

0001

YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

ONC Multi-Purpose Room
Bethel, Alaska
April 4, 2023
9:22 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Raymond Oney, Chairman
Wassilly Alexie
John Andrew
Jacqueline Cleveland
Norma Evan
James Landlord
Myron Naneng
Henry Parks
Alissa Rogers
Richard Slats

Regional Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid

Recorded and transcribed by:

Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
329 F Street, Suite 222
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-227-5312/sahile@gci.net

0002

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2

3 (Bethel, Alaska - 04/4/2023)

4

5 (On record)

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll call on Father

8 Martin to do the invocation to open our meeting.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 (Invocation)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Father

15 Martin for that invocation. I'll go ahead and call the

16 meeting to order, the time now is 9:20 a.m.

17

18 MR. SLATS: 9:22.

19

20 MR. ANDREW: 9:22.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: 9:22 a.m. I'll call on

23 Richard Slats to do the roll call.

24

25 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 REPORTER: Richard, I need you to turn

28 on your mic.

29

30 MR. SLATS: Henry Parks.

31

32 MR. PARKS: Present.

33

34 MR. SLATS: Norma T. Evan.

35

36 MS. EVAN: Present. Here.

37

38 MR. SLATS: John Andrew.

39

40 MR. ANDREW: Here.

41

42 MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan, Sr.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan, Sr.

47

48 Jacqueline Cleveland.

49

50

0003

1 MS. CLEVELAND: Here.

2

3 MR. SLATS: James C. Landlord.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 MS. MCDAVID: James will be joining us
8 later, his flight was cancelled last night so he's on
9 standby.

10

11 MR. SLATS: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

12

13 MS. ROGERS: Quayana.

14

15 MR. SLATS: Did she say -- is that her?

16

17 REPORTER: Yes.

18

19 MR. SLATS: Okay.

20

21 MS. ROGERS: I'm here.

22

23 MR. SLATS: Okay, Alissa, we hear you.

24 Thank you.

25

26 Peter -- or Phillip K. Peter, Sr.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 MR. SLATS: Phillip K. Peter, Sr.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MR. SLATS: Okay. Wassilly B. Alexie.

35

36 MR. ALEXIE: Here.

37

38 MR. SLATS: Raymond J. Oney.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Here.

41

42 MR. SLATS: Myron P. Naneng, Sr.

43

44 MR. NANENG: I'm here.

45

46 MR. SLATS: Robert J. Hoffman.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0004

1 MR. SLATS: Robert J. Hoffman.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MR. SLATS: And Richard Slats is here.

6 Mr. Chairman, we have nine present, four absent.

7

8 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

11

12 MS. ROGERS: Quyana, Mr. Chair. I
13 request that Mr. Robert Hoffman has an excusal for our
14 meeting, he had family -- death in the family so he's
15 probably not going to be here for the whole meeting.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. It'll
18 be recognized that he'll be excused.

19

20 And also Walter Morgan and Phillip
21 Peter, I believe, are attending the Kuskokwim River
22 InterTribal Fish Commission so they're both excused.

23

24 MR. SLATS: Okay. Mr. Chairman, we
25 have nine present, Mr. Chairman.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Mr.
28 Slats for the roll call. Okay, thank you. At this
29 time I'll go ahead and go down to the meeting
30 announcements. Brooke.

31

32 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 First I'd like to welcome everyone, good morning.
34 Welcome to the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence
35 Regional Advisory Council meeting. My name is Brooke
36 McDavid and I am the Council Coordinator with the
37 Office of Subsistence Management. I'm based out of
38 Fairbanks, but it's lovely to get to travel out here
39 down to Bethel and see everyone.

40

41 Just a couple of housekeeping
42 announcements before we get going.

43

44 The first is, if you are attending here
45 in person please remember to sign in each day of the
46 meeting so we can keep track of the participants. That
47 is on the table over there. The meeting is scheduled
48 to go for two and a half days so we will have a full
49 day today and tomorrow and on Thursday we're just

50

0005

1 planning to meet in the morning.

2

3 For folks on the phone you can find the
4 agenda and the meeting materials on our web page and
5 I'll give you that internet address if you don't know
6 it. It is [www.doi](http://www.doi.gov), as in Department of the Interior,
7 so doi.gov/subsistence, and you can click on the
8 regions tab and on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and there
9 will be a page for meeting materials.

10

11 Also for those on the phone, please,
12 remember to keep your phones muted so that background
13 noise doesn't distract us here in the room and for
14 other folks on the phone. You can press star, six if
15 you don't have a mute button on your phone.

16

17 We do have a translator here with us
18 today, Joanne Andrew is going to be providing
19 simultaneous Yup'ik/English translation as needed.
20 There are headsets over on the public information table
21 for folks in the room. As Joanne is translating you
22 can turn those on and listen to the translation. Those
23 do need to be on frequency No. 1. And if you find that
24 the batteries aren't working or something, there are
25 some extra batteries over there on the table as well.

26

27 There will be a couple opportunities
28 for public comment throughout the meeting on non-agenda
29 items. This comes at the beginning of each meeting
30 day. Today, on the first day, it will be a little bit
31 later because we have the Council member reports first
32 but if you would like to sign up to comment on a non-
33 agenda item you can fill out one of these blue cards
34 and each morning we'll go through the list of folks who
35 would like to testify or make a comment to the Council.
36 You can also comment on agenda items so if there is
37 something specific to the agenda just note what agenda
38 item on your comment card. And the Chair will call on
39 folks in the room and online when he opens up for
40 comments. You can also submit written comments if you
41 prefer, you can give those to me here in the room or
42 you can email them to subsistence@fws.gov. That's
43 subsistence@fws.gov.

44

45 One update about Council membership.
46 We do have one new Council member, that is Walter
47 Morgan, Sr., of lower Kalskag. He was appointed to the
48 Council in December and will be serving a three year
49 term. He wasn't able to come to this meeting because

50

0006

1 of the overlapping InterTribal Fish Commission meeting
2 but he's looking forward to being on the Council and
3 we're looking forward to having him.

4
5 The application period for RAC members
6 for this coming term did close last month so thank you
7 to our incumbents who reapplied. You will find out at
8 the end of the year about your reappointments. And for
9 those that did reapply, there are four Refuge
10 Information Technicians from Yukon Delta Refuge that
11 are going to be giving each of you a call to do a real
12 short interview as part of the reapplication process.
13 So be on the lookout for a call from them.

14
15 And last reminder.

16
17 For our Council members and for those
18 in the audience, we just ask that everyone be
19 respectful during the meeting, we know that there are
20 many issues that people are passionate about and it's
21 okay to disagree or be frustrated, we just ask that
22 comments remain professional as we tackle these
23 important issues.

24
25 Also if there is a conflict of interest
26 that you might have for anything to please state so for
27 the record when we get to that item and recuse yourself
28 from voting.

29
30 And that was the last of my comments.

31
32 REPORTER: Brooke, could you say
33 something about the speaker, please.

34
35 MS. MCDAVID: Oh, we do have -- our
36 court reporter would like me to let everyone know,
37 there is not a speaker for the public audience here in
38 the room, it was causing lots of feedback.

39
40 REPORTER: And then blew up.

41
42 (Laughter)

43
44 MS. MCDAVID: So hopefully you guys can
45 hear us all pretty good.

46
47 IN UNISON: (Nodding positively)

48
49 MS. MCDAVID: Okay. Folks are nodding

50

0007

1 their heads. We should be getting one at noon when
2 someone comes in on the midday flight from Anchorage
3 but until then we'll carry on. That was all I had, Mr.
4 Chair. Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke, for
7 the meeting announcement. First of all I want to thank
8 ONC for allowing us to be here in their building to
9 conduct our winter meeting and also to be on their
10 grounds to have this meeting of the Yukon Kuskokwim
11 Delta Regional Advisory Council. At this time I would
12 like to welcome everyone and if we could go ahead and
13 introduce ourselves, maybe starting from the back and
14 moving this way and then coming around.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 MR. ANDREW: Maybe ask them to come up
19 front.

20
21 REPORTER: Yes, would be better.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, up front. Okay, up
24 front would be fine so if you could go ahead and
25 introduce yourselves starting from the front.

26
27 MR. ANDREW: And turn the microphone
28 on.

29
30 FATHER NICOLAI: Father Martin Nicolai,
31 Kwethluk.

32
33 MS. MCDAVID: Please come to the mic,
34 thank you.

35
36 FATHER NICOLAI: Father Martin Nicolai,
37 Kwethluk.

38
39 MR. ANDREW: Good morning and welcome.
40 Timothy Andrew from Bethel representing myself.

41
42 MS. KENNER: Good morning. My name is
43 Pippa Kenner and I work at the Office of Subsistence
44 Management and I'm an Anthropology [sic] for the YK
45 Delta region. Nice to be here, thank you.

46
47 MR. BLIHVDE: Wacaa. I'm Boyd
48 Blihovde, the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta National
49 Wildlife Refuge. Good morning.

50

0008

1 MS. HOOPER: I am Delan Hooper. I am
2 with ONC as the Partners Program Coordinator.

3
4 MS. PETERSON: Hi. My name is Paige
5 Peterson. I'm here on behalf of Jennifer Hooper for
6 AVCP.

7
8 MS. BOECK: Good morning. Laurie
9 Boeck. I'm with the Refuge, the new Deputy Refuge
10 Manager.

11
12 MR. TULIK: Christopher Tulik, Lead RIT
13 Yukon Delta Refuge.

14
15 MR. MOSES: Good morning everybody. My
16 name is Aaron Moses. I'm the Subsistence Specialist
17 for the Yukon Delta.

18
19 MR. PLANK: Good morning. Tom Plank,
20 OSM Wildlife Biologist.

21
22 MR. LIND: Wacaa. Orville Lind, Native
23 Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. It's
24 really good to be here and good to see everybody in the
25 face. Quyana.

26
27 MS. ANDREW: Joanne Andrew,
28 Interpreter.

29
30 REPORTER: Okay, that's it for in here.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, if we could get
33 those people on the phone at this time, if there's
34 anyone on the phone that wants to introduce themselves.

35
36 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, Mr.
37 Chairman and members of the Council. This is Greg
38 Risdahl. I'm the USDA Forest Service Subsistence
39 Program Leader and InterAgency Staff Committee member.
40 Glad to be here today, I wish I was there with you in
41 person.

42
43 MS. MCDAVID: Tina, who was that.

44
45 REPORTER: Greg Risdahl, Forest
46 Service.

47
48 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

49
50

0009

1 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you.

2

3 MR. ADERMAN: Andy Aderman, Wildlife
4 Biologist with the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge in
5 Dillingham. Good morning.

6

7 MR. THERCHIK: Good morning. This is
8 David Therchik, RIT YK Delta.

9

10 MR. CHYTHLOOK: Good morning. This is
11 John Chythlook with the Department of Fish and Game,
12 Sportfish Division.

13

14 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning. Christian
15 Alexie, Jr., Refuge Information Technician for Yukon
16 Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Qu yana.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Are we missing anyone
19 else that wants to introduce themselves on the line.

20

21 MS. ESQUIBLE: Hi. This is Janessa
22 Esquible. I'm calling in as a UAF Fisheries Student
23 and with ONC.

24

25 MR. BURCH: Hello. This is Mark Burch
26 from the Department of Fish and Game in the Palmer
27 Office.

28

29 MS. EVAN: Good morning. Norma Evan,
30 Marshall Council member.

31

32 MS. MARTINEZ: Hello. This is Mary
33 Martinez, Planner at Calista Corporation.

34

35 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And this is
36 (Indiscernible) with Calista Corporation. Good morning
37 and Qu yana.

38

39 NICK: Nick (Indiscernible) Kwethluk.

40

41 MS. BENNETT: Rose Bennett with Calista
42 Corporation.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, is there anyone
45 else that wants to introduce themselves at this time.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I thank

50

0010

1 you for calling in to participate in our winter
2 meeting. We'll go ahead and go through the agenda. If
3 you can look through the agenda, review it and look
4 through there and see if there's anything that needs to
5 be changed or added to the agenda at this time.

6
7 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

10
11 MS. MCDAVID: I just wanted to let
12 folks know there is an updated copy of the agenda.
13 Everyone should have a pink copy. There's plenty of
14 copies on the table and the updated agenda is also on
15 our website. There's just a couple of minor, very
16 minor changes from the one that was in your meeting
17 book. There are a couple of time certain items that I
18 wanted to point out. This afternoon at 3 p.m., we'll
19 have an update from Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish
20 Commission and that's just so we can accommodate the
21 overlap with their meeting that's also happening. And
22 then Thursday morning we'll have an update at 10:00
23 a.m., from the Fish and Wildlife Service Regional
24 Office, they're going to tell us about a really cool
25 gravel to gravel initiative that's getting started.
26 And we'll also have a call coming in from Washington,
27 D.C., we'll have an update from the Department of
28 Interior about a potential move of OSM office from Fish
29 and Wildlife Service to the Assistant Secretary's
30 office.

31
32 And then something else very exciting,
33 today at 4 p.m., and this is not on the agenda, it's
34 not technically an agenda item, Senator Lisa Murkowski
35 is actually going to stop by the meeting to say hello
36 to us so when she arrives we'll take a break from the
37 agenda and let her address the Council.

38
39 And that's all I had, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
42 Brooke. Is there any more additions or deletions to
43 the agenda.

44
45 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
46 Myron.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

49
50

0011

1 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I move to adopt the
2 agenda with the additions that were cited by Brooke and
3 also be ready to hear if there's additional items. So
4 I make that motion so we can discuss the agenda and
5 adopt it.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.
8 There's a motion on the floor by Myron to adopt the
9 agenda with additions and to keep in mind all those
10 people that are going to be giving reports, so keep
11 that in mind, do I hear a second.

12
13 MR. ANDREW: Second.

14
15 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by John Andrew.
18 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

19
20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed, say nay.

23
24 (No opposing votes)

25
26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none motion
27 carries. So we do have a working agenda in front of
28 us.

29
30 Our next item on the agenda is election
31 of officers. I'll go ahead and turn it over to Brooke.

32
33 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
34 in accordance with your charter, each year we do
35 election of officers and the officers serve a one year
36 term. We'll be electing the Chair, Vice Chair and
37 Secretary today. And I will carry out the elections
38 for the Chair and we'll open up the floor for
39 nominations for the Chair now. And nominations do not
40 need to be seconded, just for your information.

41
42 Jackie.

43
44 MS. CLEVELAND: Hi, this is Jackie. I
45 nominate Myron Naneng for Chair.

46
47 MR. PARKS: I nominate Raymond Oney.

48
49 MS. ROGERS: Alissa Rogers. I nominate
50

0012

1 Raymond Oney.

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: Do I hear any other
4 nominations.

5

6 MS. EVAN: Norma Evan. I nominate Ray
7 Oney.

8

9 MR. ANDREW: Second.

10

11 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, I don't hear any
12 other nominations. We have two folks that were
13 nominated. Myron Naneng and Raymond Oney. I'm going
14 to ask the Council if you guys are okay doing a roll
15 call vote since we do have folks on the phone.

16

17 MR. NANENG: Madame Chair, this is
18 Myron.

19

20 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, go ahead Myron.

21

22 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I'll -- what do I
23 call it -- I appreciate the nomination for the Chair
24 but I think in the interest of continuing the work
25 that's being done, ask for unanimous support for Ray
26 Oney.

27

28 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Myron. So I'm
29 hearing that you would like to rescind your nomination
30 and that would just leave one nomination on the table
31 for Raymond Oney.

32

33 MR. NANENG: Yes. If there's no
34 objections I ask for unanimous consent.

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: Okay. I will ask for
37 unanimous consent. All those in favor say aye for
38 Raymond Oney.

39

40 IN UNISON: Aye.

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: Any opposed.

43

44 (No opposing votes)

45

46 MS. MCDAVID: Hearing none,
47 congratulations Mr. Raymond Oney, for being our Chair
48 again for another year. I'll turn the election for
49 Vice Chair back over to you.

50

0013

1 (Applause)

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you again for your confidence in me leading this organization, I appreciate your vote. As you can see we got a lot of work ahead of us.

At this time I would like to have the floor opened for Vice Chair.

MS. EVAN: Norman Evan nominating Myron Naneng, Vice Chair.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma votes for Myron Naneng.

MS. EVAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more nominations for Vice Chair.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, is there unanimous consent.

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I nominate Mr. Andrew.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Nomination by Alissa to nominate John Andrew.

Anyone else for Vice Chair.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, we do have two nominations. One for Myron Naneng and John Andrew. At this time we could go ahead and ask for a voice vote. If the Secretary could go down the list, for two nominations, one for Myron Naneng and the other is for John Andrew. So I'll go ahead and ask for a voice vote.

MR. SLATS: Nominations for.....

REPORTER: Richard. Richard.

MR. SLATS: Nominations for Vice Chair.

0014

1

REPORTER: Thank you.

2

3

MR. SLATS: Henry Parks.

4

5

MR. PARKS: Myron.

6

7

MR. SLATS: Norma T. Evan.

8

9

MS. EVAN: Myron Naneng.

10

11

MR. SLATS: John Andrew.

12

13

MR. ANDREW: Myron.

14

15

MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan.

16

17

(No comments)

18

19

MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan.

20

21

(No comments)

22

23

MR. SLATS: Jacqueline K. Cleveland.

24

25

MS. CLEVELAND: Myron.

26

27

MR. SLATS: James C. Landlord.

28

29

(No comments)

30

31

MR. SLATS: James C. Landlord.

32

33

(No comments)

34

35

MR. SLATS: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

36

37

(No comments)

38

39

MR. SLATS: Alissa Nadine.....

40

41

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Andrew.

42

43

MR. SLATS: Who?

44

45

MS. MCDAVID: Could you repeat that

46

please.

47

48

MS. ROGERS: John Andrew.

49

50

0015

1 MR. SLATS: Uh?

2

3 REPORTER: John Andrew.

4

5 MR. SLATS: Peter -- Phillip K.....

6

7 MS. ROGERS: John Andrew.

8

9 MR. SLATS: Peter K. Peter, Sr.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MR. SLATS: Peter K. Peter, Sr.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 MR. ANDREW: Excused.

18

19 MR. SLATS: Oh, sorry.

20

21 Wassilly B. Alexie.

22

23 MR. ALEXIE: Myron.

24

25 MR. SLATS: Raymond J. Oney.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron.

28

29 MR. SLATS: Myron Naneng, Sr.

30

31 MR. NANENG: Myron.

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 MR. SLATS: Robert J. Hoffman.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 MR. SLATS: Robert J. Hoffman is

40 excused.

41

42 Richard B. Slats votes for Myron.

43

44 Mr. Chairman, we have eight for Myron,
45 one for John Andrew.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard, for
48 taking up the nominations. And, again, congratulations
49 Myron for being the Vice Chairman for the RAC, I

50

0016

1 appreciate your.....

2

3

MR. NANENG: Quyana.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. At this time
I'll go ahead and ask for nominations for Secretary.

7

8

MR. ANDREW: I nominate Richard Slats.

9

10

11

MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, I ask for
unanimous consent to support Richard Slats as
Secretary.

12

13

14

15

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a
nomination by Myron to have unanimous consent for
Richard Slats to be the Secretary. Any opposition.

16

17

18

(No opposition)

19

20

21

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, Richard
Slats, you are the Secretary for the RAC.
Congratulations.

22

23

24

25

MR. SLATS: Thank you. I will do my
best.

26

27

28

29

30

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. And, again,
thank you all for your nominations and your
participation in the election of officers. At this
time if we can go and review previous meeting minutes.
Your meeting minutes are in your booklet on Page 5.

31

32

33

(Pause)

34

35

36

37

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is there a motion on
the floor to adopt the meeting minutes of October 27,
28, 2022.

38

39

40

41

MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, this is Myron.
I move to adopt the meeting minutes of the October 21,
22.

42

43

44

45

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
on the floor to accept the meeting minutes of October
27th, 28th; do I hear a second.

46

47

48

MR. ALEXIE: I second. This is
Wassilly.

49

50

0017

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Seconded by Wassilly.
2 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed, say nay.

7
8 (No opposing votes)

9
10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
11 carries. Thank you.

12
13 We'll go down to No. 9, reports. At
14 this time I'll ask for Council Member reports at this
15 time.

16
17 We'll start on our left side, if we
18 could have Wassilly give a report and then we'll go
19 around the table. Thank you.

20
21 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning. My name is
22 Wassilly Alexie and I'm from Russian Mission. I'm
23 finally attending my first meeting with the RAC and
24 thank you guys for allowing me to come in.

25
26 I don't have much to report but I know
27 I've been to a couple teleconferences.

28
29 It's been a pretty tough couple years
30 without fishing so I'm hoping we can get something to
31 help our people and go out and get some fish for
32 themselves. It's been a pretty tough year trying to
33 subsidize getting food to replace the salmon that we
34 can't go out and get. So hopefully we can get
35 something going.

36
37 Thank you.

38
39 MR. SLATS: This is Richard Slats.
40 Last couple, two or three years now we've been getting
41 restricted from fishing, you know, all these
42 restrictions that we've never had before because we've
43 never had any commercial fishing in our area and then
44 because there's a crash on the Yukon we've been getting
45 restricted and, you know, there's been closures which
46 have never been imposed on us prior to the last two or
47 three years.

48
49 So I just wanted to let that be known
50

0018

1 because we're not of the Yukon and it's never really
2 been established that the fish that we're catching on
3 our rivers are fish from the Yukon because in one of
4 the teleconferences it had been stated that there is,
5 you know, there is a distinct difference between the
6 king salmon on the Yukon and the fish that -- the kings
7 that we get on our rivers because the kings from -- of
8 the Yukon are rich and ours are not, you know, like not
9 as rich as those that we get from the Yukon. We're the
10 ones that are out there, we taste, we know the fish and
11 that -- so I just wanted to point that out, that we're
12 being restricted for no apparent, or obvious reasons
13 that any of these studies in the past and what
14 traditional and local knowledge know about the fish are
15 not really of the Yukon. And we never take anything
16 more than we need.

17

18 So that needs to be looked at.

19

20 And I'm hoping that something gets done
21 about, you know, other restrictions for people of the
22 Yukon because I talked to a leader from the village
23 north of the Yukon and then they said, out on the
24 Coast, that they are being restricted too. So because
25 there is a crash on the Yukon there needs to be more
26 discussion, more studies being done about the crash on
27 the Yukon because we're being given, you know, the
28 brunt of the, you know, we're being looked at as a
29 cause for the crash that is going on when we're not
30 really taking anything more than we ever needed in the
31 past.

32

33 I appreciate everybody's being here.

34

35 It's been a tough two years. We've
36 seen some people go away because of this thing that's
37 been on us and we're still out there trying to do what
38 we need to do so we can get through the winters. I
39 appreciate everybody's time and it's good to see
40 everybody. I'm glad you guys are all here and thank
41 you.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MR. ANDREW: Quyana, Mr. Chairman.

46

47 (In Yup'ik)

48

49 MR. ANDREW: John Andrew from Kwethluk.

50

0019

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

INTERPRETER: Thank you for coming to the meeting. My name is John Andrew. Ever since I was small I've been subsistence -- eating my subsistence food.

MR. ANDREW: Yeah, my name is John W. Andrew from Kwethluk. I've been a long time subsistence and commercial fisherman on our rivers and from way past, pre-1976, prior to intercept fisheries and bottom trawl fisheries out in the Bering Sea, I used to see families all along the Kuskokwim, from the mouth all the way up to above Chuathbaluk on the Kuskokwim full smokehouses every year after year. And starting about 1980s we started getting less and we used to have commercial -- even commercial fisheries from 1968 through early 1980s on the Kuskokwim. And then on the Coast I used to go fish, commfish from here all the way down to in front of Quinhagak and Goodnews and Platinum. Then after they started intercepting our salmon out there no more commercial fishing on our rivers. It's how bad the intercept fisheries are affecting the whole AK AYK region, not just our river only, not just Yukon only, it's been very, very hard since 2016 and it's getting really bad. We've been fighting Alaska Board of Fish and Game and intercept fisheries down in False Pass and Unimak area. Especially this winter it's been a real hard fight and we lost our -- every time we go there and fight the Board of Fish and the intercept fisheries we lose. I think we're not fully -- we see right at the Board of Fish there's about three or four people that are pro-commercial and pro-intercept fisheries there. They don't care whether we die out there or starve out there.

And the last recent years we never meet our amount needs for subsistence on salmon on all our rivers. It's really, really hard. Especially if you come from the village. The cost of living out there is up to over 200 percent compared to Anchorage prices and it's been really hard. Ever since last summer we've been fighting. And even -- they even have in-river management group fighting each other. We're fighting our down river and up river brothers. It's been a real (In Yup'ik)

I could go on but it's pretty hard for me to bring it out. But I have to -- all of us know

0020

1 this one.

2

3 Quyana, Mr. Chairman.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. And,
6 again, Raymond Oney. My Yup'ik name is (In Yup'ik). I
7 was born and raised in Marshall and have been living in
8 Alakanuk for the last 40 years. I've made my home in
9 Alakanuk. I always tell people one spring I just
10 happened to go on a log haul because every spring we
11 look forward to the break up and those were the days
12 that you could see just about everything that comes
13 down the Yukon. And I always tell people that one
14 spring I just happened to hop on a log and it brought
15 me to Alakanuk and that's where I got off and found a
16 beautiful wife and I've been living there ever since.

17

18 Yes, things have been hard for us. It
19 seems like going from bad to worse, even the weather.
20 You know it's pretty hard to predict weather nowadays.
21 I used to listen to the old people what they forecasted
22 for the upcoming summer about the fish and for the
23 salmon that are returning. Right now you don't hear
24 that anymore. The unpredictable weather. Even
25 experiencing Typhoon Merbok, first time in my life
26 I've experienced that type of weather and it seems like
27 it's not getting any better. And we've seen that in
28 the Lower 48, too, going from bad to worse. And like I
29 said it's pretty hard to predict what the weather's
30 going to do from year to year.

31

32 And growing up as a young man I recall
33 living a semi-nomadic lifestyle where we moved from
34 camp to camp going from fish camp, spring camp, winter
35 camp and the village was just a staging ground for
36 people that were doing this kind of living, where
37 they'd come in to the village and get ready for the
38 next season. And right after break up our family would
39 move to a fish camp that's like about 20 miles up the
40 river called Kwethluk, it used to be a tent city at one
41 time. I'm sure Tim recalls some of those days where
42 people were operating one, two fishwheels and everybody
43 shared that fishwheel up until nets came into being
44 probably in the late '50s, early '60s and everyone --
45 everyone from the village went to fishcamp because they
46 had dog team. Every family had a dog team and when we
47 moved -- when we moved to fishcamp we took dogs and
48 all, even our extended family and we'd be there all
49 summer putting up fish and there was no restrictions,

50

0021

1 nobody'd come and tell us that, you know, we have to
2 shut down. We shut down on our own when we felt that
3 we had enough because we had to stop for awhile and to
4 get caught up with cutting the fish.

5

6 That's the kind of lifestyle I remember
7 growing up. You don't see that anymore.

8

9 Dog teams, like I said, was part of all
10 of our lives. And every winter we'd get up early in
11 the morning before the sun gets bright and you'll hear
12 dog teams from one end of town to the other and people
13 going out every morning, especially on weekends because
14 we used to go up to a place called Koyukuduk and there
15 was a little log cabin there where people use it to
16 fish for themselves for pike to feed their dogs, to
17 feed the family and you would see different people that
18 would use that cabin, even from Pilot, that would come
19 to that area to fish for the dogs. You don't see that
20 anymore.

21

22 It's been hard. It's been hard. Even
23 for me setting net this winter. Right at the beginning
24 of freeze up I usually set out a net, I start off with
25 a -- right before freeze up I usually try and get
26 Bering Cisco which is (In Yup'ik) and I start off with
27 that and then winter when the river freezes over I put
28 out a net and I start out with 3.5 inch and then maybe
29 about a month or two then that changes to 4 inch, then
30 5.5, then to 6 inch, I'd keep changing my net all
31 throughout the winter using the same net holes because
32 I use that same net area year after year. And this
33 year's been really hard, really hard, very few fish,
34 very few sheefish, very few (In Yup'ik), that Bering
35 cisco, even the last -- even during the winter right at
36 the beginning I caught a couple of cohos. I was
37 surprised to get coho. First time I've caught coho in
38 the wintertime. And it made me think because of the
39 warm waters that are affecting the Yukon where the fish
40 mingle out in the Bering Sea until it's time for them
41 to go up the river and that seems like that's starting
42 to occur more.

43

44 So there's a lot of things we don't
45 know and we're learning yet about our fisheries and we
46 still got a lot of work to do on fisheries, not only
47 for us but for both Yukon, Kuskokwim and Coastal
48 villages, even people from Bering Sea.

49

50

0022

1 And I thank all those people that
2 provided testimony just recently at the Board of Fish
3 meeting in Anchorage. So I thank all those that were
4 available to give public testimony in regards to
5 Proposal 140.

6
7 So we still got a lot of work to do and
8 people need to come to understand where we're coming
9 from. It seems like -- it seems like we're on the
10 bottom of a totem pole where like John Andrew said, it
11 seems like they don't care about what we do and we live
12 off the land, the resources that it provides as far as
13 I could remember. Everything that we get is from the
14 land, the sea and the air. Everything. And now we're
15 beginning to hear about the fish moving up north and
16 also the birds in the area that are dwindling and the
17 habitats in the area that are being affected by climate
18 change. There's lots that are affecting our area and
19 we do need to be on top of these issues so we could try
20 and find ways to try and see what's causing all these
21 declines for the resources that we heavily depend on as
22 we still do today.

23
24 And, again, I thank you for being here.

25
26 Quyana.

27
28 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana, Ray. Hi. So
29 I'm Jackie Cleveland. My Yup'ik name is (In Yup'ik).
30 And for those of you who don't know me I'm from
31 Quinhagak but my family originally came from Eek. And
32 then my grandparents moved to Quinhagak in the mid-60s,
33 I think and we've been there since.

34
35 So some of the things that are
36 happening currently at home is my aunt, actually, she
37 caught a chrome silver while ice fishing yesterday
38 which was really weird. It wasn't that big but I just
39 thought I'd throw that out there because that never
40 happens.

41
42 Other things we're eating, trout,
43 smelt, ptarmigan, rabbits and people are starting to go
44 seal hunting. And our salmon harvest, overall, I would
45 say it was a little under the met because I guess it's
46 kind of complicated. We have an abundance of reds,
47 which make up most of our catch now. The kings are
48 much smaller and less. They're mostly jacks we caught
49 this year and mostly male. And then almost no chum
50

0023

1 until the end of July when they decided to show up
2 really late which is the first time they've ever done
3 that for us. They did seem like a lot because we
4 hadn't seen them all summer until then but still in the
5 end people were saying that their chum needs wasn't met
6 either in terms of subsistence.

7

8 Silvers were reported less on the
9 Kanektok River but the Arolik River they were doing
10 okay.

11

12 We did not have a commercial fishery in
13 2022. We did have a subsistence and sportfishery out
14 in the bay. The only restriction was no Sundays and
15 six inch mesh nets, 45 fathom, I believe. And then for
16 sport I don't think there were any restrictions there.

17

18 And they were also reporting just not
19 seeing any chum or big kings anymore until the late end
20 of July when the chums came back, made a come back.

21

22 And then we are getting mixed reports
23 about the chum, locally, they are saying, you know,
24 some people are saying their chum needs were not met
25 and some are saying they were so plentiful.

26

27 But I still feel like our bay and
28 rivers are the last standing fishery of this region and
29 we're, as a community, trying to be proactive rather
30 than reactive given the crash of species around the
31 region. So we did submit two proposals to the Board of
32 Fish. One was for the river concerning sportfishery
33 and then one was for the bay, which included
34 subsistence and commercial fisheries. Of the two
35 proposals only one was published which was the
36 sportfish proposal and the other proposal concerning
37 the bay and subsistence and commercial was lost by
38 Board of Fish and then found and then now we're going
39 to have -- they're going to have a special meeting on
40 April 19th at 4:30 p.m., and comment deadline of April
41 7. And then there's a special action request as you
42 all know, from the agenda, that came from the Native
43 Village of Quinhagak as well which mirrors the
44 proposal, the sportfish proposal to the Board of Fish.

45

46 Some other -- some new news, I guess.
47 Fish and Game, or the State had announced that the chum
48 are closed for sportfish in our -- or everywhere, but
49 in Quinhagak and Goodnews, for Goodnews, Arolik and

50

0024

1 Kanektok Rivers, and then they also announced there is
2 no commercial fishing this year due to low numbers of
3 chum. But NVK, Native Village of Quinhagak is looking
4 into funding to find a way to collect this data and we
5 have a couple of hopeful options we're looking into
6 which we'll find out more about on Thursday when
7 there's -- after the meeting there.

8

9 And then finally the most recent thing
10 is NVK, or Native Village of Quinhagak will be
11 submitting a proposal to extend our existing moose hunt
12 from September 1 to 30 to September 1 to October 15 to
13 align better with our neighboring watersheds.

14

15 And I'll stop there.

16

17 Thanks.

18

19 MR. PARKS: Good morning. (In Yup'ik)
20 Since we have an interpreter here I told her earlier
21 that I'm going to speak in Yup'ik so I'll start off
22 talking in Yup'ik.

23

24 Quyana

25

26 (In Yup'ik)

27

28 INTERPRETER: My Yup'ik name is (In
29 Yup'ik). I am from the tundra villages, from
30 Nunapitchuk. I am a fisherman, hunter, trapper and I
31 also use snares. That's who I am, a hunter. I'm also
32 a berry picker. I don't sit around. And I've become
33 this age. I -- my body's starting to slow down, I'm
34 not as active as I used to be when I was younger and
35 because I am a fisherman during the time I am able, for
36 the process where my fishing -- of those of us that are
37 trying to survive on the Kuskokwim, including the Yukon
38 River. When I look at our subsistence way of life we
39 have many issues including moose, ptarmigan and other
40 animals that we eat on while we are trying to survive
41 off of the land.

42

43 There's one thing that is really a big
44 issue and we hear about False Pass. They are
45 interfering the fish that are coming up the Kuskokwim
46 River into the Yukon River. They are taking a lot of
47 our fish. And sometimes it makes me have a feeling of
48 like a jealousy feeling, and we haven't had commercial
49 fishing for a long time and the only time we fish is
50

0025

1 for subsistence and -- but when the fish is being taken
2 away from us, I don't like that, and being restricted
3 all the time. And yet the other fisheries, like the
4 trawlers and Area M, they should be restricted more
5 than us. I cannot completely talk about this because I
6 don't -- I'm not around their area but I know they make
7 a lot of money off of our king salmons and we haven't
8 had commercial fishing for a long time.

9
10 And the bycatches in the Bering Sea is
11 a big issue and a problem for many years. Estimating
12 100,000, they take king salmon, not only the Kuskokwim
13 River, but including the Yukon River. If we have 20
14 families and 100,000 -- when we reach the -- that is a
15 lot of fish that could have gone to family members.
16 It's like taking away the food from the -- the bycatch
17 is too much. I am not against them but it makes me
18 feel jealous because they are taking so much of our
19 survival food. We know there's a boundary line and
20 those of us that are always being restricted, maybe we
21 need to let them move their boundary line, that's what
22 I ask myself.

23
24 And in the past, I have a lot of
25 relatives over in this river, the Tom cods, I like the
26 Tom cods because I -- the subsistence way of life is
27 the most important for me that I get from the ocean and
28 from our rivers, I really like the Tom cods. I used to
29 catch them in Kwethluk. And to this day, including the
30 years before they're not as abundant as they used to
31 be. There used to be a lot of Tom cods and they're
32 becoming less and less. I used to get a lot of Tom
33 cods from the river but maybe I'm wondering, too, that
34 the trawlers maybe they might be catching the Tom cods
35 as well so it makes me confused.

36
37 So if we think about all these things
38 it will be better toward -- because subsistence way of
39 life is the most important for me. And we've eaten
40 that way beginning from our ancestors and if it's God's
41 will that we are to pass it on to the next generation,
42 especially the two that I mentioned, the trawlers are
43 affecting the amount of fish we're getting here. I may
44 be making a mistake but that's -- when I think about it
45 that's what I come up with. Maybe I'm wrong.

46
47 But I don't want to take too much time,
48 I have a lot to say, but I'm thankful for several
49 openings so that we can get fish for our subsistence
50

0026

1 food. And if it's God's will summer is coming and fish
2 are coming up and we look forward to that because it is
3 our food.

4
5 I am glad that Fish and Wildlife are
6 here.

7
8 I am looking forward to fishing this
9 summer and I will thankful when you open -- give us an
10 opening and do not open on Sundays because Sunday is a
11 day of rest and also don't open 6 a.m., maybe open at
12 9.

13
14 Qu yana, Mr. Chairman.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Is
17 there anyone online, Myron, Alissa or Norma want to
18 give a report.

19
20 MR. NANENG: Good morning, this is
21 Myron.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Myron.

24
25 MR. NANENG: First of all, I'd like to
26 thank everyone for being here. And I'm glad we're able
27 to talk about the issues that we have to work on so
28 hard for so many years, or we have been working on for
29 many years and will continue to work on.

30
31 I'd like to thank Ray -- not Ray, but
32 Richard Slats, for his work on getting customary and
33 traditional use recognition for the village of Hooper
34 Bay, Chevak and Scammon Bay of the salmon that swim
35 along the Coast there, that maybe are found up North or
36 somewhere. I'm really appreciative that our people in
37 those three villages are recognized for being
38 subsistence users of that salmon that swim along the
39 Coast and Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay as well.

40
41 I attended the Board of Fish meeting
42 last -- when they had the AYK meeting. One of the
43 things that kind of shocked me was the question by one
44 of the Board of Fish members; was, what's -- how's the
45 test case of the subsistence user that was cited,
46 what's the status of it. At some point I'd like to
47 hear from both Fish and Game as well Fish and Wildlife,
48 what the status of this is, are we now being
49 criminalized for trying to put food on the table like
50

0027

1 we have been over the years while commercial fisheries
2 are still being executed without regard to the needs of
3 the people or the rest of the state that rely on salmon
4 stocks for food.

5
6 That's my question.

7
8 Because that was a question asked by a
9 Board of Fish member.

10
11 And another issue, out in the village
12 of Hooper Bay, you know, there's -- for the last few
13 years there has not been much subsistence salmon
14 fishing because they've been monitored by both Fish and
15 Wildlife Service as well as State law enforcement and
16 being restricted on harvesting salmon for food. That's
17 where the test case comes in.

18
19 And one of the things that we work on
20 at the village of Hooper Bay is that we have lands that
21 produce the highest number of migratory birds in the
22 world. Nesting populations of birds that come into our
23 region. And our people at the local village have been
24 making a concerted effort not to disturb those nesting
25 grounds. And here at the same time, I know we were
26 told not to be political, but King Cove Road, that has
27 impact on black brant as well as emperor geese. You
28 know they're starting to winter there and now they're
29 talking about building a road there that will impact
30 the feeding grounds for those birds, yet, our people at
31 the village of Hooper Bay and the surrounding villages
32 are expected to conserve these birds for the future and
33 at the same time they're being restricted from being
34 able to fish for salmon and becoming criminals because
35 they're trying to put food on the table.

36
37 And as Henry just mentioned, there's
38 hardly any Tom cods that people are catching along the
39 Coast, both at Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, they're
40 starting to catch mostly smelts and people are saying,
41 well, it's part of the impacts by climate change. And
42 the Merbok storm of September was the highest level of
43 water around the village of Hooper Bay that was never
44 seen before. The sand dunes that protect the village
45 along the Coast, along the beach, people had estimated
46 that it would take up to 10 years, or less, before they
47 erode away but in two days they were completely eroded
48 away and now it's flat. So the village is going to be
49 impacted in the future by the storms that usually occur
50

0028

1 during the fall time. We have a boardwalk that we have
2 -- the village corporation of Hooper Bay is working
3 with USDA, Fish and Wildlife Service, to prevent off
4 road vehicles from going all over the place and to
5 prevent impacts on nesting grounds. We've been working
6 on that since 2013. And one of the things that we're
7 seeing is that back in 2013 there were 400 nesting
8 pairs of black brants on our lands at Toksook Bay, the
9 year after we started implementing at the village level
10 the restrictions of use of all terrain vehicles on the
11 lands, there was 1,400 nesting pairs that were counted
12 by Fish and Wildlife Service. You know our people are
13 conservators of the resources that we live off of. One
14 of our elders at the village made a comment, do not
15 disturb the land because the land is your food source,
16 it's your plate. So we take that very seriously and we
17 hope that both Fish and Wildlife Service and ADF&G work
18 with us instead of trying to criminalize our people
19 from trying to harvest food that they're being
20 restricted on because of the need for conservation, yet
21 they allow -- the State of Alaska allows for commercial
22 fisheries to occur down in Area M. And they claim,
23 well, we're going to restrict the number of hours that
24 they're fishing but last year, both on the Yukon and
25 the Kuskokwim there was hardly any king salmon on the
26 Yukon, very few on the Kuskokwim, hardly any chum
27 salmon going into both of the rivers as well as hardly
28 any coho going up those two river systems.

29
30 So I think that there's a lot of work
31 to be done. And you won't get this done unless you
32 work with the people that have relied on this resource
33 for centuries. If you try and criminalize people at
34 the village for these things it's not going to help the
35 resource in coming back, the numbers, yet, our people
36 are the ones that bear the most heaviest burden of
37 conservation in an effort to keep these resources
38 available for food.

39
40 So my question to both Fish and
41 Wildlife Service as well as for Fish and Game, are they
42 going to continue to criminalize our people for trying
43 to put food on the table.

44
45 You know the moose population would not
46 have increased on the Yukon if it wasn't for people's
47 efforts to increase those numbers up on the Yukon River
48 area. You know both the State, the Feds and the
49 villages agreed to a five year moratorium and the
50

1 villages, on their own put two additional years on the
2 moratorium, it wasn't at the urging of the State or the
3 Feds, the villages did that on their own. And today is
4 the result that everybody's concerned about over
5 population of moose on the Yukon area and they're
6 concerned that it might be crashing at some point in
7 the future, which might happen but today the people in
8 the villages on the Yukon, as well as along the Coast
9 in the vicinity of the Yukon are able to harvest two
10 moose during the year and it can either be a bull, a
11 cow or a calf. That's what working together, is an
12 example of what conservation can mean for the benefit
13 of the people that live in the villages.

14
15 We're losing ground for the nesting
16 areas for the birds because of the floods that have
17 occurred. And some of the stocks -- the fish stocks
18 that our people rely on are not as available as they
19 used to be, we cited the example of Tom cods, and the
20 size of the halibut that our people are now starting to
21 fish for, the size of those have shrunk because of the
22 bycatch that's occurring out in the Bering Sea.

23
24 Last year it was reported by some of
25 the folks that work down in Area M that there was a
26 large number of coho that was caught two weeks before
27 they arrived to the river systems, the Yukon or the
28 Kuskokwim, two weeks before that a large number of
29 cohos were intercepted down in Area M. So I think
30 there needs to be better science but sometimes when our
31 people say something about reconsider that science and
32 they mention something about -- they say that they know
33 is occurring, the response that we get from the
34 agencies is usually that's anecdotal, because they say
35 it wasn't studied by someone who may have a PhD or is
36 attending college to make whatever the observation that
37 our elders have seen over the years to be verified by
38 someone who may have put it in writing.

39
40 So, you know, we've seen how we can
41 work together, we've seen how things can be created
42 where we don't want to support the State of Alaska in
43 its management of fisheries and sometimes the same
44 thing happens with Fish and Wildlife Service and we
45 need to stay focused on the effort to have food on the
46 table for many of our people in the villages because
47 the land provides, the rivers and the ocean provides,
48 let's not kill it off.

49
50

0030

1 So with that, thank you everyone and I
2 hope we have a good meeting for the rest and come up
3 with some ideas that can be beneficial to continue to
4 protect the resources that we rely on for food.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Myron. I'll
9 call Alissa and then Norma for their report.

10
11 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 Through the Chair. Going from our last subsistence
13 report in October through April.

14
15 I feel like for our whole entire region
16 it's been pretty tough for people all around. The
17 reports that I've been getting from folks and issues
18 all the way up from the headwaters of the Kuskokwim,
19 Russian Mission, Marshall on the Yukon all the way down
20 along the Coast back through our Kuskokwim and people
21 from Manokotak have been calling and letting me know
22 how difficult it has been gathering and fishing and
23 their normal traditional lifestyles.

24
25 One thing that was pointed out is
26 because of Covid people got used to having that surplus
27 of money and because they no longer have that surplus
28 of money coming in they're having to rely back on
29 subsistence lifestyles. Some of the things they
30 brought up was is that money was good for buying gas
31 and things they needed for their homes. Folks who
32 actually used it correctly.

33
34 And then this past year, November
35 through April it was kind of -- it was pretty tough
36 trying to go out. It was -- by snowmachine or access
37 -- hunting trails because of the weather, the weather
38 was -- it would get super cold, freeze over, and then
39 it'd be good for like a day and a half and then melt.
40 And we've experienced the same thing too here in Bethel
41 with our family. There would be times where we'd be
42 able to go out and we'd have to request time off to go
43 out hunting when the weather was good because the snow
44 would be plentiful, it'd be hard, good shell on top and
45 then within that day, around 2:30, 3:00 o'clock in the
46 afternoon completely melted to the tundra and just
47 bumpy and brown. It's been like this pretty much the
48 whole entire year. We've had some really really strong
49 winds that completely melt everything, ruined dry meat,
50

0031

1 ruined fish I was trying to dry so I would have to
2 start all over.

3
4 And we've had such issues with ravens
5 this year too. There's more ravens that are being a
6 nuisance than previous years. We had to improvise how
7 to protect our drying racks, how to protect our meat
8 racks from ravens. They even went after my eggs. Oh,
9 this past winter.

10
11 We have -- let me check -- we were
12 successful this year, finally, after two years of not
13 being able to get any moose, we went moose hunting in
14 March (In Yup'ik), we ended up going all the way to the
15 Yukon, all the way across to the Yukon, we didn't want
16 to drive around for long periods of times on the north
17 side of Johnson so we wanted to make sure we got one
18 this year because our freezers were empty. We have no
19 fish, no moose and it was getting very, very expensive
20 trying to buy groceries from Target, Amazon and AC
21 Store and Fred Meyer and Carrrs, even with a food stamp
22 card, it's still expensive.

23
24 I couldn't believe the price, our
25 oxtails at the store here, they were -- just for one
26 package of maybe two big oxtails and eight little tiny
27 ones it was like 60 bucks, and then when I buy the
28 family back of chuck roast it's big enough, like about
29 the size if I put my hands together and spread them
30 out, both my hands, that was almost 100 dollars and so
31 I was like this is ridiculous, I can't believe the
32 prices, it's just insane.

33
34 I'm so thankful we were able to get
35 some moose this year.

36
37 As far as fishing there's been --
38 people have been sending me lots of pictures of fish
39 they catch and let me know what their catch is for
40 under the ice fishing. Here -- here on the Kuskokwim
41 there was still reports of coho and chum being caught
42 underneath the ice all the way through March. There
43 was at least two to three fish per month that were
44 being caught and people would take pictures, text me,
45 let me know where they were fishing, what time and when
46 they went to check their nets and there was still
47 salmon being caught underneath the ice. They were
48 pretty spawned out looking. They weren't rotten
49 looking they just were pretty spawned out. And even on
50

0032

1 the Yukon as well there was folks catching king salmon,
2 coho, chum and I think the last picture that was sent
3 to me not too long ago, I believe in February, someone
4 sent me a picture of a pink salmon, male pink salmon
5 that was pretty spawned out looking. It was caught
6 near Tin Can. Tin Can used to be where my grandpa
7 would go fishing, it was one of our fishing grounds
8 where we used to commercial fish and set our nets and
9 our winter nets as well.

10

11 Out on the Coast in Scammon, I got
12 reports of people catching salmon through the ice and
13 through their nets all the way through until February.
14 The last one, picture that I got, was from Scammon Bay
15 who had their ice net in the river and then they went
16 out fishing in Black River, near the coast of Black
17 River and caught a couple salmon, one was a jack salmon
18 and the other one was a chum salmon. They looked
19 really good, they didn't look spawned out at all. They
20 looked like they were just coming in for the year, like
21 our fish come back. But they had white on their noses.
22 During the fishing.

23

24 Then I got another picture last month,
25 mid of last month, there were folks that were on the
26 Coast for smelts and Tom cods and they caught a pretty
27 fat -- pretty good size looking jack, jack salmon with
28 white on its nose. It wasn't fleshed out or anything,
29 or spawned out looking, really healthy looking but the
30 meat was white. It was white meat. And they were
31 scared and they were asking me, could we eat it, could
32 we eat it, and I was like I told them to call Fish and
33 Game and find out or check because I know down in
34 Southeast they have salmon that has white meat, I was
35 thinking maybe they mixed breded or it got lost.

36

37 This spring there was quite a bit of
38 jackrabbits, jackrabbit season -- this year -- I've
39 been seeing lots of people posting that they've caught
40 quite a bit of jackrabbits so I think they're on a peak
41 year. But even because there's so much jackrabbit
42 doesn't mean our people have to go out and shoot them
43 all knowing that jackrabbit is on the decline and
44 they're trying to conduct studies to understand how
45 come our jackrabbit has been declining. We need to
46 tell our young folks that just because they see a
47 jackrabbit, if you need to shoot, but if you don't need
48 to shoot, don't shoot. We need to get our studies back
49 up, including with our owls, our snowy owls. We
50

0033

1 haven't seen snowy owls in a long time and I think
2 maybe a year and a half ago or two years ago was the
3 last (In Yup'ik) that was caught so again we need to
4 tell our young folks that they need to be cautious
5 about animals we don't get to see very often and just
6 because you see them doesn't mean you get to shoot
7 them.

8
9 Blackfish started pretty early this
10 year. I think it was because we had such an early
11 winter, and we are having a elongated winter. They
12 were pretty skinny. Our blackfish in our blackfish
13 grounds this year were pretty skinny. I was surprised.
14 I was wondering if something happened to their food
15 source or if they were sick or if something was going
16 on. But I checked a couple places and we've moved
17 quite a bit to check other spots for blackfish, nothing
18 -- nothing bigger than my hand. We didn't hit jackpot
19 this year but at least we had food on the table. I
20 seen some people on the Yukon have caught really big
21 blackfish which was nice to see because that's where
22 all the big blackfish are. My grandpa used to tell me
23 -- my grandma and grandpa used to tell me they used to
24 go up to the lake and just pluck them out, just grab
25 them by the head and just pull them out of the ice back
26 in the day, nowadays you can't even do that.

27
28 What else.

29
30 (Pause)

31
32 I lost my thought.

33
34 We -- we weren't very successful in
35 ptarmigan hunting this year. We tried to go out
36 ptarmigan hunting but it was too warm for the Bethel
37 area this year. The snow didn't stick as well as we
38 thought it would so the ride was pretty bumpy. It was
39 like -- it was like getting bucked off your snowmachine
40 every 15 -- 15 seconds, super bumpy and you had to
41 stand and it was rough trying to bring kids with --
42 with us, because it was so bumpy and we had to go super
43 slow. It was also very stormy though and it was only
44 good weather when we had to work, it feels like. It
45 was only calm when it was time to go to work.

46
47 When we went out the last time it said
48 it was supposed to be good weather and it was nice
49 weather for the most part of it but when we went toward
50

0034

1 (In Yup'ik) side it started to rain and it was freezing
2 rain and that's the kind of weather that's no good for
3 snowmachining or being out in the tundra with little
4 kids so we ended up having to come home after awhile.
5 And it seemed like it was like that every time we (In
6 Yup'ik), It'd be nice weather and we'd go and then
7 halfway through the day, after the afternoon, it would
8 get frozen and start to freeze up and start raining and
9 everything would get super -- super brown on us as we
10 were out there so we had to be careful of creeks and
11 trying to avoid open water. The terrain this year was
12 pretty rough. It was semi-good to start off of but it
13 started to get rough and very slow going.

14
15 We've lost a lot of good people this
16 year. I wanted -- I hoped to take a couple minutes to
17 recognize Mr. Bob Aloysius; for the birds in the air,
18 to the animals on the land, and to the bugs beneath our
19 feet. For all his great and wonderful work that he has
20 done for us and teaching us his wisdom and guidance.

21
22 (In Yup'ik) Bob Aloysius. You're very
23 missed. You're very honored. And so thankful that we
24 got to know you and be a part of our lives and us a
25 part of yours.

26
27 Quyana, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.
30 Norma. Norma Evan.

31
32 MS. EVAN: Good morning, Mr. Chair. T
33 his fall in the Marshall area we did not get eels but
34 the surrounding villages did get eels, I think due to
35 the years of erosion and winter blowing from the muddy
36 lakes changed the channels below Marshall and made new
37 sand bars and channels on the river.

38
39 Moose hunting was plentiful in our
40 region. Moose counts during the week of February 5
41 through 11 showed large numbers -- large populations of
42 moose on all the large sand bars starting from Devil's
43 Elbow above Marshall and to across Pilot Station.

44
45 Wolves are also on the rise. During a
46 few winter nights they can be heard howling at nights
47 from across the river.

48
49 We had very deep snow this -- over the
50

0035

1 past few months and the moose were running around, even
2 in front of town getting, I think, sanctuary for the
3 moose.

4
5 Ice is thicker than last year.
6 Whitefish catches were picking up on the week of
7 February 12 and then the first sheefish was reported
8 caught on February 21st. Setnetters reported catching
9 bigger pikes than usual, about five feet, while the
10 week of February 19th, setnetters seen an increase of
11 whitefish. Fish catches, one reported catching 10
12 whitefish overnight. Ice levels are lower in
13 Chuathbaluk, (indiscernible). Fishers reported sunken
14 ice where mud was visible possibly due to permafrost
15 melt.

16
17 Rabbit populations were also high but
18 no one reported catching the rabbits. There's also
19 been a visual decrease in the small birds, that stay
20 the winter, the chickadees and the common redpole
21 birds.

22
23 Questions.

24
25 No one reported any sores or lumps on
26 the sheefish or whitefish yet.

27
28 I had some questions to bring to mind
29 with the Cleary Creek Mine near Fairbanks, will it
30 affect our salmon, no matter during the summer or fall
31 we do have fry salmon, or eggs in the river systems.

32
33 Can our salmon shortage be
34 environmental.

35
36 Can the fry survive in their new
37 ecosystem with methane emissions.

38
39 (Indiscernible) visible in our region.
40 I have not seen much fry salmon in the river for the
41 past three years and they are usually very visible near
42 the shore.

43
44 Maybe that's something UAF can look
45 into if there's a mortality rate for fry salmon in our
46 spawning grounds where methane emissions are visible.

47
48 And I also did contact the State if we
49 could start sending in fish samples for mercury
50

0036

1 testing.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Council, that's
4 my report from Marshall area.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma. Is
7 there any other Council members that may be online that
8 we maybe missed.

9

10 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, this is Myron.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

13

14 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I forgot to add that
15 the Yukon River has a U.S./Canada Treaty with an
16 escapement objective of -- back in the 1990s the
17 escapement objective of chinook salmon entered the
18 Canada side was like about 45,000, that escapement
19 objective that was agreed to between the U.S. and
20 Canada is one part of the reason why there's
21 restrictions of fishing on the Yukon. They're saying
22 that, oh, well, we need to try and meet this escapement
23 objective so we'll restrict the mesh size nets so that
24 they wouldn't harvest any chinook salmon but when the
25 numbers of the chums were higher than what they were
26 last summer, that fishing also was restricted for chums
27 and other fish species. The State of Alaska is part of
28 the -- included as part of the agreement between U.S.
29 and Canada, State of Alaska also has that obligation to
30 meet that escapement objective. What I cannot
31 understand is that they allow intercept fisheries to
32 occur in Area M that last year reported that they got
33 over 63,000 chinook salmon. If I'm wrong I want to
34 hear it from Fish and Game that that's not the right
35 number. So I think there really has to be a commitment
36 by the State of Alaska by closing commercial fisheries
37 that intercept salmon that are bound for the Yukon. I
38 know that they've tried to do what they call genetic ID
39 studies of these salmon stocks for the Yukon and the
40 Kuskokwim but they never -- the Fish and Game and their
41 Administration never seem to agree that whatever
42 numbers that they say are provided are true numbers.

43

44 So I just want to bring that out as
45 part of why we have restrictions on the Yukon for other
46 salmon stocks other than the chinook salmon, because of
47 that U.S./Canada treaty obligation. And I do believe
48 the State of Alaska has to participate, fully
49 participate in meeting that Treaty obligation.

50

0037

1 Quyana, Mr. Chair.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Thank
5 you, Myron. Is there any other Council members that we
6 might have missed while we were giving our reports,
7 that would want to give their report at this time.

7

8 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, Alissa.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Brooke.

13

14 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry Alissa. I just
15 wanted to note that I did hear from James Landlord and
16 his plane is coming so perhaps we could just let him
17 give his report this afternoon when he gets here.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. If
22 there's no other reports I want to thank you.....

23

24 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, Alissa, did you
27 want to comment.

28

29 MS. ROGERS: Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank
30 you, Mr. Chair. Through the Chair. I just wanted to
31 add in to what Myron is saying, but it's not going to
32 be coming from Alaska Department of Fish and Game, they
33 can't do anything, it's going to have to come through
34 North Pacific Management Council because those are the
35 governing bodies who govern the Board of Fish and to
36 govern the North Pacific Management Fishery you have to
37 talk to your Congresswoman and she's going to have to
38 discuss those items with Congress to issue.....

39

40 MR. NANENG: Yeah.

41

42 MS. ROGERS:the needs for our
43 region and the importance of subsistence needs. So
44 they're going to have to advocate on our behalf and
45 fight for our behalf because we can't expect folks who
46 are only following and doing their job to do their job
47 without any power or tools that they have.

48

49 So if we want to do something, Mr.

50

0038

1 Chair -- through the Chair -- I suggest that we write a
2 letter to Congress, if possible, as a Federal
3 Subsistence body of the Yukon, Kuskokwim area
4 requesting that they acknowledge subsistence as a
5 priority and the importance of subsistence to our
6 people and include the justification and scientific
7 notation of the importance of subsistence and how it
8 affects us. It was presented at the Board of Fish and
9 Game there is a significant black hole in the
10 subsistence decrease over the year in which no one
11 reported how people were able to manage over the past
12 years to limit the decline of subsistence fisheries.
13 And if we could get those justifications and that
14 letter written and have all the other RACs within the
15 state who are affected by subsistence sign on to that
16 unified letter, with -- where they could make
17 amendments and changes and then by our next meeting,
18 the fall meeting, you would be able to finalize that
19 letter and send it off.

20
21 Mr. Chair.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa, for
24 that.

25
26 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, it's Myron.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

29
30 MR. NANENG: Yeah, State of Alaska
31 participates in these negotiations. They started back
32 in the late 1980s, early 1990s of that Treaty
33 obligation. State of Alaska was the one that headed a
34 negotiating team with Canada. I was a member of that
35 negotiating team back in late 1980s and early 1990s.
36 My comment to the Commissioner of Fish and Game, who
37 happened to be Chuck Meechum back then, I said to him
38 we ought to try and deal with some of the issues that
39 we have in state to address some of the concerns that
40 we have with the low escapement numbers that are
41 beginning to show up. After I made that comment, one
42 week later I got a letter from the Commissioner of Fish
43 and Game stating that my services were no longer needed
44 because of that comment. So that is why the State of
45 Alaska is also under that Treaty obligation to meet
46 that escapement objective and the State of Alaska,
47 Department of Fish and Game Commissioner takes the lead
48 in negotiating with the Canadian counterparts. So it's
49 not just the Federal side, it's also State of Alaska
50

0039

1 that's obligated under that Treaty.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Myron.
6 I want to remind those that do have questions from this
7 body, from this Council, for those that are going to be
8 giving reports, whether it be from Fish and Wildlife or
9 Fish and Game, if you guys could keep those questions
10 in mind and bring it up to them when they give their
11 reports, that would be beneficial if they don't already
12 got an answer for you.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 Thank you all for your reports and,
17 again, we'll hear from James Landlord, I believe he's
18 on his way and he'll give his report later on this
19 afternoon.

20

21 Before we go into the next item, public
22 and tribal comment on non-agenda items, I'll ask for a
23 10 minute break.

24

25 (Off record)

26

27 (On record)

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Maybe we could take our
30 seats now and continue our meeting.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, I'll go ahead and
35 call the meeting back to order, the time now is 11:25
36 a.m. Next on our agenda is public and tribal comment
37 on non-agenda items. At this time I'll go ahead and
38 call Tim Andrew to go ahead and give his comments.

39

40 Tim.

41

42 MR. ANDREW: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
43 Members of the Regional Advisory Council. Staff and
44 guests. My name is Timothy Andrew. My mother, when I
45 was born, named me (In Yup'ik) before giving me a
46 taxpayer name of Tim Andrew. I was born and raised in
47 the community of Marshall on the Yukon River as a
48 subsistence dependent individual very much like
49 everyone else from the villages and from the area and
50

0040

1 grew up with eating salmon, moose, bear, rabbits and
2 everything off the land as much as all of you had
3 indicated on your reports to the Council.
4

5 I share the same concerns for the
6 salmon, the sustainability of the salmon on the Yukon
7 River and Kuskokwim River and also out on the Coastal
8 areas as well as Richard had indicated in his report.
9

10 There is a great concern all throughout
11 the area. Our salmon stocks are starting to dwindle.
12 Our lush fish, which used to be on the Yukon River,
13 used to be three, three and a half feet long, have
14 reduced down to a foot and a half and possibly up to
15 two feet. But those are becoming very rare.
16 There's also very erratic runs of the lamprey eel that
17 we have seen over the years. Back in the 1960s when I
18 was a kid, and, Mr. Chair, you'd probably relate to
19 this very well, is, we used to have a great abundance
20 of the lamprey run on the Yukon River and they were
21 very, very predictable, they were always at the end of
22 October and early November and now we're starting to
23 see runs that come in as late as late November as they
24 make their way up the Yukon River.
25

26 A lot of these issues are starting to
27 fall upon us.
28

29 Erratic runs.
30

31 High runs, low runs, and sometimes
32 total absolute runs of these various fish that come up
33 our rivers. And the production of the blackfish as
34 well. I believe it was back in the mid- mid- to early
35 2000s we started seeing some erratic issues starting to
36 occur with our blackfish on this side of the river,
37 places that were abundant in blackfish were very -- it
38 was very odd, you know, people depend on -- people tend
39 to go to places where they know that there's a lot of
40 species that they can kind of -- like blackfish. They
41 go there, you know, for years and years and years and
42 years and family just carries on and on and on, but
43 some of the years they were starting to fluctuate quite
44 a bit since we had that warm spell back in 20 -- I
45 can't remember the year but we had temperatures up to
46 the '90s, and we had very early break ups, you know,
47 the Fukushima incident that occurred in Japan, major
48 earthquakes, major, major weather changes, a lot of
49 that probably has a lot to do with that as well. The
50

0041

1 high surges of sea waters coming on our lands with the
2 -- with Merbok, which people commonly refer to as
3 Merbok (ph), lots of concerns.

4
5 Even the Kilbuk Caribou Herd, you know,
6 we've seen that population go up to 220,000 animals
7 back in 1996 and it's down to less than 12,000 today.

8
9 A lot of changes are occurring on this
10 land and all these changes are affecting how we gather,
11 how we feed ourselves, how we share with each other as
12 well.

13
14 Back in 20 -- in 1996 when there were
15 220,000 caribou we were allowed up to five but now we
16 can't even go out there and hunt caribou. But we have
17 an abundance of moose. We have an abundance of beaver.
18 We have an abundance of various other animals that we
19 can depend on.

20
21 But missing our salmon, which is a
22 pretty good -- very big contributor to our diet, is it
23 affects the heart and soul of people.

24
25 When we had initially started the
26 declines of the salmon run, king salmon run on the
27 Yukon River we took a press tour that went from
28 Marshall down to Mountain Village, then back to Bethel
29 and we heard a lot of testimony, a lot of people
30 saying, you know, this is our heart and soul. This is
31 what we've depended on for years. And this is what
32 we've -- the point that we've come to. And, you know,
33 thought we had a low year that year and we hoped and
34 prayed that it was just a low year but it just became a
35 -- almost a way of life, not expecting salmon, you
36 know, the Yukon River people, this is going to be your
37 fourth year of no salmon, and same thing here on the
38 Kuskokwim, we're starting to see these low returns, and
39 it affects us horribly. It affects us family-wise,
40 community-wise, what we feed people. A lot of the
41 feeds that I've gone to in the more recent years here
42 in Bethel, although we have -- we were provided the
43 opportunity to fish, you know, becoming this late in
44 the season, even throughout the year there's hardly any
45 salmon on the table anymore. We used to have -- we
46 used to experience, as we go to these various feeds,
47 there'd always to be salmon, dried salmon, (In Yup'ik)
48 and all the different ways that people prepare salmon
49 but we don't see that anymore. (In Yup'ik) you know,
50

0042

1 we miss them. Even our little children that have
2 depended on the salmon miss them.

3

4 But there are three points that I would
5 like to inform the Council.

6

7 One. Last fall I introduced -- or
8 informed the Board about the lawsuit that was filed
9 here for Eric Bore versus the State of Alaska. This
10 past -- in the month of March they held a hearing here
11 in Bethel and we also had a very informative meeting
12 about the basis and the cause of the lawsuit that had
13 occurred, that Eric Bore had filed. It turns out he
14 was a kid back in 1965. Lived in the community of
15 Alakanuk and went up and down the Yukon River and
16 witnessed the abundance of salmon, witnessed the
17 happiness of people back then and throughout the most
18 recent years started seeing the declines, you know,
19 down to absolutely nothing that we're encountering
20 today. So he filed suit based on the sustained yield
21 clauses of the Alaska Constitution. And that part of
22 the Constitution of Alaska mandates all management
23 agencies of the natural resources, whether it be
24 salmon, whether it be timber, whether it be grass
25 lands, et cetera, that they manage it on a sustained
26 yield principle. And Bore is citing that -- Bore is
27 citing that the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and
28 Game is not doing that, they're not managing on
29 sustained yield. We've seen it, each and every one of
30 you that have provided testimony informing each other
31 and us that it's not happening, it's not -- I mean the
32 salmon resources, the Kilbuck Caribou Herd, and other
33 resources that we've seen declines on are not being
34 managed according to the sustained yield principle in
35 the Constitution, and it's hurting us and they're also
36 giving away our salmon, our caribou to other parties,
37 other than subsistence, you know, through actions of
38 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council where
39 the State of Alaska maintains a five out of the nine
40 voting seats on the Council, we have the Board of
41 Fisheries that many of you had attended; John Andrew
42 and Father Martin and others that may have -- and
43 Jackie that have attended the Board of Fisheries. Over
44 the years we have pounded our fists, we've said, you
45 know, our salmon are declining, we want to limit the
46 bycatch, we want to limit the interception that's
47 occurring in the Area M fishery but all of our
48 testimony that we provided -- you know we need that
49 sustained yield, we want the salmon to come back year
50

0043

1 after year after year after year, like Richard says, we
2 only harvest what we need and let the rest go in hopes
3 that our future generations are able to enjoy the same
4 things that we have depended on over, you know, 10,
5 25,000 years that we've lived on this land. You know
6 people say you are what you eat and we are what we eat.
7

8 But Bore contends that it is not being
9 managed sustainably. And at the court hearing that was
10 held on -- I can't remember what the date of the
11 hearing was but it was the mid part of March, but the
12 State of Alaska, motioned to dismiss the case before
13 Superior Court Judge Nathaniel Peters on the basis that
14 Bore has no substance. They kept -- the State's
15 attorney kept indicating that the Department of Fish
16 and game is managing all resources on a sustained yield
17 principle, what does that sustained yield principle
18 mean. They kept -- they also kept citing the Native
19 Village versus Alaska Peninsula Marketing Association,
20 Area M -- the Area M marketers for the salmon, they
21 kept mentioning that lawsuit and they also kept saying
22 that they're managing on sustained yield and they kept
23 saying throughout the court proceeding that they are a
24 world renowned managing agency but it's just not
25 happening. It's not happening, you know, on our front,
26 in our eyes, by the actions of the Board of Fisheries
27 and also the five voting members of the North Pacific
28 Fisheries Management Council.
29

30 So, you know, based on what all of you
31 are saying and based on the actions that we've seen at
32 these management levels, that I encourage -- and I
33 don't know if the RAC can do this or not but it
34 definitely write a -- or have your attorney or OSM
35 Staff, if they can, file a friends of the court
36 briefing supporting Bore to not have Judge Nathaniel
37 Peters dismiss the case because we need to hear it, we
38 need to establish some kind of a final conclusion on
39 it. What is sustained yield, you know, all of us have
40 a different concept of sustained yield and there's also
41 scientific portions of sustained yield as well,
42 biological escapement goals and a whole myriad of other
43 types of sustainability that is currently defined by
44 regulation and also State law.
45

46 But, you know, sustained yield is not
47 managing the resources to the point of extinction as we
48 see that's starting to occur on the Yukon River, that
49 is absolutely not sustained yield.
50

1 You know we fought administratively,
2 we've gone to the Governor's office, we've gone to the
3 Secretary of Commerce to talk to them individually,
4 Department of Interior, down in D.C., AVCP has done it
5 under Myron Naneng and also other leaders in the state,
6 we've done our part administratively, we've beat our
7 fists on the tables providing testimony to the
8 management councils and the Board, you know, we've done
9 our administrative processes. But it's not going
10 anywhere, it's getting worse and worse and worse. So
11 we need to get involved in the judicial approach
12 through the filing of amicus briefs and filing the
13 lawsuits and supporting those that file lawsuits on our
14 behalf. You know we've lost on the administrative
15 front, we've lost on the regulatory front, the only
16 recourse that we have as American citizens and of
17 Yup'ik people is through the courts. That the only
18 area that we have to go rely on at this point is making
19 sure that those who filed those lawsuits on our behalf
20 succeed in those courts. And the way to get involved
21 is through the -- what they call the amicus curiae,
22 legally. But it's a briefing that individuals,
23 organizations compile in support of the party.

24
25 So, you know, I would ask the Regional
26 Council to find out if we can possibly support the
27 case, you know, for our fisheries, for our caribou, for
28 our moose, for our blackfish, for our whitefish, for
29 our lamprey. Just to make sure that we are able to
30 continue to enjoy our foods and also carry on that
31 enjoyment to our children, grandchildren, great
32 grandchildren.

33
34 The next one I'd like to talk about is
35 the chinook salmon genetic sampling resolution that I
36 drafted and submitted to various people to consider at
37 their tribal council meetings, at their -- at the AVCP
38 executive board and possibly convention resolution this
39 coming October -- September/October. And what that
40 resolution basically entails is that the Department of
41 Fish and Game, although they knew that an increasing --
42 ever increasing amount of chinook salmon were starting
43 to be caught, intercepted in the Area M fishery has
44 never taken a genetic sample of, not even one fish, not
45 even one chinook salmon, despite our plight, despite
46 our challenges here on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers
47 and the Coastal areas. And they have the tools to do
48 it. I was involved with the development of the genetic
49 sampling protocols and genetic sample analysis that
50

0045

1 they've done throughout the entire Bering Sea bowl, all
2 across the Pacific Rim, wherever king salmon exist,
3 they have the genetic samples of those. And they can
4 tell exactly where each salmon caught, or each chinook
5 salmon caught, their stream of origin, their area that
6 they are -- the area that they affect. And I've asked
7 the Department of Fish and Game why and why not -- why
8 aren't they not conducting genetic sample -- and there
9 has never been a clear definitive answer from the
10 Department why they are not doing that. You know I've
11 heard through the grapevine and through various areas
12 that I've been involved that they're afraid to do the
13 sampling in the Area M fishery. There's only one
14 stream, I believe, in the South Peninsula that have
15 biological escapement goals for chinook salmon. I may
16 be wrong but it's very, very minimal. So in 2016, I
17 believe there were about 55,000 chinook salmon that
18 were caught in that fishery, in the South Peninsula
19 fishery, and 25,000 alone in the June fishery. You
20 know those chinook salmon are coming from somewhere.
21 Whether they come from the chinook deprived, or king
22 salmon deprived areas of the Yukon, Coastal and
23 Kuskokwim areas or whether it comes from Russia or
24 whether it comes from Pacific Northwest or the Kenai
25 Peninsula, people have the right to know, we have the
26 right to know, you know. At every fisheries meeting
27 I've gone to, the Department of Fish and Game has
28 always pounded their fist every salmon counts. Every
29 salmon counts to the spawning grounds that we possibly
30 contribute to the spawning grounds, whatever we can
31 contribute to the Treaty obligations, we have -- every
32 salmon counts. Let's hold their feet to the fire and
33 have them enumerate, what, exactly is being harvested
34 in either the Area M fishery or any other intercept
35 fishery or the Bering Sea -- what's caught in the
36 Bering Sea trawl fishery.

37

38 So I believe the Council does not do
39 the resolution process so if you can write a supporting
40 letter encouraging the Department to genetically test
41 and report back all the chinook salmon that are being
42 caught in the Area M fishery and also the Bering Sea
43 trawl fisheries. Well, in any of our areas. Like for
44 example, Richard Slats had indicated that, you know,
45 what they catch out there is not likely the Yukon River
46 chinook salmon because, you know, the physical part is
47 saying that it's not oily. Perhaps it's chinook salmon
48 from -- could be from the Unalakleet River, it could be
49 from the Russian side, could be from anywhere. You
50

0046

1 know they'd get a definitive answer, what -- what
2 exactly they are harvesting, instead of restricting
3 them -- or restricting their subsistence fishery for no
4 other reason. And same goes with Nelson Island. Same
5 goes with all of our other Coastal areas. Being able
6 to clearly identify where those salmon are coming from.
7 If they're coming from the Yukon, yes, there is a right
8 to restrict because we can't fish any salmon on the
9 Yukon River, you know, the Kuskokwim River is moving in
10 that direction and we need to conserve, we need to put
11 them into the spawning ground, hold the Department of
12 Fish and Game's responsibilities to where they need to
13 be responsible to us and most importantly to the
14 resource, to our salmon.

15
16 So those two measures, the genetic
17 sampling, the support for the Bore case that they're
18 bringing before the State of Alaska greatly move in our
19 attempt to salvage what we have left, you know, our
20 salvaging is -- we've done this for 30 to 40 years,
21 which is leading to absolutely nothing. It's leading
22 to more heartache. More restrictions. More closures.
23 It's just not going anywhere. You know we've
24 conserved, we've cut down our hours, reduced our gear,
25 we've sacrificed way too many years to come out with
26 absolutely nothing and it's getting worse, and worse
27 and worse.

28
29 (Teleconference interference -
30 participants not muted)

31
32 MR. ANDREW: And I'm really concerned
33 that.....

34
35 REPORTER: Myron.

36
37 MS. MCDAVID: Excuse me, Myron, could
38 you please mute your line please we can hear you.

39
40 REPORTER: Myron, mute your phone we
41 can hear your conversation.

42
43 MS. MCDAVID: Myron, if you can hear
44 us, could you please mute your phone -- sorry.

45
46 REPORTER: Go ahead, Tim.

47
48 MR. ANDREW: Okay. But we have to take
49 action and, you know, like I said, administratively
50

0047

1 we've exhausted that. Regulatoraly we have exhausted
2 that. We've got to support the judicial side of it.
3 And also support the scientific tools to identify what
4 they're exactly getting out there.

5
6 And last October I informed you that I
7 will be drafting a proposal for a limited, a very well
8 -- not very well, but a regulated hunt for the muskox
9 -- mainland muskox that we have on the areas beside
10 Nunivak and also Nelson Island. We've seen them all
11 over the place. You know people are saying the muskox
12 are there, we see them when we're out berry picking, we
13 see them when we're hunting, we see them everywhere on
14 mainland. The Department of Fish and Game, along with
15 Fish and Wildlife Service, I believe it was back in
16 2019 conducted an aerial survey and they concluded that
17 there were 174 observable muskox numbers out in main
18 land, but that's observed. The biologist at Fish and
19 Game said that at times he flew out to various parts
20 and he was able to see 30, 40 muskoxen in a group and
21 sometimes he'd go out there and he'd see absolutely
22 nothing. So it was a limited count that had occurred.
23 It was observation only, it's not scientific -- or
24 statistically expanded to determine what the population
25 of these various muskox are. I know there's the
26 Eskinuk (ph) Mud Volcano Herd, there's also the Kilbuk
27 Herd as well, there's also a herd up here at the
28 Kilbuk, there's a bunch up around in the Kalskag area,
29 there's some north of the Yukon River. You've seen
30 them across the island and also a population our here
31 not very far from Bethel, between here and the tundra
32 villages wandering in that area. You know I've been
33 told that there's muskox harvested -- there's been
34 people that have been cited for muskox. Currently
35 there is no management plan. There is no annual count
36 of more frequent counts for muskox. They're a great
37 animal. I've tasted muskox before, they're -- they
38 would make a great addition, a great change to our diet
39 and it's developing to more of a more population being
40 present in the area. So it's time to determine what
41 those numbers are, determine what the huntable
42 population, or huntable number that we can harvest and
43 start moving in the direction of active citizen
44 involvement in our muskox population.

45
46 And that proposal is going before the
47 Board of Game whenever their Region 5 meeting occurs
48 and I believe it's likely going to be after your fall
49 meeting and then you'll probably have an opportunity to
50

0048

1 look at the proposal yourself and make recommendations
2 on what you see as a body for that proposal.

3

4 And I only submitted to the State Board
5 of Game, I didn't submit it before the RAC and I didn't
6 submit it before the Federal Subsistence Board, I
7 didn't provide a Federal proposal. And the basis
8 behind that is that State permits are useable on
9 Federal land, the State regulatory permit whether it be
10 registration, whether it be permit or whether it be
11 just a general hunt. Those are -- those you can use on
12 Federal land. But the Federal permit, Federal permits
13 that are issued by the Federal government are not
14 recognized on State lands. People get cited for
15 utilizing Federal permits and licenses on State lands
16 so, you know, as a foundation for -- you know, as a
17 basis of the regulatory process or the law enforcement
18 side I only submitted it on -- at -- for the Board of
19 Game for their consideration.

20

21 And that's basically it and would be
22 happy to answer any questions that you might possibly
23 have.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you Tim,
26 appreciate your comments. Is there any questions or
27 comments for Tim at this time.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tim.

32

33 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll just comment maybe
36 just a little bit. I know the Regional Advisory
37 Council is just an advisor to the Federal Subsistence
38 Board and those are the only ones that we answer to.
39 So if there's any recommendation that comes from this
40 body it's only going to come as a support.

41

42 And what I'd like to comment also, too,
43 if this -- if we could elevate the concerns to Federal
44 Subsistence Board because we've been hearing this time
45 and time, you know, over time for the last how many
46 years now and if this body can advise the Federal
47 Subsistence Board to elevate the concerns that are
48 coming from our people I think that's what I want to
49 see come from either the people that we'd like to
50

0049

1 elevate our concerns to -- the comments that we're
2 hearing to see how we could get the Federal Subsistence
3 Board to hear our concerns and to elevate that to
4 whatever the next level could be.

5

6 Appreciate your comments.

7

8 MR. ANDREW: If I may, Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Tim.

11

12 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
13 didn't realize I didn't turn off my mic. Issues like
14 this have crossover implications with the Eastern and
15 Western RAC as well, the Norton Sound area, Bristol
16 Bay, you know, especially with salmon concerns and I
17 don't know if there's any way to communicate with the
18 other Regional Advisory Councils besides the permit
19 process and perhaps a letter -- letter to the other
20 Councils encouraging them to support these judicial
21 measures, to support these resolutions, to support our
22 subsistence causes because what affects us affects them
23 as well. And perhaps the Federal Subsistence Board
24 will further recognize the expanded need and take
25 action -- take the action necessary to protect
26 subsistence uses as provided by ANILCA.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
31 just wanted to let the Council know that a good way to
32 elevate your concerns to the Federal Subsistence Board
33 is through your annual report and you will have the
34 opportunity to review the draft report with the topics
35 that you developed in the falltime later in the agenda,
36 and you also have the opportunity to add any additional
37 topics at this meeting. So if you notice there are
38 some big concerns that got left off of that annual
39 report, we can definitely add those.

40

41 I also wanted to let you know, and I'll
42 bring this up again later in the meeting when we talk
43 about future meetings, next year at this time, instead
44 of having just your Council meet, OSM is planning an
45 All Council meeting for all the RACs across the state
46 to meet together in Anchorage and during that time you
47 may have the opportunity to sit down with other RACs
48 that have similar concerns or dealing with similar
49 issues such as salmon. So that will be a pretty good

50

0050

1 chance -- it doesn't happy all the time.

2

3 So just wanted to bring those two
4 things to your attention.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Tim.
9 Appreciate your comments. At this time I'll go ahead
10 and call Martin Nicolai.

11

12 MR. NICOLAI: Can I be -- can I speak
13 after the next person. My son is coming down from the
14 airport and I have to pay for his cab fare, maybe after
15 the next one.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We don't have any more
18 -- anyone to comment at this time. So it is lunchtime
19 right now, if that could work out for you, and then go
20 ahead and comment after lunch.

21

22 MR. NICOLAI: It won't be long, I'll
23 make it short.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, go ahead, you
26 have the floor.

27

28 MR. NICOLAI: Okay.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You have the floor,
31 thank you.

32

33 MR. NICOLAI: Father Martin Nicolai,
34 I'm from Kwethluk. I represent my village and also the
35 -- my corporation that sends me to places like this.

36

37 But during the recent Alaska Board of
38 Fish meeting in Anchorage, a bad thing was made against
39 the majority of Alaska residents who rely on the salmon
40 for subsistence, they voted not to restrict Area M
41 fishermen in their commercial activities. And the same
42 kind of injustice is still present in trawling in the
43 Bering Sea that continues to destroy and discard
44 thousands and thousands of salmon, some of them
45 destined for our rivers. And I know that you're
46 sitting up here, you're only an advisory Council, your
47 vote is considered -- only considered in the
48 authoritative Councils and whatever you vote on and
49 approve, especially on the issues of bycatch it's
50

0051

1 hardly heard. But even so you must not keep quiet. We
2 must not keep quiet. And even if -- even if we have to
3 say it at each and every meeting, so be it, they have
4 to be aware that we are not happy with the decisions
5 that they have -- they have made in their -- especially
6 in the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

7
8 But I'll quickly read my -- what I
9 wrote down, my thoughts on the recent Board of Fish
10 meeting in Anchorage. By a vote of four to three, they
11 destroyed the Proposal 140 that we were hoping for so
12 much out here in the rural areas. They chose to side
13 with a small group of Area M fishermen and just didn't
14 listen to the cry of thousands and thousands of
15 Alaskans who rely on the salmon. So there's one Board
16 member who I talked to and told him about our fishcamps
17 and putting up fish and he admitted that he didn't know
18 anything about what we do, but that he had been an Area
19 M fisherman before and he consistently voted in favor
20 of the Area M fishermen. And just incidentally,
21 recently, the Governor appointed this particular Board
22 member to the bycatch committee. And it's clear that
23 we know how he'll be voting and pushing -- who he will
24 be pushing for.

25
26 But Area M fishery is over 90 percent
27 intercept fishery, that means the salmon that they
28 catch are bounds for areas in Alaska or elsewhere. In-
29 river fisheries like the Yukon or Kuskokwim are also
30 intercept fisheries but there's a difference between
31 those two intercept fisheries. Area M catches a lot of
32 chum salmon that are of concern because of their low --
33 low recent returns to Western Alaska rivers and there's
34 no limit, no restrictions on how many chums and kings
35 they can catch. And in the meantime the Yukon River
36 people have not been able to fish for the past two
37 years. The Kuskokwim River has been restricted to a
38 few openings in June. And even -- even if we fish we
39 don't catch enough salmon as we have done in the past.
40 So like the ongoing trawling fishing, the Area M
41 fishermen are still wasting a lot of salmon and this is
42 actually against the Alaska statutes that should be
43 prioritizing subsistence needs in times of low wildlife
44 and game returns.

45
46 And by voting to keep the status quo,
47 the Board of Fisheries hopefully -- disregarded and
48 going against the Alaskan statutes and I'll say that
49 they have disqualified themselves and no longer worthy
50

0052

1 to represent the entire state of Alaska. I'll say
2 that.

3

4 And you know what, the Commissioner,
5 who heads the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is
6 going along with all of the Board's decisions.

7

8 I'm asking a question here, and are we
9 as Alaskans going to keep quiet and say and do nothing
10 again?

11

12 Quayana.

13

14 (Applause)

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Thank
17 you, Father Martin. At this time we don't have no
18 other people that want to comment on non-agenda items,
19 we could probably take a lunch break for now.

20

21 MR. ANDREW: Let's go for an hour and a
22 half.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: So 1:30.

25

26 MS. MCDAVID: 1:30.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, we'll take an
29 hour and a half lunch break and come back at 1:30.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 (Off record)

34

35 (On record)

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, I'll go ahead and
38 call the meeting back to order, the time now is 1:36
39 p.m. Before we get started I'd like to ask if there's
40 new folks in the room that might have come in after
41 lunch, if they could introduce themselves at this time.

42

43 MS. HAVEN: Hi, yes, my name is Kitty
44 Havens and I am with the Subsistence Division of Fish
45 and Game and I am here in Fairbanks, I'm in charge of
46 the western area projects, so the Kuskokwim River.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you.

49

50

0053

1 MS. JOHNSON: Hi. This is Ashley
2 Johnson with AVCP in Bethel, Natural Resources with
3 Jennifer Hooper and Paige Jones -- or Paige Peterson --
4 sorry, and Eddie Corb*.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.
7

8 MS. PETERSON: Hi. This is Paige
9 Peterson with AVCP. I came back to the office, I was
10 there this morning, but I am still participating over
11 the phone. Thank you.
12

13 MR. CHEN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair
14 and Council members. My name is Glenn Chen. I'm the
15 Subsistence Branch Chief for the Bureau of Indian
16 Affairs.
17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Anyone else need to be
19 introduced that might not have introduced themselves
20 this morning.
21

22 MS. KLEIN: Hi. This is Jill Klein
23 with the Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm the Regional
24 Subsistence Coordinator and joining online now.
25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome Jill.
27

28 MS. MATHIES: Hello. My name is Mary
29 Mathies. I serve ONC as an interim Natural Resource
30 Director.
31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, welcome.
33

34 MR. CORB: Good afternoon. My name is
35 Edward Corb, the Marine Resource Coordinator for AVCP
36 here in Bethel.
37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome. Anyone else
39 that needs to introduce themselves after lunch.
40

41 (No comments)
42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I'll
44 recognize James Landlord, Council Member at our meeting
45 this afternoon. I believe if you want to give a report
46 as a Council member to the Council for your area.
47

48 MR. LANDLORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49 My name is James Landlord from Mountain Village. I
50

0054

1 have a very short report.

2

3 Of course there was no fishing this
4 summer, no chums, no cohos. But this winter was right
5 when the ice started to form in October the guys in
6 Mountain started checking for eels, they use sticks or
7 a little basket. After a day they started catching a
8 lot of eels. There was a lot of eels, maybe last six
9 years or so. St. Mary's, Pitka's Point came down and
10 started dipping in front of Mountain Village so
11 everybody was real grateful because a long time eels
12 were passing.

13

14 Other than that I don't -- I don't
15 have much to report.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, James.
20 Appreciate your report. We are down to old business.

21

22 MS. MCDAVID: If it's okay with you,
23 Mr. Chair, could we just confirm if we have our Council
24 members online still. Alissa, Myron and Norma, could
25 you let us know if you're on the call.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 MR. NANENG: I'm on the call, this is
30 Myron.

31

32 MS. EVAN: Norma Evan, here.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, are you still
35 with us?

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hopefully she'll call
40 in later. We are down to old business. First on the
41 old business we have follow up on May 2023 North
42 American Caribou Work Shop and Arctic Ungulate
43 Conference. Tom Plank with OSM, Wildlife.

44

45 MR. PLANK: Hello, Mr. Chair and
46 members of the Council. My name is Tom Plank and I'm a
47 Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
48 Management. And during your fall 2022 meeting you
49 heard about the Caribou and Ungulate Conference taking
50

0055

1 place in Anchorage this May. And in case anybody was
2 wondering ungulate, the definition of ungulate is any
3 hoofed mammal. All Councils nominated one member to
4 attend the conference and provided input on an Alaska
5 Ungulate Management Symposium. An informational flier
6 about this conference can be found in your meeting
7 books on Page 17. And before I proceed, would any
8 Council member like an overview of this conference?

9

10 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes, please.

11

12 MR. PLANK: All right. So a joint
13 meeting of the North America Caribou Workshop and
14 Arctic Ungulate Conference will be held in Anchorage
15 from May 8th through the 12th, 2023. The meeting will
16 bring together an international group of managers,
17 researchers and indigenous and local knowledge holders
18 who want to share their knowledge of caribou, muskox,
19 dall sheep and moose and reindeer. The theme for the
20 meeting is Crossing Boundaries.

21

22 Arctic ungulates regularly cross
23 landscape boundaries connecting ecological processes
24 between different systems and this necessitates
25 collaboration across geographical borders and also
26 calls for crossing boundaries between Western science
27 and local and indigenous knowledge.

28

29 The conference will include a
30 preliminary session on co-management, the status of
31 caribou globally, integrating Western science and
32 indigenous knowledge and the effects of climate change
33 on caribou. Field trips, workshops, research talks,
34 symposiums and a poster session will also be part of
35 the conference. The conference web address is included
36 on your fliers in the meeting books and I encourage you
37 to visit the website for more detailed information.

38

39 Are there any other questions or
40 clarifications needed?

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any questions or
43 comments from the Council at this time?

44

45 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard.

48

49 MR. SLATS: Yes, can you repeat the

50

0056

1 dates on that work shop, May 8th through the?

2

3 MR. ALEXIE: The 12th.

4

5 MR. SLATS: Pardon?

6

7 MR. ALEXIE: The 12th.

8

9 MR. SLATS: The 12th. Okay, thank you.

10

11 MR. PLANK: Alrighty. So.....

12

13 MS. ROGERS: Hello, Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is that you Alissa?

16

17 MS. ROGERS: Yes. Sorry about that I
18 was having technical difficulties getting online.
19 Something about our GCI service isn't working very well
20 but I am here now.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, you're
23 recognized. Thank you. Go ahead, you could proceed.

24

25 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
26 Page 18 of your meeting books please find a summary of
27 all the potential topics suggested by Councils for
28 discussion during the ungulate management in the Alaska
29 symposium. This session is intended to be a natural
30 [sic] forum for Council members, State Fish and Game
31 Advisory Committee meeting -- meet -- members, Federal
32 and State agency Staff and other interested parties to
33 discuss ungulate management in Alaska specifically
34 regarding harvest regulations.

35

36 During the fall 2022 meeting cycle, all
37 Councils provided input on potential topics to discuss
38 during the symposium and several Councils asked for a
39 followup summary list during these winter meetings.
40 Councils are now being asked to review the list and
41 provide additional feedback for the symposium such as
42 highlighting topics of particular interest or providing
43 clarifications on topics. The OSM Staff will then
44 decide which topics will be discussed during the
45 symposium based on feedback from all 10 Councils
46 prioritizing topics that are relevant statewide and
47 applicable to regions and Councils.

48

49 And, Mr. Chair, I will turn the

50

0057

1 discussion over to you, any additional feedback would
2 be very helpful in finalizing the discussion topics for
3 the symposium.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tom. Is
6 there any follow up questions or comments relating to
7 Tom's report at this time.

8

9 Jackie, go ahead.

10

11 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks. Since I --
12 this is Jackie by the way -- and I'm going to this
13 event and I'm excited and I was going to request if you
14 have an agenda I could get it. Sometime. I could do
15 this after, too -- sorry.

16

17 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Jackie. I do
18 not have that agenda at this time but I will reach out
19 and as soon as I can find it I can forward it to Brooke
20 and have it sent to you. Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is there any other
23 comments of questions to Tom's report.

24

25 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard.

28

29 MR. SLATS: Yes, in the past we had
30 been discussing, the last couple meetings, couple years
31 ago, on or about those times, and then when we had
32 those discussions, or when we were being reported to
33 about the Mulchatna Caribou Herd there was an issue on
34 that herd being infected with brucellosis and then
35 since that time we haven't heard any -- I haven't heard
36 anything new or what if, you know, that kind of
37 infection on the herd, in and around this area, if
38 that's still -- if the herd is still infected or what
39 the story is on that.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MR. PLANK: Thank you. Through the
44 Chair. Again, I do not have that information on
45 whether it is or not, but what I can do is I can add it
46 to the potential topics list and bring it up so that
47 that topic could be added to this list and that's what
48 I could do at this moment.

49

50

0058

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, I do recall, too,
2 I know a couple of meetings back from Kenton Moos, I
3 believe was his name, Kenton Moos, who was going to
4 give us an update regarding the hoof disease that were
5 in the caribou and we haven't heard nothing back from
6 him. So if we could get an update regarding that or if
7 he's going to be at our meeting that would be helpful.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 Brooke, go ahead.

12
13 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. I just wanted
14 to follow up on that. Togiak Refuge will be giving an
15 update later in the meeting and you could ask questions
16 about the Mulchatna Caribou Herd then if that works.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. John Andrew.

19
20 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 I am from Kwethluk up there, my family and my
22 grandfathers, they were reindeer -- back in their --
23 back in the late 1800s and early 1900s they were
24 reindeer herders, those older herders they used to say
25 that there are several types of caribou out there. He
26 said before the introduction of the reindeer they used
27 to have big caribou coming in from the Interior. He
28 said their big bulls used to weigh pretty close to 700,
29 the big bulls, that were coming in from the -- way from
30 the Interior, they'd come in the backyards, he said
31 prior to the reindeer herding days there used to be
32 lots of caribou, local Native caribou up there. They
33 used to see -- they have the same migratory routes like
34 the Mulchatna caribou but they say there was a local
35 Kilbuk Caribou Herd that stays up in the headwaters of
36 the -- in the early days in the headwaters of Eek,
37 Kwethluk, Aniak, and all the way up to Holitna area,
38 those were the local herds before the reindeer was
39 introduced. And then at the time -- at that time they
40 used to recognize Interior caribou that come in and
41 away from the Woodland -- they call them Woodland
42 Caribou, in Native terms they used to be small kind of
43 caribou, size of reindeer, and they were dark in color,
44 almost charcoal grey -- grey and black and you see
45 decedents of those. And the Kilbuk caribous that they
46 said they were -- that was decedents of carb --
47 reindeer -- they were let loose back in the early 19 --
48 probably 19 -- probably early 1900s, somewhere in 1930s
49 or early '40s before they crashed. At the time of the
50

0059

1 reindeer herders, they said their reindeer used to --
2 way better than 60 to 70 hundred thousand [sic] and
3 they were scattered all over and they gave them to
4 Interior, (In Yup'ik) some were transported over to
5 Togiak and one old guy before he passed away he used to
6 say -- he even took some over to St. Michael for their
7 (indiscernible) herd, and same way with Tanana area,
8 they took a herd from this area, they take it all the
9 way back there, a guy named Paul -- Paul Nicolai, he
10 passed away many years ago, he was one of the herders
11 that used to help other herders transport herds to
12 nearby villages.

13
14 I don't think they have any written
15 records of them but those were the oral histories
16 passed on to us.

17
18 And when they talk about caribou
19 locally they say that Mulchatna, Kilbuk, and Woodland,
20 and they said sometimes that -- they said that there's
21 big caribou coming from the Interior but nowadays they
22 don't. He said in the years when you have real heavy
23 snows back in the early -- probably early '40s --
24 between '30s and '40s they used to have real heavy
25 snows those years, sometime during the winter that they
26 thaw out, or chinook weather, if it rains on the ground
27 it'll freeze there'll be mass starvations of those
28 herds and they die off pretty fast. They said same
29 thing can happen in the years when we don't have snow
30 in times of rainy spells -- after rainy spells there'll
31 be die off of those wild caribou too because they're
32 frozen to the ground. Even the moose have trouble
33 feeding on them when the trees and brush are frozen.

34
35 Those are some things our people know
36 but they never put them down in books or writings. But
37 it's good to know. Very few people can remember that
38 especially guys my age or older.

39
40 Quayana, Mr. Chairman.

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Anyone else
43 have any comments in regards to Tom's report.

44
45 Brooke.

46
47 MS. MCDAVID: I just wanted to remind
48 the Council that at the fall meeting you all elected
49 for Jackie to attend on your behalf so she'll be
50

0060

1 attending the meeting and hopefully at the fall meeting
2 she'll be able to share back with us about what goes
3 on. And Phillip is the alternate in case Jackie ends
4 up not being able to go.

5
6 Thanks.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do you have any more to
9 report, Tom.

10
11 MR. PLANK: Yes, sir, Mr. Chair. I
12 just wanted to follow up with Council Member, Mr.
13 Andrew. So I just wanted to make sure I captured what
14 you were telling me for the topics that they have here
15 on Page 18. And so just right off the top I.....

16
17 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, I have trouble
18 reading what's in front of me right now because I just
19 had eye surgery not too long ago and my right eye can
20 only see -- only up close.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 MR. PLANK: No problem. So the four
25 that I captured from you would be information -- a
26 topic about habitat changes -- I'm just going to read
27 them so you don't have to worry about.....

28
29 MR. ANDREW: What I brought out is
30 traditional knowledge, it's not in the books.

31
32 MR. PLANK: Okay, gotcha. Thank you,
33 sir.

34
35 MR. ANDREW: Thank you.

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, do you have any
38 more to report Tom.

39
40 MR. PLANK: Not at this time, thank
41 you, Mr. Chair.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you for
44 your report. We look forward to the updates once
45 Jackie attends the meeting so we look forward to the
46 winter, fall meeting. Thank you.

47
48 Next up we have Council correspondence
49 update. Brooke.

50

0061

1 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
2 just wanted to take this opportunity to update the
3 Council on correspondence that you decided to write at
4 the fall meeting and so there were two letters sent by
5 the Council. One was a comment letter on Board of Fish
6 proposals at the AYK and the Area M meetings. And then
7 the second letter -- and, oh, I should say that letter
8 starts on Page 19 of your books. The Board of Fish
9 comment letter.

10

11 And then the second letter that you all
12 sent begins on Page 22 and, James, you'll probably be
13 interested to hear, this one -- that was the letter to
14 the Yukon River Panel requesting information about
15 potential impacts to salmon from mining in the Canadian
16 headwaters and also from the Whitehorse dam. The Yukon
17 River Panel is currently meeting this week -- lots of
18 meetings going on this week -- so we'll hopefully hear
19 back from them if they're willing to give a
20 presentation or a response for our fall meeting. So
21 I'll keep you updated about that.

22

23 And that was all for that, Mr. Chair.

24

25 We do have Robbin LaVine from the
26 Office of Subsistence Management on the phone and she
27 was going to give you an overview of the Council
28 correspondence policy. There's been a couple of draft
29 updates made and I'll turn it over to Robbin, if you're
30 on the line with us, Robbin.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Brooke. Thank
35 you, Mr. Chair and members of the Council. Hello
36 everyone. This is Robbin LaVine, Subsistence Policy
37 Coordinator with OSM. And I'm sorry I'm not with you
38 in person, it was wonderful to see you all again in the
39 fall. But maybe next time.

40

41 In the meantime, the meeting materials
42 for this agenda item can be found beginning on Page 24
43 of your Council books.

44

45 The Office of Subsistence Management
46 would like your review and comments on a suggested
47 update of the current Council Correspondence Policy,
48 which has been in effect and unchanged since 2004.

49

50

0062

1 The update is meant to streamline and
2 clarify the policy. Hopefully the suggested edits
3 eliminate any unnecessary language or information,
4 clarifies the guidance on the official scope of Council
5 correspondence, to whom Councils may or may not
6 correspond directly and the process for correspondence.

7
8 The updated version of the policy can
9 be found on Page 24. Any new language is presented in
10 bold although proposed removed language is not
11 represented in that draft. For comparison, though, you
12 can look to the existing policy and that's found on
13 Page 26. You can kind of flip back and forth between
14 these two to see how those changes look in real time.

15
16 I am going to outline the primary
17 changes in this draft policy and they include: a
18 shortened preamble, so that's the introductory
19 paragraphs of the policy, and it's summarizing the
20 intent of the policy and the authorities foundational
21 to the Councils. We just shortened that up, summarized
22 it more fully.

23
24 Element 1 uses clear language to
25 define the content and focus of Council correspondence.

26
27 Element 5 combines elements that define
28 the correspondence process. So when I say combines
29 elements, these are the elements that are found in the
30 original correspondence policy and we've added them all
31 together under Element 5 to define the process of the
32 steps that we go through when Councils wish to
33 correspond or write a letter.

34
35 Element 7 confirms that Councils can
36 submit comments on State regulatory proposals directly
37 to the Board of Fish and Board of Game without review
38 by the OSM Assistant Regional Director.

39
40 And Element 9 clarifies the Councils
41 may not write directly to Federally elected or
42 appointed officials and this is due to Hatch Act
43 restrictions.

44
45 So, finally, and most importantly,
46 these changes will not prevent Council members from
47 writing to whomever they wish as private citizens or in
48 any other capacity.

49
50

0063

1 So just take a moment to review the
2 suggested changes, and you can -- if -- if you wish I
3 could -- I could read the whole policy into the record.
4 Once again just share your comments and questions if
5 you have any, which will be noted.

6
7 The Board will take action on this
8 draft policy during the summer work session and you'll
9 be update on the final policy at your fall meetings.

10
11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12
13 I'm ready for any questions or comments
14 you may have.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Is there any
17 questions or comments for LaVine at this time -- Robbin
18 LaVine.

19
20 (Pause)

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none. Maybe
23 just kind of highlight the ones that are going to be
24 changed, I know there's one, two, three, four changes
25 that are going to be made in regards to the
26 correspondence policy.

27
28 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. Yeah, so if
29 you look on Page 24 you'll see that we've got these
30 suggested changes. Most of the ones -- the added
31 language you'll see in bold. We have done some moving
32 around.

33
34 So on the very first portion of this
35 correspondence policy you'll see that we have three
36 paragraphs, and the old policy we had four, so there
37 were a lot more words there. We found that a lot of it
38 was probably unnecessary for guidance on how Councils
39 correspond. So that was pared down.

40
41 You can see the language in bold on
42 Elements 1, 4, 5, 7 and 9. Those -- those -- the --
43 the language in bold, we're just hoping we're providing
44 clear guidance on those elements. It's not a
45 significant change from the former policy. It's
46 primary clarifications and, again, most importantly, we
47 want to make sure that you understand restrictions due
48 to Hatch Act -- the Hatch Act Policy -- or the Hatch --
49 Hatch Act -- sorry. And then also to reiterate that
50

0064

1 you, as individuals, private citizens, or people who
2 have other responsibilities and represent or work in
3 other capacities, you can write to whomever you want
4 outside of this Council.

5

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
9 Robbin. Is there any questions or comments for Robbin
10 LaVine at this time.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, do you
15 have any more to report?

16

17 MS. LAVINE: No, thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 Just miss you all.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
21 Robbin. Moving on to the next item. Oh, go ahead,
22 Brooke.

23

24 MS. MCDAVID: Hi, Robbin -- thank you,
25 Mr. Chair. I just wanted to verify, do you need a
26 motion from the Council to approve the draft?

27

28 MS. LAVINE: Oh, thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 And, Brooke, through the Chair. Nope. There is a --
30 we don't need an official motion. We want to capture
31 comments, that's why this is an action item, but any
32 kind of discussion, any kind of questions, or if there
33 were any significant concerns, we definitely record
34 those and bring them to the Board. But if there are
35 none, that's good to know too.

36

37 Thanks.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
40 Robbin. If there is no questions or comments we could
41 go ahead and move on.

42

43 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Richard.

46

47 MR. SLATS: Yes, this is Richard Slats,
48 I had a question. I didn't catch your last name
49 Robbin, but.....

50

0065

1 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

4

5 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
6 Slats my name is Robbin LaVine.

7

8 MR. SLATS: Okay, thank you. We're
9 looking at, you know, this correspondence policy and
10 it's based on ANILCA, Sections of ANILCA, and then
11 we're making changes and then we're -- you know, like
12 we're going to be proposing or making recommendations
13 for changes to a policy, my thinking is that, you know,
14 when we're making additions to policy that would guide
15 us about the way we conduct our correspondence and
16 these things, sections of ANILCA, it's just that -- you
17 know I'm leery about watering down sections of ANILCA,
18 so long as it's not undermining, you know, ANILCA.

19

20 So that would be just a point that I
21 wanted to make is that as long as we're not watering
22 down and adding more -- you know, like adding more work
23 that we need to do in order to write letters so I know
24 that -- I know that we meet once a year and in between
25 that -- those times there are issues that come up that,
26 you know, that's -- you know, surrounding subsistence.
27 And then when it's subsistence, things need to be taken
28 care of, there needs to -- you know, like on certain
29 things we need to make a stand or to oppose or to
30 support and, you know, in between these dates and times
31 -- the times of our meetings is, you know, about a year
32 and so if things -- if action needs to be taken care
33 of, it says the Council Chair has the full authority to
34 approve letters. So if it's -- as long as we're saying
35 that we're delegating our Chairman -- Chair Person to
36 write letters and then he signs off on them and then,
37 you know, so that -- and as long as five or six of us
38 are called upon to do a poll vote and those -- you know
39 sometimes things need to be taken care of because
40 things come up and things need to be taken care of
41 before time passes.

42

43 So that's the point I wanted to make.

44

45 I hope I make myself clear.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Slats.

50

0066

1 Through the Chair. This is Robbin. And I think much
2 of what you're speaking of, first, is your concern for
3 ensuring that our changes in this policy don't water
4 down ANILCA, and -- and the policy really is -- it's a
5 very small part of how our groups, all together, our
6 office, OSM, and you, the Councils, it's a small
7 outline of how we implement ANILCA, how we serve
8 ANILCA. It doesn't change ANILCA at all.

9
10 And then I -- and so I wanted to just
11 assure you that it's -- it's just hopefully making it
12 less complicated for you to write correspondences on
13 issues of -- of concern and interest.

14
15 And then, further, in the
16 correspondence process what we do have here, in bold,
17 the first bullet under Element 5 is Councils shall
18 discuss and agree upon contents of proposed
19 correspondence during public meetings. And so what
20 this correspondence policy is saying is that if your
21 Council is going to produce a letter it should be
22 discussed on the record. But once you are complete --
23 you've completed your meetings, the Council Chairs have
24 the final authority to approve the letters and that can
25 happen off the record, or outside of a meeting.

26
27 I hope that's helpful.

28
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, this is Myron.

32
33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead, and
34 then Brooke.

35
36 MR. NANENG: Yes. I have a question
37 related to Title VIII of ANILCA. When there's going to
38 be land exchanges for certain purposes, I think the
39 Title VIII of ANILCA subsistence protections should be
40 included so that the subsistence users are not
41 negatively harmed by that lack of inclusion, the
42 impacts that can be brought up under Title VIII of
43 ANILCA for any land exchange.

44
45 Because it's really important for us as
46 Alaska Native people that have been asked to bear the
47 burden of conservation for different resources, yet
48 when the ruling comes down from the Federal agencies
49 they tend to decide with those that make the most money
50

0067

1 out of them, you know, but for many of our people in
2 the villages subsistence is money that you don't have
3 to spend at the store to buy groceries, high cost
4 groceries, very low nutritional source of food that you
5 otherwise wouldn't get from the subsistence harvest
6 food when you end up with -- with the closures of
7 fisheries as well as some land exchanges that don't
8 consider Title VIII of ANILCA, our people end up having
9 to try and wait for SNAP, SNAP funding, that really
10 doesn't provide a replacement for the subsistence
11 resource that our people rely on.

12

13 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. Thank
14 you for those comments and your words, Myron. Thank
15 you.

16

17 MR. NANENG: And I hope that both OSM
18 -- OSM takes that very seriously because our people are
19 the ones that are bearing the burden of conservation,
20 yet bearing the burden of cost to benefit those that
21 don't really use subsistence as a means of trying to
22 provide food for their -- their own families and --
23 families and those people that live out in the village.

24

25 And one more additional item I wanted
26 to say, Mr. Chairman.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Myron.

29

30 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I was just looking
31 at some of the comments on Facebook earlier today
32 before lunch and they're having a North Pacific
33 Fisheries Management Council meeting this week here in
34 Anchorage from the 4th through the 11th and Congressman
35 Mary Peltola is going to have a listening session from
36 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., tonight at the Hilton regarding
37 bycatch and issues related to the North Pacific
38 Fisheries Management Council.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, we'll
41 keep that in mind. Hopefully we'll be able to get
42 people to listen in on that while they're here.

43

44 Brooke, you had a comment to make.

45

46 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, thank you, Mr.
47 Chair. I just wanted to follow up with Richard to make
48 sure that it's clear about when the Council can write
49 letters. I know it's a long time between our two

50

0068

1 meetings in the spring and the fall but because the
2 Council is a Federal Advisory Council and there's an
3 Act that governs, you know, -- that everything has to
4 -- that the Council business has to take place in a
5 public forum and so if the Council wants to write a
6 letter it does have to be decided in a public meeting.
7 So we can, you know, draft the actual language of the
8 letter outside but the justification and the discussion
9 does have to happen on the record.

10

11 So I guess that's also a plug to think
12 about if there's any letters you would like to write as
13 a Council, be sure to bring that up during this
14 meeting.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Brooke.
19 And keep in mind if there's anything that we need to
20 bring up as far as correspondence I think it'd be a
21 good time to think about it now and discuss it during
22 our meeting.

23

24 So we could go ahead and move on under
25 C, update on Federal Subsistence Board actions.
26 Brooke.

27

28 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
29 just wanted to give you guys a quick update about what
30 happened at the Federal Subsistence Board meeting.
31 They met at the end of January, beginning of February.
32 You will be receiving the official .805(c) report this
33 fall, it wasn't ready. But that will be a long time
34 from when the meeting happened so I wanted to go ahead
35 and give you just an overview.

36

37 On Page 28 of your meeting books
38 there's a news release that outlines sort of the
39 statewide major actions that the Board took, and if you
40 flip the page one more page to Page 30 I made a real
41 short little summary table for you guys that shows the
42 proposals and the closure reviews that you took up and
43 made recommendations on in the falltime and what the
44 Board action was on those proposals. So you'll
45 actually see that for the two proposals and the three
46 closure reviews that the Board actions aligned with
47 your recommendations and most of them were outside of
48 your region. But I did want to point out that the
49 Board did pass the customary and traditional use
50

0069

1 proposal that was submitted by Native Village of Chevak
2 to recognize the subsistence uses of all salmon -- or
3 the customary and traditional uses of all species of
4 salmon on the Yukon for residents of Chevak, Scammon
5 Bay and Hooper Bay. So we appreciate Richard and folks
6 in Chevak submitting that and it has been adopted by
7 the Board.

8
9 I also wanted to let you know that the
10 Board, at their meeting, they also updated the
11 delegated authorities given to Federal in-season
12 fisheries managers and they updated it to allow
13 managers to issue temporary special actions, if needed,
14 to protect populations in their region, and that would
15 just be a temporary action until the next regulatory
16 cycle when a proposal could be submitted, that would
17 set harvest limits, gear types and seasons. Previously
18 fisheries managers were only granted emergency special
19 actions and that would expire after 60 days so this
20 will give them a little bit longer of a time period to
21 enact actions but it does require a public hearing
22 process.

23
24 So that was my update, Mr. Chair, on
25 Board actions and if anyone has any questions I will
26 take them now.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does anyone from the
31 Council have any questions for Brooke at this time in
32 regards to the Board actions that she updated us on?

33
34 MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie.

37
38 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana, Chair. My
39 question was -- oh, for the temporary, how long is
40 that, the season in comparison to the six months,
41 emergency? Thanks.

42
43 MS. MCDAVID: I think it can be season
44 long.

45
46 MR. BLIHVDE: If -- somebody correct
47 me if I'm wrong, through the Chair.

48
49 MS. MCDAVID: Can you come to the mic.
50

0070

1 MR. BLIHOVDE: I believe emergency
2 special actions are a little shorter, 60 days, and then
3 90 days, I believe is the -- yep, Aaron it shaking his
4 head, yes, so for the temporary special action 90 days.

5
6 MS. KENNER: It actually can be
7 (indiscernible - in audience, away from microphone)

8
9 MR. BLIHOVDE: But can be extended
10 beyond 90, right, yeah, so thanks. Thanks, Pippa.

11
12 MS. MCDAVID: And for the record that
13 was Boyd.

14
15 REPORTER: Got it, thanks.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does that answer your
18 question, Jackie.

19
20 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes, Quiana.

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. So I
23 believe moving on, I guess we are down to E, special
24 action briefing for -- oh, sorry, we're down to D.....

25
26 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You had a question.

29
30 MR. SLATS: Before you move on, Mr.
31 Chair.

32
33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Richard.

34
35 MR. SLATS: Yes, I just wanted to
36 publicly thank Pippa Kenner for assisting Chevak Native
37 Village -- Chevak Native Village, so I wanted to thank
38 Pippa Kenner publicly for assisting us. Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I remember this
41 when it was introduced. I'm glad that it's been
42 updated and adopted by the Board so thank you for your
43 hard work.

44
45 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Moving on we are down
48 to update on Alaska Board of Fisheries actions.

49
50

0071

1 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
2 just want to -- because you all submitted a comment
3 letter and commented on four proposals for the Board of
4 Fish, I just wanted to point out in the Board of Fish
5 action summary that begins on Page 31 in your meeting
6 books, the outcome of those proposals that you
7 commented on for your information.

8
9 So on Page 33 you'll see three
10 highlighted proposals and these were all in the AYK
11 region.

12
13 The first one was Proposal 80 for the
14 Yukon River and the proponent actually asked for that
15 proposal to be withdrawn so the Board did not take
16 action on it.

17
18 And then there were two Kuskokwim
19 proposals, Proposal 90 and 91, that are down toward the
20 bottom of the page.

21
22 And Proposal 90 requested that a Tier
23 II subsistence king salmon fishery be implemented and
24 it failed.

25
26 And then Proposal 91 carried and that
27 -- it modified the lawful gear and gear specifications.
28 Basically I think it was aimed to give managers more
29 tools for harvest during times of conservation.

30
31 And then the last proposal that you all
32 commented on, it's not in your meeting books, is it was
33 at the Area M meeting, which I know we always say Area
34 M but it's actually the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian
35 Islands and Chignik areas meeting. In Tab 1 of your
36 supplemental materials there was a summary, it's okay
37 if you don't have it in front of you, there was just
38 Proposal 140 that you commented on and I'm sure you're
39 all familiar with that and it did fail.

40
41 So I just wanted to give you that
42 update.

43
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke. On
47 Proposal 80, I'm thinking that the person that wrote
48 the proposal withdrew it that's why there was no action
49 taken on it?

50

0072

1 MS. MCDAVID: (Nods affirmatively)

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. The answer's

4 yes, so I'll take that as a yes, thank you. Is no

5 other questions or comments from the Council.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, we could

10 go on to -- just to remind the Council that at 3:00

11 o'clock the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission

12 will be calling in so if we could keep watch on our

13 time, and when the time comes we could take their call.

14 So moving on down to update on Alaska Board of

15 Fisheries action.

16

17 MS. MCDAVID: That was the update on

18 that, item so I think we're on Item 12E [sic] now.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, sorry. C [sic]

21

22 MS. MCDAVID: Special actions.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, the next item on

25 the agenda is C, special action briefing for WSA22-04

26 by Tom Plank. You have the floor.

27

28 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair and

29 members of the Council. Again, for the record, my name

30 is Tom Plank and I am a Wildlife Biologist for the

31 Office of Subsistence Management. I will be presenting

32 a summary of the results for Temporary Wildlife Special

33 Action WSA 22-04 and that's on Page 35 in your books.

34

35 Wildlife Emergency Special Action

36 Request WSA22-04 submitted by the Yukon Delta National

37 Wildlife Refuge requested the Federal Subsistence Board

38 modify an existing delegation of authority letter for

39 moose in the Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18. The

40 modification was to delegate additional authority to

41 the manager of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

42 to determine the number of permits to be issued and any

43 needed permit conditions for the may be announced

44 winter moose season. This modification to the

45 delegation of authority would only apply to the 2022/23

46 winter may be announced season.

47

48 The Yukon Delta National Wildlife

49 Refuge Manager was delegated authority to announce a

50

0073

1 winter moose season in Zone 2 of the Kuskokwim hunt
2 area in Unit 18 by the Board in April 2022 through
3 adoption of Wildlife Proposal WP22-44. This delegated
4 authority does not limit the number of permits and can
5 be -- that can be issued for the newly established may
6 be announced winter season. The number of moose
7 available to the harvest during a may be announced
8 winter season is based on the remaining moose quota not
9 met during the fall season. Given the in-season
10 manager an ability to limit the number of permits
11 issued and set permit conditions would give the in-
12 season manager the needed tools to prevent overharvest
13 and allow for a longer season based on winter
14 conditions.

15
16 On November 21st, 2022 the Federal
17 Subsistence Board approved this request as modified by
18 OSM to clarify that the effective period ended January
19 31st, 2023 and to specify permit conditions must comply
20 with the Office of Management and Budget information
21 collection clearance.

22
23 The Board, in approving this request,
24 supports limiting permits and setting any needed permit
25 conditions to ensure the in-season manager can
26 effectively manage the winter may be announced moose
27 hunt in the Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18. The Board
28 also noted that these tools could help provide
29 Federally-qualified subsistence users with more harvest
30 opportunities while safeguarding against overharvest.

31
32 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
33 Council, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

34
35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Tom.
36 Do we have any questions or comments at this time in
37 regards to special action.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank you
42 for your report. And what time is it now?

43
44 MS. MCDAVID: We have half an hour.

45
46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: A half an hour, so we
47 could go ahead and move on. We are down to No. 12, new
48 business, and, A, is the wildlife reports, Yukon Delta
49 Refuge by Bill[sic] Blihovde or Aaron Moses, U.S. Fish
50

0074

1 and Wildlife Service.

2

3

MR. BLIHOVDE: Chairman Oney, and
4 Council members. Thank you so much for allowing us to
5 be here. Just for the record my name is Boyd Blihovde,
6 the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta National Wildlife
7 Refuge. And if you guys could introduce yourself.

8

9 MR. MOSES: Hi, again. This is Aaron
10 Moses, Subsistence Specialist.

11

12 MS. BOECK: Laurie Boeck, Deputy Refuge
13 Manager.

14

15 MR. BLIHOVDE: Perfect amount of time,
16 30 minutes is just enough to cover all this -- no, I'm
17 kidding.

18

19 (Laughter)

20

21 MR. BLIHOVDE: We, hopefully won't need
22 30 minutes, but there are a lot of updates that we
23 could give. But I believe that you all have this
24 booklet that is the one that I'm using and Page 36 has
25 all the information that we plan to cover. I will
26 cover some general information and I'd like Aaron to go
27 over that moose hunt that was just mentioned. So we got
28 some details to cover on that really quickly.

29

30 First, on Page 36, I just wanted to
31 cover some of the important topics that we highlighted
32 there and I don't want to go over it word for word, but
33 just some updates and some new information that wasn't
34 ready by the printing of this document. First and
35 foremost we're already thinking and meeting and
36 planning for the salmon season. So I know it's still
37 icy out there, there's -- break up has not occurred,
38 but we have been meeting already several times with the
39 InterTribal Fish Commission, we've gone to the
40 Organized Village of Kwethluk, we've had lots of
41 discussions about salmon, and it's important to us as
42 it is to subsistence users.

43

44 And so you see No. 1 there, it's a
45 little complicated, I won't go in to all the details
46 but as you were told we got new delegation of authority
47 letters from the Federal Subsistence Board to allow us
48 and the InterTribal Fish Commission and other partners
49 to work together to implement a temporary special
50

0075

1 action if we choose. And ironically that was the
2 direction that we were planning to go this year.
3 Tentatively we had planned to do a temporary special
4 action on the Kuskokwim River, rather than an emergency
5 special action, we had asked the Federal Subsistence
6 Board to make a decision or vote on that, now we have
7 the ability to do that ourselves, locally.

8
9 So the one update that I'd like to
10 share is that around mid-May, working with OSM, we hope
11 to have a public hearing and we hope that there could
12 be a local in-person meeting option and a way to call
13 in for that meeting, in that public hearing, to discuss
14 the temporary special action, the restriction, the
15 conservation restriction for, not only chinook salmon,
16 but for chum, and now unfortunately coho. It was
17 mentioned before by members of the Council here that
18 it's gotten worse. Last year we didn't expect it but
19 we had coho at really low numbers as you all know so we
20 are planning and we hope that things will be different,
21 we'll have more salmon than expected, but we are
22 planning to have to be in conservation mode, if you
23 will, from as early as June -- if it's like last year
24 it was until September 16th when the State of Alaska
25 said, okay, we can rescind any restrictions for coho
26 salmon. So it's essentially a three, almost four month
27 season for salmon management now, and that's a shame.

28
29 So that's an update on that.

30
31 As you can see we've got the moose
32 information about the hunt that's in here and I'd like
33 to have Aaron go over that real quick.

34
35 MR. MOSES: Yeah, like No. 2 said, we
36 implemented our first ever hunt. We were going to give
37 out 60 tags but we ended up giving 54. Unfortunately
38 the weather in January was very bad and so just talking
39 to some of the hunters probably 90 percent of them
40 weren't even able to make it out to go hunting. So the
41 statistics are that out of the 54 tags one moose was
42 harvested. So we're in the process of gathering
43 information. We're going to be submitting some special
44 actions and some regulations so that we could be able
45 to modify our hunt conditions in the future so it'll
46 make it easier for -- or the ability of hunters to be a
47 little bit more successful in the future. And so I'm
48 still in the process of talking with people that had
49 the tag and figuring out how it went. So unfortunately
50

0076

1 we just had bad weather this January.

2

3 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thanks, Aaron. So a few
4 other updates that we had here were Mulchatna Caribou
5 came up. I wanted to just briefly address a question
6 about Mulchatna caribou and I think I was out of the
7 room and then I came back in as I heard -- I think
8 brucellosis came up and somebody asked about that. And
9 so we don't directly work on caribou and do a lot of
10 caribou research from the Yukon Delta side, Togiak does
11 and they may have more updates but the State of Alaska
12 biologists have expressed to me that all the herds in
13 Alaska for caribou have brucellosis, it's been
14 documented. For some reason the Mulchatna Caribou Herd
15 has a higher prevalence of brucellosis for some reason
16 that they can't figure out why. So unfortunately for
17 our herd, brucellosis prevalence is high and has really
18 affected the population here locally and so you may
19 have seen notices come out about proper handling of
20 meat and caring for meat when you get an animal that
21 has possibly got brucellosis, so that's come out from
22 the State. The hunt right now is closed, and that's
23 unfortunate, but we've been working with the tribes
24 along the river and the tribal elders have all
25 basically unanimously agreed that there should be a
26 closure because the population is at such a low level.

27

28 And I just wanted to update you on that
29 because I heard that question.

30

31 So we've been also reaching out to
32 tribal leaders on lead shot and the lead shot exchange
33 program. So if Aaron could just give a plug for that
34 again as well, that'd be great.

35

36 MR. MOSES: This is Aaron again. This
37 is the second year that I am in charge of the lead shot
38 exchange program. This program is -- we're finding out
39 that there is starting to be more lead coming into the
40 Refuge. We've had pictures of village stores having --
41 selling lead shot and so we feel like it's very
42 important to give this plug that the Refuge does
43 exchange lead shot box for box. Last season we
44 probably exchanged more than 20 cases of lead. And me,
45 along with Chris Tulik, are the main leads for that and
46 so with geese coming up -- there were swans in
47 Anchorage this last weekend so the geese are coming up
48 fairly soon, so I just want to plug that that we're
49 still going to pursue the lead shot exchange, box for
50

0077

1 box, pretty much you could call the Refuge at 543-3151
2 and we could -- we've been able to ship out so it's not
3 just in the Bethel area, it's been the whole Refuge
4 that we've been working with.

5
6 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thanks. Thanks again,
7 Aaron. And the other thing that just is related to
8 that is the Refuge Information Technician Program,
9 which I think you're familiar with. Christopher Tulik
10 is our lead RIT, we call him, and we have three other
11 RITs in the field. Laurie Boeck down there, is going
12 to be supervising that program and I wanted to just
13 give a little plug to the fact that we have two
14 positions that are currently open. And so for those of
15 you that live over on the Yukon, if you could spread
16 word for us, we're trying to hire one RIT that is
17 working just directly for the Refuge and then another
18 RIT that's a partnership position with Calista, so
19 Calista is paying for half of the salary and we're
20 paying for the other half for another RIT that would be
21 either along the Yukon or on the Coast, that's our
22 priority. So there's two positions and we really would
23 like to get a lot of applicants. If you know of
24 anybody that's interested, especially from that
25 geographic area, those positions are critical for lead
26 shot exchange and all types of other information
27 getting out to the public but then also getting
28 information from these villages as well.

29
30 Really quickly, on Page 37, I only
31 wanted to mention two things related to our waterfowl
32 program that are new. One of them is unfortunately bad
33 news and that's Avian Influenza, which I think you all
34 are familiar with that out there and especially last
35 year was a bad year for our waterfowl on the Coast.

36
37 Brian Daniels, our waterfowl biologist,
38 documented by testing birds and having birds sent off
39 for testing, that Avian Influenza was found in our bird
40 populations. A lot of the species of birds had tested
41 positive for it. Many are suspected to have died from
42 it but we tested some birds that were still living and
43 they lived through Avian Influenza, and for some reason
44 emperor geese seemed to be able to cope with Avian
45 Influenza better than some of the other waterfowl
46 species. So that's interesting.

47
48 The other thing there, No. 4, is black
49 brant colony surveys. That's something that's new that
50

0078

1 we're going to be doing this year and we hadn't done in
2 the past. Migratory -- the Migratory Bird Program had
3 done black brant colony surveys in the past, they don't
4 have the funding to do it any longer. We're going to
5 pick that up so I think black brant were mentioned by
6 maybe Myron Naneng, and so I just wanted to address
7 that.

8
9 So those are two things that are fairly
10 new for the Refuge in the waterfowl program.

11
12 On Page 38 -- we like pictures so we
13 put some more pictures in there -- Aaron Moses, Spencer
14 Rearden were very influential in getting a partners
15 project with the InterTribal Fish Commission to do
16 smolt out-migration studies on the Kwethluk River right
17 at the weir site. You see the picture there, I hope
18 that is the actual trap for catching smolt salmon, and
19 the goal was to look at chinook salmon and how many
20 chinook salmon are making it out from the spawning
21 grounds, and that's what the trap looks like there.

22
23 And then below that picture is a
24 meeting that maybe some of you attended, in Organized
25 Village of Kwethluk, we had a Kwethluk River weir
26 meeting -- actually several meetings. And we've been
27 going back to Kwethluk to consult and to get the
28 opinions and any concerns that the folks in Kwethluk
29 have about the Kwethluk River weir. And we're
30 continuing to move forward. We're trying to improve
31 the weir operations. We hope that by April 18th we'll
32 be going out with partners to try to get the weir
33 installed. So just wanted to provide that update.

34
35 And then quickly a few more updates is
36 on Staff and then a few more updates on meetings coming
37 up really quick.

38
39 Our big game biologist has changed,
40 Aaron Webber was our former big game biologist, now
41 Spencer Rearden is moving from supervisory biologist --
42 he decided to move back in to the big game biologist
43 which he previously held that position, and so now he
44 is our big game biologist. We are looking to fill our
45 supervisory wildlife biologist for the Refuge and so
46 that will be advertised soon and another position we'd
47 like to have lots of applicants from the local area, if
48 possible.

49
50

0079

1 Laurie Boeck, as she's introduced
2 herself, is our new Deputy project leader, and glad to
3 have her on board. This is just her second week in
4 Bethel.

5
6 And then we're in the process of hiring
7 a fish biologist. We've got candidates -- about five
8 candidates that we've been reviewing. The visitor
9 services manager is out there and it's closed but we
10 hope to look over those candidates and then I already
11 mentioned the Refuge Information Technicians.

12
13 A few other updates just really quickly
14 is April 14th through the 16th, myself and -- Chris
15 Tulik stepped out, but we're going to Hooper Bay and
16 we're going to be talking about climate change there
17 with partners and the village there to discuss
18 primarily Merbok -- Typhoon Merbok and how it affected
19 the community, but also look at ways to improve
20 conservation for wildlife species. There's a lot of
21 hopelessness around the topic of climate change because
22 we feel like we can't do anything about it, but we can
23 start planning for conservation measures, especially
24 for waterfowl and where they nest and that's part of
25 the goal -- there he is -- we want to go to Hooper Bay.
26 So Chris and myself, hopefully -- maybe Laurie as well,
27 we'll go to Hooper Bay and so if you're from that
28 region I just wanted to share that that meeting is the
29 14th -- actually through the 16th, but we'll be there
30 at least the 14th and 15th.

31
32 Coming up really soon is April 6th,
33 there's the Annual Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
34 Commission -- annual meeting, sorry. And I'm going to
35 be there and then the next day the bycatch committee is
36 meeting giving their report out at the North Pacific
37 Fish Management Council meeting. And I just
38 respectfully want to correct something I heard, that
39 meeting is the 5th through the 9th in Anchorage, and
40 then the listening session for Congresswoman Peltola is
41 6 to 8 p.m., on April 6th, so I wanted to make sure
42 that date was correctly posted for everyone, because I
43 hope that, as was said, some people could call in,
44 listen in, or even be there, it's going to be at the
45 Hilton downtown in Anchorage.

46
47 If it's okay, Mr. Chairman, a few
48 things came up that I'd like to respond to.

49
50

0080

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, go ahead.

2

3

4 MR. BLIHOVDE: Okay. Myron Naneng
5 brought up some really good points. And one thing he
6 brought up was a concern about law enforcement
7 criminalizing or ticketing those that are out just
8 trying to provide food for their families, and whether
9 it's salmon, waterfowl, you name it, that is definitely
10 a concern of ours too. And we want to hear back on
11 reports from anyone out there that feels law
12 enforcement is going too far or taking things -- taking
13 too aggressive steps with folks out in the Yukon Delta
14 area.

15

16 I will say that often times our
17 officers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are
18 confused with State Wildlife Troopers and others but
19 I've said this many times, everybody these days,
20 whether we like it or not we've got these things in our
21 hands, these phones, and if you are out there and
22 someone's flying over you with a law enforcement plane
23 or they're coming up to you with a Refuge or a State
24 boat, you have the ability to take that out and record
25 something if it's happening to you and you feel like
26 it's not right and we'd love to get that and we'd like
27 to have those reports back to us because we don't have
28 direct authority over the law enforcement staff but we
29 certainly could bring it up and hope to get thing
30 changed. Obviously they're doing a job that they're
31 paid to do, it's just their job and many of them are
32 really good and passionate about what they do and
33 passionate about conservation, and so I will say there
34 are folks that are ticketed sometimes for in the
35 instance of salmon fishing maybe two long of a net or
36 wrong mesh size but we've tried and we'll keep trying
37 to make sure that they're lenient on the folks that are
38 trying to do the right thing. Because the regulations
39 are confusing. They're confusing for me. There are
40 State rule, there are Federal rules, it's hard to keep
41 it straight. So we've really expressed as often as we
42 could that we'd like leniency and working with people
43 to try and first educate them to the right rules and to
44 find them too.

45

46 So I don't know if that helps but I
47 just wanted to share that.

48

49 Tim brought up muskox numbers and he
50 mentioned that there were no annual surveys. On

0081

1 Nunivak Island that population is surveyed annually by
2 the State and we support them. We help them on that.
3 So that population is counted. Those numbers could be
4 provided if you wanted them. But I do agree with him
5 that the other populations that have expanded out into
6 other places on the main land, they aren't counted and
7 that could be improved.

8

9 And I think that was all the updates I
10 had. Aaron, did I forget something, or Laurie.

11

12 Okay, thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Thank
15 you, Bill [sic] for your report and quick updates. Do
16 we have any questions or comments for any of them at
17 this time.

18

19 Jackie.

20

21 MS. CLEVELAND: Qu yana, Ray. Welcome
22 Laurie, welcome to the region. I wanted to ask Boyd,
23 going back to the RIT Program, I saw that Chris Alexie
24 had posted on our local Quinhagak bulletin the job
25 position and announcement and I just -- even though I
26 knew the answer I just asked on there, can Quinhagak
27 residents still apply for this position when we fall
28 under Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and he said good
29 question, I'll get back to you. But in case it got,
30 you know, people excited to apply and then realize they
31 couldn't, was I correct in saying that or can Quinhagak
32 residents also apply and be a part of both since we are
33 in that borderline geography?

34

35 Thanks.

36

37 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you. Through the
38 Chair, if it's okay, this is Boyd again. And we're
39 encouraging everyone to apply because as you know it's
40 been hard to get people to apply for some of these
41 jobs. I think some of the past transgressions that
42 have occurred or the mistrust has made it hard for us
43 to build that trust back and make people feel
44 comfortable that, hey, working for the Fish and
45 Wildlife Service is not a bad thing, or you won't be
46 the bag guy, you know, so I would encourage anybody to
47 apply. And it's a local hire, as you know anybody in
48 Alaska can technically apply and we wouldn't discourage
49 that. We are trying to focus on that Yukon River

50

0082

1 corridor because we don't have any RITs currently up
2 there. Michael Jimmy was our last RIT from up in
3 Emmonak and he was obviously on the Yukon River and we
4 really need someone up there in the northern part of
5 Yukon Delta. We're aiming for that but so far we
6 haven't had a bunch of applicants yet.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Do we have
13 any more questions or comments.

14

15 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James.

18

19 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
20 Myron.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll take James and
23 then Myron.

24

25 MR. NANENG: Thank you.

26

27 MR. LANDLORD: On that lead shot, I
28 thought those were outlawed how many years ago.

29

30 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair, this is
31 Aaron. It is still legal for stores to sell lead shot,
32 it is still legal for you to buy it. It's just a weird
33 part of the rules where you can't use -- you could have
34 it but you can't use it for hunting. And you can't --
35 there's no real way you could use it here in Unit 18,
36 but you could bring it to like another place and use
37 lead where it is legal. So it's not illegal for you to
38 buy it. So that's one of the hard parts that we're
39 getting is, the lead is coming in and people aren't --
40 they're still able to buy it and so the stores carry it
41 but it's illegal to use on the Refuge.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does that answer your
44 question, James.

45

46 MR. LANDLORD: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Myron.

49

50

0083

1 MR. NANENG: Yeah. On the lead shot,
2 the reason why it's illegal is because of the birds
3 eating it and use it as part of a way to grind their
4 food in their gizzard and have lead poisoning as a
5 result of that. So I just want to add that.

6
7 On the law enforcement, I really
8 appreciate your comments, Boyd, in trying to work with
9 the people out there because sometimes law enforcement,
10 at times, can be a message that's not necessarily what
11 the Refuge wants so I really appreciate your comments.

12
13 Quayana.

14
15 MR. BLIHOVDE: If I could, Mr.
16 Chairman.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

19
20 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you. This is Boyd
21 again. And thanks for both of those comments. And I'd
22 like to say something about the lead shot. I really
23 believe that this is, you know, too often a one way
24 street where we're talking to you and you are our
25 advisors, right, so I would really like the advice on
26 anything that you think we could do about lead shot,
27 more than what we're doing now. The idea is to go to
28 distributors to get them to stop sending lead shot out
29 here because it's basically entrapment. If they're
30 selling it in the stores and somebody goes and buys it
31 unknowing that it's illegal and then the law
32 enforcement goes and gives them a ticket, they
33 essentially, in my opinion, are entrapped by the
34 distributors, for lack of any other scapegoat because
35 the distributors keep getting it out here to the
36 stores, we're finding it on the Coast, we're finding it
37 on villages right outside of Bethel and Aaron even
38 found it in Bethel. So it's, again, I can't say it
39 enough, entrapment for the people out here who
40 shouldn't be the blame for doing something -- sometimes
41 it's the cheapest thing to buy and so anybody would buy
42 it just thinking, well, it's the best deal. So we
43 really could use advice on anything that we could work
44 together on to get to the distributors, if it's a
45 letter from the RAC or maybe you've written letters
46 before that I don't know about, but we really are
47 trying to do something about it. But the exchange
48 program is probably not enough.

49
50

0084

1 And then with -- it goes back to law
2 enforcement that I think Myron is right about, we don't
3 have control over them and we do our best, but any
4 other ideas for helping with the law enforcement issues
5 would be welcome.

6
7 Thanks.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Is there
10 any more questions or comments.

11
12 Wassilly and then John.

13
14 MR. ALEXIE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
15 just got a question. Do you guys go fly out like to
16 the villages and do presentations because when I was
17 growing up we used to have a lot of wildlife service
18 come fly into our areas, especially spring time and we
19 haven't seen that around for quite a few years. And I
20 think that would help out getting the community to know
21 these things.

22
23 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair.
24 Actually the RITs have restarted their school programs,
25 just out of Covid, you know, we couldn't go to schools,
26 and it's been really cool to see Christian and Emmitt
27 and David, they're aggressively going to the schools.
28 They've done an amazing job so far. We -- my job is to
29 go more to with the tribal council for the subsistence
30 and I am trying to do that. I'm kind of -- I got like
31 multiple hats on right now. But last year we were able
32 to at least to go to about five villages on the Coast.
33 I'm wanting to do that again. I know I can't make it
34 to every village but I'm working hard with trying to
35 get to tribal councils and sending fliers out on a lot
36 of this stuff. Chris could talk a little bit about
37 what they're doing in their program.

38
39 MR. TULIK: Yeah, Chris Tulik for the
40 record. In addition to that, back in the early 1980s
41 we started the school program but we haven't been doing
42 it for quite some time, for about 20 years, but this
43 fall we got it restarted, we started our school program
44 and we've been to a number of villages so far. But
45 we're planning on doing more next year. So the problem
46 we are having is recruiting RITs from the Yukon if --
47 that's where you're from.

48
49 MR. ALEXIE: Uh-huh.
50

0085

1 MR. TULIK: And further out in the
2 Coast around Chevak, Hooper, Scammon Bay, and we would
3 like to be able to spread out and be able to travel to
4 a number of villages out that way so we can, you know,
5 talk about lead shot, Avian Influenza in birds and all
6 that.

7
8 Quayana.

9
10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Did that answer your
11 question, Wassilly.

12
13 MR. ALEXIE: (Nods affirmatively)

14
15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John.

16
17 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
18 My name is John Andrew from Kwethluk. I seen -- there
19 was three few boys over here a few times in our village
20 and we tried to work in good faith with them and, you
21 know, we've been trying to fight for subsistence rights
22 for years and years, it's getting bad, worse and worse
23 and worse year after year especially this winter, our
24 fight with Board of Fish, and all our proposals, all
25 our area proposals have failed, like 4/1, 4/1 every
26 time and we've -- we've asked these boys over here,
27 actually the Fish and Wildlife to take over the Federal
28 fishery on our river in good faith because the State
29 has failed us year after year. Not just over here,
30 it's up in Norton Sound, Yukon, Kuskokwim, even Bristol
31 Bay and Chignik. They've failed us year after year,
32 they're on the record too. And then we turn around, or
33 we've been asking our own Refuge, we need to fish for
34 our families and they're still holding back on us. We
35 even got -- in the case of some of these boys that
36 trade out for cooperating with them, they'll provide us
37 openings, or there's that boy over there to hunt moose
38 for me, he still doesn't listen to me.

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 MR. ANDREW: And I think they're
43 stingy.

44
45 (Laughter)

46
47 MR. ANDREW: The point is that we've
48 tried to -- at least we tried to cooperate with them
49 and in return we ask for what we need and when we still
50

0086

1 don't get it, it hurts us physically, mentally and
2 culturally. It's a slap in the face every time. It
3 really hurts us.

4

5 (In Yup'ik)

6

7 INTERPRETER: We're trying to feed our
8 family but they don't listen and now we've come to them
9 and we've tried to ask from them and they still haven't
10 done anything yet.

11

12 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Anyone care to respond.

15

16 MR. BLIHOVDE: This is Boyd from the
17 Refuge. And just to prove that what Trapper John is
18 saying is true I was just at lunch and an elder from
19 Kwethluk was there at the same location on his way to
20 Anchorage for medical purposes and he saw that I had a
21 uniform and he asked about, you know, a pretty
22 heartbreaking thing, he said his dog was starving, his
23 family didn't have enough food and he asked, you know,
24 there's moose all around, you know, how could he get a
25 permit to hunt one of those moose and harvest it
26 because he didn't have enough food. So it's something
27 that we take seriously at the Refuge, we take pride in
28 the fact that we have local folks that work at the
29 Refuge and that they know what it's like. I'm an
30 outsider but we have really good advice from the Staff
31 that know about subsistence living, and so -- I know
32 that you're joking a little bit about the moose and the
33 Department and the food but I just wanted to say it's
34 very serious that people don't have enough food out
35 there especially with caribou going down in numbers and
36 the salmon situation. So we're doing the best we can
37 and as I told that gentlemen from Kwethluk, we'd work
38 with him to try to get him a permit because there are
39 ways to get permits for potlatches and different
40 things.

41

42 So that is my response, thank you.

43

44 MR. ANDREW: Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. John.

47

48 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49 We thank you all, aside from the joking, Qu yana. Thank
50

0087

1 you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Do we have any
4 more questions or comments for the Refuge. James, go
5 ahead.

6

7 MR. LANDLORD: Yes. James Landlord.
8 Again on lead shots, when it first became illegal to
9 sell lead shots, I remember the stores at home were
10 starting to switch over to the lighter pellets and
11 there were -- I think somebody from Wildlife used to
12 travel to Mountain Village and give information that --
13 just like John -- I think that John said that poisoning
14 birds and even when they land on tundra or water, you
15 know, that's going to affect the waters too. The
16 hunters were disappointed because the pellets were
17 lighter and they have a different way of shooting. I
18 think they were giving lessons on that, how to shoot,
19 from heavier lead to lighter pellets. And if I
20 remember correctly I think they had posters that it was
21 illegal to sell lead shot. I mean a lot of people were
22 disappointed because lead are heavy and they have more
23 impact. But even though they were disappointed they
24 had to switch over and buy those lighter pellets. I
25 mean we could do that over again, maybe posters.

26

27 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. I --
28 last year we started doing that again but we've only
29 been sending them out to the tribal councils and like
30 little posters through fax. We could start doing -- we
31 could definitely do a lot more than what we're doing
32 now and we're hoping to ramp that up so that we could
33 get bigger posters, not just to the tribal council but
34 through the whole -- throughout the whole villages
35 within the region. And back then, I remember those
36 steal shot clinics, I was a little kid when they had
37 them out in Toksook so it was the RITs, like Tozulik
38 and James Sipry out there teaching us how to shoot clay
39 pigeons with steal shot instead of lead.

40

41 So, Boyd, do you know what -- how that
42 program is going to be in the future, maybe Chris
43 could talk about it more.

44

45 MR. TULIK: Yeah, Chris Tulik for the
46 record. Back then there was one individual that was
47 certified to run the clinic and then the RITs were
48 helping with that too. So, yeah, I guess we can bring
49 that back. But it will require people to be a

50

0088

1 certified to run live fire shooting, you know, in a
2 safe area, so there's a whole lot of things that we'll
3 have to look at before we can actually start doing that
4 again.

5

6 Henry.

7

8 MR. PARKS: Quyana, Mr. Chairman. I
9 have a question, I want to get back to those lead
10 shots. Now if they're illegal to use -- I know they're
11 illegal to use on waterfowl, so my question is can we
12 use lead shots on seals, like young bearded seals, any
13 kind of seals because the.....

14

15 (Teleconference interference -
16 participants not muted)

17

18 MR. PARKS:reason why I ask is,
19 you know, they swim in deep waters, they're not
20 waterfowls. That's my question as well.

21

22 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. Just --
23 through the definition throughout -- it is illegal
24 throughout Unit 18, so any waters of Unit 18 it is
25 illegal, even in bays and stuff.

26

27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any more
31 questions or comments for the Refuge managers here.

32

33 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is.....

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none.....

36

37 MS. MCDAVID: Myron.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, Myron, you had a
40 question or comment.

41

42 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I had a comment that
43 I would like to suggest to the Fish and Wildlife
44 Service. I know for many years I've worked with both
45 Fish and Wildlife Service and also the AVCP Waterfowl
46 Conservation.....

47

48 (Teleconference interference -
49 participants not muted)

50

0089

1 MR. NANENG:(indiscernible) and
2 one of the major issues we had was lead shot use. And
3 the purpose of lead shots were recommended not to be
4 used anymore was because it was affecting certain
5 species of birds and even the (indiscernible) geese. I
6 would recommend that Fish and Wildlife Service reach
7 out to the waterfowl conservation committee, the work
8 we've done and perhaps they can convey to the village
9 -- because back in the early -- late '80s and early
10 '90s there was a concerted effort to make that
11 information known in the villages. For the last few
12 years there hasn't been much in terms of information
13 regarding lead shots and it sounds like they're coming
14 back again now. I've heard the Arctic geese are
15 (indiscernible) are getting lower in numbers.

16
17 I would recommend that Fish and
18 Wildlife Service coordinate with the waterfowl
19 conservation.

20
21 (Teleconference interference -
22 participants not muted)

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You wish to comment.

25
26 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you. And we
27 appreciate all the advice on all this and we will, and
28 we have worked with WCC but we'll do more.

29
30 Thanks.

31
32 (Teleconference interference -
33 participants not muted)

34
35 MR. NANENG: Somebody has their phone
36 not muted.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. If
39 there's no other questions from the Council we thank
40 you for your reports and updates that you've given to
41 us. Definitely more RITs and more outreach, education
42 will definitely educate people out there that need to
43 know about the issues that are affecting, not only our
44 wildlife, but the fish and what not that we depend on
45 so appreciate your report.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 Is there anyone from Kuskokwim River
50

0090

1 InterTribal Fish Commission online at this time.

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: Actually he's here.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, yeah, you're here
6 so I thought we'd hear them over the phone so could you
7 introduce yourself.

8

9 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, before you go
10 on, somebody has their phone off mute and we can hear
11 the background so please ask whoever might have their
12 phone off mute to put it on mute.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Those of you
15 that are using your cell phones please put your cell
16 phones on mute so that we have a better -- so people
17 can hear the report.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 Brooke, did you want to comment before
22 we hear Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission.

23

24 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
25 just wanted to let you know that the report from the
26 Fish Commission is in your supplemental meeting
27 materials and it is on Tab 4. Tab 4 of -- yeah, that
28 one. And if you don't have a copy I can pass a copy
29 out to you now.

30

31 Thanks.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead. You can go
34 ahead and start.

35

36 MR. MAGEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 Members of the Council. Good afternoon. My name is
38 Andrew Magel. I'm the Fisheries Technician and Jesuit
39 Volunteer for the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
40 Commission. I've been in this position for almost
41 eight months now. I'm very grateful to be here and
42 provide this report on behalf of the Commission.

43

44 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
45 Commission is an organization representing the 33
46 Federally-recognized tribes of the Kuskokwim River
47 watershed in fisheries management, research and
48 monitoring.

49

50

0091

1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted)

3

4 MR. MAGEL: And we're working to
5 protect and sustain our fisheries and traditional ways
6 of life using traditional and indigenous knowledge and
7 the best available Western science.

8

9 Some following updates for you as we
10 head into the 2023 salmon season. We are -- in 2022
11 our Executive Council was represented by Betty Magnuson
12 of McGrath; Jonathan Samuelsen Vice Chair of
13 Georgetown; Gerald Kameroff of Kalskag; Mike Williams,
14 Chair of Akiak; Avery Hoffman, Secretary of Bethel;
15 Ralph Nelson of Napakiak and Adolph Lupie of
16 Tuntutuliak and our elected in-season managers were
17 Betty Magnuson of McGrath; Megan Leary of Napaimute;
18 Mike Williams of Akiak; Avery Hoffman of Bethel and
19 Paul Cleveland of Quinhagak, and our elder advisers
20 were Robert Lekander of Bethel and James Nicori of
21 Kwethluk, and we're very grateful for their
22 representation. We will be holding our annual meeting
23 April 5th through 6th, so tomorrow and Thursday, which
24 will have elections of Executive Council members,
25 Executive Officers and in-season managers and so our
26 leadership going into 2023 will have some changes.

27

28 In terms of Staffing our Executive
29 Director, Kevin Whitworth; Nikki Pollock, our
30 Operations Manager joined in October; Terese Schomogyi,
31 the Programs Manager, and we just hired a fisheries
32 biologist, Justin Leon based out of Anchorage. We're
33 very excited to have a full team ready ahead of the
34 2023 salmon season.

35

36 I'll be brief about in-season
37 management as Refuge Staff just touched upon it.

38

39 But we're looking forward to continuing
40 our eighth season of collaborative in-season management
41 with Fish and Wildlife Service at the Refuge. We are
42 -- our in-season managers, support Staff and the
43 Refuge's fisheries management team will utilize our
44 joint salmon management strategy and harvest strategy
45 to guide precautionary salmon management grounded in
46 traditional and indigenous knowledge, local observation
47 and the best available Western science. And we will be
48 focusing on chinook and chum and also coho given their
49 unprecedented crash in 2022.

50

0092

1 Since last season we've been involved
2 in a lot of advocacy to protect and conserve salmon
3 with a gravel to gravel approach. We've been urging
4 the North Pacific Management Council to take action to
5 eliminate chinook and chum bycatch in the Bering Sea
6 Aleutian Island pollock trawl fishery. Since the last
7 Regional Advisory Council meeting the Council -- North
8 Pacific Fishery Management Council voted unanimously to
9 initiate action to modify chum salmon bycatch measures
10 in the Bering Sea pollock fishery and tasked the
11 bycatch -- salmon bycatch committee with the first
12 draft of those measures. From the Fish Commission, our
13 Executive Director, Kevin Whitworth, and Chair Mike
14 Williams, Sr., were appointed to the bycatch committee
15 along with other Western Alaska tribal leaders and
16 representatives from the pollock fleet to collaborate
17 on ways to reduce salmon bycatch. They met on November
18 8th, 2022.....

19
20 (Teleconference interference -
21 participants not muted)

22
23 MR. MAGEL:January 25th, 2023,
24 and March 20th through 21st of 2023. At this most
25 recent meeting the bycatch committee passed a purpose
26 and needs statement on why the Council should take
27 action for managing chum salmon bycatch. This was
28 passed with consensus for from both tribal leaders and
29 industry representatives. They then put forward
30 alternatives and options for analysis to reduce bycatch
31 of Western Alaska chum salmon. This was not passed
32 with consensus. Tribal leaders from subsistence
33 communities pushed for a regulatory measures with caps
34 in place to reduce bycatch, while industry
35 representatives pushed for a non-regulatory self-led
36 approach consisting of adjustments to existing protocol
37 and incentive plan agreements to avoid prohibitive
38 species catch.

39
40 In January 2023 the Fish Commission,
41 AVCP and TCC hosted a tribal consultation with NOAA
42 Fisheries on the Bering Sea groundfish harvest
43 specifications for 2023 increasing the total allowable
44 catch for commercial pollock and also having an effect
45 increasing bycatch potentially on our salmon in the
46 Bering Sea. We will continue to work and consult with
47 NOAA Fisheries and other Federal agencies on these
48 issues affecting our fish.

49
50

0093

1 In February 2023 the North Pacific
2 Fishery Management voted unanimously to initiate the
3 process of creating a new programmatic supplemental --
4 programmatic environment impact statement which will
5 guide Fishery of Groundfish Management decisions
6 regarding bycatch and incorporate recent ecosystem
7 level changes such as climate change as well as
8 incorporating more indigenous Alaska Native knowledge.

9
10 This is a momentous opportunity for
11 tribes to work with the North Pacific Fishery
12 Management Council and NOAA fisheries to make sure
13 our voices are heard. We hope to have more information
14 on this soon.

15
16 Alaska Board of Fish, as I'm sure you
17 all know, held its meeting February 20th through
18 February 27th for the Alaska Peninsula Aleutian Island
19 and Chignik finfish meeting. Many AYK residents,
20 including Fish Commission Staff and Executive Council
21 members and Commissioners attended and testified in
22 support of Proposal 140. In the supplemental material
23 we have a graph that kind of shows, just visualizes
24 what 140 would have done with a 60 percent reduction in
25 fishing time. However, the Board of Fish ignored our
26 urgency and voted Proposal 140 down. The closures that
27 they voted for only reduced fishing time by 12 percent
28 and they also passed unenforceable chum caps. This is
29 insignificant to protect AYK chum salmon. We share in
30 the collective disappointment of tribes across Western
31 Alaska in this outcome yet we continue to push for
32 ecosystem wide conservation of chum salmon in other
33 avenues.

34
35 And then looking forward to 2023 again
36 with our projects. We're looking forward to expanding
37 our community based harvest monitoring program, which
38 hires local tribal citizens from the villages of Eek,
39 Napakiak, Napaskiak, Kwethluk, Akiachuk, Akiak and
40 Tuluksuk to collect post harvest data from local
41 subsistence fishermen which is used by Refuge and Fish
42 Commission Staff for the decisionmaking. We partner
43 with lower river communities, ONC, and the Refuge to
44 create in-season indices of salmon run strength, run
45 timing and harvest data. We're hoping to expand this
46 program by hiring more harvest monitors and expanding
47 our season to also incorporate coho data.

48
49 The Kwethluk River screw trap project
50

0094

1 counts juvenile salmon smolt migrating out of the
2 Kwethluk River and that data is compared to spawner
3 data for fish returning to the Kwethluk River weir to
4 paint a picture of overall productivity within the
5 tributary. We're looking forward to starting this
6 project in the next coming weeks with Refuge Staff and
7 getting deployed and getting the screw trap up and also
8 the Kwethluk River weir.

9
10 Both of these projects employ local
11 employees from the village of Kwethluk and neighboring
12 communities.

13
14 Takotna River weir, we're looking
15 forward to this project as well. The only long-term
16 headwaters stock assessment program which helps
17 calculate the annual chinook run reconstruction again
18 hiring local residents in Takotna. We're looking
19 forward to the seventh season that we have funded and
20 operated this weir.

21
22 And the environmental DNA project, or
23 eDNA. This was piloted last year at the Kwethluk River
24 weir. It's basically just taking samples of the water
25 and fish scales and other things that shed off their
26 DNA and can help estimate the abundance of salmon. So
27 we're looking forward to partnering with the University
28 of Alaska-Fairbanks and analyzing those results and
29 also expanding that to the Takotna River weir this
30 summer.

31
32 And we are also anticipating more
33 funding as soon as this year to begin more salmon
34 restoration and monitoring project such as drone based
35 stock assessment and beginning to work on documenting
36 indigenous knowledge.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. I didn't
41 get your name.

42
43 MR. MAGEL: Andrew Magel.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Andree.

46
47 MR. MAGEL: Andrew.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Andrew, oh, sorry.
50

0095

1 Andrew. Thank you for your report. Do we have any
2 questions or comments for Andrew at this time.

3

4 (Teleconference interference -
5 participants not muted)

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We have someone on the
8 line that needs to mute your phone, you're coming in
9 real loud. If you're talking can you please press your
10 mute button. If you're not speaking.....

11

12 (Teleconference interference -
13 participants not muted)

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We're still hearing
16 you. We're still hearing you. Can you press your mute
17 button if you're not speaking to the Council.

18

19 (Teleconference interference -
20 participants not muted)

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We're still -- please
23 press your mute button. Star, six.

24

25 (Teleconference interference -
26 participants not muted)

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Okay, at this
29 time, do we have any questions or comments for Andrew,
30 at this time.

31

32 Jackie, go ahead.

33

34 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana, Chair. Hi
35 Andrew, I'm Jackie. And I used to be in the
36 Commission. I think 2022 was my last year.

37

38 (Teleconference interference -
39 participants not muted)

40

41 MS. MCDAVID: Hold on, sorry, Jackie.

42

43 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay.

44

45 MS. MCDAVID: Excuse me, we have
46 someone on the line with an open mic, it might be folks
47 at Togiak. Folks are recognizing some voices, if you
48 could please mute your phone, star, six or the mute
49 button.

50

0096

1 Thank you.

2

3 REPORTER: Well, that was an immediate
4 mute.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay. So my question
9 was, does your community based harvest monitoring
10 program extend out to the whole seven units you serve
11 or represent? And if not, maybe it would be good to
12 have one at -- do you know what I mean, one in
13 Quinhagak and maybe one in Aniak or somewhere, in the
14 upper and then -- because I think from my understanding
15 it's all centered in central Kusko, am I right?

16

17 MR. MAGEL: Through the Chair. Thank
18 you, Jackie. Yeah, we are currently only in like the
19 central and lower river of the Kuskokwim. We have
20 talked with Bering Sea Fishermens Association to expand
21 the program potentially. So maybe not in 2023 but I
22 believe going forward we have discussed potentially
23 incorporating other communities including those closer
24 to the Coast such as Quinhagak but I'm not 100 percent
25 sure on the timeline or which villages but we have
26 definitely discussed about the need to expand it beyond
27 just the communities that we are currently working
28 with.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Does
31 that answer your question Jackie.

32

33 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Do we
36 have any more questions or comments for Andrew at this
37 time.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I know for the Yukon,
42 you know, probably from Russian Mission on down to the
43 mouth and along the Coastline we don't have no
44 representation. I know from Holy Cross on up they're
45 being represented by Tanana Chiefs Conference. I don't
46 know what it's going to take, maybe from this body or
47 from some other organizations that we'd like to get
48 those villages more involved in what they're doing
49 especially with the work that you're doing. I know

50

0097

1 you've made a lot of accomplishments since you became
2 organized as the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
3 Commission and that's what I've been trying to advocate
4 for the lower villages on how they can organize
5 themselves so that we could be able to at least hear
6 these updates that other organizations are doing.
7 Because as you know the river really needs a lot of
8 help as far as data collecting and all kinds of things
9 that would try and boost up our fisheries on the Yukon
10 and if there's any way that this body or somebody that
11 could direct us as to how we could get the lower
12 villages involved in such as the Kuskokwim River
13 InterTribal Fish Commission, I think, is only going to
14 benefit those people that are trying, by themselves, to
15 try and address issues that we face, you know, on a
16 yearly basis.

17
18 So I just wanted to bring that up, too.

19
20 Thank you for your report, appreciate
21 it.

22
23 MR. MAGEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24
25 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
26 Myron.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

29
30 MR. NANENG: I know that the YRDFA, the
31 Yukon River Fisheries Drainage Association represents
32 some of the villages on the lower river. So they do
33 work with the villages in trying to address the salmon
34 concerns of the Yukon River.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
37 Yes, so noted. At this time I'll go ahead and ask for
38 maybe a 10, 15 minute break.

39
40 (Applause)

41
42 (Laughter)

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, we are on break.

45
46 MS. MCDAVID: I just want to remind the
47 Council that Senator Murkowski is supposed to be coming
48 at 4 so we should just be prepared if they show up
49 early.
50

0098

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, thanks.

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: We've got plenty of time,
4 it's 3:25.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, so we could take
7 a 10 minute break.

8

9 (Off record)

10

11 (On record)

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll go ahead and call
14 the meeting back to order, the time now is 3:44. We're
15 going to do some wrangling around on our agenda in
16 hopes of timing it to where Lisa Murkowski will be
17 here. She's planning to be here at 4:00 o'clock. So
18 with the changes, I'll go ahead and turn it over to
19 Brooke.

20

21 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 Because the Council -- or the Chair wanted to make sure
23 we have plenty of time to discuss Wildlife issues with
24 Togiak Refuge and work on the wildlife proposals we're
25 going to go ahead and move that until tomorrow morning
26 and we're going to move to go ahead and take up agenda
27 Item 12G, which is the Council charter review because
28 that should be a pretty quick item. And I'll direct
29 the Council members to Page 111 in your meeting books.

30

31 So starting on Page 111 you'll find a
32 copy of your Council charter. And this charter was
33 last renewed in 2021 and per the Federal Advisory
34 Committee Act, or FACA as it's known short hand, your
35 charter has to be reviewed and adopted every two years
36 and that's why it's coming up again this cycle.

37

38 And so the Council can request to
39 change or modify things in your charter but you do have
40 to provide a justification for doing so. And some
41 things that you have done in the past were to add
42 language about geographic balance and that's under Item
43 12 in the membership and designation.

44

45 Something that a couple of other
46 Councils have done this cycle have requested the
47 addition of a youth seat on the Council. And the idea
48 behind that would be to have a young adult attend
49 Council meetings, not be a voting member of the Council

50

0099

1 but have a chance to learn about the Federal
2 Subsistence Management Program and the regulatory
3 process and participate in discussions sort of as a way
4 to train up future leaders. And so that's just
5 something to consider that other Councils have been
6 considering.

7
8 So I think those are the main points,
9 so if you want to look through the charter, yep, it
10 starts on 111 and it goes through Page 114. There are
11 certain things that we can't change that are in there
12 by law but I'll turn it back over to you, Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
15 Brooke. I think the youth seat like Brooke mentioned
16 will benefit the youth as they're more involved with
17 the issues that face us and so I think this will be
18 very beneficial if we can, you know, ask for a youth
19 seat to sit on the YK RAC. As she said it'll be a non-
20 voting member, to educate the young person at a young
21 age and to kind of groom them into what we are facing
22 today. So I think it will benefit the people that are
23 on there, we just need to figure out the terms and what
24 not and it could come from you as they body, Council,
25 for this RAC and I'm sure the other RACs will be
26 considering that also.

27
28 Is there action that we need to take up
29 as far as the charter?

30
31 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, Mr. Chair. If you
32 would like to make additions, it would be good to have
33 a motion to make additions to the charter and then a
34 motion to approve the charter with those additions.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Is there
39 recommendations from the Council to make any
40 recommended changes to the charter.

41
42 John.

43
44 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chairman, I have a
45 question. I was going through the charter, where do we
46 ask -- I know I have discussed this with my fellow
47 Council members on and off over the years, where do we
48 ask for Council stipends because we've been losing our
49 membership to other Council groups where they get
50

0100

1 compensated for their time when meeting with their
2 Council.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke.

5

6 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Mr.
7 Andrew I think the best way to go about that would be
8 to write a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board
9 asking for that and they could forward on that request
10 to the powers that be.

11

12 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, can we do it in this
13 session, sometime during this session?

14

15 MS. MCDAVID: You can suggest
16 correspondence throughout any time in the meeting so if
17 you would like to do that now or lat.....

18

19 MR. ANDREW: Okay, thank you.

20

21 MS. MCDAVID: Yep.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

24

25 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. Through the
26 Chair. John, I just wanted to maybe point out about
27 that. On our Central Bering Sea Advisory Council with
28 the Fish and Game, we did -- we wrote a letter asking
29 for the same thing and I'm not allowed -- I mean I
30 don't know how much I can share of this yet, maybe just
31 offering, if we're able -- or if I'm able, maybe I
32 could show our letter as a sample letter or something,
33 for the State. And I think it covers pretty much the
34 same reasons. High cost of living, inflation rates,
35 the fact that we're providing our Native knowledge for
36 free.

37

38 (In Yup'ik)

39

40 MR. ANDREW: Okay. Quyana.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair.
45 Jackie, is that something you think -- would you be
46 able to provide that during this meeting so we could
47 give a copy out to Council members so we could discuss
48 and decide if they would like to send something similar
49 based on that letter?

50

0101

1 Thank you.

2

3 MS. CLEVELAND: Through the Chair. May
4 I ask permission first and then I'll get back to you
5 guys. Thanks.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes. That will benefit
8 this Council because it's already been thought out
9 already and it could only benefit us. So we'll wait to
10 get permission from her organization to at least
11 provide some of that information to us so we could be
12 able to use and write to the Federal Subsistence Board
13 in trying to raise our stipend up for meetings so
14 appreciate it. Thank you.

15

16 Do we have any more on the charter.

17

18 I know like you mentioned a youth seat
19 to be placed on the YK RAC. I think it needs to be in
20 the form of a motion. Does anyone want to motion to
21 include a youth seat for the YK RAC.

22

23 MR. ALEXIE: This is Wassilly. I make
24 a motion to include a youth with our RAC committee.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
27 on the floor by Wassilly Alexie from Russian Mission to
28 include in the charter a youth seat, do I hear a
29 second.

30

31 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by Jackie
34 Cleveland from Quinhagak.

35

36 Discussion.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, if we could.....

41

42 MR. NANENG: Call for the question.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead. You
45 had a comment, Myron.

46

47 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I think we -- I'd
48 support it to give an opportunity for our young people
49 to learn about some of the subsistence issues that we

50

0102

1 have in the YK region.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you.

4 Anyone else. Yeah, I think it will only benefit the

5 youth in our area, to educate them about the issues

6 that we're facing especially with the resources that we

7 depend on that is in our backdoor. I think it will

8 only benefit the youth in the longrun and hopefully

9 educate themselves and educate others that need to know

10 about what we do as a RAC Council for the Federal

11 Subsistence Board as an advisory to the Federal

12 Subsistence Board.

13

14 Any more discussion.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, do I hear

19 a question.

20

21 MR. ANDREW: Question.

22

23 MR. NANENG: Call for question.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Question's been called.

26 All those in favor of including a youth seat to the YK

27 RAC signify by saying aye.

28

29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed say nay.

32

33 (No opposing votes)

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none motion

36 carries, thank you. Do we have any more on our RAC --

37 or charter.

38

39 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We

40 could now entertain --if there are no other additions

41 or changes you would like to see to the charter we

42 could entertain a motion to adopt the charter as

43 written with the addition that was just made.

44

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,

47 Brooke. You've had a chance to look at the updated

48 charter, is there any questions or comments related to

49 that at this time.

50

0103

1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted)

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, is there
5 a motion on the floor to adopt -- Wassilly, go ahead.

6

7 MR. ALEXIE: I just got a question, Mr.
8 Chair. On the youth is there an age limit on that?

9

10 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. I
11 think that's up for Council discussion. They might
12 have to be 18 due to travel and what not, but you could
13 -- if you wanted to discuss a range on the record you
14 could do that.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, do you wish to
17 entertain a motion to make an age limit at this time.
18 We're still up for discussion on the youth seat so if
19 you've got any recommendations you could consider it.

20

21 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. I
22 will just follow up and say I know my other Council
23 that I coordinate, Eastern Interior, they suggested a
24 cap of 25 years, so someone in the 18 to 25 year range
25 as a younger adult.

26

27 Yeah, that's all I had, thanks.

28

29 MR. ALEXIE: Okay. I request -- or
30 make a motion that we put an age limit on youth, 18 to
31 25, somewhere around there.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, I think that's the
34 recommendation that's going to go to the other RAC
35 Committee, both Western Interior -- so I think that's
36 going to be recommended to my understanding.

37

38 MS. MCDAVID: I might need a little
39 help with Robert's Rules here, since we already made
40 the motion and voted on it without the age limit you
41 might have to take it back up and revote on it, amend
42 it.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. I'll ask to
45 rescind the vote on the age limit, if you can rescind
46 your vote.

47

48 MR. ALEXIE: Okay, I rescind the vote
49 on that, the recommendation for an age limit.

50

0104

1 (Pause)

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, we could go ahead
5 and ask for another motion to take up the charter
6 changes to include a youth seat with age limit. Is
7 there a motion on the floor.

8

9 Jackie.

10

11 MS. CLEVELAND: Qu yana. I make the
12 motion to include a youth seat within the Council with
13 the age limit of 18 to 25.

14

15 MR. NANENG: It's Myron. Second it.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Standby Myron.

18

19 (Pause)

20

21 MS. MCDAVID: All right, for
22 clarification, we do need to vote for the age addition
23 and then we will vote on the entire charter with the
24 youth seat with the age limits. Okay, sorry about that
25 guys.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: So go ahead, Jackie,
28 you could make your.....

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: I think Jackie had made
31 the motion for the youth seat with the age limit of 18
32 to 25 and it was seconded by Myron, so I think if you
33 want to speak to the motion then we could vote on it.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. It's been voted
36 [sic] on and seconded, do we have a question. James.

37

38 MR. NANENG: I call for question on the
39 amending motion of the age limit. A youth with an age
40 limit.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James has a comment at
43 this time, Myron. James, go ahead.

44

45 MR. LANDLORD: A RAC member can be 18
46 on up, is that considered youth. When you're a youth
47 you're in high school, I think, you're under the care
48 of your parents and school. In Mountain Village school
49 we have youth representation, we take them out to like
50 NCAI (ph), IGAP, AFN, they're considered youth and they

0105

1 have an escort. They're escorted by an adult of the
2 community or escorted by a teacher from school. But I
3 think, here, at the RAC, you can be 18 on up to be --
4 you could run and I don't think that's considered a
5 youth, those are young adults. When you're a youth
6 you're below maybe 18.

7

8 That's my comment.

9

10 MS. MCDAVID: So I guess I don't have
11 an actual answer. If someone younger, in high school,
12 could be in this sort of youth advocate seat is what
13 some of the other Councils are calling it, we could try
14 to get that clarified by Staff at OSM. I mean right
15 now since the -- the positions don't exist, I think you
16 could ask for what you want, if you want someone to be
17 younger they could come back and say, no, we can't do
18 that or maybe they could come back and say that would
19 be fine with parental permission. Because it is
20 something new I don't have all the answers right now
21 about what that seat could look like so I guess my
22 suggestion would be if -- to make the request for what
23 you would like to see and they may put limits on it but
24 right now I think it's up to you guys to decide.

25

26 Thanks.

27

28 MR. LANDLORD: In Mountain Village we
29 want the high school students.....

30

31 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair.

32

33 MR. LANDLORD:to learn more
34 about.....

35

36 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair.

37

38 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Standby. We have.....

41

42 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, James.

45

46 (Teleconference interference -
47 participants not muted)

48

49 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

50

0106

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We have someone on the
2 Council that's commenting right now, I'll pick you up
3 after James' comments. Go ahead, James.

4
5 MR. LANDLORD: Yes. We wanted the high
6 school students to learn tribal governments, other
7 Native organizations that affect our people so we
8 started sending students out from high school but you
9 have to be in good standing, good grades and all that
10 so they could learn more rather than just going to the
11 required in high school, kind of like outside
12 activities, just to let them learn more and that's how
13 we -- in the last meetings, that's how we wanted the
14 students to learn more but they're still youth.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, James.
17 I think there was Alissa on the line, go ahead.

18
19 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 for the record my name is Katya Wessels and I'm Council
21 Coordination Division Supervisor with OSM. Good
22 afternoon, members of the Council. It's my
23 understanding that you're right now discussing your
24 charter and discussing the possibility of adding a
25 youth seat, or a developmental seat for younger adults.
26 And what you can do in the process of renewing your
27 charter, you can request it and the way it works is
28 your request then goes to the Federal Subsistence Board
29 and the Federal Subsistence Board discusses it and if
30 they're in support of it they will forward your request
31 to the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of
32 Agriculture and then the Secretaries make the final
33 decision if they are going to add this language to the
34 charter.

35
36 (Teleconference interference -
37 participants not muted)

38
39 MS. WESSELS: So it's always good to
40 ask, you know, for what you want. There is more than
41 one Council that is asking right now for a similar
42 seat. So when several Councils are asking there's
43 obviously a need for this kind of a developmental seat
44 and the need to pass your knowledge to the younger
45 generation and the need to provide opportunities for
46 younger people to understand the regulatory process
47 better and learn without, you know, being a voted
48 member, if they just attend the meetings, if that seat
49 is allowed, and then there will be funding from the OSM
50

0107

1 and then this younger person can travel to the Council
2 meetings just like you do and just be there, be with
3 you and listen to what you have to say and how you deal
4 with different regulatory problems.

5

6 So I just wanted to provide this
7 clarification and if you have any questions for me I'll
8 be happy to answer them.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
13 questions for the lady that just spoke. Richard, go
14 ahead.

15

16 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
17 the record I'm Richard Slats. The Yukon Kuskokwim
18 Delta Regional Advisory Council, we have to be at least
19 18 years of age to be on this group. There are youth
20 groups in and around our areas and our meetings are
21 open to the public. If the youth delegate a youth
22 member into our body, whether they be the student body,
23 fish camps, appointed through that, then we probably
24 would have to do a solicitation process for youth
25 members and, you know, there would have to be some kind
26 of a process. But I'm just saying that there didn't
27 really need to be an age but as long as they were 18
28 years of age or older and, you know, if they were
29 appointed by the youth groups then they would be
30 delegated as their delegates into our body.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you,
35 Richard. My understanding is if we wanted to include
36 high school, that's 18 years, then we'd have to rescind
37 the main motion, correct me if I'm wrong.

38

39 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. Currently the
40 motion on the floor is for the age range for this youth
41 seat for 18 to 25. If you wanted to high school --
42 younger high school students to be eligible then you
43 would need to change the motion.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Any more
46 comments from the Council. You understand what Brooke
47 just mentioned.

48

49 MR. SLATS: Yep.

50

0108

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, so I
2 guess our motion stands. It's already been voted.....

3
4 MS. MCDAVID: It hasn't been voted,
5 right.

6
7 REPORTER: It hasn't been voted on yet.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: It hasn't been voted
10 yet, if there's no other discussion then maybe we could
11 go ahead -- I think Myron made the motion to adopt --
12 can you clarify that again Myron.

13
14 REPORTER: Jackie made the motion and
15 Myron seconded the motion.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay.

18
19 MS. CLEVELAND: It was me.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, sorry, Jackie.

22
23 MS. CLEVELAND: How did I word it. I
24 made the motion to include a youth seat on our Council,
25 a non-voting member -- youth member to our Council
26 between the ages of 18 and 25.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie for
29 that clarification. It was also seconded by Myron,
30 Tina?

31
32 REPORTER: Yes.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Then we go to the main
35 motion to adopt the charter with that addition.

36
37 MS. MCDAVID: We have to -- we'll first
38 vote on this motion on the table and then -- yeah.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Okay, what you
41 need to do is go ahead and vote on the additions that
42 we made to the main motion.

43
44 REPORTER: No, you just have this one
45 motion, no main motion on the charter.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: The motion on the
48 floor.

49
50

0109

1 (Pause)

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: I think someone could
4 call the question.

5

6 MR. LANDLORD: To clarify myself, James
7 Landlord. There was a motion to adopt this charter?

8

9 REPORTER: No. There is no main motion
10 to adopt the charter yet James.

11

12 MR. LANDLORD: And then Jackie made a
13 motion to amend.....

14

15 MS. MCDAVID: We haven't made the
16 motion to adopt the charter yet, they're just talking
17 about the youth seat to add and the current motion is
18 for that age range from 18 to 25.

19

20 REPORTER: Yes, and it's been seconded,
21 waiting for the question on that motion only.

22

23 MS. MCDAVID: So that's what we'll vote
24 on now. And then next we'll vote on the whole charter.

25

26 REPORTER: After it's moved and seconded
27 to accept the charter with amendments.

28

29 MR. LANDLORD: Okay. Can the amended
30 motion be amended to.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, you can rescind or
35 amend.

36

37 MR. LANDLORD: We have to vote on the
38 amended motion first before we make another amendment.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, that's my
41 understanding. Yes. Because we put an age limit on
42 there and we discussed it and if right now there's no
43 other discussion then somebody can call a motion to
44 vote on that and then the next, after the age, youth is
45 included in the charter -- in the -- then we vote again
46 for the advisory -- the main charter.

47

48 REPORTER: You'll need a motion and
49 second to accept the entire charter.

50

0110

1 MS. MCDAVID: Also if -- sorry to
2 interrupt, Mr. Chair. If you want to no longer have
3 the age limit you could just vote against it is another
4 way to go about it.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
7 on the floor and seconded and discussion's been made,
8 and right now if someone can call the question to vote
9 on the age limit we could vote it up or down.

10

11 MR. ANDREW: Question.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: There's a question on
14 the floor by John Andrew, I'll go ahead and ask for a
15 roll call vote for the amendment.

16

17 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, I will do roll call
18 vote now. If you are in support of the age limit of 18
19 to 25 say yea.

20

21 Wassilly Alexie.

22

23 MR. ALEXIE: Yea.

24

25 REPORTER: Could we turn on the mics
26 please.

27

28 MR. ALEXIE: Yes.

29

30 REPORTER: Thanks.

31

32 MS. MCDAVID: John Andrew.

33

34 MR. ANDREW: Yes.

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: Jacqueline Cleveland.

37

38 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes.

39

40 MS. MCDAVID: Norma Evan.

41

42 MS. EVAN: Yes.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: James Landlord.

45

46 MR. LANDLORD: No.

47

48 MS. MCDAVID: Myron Naneng.

49

50

0111

1 MR. NANENG: No.

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: Henry Parks.

4

5 MR. PARKS: Yes.

6

7 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa Rogers.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa, are you still
12 with us?

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, I'm not hearing
17 her.

18

19 Richard Slats.

20

21 MR. SLATS: Nay.

22

23 MS. MCDAVID: And Raymond Oney.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes.

26

27 MS. MCDAVID: Motion passes six to
28 three.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. The motion
31 passes six to three. That brings us back.....

32

33 MR. ANDREW: Now we're back to the main
34 motion.

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: All right, now we're back
37 to the main motion.

38

39 REPORTER: No, you don't have a main
40 motion quite yet.

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: We don't have a main
43 motion yet but the next item of business would be for
44 someone to make a motion for someone to adopt the
45 charter with the additions, the two amendments that you
46 just made.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, you heard Brooke,
49 to adopt the main motion to include the youth, is there
50

0112

1 a motion on the floor.

2

3 MR. ANDREW: I so move.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
6 on the floor by John Andrew to accept the charter with
7 a youth Council seat, do I hear a second.

8

9 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by.....

12

13 MS. EVAN: I second. This is Norma.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY:Jackie.

16

17 Discussion.

18

19 Myron were you commenting -- or Norma.

20

21 MS. EVAN: That would be an appropriate
22 age even for the youth that graduated or are attending
23 their first years in college that are interested in
24 salmon and biology studies at -- in our region
25 colleges.

26

27 Thank you, Chair.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma. Any
30 more comments. Questions.

31

32 MR. NANENG: I call for question on the
33 motion.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, there's a motion,
36 there's a question called by Myron on the main motion,
37 I'll go ahead and do -- not a roll call vote but all
38 those in favor signify by saying aye.

39

40 IN UNISON: Aye.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed say nay.

43

44 MR. LANDLORD: Nay.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Let the record
47 show there's one nay. Motion carries. Thank you.

48

49 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, good job Team.

50

0113

1 Sorry about that, we need to go to Robert's Rules
2 Academy.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, sorry for all
5 that confusion but we're back on track.

6

7 So at this time we do have our Senator
8 Lisa Murkowski attending our meeting. I'd like to
9 welcome you to our Yukon Kuskokwim Regional Advisory
10 Council, today being our first meeting, so if you want
11 you're welcome to address the Council.

12

13 Welcome.

14

15 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Good afternoon.
16 Thank you for the opportunity to join in you in your
17 meeting. I hope that I am not interrupting your
18 agenda. This is the first -- the first meeting of the
19 Advisory Council this year; is that correct

20

21 REPORTER: I'm going to turn your
22 microphone on. Try it again.

23

24 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Okay.

25

26 REPORTER: Go ahead.

27

28 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Is that a little
29 bit better.

30

31 REPORTER: Yes.

32

33 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Okay. All right.

34

35 REPORTER: It wasn't you.

36

37 (Laughter)

38

39 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Thank you.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: But thank you for
44 the opportunity to just be with you. My comments are
45 limited because I am here primarily in a listening
46 mode.

47

48 As you know, because you are certainly
49 living it, as we're dealing with pressures within the

50

0114

1 region when it come to subsistence, whether it is with
2 our fisheries, whether it's with the game management, I
3 think we recognize that it takes many partners, it
4 takes levels of communication at the tribal, all the
5 way up to, and working with our Federal agencies that
6 help to facilitate the good operations of what happens
7 within the management structure.

8

9 For my part, as your Federal
10 representative back in Washington, D.C., in the Senate,
11 when it comes to the fisheries side of this, this is
12 something that we have been working as a Delegation,
13 me, along with Representative Peltola, Senator
14 Sullivan, trying to help facilitate as much science and
15 data and understanding as to the impact that we have
16 seen on our fisheries and, trying, again, to better
17 understand some of what we're seeing with the crash and
18 the situation with our salmon.

19

20 You are familiar, of course, with the
21 Alaska Salmon Research Task Force that Senator Sullivan
22 and I incorporated into law just last year. We are
23 still waiting the Secretary of Commerce's list of task
24 force members to that. In addition to what we have
25 done, Legislatively, on the Appropriations side of the
26 ledger, what we have been doing to help facilitate
27 funding for research here in the region for monitoring,
28 not only -- not only within the Yukon Kuskokwim area
29 but really more system-wide, throughout the state.

30

31 Last week the Deputy Secretary of the
32 Interior, Tommy Beaudreau, announced \$16 million from
33 the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that will go towards
34 building the resilience of salmon ecosystems here in
35 Alaska, but including here in the YK area. So there is
36 much that we can be doing from the funding side, which
37 is important. We know that it's not just about
38 funding, though, it's allocation of that and how,
39 through good management and stewardship we see the
40 results there.

41

42 I have had specific -- very specific to
43 you and this particular meeting, I know that there have
44 been discussions about the Office of Subsistence
45 Management, OSM, and the role that it plays currently
46 within Fish and Wildlife, there's been some discussions
47 about is there -- is there a different, a better place
48 for the Office of Subsistence Management. I would be
49 curious to know if you all have views and opinions on
50

0115

1 that because that is something that is in discussion
2 back in Washington, D.C.

3

4 But my hope, Mr. Chairman, and to the
5 Council Coordinator here, is to be able to carry from
6 you today, whether it is recommendations, suggestions,
7 comments about what more on the Federal side we can be
8 doing to help with the -- with subsistence within this
9 region and how we can be more responsive to Alaskans.
10 Everywhere I'm going the issue of food security is
11 being raised with me. Everywhere I'm going is food
12 security.

13

14 I'm going to be going out to Mekoryuk
15 tomorrow and really one of the prime reasons to go,
16 other than I've not had an opportunity to be out there,
17 I'm looking forward to that, but we're going to be
18 meeting with those who have been focused on reindeer
19 husbandry, how we can work to facilitate more
20 opportunities for commercial harvest of reindeer.
21 We're looking at some different ideas in terms of how
22 you deal with things like USDA certification and
23 whether or not we can do 638 contracting with tribes to
24 have the tribes actually do the -- get the training and
25 do the certification, they do that in other parts of
26 the country on reservations where Indian tribes are
27 able to get that USDA training and thus be able to
28 certify whether it's bison or elk or the like. So what
29 all we can be doing together to be focused on the issue
30 of food security particularly at a time when there's
31 increasing pressures on cost of living in our
32 communities, everything is more expensive, and so I
33 think there's even more pressure, there's more urgency
34 now than perhaps ever before to make sure that your
35 subsistence opportunities are good and strong because
36 there is so many families that are very challenged
37 right now.

38

39 And with that I would truly welcome
40 your comments that I can take back with me.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Senator
43 Murkowski for being here at our winter meeting. Who,
44 to better understand, you know, our people, and to be
45 here and listening to them. We appreciate you taking
46 the time to be with us today.

47

48 Is there any comments or questions
49 coming from this Council, this would be a good
50

0116

1 opportunity now to let her know.

2

3 (Pause)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I know we've been
6 facing a lot of issues especially with the salmon. I'm
7 from the Yukon River. And as you know the Yukon River
8 hasn't been fishing for subsistence for the last three
9 years.....

10

11 (Teleconference interference -
12 participants not muted)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY:because of the low
15 returns that we've been experiencing. It's been going
16 on for a long time, I know, probably since the '80s
17 when we started experiencing restrictions to our
18 subsistence and within the last three years we haven't
19 had no subsistence opportunity. It's been really hard
20 on those -- on us that rely on this resource because we
21 look forward to it every summer because we go through
22 the winter utilizing the other species of fish like
23 pike and sheefish and we look forward to the summer
24 when the salmon are here, and that's what all our
25 people look forward to is the harvest of salmon because
26 that is one of the resources that is part of our diet
27 that we rely on every year. And like I said it's been
28 doing dwindling and bringing a lot of hardship on our
29 people.

30

31 It's been really hard.

32

33 And, you know, even to restrict some of
34 the gear that we're using, you know, to me that's even
35 more harder because the only way we've fished salmon is
36 with a 6 or 8.5 inch mesh gear and over the years
37 they've been cutting down the mesh size and all we're
38 doing is catching pike and sheefish, other than the
39 salmon that we're trying to target. And if we could --
40 if we could go back to the 8.5 inch, you know, because
41 we've relied on that mesh size and it hasn't really
42 done any damage to the fish that are coming back to the
43 Yukon and to the Kuskokwim, and, you know, cutting down
44 the mesh size kind of killed off or caught more other
45 species than salmon that we're trying to harvest, and
46 it's been really hard on people all up and down the
47 Yukon.

48

49 And like I said we look forward to that

50

0117

1 resource every year. And if there's ways that we could
2 find to rebuild that stock I think that's what we're
3 asking for now; to find some ways to try and rebuild
4 the stock that are coming to the Yukon and the
5 Kuskokwim.

6

7 We understand Mother Nature, you know,
8 does it's own thing. You know, Global Warming. You
9 know we've heard from NOAA and other agencies that, you
10 know, use global warming and different patterns of
11 weather that we've been experiencing, you know, but we
12 still like to see that salmon come back, you know,
13 that's one of the things that our people have utilized
14 over time and they know what they need to sustain
15 themselves. But when the other Departments try and
16 manage it, it's gone from bad to worse and like I said
17 we've been stewards of the land since time and
18 immemorial and, you know, we haven't had no problems
19 with that in the past. And it seems like ever since we
20 became a state things started dwindling, not only the
21 salmon but other resources that we heavily depend on
22 because, you know, we're not farmers we rely on the
23 resources that are in our back door and we look forward
24 to those every year because we get different species
25 throughout the year, whether it be beaver in the winter
26 or salmon in the summer or moose in the fall and those
27 we rely on, those resources that go through a cycle of
28 life. And, to me, the salmon is like part of a circle.
29 When you take part of that resource off it becomes
30 wobbly and that's where we're at right now, that cycle
31 of life is on the wobble stage and we don't want to see
32 it become an extinct species and we would like to --
33 whatever it takes to try and rebuild the stocks for the
34 Yukon I think that's what we're looking for. Because
35 like I said we heavily depend on the resource from year
36 to year.

37

38 And a lot of our elders have gone to
39 their rest not eating the resource, the king salmon
40 that they -- they go to their grave brokenhearted, not
41 knowing that, you know, if they're going to be eating
42 fish that summer.

43

44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: So whatever it takes to
48 try and get the salmon stocks back to rebuild it I
49 think that's what we're asking.

50

0118

1 I know there's some other places that
2 do still have commercial fishing, such as the bycatch
3 out in the Bering Sea and intercept fisheries in the
4 Area M and a lot of it has to do with wanton waste
5 because we don't know what other species that may be
6 dwindling as a result of wanton waste. It might be
7 seals, it might be whales, you know, those need to be
8 looked into because wanton waste is not the way we
9 live. You know, like you hear from many of our elders
10 we rely on the species that -- and we know how much to
11 take, and if we do take more than enough it's shared.

12

13 So I just want to comment on that.

14

15 Thank you for being here.

16

17 Anyone else want to comment.

18

19 James, then Myron. I'll call James
20 Landlord and then Myron.

21

22 MR. NANENG: Okay.

23

24 MR. LANDLORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 Senator Murkowski, did I hear you say that moving OSM
26 to another position or department?

27

28 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: James it has been
29 raised to me that there's a consideration to move OSM
30 from out of Fish and Wildlife over to the Secretary of
31 Interior, in that office. So these are discussions
32 that have been had and presented by the Administration.

33

34 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Senator
35 Murkowski. I just wanted to follow up on that. The
36 Council will be receiving a presentation on Thursday
37 morning about this proposed move. Department of
38 Interior will be calling in from Washington on Thursday
39 morning so in -- just as a little preview in the
40 President's proposed fiscal year budget for next year,
41 Department of Interior has suggested that OSM move from
42 under.....

43

44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46

47 MS. MCDAVID:the Fish and
48 Wildlife Service into the Assistant Secretary for
49 Indian Affairs within the Secretary's office of

50

0119

1 Department of Interior so you'll hear more about that
2 on Thursday. But if you have thoughts on that now I'm
3 sure that the Senator would love to hear them.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: That's good to know
8 that they're going to be presenting.

9

10 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chairman brought up
11 the False Pass area. You know the area's managed by
12 the State of Alaska, Board of Fish, and when they voted
13 down the Proposal 140 a lot of people on the Yukon
14 River and Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay, even Arctic were very
15 disappointed, you know. Everybody felt like they were
16 deflated. I know I had no more energy after that, I
17 didn't want to go back to the meeting because when they
18 voted it down 3/4 it just was really defeated. We're
19 not going to have any chums -- that's where most of the
20 -- like Mr. Chairman said the chums are intercepted in
21 that area. And in the Bering Sea, when they trawl from
22 here, that's where the king salmon, or chinooks are
23 intercepted by the North Pacific Fisheries Management,
24 you know, under their -- what is it, they're quota, or
25 bycatch.

26

27 So it seems like no matter what we say
28 regarding subsistence we always feel defeated. Nobody
29 -- we haven't had a taste of chinook, chum last four,
30 to six years, I think, nobody wants to listen to us.
31 It's always commercial fishermen from Seattle or State
32 of Washington, Portland area, they seem to listen to
33 them first before we argue for -- that we want fish, we
34 want subsistence, we want at least something to catch
35 in the summertime, but so far -- at this last meeting,
36 last month, that really caught us -- because the State
37 of Alaska manages these resources, you know, I think we
38 know that, and so even when -- I always feel that even
39 with the Federal, that they have to work with the
40 State, you know, I think they call it cooperative or
41 coordination.

42

43 Something's got to be done.

44

45 And if OSM is moved over to Interior,
46 Assistant Director, I think -- I hope that will help
47 regarding subsistence or Yukon River, Kuskokwim area.

48

49 For my personal view I think that might

50

0120

1 be a move that maybe that might help us.

2

3 I went to another meeting that was
4 under USDA that subsistence needs to be defined in
5 USDA, like you mentioned, I think it's -- that they
6 felt that subsistence was not defined under some of the
7 definitions in USDA and they were trying to put it in
8 there so it would be put in the books in one of the
9 departments, especially with the USDA.

10

11 I think we need the Federal
12 government's help.

13

14 Because they manage only the Federal
15 waters, you know, and the fish swim in the Federal
16 waters, State, Federal, both, but when they set up
17 subsistence and how many hours to fish, and that's four
18 hours, maybe six hours and sometimes you don't hit the
19 fish because maybe they passed, maybe we got the tail
20 end, you know, things like that before they come in.

21

22 I just wanted to -- regarding OSM, that
23 maybe -- I hope it will help.

24

25 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Thank you, James.
26 I appreciate that.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, James.

29

30 Myron, you're next.

31

32 MR. NANENG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
33 And thank you, Senator Lisa Murkowski, for joining us
34 at this meeting today.

35

36 You know the fishery disaster since
37 1990s through the early 2000s and even towards 2010
38 timeframe and the fishery started observing around
39 2016, '17 and last year complete closure from the very
40 beginning of the season reflects that both the state of
41 Alaska (indiscernible - cutting out) fishery management
42 agency is failing our people. I know Senator Stevens,
43 when he was alive and when he was -- that he provided a
44 lot of money for fishery disasters back in the 1990s as
45 well as the early 2000s and all that money was to study
46 why fish were starting to decline. And to-date we
47 haven't got any real concrete answers of why the fish
48 disaster -- or why the fish -- salmon stocks are on the
49 decline. Back then it was the chinook salmon, last

50

0121

1 year it was the chums, the coho and those are the fish
2 that return to the Kuskokwim River as well as the Yukon
3 River.

4
5 At one time there used to be a
6 (indiscernible - cutting) chum salmon going up the
7 Anvik River. Very few returned this past year. And
8 our fisheries are completely closed because due to the
9 fact that there is also a Treaty obligation of the
10 Yukon River for chinook salmon escapement into Canada.
11 And I don't think that escapement has been met at all
12 for quite some time. You know the State of Alaska is a
13 party to that International Treaty, yet, we hear that
14 the intercept fishery down in Area M, intercepts at
15 least 62,000 chinook salmon which is a mixed stock
16 fishery and now we hear that there's closures not only
17 in Western Alaska but also there in Southcentral
18 Alaska, the Susitna River area, that fishery that
19 harvest chinook salmon are completely closed, even
20 before the season begins.

21
22 I cannot see why the State of Alaska
23 being a part of the International agreement for chinook
24 salmon escapement is not a party -- supposed to be a
25 party -- but not honoring any efforts to do
26 (indiscernible - cutting out) of those salmon towards
27 the Yukon. Our people are bearing the burden of
28 conservation for the fisheries is allowed by the Board
29 of Fisheries at the State level and it's not fair to
30 people.

31
32 At the last Board of Fish meeting of
33 AYK I was asked by one of the Board of Fish members,
34 how's that test case going regarding one of the
35 subsistence at Hooper Bay, and I hadn't heard about it
36 and I didn't know about it until he mentioned it. Are
37 we now going to be test cases with subsistence closures
38 while the State of Alaska allows for commercial
39 fisheries in an intercept fishery area. That's Area M.

40
41 I know there's a lot of out of state
42 fishermen in those meetings. And they pay money and
43 I'm sure that after the AFN Convention last fall where
44 there was a resolution passed to try and reduce Area M
45 fisheries, the Area M fisheries lawyered up and started
46 (indiscernible - cutting out) the Board of Fish to vote
47 a certain way to not cut off their fishing opportunity.
48 And I think that U.S. -- part of the negotiated
49 agreement with Canada and, of course, the State of
50

0122

1 Alaska to honor that escapement goal while
2 (indiscernible) allowing for salmon to be fished on the
3 Kuskokwim River. You know our good friend Robin
4 Samuelsen from Bristol Bay, he took -- and one of the
5 fishermen in Area M told that the coho salmon that are
6 -- were there two weeks early and those coho salmon did
7 not show up on the Yukon and Kuskokwim. And the -- I
8 think the number said they caught over a million.
9 That's why our fisheries (indiscernible - cutting out)
10 primarily to those that live on the Kuskokwim as well
11 as the Yukon and village areas in the YK Delta.

12

13 Something definitely needs to be done.

14

15 The bycatch also needs to be addressed.

16

17 We have to revisit the Magnuson-Stevens
18 Act and reduce the amount of -- the trawlers are
19 complaining (indiscernible - cutting out) our people in
20 the villages are going bankrupt because of the high
21 cost of fuel. In some villages \$12. High cost of
22 food. High cost of laundry soap, which you've seen in
23 some villages costing as much as \$42. I thought we
24 were Americans. How come we're being treated like
25 Third Class Citizens. And we're the First Nation
26 people.

27

28 That is not fair at all.

29

30 So I'd request that our Delegation take
31 a look at that and change some of these structures that
32 will allow for salmon to return to the river. The
33 river is our source of food. The land is our source of
34 food. So I'd respectfully request Senator Murkowski,
35 that you and Senator Sullivan and Congresswoman Mary
36 Peltola work together to find a way to reduce
37 substantially the bycatch and also the State of Alaska
38 commit to its (indiscernible - cutting out) Treaty with
39 Canada that it has been restricting our people from
40 eating fish on the Yukon River.

41

42 So I'd request that and it be taken
43 very seriously, to protect the people, it's affecting
44 the livelihood of our people, our family structures and
45 it's (indiscernible - cutting out) need to work and
46 live and it's causing an exit of our young people from
47 the village to urban areas.

48

49 So I thank you and I hope you find a

50

0123

1 way to address the concerns out here in Western Alaska
2 and our needs and our food security concerns.

3

4 And I thank you very much.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Myron.

7 Anyone else want to -- go ahead, Richard.

8

9 MR. SLATS: For the record I'm Richard
10 Slats, Secretary for the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional
11 Advisory Council. Thank you for being here Senator
12 Lisa Murkowski. It shows us where your heart is when
13 you come into our meetings in person. Appreciate that.

14

15 Climate change has been taking its
16 toll, you know, for us the last decade and a half.
17 We're seeing all of these changes and we have to adapt
18 with, you know, the way we hunt and fish. To this day
19 everything has been one month ahead. We used to pick
20 berries in August, now we're picking them in July
21 because they're ripe and falling off. And then with
22 climate change that's been going on, our small
23 communities emergency response plan did not have a
24 pandemic anywhere in its horizon. We didn't know how
25 to respond to a pandemic. Nothing on the horizon. So
26 there was -- you know a couple years ago, a year and a
27 half ago it was a time of great uncertainty. And then
28 Merbok happened, a great -- one of the greatest high
29 winds, storm surges have been going on in our
30 communities since 2018, after three days of high winds
31 we're on a 30 foot -- my community is on a 30 foot
32 hill, small stretch of rolling hill, you look out from
33 the edge of those hills and you're looking at water all
34 the way -- just like you're looking out to the ocean,
35 we're 17 miles inland. Our neighboring village had
36 waters up to their doorstep when Merbok happened. And,
37 you know, like for my community even though we're on a
38 stretch of a rolling hill erosion is taking its toll.
39 Everyone lost their fishcamp. A lot of them, their
40 fishing boats and their fishing gear either got swamped
41 or floated away and some are lucky to just be able to
42 find and salvage them.

43

44 So we're the ones that have been out
45 here, just like we say, it's just that we're the ones
46 that, you know, like we hear of communities having to
47 relocate and it's just like I always get reminded of
48 when me and my late brother were looking out the window
49 in November when the first time it rained into November

50

0124

1 in 1995 -- or 1985 and then he looked at me and then he
2 said what are we going to do and I looked at him and I
3 said, time to move up north, because traditionally our
4 people have been nomadic so we followed where the fish
5 and game were and then where it was colder so we could
6 travel on snow and ice. But as I say, we're the ones
7 that are out here.

8
9 It's just like the way things have been
10 going we're the ones that will be going hungry.

11
12 For some, if they don't catch fish,
13 they won't eat, because an elder stated he worked with
14 a young couple and that young couple said this is all
15 we know and if they didn't catch any fish they won't
16 eat. They won't be able to feed their children.

17
18 And during one of our teleconferences,
19 one of our elders stated the reason why we're in here
20 today and we're speaking up is that we just want our
21 children and our children to witness what we enjoyed,
22 you know, having fish camps and being able to hunt and
23 fill up our fish racks with fish. So -- and then this
24 is all -- subsistence is all that we're trying to hang
25 on to.

26
27 So just wanted to let you know and I
28 appreciate you being out here and listening to us.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard. Is
33 there anyone else on the Council that wanted to address
34 Senator Murkowski at this time. Henry, go ahead.

35
36 MR. PARKS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
37 For the record I'm Henry Parks and I thank Senator Lisa
38 Murkowski for you to be with us at this very important
39 meeting.

40
41 I'm just going to make a friendly
42 comment. You know we're all Natives here, we're all
43 mostly Natives here and we rely on subsistence way of
44 life, that's who we are. That's how our ancestors were
45 and it will continue on down the road if it's God's
46 will, to our next generations.

47
48 So my point is here I just want to make
49 a comment on those bycatches down there at the Bering
50

0125

1 Sea who has been affecting and impacting our
2 subsistence, especially salmon returns, which are
3 coming up to our river systems.
4

5 Now I'm going to make an example of a
6 farmer like in down States, there's so many farmers
7 down there who take care of their cattle. So they rely
8 on their cattle and they feed them and they take good
9 care of them. So my point here is that if those fish,
10 salmons, especially salmons, if they're not being taken
11 care of down there, yeah, they will be gone down the
12 road pretty soon, they will be gone. Right now they
13 are declining every year and it is really hard for us
14 to harvest salmons for us to feed our, you know, family
15 members and we are given some big time restrictions up
16 here, not only us, even those up north people up there.
17 So if it's God's will own the road, you know, I hope
18 that this issue be taken care of by some agencies, this
19 is regarding about those bycatches, not just those only
20 bycatches, also those False Pass fishermen down there
21 who are, you know, taking all our -- not taking our
22 fish, but intercepting the fish there that are supposed
23 to come up to our river systems.
24

25 So, you know, all these are my big
26 concerns and hopefully down the road our fish will get
27 back in big numbers again. That's my hope.
28

29 Thank you.
30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Anyone else
32 from the Council want to address Senator Murkowski at
33 this time.
34

35 MR. ANDREW: Yes.
36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.
38

39 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
40 Listening to all the Council members I can echo all
41 their testimonies but I don't want to really repeat
42 them because you'll hear them over and over in all the
43 nearby villages too, they have the same problem.
44 They've been living this type of lifestyle for many
45 generations now.
46

47 But back on -- back before the time of
48 intercept fisheries and trawl fisheries out in the
49 ocean in the Bering Sea, we used to fill up all our
50

0126

1 smokehouses every summer. All those little nearby fish
2 camps were like little villages from spring -- sometime
3 in May we moved to our spring camp -- from our spring
4 camps down to our fish camps and stay with them until
5 we're done harvesting salmon and most of the time right
6 where I live -- I live about 17, 18 miles on the river,
7 up by the Kwethluk, that place called (Indiscernible)
8 where a fishcamp is -- we used to have seven families
9 every year starting from the time I was able to fish I
10 was probably somewhere in 1953, my old man used to tie
11 a rope around my waist and asked me to help him pull a
12 35, 40 foot driftnet. We'd be pulling them out, I
13 don't know for how long, he used to force me to pull a
14 lot of the fish as much as possible. By the time we
15 get the net out, our boat could sink, a couple of
16 hundred fish, almost 300 fish, mostly chum salmon
17 because in the early days when they only had small
18 motors and smaller fishing gear, we always tried to
19 limit our catches once we see how fast the fish are
20 hitting our nets and we could pull it up as fast as
21 possible and deliver to our -- mostly to our relatives
22 first and if we're not too tired we'd go out again and
23 fish for our neighbors, because half the time our
24 neighbors, you know, couldn't afford the fishing gear
25 like a net, motor or boat. We had to help each other
26 out even if it put a hardship for us. But in those
27 days we were pretty happy because our fish houses, our
28 fish smokehouses used to be full almost -- practically
29 every year. If you were healthy and you could fill up
30 your smokehouses and if we are 300 to 1,500 or just
31 slightly more, when they're dried you can pack them and
32 put them up in your storage cache. But if you have a
33 dog team you got to catch better than 3,000 to provide
34 for your dogs too.

35

36 But then once we start hearing about
37 False Pass and trawl fisheries, our old people used to
38 say sometime in your future the fish won't come back if
39 they catch too many of them out there before they get
40 back to their river of origins. And now we're seeing
41 that year after year and especially the last five years
42 has been pretty tough, like my friend over here says,
43 the climate change of five years at the same time as
44 intercept fisheries are getting, at least, I'd say
45 around pretty close to 90 percent of the fish that are
46 bound for the Western Alaska rivers and bays because
47 earlier this morning we heard from one young man when
48 he made a report that False Pass intercept Area M
49 fisheries are intercepting at least a little over 90
50

0127

1 percent of the salmon that are meant for our Yukon,
2 Kuskokwim and Bristol Bay. And we see year after year,
3 it's been really hard, especially in recent years
4 practically all the families I know on the Kuskokwim
5 River and the Yukon side they never met their amount
6 needed for subsistence, like for example, from what we
7 catch last summer, salmon, by November, December their
8 freezers are out of dry fish and frozen fish and
9 they're relying on store bought food that's really
10 expensive, even for one household -- one household size
11 will set you back over 2,000 at the local store prices.
12

13
14 And I thank you for honoring us with
15 your presence.
16

17 Quyana. Quyana.
18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John.
20 Anyone else want to provide comments to Senator
21 Murkowski at this time.
22

23 Jackie.
24

25 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. Through the
26 Chair. Welcome Senator Murkowski. I'm Jackie
27 Cleveland from Quinhagak. We've met before a number of
28 times, so good to see you. I know you're here to
29 listen but I just wanted to ask a question and I know
30 we are bringing up this topic on Thursday morning but I
31 can't wait, sorry.
32

33 But the idea of OSM moving out of Fish
34 and Wildlife Service is new to me. And in your
35 opinion, what are the benefits for indigenous people if
36 that move were to happen, would there be more
37 downfalls, or more benefits and, if so, why?
38

39 Thanks.
40

41 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Jackie it is
42 something that we are, again, exploring. As Brooke
43 mentioned this is something that the Administration had
44 presented in the President's budget and so we have
45 begun kind of the initial inquires. We've been hearing
46 from different groups, different individuals about the
47 support for moving it from Fish and Wildlife to the
48 Assistant Secretary's office, Secretary Newland and I
49 think part of it is a desire to have greater attention
50

0128

1 and focus on subsistence itself, and the subsistence
2 user. And so the thought -- I think the thought being
3 that moving it over into Bureau of Indian Affairs it
4 has a more closer and a more direct connection to
5 subsistence itself.

6
7 I think if there is a challenge with
8 any of this it is that, as we know, and in Alaska,
9 under ANILCA, ANILCA provides not for a Native
10 preference but a rural preference, that is the law
11 under ANILCA. And so if you move it to the Assistant
12 Secretary of Indian Affairs are you not including other
13 users of rural subsistence who are not Native. So I
14 think that's some of the issues that I have heard
15 presented to me as we have been brought into some of
16 this more preliminary discussion.

17
18 I know that often times when there
19 isn't as much efficiency within a Federal agency as the
20 stakeholders would like the idea is, well, let's move
21 it somewhere else and see if there's greater efficiency
22 that then can be gained. Sometimes it is. Sometimes
23 things work. And other times there are unintended
24 consequences, and I think that's what we need to make
25 sure that there aren't unintended consequences or, in
26 fact, what the stakeholders are seeking to gain by
27 movement is actually possible given that shift.

28
29 So I would advise those of you on the
30 Council to just listen carefully to presentation, ask
31 lots of questions about what this will actually look
32 like. Will it be greater resources. Will it be --
33 where will their focus be. I think these are exactly
34 the type of questions that you should be prepared for
35 and hopefully get good answers.

36
37 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. I
40 know you've gotten a lot of comments and a lot of
41 concerns for you to bring back to your office and to
42 advocate on our behalf on some things that you heard
43 from this Council so we appreciate you being here.
44 This is the first time we've had someone from Congress
45 attend the RAC meeting and we appreciate it very much
46 you being here and listening to our Council's concerns
47 about things that we heavily depend on and, hopefully,
48 some of those comments that you heard from us will be
49 able to bring back and to address what we'd like to see
50

0129

1 in the long run.

2

3 So, again, thank you for being here and
4 taking the time to be with our Council.

5

6 So thank you, again.

7

8 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Quyana. And if I
9 might just share, I believe it was you, Richard, that
10 said; if we don't catch fish, we don't eat. And that
11 is a very important reminder for me to take back. I
12 will share with you that at the end of last year when
13 we were able to advance our Appropriations Bill, in a
14 very significant omnibus bill, it was a thousand pages,
15 plus, and there was somebody who was just looking to
16 see if this Appropriations Bill had been loaded with
17 one lawmakers priority over another, looking for the
18 proverbial government pork, and my name was called out
19 and it said that Senator Murkowski has in the omnibus
20 Appropriations request 49 times the word, salmon, is
21 mentioned and it was meant as a dig, like isn't she
22 greedy asking for salmon requests in 49 different
23 areas, research, monitoring, surveys, the like. And
24 when I saw that comment, it was actually a tweet, I
25 believe, we only mentioned it 49 times we should have
26 mentioned it 149 times. But your comment, Richard, is
27 an important one for me to remember, because in no
28 other part of America do I think of people for whom, if
29 they do not have just one food source they're in a
30 position where they don't eat.

31

32 So your words are very simple and
33 they're really very compelling.

34

35 If we don't catch fish, we won't eat.

36

37 This is not a rhetoric, it is reality.

38

39 And so when we talk about food
40 security, or insecurity there is nothing more insecure
41 than when your primary source of sustenance and really
42 identity as salmon people, when that is gone, is
43 limited, is restricted and your alternatives are so
44 challenged because others, in other parts of America,
45 can go to a grocery store. You have grocery stores
46 here but nobody faces the prices at the grocery stores
47 that you face here and when you live a subsistence
48 lifestyle in a cash economy it's pretty hard.

49

50

0130

1 And so reinforcing what I already know
2 but doing it through your very direct comments and
3 stories is important to me.
4

5 Know that your entire Delegation, of
6 course, is very focused on this. I think the fact that
7 you have Representative Peltola, that we have
8 Representative Peltola in the Congress, a woman who ran
9 on fish first, she has been carrying that message very
10 directly and I think you need to know, very
11 effectively. We have some legislation in front of us
12 that we need to address. I believe it was Myron that
13 mentioned the Magnuson-Stevens Act and, you know, that
14 is going to have to be reauthorized and when that
15 happens, I think there is -- there is great opportunity
16 there. And then North Pacific Fisheries Management
17 Council is an important management entity tool but in
18 fairness it is a structure that is not nimble, and we
19 are facing a resource that is seeing changes. You've
20 raised the issue of bycatch, of intercept and we
21 recognize that those externalities that are out there,
22 but then there are also other things that are happening
23 within our oceans that, again, we -- we're not able to
24 turn down the temperature in the water as much as we
25 might like here. There are some things that we don't
26 yet fully understand. So the Council, as an important
27 as a tool as it is is not structured to be nimble and
28 responsive in a quick way.
29

30 And so these are some of the things, as
31 I think about the tools that we have at the Federal
32 level, that we need to reinforce as we listen to you,
33 know that I'm carrying your words with me.
34

35 So know that I hear the struggles that
36 you all are facing and our desire is to do more
37 directly.
38

39 I was -- I was visiting last summer
40 with someone that was going through all the issues that
41 you have all outlined here, everything that we needed
42 to focus on, bycatch and ocean temperatures and
43 predation, and then he just said, Lisa, we just need
44 you to put the fish back in the river. And that's
45 pretty heavy because I can't put the fish back in the
46 river but we all, together, can be working towards
47 making these stocks healthier and that will put our
48 fish back in the river.
49
50

0131

1 So thank you for what you do as a
2 Regional Advisory Council. These meetings are very
3 important and know that I appreciate them.
4

5 And to our Federal partners, thank you
6 as well for the role that you play. Thank you for
7 giving me this time today and I've got my notes and I'm
8 going to remind my colleagues; if you don't catch fish,
9 you don't eat. So thank you.
10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you again for
12 being with us and wish you a happy flight back to your
13 -- back to the office in Washington, D.C., and, again,
14 thank you. Hopefully we'll see you again in the future
15 in our meetings, so I appreciate you being here.
16

17 Thanks again.
18

19 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.
20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, Alissa.
22

23 MS. ROGERS: Hi, Mr. Chair, I was
24 patiently waiting my turn. Would it be okay if I can
25 address Ms. Murkowski.
26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Would that be okay,
28 Lisa -- I know she's kind of short for time but she
29 said okay -- go ahead, Alissa.
30

31 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Lisa. I
32 greatly appreciate your presence. Unfortunately -- I
33 apologize for not being there otherwise I would shake
34 your hand and give you a big hug and welcome you to our
35 home.
36

37 In addition to what you've heard I
38 wanted to bring up Donlin Gold. Since we are a
39 subsistence economy out here and we heavily rely on the
40 resources, the land, the water, pretty much everything
41 that touches affects us in our bodies and all the
42 chemicals that are being brought in through Donlin Gold
43 and affecting our subsistence and threatening our way
44 of life out here, how -- I guess the question would be,
45 is your office in -- is it going to be able to protect
46 our subsistence way of life out here so that we can
47 continue our livelihood and keep our people healthy?
48

49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
50

0132

1 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Well, I think the
2 direct answer to that is, yes. As with everything we
3 seek to find that balance. I think it is imminently
4 clear that there is a resource there that brings value,
5 there is a resource there, the development of which
6 will bring jobs and economic opportunity to a region
7 that needs it but there is also a responsibility to
8 ensure that any level of development, whether it be
9 from a mine or otherwise is done in a way, in a manner
10 that will not have negative consequence to the
11 resource, to the subsistence resource, not only for the
12 fisheries but to other aspects of subsistence and that
13 is what these processes are designed to do.

14
15 We saw the example with Pebble where
16 the Army Corps of Engineer, after extensive, years and
17 years of analysis and review came back and said that
18 the way that that project was designed was not going to
19 be compatible with the -- not only subsistence
20 protections, but just the environmental protections.
21 So that process demonstrated that the effort to, again,
22 balance, whether it's a mining, a mineral prospect, or
23 any other level of development that it has to go
24 through a rigorous review and it has to withstand that
25 rigorous review.

26
27 And so as I did with Pebble, I said we
28 have to make sure there is a fair and a thorough
29 process that will advance and we ensure that there is a
30 rigor to it and then when the time comes to make that
31 determination we need to make sure that it is the
32 science that guides us rather than perhaps the politics
33 of a project.

34
35 But thank you for that, Alissa, thank
36 you for raising it.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: And, again, thank you,
39 again, Lisa, for being with us and listening to the
40 Council on their comments and concerns that they have.
41 And, again, like I said, hope to see you again in the
42 future in one of our meetings so thanks for taking time
43 out to be with us today.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 SENATOR MURKOWSKI: Thank you for the
48 invitation. Thank you. Thank you for your good work.

49
50

0133

1 (Applause)

2

3 MR. NANENG: Is anyone still on.

4

5 MS. MCDAVID: Myron, we're still on,
6 we're just taking a short pause to take a picture with
7 the Senator and then I'll have a short announcement
8 before we adjourn.

9

10 (Photo opportunity)

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If we could go ahead,
13 Brooke has a short announcement and then we'll break
14 for the evening. Go ahead, Brooke.

15

16 MS. MCDAVID: Just a quick
17 announcement. We are about to break for the day.
18 Tomorrow morning we'll start with public comments on
19 non-agenda items. We have two cards that were turned
20 in this afternoon and then we're going to move the
21 Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 173 and the
22 Fisheries Special Action for 23-01 up to the start of
23 the day so that we can have the Council's
24 recommendation to pass on to the Western Interior who's
25 also meeting. And that's all, thank you. We'll be
26 back at 9:00 a.m., in the morning.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, we will recess for
29 the evening and start up again at 9:00 a.m. -- 9:00
30 o'clock in the morning.

31

32 MR. SLATS: We're going into recess and
33 then back to order at 9:00.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes.

36

37 MR. SLATS: Okay.

38

39 (Off record)

40

41 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

0134

1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

4) ss.

5 STATE OF ALASKA)

6

7 I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the
8 state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court
9 Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

10

11 THAT the foregoing pages numbered ____ through
12 ____ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the
13 YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL
14 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically
15 on the 4th day of April;

16

17 THAT the transcript is a true and
18 correct transcript requested to be transcribed and
19 thereafter transcribed by under my direction and
20 reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and
21 ability;

22

23 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or
24 party interested in any way in this action.

25

26 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 5th
27 day of May 2023.

28

29

30

31 _____
32 Salena A. Hile
33 Notary Public, State of Alaska
34 My Commission Expires: 09/16/26

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50