Dr. Diana Stram, Senior Scientist
- Curyung Tribe update presented by Courtenay Carty, Tribal Administrator
- BBNA Update presented by Cody Larson and Gayla Hoseth
- Togiak NWR update presented by Andy Aderman, Wildlife Biologist, Togiak NWR
- Alaska Peninsula and Becharof NWR:
 - Update presented by Susan Alexander, Refuge Manager
 - Bill Smith, Supervisory Biologist, presented an update on wildlife projects
- Lake Clark National Park and Preserve:
 - Update presented by Susanne Fleck-Green, Superintendent
 - Liza Rupp, Cultural Resources Program Manager and Subsistence Program Manager, provided highlights from her program
- Katmai National Park and Preserve, Aniakchak National Monument, and Alagnak Wild River
 - Update presented by Mark Sturm, Superintendent
 - Troy Hamon, Natural Resource Manager, presented an update on wildlife projects
- NPS Regional Subsistence Program Update presented by Dillon Patterson
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Chance Wilcox, Subsistence Resource Specialist, provided an update on the Division of Subsistence activities
- Office of Subsistence Management, Lisa Grediagin, Wildlife Division Supervisor, provided the OSM program update

Future Meeting Dates:

Winter 2023 meeting to be held March 8 – 9, 2023, in Naknek.

Fall 2023 meeting to be held October 24 – 25, 2023, in Dillingham.



Leigh Honig, DFO

USFWS Office of Subsistence Management



Nanci Morris-Lyon, Chair

Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its March 8 – 9, 2023 meeting in Naknek, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes at that meeting.

For a more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Leigh Honig at 1-800-478-1456 or 907-891-9053, email leigh_honig@fws.gov.