

NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

TELECONFERENCE - ALASKA
November 5, 2020
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gordon Brower, Chair
William Hopson
Wanda Kippi
Steve Oomittuk
Edward Rexford
Peter Williams

Regional Council Coordinator, Eva Patton

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Teleconference - 11/5/2020)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Well, good morning. I'll go ahead and call the North Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council back to order. We recessed yesterday to reconvene to take up the remainder of the agenda items.

Every morning public comments are welcome for each agenda item and for regional concerns not included on the agenda. The Council appreciates hearing your concerns and knowledge. So it's important to -- and maybe the public and tribal comments on nonagenda items I'd like to make sure that we provide those opportunities for the public and the tribal comments on nonagenda items each morning and we'll recognize the tribes.

So yesterday we went through the agenda and I think we were down to agency reports I believe or were we still on item 11 under new business. I'm trying to get reoriented where we left off yesterday.

MS. PATTON: Good morning, Gordon. This is Eva. So we had just started the discussion under 11-B on page 2 of your meeting books. And that's the 2022 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. We had just heard from FRMP researchers in the region and I believe Brendan Scanlon was about to speak right at lunch break there. And then Hannah Voorhees and Karen Hyer, the North Slope fisheries biologist and anthropologist will address the Council on previous projects funded in the region and then walk through discussion with the Council on what you see as needs for subsistence fisheries research in the North Slope region that should be included in the call for proposals.

So I think Hannah is up here to take over and we'll go from there.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: And just before Hannah comes on, Eva, I just want to see where we are with action items that need to have a quorum to -- for action items. And are any of these that we need to go

1 ahead and reestablish quorum or can we go ahead and
2 move forward on the agenda just to get out of recess
3 and restart the meeting?

4
5 MS. PATTON: Sure. Thank you. Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair. So the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
7 Program we are looking for the Council's recommendation
8 on what those research priorities should be. It's not
9 as critical to have a quorum for a vote on that. We've
10 had previous discussions with the Council to begin
11 developing those and can further develop that in
12 discussion with the Council that we have. So we do
13 have four Council members on right now and William was
14 going to be joining us shortly. I know Wanda had
15 anticipated being on this morning. So we can proceed
16 with the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

17
18 We have a couple action items in terms
19 of the annual report. And again that's recommendations
20 from the Council and if we don't have full quorum for
21 that vote those recommendations are still part of the
22 record and the discussion here.

23
24 And then the National Park Service
25 subsistence permits for individual customary and
26 traditional use determination. Marcy Okada will be
27 presenting those. And that one is an action item. The
28 Board is seeking formal recommendation from all 10
29 Councils on that. So we would want a quorum to take
30 action on that one.

31
32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. With
35 that, Wanda, are you online yet.

36
37 (No comments)

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Eva, in the absence
40 of Wanda can you do a roll call real quick and I
41 believe we do have a quorum established with the
42 majority online.

43
44 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 Roll call.

46
47 Gordon Brower, Utqiagvik.

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49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning. I'm

1 here this morning.
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3 MS. PATTON: Wanda Kippi, Atqasuk.
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5 (No comments)
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7 MS. PATTON: Wanda hasn't joined us
8 quite yet.
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10 Steve Oomittuk, Point Hope.
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12 MR. OOMITTUK: (In Native).
13
14 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Steve.
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16 MR. OOMITTUK: Good morning.
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18 MS. PATTON: Edward Rexford, Sr.,
19 Kaktovik.
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21 MR. REXFORD: I'm here. Present.
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23 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Eddie.
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25 Martha Itta, Nuiqsut.
26
27 (No comments)
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29 MS. PATTON: And again Martha is
30 excused absence for this meeting.
31
32 William Hopson, Utqiagvik. William,
33 are you able to join us online.
34
35 MR. HOPSON: Hi. Good morning. I'm
36 here, I've been on for about five minutes.
37
38 MS. PATTON: Wonderful. Thank you,
39 William.
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41 Earl Williams, Anaktuvuk Pass.
42
43 MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning.
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45 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Earl.
46 Wonderful. Thank you.
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48 So we do have quorum, Mr. Chair. And
49 hopefully Wanda will be able to join us shortly here to
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1 join in the discussion.

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Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Eva. And I appreciate that. And so we'll go ahead and continue with item B, 11-B, Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program and go ahead and continue from yesterday.

MS. HYER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Council members. This is Karen Hyer with the Office of Subsistence Management. And I think Brendan is on the line and he's going to do his presentation and then Hannah is going to take over and walk us through the PINs.

So, Brendan, are you there?

MR. SCANLON: Good morning, Karen. I'm here.

MS. HYER: Good morning. And, Mr. Chairman and Council members, you received some information in the mail. And one of those is a handout from Brendan and it has a couple maps and it's the Colville grayling. So if you could take a minute and find that in your materials, I think that would assist you in his presentation.

And then I'm going to turn the floor over to Brendan when he's ready.

MR. SCANLON: Thank you, Karen. Were you folks able to find the materials I sent up?

CHAIRMAN BROWER: I think I have. It's a report from ADF&G on Sportfish Division, Brendan Scanlon, Northwest/North Slope area biologist, Fairbanks. Update of OSM FRMP project FIS 18-100. Is that the one?

MR. SCANLON: Great. Yeah, that's it, Gordon. Thank you.

So once again my name is Brendan Scanlon. I'm the Northwest and North Slope area fisheries biologist for Fish and Game. And I've been to a few of these meetings, you've probably seen my presentations on some of the dolly varden char work

1 we've done and lake trout work we did over on Chandler
2 Lake as part of the FRMP. And today's project I'm
3 going to talk about, the one we're doing over on the
4 Colville River, this was to address a priority
5 information need regarding the health of the Arctic
6 grayling subsistence fishery for residents of Nuiqsut.

7
8
9 And we designed this project to be a
10 radio telemetry project so we radio tagged a bunch of
11 grayling in two different spots. We designed this to
12 have two tagging events. We deployed 116 transmitters
13 in graylings upstream of the village of Nuiqsut and
14 several of the tributaries kind of around near Umiat.
15 On that first map you can see the white circles with
16 the numbers, those are the locations and numbers of
17 tags we put out in each location. And you can see we
18 went as far up as the Nanushuk River. And we've tried
19 to put these tags out in sort of relative abundance
20 when we found them. That's why there's so many tags in
21 the Anaktuvuk and just a couple in the Tulugak Creek.
22 The Anaktuvuk is a really big river up there, there's
23 tons of graylings. So we tried to spread the tags out
24 in sort of the relative abundance that we found them
25 in. And one thing we know from Arctic grayling life
26 history from projects we've done on the Seward
27 Peninsula and in the Interior is that they like the
28 char they'll overwinter in lower rivers where's there
29 deep liquid water and they don't move very much and
30 then in the spring they'll -- they'll move up and spawn
31 in sort of the middle reaches and then as the summer
32 comes and ice melts and everything warms up they'll
33 move pretty far up into these creeks to feed on some of
34 the bigger insects that are found at the very top.

35
36 So we deployed our 100 transmitters
37 upstream in the summer when they were in their feeding
38 areas and we went back to Nuiqsut in the wintertime,
39 hired a great guy name Jonas to take us around and we
40 put out 52 radio tags just upstream of the village
41 where people were fishing through the ice. And so the
42 idea was we'd like to see how far upstream the fish
43 that were tagged in Nuiqsut go in the summer and if the
44 fish that were tagged in the stream in the summer came
45 down close enough to Nuiqsut to be vulnerable to the
46 fishery. So we put all these tags out and then the
47 next summer we did several flights. I did include one
48 of the maps from one of the flights, the second map
49 figure two, and its locations of fish that were located
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1 on August 11 of 2020. The fish in the white circles,
2 those are the fish that were tagged in the summertime
3 in the upstream reaches and the ones in black are the
4 ones that are all tagged in Nuiqsut. And the -- kind
5 of the big take home here is that the Aichilik appears
6 to be far and away the most important source of
7 grayling for the fishers in Nuiqsut in the wintertime.
8 We only tagged just a handful of grayling in the
9 Aichilik in the summertime, but most all the grayling
10 that were tagged through the ice in Nuiqsut went into
11 the Aichilik River. The Anaktuvuk River is a much
12 bigger river, there's a lot more grayling, but it
13 appears that in the wintertime they just don't drop
14 down far enough close to the village to be vulnerable
15 to very much fishing.

16
17 So now that the Aichilik is the largest
18 source of graylings for the subsistence fishery in
19 (indiscernible - distortion). Tags that will turn on
20 and off. Grayling are really small so we can't use a
21 very large transmitter and so to save battery life and
22 since the fish don't move in the wintertime we go ahead
23 and program the tags to shut off until March. And so
24 we'll conduct four or five more flights throughout the
25 spring and summer and we'll be finished with our
26 tracking by the end of August and we'll have a final
27 report by next (indiscernible - distortion). It
28 appears by the size of the fish, the catch rate and
29 just the locations where we found grayling, they were
30 just all over the place, it appears right now that the
31 population of grayling is healthy and that the fishery
32 appears to be sustainable.

33
34 So that's what we know so far.

35
36 I'm happy to take any questions if you
37 have any.

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39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions for --
40 is it Brendan?

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Interesting study.
45 So the first map where it says Nuiqsut 52 that were
46 tagged, my guess is 52 grayling right at Nuiqsut there
47 and then the white ones are those not tagged right at
48 Nuiqsut and then distribution is on the next page of
49 those radio telemetry work that are in the fish and it

50

1 looks like all those black dots are lined up in the
2 Aichilik River there. And it looks like a pretty cool
3 study. I've seen how the distribution pattern goes.
4

5 MR. SCANLON: Yeah, Mr. Brower, that's
6 absolutely right. Those 52 tags all went out in about
7 a day and a half. Fishing was really good through the
8 ice in Nuiqsut with the help of Jonas and some of his
9 friends. The tags that are located downstream of
10 Nuiqsut on the Delta, I imagine those fish are dead
11 just because there's going to be some saltwater mixing
12 with that. Those might have drifted down. But yeah,
13 it appears that if there ever is a problem with the
14 grayling fishery in Nuiqsut that the Aichilik would be
15 the first place to look for problems. But right now
16 everything seems to be good and healthy just based on
17 numbers of fish and size composition.
18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. Any
20 questions for Brendan from the Council.
21

22 MR. REXFORD: This is Edward, Kaktovik.
23

24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Edward.
25

26 MR. REXFORD: The -- with the 116
27 transmitters that you deployed, is there -- do you guys
28 retrieve them transmitters after the studies are done
29 permanently?
30

31 MR. SCANLON: So these fish were
32 surgically implanted. We anesthetize them using a --
33 kind of a synthetic clove oil mix called Aquiesse and
34 we revive them before we release them to make sure
35 they're still alive, but, you know, these tags are
36 implanted, they're sewn up, their sutures are held
37 together by something called Dep Bond. These fish
38 might live several more years even after the tags have
39 quit working. But if you catch a tagged fish it'll
40 have our contact information on it and you could send
41 it to us, we'll send you a nice little -- maybe a small
42 reward and a nice letter saying thank you and give you
43 a little (indiscernible - distortion) fish.
44

45 MR. REXFORD: Okay. One of the -- is
46 the transmitters hazardous to other animals if they
47 ingest the fish?
48

49 MR. SCANLON: No, if a bear chewed one
50

1 up he might get a little bit of glass and copper in
2 him, but on the occasions when other fish eat radio
3 tagged fish they seem to pass the tag. It's really
4 smooth, it's encased in kind of like a acrylic glass
5 material, it's real smooth and they just seem to poop
6 it out later. But we did have one burbot eat one of
7 these tags, one of these tagged fish before it -- the
8 fish appeared fine. So it happens in nature quite a
9 bit, fish -- little fish get eaten by bigger fish and
10 I'm not aware of any problems with tags causing health
11 problem.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. I got a
14 question. Edward, were you done or.....

15
16 MR. REXFORD: Thanks.

17
18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Edward, were you done
19 with your questions?

20
21 MR. REXFORD: Yes.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I do have one concern
24 and it may be just an issue. If a larger fish eats one
25 of those tagged fish does the transmitter keep working
26 and you're now following a predator that has eaten one
27 of those fishes now?

28
29 MR. SCANLON: That -- that's a good
30 question. I think that's happened, but there's an
31 antenna that sticks out that's about eight inches long
32 and that generally needs to be outside the fish's body
33 wall for us to be able to detect it from a tracking
34 station or an airplane. So fish sitting in the belly,
35 we probably couldn't get a location, but if for some
36 reason if the tag was -- antenna was sticking out of
37 the mouth or the rear end, yeah, we might be able to do
38 that. And generally the antenna needs to be outside
39 the body wall of the fish.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Just
44 wanted to make sure that all of the black dots on the
45 Aichilik River weren't burbot that had eaten all those
46 fish.

47
48 Any other questions to Brendan from the
49 Council.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And maybe.....

4

5 MR. HOPSON: Gordon.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

8

9 MR. HOPSON: Yeah, hi. William here.

10 Do they have any plans to do any new species study, you
11 know, like for Barrow area. Basically all the
12 villages, what are we getting and how fast are they
13 going to become an invasive species to upset our
14 natural grayling and whitefish species that we subsist
15 on?

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 MR. SCANLON: Thank you for the
20 question. I'm not familiar of any invasives right now
21 on the North Slope in freshwater. I know salmon appear
22 to be showing up more and more, in fact during this
23 study near the mouth of Tulugak Creek which is on the
24 Anaktuvuk River, was actually counting dolly varden
25 char from the air. I saw maybe a couple hundred chum
26 salmon in a big pool that looked like they were getting
27 ready to spawn. We also so -- we caught a coho salmon
28 in the Anaktuvuk River. Over on the Aichilik we saw
29 sockeyes and some chum salmon.

30

31 I know at these previous RAC meetings
32 there's been some concern about fish in some of the
33 lakes just south of town. And I didn't have any
34 information on that, but I did talk to Carmen Daggett
35 who talked to Geoff Carroll and I think Todd Sformo a
36 little bit about some of the concerns people have about
37 whitefish catches and sizes of fish. And they might
38 have some more information. But we don't have anything
39 else currently planned for the North Slope, but
40 certainly that's why -- one reason I'm calling in to
41 listen for any other priority information needs or
42 answer any questions people have and maybe we can come
43 up with a legitimate concern that needs to be
44 investigated and turn that into an FRMP funded project.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: In terms of other
49 studies and, you know, I -- I'm hearing from Nuiqsut

50

1 some of the whitefish that are caught again this year
2 in their -- during their (in Native) season the Arctic
3 cisco's -- heard that one's going pretty good. I got
4 some fish sent to me. And but from some of the
5 fishermen that they're getting the moldy whitefish
6 again. Is there any effort by ADF&G to assess the
7 concerns raised by Nuiqsut on the whitefish?
8

9 MR. SCANLON: Mr Brower, I don't think
10 there's anything active that the Fish and Game is
11 doing, but I know the North Slope Borough Wildlife
12 Department has a pretty rigorous whitefish program and
13 maybe if Todd Sformo's on the line he could answer some
14 of these questions. But he's been looking at this
15 quite a bit and I believe he got some money to look at
16 some of these fish and also to look at water
17 temperature. These -- this mold is probably something
18 called saprolegnia, it's a water mold, it's pretty
19 ubiquitous and it's very important in the breakdown of
20 organic material, but it attacks weakened fish that
21 either have lost some of their slime or have a wound,
22 but it shows up a lot more when the water gets warm.
23

24 But I don't think the Department has
25 any whitefish studies going on up there, but I have
26 talked to the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department
27 before about their whitefish program so hopefully Todd
28 and North Slope Borough can better answer this
29 question.
30

31 Thank you.
32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.
34

35 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair, this is
36 Steve.
37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve, from
39 Point Hope.
40

41 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah. Just out of
42 curiosity do you know of any other studies within the
43 Chukchi Sea or the Bering Sea or around Point Hope on
44 fish. I know that they, you know, when they were doing
45 some sort of study in the inlet 12 years back that
46 there was a whole bunch of different species in the
47 inlet. And that, you know, we were pretty surprised on
48 the amount of species that come into our inlet. We're
49 only so used to catching certain type of fish. We
50

1 never did fish in the inlet, but we always go to the
2 river or the ocean, mostly our ocean. You now, we used
3 to fish mainly for char, like I said in the past that,
4 you know, in the old days you -- when we had dog teams
5 a lot of our humpies went for the dogs but now we see a
6 whole bunch of store salmon that were catch and they're
7 catching some king salmon. You know, the king salmons
8 used to be further out in the ocean, but now they're
9 coming right to the edge, you know, how we set our nets
10 right on the edge of the ocean and sit and wait for the
11 fish to hit and scoop them up. And, you know, we used
12 to scoop like 30, 40 fish at a time, you know, go home
13 with a sackful of char, but now we're getting a whole
14 -- you know, back then we use a smaller mesh, but
15 nowadays they're using a bigger mesh to let the smaller
16 fish go through. We know we get a lot of herring, but
17 not too many people fish for herring.

18
19 But I -- you know, we notice some ships
20 south of Point Hope that stay out in the water for a
21 week -- week at a time and they're about three miles
22 out. And we were just wondering if you know of any
23 studies that are being done by Department of Fish and
24 Game that -- looking at the waters and seeing what
25 species are out there. We've had a lot of concerns on
26 the different vessels that we can't recognize or don't
27 know what kind of studies are being out there in the
28 ocean if you know anything about that?

29
30 MR. SCANLON: Sure. I don't know a ton
31 about what they're doing in the ocean. They do have a
32 juvenile salmon trawl survey that goes up to the
33 Chukchi Sea, I don't think they go much past
34 Shishmaref. And they are primarily looking for the
35 relative abundance of juvenile chinook and chum salmon.

36
37 But I do know in the Kukpuk River there
38 near Point Hope we had some of our radio tagged dolly
39 varden char from the Noatak River get recaptured by
40 folks from Point Hope in the Kukpuk. So that's
41 interesting, that's a little bit of a swim to go up the
42 coast like that. And there's probably some fish that
43 -- from the Kukpuk that will overwinter in the Wulik
44 River. The Wulik River has some years over 200,000
45 dolly varden that overwinter there and most of those
46 are not spawners from the Wulik.

47
48 And in the Wulik River near Kivalina
49 just this year they're -- they saw lots and lots of
50

1 pink salmon. So when they did their surveys for dolly
2 varden char in the fall they saw a whole lot of dead
3 pinks that had spawned out. And they caught a lot of
4 pinks in the commercial fishery near Kotzebue. It was
5 a huge pink year in Norton Sound so certainly it's not
6 surprising that a lot more pink salmon are showing up
7 as well as chum salmon.

8
9 And offshore we did satellite/tag some
10 dolly varden in the Wulik River at Kivalina and several
11 of those fish swan over to the Chukchi Sea about 500
12 miles west of Kivalina and were feeding off the
13 Siberian coastline. And I suspect that the dolly
14 varden that are in the Kukpuk River are part of the --
15 kind of meta population, they're part of the same group
16 of fish, that the Noatak and Kobuk and Kivalina and
17 some Norton Sound fish all move around in the ocean
18 together.

19
20 So we don't know much about the Kukpuk
21 itself. I did fly over it once looking for radio
22 tagged fish since we did have one -- have two get
23 caught there, but they haven't been on the ground on
24 the river there to my knowledge not since I've been
25 here. But it -- it's certainly something that's really
26 interesting and I'd be glad to talk to you more about
27 it and ask you a bunch of questions because I just
28 don't know.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 MS. KIPPI: Good morning.

33
34 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair, this is Todd
35 Sformo.

36
37 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you.

38
39 MS. KIPPI: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning. Before
42 I acknowledge you, Todd, I think I heard Wanda chime
43 in. I just wanted to make sure we acknowledge our
44 Council members when they chime in.

45
46 MS. KIPPI: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
47 Thank you. I've been on here for over -- about eight
48 minutes. I didn't want to interrupt. I've been -- I
49 was sitting here with my babies. I had to put them

50

1 back to sleep. Sorry about that.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We --
4 glad you made it and just want to make sure for the
5 record that Wanda is on.

6

7 Go ahead, Todd.

8

9 MR. SFORMO: Thank you. Yeah, I can
10 mention a -- or talk about a few things that's just
11 come up. So concerning the whitefish in the Colville,
12 we -- you know, we do have a program, we are trying to
13 actively collect fish, both healthy and fish with the
14 mold on it. It's been a little bit difficult
15 especially this year with the covid restrictions to get
16 there. So I haven't been able to get there this year.
17 Right now we do have individuals, individual fishermen,
18 who will be sending me some fish so that we can examine
19 those for this year as well as ABR through their work
20 with Conoco. So they've also collected some whitefish
21 that have the mold on them this year and they should be
22 sending it any day.

23

24 The thing with temperature that's kind
25 of interesting is that in 2018 when our Department --
26 when the Wildlife Department went to Nuiqsut one thing
27 that was requested was an experiment to look at
28 temperature and salinity affect on mold growth. And so
29 I've conducted an experiment and we are just waiting
30 for one -- a few coauthors to make their final comments
31 on that paper. But what's interesting is that the --
32 as you would expect temperature increases the growth
33 rate of this mold, but until the end of July of this
34 year no one has seen the mold on these fish at that
35 time of the year during the warmest water conditions.

36

37 So unfortunately we didn't have
38 photographic evidence of a single fish that has -- that
39 has the mold on it at the end of July. So that's the
40 first kind of new piece of information that we received
41 this -- this summer. And unfortunately the -- I guess
42 the fishermen didn't save the fish and so we don't have
43 a -- can't really examine it.

44

45 And concerning Point Hope, we had
46 conducted a few surveys, fish surveys in the inlet in
47 2018 and '19. We were obviously hoping to go this
48 summer, but we -- you know, we couldn't make it. So we
49 have looked at a number of fish and we've collected

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1 everything from let's see, ferry flounder, saffron cod,
2 rainbow smelt, tarm smelt, salmon, least cisco, Bering
3 cisco, Arctic flounder. So there is a huge range of
4 fish within the -- within the lagoon and outside of
5 Point Hope. And we're hoping to do more river work.
6 We've gone up there twice, but it's just -- we're still
7 trying to get a feel for this, but we've had really
8 good help from individual fisherman and in Point Hope
9 so that's helped guide us.

10
11 And then finally also working with ICAS
12 and the Native Village of Point Hope we've put together
13 a tribal wildlife grant that's been submitted to the
14 U.S., you know, Fish and Wildlife Service. So we're
15 still waiting to hear about whether we'll be funded for
16 that grant.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Todd. Any
21 questions for Todd.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We'll
26 continue on with item B for the fisheries.

27
28 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, hello, Mr. Chair,
29 members of the Council. This is Hannah Voorhees, I'm
30 an anthropologist at Office of Subsistence Management.
31 And today I'm working with Karen Hyer, a fisheries
32 biologist at OSM. And I'm going to review the
33 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program with you and then
34 we'll work to develop and approve the 2022 priority
35 information needs. The materials I am discussing begin
36 on page 35 of your books.

37
38 So just a reminder that priority
39 information needs which are also known as PINs for
40 short just refers to topics of research that the
41 Council feels are critical and timely. So before we
42 begin discussing the priority information needs for
43 your region I'll go through the whole process and try
44 to be pretty brief though.

45
46 Every two years OSM announces an
47 opportunity for researchers to apply for money to fund
48 fisheries research and management projects that address
49 data gaps. This announcement is called a notice of

50

1 funding opportunity. Three primary types of research
2 are funded and these include harvest monitoring,
3 traditional ecological knowledge and stock status and
4 trends. Harvest monitoring and traditional knowledge
5 projects provide information directly from subsistence
6 users including descriptions of fishing effort and
7 harvest and use patterns, while stock status and trend
8 projects address fish abundance, migration and behavior
9 in specific fisheries.

10
11 So the researchers interested in
12 submitting proposals will look at the priorities
13 identified by your Council. These priorities will
14 inform investigators of what data gaps the Council
15 thinks are critical and they guide the money spent on
16 fisheries research in your region. This is really
17 important because your input guides the program. This
18 is the point at which the Council has the most
19 influence over the course of the FRMP.

20
21 The list of research priorities
22 developed by your Council will be combined with
23 research priorities identified by the other northern
24 councils which include Seward Peninsula and Northwest
25 Arctic RACs. This combined list will be called the
26 2022 priority information needs for northern Alaska and
27 it highlights the data gaps identified by these three
28 Councils. And then this list is included in the 2022
29 notice of funding opportunity when it's published in
30 November. So very soon. Once this is published
31 investigators can submit proposals to OSM and the
32 deadline will be sometime in March. Once all the
33 proposals are received they're evaluated according to
34 five criteria including strategic priorities, technical
35 and scientific merit, investigator ability and
36 resources, partnership capacity building and cost
37 benefit analysis. And just to remind you these
38 projects do need to have a Federal nexus and a
39 connection to Federal fisheries management --
40 subsistence management.

41
42 So next during the winter 2021 Council
43 meeting you'll be presented with a list of proposed
44 projects that OSM received for the northern region.
45 And during that meeting your Council will be able to
46 comment on each project, let us know if you think the
47 projects meet the PINs and what could be changed to
48 make them better projects. And the Technical Review
49 Committee's evaluation and your comments will be
50

1 submitted to the Federal Subsistence Board for their
2 recommendation on funding. The projects that are
3 successful in receiving funding will begin in 2022.
4 Since 2000 this process has resulted in 54 projects
5 being funded in northern Alaska. These projects are
6 listed in your meeting materials on page 36.

7
8 So we'll begin discussing the 2022
9 priority information needs shortly. I just want to
10 pause and ask if there are any questions first.

11
12 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair, this is Todd
13 again.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions for the
16 researcher.

17
18 MR. HOPSON: Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead. Is
21 that William?

22
23 MR. HOPSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 While these studies like these types of studies are
25 being performed are they studying the ocean, the
26 temperature, at the same time, the salinity. I bring
27 this up because right across the Arctic Ocean the
28 Russian far east which is not far from here and they
29 have nuclear reactors and they're having oil spills and
30 what it would do -- how we deal with that effect on our
31 side of the ocean.

32
33 That was my question. Thank you.

34
35 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Hopson.
36 So marine waters are outside of Federal subsistence
37 jurisdiction and are not part of the Fisheries Research
38 Monitoring Program in the sense that -- so projects
39 considered for FRMP funding cannot focus on marine
40 areas. We're talking about Federal public waters and
41 there are some kind of near -- some tidal areas that
42 come within that jurisdiction, but unfortunately for
43 this program we have to focus on inland areas adjacent
44 to Federal public lands and within the boundaries of
45 Federal public lands.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 MS. VOORHEES: But I do understand your
50

1 question.

2

3

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other questions.

4

5

(No comments)

6

7

8

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. And what was
your name again?

9

10

MS. VOORHEES: This is Hannah.

11

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CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, Hannah. I got
a question on studies. I see a whole bunch of North
Slope eastern dolly varden spawning overwintering
assessment, these kind of things, genetic stocks,
subsistence fish harvest, a whole bunch of different
things here. And just trying to find the types of
studies. Can you give an example of a study that you
wouldn't or couldn't take and -- and one that you
could.

21

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And I'm going to just give a quick
example of a concern on the fish mold based on
temperature. It's highly linked to subsistence
resource, right, we -- it's a subsistence food, it's
bordering Federal lands and it seems to me that there
has to be some way to check what the stressor is. I
know temperature is one, maybe the fish was weakened by
its own spawning or maybe it was an injured fish, a set
of variables there. But at the same time, I mean, you
could start to think why would there be a temperature
related disease developing. And I -- it seems to me
that it's about maybe five to six years, five to six
years old.

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And if you look at development in that
area, I think Alpine started its production somewhere
around the year 2000 and then you look at the stem and
web of the wells that go 8,000 feet down and to bring
the oil up so that it can be processed and a little bit
refined to take water and sulfur and the gas and
separate it so it can go down the pipeline as quality
crude, but that oil comes to surface from 8,000 feet
below the surface at a temperature of about 150 degrees
fahrenheit. I mean, it's a pretty -- pretty warm oil
and if you have, you know, five or six pads with 50
wells going down into the subsurface to 8,000 feet
down, every one of those wells and pads, you add them
together pulling 150 degrees oil up to the surface in a

1 known -- in a known thaw bulb meaning the whole
2 Colville River delta and its (in Native) channel in the
3 Colville River has a thaw bulb. I'm not sure if you're
4 familiar with that term, but it's more like thaw stable
5 area, it's not impacted by continuing permafrost. But
6 I'm wondering if when drawing that much production
7 could act as a bunsen burner on that thaw bulb, raising
8 the temperature a little bit.

9
10 And it seems to me that the fish mold
11 is fairly new, it might be five or six years now of
12 being reported and maybe no prior history of that
13 saprolegnia or whatever they call that fish mold, not
14 being reported in that area prior to that date, I'm not
15 exactly sure, and then maybe look at the neighboring
16 delta which is the Ikpikpuk to the west which has a
17 huge, huge whitefish population and spawning events.
18 And not having the same issues on the same type of
19 species, but there's no development there, I mean, it's
20 not impacted with subsurface oil production activity.

21
22 So just that type of scenario and maybe
23 I'm going on too long and then but I think there's --
24 you know, if we didn't have it and then now it's kind
25 of an ongoing issue and the -- and maybe the whitefish
26 are more resident than the qaaktaq because we know the
27 qaaktaq migrates in and out from the McKenzie River in
28 Canada and comes in and that's why the qaaktaq
29 fisheries start annually all the time. In any event
30 maybe I'll leave it there.

31
32 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Hannah Voorhees again for the record.

34
35 And yes, there are specific topics
36 which the Federal Subsistence Board has said they will
37 not fund and this does include contaminant assessment
38 as well as habitat protection and hatchery research.
39 The Federal Subsistence Board decided that these
40 projects are more appropriately funded by the local
41 land management agencies. However having said that
42 there's -- the mold itself can certainly be
43 investigated and we do have a PIN noted from previous
44 discussion with Council members on that topic. And, I
45 mean, there's no reason why we can't investigate, that
46 the researcher who has a successful project or
47 proposal, that there's no reason that they can't
48 investigate the causes of mold. I think that we do
49 have to be cautious in framing a -- you know, a

50

1 causation in the PIN itself, but rather to leave that
2 open. And then certainly communicate the Council's
3 concerns which has been well documented in the record
4 and which they can also -- you know, if this -- if we
5 decide to have a PIN on mold in fish they can also --
6 the Council members can also comment on that next --
7 during our next meeting. Anyway so I just want to --
8 when you're -- excuse me, when you're at the meeting
9 when we're reviewing the project proposals they can
10 comment.

11
12 I definitely want to get into
13 developing that PIN with you.

14
15 I have it number 2 on the list and I
16 can start going through the draft PINs with you now if
17 you would like.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It was just a
20 question and I don't know if -- that it's such a issue
21 that warrants a major investigation or anything like
22 that. But certainly the concerns raised out of the
23 community about the whitefish in the Colville River
24 being harvested by Nuiqsut seems to have some issues
25 that are ongoing with this type of concern. And yeah,
26 I know there are concerns about trying to pinpoint a
27 cause. So I'll just leave it at that.

28
29 I mean, I thought maybe there were
30 easier ways to -- other than just saying that well, you
31 know, the climate is changing and that it's subjected
32 to climate change. Well, if it were there would be
33 those issues in the Salvanik River has a huge whitefish
34 population that spawn because I fished there, I fished
35 at the Salvanik to the east and then I fished over at
36 the Ikpikpuk to the west and so anyway it just seems
37 like in between where development is -- anyway, I'm
38 just thinking about that.

39
40 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 I do -- I think that the recommendation to perhaps have
42 a comparative aspect with near -- nearby river systems
43 is a good one and can certainly include that in this
44 PIN if you would like.

45
46 And also I'd like to acknowledge that
47 Karen Hyer is working with me on this. She's the
48 fisheries biologist, I'm an anthropologist so if she
49 wants to add anything she can. She may not want to,
50

1 but just wanted to remind you that she's available as
2 well.

3
4 And so I just wanted to mention that we
5 really -- at OSM really appreciate the efforts that
6 have been made by volunteer Council members from the
7 North Slope RAC to meet with Eva and myself and Karen
8 in the weeks leading up to this meeting and that from
9 those meetings we developed a list of draft priority
10 information needs. And the process now, if you're
11 ready, is for me to start going through each one. And
12 you can edit these PINs, you can remove PINs, add a
13 PIN, and eventually we will need to approve them and it
14 is an action item.

15
16 I am going to skip forward to the mold
17 PIN as it were just because we've been discussing that
18 and I'll -- I have some very basic language for that
19 and I was hoping to add some more information to it
20 which you've already helped me with to some extent
21 here. The PIN as written is in place to document mold
22 disease and discoloration on fish and to document
23 possible connections to increased water temperature or
24 other factors. So we could -- we could wordsmith this
25 a little bit, but I would add a sentence here perhaps
26 about having a comparison with nearby river systems. I
27 can remove the clause, possible connection to warmer
28 water if you would like. I do have some questions, do
29 you want this to focus on whitefish and would you like
30 this to focus on the Colville River or do you want it
31 -- it sounds like that is the focus. I will mention
32 there are two other PINs that are specific to Nuiqsut
33 on this draft list that kind of approach this issue of
34 the changing whitefish situation and from different
35 aspects. And would you like this -- I imagine it would
36 be important to have a traditional knowledge component
37 to this investigation, but I just want to put this one
38 on the floor for you and have feedback at this time.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 So just to clarify the will of the
43 Council now is to -- we can do some wordsmithing later,
44 but broadly what would you like the PIN -- is this a
45 PIN that you would like to approve or are there any
46 changes that you would like to make to it.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'm not sure I
49 understand clearly what you're asking because there's

50

1 so much information all at once. I mean, I did try and
2 look at concerns that are raised and how a possible
3 scenario in a study could occur. So what -- anyway I'm
4 not sure what a PIN is.

5
6 MS. VOORHEES: Okay. A PIN is a
7 priority information need and that is just referring to
8 a topic that is of concern to the Council that we'll
9 put on a list with the notice of funding opportunity
10 when that is released in November. And then that
11 guides the kind of projects that we accept for the
12 FRMP. So basically we just want to list -- right now I
13 think we have six possible PINs and I was just going to
14 go through them and see if you would like to approve
15 them. These are topics that have been raised in
16 conversation with the volunteer Council members in the
17 last couple weeks. For example, Mr. Chairman, we have
18 one that you recommended, affects of climate change or
19 lake freeze-up specifically on Ikpiuk River and
20 affects on subsistence practices and fish preservation.
21 So that will be a PIN on the notice of funding
22 opportunity and we'll invite researchers to submit
23 projects under that priority information need. So the
24 PINs that you choose today will -- are an invitation to
25 researchers to submit proposals and they're powerful in
26 the sense that they shape the kind of projects that
27 we'll consider for funding.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. I think I
30 understand a little bit better. I think you can go
31 through those and maybe just.....

32
33 MS. VOORHEES: Okay.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER:any other -- are
36 there any questions from the Council in this area.

37
38 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair, this is Steve
39 for the record.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

42
43 (Teleconference interference -
44 participants not muted)

45
46 MR. OOMITTUK: You know, all -- all
47 these studies that have been done since -- for quite
48 some time within the Colville River or within the
49 Prudhoe Bay area and all the industry that's going on

50

1 there for years and, you know, and we talk about
2 climate change and erosion and, you know, the rivers
3 are changing and we're having a lot of erosion due to
4 permafrost melting. Is there any sort of contamination
5 that you guys find any sort of contamination with this
6 erosion that's going on or with the industry that's
7 been there for over 40 years, is there any --
8 especially in the Colville River area. And I just out
9 of curiosity are they doing studies to that sort to
10 see, you know, if there's an environmental impact
11 statement in the area especially with industry.
12

13 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Oomittuk.
14 I may have to defer to a researcher on that question,
15 but I will say that there is a priority information
16 need on the list this cycle for you -- for your Council
17 to approve that reads, baseline fish habitat and water
18 quality monitoring on the rivers and tributaries
19 important to subsistence fishing around Nuiqsut. And
20 so you raise a great point and I believe that would be
21 an essential and valid part of that priority
22 information need.
23

24 And if anyone else would like to chime
25 in please go ahead.
26

27 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
28 members, this is Karen Hyer. I couldn't quite hear
29 what Steve had to say and I'm wondering could he --
30 because this PIN's directed towards around Nuiqsut can
31 -- and maybe this PIN should be more general, I -- can
32 he just repeat again the area that he was interested
33 in? I'm sorry, I just didn't hear.
34

35 Thank you.
36

37 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes. I'm sorry, I have
38 a bad connection here and I keep getting cut off so I
39 couldn't quite hear. The wind gusts are going past 60
40 and I had to go upstairs and my window felt like it was
41 going to blow open so I had to put a two by four and I
42 was kind of pounding a nail around these two by fours
43 to ensure my window don't blow open. But it's gusting
44 over 60 right now.
45

46 Yeah, my question was around the
47 Colville area and the industry and any impacts on the
48 subsistence lifestyle over there. Just the last 40
49 years our population of the fish and with the climate
50

1 change and the warmer weather any other contamination
2 showing up. We're having longer -- it seems like it's
3 taking a lot longer to freeze-up and we're having
4 longer summers. You know, I -- I could remember when I
5 lived in Barrow in the '70s and we had ice year round,
6 you know, in June, July ice was always there. And now,
7 you know, it's still ice free pretty much, it's ice
8 free here in Point Hope, you know. It's been like that
9 for how many years. You know, we -- we noticed the
10 climate change, we -- you know, in the old days we
11 traveled by stars too. Our grandparents would tell us
12 about, you know, what stars, you know, it's clear and
13 you're lost and you know which way the -- where the
14 stars are. But seem like the stars are not in the same
15 place where they used to be, you know, at certain times
16 which things have changed so much within our area, in
17 our lifetime.

18
19 Thank you.

20
21 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

22
23 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman, Council
24 members, can you hear me? This is Karen.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Let me go to -- it
27 sounded like maybe Earl and then we'll go.....

28
29 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER:to Karen.

32
33 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair, it sounds
34 like someone's scratching the mic, maybe somebody's got
35 their phone on or something, just hearing scratching
36 here.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 (Teleconference interference -
41 participants not muted)

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. For those
44 that are online please if you're working on something
45 don't put us on hold, but use your mute button so that
46 there's limited interference.

47
48 Go ahead, Karen.

49
50

1 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman, Council
2 members. Just for clarity I just -- just what I heard
3 had to do with the Colville area and then some other
4 areas too. So I'm wondering for this particular PIN if
5 this baseline habitat and water quality should be just
6 for the North Slope in particular instead of just
7 around Nuiqsut which would give a broader area for the
8 researchers to look at.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is
13 Hannah.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I think if
16 you're going to look at that issue and looking at
17 similar areas on the North Slope that may not be being
18 affected might be important. So.....

19
20 MS. HYER: Yeah, I was just wondering
21 because I heard him mention also just climate change
22 and how things in his area are changing in June and
23 July and how ice free it is. So I was just wondering
24 if the Council is interested in making it a little bit
25 more general.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I think it's
30 important. I mean, there's this one concern that I've
31 seen from a couple of subsistence hunters like around
32 (in Native) and the little stream that goes out of the
33 (in Native) Lake, just 18 miles out of Barrow that goes
34 to the eastern side, it's not even frozen. And when we
35 -- there's some concerns that it's being affected by
36 geothermal activity. And I've seen that area where the
37 stream outlet goes from the lake even in February have
38 wet areas that normally should be frozen. So but I
39 don't know if it's increasing to where a whole section
40 of that stream coming out of that area is being
41 affected that way. But that one to me sounds like it's
42 geothermal and some issues subsurface that's affecting
43 that one. But certainly some of the river issues for
44 fall freeze-up fishing, we have those kind of concerns
45 as well.

46
47 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair, this is Todd.
48 Could I ask a question or two?

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

2
3 MR. SFORMO: Thanks. I guess mainly --
4 maybe it's mainly to Hannah and Karen. One of the
5 difficulties with this particular kind of request for
6 proposals is that as you said contaminants aren't
7 really part of this or, you know, you don't really get
8 credit for mentioning contaminants or maybe you're even
9 taken off of possibly receiving this grant because of
10 that. And yet if you talk to -- when you talk to the
11 fishermen, you know, all over the North Slope that is
12 one of the major questions that comes up. So
13 contaminants related to, you know, Umiat, traveling on
14 the Colville, reaching Nuiqsut and things like that.
15 This kind of is one of the main questions that
16 fishermen have and yet for this call it's not really
17 part of it.

18
19 And so when I've applied in the past
20 for some of these grants that's a big sticking point.
21 And I just don't know exactly -- I guess I don't really
22 know exactly what you're looking for. It is good to
23 have baseline information and water quality
24 understanding of these rivers and to a certain extent
25 that has been done through the qaaktaq fishery, you
26 know. And so but they don't always look at certain
27 contaminants and so there is a very difficult, kind of
28 fine line that I'm not really sure I'm understanding in
29 trying to secure some of these grants because of that
30 limitation.

31
32 And then the second thing is also the
33 stock. I've asked specifically what -- what do we --
34 what is the name of the stock for the, you know, North
35 Slope salmon. And there really doesn't seem to be an
36 answer to that. And so I can't put a name down when
37 I'm filling out, you know, a proposal because of that.

38
39
40 And so, yeah, those are the -- kind of
41 the two difficulties I'm having and I'm just wondering
42 if you can sort of address that.

43
44 Thanks.

45
46 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman, Council
47 members. I'll talk about the first point first and
48 then I think we need to revisit a little bit on the
49 second point because I didn't 100 percent understand

50

1 the question.

2
3 But the contaminants, an actual study
4 on contaminants would not be competitive under this
5 funding. And that is because the Federal Subsistence
6 Board when this money was set aside to do research
7 decided that the land managers were better suited to do
8 any sort of direct contaminants study. Now we
9 understand that contaminants is a huge issue in this
10 part of the world. We have proposals that have been
11 successful where they've looked at the habitat and the
12 climate change and things like that. And then they've
13 gone to a different funding source to actually pay for
14 the contaminant work. So the samples that they collect
15 during the research has been sent to labs and the
16 funding to pay for the contaminants work has come from
17 a different pot of money. We often see projects as
18 submitted through this program that are funded from
19 multiple funding sources and have multiple partners.

20
21 And so that is probably the best
22 guidance I can give you. If you're interested in
23 direct contaminants work because it does say in our --
24 in our call that the Federal Board has decided not to
25 pay for direct analysis and lab work for contaminants.

26
27 And then could -- could I have that
28 second question repeated because I didn't quite
29 understand what was meant by stock.

30
31 MR. SFORMO: Yeah. Sure. Thanks. The
32 -- there are certain stocks, you know, of fish, but I
33 don't know the -- what is the name of the stock of
34 salmon that are on the North Slope. So I've called --
35 this is a number of years ago actually, so I called
36 your area as well as others to find out well, what do
37 you call these stocks because I think at least in the
38 past that was a question that was specifically asked,
39 what stock of salmon or what stock of fish are you
40 intending to work on. And I didn't have a name and I
41 don't think there is one related to North Slope salmon
42 say. And so that was a very -- it was a difficulty and
43 I just was wondering if that was still the case.

44
45 Thanks.

46
47 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman, Council
48 members. So I can understand that. If I'm
49 understanding the question right like I would talk

50

1 about Copper River chinook salmon escapement and the
2 stocks going to the upper river. And I agree that
3 there is no name for any -- a specific name like that
4 on the North Slope especially since we're seeing salmon
5 in places we haven't seen it before. I'm a little bit
6 surprised that you would get dinged for not being able
7 to specifically name a stock, but you do have to tie it
8 back to Federal subsistence management in some way.
9 And so I -- I would recommend that more than actually
10 naming the stock.

11
12 And I certainly -- after this meeting
13 if we have -- if you have specific issues I'd be happy
14 to go back in our records and look at what was -- what
15 was put forward and help you work through that. But I
16 think more important than naming the stock, talking
17 about how it applies to Federal subsistence management
18 because we're indeed seeing new salmon or seeing salmon
19 in places we haven't seen it before.

20
21 So I hope that helps. I'd be glad to
22 follow-up after the meeting if you have some real
23 specifics you want to work through with me.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 MR. SFORMO: Thank you. I will.

28
29 MS. HYER: And I also might add we're
30 all working from home. So again my name is Karen Hyer
31 and you'll find me on the website related to North
32 Slope. But the -- probably the best way to get ahold
33 of me is to send me an email to start that because if
34 you call my work number I check that periodically and
35 that's not the best way. And then we can start a
36 conversation via email and go from there.

37
38 MR. SFORMO: Thank you.

39
40 MS. HYER: And then I also might add
41 we're expecting this call to come out sometime in late
42 November. So if you have questions get ahold of me
43 now.

44
45 All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
46 Council members.

47
48 MR. NAGEAK: Mr. Chairman, this is Roy
49 Nageak with BLM at the Barrow office.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Roy.

2
3 MR. NAGEAK: Thank you. And I just
4 want to check with Shelly because there are some
5 concerns. We are the management for NPR-A which is
6 being looked at -- at the resources that are needed to
7 run the energy of America. And I want to pick on
8 something that Gordon Brower freaked out a little. He
9 said thaw bulbs and the changes in the river system
10 that we utilize for subsistence. And I'm going to take
11 that issue in hand because as the managers of NPR-A we
12 have done three development studies in all the villages
13 in NPR-A. And then one of the things that has become a
14 concern as the president, Gordon Brower, spells out is
15 the thaw of the region across NPR-A.

16
17 And the reason why I'm looking at it at
18 a different level is I have family and they fish for
19 months in the Chip River, right in the middle of NPR-A,
20 basically one of the biggest rivers. And all summer
21 basically while they were trying to fish they got some
22 fish where there was less current. They had to go to
23 rivers that has less currents. But the big currents
24 that take the run through there were filled up with
25 silt and there was so much silt that it wasn't proper.
26 And sometimes it tend to trip the net away so they took
27 a lot of their nets out from the major river because
28 there was a lot of silt or tundra that was migrating
29 from every little creek or every little thaw bulb that
30 goes all along the rivers and kept silting the rivers
31 and the impact it has on trying to do subsistence. And
32 that's becoming a concern is the change in the tundra,
33 and the rivers getting more, what you call that, it's
34 stirred, it's tundra growth that is going into the
35 river and clogging it up.

36
37 And for the first time in how many
38 years I finally went out into the tundra after maybe
39 10, 15 years and the thaw that I saw from the mounds
40 that used to be in flush with the tundra, some of those
41 bingles are like five -- five to 10 feet above the
42 tundra that used to be kind of in flush with the
43 permafrost hardened bingles or mounds across the
44 tundra. And the little creeks that used to run on top
45 of the permafrost now a lot of them are like four to
46 five feet deep and migrating into the peak of rivers.
47 And then when I saw that it's like how is the industry
48 after 40 years realizing the thaw that is happening
49 around their development areas. And I think that's
50

1 happening around that area too in Prudue Bay, and
2 Anaktuvuk, I was in Anaktuvuk 40 years ago when they
3 were using the water there for development especially
4 with ice roads had a great impact on the whitefish.

5
6 And I remember some of the now adult
7 elder -- elderly people that worked there. In their
8 middle age they were just sucking up tons and tons of
9 whitefish and maybe catch a little study on what's
10 happening in Anaktuvuk and whether the whitefish came
11 back. But getting away from there we're in the front
12 line of whatever they want to call it, global warming
13 and the rivers that are being impacted with whatever
14 creeks that are keeping it in whatever silt or tundra
15 that is going out in great amounts and where you can't
16 even fish anymore. And I tend to agree on which way we
17 need to go especially with impacts of subsistence
18 hunters like my family.

19
20 But Gordon brings out a good point
21 about the thaw bulbs and still development going to
22 happen and what needs to be done and looked at is where
23 they plan to put a lot of the development structures
24 and whether any climate change as it goes along will
25 impact the stability or whatever of the development
26 structures. It's -- if we start addressing it now
27 because it's still going to be coming this way towards
28 Barrow maybe we might get a heads-up on the best way to
29 try to deal with the thaw bulbs and whatever is
30 happening now in NPR-A just to get a heads-up because
31 it's really drastic and especially more so along the
32 ocean.

33
34 And I took a whole bunch of pictures
35 all the way to the west of Barrow where the cliffs are
36 just right up to the beach line. And we're starting to
37 have storms and thank god some of the slush started
38 freezing and now it's a barrier. But we need to start
39 thinking of development in the thaw bulbs and
40 permafrost that they have utilized for keeping up their
41 structure is of concern and try to get the heads-up on
42 that development with looking at what needs to be done
43 and the safe way to develop what the country needs or
44 what the State needs or the output of what is being
45 looked at especially with the management of NPR-A and
46 the borough for our management. And that's what we
47 need to start thinking is how to develop NPR-A with the
48 global warming that's happening because we're in the
49 front lines of it.

50

1 I just want to comment on that because
2 it's going to be a Federal issue. You can't produce
3 the areas that have the resources and not manage it
4 right to not be impacted by as Gordon put it the thaw
5 bulbs. We need to look at that and start getting ahead
6 of it.

7
8 Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Roy.

11
12 MS. JONES: Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead. Is
15 that Karen?

16
17 MS. JONES: No, this is Shelly Jones
18 calling from BLM.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, all right,
21 Shelly.

22
23 MS. JONES: Hey, I just.....

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You've got the floor,
26 Shelly.

27
28 MS. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
29 Council. I just -- I've been listening on this
30 conversation and scrolling back through some of my
31 emails, trying to remind myself of some of the
32 conversations I've had and I -- I'm finding a couple of
33 citations that I can send to Eva to distribute to the
34 group on different studies that have been done not real
35 recently, but like I think it was back in 2005 the
36 North Slope Borough's Wildlife Department had published
37 findings from a study called Petroleum Hydrocarbons in
38 Fish and Sediments of NPR-A, Teshekpuk Lake and
39 Colville and Ikpiuk Rivers. So that might be
40 something, I think they were looking into the so called
41 PAHs in that study.

42
43 And then also I'm not sure of the date,
44 but there was a study that was done as a requirement by
45 ConocoPhillips to study contaminants in subsistence
46 foods. That was the requirement of the GMT-1 project.
47 And they did do that study. They didn't continue with
48 it. It was not -- it had some I think design issues.
49 And I think that's where I left my conversations with

50

1 our staff. We don't have any contaminant expert and
2 from time to time we've been talking and following up
3 with people to try to figure out how a person might
4 design a study that would be considered valid. And I
5 think that, you know, might be -- there may have even
6 been a study that -- a grant that the North Slope
7 Borough got a while back from the impact litigation
8 fund to study that topic. But it just seems like all
9 the emails I have on it are alluding to the fact that
10 they can't design the study and so I'm wondering if
11 that should be the focus of a grant is just to design
12 the study and not necessarily think about implementing
13 it just yet because it sounds more complicated than,
14 you know, maybe some people realize.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Shelly.
19 And I think it's been pretty interesting discussion
20 about interest in studies on fisheries up here. And I
21 think it's important to look at traditional knowledge
22 and those kind of things. And the subsistence pressure
23 on these resources that we have and to be mindful that
24 some of the other tributaries, the other areas like the
25 Colville River that are -- have some stated concerns
26 about things like fish mold and the temperature related
27 issues and things like that. And it might be important
28 like you said to design something that -- yeah, just
29 get the grant to put the talk together to bring people
30 to design these studies that could develop into
31 something meaningful and that could develop into
32 something best management practices might embrace like
33 how do we protect if in fact there's a conclusion about
34 -- you know, these -- you know, title 19 of the Borough
35 ordinance, land use ordinance, has statements to
36 protect overwintering habitats. And there are these
37 deep portions of the river where fish spawn and over
38 the course of winter they become little fries and
39 juvenile fish and but there are nurseries and there are
40 smaller thaw bulbs that are used. In fact I have a
41 picture in my office in February back in the 1990s of a
42 Cat going through the river trying to shortcut over a
43 -- a overwintering habitat and fall right through in
44 February when you'd think that's the coldest month time
45 of the year and there's a lot of snow covering some of
46 these river banks that are overwintering habitat. And
47 it -- I think there needs to be some way to look at
48 these areas especially when it's a highly prized
49 subsistence resource that's heavily traded, subsistence
50

1 traded, between communities and to make sure we
2 minimize disruption of those kind of activities. In
3 any event I think it's an important area.
4

5 With that we'll go back to where we
6 were in the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. And
7 we were talking about I think some of the priorities
8 that were going to be discussed from a few weeks ago
9 without exactly knowing where we are on the agenda in
10 this -- on this topic.
11

12 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 This is Hannah Voorhees. I -- if it's okay with you
14 I'm going to go through and read the list that I have
15 now completely so that we can at least get that out on
16 the record and for further discussion. We discussed
17 many of them at length already and I've been going
18 through and editing according to some suggestions we've
19 had. So I'll go ahead and start that now.
20

21 The first priority information need
22 that we have drafted with your volunteers is to
23 document new fish species and changes in abundance,
24 size and distribution of previously present fish;
25 impacts of new or expanding species on other fish that
26 are important to subsistence. And this could draw on
27 traditional ecological knowledge.
28

29 So a question that I -- we have on this
30 is whether, you know, there -- you would like to list
31 specific species that you observed, but I will move on
32 to the next PIN so that we can keep the conversation
33 flowing.
34

35 The second PIN that I have that we've
36 discussed a little bit already is to document mold
37 disease and discoloration on whitefish in the Colville
38 River and investigate possible causes.
39

40 The third PIN I have is affects of
41 climate change including late freeze-up on Ikpikpuk
42 River and affects on subsistence practices and fish
43 preservation.
44

45 The fourth PIN that I have is
46 documentation of changing subsistence fish harvest and
47 consumption in the community of Nuiqsut.
48

49 I wanted to address briefly Todd's
50

1 question where he mentioned that contaminants are a
2 major concern for fishermen. And I think that as part
3 of the intent of this PIN is which we've discussed with
4 Martha Itta is to look at how concerns about
5 contamination are affecting practices and to show that
6 people have these concerns and document that in a
7 really solid way as a first step.

8
9 All right. I'll move on to the fifth
10 PIN which is baseline fish habitat and water quality
11 monitoring, especially temperature, dissolved oxygen
12 and silt content on the rivers and tributaries
13 important to subsistence fishing in communities on the
14 North Slope.

15
16 The sixth PIN that I have which is not
17 one that was brought up by volunteers, but which was a
18 PIN from last cycle, 2020, is document temporal changes
19 and harvest patterns, resource availability and
20 abundance of broad whitefish in the tributaries of
21 Smith Bay and Lake Teshekpuk including application to
22 Federal subsistence management such as identifying
23 critical habitat, refining range maps and understanding
24 ecological relationships, identify spawning locations
25 of broad whitefish in central and western North Slope
26 areas.

27
28 The background on that final PIN is
29 that no proposals were received for it and the Council
30 should let us know whether or not you think this is
31 still an important topic.

32
33 All right. Would you like me -- how
34 would you like to proceed, would you like me to go
35 through one by one and approve each one or I'll leave
36 this up to the Chair.

37
38 And Eva and Karen if you want to jump
39 in on the best way forward please do that as well.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. And
42 you're -- this is where the action item exists is what
43 I'm thinking, maybe order of ranking or just approval
44 those are the important PINs, priority information
45 needs, that -- for the North Slope region in Fisheries
46 Resource Monitoring Program.

47
48 MS. VOORHEES: That's correct, Mr.
49 Chair. This is an action item to approve these PINs,
50

1 but you may of course remove some or edit them or add
2 any at this point as well. And I did have a few
3 questions still outstanding which I was hoping to
4 address with the Council before you vote to approve
5 them.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. What's
8 the wish of the Council, are we -- I think Hannah read
9 out some of the PINS, I'm starting to learn to use the
10 acronym, and understanding it a little bit better what
11 the PINS are, but seems to me that's a pretty good list
12 of some of the things that we've expressed for several
13 years. In any event I'm going to before -- I'd just
14 like to hear the Council before I turn it back over to
15 Hannah if there are additional or if you feel confident
16 that this list is the right list.

17
18 MR. REXFORD: Mr. Chair. Kaktovik.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, Eddie, go ahead
21 from Kaktovik.

22
23 MR. REXFORD: Yes, I had some concerns
24 on some studies that are happening in our area and I'll
25 give you a comment. But on page 36, the Department of
26 Fish and Game and KIC.....

27
28 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, Mr. Rexford.

29
30 MR. REXFORD:that would be.....

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

33
34 MS. VOORHEES: That is a study that was
35 initiated in 2001 and is now completed. So I don't
36 know if you -- do you still have a question about it or
37 is it -- it's a pretty old study, I just wanted to let
38 you know.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Was that -- did that
41 answer your question, Eddie?

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I hope I'm still on.

46
47 MS. VOORHEES: I can hear you, Mr.
48 Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I didn't hear Eddie
2 respond back. Either he's on mute or maybe he got
3 dropped on the call.

4
5 MR. REXFORD: Yes, I'm on.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. You were
8 knocked out and Hannah said that was a study that was
9 2001 vintage. (In Native) and that it was probably a
10 completed study.

11
12 MR. REXFORD: Okay. And the other one
13 was 02-0 -- of Arctic cisco and dolly varden in
14 Kaktovik lagoons by the Fish and Wildlife Service. On
15 these studies could there be reports to our tribe on
16 what the studies have come up with and so our community
17 would be aware of what's happening in our area on these
18 studies.

19
20 MS. VOORHEES: And, Mr. Rexford, this
21 is Hannah Voorhees. And yes, definitely, we can share
22 copies of those. OSM can deal with sharing copies of
23 those with you. I'll make a note and we'll be in touch
24 after the meeting.

25
26 MR. REXFORD: And any that's happening
27 in our area is 07-107, the HulaHula River dolly varden
28 sonar enumeration. Can you have that study provided to
29 our community and our tribal government here.

30
31 MS. VOORHEES: Okay. Certainly.

32
33 MR. REXFORD: And these studies are
34 kind of like baseline studies that would be happening
35 in our area and -- and other contaminants we'd sure
36 like to have a contaminant study done on our fishes in
37 our area. That way I guess we won't be blamed for
38 later findings of contaminants in the fish species in
39 our area.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.

44
45 MS. VOORHEES: Thanks, Mr. Rexford.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Eddie. Go
48 ahead. Is that Hannah?

49
50

1 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 And I wanted to just note I think that you all
3 understand this, but the study -- the initial number by
4 the project is the year it was initiated and projects
5 are funded for up to four years. And the projects that
6 are still going on on the North Slope are the Meade
7 River changes in subsistence fisheries and the Colville
8 River grayling habitat and migration. Those are the
9 only two that are -- oh, and then aerial monitoring of
10 dolly varden overwintering abundance. The other ones
11 are completed or having -- reports are being written up
12 at the moment.

13
14 So thanks for your comment on
15 contaminants near Kaktovik. I believe that the same
16 guidelines that prevent the FRMP from funding
17 contaminant study elsewhere would apply however we at
18 OSM are -- you know, we're trying to work with
19 communities to find ways to document their concerns
20 that don't deal with documenting contaminants directly.
21 So that might be something to work on developing as a
22 PIN even in future cycles through conversations prior
23 to our meetings as, you know, volunteers come forward
24 to discuss PINs.

25
26 Thank you for those comments.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: This is Gordon and in
29 looking at the studies and some of them are aged
30 studies. And when it's a study that might be most
31 affected by a region, area or a community, what is the
32 practice of the study being complete, is it merely
33 getting it presented in the Regional Advisory Council
34 and with the findings there or is there any effort to
35 bring that study and do a presentation to the community
36 where it's most impacted?

37
38 And just wanted to get your feedback on
39 that.

40
41 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is
42 Hannah. And so generally there needs to be a final
43 technical report filed with OSM and then funding is
44 closed out. And in terms of accountability to
45 communities that does differ a little bit between
46 projects and agencies. I know for example Alaska
47 Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence
48 conducts final community meetings whenever they've
49 completed a study and communicate results and verify
50

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1 them. In other cases the results may just be coming
2 back to the RAC, I can't say for sure. Karen Hyer may
3 have some additional comments. But definitely
4 communication with communities on the results is and at
5 least with the Regional Advisory Council is something
6 that OSM emphasizes in considering proposals.

7
8 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.

11
12 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
13 members. I.....

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Karen.

16
17 MS. HYER: Oh, I just wanted to add we
18 do encourage all investigators to return to the
19 communities to present the work. We also encourage
20 them as the work is going on to be in contact with the
21 communities, kind of before, during and after. We have
22 had situations -- we do have a project up in Anaktuvuk
23 Pass where when we went forward with it the community
24 had concerns about timing and through several meetings
25 with the community we changed the timing of the
26 project. So we do -- I would say more than just a
27 recommendation, we do ask that our investigators engage
28 with local communities because I know that there have
29 been issues in the past up there with investigators
30 that have simply gone about their research without
31 involving communities and have actually interfered with
32 local subsistence activities. So we're sensitive to
33 that and we basically require our investigators to
34 engage in that way.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Any other
37 questions on the PINs that were described by Hannah.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And, Hannah, were
42 there additional questions before this action item was
43 brought for a decision?

44
45 MS. VOORHEES: Yes. Thank you, Mr.
46 Chair.

47
48 MR. OOMITTUK: This is Point Hope.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Let's take Point Hope
2 first, Hannah.

3
4 MR. OOMITTUK: I can listen to her
5 first and then I will respond after that.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Steve.
8 Okay. Go ahead, Hannah.

9
10 MS. VOORHEES: Okay. Excuse the
11 interruption. Yes, I do have a question on the first
12 PIN. This priority information need regards new fish
13 species that are showing up and as well as species that
14 might be increasing in abundance or changing their
15 distribution. And in earlier conversations there were
16 a number of specific fish mentioned and I wondered --
17 okay. So first I'll just read the list. It was large
18 whitefish, pink salmon, northern pike, smelt and cod.
19 So I'm wondering if you want all those included and I
20 have a question about cod in particular which is can
21 you help me understand exactly what fish we're talking
22 about because again we would not be able to -- you
23 know, we don't have jurisdiction over marine species.
24 So just wanted to check, I think that might have been
25 saffron cod and if so we probably would not be able to
26 include it in that list.

27
28 Do you want us to include a list at all
29 of species or just say -- I mean, and the wording can,
30 you know, kind of shape the way people apply so that's
31 why I'm asking how'd you like to handle that.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And what was the name
34 of the study again on the first PIN?

35
36 MS. VOORHEES: Oh, the topic is
37 documenting new fish species. So I'll read it in its
38 entirety. It reads, document new fish species and
39 changes in abundance, size and distribution of
40 previously present fish species, impacts of new or
41 expanding species on other fish that are important for
42 subsistence, and studies should draw on traditional
43 ecological knowledge.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we've listed some
46 specific fish and you're thinking that maybe it should
47 be just a broad statement to look at any new fish that
48 are coming in and then look at the impacts of the
49 current fish that we already know are known to exist?

50

1 MS. VOORHEES: That would be one
2 option. We could also just say, you know, for example
3 or possibly including and then give a list, but I
4 didn't want to include cod in there in particular if
5 it's not within our jurisdiction.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And if cod -- like
8 saffron cod is not in your jurisdiction what would be
9 the reason that it's not, is it a marine fish and not
10 anadromous, doesn't come into the rivers and stuff?

11
12 MS. VOORHEES: I'll defer to Karen Hyer
13 on that.

14
15 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
16 members. Yes, we don't have any jurisdiction on marine
17 waters, all our jurisdiction is on freshwater. So that
18 is where we engage in management so that's where the
19 research is focused.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So
22 something like tom cods or saffron cod, those are
23 exclusively marine fish and would not be candidates?

24
25 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
26 members. That is correct.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good.

29
30 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair. This is Todd.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead, Todd.

33
34 MR. SFORMO: I just had a question.
35 But a lot of the saffron cod, rainbow smelt, things are
36 -- like that are also caught in the lagoon and, you
37 know, technically they're not freshwater or a
38 freshwater environment, but they're not marine. So I
39 -- I have a problem kind of with understanding
40 something like that or is the lagoon a spot that can be
41 examined and if so it's not technically a freshwater
42 environment, but saffron cod is regularly caught in
43 these lagoons. So if you could just get a little
44 clarification for me for that.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sounds like a Karen
2 question.

3
4 MS. HYER: Yes, this is Karen again for
5 the record. Yeah, so we have done work in northwest
6 Arctic in the brackish waters because it is -- it is an
7 area where -- it's so close to the freshwater that it
8 does apply. It's an area where we sometimes share
9 jurisdiction, but I can say for sure that we have
10 funded projects like in Hotham Inlet and places like
11 that that are brackish water. So that is a little bit
12 different than a straight marine environment. But
13 again.....

14
15 MR. SFORMO: So I guess maybe that --
16 oh, sorry. Go ahead.

17
18 MS. HYER: That would then need to be
19 tied back to Federal subsistence management and of
20 course if those fish are moving through that -- what
21 was happening is those fish were moving through that
22 area and heading back into Park land to spawn, it was
23 sheefish work and they were harvested by our Federal
24 subsistence users. And so we were able to tie the
25 project back to Federal subsistence management and
26 that's really the key.

27
28 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Todd.

31
32 MR. SFORMO: Uh-huh. Okay. I kind of
33 see that as a difficulty for the area that's just North
34 Slope rather than Northwest Arctic.

35
36 Okay. Well, thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So I do have a
39 question here in terms of structuring the language
40 there. So if it were to change to new fish species and
41 the size and abundance of existing species study and
42 some of the cod type stuff in the lagoons are in these
43 brackish areas would they be singled out as not being
44 counted or as would be the abundance of those they
45 would qualify to be numerated at that point?

46
47 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
48 members. Gordon, could you repeat that again, are you
49 talking about like an abundance study in brackish

50

1 water? I wasn't 100 percent sure what you were asking.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, there seems to
4 be some concerns and questions about the cod and what
5 species we're talking about, that it probably wouldn't
6 qualify or something like that to be part of this. But
7 knowing that they're caught regularly in the brackish
8 lagoon areas where those lagoons are fed by multiple
9 streams, multiple rivers and things like that and but
10 taking the words that species of fish off the list, but
11 putting -- looking at other fish including the known
12 species are of subsistence resources and their
13 abundance, if -- if we were to wordsmith that would
14 that suffice as to be able to count those particular
15 fish that are named that may not be qualified? I'm --
16 I'm just trying to see.....

17

18 MS. HYER: Mr. Chair, yes.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER:somebody
21 obviously put in cod in there and be -- you know, there
22 used to be just for an example down the beach from
23 Barrow and there used to be a lot of ice starting
24 around late September, you'd have 300 people fishing
25 right on the beach down here and it was a major
26 subsistence food resource for the community. Now we're
27 limited to the lagoon side of things to try to get the
28 same resource and the abundance and are -- is there
29 concerns to those, seems like we don't get as much, I'm
30 not sure, but obviously it was put on the list as a
31 concern.

32

33 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is
34 Hannah. And I think that -- I think a community based
35 kind of traditional ecological knowledge approach this
36 would capture people's concerns. I think that any
37 researcher worth her salt would be checking the
38 records, the public transcripts from your meetings,
39 from this meeting, for example. And I don't -- I think
40 that either way it's fine, but we may just keep things
41 simpler and eliminate some, you know studies being
42 predisposed to focusing on species, certain species,
43 rather than taking kind of a holistic assessment from
44 communities about what they're seeing.

45

46 So I would just recommend taking off
47 the list of species, but it's obviously up to the
48 Council.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So the recommendation
2 is to take the list of species off.

3
4 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, that's correct.

5
6 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair, I have a
7 question.

8
9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
10 Steve.

11
12 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, you know, our
13 ecosystem in the Arctic is so delicate and here we have
14 an abundance of new species coming within our area.
15 Are -- you know, and some of these species are known to
16 be more dominant in certain areas and take over certain
17 species and that can change our ecosystem. Are we --
18 you know, that's always been like a -- and then when
19 we're talking about tom cods, you know, the (in Native)
20 that we catch, you know, Point Hope is way out on a
21 point and we mainly fish in the ocean and in the river
22 October and November, you know, they used to go and
23 because it doesn't freeze-up much early as it used to,
24 but.....

25
26 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So a question for
29 you, Hannah, is, you know, considering Point Hope's
30 issues who has the jurisdiction of studying fish that
31 are all just marine dwellers, I mean, is that NOAA or
32 is that.....

33
34 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman.....

35
36 MS. VOORHEES: Would you -- oh, go
37 ahead, Karen.

38
39 MS. HYER:and Council members.
40 It is NOAA.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

43
44 MS. VOORHEES: I also wanted to add
45 that -- this is Hannah, that there is a clause in that
46 PIN about expanding the -- whether the impacts of new
47 and expanding species on other fish that are important
48 to subsistence so maybe getting Steve's question about,
49 you know, dominance of one species over another. I

50

1 think that in conversation about new species moving in,
2 you know, I mean, obviously it's pretty difficult to
3 separate out the marine and nonmarine environments and
4 that would certainly probably come up in interviews
5 with participants if a traditional ecological knowledge
6 approach was taken.

7
8 So if it's -- we can move on to the
9 next -- the next question that I had about PINs unless
10 there's other comments and questions of course.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, Hannah, I think
13 we would consider maybe your recommendation of taking
14 the species out of the -- but making it still a PIN if
15 there is an issue with commingling with marine dwelling
16 fish that might be under the jurisdiction of another
17 agency like NOAA or something like that.

18
19 MS. VOORHEES: Okay. Thank you. I am
20 noting that. And at the end of all this I'll probably
21 just go through and read all the PINs one more time
22 just for the record before you vote on whether or not
23 to approve them or not so you can make sure that they
24 sound correct to you.

25
26 The next question I have is whether for
27 affects of climate change including late freeze-up on
28 Ikpikpuk River and affects on subsistence practices and
29 fish preservation if you do want that to be specific to
30 the Ikpikpuk River or to a wider area.

31
32 And that is the last question I have
33 for the Council about these PINs.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah. I
36 do know from issues that -- on the Ikpikpuk and for
37 many, many, many generations of families that fished up
38 there and the stories that are handed down from
39 generation to generation around Aulavik area which is
40 an old townsite that existed back in the day, but it
41 was a major fishing village. And the amount of
42 subsistence trading that went along and the amount of
43 fish that is -- was caught and traded throughout and
44 the ability to continue to do that. The fish are still
45 there, they're in great abundance, but the ability to
46 keep them -- to fish because of the impacts of climate
47 change on river freeze-up, tearing up nets, then when
48 you do catch fish there's a continuing struggle to keep
49 them fresh.

50

1 Normally the winter would set in, you
2 would fish and you can put -- sack your fish up and put
3 them in a warehouse, wait until November and start
4 hauling that fish to -- to the community. And in the
5 past few years and -- and continuing today is those
6 fish start to go bad. They're still edible, elders
7 like to have (in Native) fish, but when 90 percent of
8 your catch is doing that and you're not intending to
9 make that into stink fish that's -- that's a concern
10 because we can't depend on the weather to preserve them
11 for the community. And seems to me we need to look at
12 this as -- because it's a food security concern and how
13 we do that.

14
15 So I think it's important and to the
16 extent that it's a wider spread problem throughout the
17 North Slope, maybe it is, but that was something that
18 was -- that the fishermen along Ikpikpuk that fished in
19 that abundance and there used to be several families
20 like our family, Penagues, Danny Edwards and those
21 Melacks, they -- we would fish on the Ikpikpuk and fish
22 in great numbers. And in the same way that our
23 ancestors did in the past. And we're struggling to do
24 that today.

25
26 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
27 This is Hannah again. And from that I might suggest
28 saying something like affects of climate change
29 including late freeze-up on subsistence practices and
30 fish preservation. And let's see, impacts on
31 continuity of traditions and food security with a
32 special emphasis on Ikpikpuk River. That would leave
33 the door to application -- proposals from other regions
34 that would show that there's a special interest in that
35 area.

36
37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, that seems
38 palatable to me, keeps the door open. And, you know,
39 if you didn't know the Sagavanirktok River in the
40 Prudhoe Bay area has a big whitefish spawning event as
41 well and it was used in the past before industry was
42 there. In any event if that's okay with the Council I
43 think it leaves it broad enough.

44
45 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, just for the
46 record, Gordon, I'm back. I got disconnected and had a
47 hard time getting back on. I -- so I missed a lot of
48 -- I don't know if they responded, but I was talking
49 about the cod, the tom cods, that we get.

50

1 You know, because we -- we live in the
2 point, we're surrounded by the Bering Sea, the Chukchi
3 Sea, Arctic Ocean and a lot of our fishing is we do a
4 lot of ocean, we're right on the coastline. And we
5 don't go out in the ocean and then upriver mainly in
6 the falltime, late fall, winter. But lately the tom
7 cod, the (in Native), you know, have been hard. You
8 know, we usually go to a certain area usually in
9 January right by the point, on the north side of the
10 point, and we used to get a whole -- sacks and sacks of
11 them. And the last few years that it's been harder to
12 find them. You know, there could be 40, 50 people and
13 we'd go home with sacks of them. We'd have these hooks
14 so we could get 10, 12 at a time, you know. And then
15 pull them out one after another and fish for a good two
16 hours and go home with over 300 tom cods, you know, or
17 four sacks easily. But maybe the women and children
18 would fish for (in Native) and the men would be hunting
19 seal. But if seal hunting was bad then they would fish
20 for (in Native) also. And I -- you know, they're
21 getting harder to find, we have to move around and
22 sometimes the ice isn't as stable as it used to be in
23 January. And the last few years it's been pretty good.
24 But, you know, I don't know if they responded to my
25 concern about species and the fact we live in a
26 delicate ecosystem and other species coming in that are
27 more dominant than the species that are there and
28 taking over.

29
30 And the other concern was can -- do
31 saltwater fish, are they capable of adapting into
32 freshwater at times.

33
34 The other concern that Point Hope had
35 was the abundance of birds washing up on the beach
36 especially towards the east of Point Hope and north of
37 Point Hope on the other side of Cape Lisburne and on
38 the east side of Cape Thompson of puffins and the
39 murres. We know that -- I know the population is still
40 high on the murres, the (in Native) that we get the
41 eggs from the cliffs and usually we get them in first
42 of July, lately they've been getting them in the middle
43 part of June. And at Cape Thompson they used to have
44 like 300,000 birds nest on the cliffs and then at Cape
45 Lisburne 600,000. It seems like you don't see that
46 many murres flying like they used to. I was just
47 wondering about the population and the studies that was
48 being done.

49
50

1 Thank you.

2
3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Steve, on the tom
4 cods, the way the recommendation is heading because we
5 can't intertwine marine going fish that are exclusive
6 marine domain that NOAA would be the jurisdiction on
7 that. That the anadromous species, those that spawn
8 into the rivers and hang around in brackish areas, that
9 is the domain of these studies and such that it was --
10 the study will be amended in that way so that there is
11 clarity on -- and it might even help make sure that we
12 -- that clarity might help secure that funding because
13 there is no commingling of species from anadromous to
14 marine going. And so it will address fish that might
15 be anadromous and coming into the rivers as invasive
16 and that may become dominant and taking up more space
17 of local fish. So to my understanding that's part of
18 that.

19
20 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 And I think that was one of our concerns, our
22 jurisdiction. You know, we are the North Slope Borough
23 Subsistence Advisory Council and, you know, we have
24 over 90,000 square miles and the Borough limit is three
25 miles out into the ocean. And yet we still have no
26 jurisdiction in the ocean to -- you know, to address
27 our concerns as each community especially with the
28 ocean when some of us live -- depend on ocean,
29 especially the animals like the seal, the walrus, the
30 whale, the fish and all that. And yet, you know, our
31 jurisdiction is limited and we are appointed by the
32 Secretary of Interior. And I think that's something we
33 need to discuss and see how we can amend that to widen
34 our jurisdiction especially with the concerns that we
35 have with our ecosystem and the migration of certain
36 species of fish and animals. And like you said, you
37 know, subsistence is a broad thing and we are
38 subsistence communities and.....

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thanks, Steve.
43 Hannah, if you could go ahead and continue.

44
45 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
46 lied, I do have one more quick question for you. I had
47 brought up a PIN from 2020 about broad whitefish and
48 the tributaries of Smith Bay and Lake Teshekpuk and I'm
49 wondering do you still want that to be a PIN. It did

50

1 not receive any proposals in the last cycle. And I can
2 read the entire PIN if you'd like again.

3
4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, why don't you
5 refresh our memory on that one.

6
7 MS. VOORHEES: All right. This was the
8 North Slope RAC's only 2020 PIN and it reads, document
9 temporal changes in harvest patterns, resource
10 availability and abundance of bright -- broad whitefish
11 in the tributaries of Smith Bay and Lake Teshekpuk
12 including application of Federal subsistence management
13 such as identifying critical habitat, refining range
14 maps and understanding ecological relationships;
15 identify spawning locations of broad whitefish in
16 central and western North Slope areas.

17
18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Yeah, that
19 seems -- yeah, I can't really recall deliberating too
20 much as a PIN. Yeah, I do remember.....

21
22 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRMAN BROWER:concerns about
25 the Smith Bay area and Ikpikpuk and the fish and their
26 health needs in comparison to the locations in the
27 Colville River where the whitefish there are enduring
28 some level of sickness with the mold and to assess the
29 neighboring area, tributaries around by the Smith Bay
30 right there. And there seems to not have the same
31 issues that are occurring from the Colville -- I don't
32 know if it's related to that and it was drafted in a
33 way that singled that out as looking at is -- is the
34 issues going on in the Colville River, are those issues
35 going on in the Ikpikpuk area for knowing that the
36 broad whitefish is a major fishery in that area where
37 there's the heavy population of subsistence activities.

38
39 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, I don't --
40 since I wasn't here that cycle I don't propose them, I
41 don't know exactly the history of this one either.
42 Someone else can chime in, but it sounds to me like the
43 issue that you were just discussing and which we
44 discussed as a PIN focusing on mold disease and
45 discoloration of whitefish in the Colville River and
46 comparison to the Ikpikpuk, et cetera, sounds like that
47 is a greater concern. And if this is not a current
48 pressing concern, you could take it out. I mean, there
49 is -- the benefit of having fewer PINs is you're more
50

1 likely probably to get proposals focused on those
2 concern -- those topics of greatest concern and
3 immediate (indiscernible - distortion) but there's no
4 real harm in including more PINs if you feel strongly
5 about it either.

6
7 So just let me know what the Council
8 decides.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, it's my
11 understanding that kind of study did occur back in the
12 1990s. I think there was a radio telemetry and stuff.
13 So I would be inclined to maybe take it off the list.
14 I would need to defer to the entire Regional Council
15 that there are more important studies than that one
16 that was just described. But I would leave it to the
17 better judgment of the entire group.

18
19 What's the wish of the Council on that
20 one. It seems to me we could table that one and take
21 it off as a PIN.

22
23 MR. REXFORD: This is Edward. I agree
24 with that recommendation.

25
26 Thank you.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So thank you, Edward.
29 And I think -- I think we're understanding these things
30 more as we discuss them there, Hannah, and yeah, I
31 think we would take that one off because there are
32 multiple broad whitefish proposals in there that are
33 PINs.

34
35 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
36 and members of the Council. Duly noted and when you're
37 ready I will read the final list of PINs to you for
38 your approval.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.
41 We're getting closer to lunch so we're going to speak
42 with our stomachs here pretty soon.

43
44 MS. VOORHEES: All right. I have a lot
45 of edits here so bear with me, but the first PIN, and
46 these are not read in any particular order and they're
47 not ranked, they're just a collection.

48 The first PIN is to document new fish
49 species and changes in abundance, size, timing and
50

1 distribution of previously present fish species; study
2 impacts of new or expanding species on other fish that
3 are important to subsistence and studies should draw on
4 traditional ecological knowledge.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.

7
8 MS. VOORHEES: The second.....

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Do you want to
11 approve them one by one or do you want to name them all
12 and then we go into approval at that point?

13
14 MS. VOORHEES: I think it might be best
15 to approve them all at the end.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Continue.

18
19 MS. VOORHEES: All right. Okay. The
20 second PIN is to document mold disease and
21 discoloration on broad or just -- excuse me, whitefish
22 in the Colville River and investigate possible causes.

23
24 The third one is affects of climate
25 change, including late freeze-up -- I'm sorry. And
26 there was a comparative aspect for the second one as
27 well with lake -- with Ikpikpuk River.

28
29 So the third PIN is affects of climate
30 change, including late freeze-up on Ikpikpuk River on
31 subsistence access practices and fish preservation.
32 This should include study -- studies about how these
33 affects are impacting people's ability to continue
34 traditions and their food security or something to that
35 affect. We'll tighten up the language.

36
37 The fourth PIN.....

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And there was a --
40 there was a concern on that one that it was going to be
41 stated in a way that.....

42
43 MS. VOORHEES: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes,
44 and.....

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER:primarily in the
47 Ikpikpuk.....

48
49 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER:or something to
2 -- you phrased it just right earlier when we were
3 discussing it.
4

5 MS. VOORHEES: Yeah. So affects of
6 climate change including late freeze-up, et cetera, et
7 cetera, on North Slope -- on North Slope systems with
8 an emphasis on Ikpihpuk River. Something -- something
9 like that.
10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There you go.
12

13 MS. VOORHEES: Okay. Thank you. Karen
14 is taking notes so we'll make sure these are according
15 to the Council's wishes.
16

17 The fourth PIN is documentation of
18 changing subsistence fish harvest and consumption in
19 the community of Nuiqsut.
20

21 The fifth and last PIN is baseline fish
22 habitat and water quality monitoring, I was going to
23 suggest including overwintering areas, with a special
24 focus on temperature, dissolved oxygen and silt content
25 on the rivers and tributaries important to subsistence
26 fishing in North Slope communities.
27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I like that one
29 because I've got a picture of a overwintering habitat
30 with a D-7 stuck right in the middle of it in February.
31 If you ever want to see that picture I'll send it to
32 you. And I'm thinking that there's lots and lots of
33 baby fish in that -- in that picture underneath that
34 tractor and that tractor is -- in February, it's an
35 overwintering habitat, because I know they spawn in the
36 -- in these deep holes on almost every bank of the --
37 when they -- in these spawning areas on the Ikpihpuk.
38 You can practically go fishing one deep hole and then
39 if you know where there's another deep hole go move
40 your nets over there and get more spawning fish in the
41 next hole.
42

43 MS. VOORHEES: But I'm glad you approve
44 of that addition. Thank you.
45

46 And that is the complete list of PINs
47 and now it is open -- this is an action item and it's
48 open to the Council's approval.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Eva, in
2 the cover -- in the cover of the November 4-5 meeting
3 there's a picture of -- that's the Ikpihpuk River right
4 there on the cover, the one that you distributed and
5 those are my boys fishing. And you can see a little
6 stick sticking out by one of the boys standing and
7 jigging for grayling, but the area is full of lined-up
8 fish. That's what I'm talking about, this picture is
9 like September 28 and my kids are pretty young in that
10 picture. You don't get anymore of that kind of setting
11 hardly to allow for the nets to be stationary and now
12 we're dealing with moving ice quite a bit. So and the
13 Ikpihpuk is a major fish spawning area. Anyway I just
14 thought I'd say that.

15
16 So what's the wish of the Council on
17 the studies. This is an action item, we need a motion
18 to approve those PINs as our priorities for study.

19
20 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. I make a
21 motion to approve the studies that were presented.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
24 the floor from Steve Oomittuk from Point Hope for the
25 PINs described today.

26
27 MS. KIPPI: Second the motion. Wanda.

28
29 MR. HOPSON: I'll second that motion.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
32 Wanda at Atgasuk. Any discussion.

33
34 MR. OOMITTUK: Under discussion I know
35 you -- they mention about ocean studies. You know, the
36 murrees are, you know, that come to Point Hope and lay
37 their eggs in the cliffs and the abundance of murrees
38 that are -- and puffins that are -- nest in the cliffs.
39 You know, they've been washing up. I don't know if
40 they're doing any studies on that. They are on land,
41 but they feed on the ocean, down deep, you know, in the
42 eco. And then you had mentioned that some of them
43 starve.

44
45 So and then, you know, that's a concern
46 because of the jurisdiction problem that we have
47 dealing with the ocean. And when you're surrounded by
48 ocean and a lot of your concerns deal with, you know,
49 the animals that live within the ocean that we depend

50

1 on. And that's some of the concerns that Point Hope
2 has to really -- and we are mainly an ocean subsistence
3 people and yet sometimes we can't adjust these because
4 I think it's not within the North Slope Subsistence
5 Advisory Council. And then that's something that we
6 want to look into to try to change that because the
7 boundary lines of the North Slope Borough is three
8 miles out.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'm going to
13 ask Eva to maybe chime in a little bit because we can
14 send a message to NOAA on some of these concerns. But
15 I don't think the -- our boundary of the State and the
16 Borough on this particular issues are at play. I think
17 the jurisdiction is related to it because some of the
18 species are marine going, they may come in right near
19 to the shore, but they spawn in the ocean, they live in
20 the ocean and hangout where we can subsist off them
21 often. And that's the only defining jurisdictional
22 issue where when it's all marine it's NOAA. And when
23 it's anadromous, being able to go ocean, but go into
24 the rivers and do their thing, then it's in our
25 jurisdiction to study thee things because they're in
26 our jurisdiction at that point. That's my
27 understanding. It doesn't have to do with the Borough
28 boundary or the State boundary, it's just a
29 jurisdiction between it's all fully marine or it's
30 anadromous. Anadromous meaning a mixed.

31
32 I hope that helps, Steve.

33
34 And, Eva, if you could chime in on the
35 messages and concerns that have been raised that may be
36 the exclusive jurisdiction of another agency.

37
38 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
39 thank you, Steve, again for that question. Yeah, and
40 it -- as we've discussed before both the Council's own
41 jurisdiction is guided by ANILCA addressing Federal
42 subsistence fish and wildlife on Federal lands in the
43 region. Federal lands and waters so inland waters.
44 And the FRMP program itself also has a limitation in
45 terms of the research that can be funded has to address
46 Federal management so again on Federal lands and
47 Federal waters.

48
49 And then when we get into the marine
50

1 environment that is the jurisdiction of NOAA and
2 National Marine Fisheries Service. And we'll be having
3 a report on Beaufort and Chukchi Sea research at the
4 end of the Council meeting today. So it is something
5 that as the Nuiqsut subsistence is broad encompassing,
6 you know, there isn't a boundary between freshwater and
7 marine waters for subsistence activity especially for
8 coastal communities. So we will be trying to get more
9 of those marine research reports and information to the
10 Council and the Council can also, you know, address
11 those concerns in your annual report as well which is
12 coming upon the agenda next too.

13
14 But for the Council's work and for this
15 FRMP project the jurisdiction can only be Federal lands
16 and waters. And we'll have to defer to the other
17 agencies to address some of the environment.

18
19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Eva. And
22 I hope that helps, Steve, and.....

23
24 MR. OOMITTUK: Oh, yes. Thank you.
25 Thank you very much.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Any
28 further discussion.

29
30 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
33 called for. All those in favor of approving the
34 current PINs that were of discussion this morning
35 signify by saying aye.

36
37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
40 nay.

41
42 (No opposing votes)

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The ayes have it.
45 Those are our PINs.

46
47 Thank you, Hannah.

48
49 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
50

1 members of the Council.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We're
4 about 15 minutes to lunch. What's the wish of the
5 Council, do you want to take a lunch break and then --
6 and if so for how long.

7

8 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council, if
9 I may. This is Eva. There's one more topic on the
10 agenda that would be very helpful to address briefly
11 before breaking for lunch. And that is the.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. It'll be
14 -- we'll get it done before lunchtime because we're
15 growling.

16

17 MS. PATTON: Yes. So that's the
18 overview to address the Council's annual report and
19 identify topics for this year's annual report. So this
20 is something I can provide a quick overview of and any
21 recommendations from the Council and then we circle
22 back around at the end of the meeting as well because
23 there's other things that come up as you're getting
24 information and reports that you'd like to add to your
25 annual report reply. So it would be -- of your annual
26 report rather. So it would be helpful to be able to
27 cover this quickly before lunch and then we'll be able
28 to add.....

29

30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is it a action item?

31

32 MS. PATTON: It is an action item. And
33 the feedback from the Council comes throughout the
34 meeting and we can add it at the end of the meeting.
35 The Council doesn't necessarily have to vote on it, but
36 we're looking for your feedback. But again if I can
37 provide the overview so the Council has the opportunity
38 to continue to think about it and we'll get more
39 feedback on what you'd like to add to your annual
40 report at the end of the meeting.

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. Go ahead, Eva.
43 We'll listen super fast.

44

45 MS. PATTON: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
46 Chair and Council. So you'll find page 38 of your
47 meeting books is an overview of the annual report
48 process. And then you'll find that beginning on.....

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. I'm on page
2 38.

3
4 MS. PATTON: All right. And then
5 you'll find beginning on page 40 of your meeting books
6 is your last year's annual report with the replies from
7 the Board.

8
9 So for this year's annual report just
10 again ANILCA, title VIII of ANILCA which established
11 the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils
12 established these annual reports as a way to bring the
13 regional subsistence uses and needs to the Secretary's
14 attention. And again the Secretary's delegated this
15 responsibility to the Federal Subsistence Board and
16 section 805(c). Again deference includes matters
17 brought forward in the annual report to the Federal
18 Subsistence Board.

19
20 So this is an important opportunity too
21 for the Council to address the Board directly on
22 subsistence issues of concern, requests for information
23 or research and to make recommendations to the Federal
24 Subsistence Board.

25
26 So the annual report provides the
27 Councils an opportunity to address the directors of
28 each of the four Department of Interior agencies,
29 Department of Agriculture and as members of the Federal
30 Subsistence Board. And the Board is required to
31 discuss and reply to each and every issue in the annual
32 report and take action when it's within the Board's
33 authority. And in many cases if the issue is outside
34 the Board's authority then the Board will provide
35 information to the Council on how to contact personnel
36 at the relevant agency.

37
38 As directors the Board members have
39 authority to implement most of the actions which would
40 affect the changes recommended by the Council, even
41 those not covered in the 805(c). And the Councils are
42 strongly encouraged to take advantage of this
43 opportunity.

44
45 And so if Council members have topics
46 that you would like to bring to the Board's attention
47 and I know Steve Oomittuk has, you know, been very
48 concerned about the marine environment and what's going
49 on there and the importance for subsistence and the
50

1 inter-relationship. And so we'll, you know, definitely
2 ensure that those concerns and that dialogue is
3 included in this year's annual report to the Board.
4

5 I'm going to open it up to the Council
6 if there's topics that you feel at this time you'd like
7 to have in the annual report and then again we'll
8 circle back around at the end of the meeting to see if
9 there are additional interests or requests or
10 recommendations you'd like to add.
11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
13 you, Eva. And I suspect we'll discuss this at the end
14 of the -- later on towards the end of the agenda items
15 as you said. But thanks for the overview for the
16 annual report and the process and what we could mention
17 and then the -- from there.
18

19 So with that I think we're due for a
20 break, a good lunch break. And what's the wish of the
21 Council, it's about 10 minutes until noon.
22

23 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. I make a
24 motion to break for lunch until 1:00 p.m. Is that
25 enough time?
26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: 1:30.
28

29 MR. REXFORD: Second.
30

31 MR. OOMITTUK: Okay. 1:30. I make a
32 motion to.....
33

34 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. If I may just
35 jump in real quick. We do have a very full agenda for
36 the second half of the day since we recessed yesterday.
37 We have one more action item for the Council from the
38 National Park Service and then we do have a full agenda
39 of informational reports that the Council has
40 requested. So we do want to make sure we are able to
41 get to those on behalf of the Council. And so if there
42 might be an opportunity to begin the meeting again at
43 1:00 p.m. that might help to fit all those reports in
44 by the end of the day.
45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, come on, Eva. I
47 got to sign lots of timesheets. I -- is it 1:30 or
48 1:00 o'clock. I do have to do a little bit of making
49 sure everybody gets paid while they're hunkered down
50

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1 here and sign a bunch of timesheets here. That's --
2 that'll probably take me about 15 minutes.

3
4 MR. REXFORD: 1:15.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: But I'd like to enjoy
7 my lunch. So 1:15, is that good enough or 1:30.

8
9 MR. HOPSON: 1:30.

10
11 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes, Mr. Chair, I make a
12 motion for 1:15.

13
14 IN UNISON: Second.

15
16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We're in
17 unanimous vote for 1:30 sounds like. There was one out
18 of Anaktuvuk and from Barrow and from Kaktovik I think.
19 So I think we'll have ample time this afternoon. So
20 let's go on recess, break until 1:30 and we'll
21 reconvene.

22
23 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah. (In Native).
24 We'll see you at 1:30.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Bye-bye.

27
28 (Off record)

29
30 (On record)

31
32 MS. PATTON: All right. Well, I think
33 we should probably proceed with the meeting. We have a
34 very full agenda for this afternoon to get through all
35 the information and agency reports that the Council has
36 requested. And we do have one action item also at the
37 request of the National Park Service for the Council to
38 make a recommendation on their delegation of authority
39 for individual customary and traditional use
40 determinations that you'll find in your meeting books
41 on page 49. And because it is an action item and that
42 will be addressed by Marcy Okada.

43
44 Are you online, Marcy?

45
46 MS. OKADA: Hi, Eva. This is Marcy.

47
48 MS. PATTON: Hi, Marcy. Thank you. We
49 are still waiting on two other Council members here,

50

1 but given the timeline that we're looking at this
2 afternoon we should proceed. I guess at the Council's
3 wish if maybe since we're waiting for a couple Council
4 members for a full quorum for making a recommendation,
5 if you would like to provide the Gates of the Arctic
6 National Park and Preserve update and then we can take
7 up the National Park Service request when we have full
8 quorum of Council members joining us.

9
10 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, just for the
11 record this is Steve, I'm on.

12
13 MS. PATTON: Oh, okay. We've got Steve
14 on. Okay. So we have quorum so we can go ahead and
15 proceed then with the next and last action item for the
16 Council.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 MS. OKADA: Okay. Good afternoon, Mr.
21 Chair and Council members. For the record my name is
22 Marcy Okada and I'm the subsistence coordinator for
23 Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. I'll
24 be presenting a requested change in procedure for
25 individual customary and traditional use
26 determinations. And as Eva had mentioned the
27 associated materials begin on page 49 of your Council
28 book.

29
30 This topic is complicated so our staff
31 has recently developed a comparison chart to show the
32 existing process for these determinations as compared
33 to what we're proposing. And I believe that chart is
34 in your supplemental meeting packet, but let me go
35 ahead and get started.

36
37 So requests for individual customary
38 and traditional use determinations are rare and less
39 than a dozen have been made to date. These
40 determinations only apply to National Parks and
41 Monuments so they don't apply to Preserves. During the
42 last Federal wildlife regulation call for proposals one
43 of these requests was made by an individual seeking to
44 hunt in Denali National Park, following a long existing
45 pattern of use. Unfortunately this proposal was
46 invalidated based on erroneous information regarding
47 the process. What this situation brought to light was
48 a need to provide a clear, streamlined process for
49 responding to these requests. National Park Service

50

1 staff developed one such process for consideration by
2 the Federal Subsistence Board and this is what I'm
3 speaking to your Council about today.
4

5 Throughout their July work session the
6 Federal Subsistence Board deferred action on a
7 delegation of authority to the National Park Service,
8 Alaska Regional Director, for making individual
9 customary and traditional use determinations for lands
10 managed by the Park Service and requested that the RACs
11 be briefed on this and have an opportunity to provide
12 input on the delegation of authority at their fall
13 meetings.
14

15 The Federal Subsistence Board is
16 considering a delegation of authority to the National
17 Park Service which would grant the National Park
18 Service Regional Director the authority to make
19 individual customary and traditional use determinations
20 otherwise known as individual C&T. The draft
21 delegation of authority letter and the draft standard
22 operating procedure can also be found in your meeting
23 book on page 49.
24

25 In preparation for this requested
26 administrative change staff with the National Park
27 Service have developed standard operating procedures
28 for both the 13440 subsistence eligibility permits and
29 for individual C&T. I will be presenting you with an
30 overview of both topics, the Park Service's suggested
31 changes to existing processes and the reasons that this
32 is being pursued.
33

34 To begin with it is important to
35 recognize that eligibility to engage in subsistence
36 activities in National Parks and National Monuments in
37 Alaska is different from that of National Preserves and
38 other types of Federal public lands. To be eligible in
39 these units one must not only be a Federally-qualified
40 subsistence user, but also have his or her primary
41 permit home located within a resident zone community or
42 have obtained a 13440 subsistence eligibility permit.
43 Additionally the subsistence user must also have a
44 customary or traditional use determination for the area
45 and the species that they intend to hunt.
46

47 Customary and traditional use
48 determinations acknowledge an existing pattern of
49 subsistence use. The Federal Subsistence Board
50

1 frequently receives requests to evaluate or reevaluate
2 these predominantly for inclusion of communities or
3 areas, but for lands managed by the National Park
4 Service determinations can also be made for individuals
5 pursuant to 50 Code of Federal Regulations 100.16 which
6 states for areas managed by the National Park Service
7 where subsistence uses are allowed the determinations
8 may be made on an individual basis.
9

10 Requests for individual customary and
11 traditional use determinations have been rare in the
12 history of the program and less than a dozen requests
13 have been made thus far. We have no reason to believe
14 that this will change given its rarity and the
15 applicability to only National Parks and National
16 Monuments National Park Service feels that the program
17 and its stakeholders may be better served if the Park
18 Service Regional Director is given the delegated
19 authority to make individual customary and traditional
20 use determinations.
21

22 If this were to be delegated to the
23 Regional Director the process would alleviate a burden
24 on the Office of Subsistence Management and the Federal
25 Subsistence Board, provide a more substantial role for
26 Subsistence Resource Commissions, allow requests to be
27 acted upon outside of the normal regulatory cycle and
28 provide better mechanisms for documenting and archiving
29 these decisions.
30

31 If the Federal Subsistence Board
32 delegates authority to the Park Service for individual
33 customary and traditional use determinations the Park
34 Service intends to follow the procedures outlined in
35 your meeting materials in order that the
36 responsibilities of all involved are clearly defined to
37 provide consistency and continuity across Park units,
38 to streamline both the 13440 permit process and the
39 individual C&T process and to provide mechanisms for
40 evaluating and documenting the requests and subsequent
41 decisions. These procedures are consistent with title
42 VIII of ANILCA and with the existing regulations.
43

44 So I'm not going to walk the Council
45 through every step or document -- or the document
46 outlined in the standard operating procedures, but I
47 would like to point out that the eight criteria for
48 evaluating individual customary and traditional use
49 determinations are the same as those for community and
50

1 area customary and traditional use determinations. The
2 Park Service would continue to analyze these criteria
3 in a manner consistent with the Federal Subsistence
4 Board's policies.

5
6 Delegation of authority on these
7 matters is considered an administrative action of the
8 Federal Subsistence Board, but before approving this
9 process the Board has asked the Regional Advisory
10 Councils to review the proposed procedures and to offer
11 feedback especially given that the responsibility for
12 making recommendations on these C&T requests will shift
13 from the Regional Advisory Councils to the Subsistence
14 Resource Commissions. The Park Service believes that
15 the Commissions are perhaps best equipped to evaluate
16 patterns of subsistence use and their associated Parks
17 and Monuments and each includes representation from the
18 associated Regional Advisory Councils.

19
20 As Eva had mentioned this is an action
21 item and we would appreciate your feedback on these
22 processes and specifically request that your body vote
23 on whether to endorse this change.

24
25 At this time I would be happy to try
26 and answer any questions that you might have.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Marcy.
31 Any questions to Marcy on this C&T determination
32 delegation to Park Service.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I have one. You
37 mentioned this was spurred on by somebody doing
38 erroneous stuff in the Denali National Park. Without
39 naming names what was the erroneous information that
40 prompted the need to do some better work here?

41
42 MS. OKADA: So for clarification the
43 gentleman had originally been -- him and his family had
44 originally been living in Healy or Cantwell actually
45 and then they moved to Healy to -- for work and he
46 wanted his family and himself to be able to go back to
47 Cantwell and still be able to hunt within Denali
48 National Park. So he was requesting an individual
49 customary and traditional use determination for that --

1 for his particular situation. And because we didn't
2 have a streamlined process it's kind of led to this
3 current request.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

6
7 MS. OKADA: So the information that was
8 -- he was providing in his application was erroneous
9 because we don't currently have a streamlined process.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. So since Gates
12 of the Arctic is in our region as well and what could
13 you expect for a potential individual C&T in the Gates
14 of the Arctic. I mean, could it be a guided operator
15 that's out of Fairbanks that frequents the Gates of the
16 Arctic or, I mean, can you give an example of what you
17 might see?

18
19 MS. OKADA: Because -- because the
20 applicant would have to be a Federally-qualified
21 subsistence user that means their primary residence
22 would have to be in a rural area also located within a
23 resident zoned community. And as of right now we're
24 anticipating maybe a rare request here and there, but
25 we don't suspect, you know, a rise in applications all
26 of a sudden due to the criteria.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So I'm
29 not looking for a rise in -- I'm just saying what --
30 where an application might come from, I mean, from
31 Fairbanks, a user has to be a rural resident so let's
32 just say there's a whole bunch of new teachers in
33 Anaktuvuk Pass or some other village on the Slope or
34 within the NANA region that has a -- village that has a
35 C&T to the Gates of the Arctic and it's a new resident.
36 Do those new residents automatically qualify because
37 they're rural residents or would they need to apply for
38 an individual C&T because they just moved there?

39
40 MS. OKADA: So in your example if a
41 teacher were to move to Anaktuvuk Pass because
42 Anaktuvuk Pass is a resident zoned community they would
43 already be considered a Federally-qualified subsistence
44 user.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. I'm just
47 trying to see what an application -- where it might
48 come from, what you guys are describing. It just seems
49 -- it seems like going way out of the way to work on

50

1 something that's maybe not an issue or something.

2

3 MR. PERSON: Mr. Chair. This is Brian
4 Person, North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife
5 Management. May I ask a question?

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead there,
8 Brian.

9

10 MR. PERSON: Yeah. Good afternoon,
11 Council members and hello, Marcy. I guess I'm not
12 entirely clear what you're asking of the RAC. I mean,
13 currently who -- who determines whether or not in your
14 example in Denali Park, would that go before the RAC to
15 determine if that individual could still qualify to
16 hunt within Denali even though that person moved to
17 Healy. So I guess what I'm asking is -- you know, is
18 the North Slope Regional Advisory Council are they
19 forfeiting their ability to approve or disapprove such
20 a request.

21

22 Thanks.

23

24 MS. OKADA: Currently the RACs are the
25 advisory committees that review these requests and then
26 it goes on to the Federal Subsistence Board. So what
27 we're proposing is it -- the advisory committee review
28 would be -- an advisory committee would be the
29 Subsistence Resource Commission and then the final
30 decision maker would be the Park Service Regional
31 Director. The RACs would still have some involvement,
32 but essentially the main advisory committee would be
33 the Subsistence Resource Commission. So that's one of
34 the proposed changes.

35

36 MR. PERSON: Sure. Okay. That -- that
37 helps. Sorry. Through the Chair. So but ultimately
38 with what you're proposing it would be up to the Park
39 Service to make the ultimate determination rather than
40 where the powers exist now with the Subsistence
41 Resource Committee; is that correct?

42

43 MS. OKADA: Yeah. So the proposed
44 process would change from the RACs to the Subsistence
45 Resource Commissions and then the decision maker is
46 currently the Federal Subsistence Board and we're
47 proposing that it would be the Park Service Alaska
48 Regional Director. And mainly this would be because
49 currently when an application is submitted there's a

50

1 narrow window and it -- and the current process is
2 during the call for regulatory proposals which is every
3 two years, but under this new process it would be open
4 continuously. So we -- you know, we would be able to
5 process such an application year round and not just
6 during a regulatory proposal year.

7
8 MR. PERSON: Through the Chair. This
9 is Brian, North Slope Borough, Department of Wildlife
10 Management again. Okay. Thank you, Marcy. Yeah, I
11 understand that these -- you know, the current process,
12 there's a leg just like all of these, you know, be it
13 Alaska Department of Fish and Game or geepers (ph),
14 even a call for proposals. But yeah, it just seems --
15 yeah, it seems that a lot of power is being handed to
16 the Regional Director of the Park Service and I just
17 want to bring that to the attention of the Committee.

18
19 Thanks.

20
21 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. I got a
22 question.

23
24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

25
26 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, you know, I know
27 when they bring proposals to the North Slope
28 Subsistence Advisory Council or when we pass
29 resolutions, you know, and then they get shut down by
30 Federal Subsistence Advisory, you know, even though we
31 support or we pass them. And I know -- you know, for
32 our new Council members, I don't know if you can
33 elaborate how things -- you know, the Subsistence
34 Advisory Council and the Federal Subsistence Advisory.
35 You know, we have some new Council members. I know
36 that, you know, in the past when we -- when they're
37 concerned about the Western Arctic caribou herd and we
38 wanted to stop all nonresidents and commercial hunting
39 on Federal lands and it was passed by the North Slope
40 Subsistence Advisory Council, you know, within the
41 North Slope Borough, the boundary lines on Federal
42 lands, but still it was shot down by the Federal
43 Subsistence Board. And then who makes the final
44 decision, is it -- you know, the governor appoints a
45 certain person to address these and then signs off on
46 it, you know, and we got a new governor, they get some
47 advisors or how does that work. I know we ran into a
48 situation last year or the year before and even though
49 we passed these resolutions, but was -- it was shut

50

1 down and you want to make decisions in support or not
2 support, you know.

3
4 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. This is Eva.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Eva.

7
8 MS. PATTON: Yes, I thank -- thank you
9 for that question, Steve, and I can help address that
10 question and the process of the Federal Subsistence
11 Board in terms of their consideration of Council
12 recommendations.

13
14 So the Councils are governed by title
15 VIII of ANILCA and within title VIII of ANILCA it
16 provides that the Board will accept the recommendations
17 of a Subsistence Regional Advisory Council regarding
18 harvest of subsistence fish and wildlife and providing
19 for a subsistence priority unless the recommendation is
20 not supported by substantial evidence, if the
21 recommendation violates recognized principles of fish
22 and wildlife conservation or if adopting a
23 recommendation would be detrimental to the satisfaction
24 of subsistence needs. So if other subsistence users
25 might be harmed or impacted by a proposal or
26 recommendation. And again when a Council's
27 recommendation isn't adopted then the Board is required
28 by the Secretarial regulations to provide the reasoning
29 for their decision.

30
31 So in -- overall the Board does defer
32 the majority of the time to the Councils'
33 recommendations. There are circumstances where for
34 example in the case of the Western Arctic caribou herd
35 that crosses multiple Regional Advisory Council regions
36 and, you know, is important and affecting many
37 subsistence users throughout the herd's region. And so
38 sometimes there are differing recommendations from
39 different Councils and the Board has to listen to all
40 the Councils and all the information to try to make
41 their decision supporting the majority of the Councils'
42 recommendations and again the data book, both science
43 and traditional knowledge, that is provided to the
44 Board.

45
46 So overall the -- since the inception
47 of the Federal Subsistence Management Program back in
48 1993 the Board's track record of supporting Council
49 recommendations is roughly around 95 percent for all 10
50

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1 Councils. So the Board does take the Councils'
2 recommendation very seriously and again has to provide
3 a justification for not supporting Councils'
4 recommendation and they usually do. So it varies from
5 year to year, but on average the Board supports between
6 85 and 95 percent of all Council recommendations.

7
8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.

11
12 MS. OKADA: Mr. Chair, this is Marcy
13 Okada.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Marcy.

16
17 MS. OKADA: I think what's helpful is
18 the table that was sent to you and the Council members.
19 It breaks down what the current process is and then it
20 shows what the proposed process would be. It basically
21 breaks it down to what it currently is and what we're
22 proposing to change. And then I'm not sure if you
23 folks have that table in front of you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'm trying to
26 locate.....

27
28 MS. PATTON: Marcy, this is.....

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER:locate that.

31
32 MS. PATTON: Yeah, Marcy, this is Eva.
33 I might suggest just because it might take time for
34 Council members to find that particular document and
35 that was sent out in the second set of meeting
36 materials that was mailed out. And I know most Council
37 members received it although some mail service in
38 communities is quite slow and others have concerns
39 about, you know, exposure to coronavirus. So it might
40 be helpful to reference that, to kind of narrate that
41 over the phone for the Council.

42
43 Thank you, Marcy.

44
45 MS. OKADA: Okay. So currently the
46 process has an application window which is a narrow
47 window, it's -- it's during the call for regulatory
48 proposals which is every two years. What the Park
49 Service is proposing is the application window would be
50

1 open year round and not have just a certain period
2 where applications can be received.

3
4 The current process for application
5 review. Proposals may be invalidated if they're
6 incomplete or if a 13440 permit is needed. Park
7 Service is proposing that Park Service staff interview
8 the applicant to ensure that all information regarding
9 the eight C&T factors is documented and a process --
10 and we would process the 13440 permit application if
11 one is needed.

12
13 Proposal analysis. Is currently --
14 what it does is it currently follows the standard
15 format for C&T proposals using the eight criteria
16 factors. The analysis is prepared by the Park Service
17 staff in combination with Office of Subsistence
18 Management staff. What we're proposing is to continue
19 to follow the standard format for C&T proposals using
20 the same eight criteria factors and the analysis would
21 be prepared by Park Service staff.

22
23 As mentioned before the advisory
24 committee that reviews these applications is the
25 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils. The
26 proposed process would change to the National Park
27 Service Subsistence Resource Commissions. Currently
28 the decision maker, the final decision maker is the
29 Federal Subsistence Board. We're currently proposing
30 that the final decision maker is the National Park
31 Service, Alaska Regional Director.

32
33 And lastly the current decision
34 timeline is on a fixed schedule at annual regulatory
35 meetings. But we're currently proposing to change that
36 to a flexible schedule following the receipt of the
37 Subsistence Resource Commission's recommendation.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So, Marcy, in this
40 scenario and what you're requesting, you know, should
41 we approve -- and this is an action item on our part as
42 well?

43
44 MS. OKADA: Yes. We're requesting that
45 the Council make a decision.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And that.....

48
49 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Let me be allowed to
2 finish for a minute there, Steve, and then I'll get to
3 you.
4

5 And so if the deliberation was to go
6 with the recommendation of what you're requesting and
7 that it will also defer the review and recommendation
8 from the Regional Subsistence Advisory Council to the
9 Subsistence Resource Commission or Committee for the
10 Park Service which we have one or two members from the
11 Slope on that?
12

13 MS. OKADA: Yes. So recommendations
14 would no longer be sought from the affected Regional
15 Advisory Council regarding individual C&T
16 determinations. Instead those recommendations will be
17 provided by the affected Subsistence Resource
18 Commissions or SRCs to which the Councils currently
19 have representation.
20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Right.
22

23 MS. OKADA: The affected RACs.....
24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So.....
26

27 MS. OKADA:would be made aware of
28 any of these new individual customary and traditional
29 use determinations at your meeting.
30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Right.
32

33 MS. OKADA: But so.....
34

35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I know, we'll
36 become aware of it, that would be the extent of it.
37 But the members on the Subsistence Resource Commission
38 for the Park Service, I know we -- the original
39 Advisory Council has a member that we delegate the AKP
40 representative and then one from the Western Arctic
41 Caribou Working Group I think and then who are the
42 other Subsistence Resource Commission members, who do
43 they comprise of?
44

45 MS. OKADA: So as you had said the
46 North Slope RAC has an appointed member to our SRC and
47 that's Esther Hugo. The Northwest Arctic RAC also has
48 an appointed member to our SRC and the Western Interior
49 RAC has an appointed member. Now there's nine seats on
50

1 the Commission, three are RAC appointed, three are
2 governor of Alaska appointed and then three are
3 Secretary of Interior appointments.
4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Now those
6 appointments from not the RAC, are they general public
7 appointments or are they department employees, ADF&G
8 appointments or what are the normal appointments from
9 the governor and then you said some other entity
10 appoints, is that the Secretary of Interior you said
11 maybe?
12

13 MS. OKADA: Yes. So there's three
14 seats for appointment -- three seat appointments for
15 Secretary of Interior. And for the governor of Alaska
16 appointments, we do have a North Slope Borough
17 representative on our SRC that's governor of Alaska
18 appoint -- appointed. Another SRC member has a
19 homestead just outside of Gates of the Arctic, he --
20 he's a governor of Alaska appointed member. And then
21 the third member actually comes from one of our
22 resident zoned communities, but he happens to be
23 appointed by the governor.
24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. Yeah, just
26 wanted to see what the makeup was versus Regional
27 Advisory Council deliberating versus the SRC and what
28 the makeup of that is. It seems like no one area is
29 outgunned maybe with the governor's appointment or the
30 Secretary of Interior appointments and just wanted to
31 see what the balance of power would be in reviewing
32 those types of things. So I feel comfortable that it's
33 not a really big issue and I don't expect a lot of
34 C&T's, but I'm still at a loss of what kind of
35 applicant you would be implementing on something like
36 this. Even if it -- if we are to do an individual C&T
37 -- I haven't seen an individual request a C&T and what
38 an applicant would look like. I mean, can you give an
39 example of what would be entertained and reviewed
40 besides that erroneous one in Denali National Park?
41

42 MS. OKADA: So currently the majority
43 of the applications are from the Wrangell-St. Elias
44 area. We -- you know, for Gates of the Arctic we just
45 don't receive those types of requests commonly.
46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So an individual that
48 lived in Wrangell-St. Elias would put in an application
49 to have C&T determination to Gates of the Arctic based
50

1 on prior use or something like that?

2

3 MS. OKADA: No. So for qualification
4 both the application -- individual C&T traditional use
5 determinations would -- would be someone who -- in that
6 region for Wrangell-St. Elias and would be putting in
7 for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. In regards to
8 Gates of the Arctic, you know, I don't have a strong
9 background in the type of applications.....

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.

12

13 MS. OKADA:we think we might
14 receive.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I -- I'm just
17 seeing that there's -- you're -- it's trying -- this is
18 some sort of loophole that we're dealing with because
19 you're saying even a new resident that became a
20 resident in Anaktuvuk Pass automatically gets C&T to
21 the Gates of the Arctic because that's their residence
22 now, because rural residents of that area have
23 customary use determination already. I'm just trying
24 to find out what an application would look like?

25

26 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair. This is Joshua
27 Ream. I'm the regional subsistence program manager for
28 the National Park Service.

29

30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hey, all right,
31 Joshua. Long time no hear.

32

33 MR. REAM: I know. How you doing,
34 Gordon.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Sorry for
37 all the grilling, but just -- I just want to understand
38 a little bit better.

39

40 MR. REAM: No, that's fine. And I'm
41 hoping that maybe I can fill in a little bit for Marcy
42 by providing an example. In order to qualify to submit
43 an application for individual customary and traditional
44 use determination in a Park, the individual must have
45 had a previous pattern of use. And so they could have
46 gotten that either by living in the resident zoned
47 community of the Park or having subsisted within the
48 Park before ANILCA was signed into law. So just as an
49 example if someone from Anaktuvuk Pass that had their

50

1 entire life hunted in Gates of the Arctic, moved to
2 Nome, but Nome did not have a customary and traditional
3 use determination, that person could apply for an
4 individual customary and traditional use determination
5 which would then allow them to return to Anaktuvuk Pass
6 every year to continue to hunting -- continue to hunt
7 under that existing pattern that they established long
8 ago.
9

10 And so I think that that hopefully
11 would be an accurate and good example of where somebody
12 might want to apply. And this does not apply to the
13 more common community and area C&T's, those will
14 continue to go through the same process they always
15 have, they will go to the Federal Subsistence Board.
16 This would only apply to those individual C&T's and
17 we've only gotten a handful of them from the beginning
18 of the program so they're very, very rare. And I think
19 that that's sometimes why people get a little confused
20 because you don't -- we don't hear about them that
21 often, they don't typically come up. So hopefully
22 that's helpful.
23

24 Thank you.
25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, it's kind of
27 like creating the last Alaskan people kind of scenario
28 to me, that's what it kind of sounds like to me. They
29 move in and make some good friends with good hunting
30 practices and learn the hunting trades of the local
31 residents, move out -- move back to Fairbanks or move
32 to wherever and then apply for an individual C&T based
33 on all the friendships they made and say I hunted with
34 these guys over here, now I live way over here in an
35 urban setting and want to put in a C&T because I lived
36 in one of the communities that had a C&T to this which
37 I enjoyed and I'd like to continue enjoying that while
38 I live in Anchorage or something. Is that kind of like
39 what I'm hearing?
40

41 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair. This is Josh
42 Ream for the record again. I just want to reiterate
43 what Marcy said, that the individual still has to be a
44 Federally-qualified user so they could not live in
45 Fairbanks or Anchorage, they have to be a rural
46 subsistence user. And yeah, I hope that helps to
47 clarify. But I -- maybe I will state though that this
48 is not something new, these individual C&T's have
49 existed since the inception of the program, they're
50

1 just rare.

2

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CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

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Thank you.

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MR. REAM: The only thing that we're looking to do is change how they're reviewed, but not to implement a new type of C&T, they're already in regulation.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, thank you, Josh. They're already in existence, but it's new to us if we don't ever see them, you know. Anyway.....

Thank you.

So I think I'm done and kind of understand what it is. So maybe, Marcy, you could let us know.....

Maybe I -- I better go to Steve, I think Steve had his hand up.

MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. This is Steve.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, just that's a lot of -- and I agree with Gordon. And, you know, some of us are new Council members and Gordon's been with the Subsistence Advisory Council for gees, probably 20 years. And I would like to hear Gordon's recommendation so the Council can -- before we make a decision. Gordon's very knowledgeable and I'm way on the east -- west coast. But, yeah, I just feel like we might be opening some doors in the future that are unseen. And like what Gordon mentioned. And I -- and then even though we do pass it -- don't pass it then it goes to the Federal subsistence advisory and they can override us. And that's always an issue seems like.

But I would like to hear Gordon's recommendations just so the rest of the Council can understand especially the -- we have some new Council members that -- and I thank Gordon for always being so active and under -- he understands what's going on in

1 that area and been around a long time on this Advisory
2 Council.

3
4 Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, so what we're
7 talking about is -- and Marcy might need to clarify so
8 we can -- I'm on page 49 about the standard operating
9 procedures for issuance of subsistence eligibility
10 permits and individual customary and traditional use
11 determinations for the Park Service and to be delegated
12 to the Park Service to do that instead of getting those
13 recommendations and review at the Regional Subsistence
14 Advisory Council level. So it's kind of like all the
15 communities on the Slope representatives and we say
16 well, it's -- the question is asking us would all the
17 communities would like to delegate this review and
18 recommendation to the SRC which has three appointed
19 members from the governor, has a member from Western
20 Interior I think, from the Northwest Arctic Regional
21 Subsistence Advisory Council, a member there, and a
22 member from the North Slope Regional Advisory Council
23 and three appointed members from the Secretary of the
24 Interior.

25
26 And considering the amount of
27 applications that come through I myself in the 20 years
28 that I've been here haven't been exposed to a
29 individual customary and traditional use determination
30 that I could remember, maybe I -- maybe I don't
31 remember one. But they're far and in between, they
32 don't happen all the time. And I don't know why it's
33 on the table, if there's -- if there's something behind
34 the scenes why we're being asked to do this, to get
35 that delegation to the National Park Service to do
36 that, because is there something behind the scenes that
37 is brewing that we are not aware of, I don't know,
38 that's just conjecture on my part.

39
40 But I don't really see an issue except
41 reducing the level of oversight by the Regional
42 Advisory Council and delegate it to some other. We can
43 conditionally I think see how it is for a couple years
44 and reassess how that works in a couple years. I mean,
45 that would be my recommendation because I just haven't
46 dealt with individual customary and traditional use
47 determinations. But even for a couple years is that
48 something -- there might be something imminent that's
49 going on that would get those types of determinations,
50

1 I don't know.

2
3 So maybe there's better judgment to be
4 had, but I think it's not a really big issue and but we
5 seem to have been delegating a few things in the past.
6 I think we delegated some management authority to the
7 ANWR manager, Steve Berendzen, I forgot what it was,
8 but we -- it was something that the RAC managed for a
9 long time and then -- and there was a request to
10 delegate that to the ANWR manager. And I've forgotten
11 what it was and over time we might all forget what
12 we're delegating, you know. And it may never surface
13 again especially if all the RAC members gets replaced
14 and stuff.

15
16 Anyway, Marcy, is that pretty much what
17 we're talking about?

18
19 MS. OKADA: Yes, Mr. Chair. And, you
20 know, the delegation of authority to the Park Service
21 at the Federal Subsistence Board can be retracted. I
22 mean, it doesn't mean that this is in perpetuity.
23 Should this whole procedure not be working the Federal
24 Subsistence Board can take away our delegated
25 authority.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. And if I can
28 pick your brain, I mean, why is this on the table now.
29 Is there -- is there a problem brewing or something?

30
31 MS. OKADA: Well, it all stemmed from
32 that family that was trying to get C&T for Denali. You
33 know, his application couldn't be processed in a timely
34 manner. So it kind of triggered action so that we
35 could look for a way of streamlining these types of
36 requests.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And then who had the
39 authority in the Denali National Park for individual
40 C&T reveal?

41
42 MS. OKADA: So it currently lies with
43 the Federal Subsistence Board. You know, his
44 application has to wait until it becomes a regulatory
45 cycle and then it can be taken up. So that's what --
46 what.....

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

49
50

1 MS. OKADA:also triggered this.
2 You know, if we're able to process applications in a
3 more timely fashion and not just during a regulatory
4 cycle then folks like these people can get their
5 applications processed.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh. And so it's
8 about expediency versus wait for the next regulatory
9 cycle?

10
11 MS. OKADA: Well, it's about
12 streamlining and just taking action -- yeah, taking
13 action on things in a timely fashion.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So if the Federal
16 Subsistence Board was the decision maker who was making
17 the recommendation then?

18
19 MS. OKADA: It would have fallen to the
20 RAC or that RAC for that reason.

21
22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And in the Denali
23 National Park does the RAC over there still retain the
24 recommendation level or is that now deferred over to
25 National Park Service?

26
27 MS. OKADA: I don't know how far along
28 that application went, but should his -- should he
29 reapply and this process get -- the delegation of
30 authority go through then essentially his application
31 would be the first to be processed through this
32 new.....

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh.

35
36 MS. OKADA:this new way of doing
37 things.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And then the
40 following question I have and maybe it's the last one,
41 is what other Regional Councils have deliberated this
42 and what was their recommendation?

43
44 MS. OKADA: You -- you folks are the
45 last RAC to meet and all the RACS have just been
46 presented the same information and Joshua Ream I
47 believe has the -- if you're asking for what each of
48 the RACs decided, Joshua Ream has that information
49 available.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I think that's
2 important to see if they had the types of deliberations
3 we're having in trying to look at this.
4

5 MR. REAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
6 members of the Council. For the record this is Joshua
7 Ream with the National Park Service. And I have both
8 the outcomes of this topic with the Regional Advisory
9 Councils as well as with the Subsistence Resource
10 Commissions that have met so far.
11

12 The Eastern Interior Council gave
13 unanimous support and that includes the Chair of the
14 Eastern Interior RAC who had previously expressed
15 reservations at the Wrangell-St. Elias SRC meeting.
16 The Western -- the Western Interior Regional Advisory
17 Council gave unanimous support. The Kodiak Aleutians
18 Regional Advisory Council gave unanimous support. The
19 Yukon Delta Regional Advisory Council took no action
20 and there's no Park Service Land in their region. The
21 Southcentral Regional Advisory Council unanimously
22 voted to defer until the Wrangell-St. Elias SRC had
23 more time to review the topic. The Southeast Regional
24 Advisory Council was in unanimous opposition. The
25 Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council gave unanimous
26 support for deferral, also wanting to have more time to
27 study and consider the topic. The Northwest Arctic
28 Regional Advisory Council deferred the topic to the
29 Kobuk Valley and Cape Krusenstern Subsistence Resource
30 Commission. The Aniakchak Subsistence Resource
31 Commission gave unanimous support to defer for more
32 time to consider. The Denali and Lake Clark
33 Subsistence Resource Commission took no action. And
34 the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission
35 unanimously voted to oppose until they have more time
36 to consider.
37

38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Yeah,
41 it's good to hear what other Council members are doing.
42 It almost sounds like it's split down the line, middle,
43 defer and approve. And it -- and seems like defer is
44 almost wanting to learn more about it too to another
45 time or to -- and some that have outright denied
46 delegating that is what I'm getting.
47

48 Is that about a right assumption?
49
50

1 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair. That's correct.
2 The decisions on this topic have been all over the
3 board. There -- when there has been hesitancy it's
4 been for a couple of reasons. One, some of the
5 Regional Advisory Councils possibly wanted to retain
6 their ability to make a recommendation on individual
7 customary and traditional use determination. And some
8 Regional Advisory Councils were hesitant to give the
9 final determination authority to the Regional Director
10 of the Park Service rather than the Federal Subsistence
11 Board. Many Councils and Commissions simply found this
12 to be a complex issue which it is and hoped to have
13 more time to learn about it and consider it.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 MR. NAGEAK: (In Native), Gordon.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Josh.

20
21 Go ahead.

22
23 MR. NAGEAK: (In Native).

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native).

26
27 MR. NAGEAK: Thank you, Mr. President.
28 For the record I'm a BLM natural resource specialist
29 for NPR-A. And I just got a question because this
30 reflects what the Gates of the Arctic, especially
31 that's in Anaktuvuk Pass, had dealt with. Since the
32 inception of the Park and how they were treated with
33 their subsistence rights and their ability to hunt on
34 the Park Service's land. That was -- and it was really
35 hard.

36
37 And now some of the biggest complaints
38 that we have is -- they have with their subsistence
39 hunting that is being impacted by airplanes and trophy
40 hunters that land in the North Slope Borough Airport in
41 Anaktuvuk Pass. And now the Federal -- Federally-
42 recognized subsistence boards, Advisory -- Regional
43 Advisory Councils that need to be utilized for
44 implementation of subsistence laws and what's coming
45 from government to government relationship with the
46 tribes.

47
48 One of the changes that was made in
49 December, 2016 was the New Native American Policy that
50

1 was enacted after the United States joined the United
2 Nations in regards to how the rights of the indigenous
3 people were being impacted by different, whether it's
4 Federal organization or different organization that
5 utilize the lands that was once Native lands and now
6 it's all Park Service, Wildlife, different Federal
7 lands. And the part that -- the question would be how
8 do you tell with the tribes whether it's in Anaktuvuk
9 Pass to have that government to government relationship
10 that was enacted in the New Native American Policy to
11 make sure that the people that relied on the lands and
12 the resources like the animals are not impacted
13 negatively. And I know that Parks, National Park
14 Service, have impacted the subsistence way of life for
15 the Anaktuvuk Pass people.

16
17 And then when you reflected that it
18 will be -- a lot of this activity will be with one
19 person, I think that the way that rules and regulations
20 are made it don't need to go back to one person. Even
21 before Alaska became a State there was so many one
22 person governors, one person recognize that really
23 created havoc during the times of pandemic and during
24 the times of resources that people eat all over Alaska.
25 1918 is a good example of when that pandemic started
26 and now today the resources that are utilized for the
27 subsistence hunting for the sovereign tribal
28 people.....

29
30 (Teleconference interference -
31 participants not muted)

32
33 MR. NAGEAK:are -- not a lot of
34 people want to be part of that. And when I see this,
35 it's making it easier for them to be part of the
36 system, but the way to do it would be to ask the
37 tribes, see if they would want somebody to hunt within
38 their corporation lands or to hunt in areas that --
39 areas of influence setup by the comprehensive plan and
40 approved by the regional government and by the State.

41
42 So there's a lot of different issues
43 that need to be understood. A new relationship that
44 started with the New American Policy and those other
45 things that need to be start moving forward with the
46 new policies that were made, especially with the
47 recognition of the sovereign tribes.

48
49 Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Roy. So I
2 think after listening to Joshua on the deliberation of
3 many other RACs and there seems to be a split somewhere
4 down the middle, some say do it, some say delegate it.
5 And it seems to me that the explanation given to us
6 from the Park Service is for expediency and not to wait
7 around for the next regulatory cycle for the Federal
8 Subsistence Board to take it up after the Regional
9 Advisory Council who is currently tasked with these
10 things, deliberates on them and makes a recommendation.

11
12
13 And it's my own personal opinion and
14 there was some suggestion that we're moving the balance
15 of power authority and which seems to be a trend that
16 we've been enduring like let's do the stuff ADF&G is
17 doing and align regulations too so that when you cross
18 Federal land to State land the rules are the same. And
19 then to -- and it seems to start to erode some of the
20 rural subsistence priority issues within Federal public
21 lands which is protected by ANILCA, where there must be
22 a rural subsistence priority preference in individual
23 customary and traditional use determination and the
24 permit for subsistence on these lands. And I was just
25 kind of reading through some of the intents behind it
26 and seems to me we would -- we should in my opinion
27 retain the oversight until there is an analysis done in
28 my view and then defer to some other time.

29
30 That would be my recommendation, but if
31 there are others that see it differently, then I.....

32
33 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. With that
34 said I'd like to make a motion to your suggestion.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
37 the floor.....

38
39 MR. OOMITTUK: That we change this
40 proposal until we further understand it.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So we'll
43 defer it until we have more understanding and an
44 analysis about its affects.

45
46 REPORTER: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. I'm
47 going to try to remove the beeping, if you want to hold
48 just a moment. This is the court reporter.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, all right. Is
2 that Tina?

3
4 REPORTER: No, it's Nickelle, but Tina
5 told me how to do it so I'm going to try and do it
6 right now.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, Nickelle.

9
10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'll second.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah we are going to
13 wait a few minutes to have the court recorder fix the
14 beeping.

15
16 MS. PATTON: Council, I apologize for
17 the background noise, the beeping. But due to the
18 timely needs of being able to get to all the agenda
19 items we'll need to proceed. So the operator is on
20 call so hopefully they'll be able to address that soon.
21 So, Council, if you're able to talk through the beeping
22 we can conclude with the Council's motion.

23
24 And when we get.....

25
26 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, this is
27 Mr. Williams, Earl calling.

28
29 MS. PATTON: Earl, you were able to
30 call back in. Just checking to see what other Council
31 members we have who've rejoined us on the line here.

32
33 MR. REXFORD: Okay. I'm here.

34
35 MS. PATTON: Hi, was that Eddie?

36
37 MS. KIPPI: This is Wanda.

38
39 MS. PATTON: Okay. So we got Wanda,
40 Eddie, Earl.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Gordon is on.

43
44 MS. PATTON: And do we have Steve
45 Oomittuk back online?

46
47 (No comments)

48
49 MS. PATTON: Steve Oomittuk, were you
50

1 able to join us back online?

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, somebody's
6 still on hold or something because there's still a lot
7 of beeping going on.

8

9 MS. PATTON: Yes. So, Gordon, we've
10 disconnected a few times and it's not resetting. So
11 our court reporter is trying to get through to the
12 operator yet. Given the time needs this afternoon to
13 get through the agenda if it's able for the Council to
14 proceed at this time with voting on the motion on the
15 floor, hopefully the operator's going to connect with
16 us and we'll be able to address that beeping soon.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sure. All right.
19 Well, there is a motion on the floor from Steve
20 Oomittuk to defer decision on this to a later date
21 until we get an analysis and understand better. And
22 that was the motion to -- on this for the issuance of a
23 subsistence eligibility permit and individual customary
24 and traditional use determinations to be delegated to
25 the National Park Service from the Regional Advisory
26 Council.

27

28 MS. KIPPI: Gordon, this is Wanda. I'd
29 like to second that motion.

30

31 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a second from
34 Atqasuk. We're up for discussion.

35

36 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair, this is
37 Earl.....

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl.

40

41 MR. WILLIAMS:Earl Williams from
42 Anaktuvuk.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Earl.

45

46 MR. WILLIAMS: I just talked with
47 Esther and she brought up a proposal that's been pulled
48 out two years by Noatak and it's something to do with
49 Anaktuvuk Park Service, it -- it wanted to be identical

50

1 or something she said. And she'd like a meeting on the
2 14th where it's -- for another meeting I guess and she
3 brought this issue up, see if we could put it back on
4 the table. She said it was a three year proposal, but
5 I don't know nothing about it. So I'll just tell --
6 see if you guys got a record for that.

7
8 MS. PATTON: Hi, Earl. This is Eva.
9 That proposal Esther is referring to was a -- dealing
10 with the hunt area outside of Anaktuvuk Pass there and
11 we can certainly add that back to the Council's agenda
12 for a future meeting to discuss that. But that's a
13 separate issue from this customary and traditional use
14 determination request. So but we can certainly add
15 that back to the agenda for the Council's winter
16 meeting.

17
18 Thank you for bringing it up, Earl.

19
20 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you very much.

21
22 MS. PATTON: Thank you for reporting
23 that on Esther's behalf.

24
25 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you very
26 much.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, all right.

29
30 MR. WILLIAMS: I'm just going to keep
31 that on the record.

32
33 Thank you, Eva.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl, I got a
36 question for you.

37
38 MR. WILLIAMS: Go ahead.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl, this is Gordon.
41 And on this to defer recommendations to the SRC for the
42 National Park Service to entertain individual
43 subsistence eligibility permits and individual
44 customary and traditional use determinations to the
45 National Park -- on the National Park Service lands and
46 take that away from the Regional Advisory Council and
47 delegate over to the SRC. What's your opinion on that,
48 we're kind of seeing like a whole bunch of Regional
49 Advisory Councils say no and let's defer it, some are

50

1 making no decision and some other Regional Councils
2 that say let's do it. And I'm of the opinion that we
3 should understand better what the consequence is and
4 still retain the recommendation level to the Federal
5 Subsistence Board instead of letting it go to the
6 National Park Service that way.

7
8 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, sounds pretty good
9 and very understandable. And I'll really appreciate
10 that on our behalf and, you know, keep me posted.

11
12 Let's move along.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Well, we're
15 going to vote on it, it's on the table. Right now the
16 motion is to retain that and defer those decisions and
17 deliberations at the Regional Advisory Council levels
18 for all the community members to consider it instead of
19 the SRC that has a couple of North Slope members plus
20 three appointments from the governor on that SRC and
21 then three appointments from the Secretary of Interior
22 on that Board versus just the Regional Advisory Council
23 deliberating on it. So I'm of the opinion that we
24 should retain it and -- at this time and until there is
25 a more understanding of the consequence and leave it at
26 that. That is the motion at this point.

27
28 MR. WILLIAMS: I seconded the motion
29 then.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded.
32 That's how come we are on the deliberation.

33
34 Any other discussions from any of the
35 Regional Advisory Council members.

36
37 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
40 called for to defer the decision at a later time and
41 retain to the Regional Advisory Council for the
42 issuance of individual subsistence eligibility permits
43 and individual customary and traditional use
44 determination signify by saying aye.

45
46 IN UNISON: Aye.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
49 nay.

50

1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The ayes have it and
4 there you go, Marcy.

5

6 MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
7 Council members.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Let's go
10 back to our agenda, see where we're at here, are we
11 down to agency reports?

12

13 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 This is Eva. Yes, we are down to agency reports. And
15 we do have a need to request everyone to maintain --
16 you know, about 20 minutes for presentation and
17 discussion with the Council in order to get everybody
18 in who had taken the time to prepare the Council's
19 request this afternoon. We do.....

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hey, you're adding
22 five minutes, our papers say 15 minutes.

23

24 MS. PATTON: Well, we do have a
25 request, one of the BLM people, Shelly Jones, the
26 manager for BLM, NPR-A, the Arctic field office, does
27 have a meeting at 3:30. And she has requested if the
28 Council and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Gates
29 of the Arctic National Park and Preserve would consider
30 allowing BLM to report to the Council first prior to
31 her meeting.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So is BLM
36 up next then?

37

38 MS. PATTON: If the Council agrees and
39 I'd just like to check on the agenda. We do have Steve
40 Berendzen online with Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
41 and National Park Service who were on the agenda first.
42 So if that's okay with them as well for BLM to present
43 at this time.

44

45 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So what's the wish of
48 the Council, will you let BLM pass because they got a
49 prior commitment and they got very little time. I

50

1 think we should get BLM on so we can release them.

2

3

MR. OOMITTUK: So moved.

4

5

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sound good,
6 everybody. So moved. All right. Let's go. BLM,
7 you're on.

8

9

MS. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
10 members of the Council. And also thank you to Park
11 Service and Fish and Wildlife. I really appreciate you
12 guys reordering the agenda.

13

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In your packets there are two documents
from BLM. One is a spreadsheet that has all of our
various permits and projects and planning activities
categorized in colors to indicate whether it's a
research project or an oil and gas, et cetera. I'm not
going to read through that list, but I am happy to
answer any questions on things that might be of
interest from that list.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: What page are you on?

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council.
Yes, this is a supplemental report that was mailed out
to you in your second round of snail mailings. So
that's where you'll find this report, it's not in your
meeting book, it was in your second packet mailed to
you. And then Shelly can reference the page numbers of
that report.

Thanks so much.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So I'm
going to go to Eva on my email, maybe that's where I
saw it.

MS. PATTON: I can resend the email as
well. So there's a hard copy that was sent out to you
in the mail that arrived for most folks about five days
ago or.....

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. I see it. BLM
activities. And there are two pieces.

MS. JONES: Yep. And the one that's
labeled narrative report is the one I'm going to be
going kind of through on a high level, try to keep it

1 short.

2

3

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

4

5

6 MS. JONES: So -- okay. So just real
7 quickly wanted to mention the BLM managed areas on the
8 North Slope and they're depicted on one of the first
9 maps in the narrative. Mostly it's in the National
10 Petroleum Reserve, that's a huge BLM management block,
11 23 million acres. But we do have lands on the North
12 Slope outside that block, particularly to the west of
13 the National Petroleum Reserve. There's about a
14 million acres of calving and insect relief area for the
15 Western Arctic herd over there on that side. So
16 there's a different resource management plan that
17 pertains to that, it's covered under our Kobuk/Seward
18 plan, but it's still the responsibility of the Arctic
19 district so we sometimes do issue permits over in that
20 area.

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Just to give you an idea of some of the
ongoing activities, GMT-1 has seven wells on it that
are in production now. When that pad is fully
developed it will have 33 wells, but it's already
pumping oil into the pipeline and last year in 2019 we
collected or the Federal government collected \$35
million in royalties from the production within the
NPR-A and that was split with the State of Alaska.
That is the process that is used. so 17 and a half
million went to the State of Alaska and 17 and a half
million went to the Federal treasury. And this year
the production is probably higher than it was in 2019
however the price of oil is lower so the revenue may be
down a bit. But I don't have the 2020 numbers.

So anyway just -- the main reason for
it is because the part that the State of Alaska gets
goes into the NPR-A Impact Mitigation Fund and that is
distributed through grants to all the North Slope
communities that apply for different projects. And
there's a nice report online that gives information
going back to the beginning of that program, telling,
you know, which communities and how much the grants
have been. But that's a great source for potential
future projects, wildlife and fisheries projects as
well.

So this year on our planning we worked
with our partners, a lot of the people on this call on

1 the new Integrated Activity Plan for the National
2 Petroleum Reserve and that hasn't been finalized yet,
3 it's sitting in our Washington office waiting for the
4 record of decision to be signed. And just wanted to
5 mention currently -- the current plan we're working
6 under has about 11.7 million acres of the petroleum
7 reserve open for oil and gas leasing. And the
8 recommended preferred alternative for the new IAP is
9 recommending 18.5 roughly million acres to be open for
10 oil and gas development. But currently we keep
11 operating under our 2013 plan and no new lease sales
12 that I'm aware of are being advertised or thought of at
13 this time. So it's pretty much status quo.

14
15 We do have the Willow Master
16 Development Plan that we also worked on last year.
17 That EIS was signed in -- or the record of decision was
18 signed just in October, a week or a little over a week
19 ago now. And so that has been approved and
20 ConocoPhillips, that project is eventually going to
21 develop up to five new drill pads and have a central
22 processing facility and an airport and be connected
23 back to GMT-2 via a road, a gravel road. And GMT-2, I
24 forgot to mention, there -- there's no wells on that
25 pad yet, they're still doing work, but the road is
26 constructed between GMT-1 and 2. And one of the first
27 things that the Willow project will do is begin working
28 on the road from GMT-2 to the main pad at the new
29 Willow project. So to build that road they will be
30 opening up a new gravel pit that was also approved as
31 part of the project and that'll be a winter gravel
32 operation where they'll be hauling material from that
33 pit to the road locations.

34
35 So the -- another big project that was
36 approved back in August was the leasing plan for the
37 coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge. And so now we're
38 able to use that plan to base future decisions off of,
39 both permitting decisions as well as lease sales into
40 the future.

41
42 So some of the other permits that are
43 going on right now that are available for public
44 comment, we got an application from KIC, the Kaktovik
45 Inupiat Corporation, to do a seismic project around on
46 their land as well as some of the Refuge lands that BLM
47 has responsibility for the oil and gas program. So
48 we're currently working on that EA and it's available
49 on our website right now for public comment.

50

1 We also have a new project in the NPR-
2 A, it's not yet a project but a company called Acumula
3 Energy has applied for a five year winter exploration
4 program to do work on their leases. I think they're
5 owned by a company called Emerald House, leases around
6 Umiat area. And so they'll be drilling two exploration
7 wells this winter.

8
9 Some of the project work -- I'm
10 probably skipping a lot of things, we've definitely got
11 a lot of active permits. One of the most interesting
12 in my opinion is -- this'll be the third year I believe
13 of the North Slope Borough's Community Winter Access
14 Trail. It's a right-of-way from BLM. And this year it
15 goes from the 2P pad in the Kuparuk across the Colville
16 at Ocean Point and then travels -- makes a route to
17 Utqiagvik. It also has a route that goes from
18 Utqiagvik to Atqasuk and also to Wainwright. And this
19 year I think they've applied for an extension to make a
20 route that'll go from Wainwright to Point Lay. And so
21 that extension is being worked on. And it didn't get a
22 lot of use I don't think last year because of the covid
23 situation, it had just sort of started getting used
24 when things got shut down in March. So hopefully
25 that'll be a great asset into the future and it seems
26 to be really working out well.

27
28 We've got seven thermistors along that
29 route monitoring the snow depth and soil temperature.
30 And as of this last Monday the soil temperature at one
31 foot is 31.5 degrees fahrenheit. So the State
32 requirement for opening the tundra is 24 degrees
33 fahrenheit at a foot. So we still are waiting for a
34 freeze down. I'm not sure what their thermistors are
35 showing at Prudhoe Bay which is where the State's
36 taking their measurements, but Roy told us that it had
37 been cold so hopefully that frost is getting driven
38 into the ground and the snow that you guys are getting
39 now won't serve to insulate, you know, as it would have
40 if it had come earlier. So hopefully everything will
41 work out and that system will be active this winter I
42 guess subject to covid.

43
44 We also have a project that we approved
45 quite a while ago to lay a fiber optic cable between
46 Utqiagvik and Atqasuk and I think they're going to
47 start getting out this winter to begin that
48 installation.

1 We've got several gravel projects.
2 There's an Atqasuk airport expansion so there -- we've
3 got an application too for commercial hauling of gravel
4 down to work on that project.

5
6 Some of our own work that might be of
7 interest particularly to the Council for fisheries,
8 we've got a project that we funded last year to Fish
9 and Game to get an update on the subsistence fisheries
10 harvesting from Nuiqsut. That was last done in 2014 so
11 it's been a while and it'll be really good to keep up
12 with that into the future because of all the
13 development going on. We want to make sure we're not
14 having unexpected consequences and keeping up to date
15 on that information.

16
17 And we also have a data, I don't know
18 what you'd call it, like a historic data collection
19 project that is trying to pull together all the fish
20 information that's been collected by different people
21 over the years on lakes mainly throughout the north or
22 through the NPR-A, excuse me, that we use that
23 information in our permitting a lot to decide, you
24 know, how much water can be taken out of different
25 lakes and sometimes it's hard to -- part of the
26 calculation has to do with whether there are fish and
27 what kind. So we need to have that more readily
28 available.

29
30 So those two projects are under way or
31 funded and will be getting underway soon.

32
33 The Wilderness Conservation Society
34 also got approval to do a wolverine study. So that --
35 there's a little write-up on that in the -- in the
36 information as well.

37
38 And then we also continue to work away
39 at the legacy well program for plugging and remediating
40 old wells throughout the NPR-A. And this winter
41 Olgoonik got the contract to go to the Fish Creek and
42 Inigok wells to remediate those legacy wells. So that
43 work I think will be starting in January.

44
45 And I guess one of the things we did
46 this year with Eva and Hannah's help this summer, we
47 didn't -- we got off to a little bit of a slow start
48 with our field season in May, we delayed our helicopter
49 so because of covid some of our bird studies that we
50

1 normally would have done in May didn't happen. So
2 we're going to have an unfortunate break in some of our
3 data sets, but we just didn't think it was safe at that
4 time to get started with our fieldwork. But we did get
5 our helicopter going in June and so a lot of our work,
6 monitoring work in other projects we did manage to
7 accomplish.
8

9 But our new wildlife biologist, Heather
10 Savage and Roy Nageak and I all got together with some
11 of the Fish and Wildlife people including Hannah
12 Voorhees and Eva Patton and we learned about how to
13 issue Federal subsistence permits. And I think the
14 reason we wanted to do that is that we hear every once
15 in a while from people, I've heard particularly at
16 meetings with Nuiqsut talking about, you know, they
17 remember just a few years ago when they used to be able
18 to harvest more caribou. And I guess there was a
19 change in the regulation. I'm going to ask Hannah and
20 Eva to help me out, but the bag limit was changed not
21 long ago from 15 a day to five. And so some people
22 would like to harvest more than that and there's
23 opportunities to do that under the State hunting regs.
24 They have a program that's called the proxy hunter
25 program that people can apply for, but the Federal
26 system also has a program that can help people who want
27 to harvest more for -- you know, to give to other
28 hunters. And so to do that they need to get a Federal
29 subsistence permit and we've now been trained on how to
30 issue those permits. So both Roy and Heather will be
31 able to issue those or are now able to issue them to
32 anyone who's qualified and wants one.
33

34 And so what it would allow you to do is
35 to get double the bag limit. So instead of just
36 getting five caribou you would be able to get 10. And
37 the extra five would be -- they call that a designated
38 hunter, but you don't have to pick the person that
39 you're hunting for ahead of time, you just have to give
40 it to a set -- I guess they have to have a hunting
41 license, but they don't have to necessarily hunt for
42 themselves, that somebody with a Federal subsistence
43 permit can hunt for them and give them those five extra
44 caribou and then they can, you know, use it or donate
45 it down the line as they wish. So that might be an
46 advantage or a different opportunity that people
47 haven't thought of that could help out in some
48 situations. So I just wanted to bring that up.
49
50

1 And I think that's probably -- could be
2 the end of my presentation for now and then I can just
3 take any questions.
4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Shelly.
6 Any questions for BLM.
7

8 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this is Steve in
9 Point hope.
10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.
12

13 MR. OOMITTUK: When you do these
14 projects in these communities do you utilize local hire
15 and local knowledge throughout the summer and then
16 during the winter do you have like an apprentice
17 program for young people to get involved with BLM,
18 whether it's surveying or doing certain projects, do
19 you utilize local hire, especially the youth?
20

21 MS. JONES: We do have -- we haven't
22 hired a lot of youth recently. BLM used to have a
23 program called the Resource Apprenticeship Program for
24 students that we used in the past to hire students, but
25 I don't know, that program seems to have kind of gone
26 defunct. A lot of the youth programs under the current
27 administration were unfunded. So right now the way you
28 would get hired onto a BLM project would be through our
29 regular seasonal hire program. And we sometimes do use
30 local hire for that.
31

32 So for example we're getting ready --
33 our -- Roy was -- Roy Nageak was hired in Utqiagvik and
34 he originally got hired as a local hire. And then
35 we're hoping to have a position in Nuiqsut fairly soon.
36 And that will also be advertised under our local hire
37 authority. So but neither of those programs or
38 positions were targeting youth. That said, a lot of
39 the applicants I think do -- it's not a requirement of
40 ours, but particular.....
41

42 (Teleconference interference -
43 participants not muted)
44

45 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. And, you
46 know, there's always a lot of concerns with the -- you
47 know, when they utilize helicopters to do some of their
48 projects, especially during migration season or calf
49 season or, you know, in certain areas. And, you know,
50

1 we've always heard about helicopters within our area
2 especially when the -- you know, migration routes
3 coming south in first of July, usually we'll get some
4 caribou. And then there's always -- hunters are always
5 saying there's a helicopter roaming around out there.
6 And it seemed like it's just diverting the caribou away
7 from their natural migration routes. So that was a
8 concern. And they didn't know whose helicopter, who's
9 flying around. Usually they have numbers on there, we
10 try to tell them to catch the numbers on the tail or I
11 don't know if helicopters have numbers where they can
12 see them, but it would be good to inform communities
13 when you're going to be flying around and in what area
14 and what time of the year.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 MS. JONES: Sorry, Mr. Chair and
19 members of the Council, for -- I guess I may have been
20 the only one that got cut off, but I just dialed in so
21 I probably didn't hear most of that last question.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I just dialed
24 back in, somehow I got cut off.

25
26 MS. JONES: Okay. I guess I got cut
27 off too, but I did hear the end of that about using
28 local knowledge having to do with our aircraft and that
29 kind of stuff. And so the two ways that we -- we have
30 several ways that we outreach to the communities. If
31 we're based out of the community we will be talking to
32 the tribal council before we base our project out of
33 any community. Currently we're only basing ourselves
34 out of own administrative sites near Inigok or at
35 Inigok and Umiat. And so the main communities that we
36 could be bothering there are -- is Nuiqsut.

37
38 And so we call in -- ConocoPhillips
39 runs the aviation, it's not really a dispatch, but
40 every evening all the pilots that are working in that
41 area including their own call into a center at Alpine
42 and talk about where they're going to be going the next
43 day. And that call has subsistence reps on it that
44 talk about areas that are being used at different times
45 of the summer for subsistence. And then those areas
46 are marked and the aircraft is rerouted.

47
48 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you.

49
50

1 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

2
3 MS. KIPPI: Mr. Chair.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

6
7 MS. KIPPI: Hi. This is Wanda.
8 Shelly, on the Atqasuk airport expansion, is that a
9 gravel haul or is that for addition to the airstrip or
10 apron or what are they going to use that gravel --
11 gravel haul for or is that -- are they hauling gravel?

12
13 MS. JONES: Yes. Thanks for the
14 question, Wanda. The permit I think is to Cruise
15 Construction for the right-of-way. So they evidently
16 got the job to haul the gravel and they expect to start
17 repacking in towards the end of this month to help the
18 trail setup so that they can do that. But I'm not
19 sure, it sounds like it might have been if DOT manages
20 your airport, they must have an airport expansion
21 because the purpose of the gravel haul is to -- is for
22 the airport.

23
24 MR. NAGEAK: Shelly, this is Roy.

25
26 MS. JONES: Hello, Roy. They're going
27 to make a hard surface for the runway like the other
28 airports that have been completed, Wainwright, Nuiqsut,
29 Kaktovik. And Atqasuk will get a hard surface runway
30 with that crushed gravel.

31
32 Thank you, Wanda.

33
34 MS. KIPPI: Hi, Roy. Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other questions
37 for BLM.

38
39 MR. SFORMO: Mr. Chair, this is Todd.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead, Todd.

42
43 MR. SFORMO: Thank you. I was just
44 wondering in your description of kind of synthesized
45 all this information on the lakes for the presence of
46 -- presence or absence of fish and species, is there
47 any ongoing or future studies of lakes to find, you
48 know, presence and absence of fish or are you relying
49 only on past data and if you are is there sort of a cut
50

1 off, is there a point at which old data is too old?

2

3 Thanks.

4

5 MS. JONES: Yeah, thanks, Todd. That's
6 a good question. And I might see if our fisheries
7 biologist happened to have called in. We have a new
8 biologist, Katie Drew, and she might not know the
9 answer to that question quite yet either.

10

11 But, Katie, are you -- do you happen to
12 be on the line?

13

14 MS. DREW: Yeah. Yeah. So, everyone,
15 I am on the line. So for projects looking at
16 distribution of fish other than the environmental DNA
17 study or the eDNA study that was conducted kind of over
18 the past couple years in collaboration with the assess
19 inventory and monitor program, I don't know of any
20 immediate projects that are going to be doing
21 distribution, fish distribution studies especially in
22 this upcoming year, but that doesn't mean that there
23 won't be any on the horizon.

24

25 So and we are -- Shelly might have
26 already, you know, mentioned this of course, but we are
27 -- do have a project going on this year where we are
28 compiling both the historical fish distribution data,
29 you know, back from as far as the, you know, '70s and
30 the '80s as well as more recent data that's been
31 collected by industry or contractors such as
32 ConocoPhillips and ABR and going to basically combine
33 and compile all that data into a single data base so
34 that it will just be much more easy to manage and see
35 not only kind of help assess kind of development and
36 where development is occurring, but also help address,
37 you know, fisheries inventory needs throughout the NPR-
38 A.

39

40 MR. SFORMO: Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

43

44 MS. DAGGETT: This is Carmen at Fish
45 and Game.

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sure. Go ahead,
48 Carmen.

49

50

1 MS. DAGGETT: So one thing that I
2 haven't heard come up and I -- I don't know if our fish
3 -- fisheries biologist could expand upon this more, but
4 I'm fairly certain that Fish and Game has both an
5 anadromous waters and an inland waters catalog that we
6 keep records in. And I know for certain that some of
7 the information that was gathered years ago was done
8 quite extensively across the North Slope and there's a
9 really interesting map of it on the wall in Umiat
10 quonset hut. But so I guess I just wanted to throw
11 that information out there when people start digging
12 for some of this information that there might be some
13 catalogs already available for some of those things
14 regarding the North Slope. And so yeah, just know that
15 there might be some resources there.

16
17 Thank you.

18
19 MS. JONES: Thanks, Carmen. Yeah, I
20 was thinking of that resource as well and I think we
21 definitely utilized that for the rivers in particular
22 and our environmental assessments often cite that
23 information.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. If there
26 aren't any further questions for BLM.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I thank you, Shelly,
31 for your informative report.

32
33 MR. JONES: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair
34 and Council. And I appreciate the questions. I'm
35 going to have -- several of our staff members are going
36 to stay with you guys on this meeting so I'll be able
37 to catch up with them as well as the notes.

38
39 So thank you and have a good rest of
40 your meeting.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Did we
43 time this meeting, your presentation, did we pass 15
44 minutes?

45
46 MS. JONES: I was at 17 minutes, but
47 then I got questions. So.....

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So we're
50

1 going to go to item 12, see if we got tribal
2 governments, ICAS was on the roster to make a report.

3
4 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
5 Council. Raymond Atos of ICAS was going to provide a
6 report to the Council. He had an ICAS meeting that
7 came up this afternoon so he won't be on at this
8 Council meeting, but plans to participate at the
9 Council's February meeting in winter.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So we
12 only under tribal governments had ICAS listed. So
13 we'll go down to Native organizations.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, was
18 there any special actions?

19
20 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
21 Council. No special actions other than Steve Berendzen
22 with Arctic National Wildlife Refuge I'm sure will be
23 giving a report to update his action as the delegated
24 authority for unit 26C moose and we do have Arctic
25 National Wildlife Refuge up next on the agenda.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. So we'll
30 go to Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

31
32 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair
33 and Council. In the packet of meeting materials about
34 three-fourths of the way down is the Arctic National
35 Wildlife Refuge summary of activities. I'm planning to
36 follow that and just mention highlights from it to try
37 to stay within my 15 minutes.

38
39 So Arctic.....

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is that on page 70?

42
43 MS. PATTON: Yes, Mr. Chair. You'll
44 find the Refuge report on page 70 of your meeting
45 books.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Proceed,
48 Steve.

49
50

1 MR. BERENDZEN: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
2 Chair. We -- due to the covid-19 impacts we had a very
3 limited field season or field activities this year. It
4 shut down most of our activities that we wanted to do
5 as well as a lot of the collaborative work that we had
6 planned with partners on different studies. But there
7 were still a few things that we were able to do and I
8 would like to report on those.

9
10 But following down through this -- the
11 information we provided I should mention that we were
12 able this time to hire a -- fill a few of the
13 vacancies. We've had several vacant positions for a
14 few years now and we were able to fill a few of those.

15
16 The next item on the list is oil and
17 gas leasing program. I think Shelly gave a good
18 summary of those activities. The only thing that I
19 would mention is that we have a few studies listed here
20 that we were able to do. The majority of our
21 activities and studies that we had planned to do were
22 related or in support of the oil and gas program, but
23 most -- like I said most of those were shut down. So
24 we still had a few things we were able to do in the way
25 of in support of oil and gas studies.

26
27 And then for biological monitoring and
28 research, you know, separate from that we have the
29 Canning River delta study site where we have been
30 working for a couple of decades now and we did not get
31 a crew out there this year due to covid, but one of the
32 interesting results that we were able to learn from
33 previous work there was related to cackling geese.
34 Over the years we've had a 10 fold increase in the
35 cackling goose population and last year they put some
36 miniature radio transmitters on neck collars on a few
37 of those geese to try to learn their movements and
38 where they spend the winter. And what we learned is
39 when they leave the Canning River delta they fly east
40 along the coastal plain to the McKenzie River and then
41 they head south. And we had speculated that they would
42 just go down along the Pacific coast and there are a
43 lot of cackling geese down there, but these that we
44 tracked didn't really do that. They ended up down
45 in.....

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Come on in.

48
49 (Teleconference interference -

50

1 participants not muted)

2

3

MR. BERENDZEN: I'm sorry.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, sorry. I -- I'm going to go on mute here.

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

MR. BERENDZEN: Oh, okay. So anyway we have in our information here we do have photos where one cackling goose was in Albuquerque, New Mexico for most of the winter and just a little information about that.

15

16

17

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19

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26

Another thing that we were able to do this summer that we wanted to do at the Canning River delta, but couldn't because of covid, we did a pilot study looking at our plans for tagging and tracking small mammals. The idea or -- up on the North Slope it would primarily be lemmings, but outside of Fairbanks it was voles primarily. And anyway we put PIT tags in voles that we captured and we had some loggers that would register when that PIT tagged vole came nearby. And so we could monitor the movement of those voles that had PIT tags when they came near those data loggers that were placed out on the study site.

27

28

29

30

31

So we were able to learn a lot from that and we hope to apply that to -- at the Canning River delta when we get back up there and set up that study again.

32

33

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Other monitoring. The only flights that we were able to do in the way of surveys were for dall sheep. We had a priority need to do a survey of the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area which we hadn't surveyed in several years and there's some concern or controversy about that area so we were able to fly that. Sheep numbers were generally about the same as they had been the last time we had surveyed them, a little less, but not a statistically significant difference. But that was the only flying survey that we did in any significant amount. We had hoped to do moose surveys, but we were unable to because of covid so we did not get to do moose surveys this past year.

47

48

49

50

And, yeah, Eva mentioned the delegated authority for the moose hunt. We got the permits to Kaktovik back in early September I believe it was and

1 as I understand they have had their drawing. So 10
2 permits for residents with a three bull harvest quota.
3 And hopefully they will have a successful season and
4 get three bulls as a result of that.

5
6 For public use activities, again the
7 covid really shut down a lot of public use. The air
8 taxi operators for the most part shut down. Our
9 rafting guides were not worth operating this year. We
10 issued or directed the public through our website and
11 other information not to visit Kaktovik because they
12 had made it clear that they did not want people
13 bringing covid into the community and we totally
14 supported that. So there was very little public use
15 management or public use activities that went on this
16 year.

17
18 And one of the management actions that
19 we did related to that is we developed a prohibition or
20 through the regulatory process we proposed a
21 prohibition on the use of domestic pack animals in
22 Arctic Refuge. And in this case domestic pack animals
23 is referring to domestic goats, sheep or llamas or
24 alpacas.

25
26 And that went through the regulatory
27 process and is now in effect where those domestic pack
28 animals are prohibited. That's the third bullet under
29 public use management.

30
31 And otherwise I don't have a lot to
32 report in the way of highlights that I think would be
33 that relevant. If anybody has questions on anything
34 I'll do my best to answer those.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Steve.
37 Any questions to -- from the Council on the ANWR
38 manager.

39
40 MR. REXFORD: Mr. Chair. This is Eddie
41 from Kaktovik.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Kaktovik,
44 Eddie.

45
46 MR. REXFORD: Yes. One of your studies
47 that did happen look like there was a Fish and Wildlife
48 Arctic LCC plan to get out in September as part of the
49 frost and snow depth monitoring project. Did it

50

1 happen?

2

3 MR. BERENDZEN: It did happen. We were
4 unable to do it ourselves. We were collaborating with
5 BLM and BLM and a university person went out and did
6 that work. So yes, they -- the plan was to replace
7 some of the thermistors that were -- that had failed
8 during the previous winter, replace batteries,
9 thermistors and I think they set up another weather
10 monitoring station or two.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. So we got
13 this in the temporary special action on Federal
14 subsistence moose season and quota established in unit
15 26B remainder and unit 26C. And do you want to talk
16 about that a little bit?

17

18 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, Mr. Chair, I can.
19 There was a request well over a year ago, probably
20 closer to two years ago, to expand the season and
21 expand the area that was available for moose hunting to
22 Kaktovik residents. Previously it had been a spring
23 hunt from I believe February into the end of March I
24 believe and it was restricted to the Kongakut River
25 drainage. And so about a year and a half or yeah, a
26 year and a few months ago prior to the fall of 2019 we
27 made a change to allow the.....

28

29 (Teleconference interference -
30 participants not muted)

31

32 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

35

36 MR. BERENDZEN: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
37 Chair. We did expand the area to include all of 26C
38 and 26B remainder and we extended the season to begin
39 in September -- well, I think we -- the request was to
40 begin in September, but by the time we got the permits
41 out it was October so I think it was October 20th that
42 -- last year until the end of April was the season
43 length. And instead of just issuing three permits we
44 expanded it to issue 10 permits with a quota of three
45 bull moose. And so we've used the same protocol this
46 year to issue the permits and the same regulatory
47 season and same area to be hunted.

48

49 So we hope that will provide more

50

1 opportunities and hopefully there will be some
2 successful moose hunters.

3
4 MR. REXFORD: Yes, Steve, this is
5 Eddie. Can you hear me?

6
7 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, I can. Go ahead.

8
9 MR. REXFORD: Yes. My phone got
10 dropped when you were talking on the Arctic LLC plan on
11 the frost and snow depth monitoring. Just get back to
12 that topic. Who decided to do the study in September,
13 that's kind of before we had actually any snow and now
14 we've got a lot of snow, October, November. Is there a
15 reasoning why it was done so early before the snow
16 fell?

17
18 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, Mr. Rexford. The
19 plan was to get the -- it's snow monitoring stations
20 where they can monitor frost depth and snowfall. So
21 they wanted to get those in place before the ground
22 froze and before the snowfall started. So they were --
23 that's why they were placed in September so they can
24 function all winter monitoring the temperatures in the
25 soil through those thermistors and then also for some
26 of them, not all of them, but some of them had the snow
27 monitoring capability and they can track the depth of
28 the snow.

29
30 MR. REXFORD: Okay. Thank you for that
31 clarification. I thought it.....

32
33 MR. BERENDZEN: You're welcome.

34
35 MR. REXFORD:I thought it was to
36 measure the snow depth in preparation for like
37 industrial activity or seismic work and that would
38 probably give false information using the September
39 data. That's just my.....

40
41 Thanks for answering that and
42 clarification on that.

43
44 MR. BERENDZEN: Sure. And I guess to
45 further answer it, we think that this information from
46 these monitoring stations will help provide some
47 information. There's going to be a lot of variation
48 across the coastal plain, but if we can use -- set up
49 these stations and follow through multiple years the

50

1 trends or get a sense of what the snow is like and the
2 frost depth is like that will help inform us in those
3 decisions into the future.

4
5 MR. REXFORD: All right. Thank you for
6 that clarification.

7
8 One other question I had. On the --
9 you mentioned cackling geese were collared and I
10 haven't heard that slang used before. Is that white
11 fronted or speckled belly geese?

12
13 MR. BERENDZEN: No, Mr. Rexford, those
14 are the Canada geese, they're the small Canada geese.
15 They -- the ornithologists who classify them split them
16 up from -- split the cackling geese away from the
17 Canada goose. They said it's noticeably different so
18 instead of having several subspecies of Canada goose
19 now there's the cackling goose or a few subspecies of
20 cackling goose and a few subspecies of Canada goose.
21 But it's really just the Canada goose that's common
22 there.

23
24 MR. REXFORD: Okay. Thank you for
25 that.

26
27 MR. BERENDZEN: You're welcome.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So if it's a cackling
30 goose is it -- is it part of the Canadian goose family
31 and if it's being called differently is it going to be
32 categorized as protected or something like that or --
33 because of low numbers and things like that, is that
34 the trend for that?

35
36 MR. BERENDZEN: Actually, Mr. Chair, I
37 think it's more the contrary. That species is
38 expanding a lot. They had been -- there had been low
39 numbers 20 and 30 years ago, but they've been
40 increasing significantly over the years. And no, I
41 don't think there's going to be any kind of
42 restrictions placed on them.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I've heard the
45 term before, but I was just curious.

46
47 Any other questions for the ANWR
48 manager?

49
50

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1 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, this is
2 Earl.

3
4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Earl from
5 Anaktuvuk.

6
7 MR. WILLIAMS: I just got cut off a
8 while, I've been trying to get back on. But there was
9 a busy line so I just got back on.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Welcome back. I keep
12 getting cut off once in a while too.

13
14 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this is Point Hope
15 too. I just got back on myself. I got cut off.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Steve, does that
18 conclude your presentation or you still got more to do?

19
20 MR. BERENDZEN: That concludes it, Mr.
21 Chair, unless there are any additional questions.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, let's see. Any
24 additional questions for ANWR.

25
26 MR. REXFORD: Yeah, this is Eddie
27 again. I got a comment for Steve. Is it possible to
28 provide a moose survey routes that were done so we can
29 see it on the map where the moose were surveyed?

30
31 MR. BERENDZEN: I think we -- I can't
32 promise you right now, Edward, I'd have to check, but
33 I'm pretty sure we could get those. I will look into
34 that and try to get those to you as quickly as I can.

35
36 MR. REXFORD: All right. Thank you.
37 I'd appreciate that information.

38
39 MR. BERENDZEN: You're welcome.

40
41 MR. REXFORD: That's all I have for
42 you. Thank you.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Just one other
45 question, Steve, on the moose season quota established
46 and stuff. Does that -- we had the concerns that they
47 were out of reach and quite a ways from the village
48 where the actual hunt were to occur. And one of the
49 con -- issues and concerns and requests for the

50

1 community was wherever it's in that allowable when the
2 moose is moving around and if it's closer to the
3 community that it can be taken. I mean, can you talk
4 about that a little bit?

5
6 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, I can, Mr. Chair.
7 Yeah, there was a lengthy discussion about that. And
8 we recognize that they do move and that we -- we
9 acknowledge we don't survey as much as we ideally would
10 especially in the fall because of the short day length
11 and lack of snow, hard -- complications of spotting the
12 moose when there's not snow. So yes, we agreed to open
13 the entire area, all of 26C and the remainder of 26B to
14 -- for this moose hunt.

15
16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. I think
17 that's the important thing to recognize the communities
18 and making sure when there's an opportunity that they
19 don't forego that because the hunt limits are so far
20 away or something.

21
22 Any other questions for ANWR.

23
24 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

27
28 MR. OOMITTUK: I think I missed the
29 time range on the moose season for that area. I know
30 like in Point Hope, you know, the moose are not around
31 when the moose season opens up, but, you know, in the
32 past the -- several people got in trouble for catching
33 moose which are rare in our area.

34
35 (Teleconference interference -
36 participants not muted)

37
38 MR. OOMITTUK:July, but they're
39 never around in August or late August when the season
40 opens up or September. I just -- you know, for the
41 caribou hunting season over there at Barter Island, you
42 know, I know there's a.....

43
44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46
47 MR. OOMITTUK: I think somebody's.....

48
49 MS. PATTON: Yes, a quick remind, I

50

1 think we've got Staff in the background actually that
2 need to mute your phones please. Thank you everyone.

3
4 MR. BERENDZEN: Council member
5 Oomittuk, I think that was a -- what -- were you asking
6 what the seasons were -- what the season was expanded
7 to, is that -- do I understand that correctly?
8

9 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes, certain areas, you
10 know, moose season, you know, here in Point Hope we
11 don't normally see very much moose. I can't say for
12 eastern side of Alaska, they're a long ways, but the
13 time range of when it's -- you know, when we used to
14 hunt animals when we're there -- when they're reachable
15 or right in our neighborhood, moose is very rare for
16 us. I don't know about on the east coast, I know, you
17 know, the season for hunting moose over in that neck of
18 the woods should accommodate for when the -- it's
19 there. And one -- one moose for -- for the whole
20 village is kind of low. I know we just got that
21 increased for the last year I think it was.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you, Mr.
26 Oomittuk. The season was expanded to go from October
27 20th which is when we got the regulatory -- yeah, the
28 regulatory change made and in place. So it was October
29 20th through April 31st I believe. And this year it
30 was a little earlier than October 20th, but I think it
31 was again sometime in early to mid October through the
32 end of April.

33
34 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you.

35
36 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other questions
39 to Steve Berendzen for ANWR.

40
41 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair, this is Earl
42 from Anaktuvuk Pass.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Earl, you
45 got the floor.

46
47 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, we had three units
48 in our back yard. Do we follow the same regulations?

49
50

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1 MR. BERENDZEN: If that's a question
2 for me I'm not sure I can answer that. I -- I'm not
3 sure which you -- which area you're talking about.
4

5 MR. WILLIAMS: Anaktuvuk Pass.
6

7 MR. BERENDZEN: And -- and no, I cannot
8 answer that question for you.
9

10 MR. WILLIAMS: I was just curious about
11 that.
12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, they're
14 bordered by units like unit 26A, unit 26B, unit 26C and
15 Kaktovik is unit 26C and some parts of the remainder of
16 unit 26C or B I believe. And I could be corrected by
17 the ANWR manager.
18

19 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Earl. And for
20 the Anaktuvuk Pass area Gates of the Arctic National
21 Park and Preserve is the Federal land manager for that
22 region. And they're up next so we'll be able to
23 respond to your questions for the Anaktuvuk Pass area.
24

25 Thank you.
26

27 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.
28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. So what's
30 going on in Kaktovik area in that game management unit
31 under ANWR is limited to that area.
32

33 All right. If there's no further
34 questions for wildlife -- Arctic National Wildlife
35 Refuge we'll go on to Gates of the Arctic National Park
36 and Preserve.
37

38 (No comments)
39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we have Marcy
41 Okada and then Kyle Joly with a caribou update.
42

43 MS. OKADA: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
44 Chair. And for the record this is Marcy Okada with
45 Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. I just
46 want to address Earl's question regarding which game
47 management unit Anaktuvuk Pass falls in. So he's
48 correct, there's three game management units for
49 Anaktuvuk Pass. And that would be 26A, 26B, and 24A.
50

1 So there's no overlap in 26C, Earl,
2 which is primarily where Arctic Refuge lies.

3
4 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for the info.

5
6 MS. OKADA: You're welcome. Okay. So
7 I'll go ahead and just give a real brief update. We
8 had a Subsistence Resource Commission meeting this past
9 April via teleconference. And we were able to share
10 updates of what's going on in the Park with our
11 Commission members. Our next meeting is scheduled for
12 November 18th via teleconference. Commission members
13 will be hearing the same briefing that your RAC has
14 heard regarding the individual customary and
15 traditional use determinations as well as other
16 updates.

17
18 For Western Arctic caribou herd there
19 was supposed to be a caribou pellet project in April,
20 but that was postponed until next April. And the
21 pellets will be used to analyze the diet -- diets of
22 the caribou.

23
24 Also related to the Western Arctic
25 caribou herd, there was a recent study on the affects
26 of bugs on caribou and how they increase caribou
27 movement during peak insect harassment. Caribou spend
28 a lot of time trying to run away from the bugs and this
29 in turn affects their -- creates behavioral responses
30 to and physiological affects as caribou move to less
31 productive habitat.

32
33 So there was a bear collaring project
34 from 2014 to 2017. And results from this project
35 continue to come out. Recent information on Brooks
36 Range grizzly bears show that a large number of bears
37 have salmon as a main component of their summer diet.
38 And this led to Park Service researchers to look
39 closely at the GPS data which then led to identifying
40 major salmon streams for Brooks Range grizzly bears.
41 Park Service shared this finding with Alaska Department
42 of Fish and Game and so they were able to add new
43 information to their anadromous stream catalog.

44
45 And then also information from the
46 collaring project shows that diet analysis can be done
47 by looking at different bear hair samples.

48
49 Moving on to dall sheep. This past
50

1 July Park Service was able to conduct an aerial survey
2 of dall sheep just in the Aichilik Preserve. Mainly
3 due to covid-19 the normal protocol was replaced with a
4 pilot only count and unfortunately poor weather
5 prevented the pilot from surveying the entire Aichilik
6 Preserve. So that in turn doesn't allow the total
7 sheep count to be comparable to past surveys. Of the
8 376 total sheet observed 82 were lambs and 237 were ewe
9 like sheep. The results show a lamb to ewe like ratio
10 of .35 which is higher than average and right now
11 indicates a healthy reproductive rate.

12
13 There are surveys planned for 2021
14 which will then help determine whether this 2020 data
15 translates into a population -- translates into
16 population growth.

17
18 And then lastly an update on the Ambler
19 Mining District road. The Department of Interior
20 through the National Park Service and the Department of
21 Transportation through the Federal Highways
22 Administration issued a record of decision on the
23 access route and right-of-way that would go through
24 Gates of the Arctic National Preserve, the southern
25 Kobuk unit. The decision was based on an environmental
26 and economic analysis and it determines the most
27 economically feasible and prudent route with the least
28 impact allowing for construction, operation,
29 maintenance and reclamation of the private, industrial
30 access road.

31
32 The EA and decision includes mitigation
33 measures to protect wetlands, fish, wildlife and their
34 habitat as well as to protect subsistence hunting and
35 fishing activities.

36
37 The route that was selected through the
38 Kobuk Preserve unit follows the route selected by the
39 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Land
40 Management record of decision. And I believe you have
41 the written update.

42
43 If you have any questions we have Kyle
44 Joly, our caribou biologist, online and also Will
45 Wiese, our sheep biologist online.

46
47 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is
48 Point Hope. Steve, for the record.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

2

3 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, just out -- you
4 mentioned that you guys couldn't take a whole count
5 this year. And is it my understanding that last year's
6 count was right around between -- like 110,000 for the
7 Western Arctic caribou herd?

8

9 MR. JOLY: Hello, Mr. Chairman. This
10 is Kyle Joly with the National Park Service, Gates of
11 the Arctic. Can I answer that question for you?

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.

14

15 (Teleconference interference -
16 participants not muted)

17

18 MR. JOLY: Thank you. Again this is
19 Kyle Joly, I'm the (indiscernible - echo) this past
20 summer, but they did the previous summer. And that
21 count was.....

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I'm getting some --
24 I'm getting some delayed reaction like saying things
25 twice.

26

27 Steve, maybe if you try to go on mute,
28 maybe that will -- see what happens.

29

30 (Teleconference interference -
31 participants not muted)

32

33 MR. JOLY: Is this better, Mr.
34 Chairman?

35

36 MR. BERENDZEN: Yes, I -- I am on mute.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. Try it again.

39

40 MR. JOLY: Okay. Is it working now?

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I don't hear
43 the feedback now.

44

45 MR. JOLY: Great. This is Kyle Joly
46 with the National Park Service. I'm a wildlife
47 biologist for Gates of the Arctic. Yes, the
48 information was correct that Fish and Game did not
49 conduct a photocensus this past summer, but they did in

50

1 2019. And the estimate for 2019 was 244,000 caribou.

2
3 MR. OOMITTUK: Okay. Thank you. And
4 what time of the year do you usually do your census for
5 the Western Arctic caribou herd?

6
7 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman. This is Kyle
8 Joly again. Fish and Game conducts that survey pretty
9 much right around the 4th of July every year. That's
10 usually when peak insect harassment occurs and the
11 animals are most aggregated.

12
13 MR. OOMITTUK: Okay. Thank you.
14 Because and -- so and they're flying quite a bit above
15 the herd because normally the caribou usually come
16 around right around the 4th of July through Point Hope,
17 the Western Arctic caribou herd when they're going --
18 coming back from up north. Anytime between late June
19 to 4th of July we get that Western Arctic caribou herd
20 coming through. And lately it's been later. Last
21 couple years, you know, we had an abundance of caribou
22 sticking around in the area. And even just last week
23 while they were out fishing, you know, they got some
24 caribou. It hasn't been like this in almost 20 years.
25 You know, usually, you know, in the summer you'd see a
26 good 100,000 caribou 10, 15 miles away from Point Hope,
27 but hasn't been like that for a long time, but seem
28 like they're starting to come back this way and stick
29 around a little longer like in the past.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Steve. So
34 let's -- was that your report there Marcy and Kyle?

35
36 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman. This is Kyle
37 Joly again. I had some more information I wanted to
38 provide and give you an update on some of the recent
39 events with the Western Arctic herd if I could.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

42
43 MR. JOLY: Thank you. So currently the
44 Western Arctic herd is distributed in two long spread
45 out bands. One is as the Council member just
46 mentioned, running from Wainwright down to Point Lay.
47 There's a bunch of caribou from the Western Arctic herd
48 there. And then there's another long band of caribou
49 stretching all the way from Kiana to Anaktuvuk Pass

50

1 through the Brooks Range mountains.
2

3 Something notable was that we just had
4 the first collared caribou cross the Kobuk River
5 yesterday. Often in previous years we -- the first
6 caribou to make it across the Kobuk happens in August.
7 We routinely have our capture operations with Fish and
8 Game out on the Kobuk River in September, but for the
9 last three of the four years we've not gotten out the
10 number of collars that we wanted and this year the crew
11 was out for a couple weeks and they didn't see a
12 caribou, not a single caribou was collared. And so
13 Fish and Game and Park Service is collaborating with
14 them on the captures.
15

16 We're looking to explore the
17 possibility of different means of deploying collars and
18 specifically we're considering the use of helicopters
19 to deploy collars and we did that in 2019 out of the
20 Red Dog area. And that was fairly successful after a
21 couple failed years. But given that we've had three
22 out of four years where we haven't been able to get
23 collars out the way we'd like and need to to continue
24 monitoring we're thinking about either going to net
25 gunning or chemical immobilization of caribou which is
26 also known as darting. And that would be some
27 alternative methods that we could use to get the
28 collars out because the caribou haven't been migrating
29 through like they have been for decades before.
30

31 I'd be happy to answer questions. One
32 of the things to consider about darting is that it --
33 we do use chemicals for that and the animals would be
34 inedible for a period of time, probably a couple of
35 weeks. We'd give it 30 days. Our intentions would be
36 to avoid any village, any area where subsistence users
37 are active and have a very strong outreach program if
38 we went forward with helicopter operations.
39

40 So that's my update and I'd be happy to
41 answer any questions for you.
42

43 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. I have.....
44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any further questions
46 for Kyle.
47

48 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this is Steve for
49 the record. You know, the Ambler Road from the -- you
50

1 know, that's in the process or still undergoing to the
2 gold mine area. And the route that is chosen was where
3 the Western Arctic caribou herd migrates through,
4 whether they're going north or migrating back south.
5 And there was a lot of concerns about the road and the
6 impact it might have on the Western Arctic caribou herd
7 on their migration. And can you elaborate on that
8 and.....
9

10 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman. This is Kyle
11 Joly, I'll try and answer that question if I can.
12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.
14

15 MR. JOLY: So yes, as Marcy mentioned
16 there was a BLM record of decision approving the road
17 and a parallel process through Gates of the Arctic
18 Preserve, what we call the Kobuk boot. So the Preserve
19 section that covers the Kobuk River. The road would be
20 about 200 miles long going from the Dalton Highway
21 almost to the village of Ambler. And it would
22 intersect the migratory corridors of the Western Arctic
23 herd that are more used in the fall than in the spring.
24 It's also an area that the Western Arctic herd has been
25 known to use as winter range. So we should probably
26 expect some levels of impact. It is further toward the
27 periphery of the herd's range, especially the eastern
28 fringes of the road, but it certainly does intersect
29 migratory corridors.
30

31 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair. This is
32 Earl, Anaktuvuk Pass.
33

34 MR. OOMITTUK: So is it future plans --
35 is your future plans on more surveys or, you know,
36 keeping an eye out because one side of the road is --
37 are they going to want to be monitoring the Western
38 Arctic caribou and see what kind of impact that road is
39 going to have on it.
40

41 MR. JOLY: Thank you. This is Kyle
42 Joly again. Yes, one of the primary functions of the
43 monitoring effort that we have is to look at the
44 movements and distribution of caribou. And right now
45 we've got about 60 or so GPS collars on animals and,
46 you know, our intention is to try and keep that sample
47 at least that or maybe even a little bit higher so we
48 can figure out the best ways to mitigate any impacts
49 that the road might have and also to document any
50

1 impacts the road might have.

2

3 MR. OOMITTUK: And the other question,
4 you know, when you're using chemicals to trap caribou
5 is it a certain time of the year you're going to be
6 doing it or is it going to be bulls or females or do
7 you have any particular -- you know, because you said
8 they won't be edible and what time of the year would
9 these chemicals be put into the herd to monitor their
10 migration?

11

12 MR. JOLY: Thank you. Excellent
13 question. So the chemicals that will be used, they're
14 anesthetics so they'd be used just for the capture. So
15 the animal would not feel what we were doing, they'd be
16 basically knocked out like if you went to get surgery
17 or something like that. So they'd be anesthetized.
18 Generally we have the animal in that condition for a
19 very short amount of time, maybe 15 minutes and then we
20 are able to administer reversal drugs so they are able
21 to get right back on their feet after we give them the
22 reversal drugs. And then just out of abundance of
23 caution to let those chemicals work through their
24 system, it's recommended that they don't be eaten for
25 30 days. So we've marked any of those animals on their
26 collar when they -- the date they were captured and
27 when it's safe to eat by date on them.

28

29 And generally we like to do captures in
30 late March or early April, it provides reasonable
31 temperatures, longer days and adequate snow cover on
32 the ground. So that's generally when we like to do
33 helicopter operations.

34

35 Oh, and your other question was males
36 or females. The Park Service has only been collaring
37 female caribou and I think for this particular
38 operation both the State and the Park Service would be
39 limiting it to female, adult female caribou.

40

41 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair. This is
42 Carmen Daggett with Fish and Game.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
45 Carmen.

46

47 MS. DAGGETT: I just wanted to
48 elaborate a little bit. So Kyle is correct that we
49 mostly collar females, however we do try to keep a

50

1 small portion of males collared in the caribou herds
2 and it's a far less proportion than the females. So
3 for example right now we have about 110 animals
4 collared in the Teshekpuk caribou herd and like 10 of
5 those are male. So it's -- we try to keep it a
6 relatively small proportion that are bulls. And so I
7 hope that helps answer that question.

8
9 And also -- I guess I also wanted to
10 say that, you know, in working with our counterparts
11 that work out of the Kotzebue area, Alex Hansen, who's
12 the Western Arctic caribou herd biologist, we would be
13 working with him to get information out to villages
14 about if we were going to use drugs or net gunning to
15 capture caribou in that area and make sure that the
16 public is aware to keep an eye out for caribou that are
17 marked. The caribou that I have seen that are marked,
18 at least images that I've seen of them being marked
19 because we haven't done any chemical captures around
20 the Teshekpuk area since I've been in this office, but
21 I've seen images and they're pretty obvious. You know,
22 I believe they, you know, make it really obvious that a
23 hunter could see whether the animal had been drugged
24 recently and -- and when they were and with the date
25 that they would be okay to eat again.

26
27 So yeah, I think for the most part the
28 rest of the information is good. So I'm going to back
29 off.

30
31 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. One last
32 question, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

35
36 MR. OOMITTUK: I just out of curiosity
37 now the drug that they're going to be using to knock
38 out the caribou, is there any side effects to human
39 consumption, is there -- have they been tested or side
40 effects on -- is it poisonous to the human if
41 consumed [sic] or is it known, have they been sent
42 -- why are they moving to a chemical that -- other than
43 tranquilizers or is it.....

44
45 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman. This is Kyle
46 Joly. So the chemical that we use is called Thianil,
47 it's -- or Thiafentanil. It is a very dangerous drug
48 for humans, we have to be very careful using it. I
49 don't know of any studies that have had lab animals eat

1 the meat so I'm -- I'm not sure what the effects would
2 be if someone did do that. And that's why, you know,
3 out of an abundance of caution we -- the recommendation
4 is to not eat the meat for 30 days. That way the
5 animal can completely metabolize any remnants that
6 might be in their system.

7
8 Does that help?
9

10 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. I -- in the
11 time frame, you know, do they know of any side effects
12 on the animal itself, you know, especially when they're
13 running and their blood system is going strong and
14 their adrenalin, any sort of side effects or, you know,
15 on females to their -- their bodies, are there any
16 known side effects from this drug?

17
18 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chair. This is Kyle
19 Joly again. So there are known side effects. So one
20 of the side effects of the drug is they can have a hard
21 time breathing, but once the antidote, the antagonist,
22 is provided to the animal they just bounce right back
23 up and are completely I guess for lack of a better
24 term, cured. You wouldn't notice the difference, but
25 they -- you can get in trouble if, you know, you gave
26 too much of the drug to it, it would have difficulty
27 breathing. And I've seen that before, but once you
28 administer the reversal those side effects go away and
29 the response time for the reversal is usually under a
30 minute, sometimes it's virtually instantaneous.

31
32 As for other side effects the -- these
33 combinations have been used throughout the State, I've
34 used them in about seven different herds across the
35 State. And generally, you know, March, April is a
36 normal time to do it. We have found no evidence of it
37 affecting pregnancy at all if that was a concern. So
38 it's just a very standard procedure in other parts of
39 the State, Southcentral and Interior, Southwest Alaska,
40 have been doing this and it's a procedure, protocol
41 that has been in use for probably 50 years. And it has
42 been used in the Western Arctic herd several decades
43 ago before the captures at Onion Portage really caught
44 on.

45
46 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. That's all
47 the questions I have.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Any other
50

1 questions.....

2

3

MR. PERSON: Mr. Chair.

4

5

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead. Is that

6

Todd?

7

8

MR. PERSON: Yeah, this is -- this is

9

Brian Person with the North Slope Borough Department of
Wildlife Management.

10

11

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Brian.

12

13

14

MR. PERSON: Thanks. Good afternoon,

15

Kyle, or probably good evening to you. It's pretty

16

late there I reckon. But yeah, I guess, you know, we

17

-- I've been involved with the Teshekpuk collaring

18

program for just about 20 years. And we never used

19

narcotics like this, tranquilizing the animals simply

20

because there is a year round harvest. And I recognize

21

that with proper outreach and if you're going to mark

22

the animal in some way that it's going to be obvious to

23

hunters that it has been chemically immobilized

24

recently, you know, I recognize there can be ways to do

25

that. But traditionally on the North Slope this has

26

always been a real source of anxiety from the hunters

27

and the communities up here.

28

29

And, you know, I think net gunning

30

works fine, there are drawbacks with that of course.

31

But you can be very efficient net gunning and get your

32

sample size out and really reduce the amount of concern

33

that the hunters have here. And I strongly encourage

34

you to follow the lead and, you know -- you know, net

35

guns since, you know, ADF&G are going to be the ones

36

doing it anyway so follow their lead.

37

38

Thanks.

39

40

MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman. This is Kyle

41

Joly again.

42

43

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.

44

45

MR. JOLY: Thanks, Brian, for those

46

comments. Yes, you know, Fish and Game will be leading

47

up this operation and ultimately making the final

48

decision, you know, with input from the public on, you

49

know, which method to go with. You know, one of the

50

1 challenges that we're facing is one, you know, net
2 gunning's a lot more dangerous for the personnel
3 involved and two, there's just the shortage of teams.
4 And so it's a -- you need experts and extensive
5 coordination between the gunner and the pilot and
6 there's just not very many pilots, there's not many
7 gunners and there's fewer gunner/pilot combinations
8 around. So, you know, that's another consideration.
9 Darting's a lot more forgiving for the gunner/pilot
10 teams and there's a lot more people with that
11 experience. So that's one of the things that we're
12 considering.

13
14 But yeah, I mean, the whole point of
15 opening this conversation is to hear people's thoughts
16 on it and, you know, make a decision that everyone can
17 live with.

18
19 MR. PERSON: Yeah, through the Chair.
20 Thanks for that, Kyle, and yeah, I appreciate being
21 candid about it. And I recognize I -- you know, I've
22 been on the helicopters plenty of times and it's a real
23 -- it's a thrill, I could say that. But and, you know,
24 the one thing you got going for you is at that time of
25 year you're not going to be competing with the efforts
26 that we're doing on the Teshekpuk and Central Arctic
27 herd at the same time. So anyway I said my piece.

28
29 Thanks.

30
31 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair, I guess I want
32 to say a little bit more if that's okay. This is Fish
33 and Game, Carmen again.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
36 Carmen.

37
38 MS. DAGGETT: So this is -- certainly
39 these issues impact, you know, the Teshekpuk caribou
40 herd collaring program as well and, you know, we -- I
41 -- we as an office would prefer to keep going with net
42 gunning as long as we can and that will be our first
43 choice because of all of the reasons we've talked
44 about. You know, the only reason why we might consider
45 switching to doing drugs is if we don't have another
46 choice.

47
48 So I just wanted to lay that out there
49 for you guys that, you know, the current plan is to
50

1 keep going with net gunning and keep doing things
2 business as usual doing net gunning. Just that, you
3 know, you guys know that that's what our plan is. And
4 we'll be transparent with you if any of those issues
5 come up. But, you know, like I said we're facing the
6 same challenges that they are in the Western Arctic
7 caribou herd other than the fact that we were doing
8 Onion Portage first.
9

10 So, you know, just keep those things in
11 mind. It might be a future discussion, but for right
12 now we're going to do business as usual and keep net
13 gunning. So that's that.
14

15 Thank you.
16

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman. This is
18 Earl from Anaktuvuk.
19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Go ahead,
21 Earl.
22

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I spoke to a few
24 people about Ambler Road Mine, they just had a concern
25 about that in the village, about is this going to
26 affect our migratory herd because we're right in the
27 middle of it and this is a concern.
28

29 Thank you.
30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Earl. And
32 thank you, Carmen. Any further questions for Marcy and
33 Kyle on their projects?
34

35 (No comments)
36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, I
38 appreciate your presentations and the dialogue, very
39 informative, lots of concerns.
40

41 MR. JOLY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
42 Council members. Feel free to reach out if there's
43 anything -- any questions that come up later or if you
44 have anything to follow-up with. It's much
45 appreciated, we want to hear your comments and
46 thoughts.
47

48 Thanks.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So we'll
2 move along to ADF&G, Carmen with a written report.

3
4 MS. DAGGETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 This is Carmen with Fish and Game again.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.

8
9 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. I'm -- I sent a
10 document to Eva and I'm not sure it made it around to
11 everybody or not. But it has.....

12
13 If you did get something, Eva, it would
14 be -- it would have been probably in an email format.
15 And it should say Alaska Department of Fish and Game
16 across the top. If you didn't get it don't worry, I'll
17 walk you through it and make sure you get all the
18 information that's on it. It's pretty -- I'm going to
19 try to keep this pretty short and sweet.

20
21 Okay. So this spring I did a short
22 yearling survey again for the Teshekpuk caribou herd to
23 be clear. And we looked at about 4,000 caribou and a
24 little around 11 percent were yearlings, 11.7 percent
25 were yearlings. So that was pretty good for the
26 spring. And then during the summer we did calving
27 surveys and we had an 81 percent parturition rate which
28 is really good for the Teshekpuk herd. The 10 year
29 average is 68 percent. So it's good to see that there
30 were a lot of females out there pregnant.

31
32 During the summer we did our collaring
33 project and we collared 32 caribou, 20 of which were
34 female yearlings and three were bulls. And we collared
35 nine adult females.

36
37 We're also looking at adult female
38 mortality for this year from 2019 to 2020, we go from
39 collar year to collar year. So the mortality rate was
40 about 12 percent.

41
42 One thing that was interesting while we
43 were doing the project was that female yearling weights
44 were about 20 pounds lighter on average than the long
45 term average. So that's something we're keeping our
46 eyes on. And six out of the 10 lowest weights were
47 recorded since 1996 during this summer. So we're
48 definitely keeping our eyes out on that and hopefully
49 those weights come back up.

50

1 We also collected a variety of other
2 samples throughout the summer to keep track of their
3 diseases and also look at parasites.
4

5 This spring I did -- well, actually I
6 had help from other people to do the moose survey.
7 Because of covid I wasn't allowed to travel. So we saw
8 169 adults and 43 short yearlings which is about 20
9 percent short yearlings which is actually pretty good.
10 The number of adults is relatively low for the trend
11 count, but seeing higher numbers of yearlings is a good
12 sign.
13

14 Sorry, the total trend count for moose
15 is 212, the number of adults is 169, the total
16 yearlings is 43.
17

18 The most recent minimum count where we
19 looked.....
20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is that -- Carmen,
22 just a question.
23

24 MS. DAGGETT: Sure. Go ahead.
25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: On your total moose
27 count, the -- was the trend 212 for 2020 or is that the
28 entire region or is it limited to a unit?
29

30 MS. DAGGETT: That is a great question
31 and I was just getting to that. So we do the trend
32 count every year and it's a portion of the unit that we
33 kind of keep an eye on. So it includes a portion of
34 the main stem of the Colville, the Anaktuvuk River and
35 the Aichilik and kind of the tributaries in that area.
36 So we kind of look at the moose in that section and get
37 a good count on that.
38

39 And then every three years we try to do
40 a full survey of the entire Colville River and its
41 drainages. And the last time we did that was in 2017.
42 We would have done it this year, but as I said before
43 we had some challenges with covid and there were --
44 everybody was having the same problems and they were
45 all trying to do surveys at the same time. So we had
46 to deal with just being able to get a trend count
47 number and I was grateful to get that.
48

49 So next year provided that we can
50

1 function as normal again hopefully we'll get another
2 full minimum count of the entire drainage.

3
4 So thanks for that clarification,
5 Gordon.

6
7 The last time we did a minimum count
8 was.....

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Just one follow-up if
11 I may real quick.

12
13 MS. DAGGETT: Sure.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. What about the
16 west 156 thing that's always so controversial in my
17 mind.

18
19 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah. So that boundary
20 was decided to split the North Slope in half and to
21 provide some guidelines for where it would be
22 protecting the heart of the population of moose. So as
23 you can tell the -- what I was just going to say is
24 that there were 339 total moose in the entire system,
25 right. And so the majority of that population, we want
26 to allow it to continue to grow. So 156 longitude
27 regulation allows people to be able to take a cow
28 moose. And so when you have a core population that
29 you're trying to allow it to grow, you don't want to
30 take a cow moose out of that population. Now west of
31 156 longitude, that area over there, there's not that
32 many moose over there. And well, the area that I'm
33 talking about if you need a reference is largely if you
34 think about where the Topagoruk River is westward.

35
36 And so that area over there isn't the
37 primary area where most of the moose are. It's
38 basically where there's moose that migrate out of their
39 normal range. And in that area there's not a lot of
40 good habitat for moose and so we wanted to provide some
41 opportunity for residents to be able take a moose over
42 there whether it be a cow or a bull. We don't want to
43 have cows being taken out of the core of the population
44 because we want that population to continue to grow.

45
46 So that's why that line exists. And it
47 was -- it was put into place when Geoff Carroll had his
48 position and it was a regulation that was built in
49 conjunction with the North Slope Borough Wildlife
50

1 Department and the North Slope Advisory Committee to
2 try to provide some opportunity for North Slope
3 residents to be able to take moose when they migrate to
4 the western portion of 26A.

5
6 So I recognize that that line of
7 longitude provides some level of confusion for people.
8 And maybe this is something that we might want to
9 consider for a future proposal to think about
10 redefining what that line should be. And perhaps the
11 Topagoruk River would give some local residents enough
12 reference. The only challenging thing about that is
13 and why the west 156 longitude line is used is because
14 there's not a feature that runs from the northern end
15 of 26A all the way to the southern end of 26A. There's
16 no river that runs that full length.

17
18 So it's sort of tricky to find a
19 natural feature that people could use. The best option
20 or at least a portion of it if you wanted to keep the
21 same area, is the Topagoruk River. But like I said it
22 only goes down about a third of the length of the game
23 management unit.

24
25 So that's the challenge with that and,
26 you know, if you are interested in submitting a
27 proposal to the Board of Game at some point to have
28 some discussion about redefining that line so it's more
29 clear to users, you're welcome to do that and I'd be
30 happy to help you in that. But that's why it is the
31 way it is at the moment.

32
33 Did that answer your question?
34

35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, you know, it
36 opens up a lot of questions. But yeah, I always want
37 to try to decipher sometimes what the intent of one --
38 the west 156 really means. And I think it's the area
39 like Valley of the Willows and things like that where
40 there's like little oasis type areas where moose like
41 to be in there.

42
43 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah, and you can still
44 take bull moose at different times of the year in those
45 areas. You just can't take a cow.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Right.

48
49 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. Are we done with
50

1 that topic?

2

3

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.

4

5

MS. DAGGETT: Okay. The very last
6 thing I want to talk with you guys about is muskox. So
7 we did a muskox survey this spring in conjunction with
8 Park Service and the Kotzebue Fish and Game office.
9 And some interesting results came out of that. So
10 there were 911 total muskox between unit 23 and unit
11 26A which is a substantial increase from the previous
12 survey. In 26A alone there were 455 muskox with a
13 confidence interval range of 350 to 631. So with that
14 in mind the last time we did that survey there were
15 about 253 muskox that were in 26A in 2016. And I've
16 been hearing a lot from members of this Board, members
17 of the public who are really interested in hunting
18 muskox in this portion of 26A. And I want to be clear
19 that it's the portion of 26A that kind of is west of
20 156 longitude or the Topagoruk line.

21

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Okay. So there's two populations of
muskox in 26A. There's one that -- on the eastern side
kind of over by Nuiqsut and they can wander as far west
as about the northern end of the Ikpiuk. We -- Fish
and Game and the Board of Game actually in March
decided that they were not going to open that hunt on
the eastern portion of 26A muskox. They want to wait
until that population gets bigger before they're
comfortable with opening that hunt. However on the
western side of 26A we have enough muskox according to
the survey that we think we can open a hunt.

And so there's some things that I've
been working on and trying to sort out to have this
hunt work and be of service to people. So I have a
couple of questions for you guys and I'm hoping that
you give me some good feedback on that. So first of
all we were looking at some season dates and I know
that I kind of have brought up season dates before with
people. So we're looking at August 1st through March
15th. And the reason why we picked those dates is
they're consistent with the unit 23 regulations for
muskox. And also it seems like when local residents
are telling me that they're seeing muskox and when
they're around they tend to be around within that time
frame. And it also gives muskox a little bit of a
break to have their young and be not disturbed during
the summer.

1 So what do you guys think about those
2 dates? Again it's August 1st through.....

3
4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: As long as we could
5 have a time to catch one and eat one would be good.

6
7 MS. KIPPI: Carmen, can you repeat the
8 date.

9
10 MS. DAGGETT: Sure. August 1st through
11 March 15th.

12
13 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair. I have a
14 question.

15
16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Steve.

17
18 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, when you say a
19 hunt are you talking subsistence hunting for local
20 people or are you suggesting a hunt for nonlocals that
21 are sporthunters or nonresident hunters, you know. We
22 have a huge population and we still -- you know, and
23 when you say we can open it up, but when you say open
24 it up you're talking a range of people not resident or
25 local, you're talking nonresidents also?

26
27 MS. DAGGETT: Thanks for the question,
28 Steve. So I guess what I would like to start with is
29 so that decision would be made by the Board of Game,
30 but they have some guidelines that they have to follow.
31 So first of all this population is 455 in 26A, it's
32 still not very big, there's a limited amount of muskox
33 that would be available. And in unit 23 they've had a
34 hunt open for a while and their population is actually
35 much larger. And those have all been tier two hunts
36 which means that people would have to apply for permits
37 and that those permits would -- applying for those
38 permits would mean that you'd have to answer some
39 questions.

40
41 So first of all I'd like to point out
42 that when these permits -- when applications go out for
43 these permits I would travel to villages and help
44 people fill out this stuff. I'm not expecting people
45 to be able -- to fill out those paperwork. So I just
46 want to throw that out there to start with. And I've
47 done that in unit 22 before. So basically there's a
48 couple of questions. They're going to ask you about
49 how much you pay for gas, they're going to ask you how
50

1 much you pay for groceries, they're going to ask you
2 how long you would have used the resource if you had
3 the opportunity to do it. And it's going -- it's going
4 to score people based on how much they pay for those
5 things. And then based on that names go into a hat and
6 people get drawn for the limited number of permits
7 available.

8
9 And that's how a tier two draw hunt
10 would work for muskox. And from what I understand and
11 the research that I've done people on the North Slope
12 would well out people from other areas because of the
13 cost of living up here. So that's kind of that. It
14 would be most likely a tier two hunt and that would be
15 what -- what I would want to have happen for you guys.
16 So that's kind of the direction that we're going.

17
18 So -- okay. Does that answer your
19 question, Steve?

20
21 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, thank you. I just
22 -- you know, when they say, you know, the population is
23 too low and they're not opening it up even though. You
24 know, and then my question was kind of too low for
25 local hunters or, you know, locals should have
26 priority, they're a food source, or is it too low for
27 -- to open it up like you said like a lottery or a --
28 you know, a permit, and how do you get this permit, how
29 do you -- and anybody can get a permit even if they're
30 not in residence.

31
32 And, you know, Department of Fish and
33 Game when you justify opening muskox do -- you know,
34 that are open season and -- and then that's the thing
35 is, you know, population, but, you know, we always had
36 muskox around and the populations are high and, you
37 know, they're usually real -- you know, just seven,
38 eight miles out of town, you know, the -- we just had a
39 muskox in town this last summer. And, you know, it's
40 usually the only time they come around is when they
41 have porcupine quills on them and they're -- but
42 they're around. And, you know, some people say they're
43 -- you know, they scare off the caribou.

44
45 And, you know, we want to understand
46 that, you know, if you do open the season that, you
47 know, that local is priority, you know, we -- you're
48 going to open a season and say oh, the numbers are
49 right and that should be for residents. People like --
50

1 love muskox, you know, and if you're waiting to open
2 the season for, you know, the whole State of Alaska on
3 a permit, you know, what -- how do you justify we're
4 going to keep it closed because the numbers are too low
5 for -- you know, for a lottery or a permit and then
6 when it should be local priority is what I'm trying to
7 get at.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah, Steve, I think all
12 really legitimate concerns. And I can feel your heart
13 is with this one. And I guess what I would say is, you
14 know, the tier -- the muskox hunts that exist right now
15 that are close enough to this population in unit 23,
16 the Board already decided to make those populations
17 have to happen under a tier two hunt. Tier two hunts
18 are only available to residents and people have to fill
19 out this permit or, you know, the questionnaire
20 basically that says you -- what do you pay for gas,
21 what do you -- what are your living expenses like and
22 then they'll rank people. And that's basically how
23 Alaska can give rural priority with that.

24
25 So I hear you on your concerns on
26 about, you know, it being closed for a while and then,
27 okay, now it's open and who is it going to be open to,
28 is it going to be open to local. And certainly what I
29 anticipated how people would feel about it and it's all
30 very understandable. That certainly would be the goal
31 of opening this hunt is to have it be available for
32 people to harvest that are within the area, within the
33 North Slope. That would -- that is the intent.

34
35 The only tricky part about this is
36 that, you know, I can make this request, I can go to
37 the Board of Game. Board of Game makes choices and I
38 can give them the best information possible and request
39 things, but ultimately they get to make that decision.
40 So, you know, know that the intent is to have it be a
41 tier two hunt and that's what's most likely to make
42 sense given what already exists for muskox hunt in the
43 neighboring areas and the regional areas that are
44 associated with this same muskox population that we're
45 talking about.

46
47 So that's kind of the goal, the intent,
48 and what happens beyond that is yet to be seen. But
49 that's where we're at right now. And I will be as
50

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1 transparent as I can with people about it and I'm
2 asking you guys these questions because I care about
3 what you think and I want to build a hunt that makes
4 sense for you. And so that's why I'm here asking you
5 these questions.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 MS. KIPPI: Mr. Chair. Wanda.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Wanda.

12
13 MS. KIPPI: Okay. I have the answer
14 for what's his name, Mr. Steve, Steve from -- Steve
15 Oomittuk. The -- when you mentioned the muskox scaring
16 the caribou I have seen it myself this summer, this
17 fall. There was no caribou around while there was a
18 muskox in my cabin camping ground and it was like that
19 for the whole month. So yeah, that -- that's a fact
20 about the muskox scaring the caribou.

21 And another one for Carmen, for the
22 people of the North Slope you had mentioned it -- is it
23 going to be a tier two hunt did you say?

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Carmen, you on?

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Must have lost Carmen
34 or she fell asleep.

35
36 MS. DAGGETT: So can you hear me now?

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.

39
40 MS. DAGGETT: So, Wanda, yeah. The
41 tier two hunt is the direction that we're hoping this
42 will go and so it'll be a little bit different than how
43 you applied for a permit this last summer and it would
44 be under a different section of code and it would have
45 completely different regulations from what you were
46 able to hunt under last fall, but it would be more
47 predictable. So instead of hunting the previous code
48 where if you have a nuisance muskox you can call me and
49 we can try to get on -- you know, request an emergency

50

1 order open. We would just have a consistency. If the
2 population continues to be high enough to continue to
3 harvest, you know, we would just keep having this
4 season every year.

5
6 So that's kind of the goal with this
7 and hopefully it'll be more smooth for hunters in the
8 future when they want to hunt muskox.

9
10 I have a few more questions I want to
11 ask people.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Did you get your
14 answer there, Wanda?

15
16 MS. KIPPI: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 Thank you, Carmen.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I do have an
20 observation here on -- based on the animal and based on
21 the land it's on and being that Federal public lands
22 have a rural subsistence priority already on them and
23 -- and opening it up under a State reg sounds like
24 under a tier because that's a State reg is a tier hunt
25 in my understanding. And you would advertise it for
26 the residents of Alaska in my humble opinion and then
27 you would further evaluate the applicability based on
28 economic conditions of your area to narrow things down
29 so that -- it just -- it just seems kind of a long way
30 around to go to do things. And that seems to be your
31 end around to the rural subsistence priority. But I
32 know lands to the west, there are some State lands
33 there and to the south.

34
35 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah. Uh-huh. And, you
36 know, Gordon, part of the reason why I wanted to talk
37 with you guys about this particular hunt is because
38 like you mentioned before it's better if you have
39 consistency between, you know, Federal and State hunts.
40 And so I've been in discussion with BLM, I had a
41 discussion with Heather Savage a while ago about this
42 very idea. And perhaps there may be some options for a
43 different adaptation for participating on Federal
44 public lands versus the State ones.

45
46 However, BLM normally -- normally State
47 regulations are followed on BLM lands for the most
48 part. But, you know, I'm willing to work with our
49 Federal partners to come up wit options for people.

50

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1 I'm trying to think outside the box here and like I
2 said I'm trying to work on something that will work for
3 North Slope residents. So.....

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Try this one for
6 size.

7
8 MS. DAGGETT:you know, that.....

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Try this one for
11 size. Point Hope, Anaktuvuk Pass, Point Lay, Barrow,
12 they all have village comprehensive plans and then
13 define an area of influence in -- each village has an
14 area of influence. And where -- there's a definition
15 for that is the area immediately outside the village
16 district boundary that provides for the subsistence
17 needs for the community. And that area of influence is
18 intended to define that and to provide enhanced
19 protection for providing those subsistence resources.
20 That's why there is an area of influence developed.

21
22 And Alaska statutes, the Alaska law,
23 requires that State departments follow these home rule
24 borough laws and ordinances and zoning. And I think
25 there's things to work on in coordination with the
26 North Slope Borough as well, maybe with the Wildlife
27 Department, to look at how these area of influences --
28 and these plans are mandated by Alaska statutes,
29 mandated by North Slope Borough code and to develop
30 these things and they exist and they're adopted by
31 ordinance, they're a law. And it seems to me you need
32 to work with the North Slope Borough as well to -- it's
33 not to say that the State will change its law, it's to
34 say work within the same law to conform to these things
35 to make it work.

36
37 It's not -- it could be time area
38 management, what we do with the Federal government in
39 migratory movement of bowhead whales and the Borough
40 has put time area management or you work within an
41 existing conflict avoidance agreement. And the one
42 measure of recognizing that the industry and others
43 that are working within the migration of the bowhead
44 whale, one way we recognize that a coordination with
45 Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission has occurred is when
46 they have signed on to a conflict avoidance agreement.

47
48
49 And so it's important to recognize what
50

1 we're all really doing in management of other resources
2 in areas where food security issues are of concern,
3 high dependency and the preponderance of the evidence
4 state a high dependency on these subsistence resources
5 for these villages exist. And on top of that Alaska
6 statute says work within these laws as well. So.....

7
8 MS. DAGGETT: All right. Thank you,
9 Gordon. So I have a couple more questions and I'll be
10 done with my portion. Can I continue with this, Mr.
11 Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

14
15 MS. DAGGETT: So one thing that comes
16 with tier two hunts in the rest of the State is this
17 idea of trophy destruction. And it's something that I
18 wanted to ask you guys about because I wasn't sure how
19 you would feel about it. But basically what it means
20 is that if a hunter were to get the muskox they would
21 -- in some areas they are required to cut the horns.
22 And it's basically to avoid people going out there to
23 just get muskox for the horns. It's supposed to be a
24 subsistence hunt and so there's often trophy
25 destruction associated with that. There's certainly
26 that in 26 or in unit 23 right now in both of their
27 muskox hunts.

28
29 And so I was curious what you guys
30 would think about that?

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, that's a good
33 thing to talk about because the horns are used for
34 different things as well. You could make spears,
35 harpoon tips, arts and crafts and things like that.
36 And that's part of subsistence. And it shouldn't -- in
37 my view we're not going after the horns, but they
38 should be usable to do some of the things that are
39 traditional and make the rule for that in that way.
40 It's just my take on it, but, you know, you guys go far
41 and above and say oh, you get the horns to prevent them
42 from hanging on somebody's wall, you got to burn it or
43 grind it and turn it into dust or something.

44
45 MS. DAGGETT: All right. Thank you for
46 that comment. Does anyone else have comments on that
47 particular question, I'm curious?

48
49 (No comments)

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Was that the only
2 question there that we had left there.....

3
4 MS. DAGGETT: No.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER:Carmen?

7
8 MR. NAGEAK: Mr. President. Roy with
9 BLM.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Roy.

12
13 MR. NAGEAK: Thank you. And now we're
14 seeing what covid-19 is doing to the rest of our
15 nation. And a lot of increases of people that are
16 lining up for food in the lower 48. And we're starting
17 to feel it in the small stores all across the State of
18 Alaska because there's some form of shortage in regards
19 to what's available in the small stores. And any
20 discussion on what comes to a village for food right
21 now at this stage of what covid-19 disease is doing
22 across the nation, across the world I don't think we
23 should be talking about the food that is made available
24 and it comes right in front of us. I think we are at
25 the point where hunger knows no law.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 MS. KIPPI: May I add to that, please.
30 This is Wanda.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Wanda.

33
34 MS. KIPPI: Okay. Thank you. I agree
35 with Mr. Roy there. If food in the villages is getting
36 harder to get from the stores, our stores are very
37 limited and empty in a lot of the portions that we
38 normally buy, the meat especially. So it's getting
39 very hard for us to get some food from -- from our
40 stores now that this covid thing has been going on for
41 a couple of months.

42
43 And I think about the horns I think
44 that we should keep -- keep the horns because they do
45 -- they will be used for artifact -- I mean, for tools
46 or for making their items for sale or whatever they use
47 it for.

48
49 But I think the muskox should be only
50

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1 for -- up here on the North Slope should be only for
2 the communities within their region to hunt for the
3 muskox because there's the food shortage up here on the
4 North Slope is very slim.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Wanda.

9
10 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Carmen.

13
14 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair, just a couple
15 more things and then I can be done hopefully here. Do
16 you mind if I continue?

17
18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Please do.

19
20 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. So I mentioned
21 before when you brought up the moose regulation about
22 this challenge with north/south boundaries and having
23 to split the North Slope so that we don't have to worry
24 about harvesting a muskox population that's currently
25 closed and needs to remain closed for a while. And so
26 that population largely ends at the Ikpikpuk. And so
27 when I spoke with Beth Leonard about it she suggested
28 that if there was going to be a boundary it needed to
29 be west of the Ikpikpuk. And so there's only a few
30 rivers that run north/south that are really long, that
31 could give some guidance to hunters for providing a
32 boundary. And so I think either -- and you guys tell
33 me what you think about this, but I was thinking that
34 the Topagoruk makes sense, but and then maybe have the
35 Topagoruk extend down the line of longitude further
36 down because there's nothing else to really follow
37 there. But I also recognize the problem with the line
38 of longitude being a boundary and the problems it
39 creates because I get calls from hunters about it. And
40 I know that you don't love it either, Gordon.

41
42 And so I guess I'm asking, you know,
43 what a good natural feature boundary would be that runs
44 north/south that's west of Ikpikpuk if not the
45 Topagoruk?

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: That runs
48 north/south?

49
50

1 MS. DAGGETT: Yes.

2
3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And then that runs
4 west of the -- westward meaning the hunt would be west
5 of that?

6
7 MS. DAGGETT: Yes.

8
9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. Well, it would
10 be -- I know we -- there's that existing west 156.....

11
12 MS. DAGGETT: Right.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and but you're
15 look -- you're asking about a natural feature instead
16 of a artificial line that we only know maybe by GPS or
17 something.

18
19 MS. DAGGETT: Right.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh. Well.....

22
23 MS. DAGGETT: So do you think that if
24 we used the Topagoruk River as the northern portion
25 guideline for the hunt boundary and then had it extend
26 southward that people would at least have a better idea
27 of where 156 is if they know where the Topagoruk River
28 is?

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hmmm. I don't know.
31 Maybe if you.....

32
33 MS. DAGGETT: Do you think that's a
34 viable option?

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: These are kind of
37 hard to think about with no visuals and if we had a
38 ability to have material to.....

39
40 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER:look at this
43 would be most beneficial I would think. And it's
44 important.....

45
46 MS. DAGGETT: But we (indiscernible -
47 distortion).....

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER:(indiscernible -
50

1 distortion).....

2

3 REPORTER: Hi, this is the Reporter,
4 could I have just one person at a time please. Thanks.

5

6 MS. DAGGETT:now either. But I
7 want to plant the seed in your mind about it and, you
8 know, if you think of something feel free to shoot me
9 an email and we could have a meeting to talk about it
10 later too or something. But I just want to throw a
11 seed out there that these are the things that I'm
12 thinking about and I want to be transparent with you.
13 So that's kind of one question that we just table for
14 now if it would be easier because I totally understand
15 that looking at a map would make it a lot easier.

16

17 So I guess another thing is.....

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, there are maps
20 of features -- there is natural features in most areas
21 like (in Native), that's a natural feature. It is the
22 bluff that starts at Chipp 9, but it's a little bit
23 west of Ikpikpuk by about a mile. And then it goes up
24 towards (in Native) which is still part of (in Native),
25 the waterfall areas and they're just a little bit more
26 east. And then at the end of the northern portion of
27 (in Native) is where the Ikpikpuk drainage that goes
28 east to the Smith Bay instead of -- I mean, if you look
29 -- if you were that -- that's a noticeable feature of
30 the land and from snowmachining all the wolf hunters
31 know this going that way, you know. (In Native). So
32 that's all I'm -- and when you reach (in Native) you
33 know where you're at in the world and you can speed it
34 up, going up.

35

36 At any rate that's my own take on that.

37

38 MS. DAGGETT: Okay.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and it's not
41 using the river, but it's using a natural land feature
42 which is the bluff. (In Native) bluff is a huge bluff
43 and it extends all the way to Little Supreme, to Howard
44 Hill and then onto the Knife Blade Ridge that separates
45 Ikpikpuk and the Colville River.

46

47 MS. DAGGETT: Okay.

48

49 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair. This is Earl

50

1 from Anaktuvuk.

2

3

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Earl.

4

5

6

MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, we're having phone problems here, I keep getting cut off and I'm trying to get back on, but it said busy so I'll keep trying.

7

8

9

MS. PATTON: Hi, Earl. This is Eva.

10 It's hard.....

11

12

13

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I've had to do that too. And.....

14

15

16

MS. PATTON:you're having difficulties there.

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

And just wanted to check in with the Council because we do still have a couple other agency reports today. And there is an opportunity, sounds like some real in depth discussion about land features. And there's always an opportunity if the Council would like to, you know, form a working -- informal working group to have further discussion on potential -- you know, helping to inform potential proposals with your local knowledge. We can always convene an informal conversation to share information and feedback there.

28

29

30

31

32

33

So just wanted to touch base here. It is 5:25 and we do have a couple other folks coming up yet. If the Council would like to have an in depth discussion with -- and we could, you know, get maps together and things like that.

34

35

36

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

37

38

39

MS. PATTON: We can always do that informally to help provide feedback to the local managers.

40

41

42

Thank you.

43

44

45

46

47

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. It sounds like we got -- we need to make time to discuss and flesh these things out a little bit more. But very interesting. I think we can do with a muskox opening, you know.

48

49

50

MS. DAGGETT: Okay. So if -- I guess I

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1 have at least one more question here about this and if
2 -- and I can ask that question or we can discontinue
3 this conversation and do a working group type thing
4 like Eva suggested. If we do want to do that I would
5 like to know who would like to be involved in that.
6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hmmm. I would be and
8 I -- I would want to be in there. But are you talking
9 about agencies or local representatives in the -- like
10 maybe the North Slope Borough AC, advisory committees
11 and -- or you talking about individuals.
12

13 MS. DAGGETT: However you want it to
14 look. I mean, this is -- this is me trying to get
15 information to help make this hunt as good as it can be
16 for people here. So whomever you guys think should be
17 on that Council is more important. You know, I.....
18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh.
20

21 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah.
22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Well, I think
24 we're kind of getting meeting'd out to think logically
25 now. So a lot of information.....
26

27 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah, and that.....
28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER:you know.
30

31 MS. DAGGETT: Uh-huh.
32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Well.....
34

35 MS. DAGGETT: Is there anyone else that
36 would be interested in being part of that.....
37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the wish of
39 the Council, do -- anybody want to chime in about being
40 -- working with Carmen to develop a muskox feature or
41 whether it's Topagoruk or if it's Ikpikpuk or maybe
42 it's (in Native), whatever, to look at how a potential
43 muskox opener based on the number of animals now
44 towards the west side could open and be controlled in
45 that way. It might just mean somebody raising their
46 hand and they get to be in teleconference and receive
47 material to talk about a potential proposal development
48 in my view it sounds like.
49
50

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1 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council.
2 This is Eva. I can check with Martha Itta on her
3 interest. She wasn't able to attend this meeting.
4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh.
6

7 MS. PATTON: She may have some interest
8 in helping to inform that discussion.
9

10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Yeah, maybe
11 that -- we can do that offline or something and develop
12 a group. That way we don't hold up the meeting with --
13 it's hard to try to devise a immediate program of how
14 we open a muskox hunt.
15

16 So we'll table that it sounds like,
17 right, and work with Carmen on it.
18

19 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes, that sounds good to
20 me. And I wouldn't mind working with her to try to
21 figure out a -- you know.....
22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.
24

25 MR. OOMITTUK:how it would go.
26 This is Point Hope for the record. I think muskox.....
27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So you got me and
29 Steve so far.
30

31 MS. KIPPI: I'm interested too, Mr.
32 Chair. This is Wanda.
33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. All
35 right. We got Wanda. Sounds like a team.
36

37 MS. DAGGETT: Excellent.
38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay, Carmen.
40

41 MS. DAGGETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Does that conclude
44 ADF&G for now?
45

46 MS. DAGGETT: Yes, I think that will do
47 for now. Thank you very much for your time and your
48 consideration.
49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. I thought
2 maybe you had.....

3
4 MS. KIPPI: Thank you, Carmen. Thank
5 you, Mr. Chair.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BROWER:Central Arctic
8 herd up your sleeve or something.

9
10 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council.
11 Beth Leonard had provided a written report on the
12 Central Arctic caribou herd, but she didn't plan to
13 present to the Council at this meeting. She does.....

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

16
17 MS. PATTON:would probably
18 follow-up at the next meeting since that's a wildlife
19 cycle and provide a comprehensive overview. So that
20 written report was emailed to folks and also will be in
21 the mail as a hard copy too for the Council.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
26 you, Madame Coordinator. So we'll go to North
27 Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I'm not sure if
32 anybody's going to chime in from the Wildlife. I'm
33 going to give them a few seconds to chime in before we
34 move on.

35
36 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 And, you know, we had Brian Person with us for most of
38 the day and Todd Sformo in the morning, engaging in the
39 discussion. I'm not sure if Brian's still on at this
40 hour, if he's still on the line.

41
42 Brian.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair. This is
47 Earl. We're having phone problems down here so we'll
48 keep trying.

49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. All right. We
2 can hear you, Earl.

3
4 Okay. So we're going to move on to
5 OSM.

6
7 MS. PATTON: Actually, Mr. Chair and
8 Council. We do have one of the final reports for the
9 day was the NOAA report as requested from the Council.
10 And Ed Farley will be calling in for that.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

13
14 MS. PATTON: Let me just check and see
15 if he's online now.

16
17 Ed, just checking to see if you've
18 joined us by teleconference.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair, he was standing
23 by so I'll send him a text to call in. And the Council
24 because we just got that presentation recently, that
25 was emailed to the Council. I know not everyone has
26 access so we were working with your local North Slope
27 Borough office to print that out for folks.

28
29 And let me just.....

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. While we're
32 working on that let's confirm the winter meeting
33 location. So that's on page 85.

34
35 MS. PATTON: Yeah. And then I'll have
36 to narrate -- I will have to narrate the actual fall
37 meeting dates for you.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. So
40 winter, 2021, right, is that where we're at?

41
42 MS. PATTON: Yeah, we have to reconfirm
43 winter, 2021 and then I'll have to narrate the fall
44 dates for 2021 that are available at this time. So you
45 can go ahead with winter and I'll try to check with Ed
46 here.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And is our
49 opportunity window open February 8 through March 25?

50

1 How about February 22 and 23, Monday and Tuesday?

2

3 MR. OOMITTUK: That sounds good to me.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Does the Council have
6 any specific dates or is this tentatively February 22
7 and 23 okay.

8

9 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes, sound good to Point
10 Hope.

11

12 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, sounds good for
13 Anaktuvuk too.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We got
16 February 22 and 23 for the winter.

17

18 MS. PATTON: Sorry, Council, I was on
19 mute there. So currently the Council was scheduled for
20 February 24 and 25, but you'd like to bump it up
21 earlier to the Monday, Tuesday, February 22 and 23?

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, I didn't see
24 there. There was a SC Cordova one.

25

26 MS. PATTON: Yeah, we can.....

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And right after that
29 is NS.....

30

31 MS. PATTON: Yeah, so we can hold two
32 -- two Council meetings at a time. So the North Slope
33 was tentatively scheduled for that Wednesday, Thursday,
34 February 24 and 25th.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Sounds
37 like everybody is comfortable with 22 and 23.

38

39 MS. PATTON: Okay. Sounds good.

40

41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

42

43 MS. PATTON: And I do have -- I do have
44 Ed Farley on teleconference with NOAA.

45

46 MR. FARLEY: Yes, can you hear me?

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Ed, you have the
49 floor.

50

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1 MS. PATTON: Thank you so much, Ed, for
2 calling in. We've been kind of tag teaming back and
3 forth with updates on the agenda so really appreciate
4 you hanging on the line there, Ed. And he had some of
5 his own technical difficulties with power outages down
6 in Juneau. So thanks -- thanks, Ed, for being online
7 and I know the Council's really looking forward to your
8 report.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MR. FARLEY: Yes, I thank you. I
13 really appreciate the invitation by the North Slope
14 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council for this
15 opportunity to talk about recent observations that we
16 have through our Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research
17 Program.

18
19 And so I wanted to find out -- I have a
20 presentation that I'm speaking to here in my -- in my
21 office at home, but I don't know, do you all have
22 something on your computer or did you print it off, how
23 would you like me to speak to the presentation?

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Was that forwarded to
26 us through Eva?

27
28 MS. PATTON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair
29 and Council. So that was emailed to you Monday. And I
30 know Ed was working with a couple of the Council
31 members that don't have access to email and we were
32 hoping your local North Slope Borough office would be
33 able to print that out for you.

34
35 So maybe just be aware, Ed, there's a
36 couple Council members that due to the covid
37 circumstances weren't able to get documents printed out
38 so we do have a couple people that wouldn't have all
39 the visuals at this time. So as descriptive as you can
40 be would be helpful.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 MR. FARLEY: Okay.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So this means the
47 Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program. We are
48 experiencing the future Arctic. Is that the one?

49
50

1 MR. FARLEY: Yes, that's it.

2
3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. I have it on
4 my computer.

5
6 MR. FARLEY: Okay. Well, when I --
7 when I go to the next slide I'll just say next slide.

8
9 So I'm Ed Farley and I'm a fisheries
10 research biologist with NOAA Fisheries, the Alaska
11 Fisheries Science Center. I am at the Ted Stevens
12 Marine Research Institute in Juneau, Alaska. And I'm
13 part of a larger project, the Arctic Integrated
14 Ecosystem Research Program that I'm going to be talking
15 about today. And the slide presentation that I sent
16 for all of you is a presentation that I gave at the
17 Alaska Science Symposium last January.

18
19 So for those that are following along
20 if you go to the next slide.

21
22 The way I've arranged the presentation
23 is I'm going to give a little bit of a brief
24 introduction to the Arctic Integrated Ecosystem
25 Research Program. This is a program that is through
26 the North Pacific Research Board. And then I'm going
27 to give a little more information on one of the
28 projects within that program, it's called the Arctic
29 Integrated Ecosystem Survey. And that's a project that
30 I'm connected with. And some of the information that
31 we have or these observations that we have which are
32 over, you know, recent times over the last decade, may
33 indicate, you know, something of -- in the line that we
34 might be experiencing the future Arctic now.

35
36 So I'm going to go to the next page or
37 next slide.

38
39 And our study region for those that can
40 see the slide is the Northern Bering Sea and the
41 Chukchi Sea, an area that you are -- I am sure you are
42 all very familiar with. This area is very dynamic, it
43 has northward moving currents that connect the Bering
44 Sea to the Bering Strait and up into the Chukchi Sea.
45 So one of the features then of this region is the
46 connectivity between the Bering Sea, Chukchi and the
47 Beaufort through these northward moving currents.

48
49 So going to the next slide.

50

1 Our overarching question for the
2 program is how will reductions in sea ice influence the
3 flow of energy through the Northern Bering Sea and the
4 Chukchi Sea ecosystems. And when we're talking about
5 energy we're talking about heat, so warming sea
6 temperatures, we're talking about the strength of those
7 currents which it appears that when it's heating up so
8 the currents are getting stronger so there is more
9 movement of water from the Bering Sea into the Chukchi
10 and Beaufort. But we're also when we -- when we talk
11 about energy we're talking about the food web. And
12 you're going to see if you're following along I'll have
13 a couple of slides that describe lipid which is fat and
14 how we're seeing changes in the fat content of the food
15 web that's not only the plant matter, but the
16 zooplankton, the bugs and also up into the fish.

17
18 The next slide.

19
20 For those of you who can see this, this
21 is the Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program
22 support. Just a brief background. This started in
23 2016, there were \$16 million for funding. That funding
24 came from the North Pacific Research Board, the Bureau
25 of Ocean Energy Management, North Slope Borough Shelf
26 Baseline Studies Program and the Office of Naval
27 Research, Marine Mammals and Biology Program. And
28 there's been some in-kind support by some of the other
29 agencies such as the one I work for, NOAA Fisheries,
30 the National Science Foundation and the University of
31 Alaska Fairbanks.

32
33 So the next slide.

34
35 This slide discusses the Arctic
36 Integrated Ecosystem Research Program structure. There
37 is a social sciences component that is the Chukchi
38 coastal communities' understanding of and responses to
39 environmental change. There's another field component
40 or a survey component which was the spring field
41 expedition. And that was labeled the Arctic Shelf
42 Growth, Advection, Respiration and Deposition or ASGARD
43 as I'll refer to it at sometime during this talk. And
44 that's a -- that's a spring component to this project.
45 And then what I'm going to talk most about today is the
46 summer, late summer field expedition that I was
47 involved with. And those summer expeditions have some
48 time series to them so I can compare some early
49 observations that we had in 2012 and 2013 to the more
50

1 recent observations that we just did in 2017 and 2019.

2

3 So next slide.

4

5 We just did an overview then of this
6 fieldwork. We had spring and summer surveys for this
7 project in 2017. We did have another spring survey in
8 2018 and then we finished up our survey effort in 2019
9 in the summer. There -- this project had moorings that
10 were on the sea floor and so those -- some of the
11 information I'll share today come from the moorings.
12 These moorings were deployed and left through the
13 winter and then recovered the next year. And we were
14 able to get about three years of information from doing
15 this. And then there are a number of other
16 collaborating projects.

17

18 So next slide.

19

20 So those of you who can see this, this
21 is the survey component. We on our Arctic Integrated
22 Ecosystem Survey did a number of different
23 measurements, I won't go into each one of them, but you
24 can see that we're measuring the physical environment,
25 the biological environment and we also measured fishes
26 and we took -- we had a seabird observer so we were
27 getting seabird observations. And we also used some of
28 our acoustic devices that were on the moorings for some
29 of the marine mammal observations. We did -- these
30 surveys were on one of our research vessels. They --
31 we did the surveys between August to October, 2017 to
32 2019. The survey extent covered pretty much the
33 southern Chukchi Sea all the way to the northern
34 Chukchi Sea and then along the shelf break in the
35 Beaufort Sea to the Arctic Ocean there. And again
36 these surveys occurred in 2017 and 2019, but we had
37 similar surveys in 2012 and 2013. And I'll be
38 referring to those in a few minutes.

39

40 Next slide.

41

42 So we had some hypotheses on change for
43 fishes. I'm more familiar with the fishes. And so for
44 our Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Survey, upper trophic
45 level, that's what UTL is, we wanted to find -- answer
46 the question what we think will happen during warming
47 in the Arctic. And some of the main players up in the
48 Chukchi Sea include Arctic cod, saffron cod, herring,
49 capelin, chum salmon and pink salmon. We know that

50

1 there's quite a few snow crab up on the sea floor and
2 there's some jellyfishes that are now being -- moving
3 up into the Chukchi Sea being affected up there from
4 the -- with these currents from the -- from the Bering
5 Sea. And we expected Arctic cod to go down in
6 abundance and saffron cod to go up and these are --
7 these projections for down or up are all based on how
8 these fish respond to temperature. Arctic cod tend to
9 want cooler waters, saffron cod tend to like warmer
10 waters, et cetera.

11
12 So next slide.

13
14 For those of you that can see this,
15 this was on seabirds. We have a seabird component that
16 Kathy Kulick with U.S. Fish and Wildlife is doing. And
17 I won't go into too much depth here, but they're
18 looking at changes in abundance of seabirds that eat
19 fish versus seabirds that eat zooplankton. And they're
20 thinking that with some of the warming we might see
21 more seabirds that are -- that are fish eating and less
22 seabirds that eat zooplankton.

23
24 Okay.

25
26 Next slide.

27
28 This was just a picture of the vessel
29 that we used for the Arctic Integrated Ecosystem
30 Survey, it was the Ocean Star.

31
32 So next slide.

33
34 And then what I'm going to do is just
35 kind of put -- give a little bit of a story on some of
36 these observations that we have seen in 2017.

37
38 But I want to put some context to that
39 first so go to the next slide.

40
41 So those of you that can see this
42 slide, it's the observed and projected sea surface
43 temperatures in August through October. Again this is
44 when our survey occurred. And if you look at what the
45 observed temperatures in the Chukchi Sea were from 1979
46 to 2008, you would see that those summer temperatures
47 were between 34 and 47 degrees fahrenheit which is one
48 to seven degrees celsius. There's a model that is
49 modeling what the temperatures will look like in 2040
50

1 to 2069 and the model's sea surface temperatures for
2 August to October in the Chukchi Sea suggest that it's
3 going to warm up to 30 -- between 37 to 54 degrees
4 fahrenheit at the surface which is quite a bit of
5 warming over this time period or about 2.5 to 10
6 degrees celsius. So we're looking at observed
7 temperatures between 34 to 47 degrees fahrenheit, you
8 know, at least through 2008 and model temperatures that
9 are between 37 and 54.

10
11 So if you go to the next slide.

12
13 So we measure sea surface temperature
14 when we're on our surveys. And as I mentioned we had
15 surveys up in the Chukchi in 2012 and 2013 and what we
16 noted then is that the temperatures that we measured or
17 observed were very similar in those two years to the
18 historical observations that were between one and seven
19 degrees celsius. And so '12 and '13 look to be more
20 normal at least at the -- for the observations that we
21 had in terms of sea surface temperature.

22
23 So if you go to the next slide.

24
25 However when you look at 2017 and 2019
26 things changed dramatically. We are seeing some
27 warming in 2017. Not quite to where the model
28 suggested we would be in 2040, but if you look at 2019
29 we saw some extremely warm temperatures in August
30 through October in the Chukchi Sea. And the
31 temperatures that we observed were above or similar to
32 and above what the model forecast for 2040 and beyond.
33 So this is where we're trying to understand, you know,
34 that we are now seeing temperatures that the models
35 don't predict us to see until much later in this -- in
36 this century. So our -- some of the observations then
37 that I'm going to show, this is sort of a prediction of
38 what the future Arctic might look like.

39
40 So if you go to the next slide.

41
42 This is some of the food web
43 information. This slide says large and small copepods
44 abundance.

45
46 So a copepod, that's one of the
47 zooplanktons that fish and -- feed on. And what we
48 note is if you're a large copepod, these are different
49 species now, but we're just designating them by size,

50

1 if you're a large copepod you tend to have more fat.
2 So it says more lipid. So it -- large copepods are
3 good because they have more lipid and they're going to
4 provide more energy to the food web than some of the
5 smaller copepods. They tend to have less fat or less
6 -- less energy. So if we compare what we saw in 2017,
7 2019, one of the things that we noted when it warmed up
8 dramatically in '19 was a real drop in the large -- in
9 the number of large copepods that we saw in our survey.
10 And we didn't see much change in the number of small
11 copepods, but that decline to us is an indication that
12 potentially these large copepods that love colder water
13 aren't doing as well when it gets warmer. And that
14 might have some real consequences for energy within --
15 within the food web.

16
17 So moving on to the next slide.

18
19 Other -- other things that we're taking
20 -- that we're taking samples of the seafloor while
21 we're out there and this is one example that is from
22 one of the colleagues, Dean Stockwell, he works at the
23 University of Alaska Fairbanks and they took some
24 measurements of the -- the mud they collected at the
25 seafloor to look for domoic acid which is one of the
26 harmful algae, it's a toxin. And so if you -- if
27 you're able to see this it's some -- some of the
28 stations that they took samples from from the Northern
29 Bering Sea all the way up in -- you know, past Point
30 Hope into the Chukchi Sea. And the bars there just
31 indicate the amount of this potential toxin in the
32 seafloor. And they did note that there's a 180.5,
33 that's nanograms per liter, that's actually parts per
34 trillion, so they're measuring it parts per trillion,
35 but that's -- that can be -- that level at 180.5 can be
36 harmful to somebody or a marine mammal or somebody who
37 might eat it. And they did find one place where the
38 levels were high enough that could be -- indicate a
39 place where the toxin is built up enough to be harmful
40 and that was offshore of Point Hope.

41
42 So again, I mean, these are just some
43 observations that we're taking while we're out at sea.

44
45 So then moving on to the next slide.

46
47 This is -- this from -- again from
48 Kathy Kulick. And while we were -- we have a seabird
49 observer on the vessel and they were taking -- whenever
50

1 we saw a dead seabird when we were traveling by we
2 would grab that seabird from the ocean, bring it back
3 onto the boat, they would freeze the bird. And so on
4 the one side over here you see dead birds at sea from
5 our survey and there are a variety of species from
6 shearwaters, northern fulmars, et cetera. But then
7 this -- we were trying to get some sort of context to
8 what others in the local regions are seeing because
9 there's some information on dead birds in 2019 from the
10 community's agencies, the Coast Group. And what they
11 found was that there's been -- there was some seasonal
12 component to this shearwater die off. It looked like
13 in July there was a lot of shearwaters that died down
14 in the Bristol Bay area. But then when you move to
15 August a lot of shearwaters were found dead in the
16 coastal areas in the Bering Strait and off Kotzebue
17 Sound. So going into the -- and what Kathy was saying
18 is that these birds were emaciated and they think they
19 died of starvation.

20
21 So then moving into the next slide.

22
23 This is just another seabird slide.
24 This is changes in seabird distribution. We're looking
25 at one total bird densities. So this is -- again this
26 is from seabird observers that are on the vessel,
27 they're looking at -- they're observing these birds
28 while we're at sea and they found that there were
29 higher densities further north in 2017 and there were
30 fewer birds in 2019. So again '19 was the year that
31 was extremely warm. And the other, they pulled the
32 crested auklets out of here to take a look at that and
33 they found that in 2019 there were fewer crested
34 auklets that went north in late summer during that year
35 than we observed in the 2017.

36
37 So moving to the next slide.

38
39 This is Kate Stafford's work and she's
40 using a mooring, these are moorings like I was
41 describing before. These are there all year round so
42 you can get a seasonal or a monthly picture of movement
43 of whales because these moorings have a sound listening
44 device on them. So when they pull them up they can
45 pull all this information out. And the take home
46 message if you're able to see this is there was a
47 mooring just south of the Bering Strait called N4 and
48 Kate pulled some sounds from there and found that the
49 -- there was some Arctic species up there of course
50

1 during the winter, that was bearded seal, beluga,
2 bowhead and walrus. And then if you move down below
3 there's the weekly mean of the sub-Arctic species that
4 are the humpback, killer -- killer whales, gray whales
5 and fin whales. And just the take home message here is
6 that Kate is saying that these sub-Arctic species are
7 staying longer in the northern regions than they were
8 in the past, you know, in through November, December.
9

10 Next slide.

11
12 Moving on into the fishes. We do have
13 an acoustic device on the ship and this is just if
14 you're able to see this there's some information from
15 2012, 2013, our survey in '17, '18 and '19. So this is
16 acoustic backscatter and it's a proxy for the fish
17 abundance. The fishes that we're looking at are really
18 small. If you have -- if you can see over in 2012
19 that's my hand with one of the fish that we're looking
20 at. That's a small -- probably a small Arctic cod.
21 And so we're trying to understand, you know, the
22 numbers of Arctic cod that are up in this region.
23 They're extremely important to the food web. And if
24 you look at the time series we have -- the backscatter
25 shows that there were fewer fish in '12 and '13,
26 however '17, you know, the red shows really hot so
27 there were quite a few fish up there in '17 and then
28 fewer in '18 and '19. We did get some observations
29 from '18 using that sail drone, but that's a lot more
30 detail.
31

32 So moving onto the next slide.

33
34 And again getting back at this energy
35 in terms of fat content, this is one of the things that
36 we noticed. We have samples again for Arctic cod from
37 2013 which was more of a cool year and then '17 which
38 we were seeing some warming. We don't have the '19
39 samples analyzed yet because covid stopped our lab
40 work, but this slide essentially shows if you were just
41 to look at length and weight of these fish there
42 doesn't seem to be any difference in their condition
43 between 2013 and '17. But when you look at fat which
44 is lipids you can start to see in '13 that the larger
45 fish had less fat or, I mean, in '17 they had less fat
46 and they had less storage fat. And storage fat is what
47 gets fish through winter. So this is really important
48 information for us to understand. It does look like
49 those fish that are in water that's warmer are actually
50

1 utilizing more of their fat because their metabolism is
2 going up due to the warm water. So again we don't have
3 any information from '19 yet, those samples are still
4 in the lab.

5

6

Moving onto the next slide.

7

8

9 And just to get at fish movement, we do
10 have the moorings again that had upper looking acoustic
11 devices on them so that we could look at fish and
12 movement when we were out there. So this kind of just
13 gives you an indication of when fish were moving past
14 these moorings that were on the seafloor, there's --
15 there were three moorings, one of them up there in
16 Barrow Canyon, another one further on the Chukchi Shelf
17 and then further -- there's another one that was
18 further west and south. And again you can just -- the
19 take home message here if you can see the picture is
20 that we do see movement of fish on and up and on
21 through summer and then there seems to be no fish in
22 the winter.

22

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Next slide is just a -- this is some
folks that are working on a model to try to understand
Arctic cod's life -- a conceptual model for their life
history. And areas that are pink are potential
spawning areas. These Arctic cod spawn in the winter
under the ice. They have eggs that are buoyant or they
float. And they stay under the ice and once the ice
melts back there's ice algae. And typically those fish
are then -- or those eggs are now larvae. The larvae
begin to feed on that ice algae and because there's
these northward moving currents the larvae are moved up
into the Chukchi Shelf. So that's just a conceptual
model for Arctic cod.

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So next slide.

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And one of the things that we are
noting from our survey is that typically when we're up
here we're seeing Arctic cod in the summertime in our
surveys, however in 2017 we started to see walleye
pollock, small age zero walleye pollock. These fish
were again about an inch to two inches long. This was
a surprise to us. We saw some in there up around
Kotzebue Sound in 2017, but in 2019 that's when we
really were surprised at the number of walleye pollock
juveniles that showed up in the Chukchi Sea. Again '19
was an extremely warm year and we were not prepared to

1 see walleye pollock up to 72 north. They seem to be
2 displacing the Arctic cod. So, you know, this -- this
3 may be one signal for what a future Arctic may look
4 like.

5
6 So if we go to the next slide.

7
8 That's just again juvenile Pacific cod.
9 These are -- we did not see any in surveys in the past.
10 There was -- in 2012 there were no juvenile Pacific cod
11 in the Chukchi that we found in the summertime.
12 However in '17 we did start finding them in fairly
13 large numbers.

14
15 And in 2019 if you move to the next
16 slide, there's the juvenile Pacific cod. In '19 we
17 didn't seem to find as many, but again they were quite
18 far -- quite far north, similar to walleye pollock.

19
20 So moving to the next slide.

21
22 So the next one -- the next slide I
23 have is we weren't prepared, it just says what about
24 sub-Arctic data so in other words what about these
25 walleye pollock and Pacific cod that typically are
26 found in the Bering Sea, you know, we weren't prepared
27 to see the kind of movement north that we saw from our
28 survey for these fish. And so now we have to ask well,
29 what's happening with these fish while they move north.

30
31 And so why don't -- next slide after
32 that is our international collaboration with our
33 Russian colleagues. They also were doing surveys,
34 bottom trawl surveys, over in the western Chukchi Sea
35 on their side. If you are able to see this slide it
36 shows some black dots. That shows the stations that
37 they put a bottom trawl onto the seafloor. They did
38 that just west of Point Hope there and Kotzebue Sound
39 and they also did a -- did net tows up around 74
40 degrees north.

41
42 If you go to the next slide you'll see
43 that in 2018 when they ran that -- their bottom trawl
44 survey over there they found that there were quite a
45 few adult walleye pollock in that area. This was again
46 a very -- a big surprise to them. They found very few
47 adult Arctic cod and this is in the -- this would be in
48 the area west of Point Hope or the Kotzebue Sound.
49 They didn't -- and they also found some Pacific --

50

1 adult Pacific cod, but they -- they found that the
2 adult Arctic cod were pretty much pushed all the way up
3 north into the cooler water around 74 north.

4
5 And if you go to the next slide they --
6 well, the next slide just kind of gives you some data
7 if you want to look at this a little bit later, but it
8 just provides you with size data so that you can see
9 that there were also some small walleye pollock just
10 like we found on the east Chukchi side. But because
11 they were -- we were not running a bottom trawl, they
12 were running a bottom trawl, they did catch adult
13 walleye pollock.

14
15 So if you move to the next slide.

16
17 That one is just that they did a survey
18 in 2019, our Russian colleagues did, and they found a
19 lot more adult walleye pollock than they found in '18.
20 And I don't know if you're keeping up with the news,
21 but they were thinking of actually doing a commercial
22 fishery in the western Chukchi this year. I don't know
23 if they did it or not, but they felt like they'd found
24 enough walleye pollock to do that.

25
26 So if you move to the next side it just
27 highlights and, you know, you live in this region so
28 you know that there's been some pretty remarkable rapid
29 change. This is just some of the -- some of those
30 highlights from the news.

31
32 And then if you move to the next slide
33 it kind of gives a -- just a highlight, an overview of
34 what Henry Huntington is working on with the social
35 science project -- part of this project. And he's
36 working with youall in nine communities. You can see
37 them there, there's Savoonga, Diomede, Buckland,
38 Kotzebue, Kivalina, Point Hope, Point Lay, Wainwright
39 and Utqiagvik. And they're looking for -- you know,
40 the focal topic is environmental change, societal
41 change and community response. And what you all are
42 saying is that environment and society are changing
43 pretty fast and that the communities and individuals
44 have many ways of coping with change and that
45 traditional values and attitudes remain important for
46 well-being and that predictions are uncertain so
47 fostering resilience and adaptability is important and
48 that your tribal and community leadership are
49 essential. So that's some of the highlights from that

50

1 social science component of the project.

2

3 And if you move to the next slide this
4 is what some people are describing at least in some
5 journals as what the future Arctic might look like.
6 Essentially it's a feedback loop and it's just
7 continuing as we get warmer, we lose ice, when we lose
8 ice we get more sun, energy on the water so the water
9 heats up and it's just a continual feedback loop. And
10 some of the consequences of that are over -- there.

11

12 And so the next slide is my last slide.

13

14 And I don't know how many of you are
15 still here, but I really appreciate being able to
16 describe some of the observations that we've had
17 through this program and look forward to your questions
18 if you have any.

19

20 Thanks.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you very much.
23 And I find this to be very interesting and kind of puts
24 to light some of the things that we're enduring up here
25 ourselves as well in terms of different species and
26 stuff.

27

28 Any questions -- was this Marty?

29

30 (Teleconference interference -
31 participants not muted)

32

33 MS. PATTON: Ed Farley. Thank you,
34 Gordon.

35

36 MR. FARLEY: Ed, yes.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Ed. Ed Farley.
39 Okay. Any questions for Ed.

40

41 MR. NAGEAK: Just a comment, Mr.
42 President. We're kind of the people that's been
43 fishing for tom cod since the lagoon froze and we're
44 hardly catching any. That could be the cause of what
45 you mentioned, tom cods are going north.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other questions.

50

1 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this.....

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I really enjoyed the
4 presentation. We need outreaches and things like that
5 to communities that would -- maybe even the schools to
6 make environmental observers out of some of our
7 villages.

8

9 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this is Steve in
10 Point Hope. I really appreciate this presentation and
11 I wish I was there, you know, to see the presentation
12 on the screen. I'd like to get a copy of that, it
13 would be very helpful.

14

15 Eva, I.....

16

17 MS. PATTON: Hi, Steve. Yeah, I.....

18

19 MS. PATTON:and, you know,
20 we.....

21

22 MS. PATTON:that's the
23 presentation -- that's the presentation that's before
24 you -- printed out for you on.....

25

26 (Teleconference interference -
27 participants not muted)

28

29 REPORTER: Okay. Hold on. This is the
30 reporter. So I'm getting a lot of people talking over
31 each other and some feedback. One at a time please.

32

33 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, this is Steve in
34 Point Hope. And I really appreciate like I said. And,
35 you know, we noticed the warmer, you know, climate,
36 that the ocean is a lot warmer, it's not freezing like
37 it used to. And like I said several times, you know,
38 we celebrate the born of the ice with the whale tail
39 (in Native) and when it -- you know, it -- it predicts
40 our -- if it -- if it's (indiscernible) first on the
41 south side we know we're going to have a good season.
42 On the south side, but on the north side, it's going to
43 be a tough year for us, you know, when the first slush
44 ice connect to the land. It usually happens in the
45 October, first part. Here it is early November last
46 two years it's been late November. And then the
47 breakup of the ice is even earlier. You know, we had
48 open water in February and March and whales were going
49 by, you know. Usually we don't get the open water

50

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1 until April. You know, they might hunt seals in
2 February and March, but just, you know, very little
3 water and there's (indiscernible - distortion) but
4 we've been seeing a lot of open water in February and
5 March the last five years or so. And the tom cod are
6 -- that we hunt in January, fish for in the point, is
7 very scarce now the last few years it's -- they're hard
8 to find. Usually we get them in January.
9

10 Thank you.

11
12 MS. KIPPI: This is Wanda. I had to
13 call back in, I got cut off.
14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Wanda.
16 Yeah, we recognize some villages are storming right now
17 and there's a storm warning that's going to start for
18 these areas along the coast here as well pretty -- in
19 the next couple of days too.
20

21 Any other questions for Ed.
22

23 (No comments)
24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: If not, I really
26 appreciate it and this was really good. I hope that
27 Steve had the visuals to go along with it because the
28 visuals help a lot as you were narrating your
29 presentation.

30 MR. FARLEY: All right. Well, thank
31 you, Mr. Chair. And have a good evening. I hope
32 everyone is doing well.
33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Thank you very
35 much.
36

37 And, Eva, I think that concludes the
38 presentations of all the agencies on the agency
39 reports.
40

41 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Ed. Appreciate
42 you being on.
43

44 And thank you, Mr. Chair. That's it
45 for the agency reports. So we just have the last brief
46 OSM update and to confirm the Council's fall meeting.
47

48 And just to circle back around as well,
49 the Council was talking about -- earlier today about
50

1 issues and topics you'd like to bring forward in your
2 annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board. So if
3 there's any issues that come to mind for you now and
4 we'll -- I'll be going back through all the Council's
5 discussion from this meeting as well to develop the
6 Council's report to the Federal Subsistence Board and
7 then that draft will come back in front of the Council
8 at your next winter meeting for your full review. So
9 there's still an opportunity to add and edit at that
10 time.

11 But maybe if we can just take a minute
12 and see if Council members have any issues or requests
13 to the Board for your annual report?

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any concerns you want
16 to take to -- for the annual report, Council members,
17 otherwise Eva will work on it with all of what we've
18 worked on all day for the couple days and develop the
19 annual report for us. And we'll have to just vet it
20 when she's done.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing non, did we
25 confirm the -- and select the fall meeting date for
26 2021.

27
28 MS. PATTON: Not yet, Mr. Chair. So
29 just to reconfirm, we were looking at the winter
30 meeting dates and just to reconfirm the Council was
31 originally scheduled to February.....

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, we already did
34 that and we said 22 and 23.

35
36 MS. PATTON: Okay. So 22, 23 is
37 confirmed. And then because the North Slope is one of
38 the last to meet, all the other Councils have already
39 selected their fall, 2021 meeting date. So what I can
40 do for you, if you look on page 86 of your meeting
41 books I can let you know the meeting windows that are
42 open yet to meet for that fall meeting time frame.

43
44 So the meeting window does open mid
45 August and I know this Council likes to alternate
46 between meeting prior to the fall whaling season and
47 then after the fall whaling season. So the calendar's
48 wide open mid August through September. And then we
49 have this first week of November is still available at
50

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1 this time frame, November 1st through 4th is available.
2 So you're wide open mid August through October 1st is
3 open to meet and then the week of November 1 through 4
4 is open to meet as well.

5
6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: How about October 12
9 and 13.

10
11 MR. OOMITTUK: Sounds good with me.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: October 12 and 13
14 sounds good. It will give us all summer to hunt and
15 fish through August, September, right into October.

16
17 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council.
18 I.....

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Maybe October 14 --
21 maybe October 14 and 15 would be better I think.

22
23 MS. PATTON: Yeah, Mr. Chair and
24 Council. Those weeks in October, so it -- the
25 calendar's still open through October 1st. And then
26 because all the other Councils have selected their
27 meetings, we're not able to hold more than two Council
28 meetings per week. And so unfortunately that week of
29 October 4th through October 29th is completely booked
30 up.

31
32 So there is a little earlier in the --
33 unless it's too early in the fall whaling season, that
34 week of September 27 through October 1st is still open.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You know, those are
37 really -- those are big subsistence -- peak
38 subsistence, September 28, 29, 30, fish run -- that I
39 know that were special runs starts around September 23
40 and ends about October 10. And I always -- you know,
41 when I try to get back to my fishing, I don't like to
42 miss the fish run with the eggs. And that's the time
43 on Ikpiukuk is.....

44
45 MS. PATTON: Sure.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER:that time.

48
49 MS. PATTON: Sure. Absolutely.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Seems to me somewhere
2 around October 28 and 29 maybe.

3
4 MS. PATTON: And I -- again I
5 apologize, Mr. Chair and Council. So that entire month
6 of October is booked up because all the other Councils
7 have already selected their fall meetings
8 unfortunately.

9
10 But we do have this same time frame so
11 the week of November 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, is available.
12 So we could meet again on November 3rd or 4th or
13 prior.....

14
15 MR. OOMITTUK: Okay.

16
17 MS. PATTON:prior to October 1st
18 is available.

19
20 (Teleconference interference -
21 participants not muted)

22
23 REPORTER: I need people to mute their
24 phones, please.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: November 3 and 4,
27 good enough? I think November 3 and 4.

28
29 MS. KIPPI: Yes, November 3 and 4 are
30 good.

31
32 MR. OOMITTUK: All right. Thank you.

33
34 MS. PATTON: Okay. So November 3 and 4
35 works for the Council after fall whaling season and
36 gets a little slower for subsistence.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Closing
39 comments. Let's move right in. So anybody want to say
40 any closing comments. We'll start with Point Hope.

41
42 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council. If
43 I can, I just have a super brief OSM report. We always
44 leave it for the last. But it is very brief.

45
46 We just want to relay to the Council
47 the Federal Subsistence Board has made the decision to
48 hold all meetings by teleconference, all 10 Councils
49 have met by teleconference due to covid-19. The Board

50

1 recognizes the Regional Advisory Councils are the
2 foundation of Alaska Federal Subsistence Management
3 Program and the Board recognizes that holding face to
4 face Council meetings in rural communities across
5 Alaska is incredibly important for engaging with the
6 public. And the program is fully committed to resuming
7 in person Council meetings across Alaska as soon as it
8 is safe to do so.
9

10 And just wanted to provide a couple
11 updates. OSM does have a new director, Sue Detwiler,
12 who is a long time Alaska resident and has worked with
13 the subsistence program in the past as well as other
14 Federal agencies. So she -- she comes with a long
15 experience with subsistence herself.
16

17 And we do have a new supervisory
18 anthropologist who was just recently hired. So that
19 position was vacant for a few years and I know that's
20 one that's of real importance to the Council. So I'm
21 pleased to let the Council know we do have a new
22 supervisory anthropologist for the Federal Subsistence
23 Program.
24

25 And just real briefly the Board's been
26 working on special actions and tribal consultation
27 throughout this year.
28

29 And just a reminder for the real ID for
30 travel to Council meetings. So that deadline got
31 extended, got postponed to fall of 2021. But we're
32 here to help make sure Council members are able to
33 travel when we are able to meet in person next.
34

35 Lastly update -- just to let the
36 Council know on August 10th the State of Alaska filed a
37 lawsuit against the Federal Subsistence Board after it
38 adopted emergency special action that allowed the
39 village of Kake to engage in a community harvest of two
40 antlered moose and five male sitka black tailed deer.
41 Also included in the lawsuit was a temporary special
42 action which closed Federal lands in the unit 13A and B
43 to non-Federally-qualified moose and caribou hunters.
44 So these were emergency hunts related to covid 19 and
45 food security.
46

47 On September 18th the U.S. District
48 Court denied the State's request for a preliminary
49 injunction to the unit 13 closure and the court found
50

1 that because the State had not demonstrated either a
2 likelihood of success on serious questions on the
3 merits of its claim the court need not consider the
4 remaining elements of its preliminary injunction.

5
6 So as of this writing the court has not
7 yet ruled on the request to enjoin that Kake hunt or
8 the adoption of other covid related emergency action.
9 A ruling on preliminary injunction does not resolve the
10 litigation. A settlement with the State, questions
11 raised by the State concerning the Board's authority to
12 take these actions will be -- will continue to be
13 argued in the courts over the coming

14
15 (Teleconference interference -
16 participants not muted)

17
18 The Solicitor's Office.....

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

21
22 MS. PATTON: Okay. So anyway so we'll
23 keep the Council and communities updated on that as we
24 go forward.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Very
27 good.

28
29 MS. PATTON: That's all we have for now
30 and thank you, Mr. Chair, and Council for all your
31 great work.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, you're welcome.
36 And I think we're very tired.

37
38 So we'll go to Point Hope, we're
39 starting with closing comments. You got anything to --
40 in closing there, Steve.

41
42 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. It's been a
43 good couple days. I'm looking forward to the next
44 meeting. And safe travel and wear your mask and be
45 safe.

46
47 Thank you. It's been a long day today.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

50

1 MR. OOMITTUK: Lot of good information.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, it sure has.
4 Yeah, thank you, Steve.

5

6 Anaktuvuk.

7

8 MR. WILLIAMS: No. Thank you very
9 much. Have a good year.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Kaktovik.

12

13 MR. REXFORD: Yeah, it was a good
14 couple days meeting. And I'd like a copy of the NOAA
15 report if possible.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We'll --
20 I have it too, I was -- I had it on my email. I'm not
21 sure if you received it or not. If Eva don't send it
22 to you I'll send it to you right away.

23

24 (In Native), Eddie.

25

26 MR. REXFORD: Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Wanda.

29

30 MS. KIPPI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I --
31 you might mention about the (in Native) during
32 September (in Native) in -- after it freeze up my son
33 caught some in his net with some eggs in them. So I'm
34 hoping like they extended their -- extended their (in
35 Native) during that time. I'm, wondering if it's
36 changing because of the temperature or the climate
37 change.

38

39 But anyhow I want to thank everybody
40 for taking the time off of my time, I just -- no, I'm
41 just kidding. I just want to thank everybody for
42 understanding when -- when I didn't call in on time
43 this morning. I thank you all for your understanding
44 and I hope you all have a safe -- safe first of the
45 winter. And it's always good to hear from you guys and
46 see what's going on on your side of the country.

47

48 Okay. (In Native). Thank you.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Wanda,
2 (in Native)

3
4 Yeah, Ikpikpuk, those areas up that way
5 they're -- they always have (in Native) even in the
6 summertime, but when it's about September 20 through
7 October 10 that's when they spawn. They -- when they
8 got lots, they (in Native) for spawning. But they do
9 have eggs throughout the summer that -- when they're
10 getting ready to mature and stuff like that. (In
11 Native) they have a different spawning in the lakes for
12 lake whitefish. And then different rivers. They have
13 a different -- sometimes they have a different spawning
14 as well.

15
16 (In Native). Thank you very much.

17
18 How about William Hopson in Barrow.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, I hope
23 I didn't miss any of the Council members. And it was
24 fairly enjoyable, I really enjoyed listening to a lot
25 of the presentations and a lot of the dialogue.

26
27 And with that I'm going to entertain
28 item 15, adjournment.

29
30 MR. OOMITTUK: I make a motion to.....

31
32 MS. KIPPI: Second.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
35 the floor to adjourn by all.

36
37 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Question's been
40 called. All in favor of adjournment say aye.

41
42 IN UNISON: Aye.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We are adjourned.
45 Good night, everybody.

46
47 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 Thank you, Council members.

49
50

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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