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YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

ONC Multi-Purpose Room
Bethel, Alaska
April 5, 2023
9:07 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

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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(Bethel, Alaska - 04/5/2023)

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(On record)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, folks I guess we're ready to go to start our morning session, or second day of our meeting. I'll go ahead and call the meeting to order. The time now is 9:07 a.m. Before we get started I'll ask Brooke to see if there's any housekeeping before we get started.

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Brooke.

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Thank you.

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

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead. I was going to ask to see if there were any other Council members online. Myron, go ahead.

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44

MR. NANENG: Yeah, I think it would be proper to start off the meeting with the roll call of the RAC members.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Secretary Richard, can you do a roll call.

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MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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Roll call.

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Henry Parks.

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MR. PARKS: Present.

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MR. SLATS: Normal T. Evan.

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MS. EVAN: Present. Good morning.

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MR. SLATS: John Andrew.

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13

MR. ANDREW: Here.

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MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan.

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17

MS. MCDAVID: He's excused.

18

19

MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan.

20

21

(No comments)

22

23

MR. SLATS: Okay. Jacqueline

24

Cleveland.

25

26

MS. CLEVELAND: Here.

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28

MR. SLATS: James Landlord.

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MR. LANDLORD: Here.

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32

MR. SLATS: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

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MS. ROGERS: Present.

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MR. SLATS: Phillip Peter.

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38

MR. ANDREW: Excused.

39

40

MR. SLATS: Wassilly B. Alexie.

41

42

MR. ALEXIE: Here.

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MR. SLATS: Raymond Oney.

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46

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Here.

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MR. SLATS: Myron Naneng.

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1 MR. NANENG: Here.

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3 MR. SLATS: Robert Hoffman.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 MR. SLATS: Robert Hoffman.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MS. MCDAVID: Robert is also excused.

12

13 MR. SLATS: Excused. Richard Slats is
14 here. Mr. Chairman, we have seven present, and three
15 are telephonic.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard.

18

19 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
22 Richard. Let the record show that we have three that
23 are excused for this meeting so, thank you again. To
24 get started, as Brooke mentioned we could go ahead and
25 take those that are going to be providing public
26 testimony on non-agenda items. First, online we have
27 Chris Tulik.

28

29 MR. TULIK: Members of the Council. My
30 name is Chris Tulik. First of all I'm going to speak
31 as a concerned subsistence user. Let it be known that
32 I am not representing or speaking for the U.S. Fish and
33 Wildlife Service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

34

35 When I was listening to the Council
36 reports yesterday I was thinking and flashing back to
37 what I used to hear from the elders who have gone
38 before us and what I've been recently been hearing from
39 the Yukon and the lowest Yukon River villages for the
40 last year. Now, Ray Oney was talking about the people
41 who used to travel and spend some time at different
42 campsites and how the main village would be like a base
43 of operation. Indeed, yes, our people used to live a
44 semi-nomadic lifestyle following the seasons throughout
45 the year. Moving from one site to the next where food
46 is more abundant and available. But this lifestyle has
47 changed to where we no longer have multiple campsites.

48

49 He also talked about the change in

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1 climate that is having effect on our resources and the
2 environment. And we are experiencing and living the
3 prophecies of our ancestors in our lifetime today in
4 this weather and climate that we are having.

5

6 I used to hear my father, uncles and
7 other elderly people talking about the change in
8 weather conditions which have been occurring throughout
9 their lifetime and how they've noticed clear rivers and
10 streams that have become murky. How the layers of snow
11 have changed over time and how the shapes of the snow
12 drifts had also changed. And they've also noticed the
13 shifting direction of the snow drifts that they've
14 known. And these are just a few of the many changing
15 conditions they've noticed.

16

17 Those people back then were observant.
18 They observed everything from morning throughout the
19 day until night. They wake up in the morning, come out
20 of their hut, the first place, look at the sky and they
21 will be able to tell what the weather will be like on
22 that day.

23

24 Anyway, they used to say (In Yup'ik)
25 how our ancestors knew so much about the future.

26

27 My father was born between 1895 and
28 1901 and he used to talk about the knowledge he had
29 heard and learned from his elders whom had heard from
30 their ancestors about the predictions of how the
31 weather will change in the future. And lately we have
32 been hearing a lot about climate change and how people
33 are beginning to notice it and how the Western science,
34 the scientific research and study is also making it
35 known to the public and satellite images of the melting
36 Arctic ice proves it. And I used to hear my elders
37 talk about the severity of the weather conditions will
38 grow more intense and powerful and the latest is
39 Typhoon Merbok which we experienced for the first time
40 in our lives. The change in climate is a factor that
41 is driving the direction of our future.

42

43 And over the last 8 years I've been
44 listening to the people talking about the poor chinook
45 salmon runs on the Yukon and Kuskokwim River and
46 restrictions being imposed on the communities. More
47 and more people are also beginning to point at the
48 Bering Sea trawl fishery bycatch. Just recently Area M
49 intercept fishery was brought up, I mean people started
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1 talking about it when the chum salmon return in record
2 low numbers. I noticed that myself, too, here.

3

4

5 So what are the responses we are
6 getting from the Area M commercial fishing communities.
7 They are blaming climate change for the low salmon
8 returns when we are trying to express our points of
9 view. Yes, they are partly right on that. But they
10 don't seem to understand that they are also adding to
11 the -- adding pressure to the already troubled salmon
12 runs. And not only that they don't seem to understand
13 our views but they are also saying that they are trying
14 to make a rightful living and provide for their
15 families, which is fine, how we see it. But what about
16 us. Don't we have as much subsistence right as they do
17 commercially to make a living and provide for our
18 families.

18

19

20 What about the high seas fishery which
21 had become the focus of our communities concerning the
22 poor chinook salmon returns. I do know the fishery has
23 observers on each vessels of the fishing fleet out in
24 the Bering Sea documenting and reporting bycatch, not
25 only salmon but other species too. And I have also
26 heard that the warming ocean temperature is the
27 contributing factor causing the poor salmon returns.
28 And I know that NOAA is a Federal agency managing the
29 fishery out there in the Bering Sea. But beyond what I
30 know about high seas fishery, the high seas commercial
31 fishing industry is a major industry operation for me
32 to be able to grasp and fully understand. But the
33 thing is many of our leaders testified before the North
34 Pacific Fisheries Management Council last fall pleading
35 the Council to reduce high seas bycatch, even down to
36 zero, which we all heard was denied, yet NOAA claims to
37 say that it works closely with tribal governments and
38 the State. And also many of our leaders testified
39 before the Board of Fish on Proposal 140 to reduce
40 fishing times or other reasons but it was not honored
41 and it was voted down. Yet Alaska has a law referred
42 to as the Subsistence Priority directing the Board of
43 Fisheries to provide reasonable opportunities for
44 subsistence uses first before providing other uses of
45 any harvestable surplus of fish. What I think in my
46 own opinion is happening is that the people at the
47 decisionmaking table are prioritizing commercial
48 fishing rights over our subsistence fishing rights.
49 But like we heard Tim yesterday we can only resort to a
50 last option.

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1 But I wanted to say something about
2 that too, many of you probably have heard or have even
3 known Harold Spark. I've known him, he was the one who
4 got the CDQ going, or he's the one who started it.
5 He's stood before the Council, the North Pacific
6 Fisheries Management Council so many times and every
7 time he would testify before the Council to make a
8 claim that it can work, that he was being turned down
9 over and over and over again, but every time that
10 happens he would return, sit back, think about it and
11 ask himself, what did we miss. So if it takes
12 something like that for us to convince the
13 decisionmaking people to think about that, we could
14 also make it happen.

15
16 Quayana, Mr. Chairman, and members of
17 the Council.

18
19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Chris. Do
20 we have any questions, comments for Chris at this time.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank
25 you. Thank you, again. Next online we have Mary
26 Matthies.

27
28 MS. MATTHIES: Good morning. Thank
29 you, Mr. Chair and members of the Board. I'm still
30 getting used to this. But anyway my name is Mary C.
31 Matthies. I am -- I forget what I checked off on that
32 little box there.

33
34 MS. MCDAVID: It does say that you're
35 here to offer your own views but if you want to speak
36 on behalf of ONC you can change it.

37
38 MS. MATTHIES: Yes, I could do both.
39 So recently I had -- you know, I -- I'm sorry, let me
40 start over. I serve ONC as the Natural Resources
41 Interim Director, I also serve as the Environmental
42 Program Coordinator. I'm from Bethel.

43
44 And so I recently had attended the
45 Board of Fish meeting in Anchorage and I was there to
46 witness testimonies provided by so many people from the
47 AYK region. It was very sensitive subjects that they
48 were bringing to the table and so before the testimony
49 started there was, you know, one of the Board members
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1 of the committee had made a statement saying that it's
2 going to get very sensitive in there and that they need
3 to be prepared and having heard that and also hearing
4 that they do have a commercial fishing background, to
5 me that -- it just proves that they have a conflict of
6 interest because their families participate in
7 commercial fishing. And to them that is their own, I
8 guess, not only source of income but probably plays as
9 the largest part of their income and they're profiting
10 and just filling their pockets while our people suffer
11 trying to gather their subsistence foods and being
12 restricted from harvesting when it's time to harvest
13 during certain seasons during the year, especially
14 during the summer where we take pride and value and
15 gathering and fishing for salmon, all salmon species.

16
17 Then, of course, there's my opinion on
18 -- I've been taking steps back and reflecting and
19 looking at everything that I've been studying while
20 serving ONC. Like there's ANILCA law and history of
21 Alaska, stories that were passed down from our
22 ancestors in relating to subsistence rights and their
23 concerns and there was a course that I was taking with
24 UAF that was teaching about Alaska history and sharing
25 some stories that were shared by the -- you know, those
26 people that were living then, our ancestors, and they
27 said that generations.....

28
29 (Teleconference interference -
30 participants not muted - music playing)

31
32 MS. MATTHIES:to come, in the
33 future, will have to continue fighting for our
34 subsistence rights to continue. And the way that the
35 State of Alaska is running, in my opinion, it's not
36 fair because the State of Alaska does not recognize
37 tribal sovereignty, they don't recognize or value -- or
38 put value in the same values that our people do, which
39 is relying on the ways of the land and waters and most
40 communities throughout the region of Alaska, not only
41 the AYK region but through the whole state, I think
42 that over time our people have become divided, we're no
43 longer united, like how things were in the past. So
44 it's like if you look at the way -- how AFN was formed,
45 the reason behind it, why was it formed, and then if
46 you look at it now it seems that the way -- the reason
47 why AFN was formed, they're forgetting their way
48 because there's just so much going on in the world,
49 there's just so much and we're all being distracted
50

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1 with what the State of Alaska is echoing or saying and
2 then it's being passed around and echoing and circling
3 around and many of these corporations, organizations,
4 even with the RACs, in my opinion. Because like if you
5 look at the way conservation is applied to our people
6 along with being regulated, limited, restricted while
7 the State of Alaska takes and abuses our resources --
8 and also reflecting at Area M, that they are harvesting
9 so much salmon and not enough salmon is, you know,
10 being able to migrate through the channels that they're
11 supposed to flow through to reach our river systems and
12 tributaries and then there are people who work for the
13 State of Alaska who go out to our villages to gather
14 information, which is put under scientific methods that
15 they're studying just to gather information about like
16 where our people are harvesting or catching fish, in
17 what river and how many and they report -- you know
18 they gather all that information, they bring it back to
19 the Board, and yet the State of Alaska refused to
20 accept our cultural and traditional lifestyle because
21 they don't have the same views as we do, or understand
22 the meaning of gathering subsistence foods and sharing
23 it and having it throughout the winter.

24
25 I'm sorry, I didn't come prepared. I
26 didn't write this out.

27
28 And our region is, you know, going
29 through a lot of pressure from other outside resources
30 like Donlin. Recently there was a meeting here in
31 Bethel and then there was -- I mean the meeting was
32 with the Mother Kuskokwim Coalition and they were
33 meeting with -- I forget who was it -- I wasn't here I
34 was on leave -- sorry -- but anyways we had invited
35 KYUK to gather a report about what was going on and the
36 opposition towards Donlin and KYUK stated that they
37 won't take up -- or write up a story, or share the
38 stories or put on a report about what is going on with,
39 you know, tribes who are in opposition of the mine and
40 to me that's -- you know it just shows the same cycle
41 of how Donlin has been working, keeping everything a
42 secret. They're buying our resources out to keep
43 voices -- our voices quiet so that they can continue
44 progressing with the mine development.

45
46 We need to become united with our
47 people and not just focus or be distracted about who
48 belongs in what district or what region. Our people
49 have been divided for too long. Our elders are being
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1 forgotten. Their voices are going away, just like what
2 our ancestors had predicted. We see less and less
3 interactions with youth and the elderly, like how it
4 was -- like when I was growing up we had elders come to
5 school and teach. We even had sessions where we were
6 taught how to work on nets and stuff, how to sew, et
7 cetera, and our way, our traditional ways, you know, is
8 being forgotten, it's slipping right through our hands
9 because people who are leaving now are being distracted
10 by what is happening in the moment.

11

12 But than you for your time, that's all
13 I have.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Mary.
16 Appreciate your comments. Do we have any questions or
17 comments for Mary at this time.

18

19 James, go ahead.

20

21 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I -- during that
22 testimony for that Proposal 140, one of the people that
23 made testimony brought up customary trade where you
24 barter, and one of the Board members said they do not
25 recognize that. It was traditional knowledge, they
26 rang it up, the people that brought the testimony, and
27 one of the Board members said we do not recognize
28 traditional knowledge, it's not in our laws, so no
29 matter how much we bring it up to the Board of Fish,
30 you know, they're not going to recognize it unless they
31 change their policies, I guess. But they started
32 bringing up -- because we use traditional knowledge and
33 our people, you know, even though up river, up north,
34 but they said they don't recognize it it's not in their
35 laws.

36

37 Doi.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, James.
40 Do you care to respond.

41

42 MS. MATTHIES: What was the question?

43

44 MR. LANDLORD: Regarding people that
45 made testimony for that Proposal 140. One of the
46 people that made a testimony and brought up traditional
47 knowledge, one of the Board of Fish Board members
48 brought -- said that they don't recognize traditional
49 knowledge, they said it's not in their laws to do that.

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1 MS. MATTHIES: Yes, that's true. I've
2 seen it in their books, I've seen it, it's in their
3 statues also. And then, you know, they still send --
4 they send people out to our communities to gather
5 information which is, you know, it's all put under
6 scientific methods. They call our traditional values,
7 our culture, they label it under scientific method and
8 there is -- it's not scientific, I mean, you know, our
9 ways we have our own studies, we have our own knowledge
10 and wisdom because we were born and taught with it,
11 about it, we value it, we appreciate it, it's like it's
12 embodied in our being. It doesn't matter where we go,
13 like if we travel out of the state it's still with us,
14 our survival to hunt and knowing that when we -- what
15 we gather is filling, it's filling, it's better than
16 what is bought from the store. And then speaking
17 about the store, you know, the food stamps, the SNAP
18 benefits haven't been issued for months, I don't know
19 for how long, but people living in the rural
20 communities, they are suffering because there is not
21 enough jobs out there in their villages and their
22 stores don't have enough food and, you know, I believe
23 they are pretty much forced to go out and hunt
24 regardless of what is restricted, like moose or muskox.

25
26 It's just -- we all are going through a
27 difficult time, I think.

28
29 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, go ahead.

32
33 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mary. You know
34 thank you for bringing up Donlin, you know, something
35 that we hardly ever discuss but it's also something
36 that has been getting pushed through, you know, like
37 even though -- you know like when it first came out,
38 you know, back in 2012 or when it first was in, you
39 know, consultation processes, they didn't hit all the
40 villages to consult with Donlin and I forget when,
41 exactly the dates but I didn't have my notes in front
42 of me but it's also -- when they came up with final
43 environmental impact statement, they had 10,668 pages
44 and gave the tribes 30 days to comment and then they
45 approved the record of decision, you know, the record
46 of decision came out not too long and then it was
47 mostly because of the best, or the mines around Alaska
48 have not had any major spills or any of those things so
49 it's moving forward and to this days there's those coal
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1 mines further up north that have been abandoned and
2 they're not leaching toxins into those open pits that
3 they abandoned. Donlin Gold promises to be one of the
4 biggest open pit mines in the world and it's only with
5 our storm surges, like I've been saying and all of
6 these things that are coming into being about what --
7 is that, there are -- there are all of these things and
8 if there is going to be a spill there are 13 tribal
9 communities down river from where that is proposed and
10 Beluga there is going to be a 14.5 inch diameter that's
11 going to cross the Alaska Range and to where the Donlin
12 side is going to be and that's going to be their -- you
13 know, like the Pipeline, 325 miles long off of Beluga
14 to where the Donlin site is going to be. So it's best
15 practices as they say, but it's also that when -- when
16 BLM opened millions, millions of land for exploration
17 and stuff like this, mineral exploration they used best
18 science, you know, the practices, and they didn't ask
19 any of the people that are in and around those areas
20 that they opened up but they will be exploring for
21 mineral and, you know, like -- you know to do mines and
22 things like this but it also needs to be understood
23 that contrary to popular belief science is not always
24 right. Because when climate change first was starting
25 to be talked about back in the '70s and '80s, you know,
26 what we were reading was that climate change is not
27 going to happen in our lifetime but maybe in our
28 children's children's lifetime but it's happening today
29 and it's already made its -- made its turning point.
30 So climate change is here to stay and it's going to
31 continue.

32
33 And then for everybody's -- I don't
34 know if I'm supposed to be saying this but the North
35 Pacific Fisheries Management has a task force of local
36 and traditional knowledge integrating the North Pacific
37 Management's Council process -- integrating local and
38 traditional knowledge into the North Pacific Fisheries
39 Management Council's process. So that's in the works.
40 We just got done this past couple months and we're
41 going to be submitting that to the fisheries. So
42 they're going to hopefully buy into it, the Council
43 will buy into it and that they will start considering
44 entering local and traditional knowledge into their
45 process.

46
47 So I just wanted to point those things
48 out.

49
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1 Thank you, Mary, I appreciate your
2 coming up.

3
4 MS. MATTHIES: Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Mary.
7 Appreciate your comments, they're well taken. Thank
8 you. Next in line we have Tim Andrew.

9
10 MR. ANDREW: Good morning, Mr.
11 Chairman. Members of the Regional Advisory Council.
12 Staff and guests. My name is Timothy Andrew. Like I
13 said yesterday I was born and raised on the Yukon River
14 in the community of Marshall. My parents are Nick and
15 Nastshia Andrew. My dad is currently going to be 90
16 years old this coming October. And throughout
17 many, many years that I've been taught by him and, you
18 know, the stories he tells and everything, he told
19 about, you know, his grandparents and all the relatives
20 that he grew up with.

21
22 But one of the people that really
23 stands in my mind is my -- in the Western point of view
24 he would be my grand uncle, Alexander Isaac, born and
25 raised in the tundra back here in the Johnson River and
26 also up in Ohagamiut, the former village of Ohagamiut,
27 and what he used to tell me and also my uppa, another
28 grand uncle because my dad was an orphan, our paternal
29 side was not that huge, but he -- my uppa, grand uncle,
30 Richard Boots, we called him (In Yup'ik) or Big Boots.
31 And I thought about the wisdom of what they have told
32 me over the years and amongst all those other
33 influences, including, you know, people that have sat
34 in your seats before, like the late Robert -- the great
35 Robert -- it's totally slipping my mind.

36
37 REPORTER: Bob Aloysius.

38
39 MR. ANDREW: Robert Aloysius. Bob
40 Aloysius. We think about Paul John, we think about
41 David David, we think about Harry Wilde, you know, we
42 think about all those people who that have sat where
43 you sat and all the wisdom that they have brought forth
44 and placed on the record, their wisdom, what they have
45 been taught past generations and placed it on record.
46 And I am very, very grateful that I was able to
47 experience that time when these people were in your
48 positions and also the people that influenced my life
49 and how I look at my world view, Bob Aloysius used to
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1 say he is a product of his grandmother and he also has
2 a PhD in tundra. And a PhD in tundra, the traditional
3 way of growing up with traditional values and
4 traditional teaching. A lot of that weighed very heavy
5 on his mind when he sat in your seat in determining
6 population status and determining climate change and
7 climate change factors and allocation issues and
8 communicating with other RAC members that are affected
9 like the Western and Eastern Interior. And a lot of
10 these people became very well respected for their
11 contribution. And I hope and pray that we will see the
12 continuation. You know you've heard a lot of testimony
13 from other people than myself. I'm just a young punk,
14 or like how Bob Aloysius used to say I'm a practicing
15 elder, I'm 60- I'm going to be 64 this coming December.
16 So I've done my -- I've done my tour around and I've
17 also been educated. I have a bachelor's degree in
18 business administration. What did that have to do with
19 natural resources, I'm not sure. But a lot of the
20 statistical knowledge, or statistical teaching that I
21 had during college associating with other people, the
22 research ethics, what goes into research, and all those
23 Western concepts that I've learned throughout schooling
24 from kindergarten -- we didn't even have kindergarten,
25 from first grade up until I graduated from college, all
26 the Western views that have been put into my head, you
27 know, we've been educated by this Western system, we've
28 been fooled that Christopher Columbus discovered
29 America, we've been told about how the Pilgrims got
30 along so well with the Wampanaga and the East Coast
31 that they had -- the Thanksgiving celebration, you
32 know, all these happy stories that have been told upon
33 us and we found the real truth behind them.

34
35 And then you look at the traditional
36 knowledge that we have been so heavily influenced by.
37 You know we have the wisdom of our elders, how thick
38 the ice is and the storms, the growth of the trees,
39 willow grass, the behavior of the migratory birds,
40 salmon and moose, and trying to take those into
41 consideration to this product of a traditional way of
42 life and this Western teaching really creates a
43 conflict in people, especially people in decisionmaking
44 roles that you hold and for my years, 20 years with
45 AVCP has really created that, you know, which way do I
46 go, do I take on the traditional knowledge sense or do
47 I take the Western view approach, so in decisionmaking
48 there's a lot of things you have to consider on the
49 Western knowledge side. You know Western knowledge
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1 comes out with paper, you know, we have publications,
2 maybe sometimes like the (indiscernible) study on the
3 -- impacts of the trawl fishing upon the Yukon River or
4 for Western Alaska, I mean they come out with these
5 great big volumes, sometimes many volumes of product
6 over a short period of time and a lot of that is based
7 on a lot of other literature, you see that literature
8 cited, citing publications from the 1930s, 1920s, all
9 the way up to 2016, you know, but you have to take a
10 look at these various things and see the validity of
11 the studies that they have undertaken, the things that
12 they have considered to come up with that report. And
13 you also -- you have to question each of the data
14 points, the quality of data.

15
16 Some of the experiences that I've had,
17 we've looked at years when we saw in salmon studies, we
18 saw where there was the weir in a certain stream, all
19 -- predi -- you know, several days without the --
20 throughout the entire summer because of the high water
21 washout, you know, we had a large period of rain, you
22 know, data that's considered for a publication to come
23 out. The other thing that -- the other thing that I've
24 discovered is in one of the salmon studies that we were
25 pondering upon, you know, we started questioning the
26 data about quality of salmon -- or quality of
27 escapement, what is being counted in the weirs, what is
28 being counted in the salmon project. And they say --
29 you know, the Department of Fish and Game says, yea, we
30 made escapement, we made escapement, yea, yea, us, we
31 did it, and they did it on behalf -- or on the
32 cooperation of the people, both the people of the Yukon
33 and Kuskokwim River made sure that these yea moments
34 came when they made escapement. But if you question
35 the people that work at the weirs, what was that
36 escapement, what was that salmon escapement, you know,
37 these -- if you look at the data, the ASL data, if you
38 have -- if you look at the ASL or age, sex and length
39 data of what's being considered off these weirs, if you
40 look at that data and some of them are -- most of them
41 are mostly jacks, three to five year old king salmon
42 jacks that came back and contributed to the
43 escapements. You see that year after year after year
44 after year after year after year, whether it be chums,
45 whether it be kings, cohos, it affects an outcome that
46 we are in today, zero salmon on the Yukon River, a
47 dwindling stock on the Kuskokwim River and no longer
48 any chum salmon in the Nome Subdistrict. We see the
49 Unalakleet River happening the same way too. And, you
50

0150

1 know, it's the same way as when we look at moose, when
2 we look at caribou, when we look at other things that
3 are surviving out there, the nature, you know, the
4 moose -- the cow moose will not breed with a one year
5 old bull moose, it's going to want to breed with a
6 great big gigantic 72 inch spread moose, fully mature,
7 great big bones, big neck, pure muscle and full of (In
8 Yup'ik) and vinegar, you know, they're going to go
9 after those breeders, the ones that are very strong.
10 And it's the same way with our salmon. These little
11 things that contribute to our return and if they become
12 the majority, our salmon, our lush fish, our sheefish,
13 blackfish, all the fish breeding with those little
14 tiny, weeny runs, will only contribute to a decline of
15 our resources and then all of a sudden the crash.

16
17 So pressure must be, or there must be
18 an emphasis in our future contribution to science that
19 we need these great big king salmon, these 70, 80, 90
20 pounders, we need the majority of them to be in our
21 spawning grounds. We need great big fall chum. We
22 need great bit cohos to contribute to the genetic pool
23 to make sure that we continue to see those come back
24 year after year after year after year as we have seen
25 and what our elders have told us, you know, they've
26 never seen anything like what's happening today on the
27 Yukon River. My dad being 90 years old lived on the
28 Yukon River for the majority of those years and he said
29 he'd never, never seen the Yukon River eel like James
30 was talking about, going from a steady production,
31 always on time, always there down to absolutely nothing
32 or going up and down and he has never seen that in
33 salmon either.

34
35 So there's been a lot of change that's
36 occurred in the recent years, a lot of climate change,
37 a lot of climate factors, a lot of -- even some of our
38 traditional knowledge is being affected by climate
39 change. You take into consideration about the stories
40 -- the elders used to tell about going out ice fishing
41 with, you know, during this time of the year, they'd be
42 out there and they'd dig these six foot holes in the
43 ice to just be able to ice fish to snare beaver. But
44 nowadays, you know, we have break up that occurs in
45 April, we have early break up, we have thinner ice, we
46 have rain throughout the winter, we have less storms,
47 we have less floods that are occurring, both on the
48 Yukon and the Kuskokwim River Rivers. My Uppa Isaac
49 used to tell us about the floods, he used to say,
50

0151

1 flooding is good for the land, for both the Yukon and
2 Kuskokwim River Rivers and he said the benefits of the
3 floods is that it washes out our land, you know, the
4 big floods, the ice, the great big thick ice that we
5 used to have, it used to flood up and down Kuskokwim
6 River and I can see the wisdom behind that. You know
7 it takes all the old nutrients that have just petered
8 away to nothing and contributes new nutrients into the
9 ground and all these wash off into our river systems
10 and contributes to the, you know, from the smallest
11 cells to insects and other things that the salmon
12 depend on when they live in the river systems. You
13 know all that is -- you know, we have a curve ball
14 that's occurring with our resources, with our
15 foundations of our wisdom.

16
17 But those are just the small little
18 things that we have to consider at this point. You
19 know there's quality of data, there's -- you know,
20 there's forever changing climate issues, the wisdom of
21 our elders, and I highly respect where you sit to make
22 these determinations and just wish you all well in what
23 you do.

24
25 And also one more thing I'd like to
26 talk about, is the importance of the decisionmaking
27 process within the Native American community in the
28 Lower 48. There's a tribe or many tribes in the Lower
29 48 that when they are going to make a decision, a very,
30 very important decision, which you all make during your
31 meeting process and throughout the year, that they
32 consider the impacts of what decisions I'm going to
33 make. It's not only for us, but also for seven
34 generations in the future. What if -- if I vote yes,
35 if I vote no, how is it going to affect seven
36 generations and, you know, there's a lot of value in
37 that. Not saying, you know, it's not -- it goes
38 contrary to how it's going to affect me, right here,
39 right on this Earth right at the moment, how is it
40 going to affect our children, grandchildren, great-
41 grandchildren, future generations. The burden is
42 heavy, you know, considering both sides, the Western
43 view, Western science and traditional knowledge and I
44 wish and hope and pray the best for all of you,
45 especially for the young people, Jackie, Alissa, Norma,
46 you know, for those up and coming blooming generations,
47 that we continue to have these foundations, these solid
48 foundations to help us in our decisionmaking process
49 and, of course, the wisdom of our elders and some of
50

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1 you are becoming elders, along with myself and others.

2

3 Quayana.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Tim,
6 appreciate your comments. I know we're kind of short
7 on time right now and we have a lot of work ahead of us
8 to consider so your points are well taken. Sure
9 appreciate your comments. Again, thank you.

10

11 MR. ANDREW: Quayana.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: At this time we don't
14 have anyone to provide testimony on non-agenda items,
15 we'll go ahead and take a 10 minute break before we go
16 into the Board of Fish proposals. There's a couple of
17 action items that need to be considered. So we'll go
18 ahead and take a 10 minute break at this time.

19

20 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chairman.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma.

23

24 MS. EVAN: I'd like to make a
25 testimony. I'd like to talk about something I'm
26 worried about in our region, especially Marshall.
27 Calista Corporation is.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, maybe in the
30 morning, can you take it up in the morning.

31

32 MS. EVAN: All right.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We'll continue our
35 testimony on non-agenda items in the morning. Like I
36 mentioned we have some action items that need to be
37 brought forward because there's other RACs that are
38 meeting at this time and they're relying on us on a
39 couple of items that come from our area that needs to
40 be considered for them to consider also. So if you
41 could take it up in the morning, first thing in the
42 morning we'd appreciate that.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MS. EVAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We'll take a 10 minute
49 break.

50

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1 (Off record)

2

3 (On record)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll go ahead and call
6 the meeting back to order. I'll go ahead and turn it
7 over to Brooke to continue our meeting.

8

9 Brooke.

10

11 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
12 we are taking up Agenda Item 12E, Alaska Board of
13 Fisheries Proposal 173. And just a little background
14 information.

15

16 This proposal was submitted by the
17 Native Village of Quinhagak for the AYK Board of
18 Fisheries meeting this past cycle. Unfortunately the
19 proposal was misplaced by the Department and it didn't
20 get taken up at the meeting so they are having a
21 special meeting later this month and the comment
22 deadline for this proposal is this Friday. So if the
23 Council would like to take it up and comment on it, we
24 can be sure to get a comment submitted by the end of
25 the week. And I won't speak too much to the proposal
26 but you can read it here and I'll let Jackie talk about
27 it.

28

29 But this is an Alaska Board of
30 Fisheries proposal for District 4 and it aims to close
31 fishing on Sundays and also to allow only one gillnet
32 to be operated per vessel.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks, Brooke. So,
37 again, this is Jackie Cleveland. I'm from Quinhagak.
38 And while I'm going through this proposal, I want to
39 note that I'm representing the Native Village of
40 Quinhagak and we came up with this proposal last winter
41 when everything opened up for submissions. And the
42 Council had a list of issues they wanted to address but
43 of the list of issues, but two were able to be eligible
44 for proposals to the Board of Fish. And one of two
45 were lost, like Brooke said, and then not published, so
46 that's why no one really knew about them, so we do
47 appreciate that there's going to be a special meeting
48 about it although we can't testify.

49

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0154

1 So I'll just give a little bit of
2 background. And like I've mentioned before we haven't
3 had consistent data since 2015 when we lost the weir,
4 and I feel that -- or a lot of us feel that we've been
5 fishing blindly since then without this data to gage
6 how we're really doing out there and in the meantime
7 we're sharing this resource with the world, and I
8 really do mean the world because we are a World
9 Renowned Sportfishing spot, hot spot, and we get people
10 from all over the world there and then we have a small
11 scale commercial fishery and then we have pretty much
12 an unrestricted subsistence fishery compared to the
13 rest of the region. We do have the no Sundays, which I
14 know it sounds like it's -- the Sundays was requested
15 by the village, yes, for one because it's a rest day
16 but also because during the weekends we felt like all
17 the traffic that was coming from everywhere else, after
18 two consecutive days of -- or after two consecutive
19 days of heavy subsistence fishing we did notice -- we
20 would notice in the river there'd be a lot less fish.
21 And so like everywhere else we had lower king numbers,
22 which we still made the escapement last year based off
23 the aerial survey but on the lower end, but the chum
24 have still not been counted since then, the only
25 information we get for chum is the two years of
26 commercial fish which the chum were six percent of the
27 overall catch -- two years -- the last two years of
28 commfish. And it's just becoming concerning. Because
29 2015 is kind of a long time ago now.

30
31 So this one was to address, I guess,
32 the biggest impact was out in our bay, District 4, and
33 we were getting a lot of reports from the locals that
34 they're seeing boats, bigger boats with multiple nets,
35 two and three -- up to three nets sometimes. And
36 that's -- for Quinhagak, since we are in a shallow bay
37 and a shallow river most of our boats don't exceed 18
38 feet and 50, 50 horsepower. There are bigger ocean
39 boats but for the most part we do -- we're on the
40 smaller side and we've always used one net.

41
42 So it doesn't necessarily affect the
43 village by asking for one net per boat because as it is
44 now it's one net per user so as many people in the boat
45 there is, there can be that many nets and that's a
46 little much for one of the last standing fisheries of
47 the region.

48
49 So I think I kind of just said it.
50

0155

1 I was going to read the paragraph --
2 and we do -- we do respect our local commercial fishery
3 so we did kind of -- you know, we included the
4 commercial fishery too, because they do fish out in the
5 bay so this is for commercial and subsistence fishing
6 out in the bay.

7
8 And I hope that made sense but I'm here
9 for questions if anyone has any.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
12 questions for Jackie at this time, on Proposal 173.

13

14 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
15 Myron, I have a question for Jackie.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

18

19 MR. NANENG: Yeah, Jackie, so the
20 closure would be from midnight Saturday night to
21 midnight Sunday night?

22

23 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes.

24

25 MR. NANENG: So that would be the
26 proposal?

27

28 MS. CLEVELAND: The propos -- as it
29 stands we already have Sundays without -- that was our
30 only restriction besides the six inch mesh and 50
31 fathoms. What we're adding to it is to just have one
32 net per boat operating out in the bay rather than
33 multiple nets in one boat. So make it one net per
34 boat, rather than one net per user. If that makes
35 sense?

36

37 MR. NANENG: Yeah, that's clear enough.
38 I would support the proposal.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any other questions for
41 Jackie at this time on Proposal 173.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If there's no other
46 questions or comments for Jackie, if there's anyone
47 that wants to entertain a motion at this time.

48

49 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman this is

50

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1 Myron. I move to accept the proposal as presented by
2 Native Village of Quinhagak.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
5 Myron moves to accept the Proposal 170 as presented by
6 Native Village of Quinhagak, do I hear a second.

7

8 MR. ANDREW: Second. But I think the
9 word has to be support.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, the Board has to
12 be in support. And seconded by John. All those in
13 favor signify by saying aye.

14

15 IN UNISON: Aye.

16

17 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Standby -- standby,
20 Brooke has a comment -- wait, standby.

21

22 MS. MCDAVID: You're correct that the
23 motion is to support Proposal 173. We do need a little
24 discussion for the record to be able to submit as a
25 comment. And that should come from another Council
26 member besides Jackie.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, you heard the
29 recommendation.

30

31 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

34

35 MR. NANENG: Yeah, currently with
36 fisheries, whenever they open them on the Kuskokwim
37 River, subsistence openings, and when they have fishing
38 openings on the Yukon, they requested this to have one
39 net per boat. In the past before the salmon stocks
40 (Indiscernible - cutting out) more than -- I mean in
41 light of that, to help rebuild the fisheries stock,
42 that proposal regarding it, the fish there at
43 Quinhagak.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.

46

47 Okay, the motion has been brought
48 before and seconded by John Andrew, I could go ahead
49 and ask for a vote. All those in favor signify by

50

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1 saying aye.

2

3

IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those that oppose
signify by saying nay.

7

8

(No opposing votes)

9

10

11

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
carries. Thank you. Thank you, Jackie.

12

13

14

MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. And just -- I
didn't vote just so you guys know.

15

16

17

CHAIRMAN ONEY: And 'just for the
record Jackie abstains from voting.

18

19

20

21

Okay, next on the -- the next item on
list is Temporary Fisheries Special Action, FSA23-01,
Kanektok River chinook and chum salmon.

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MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
members of the Council. My name is Pippa Kenner and
I'm an Anthropologist at the Office of Subsistence
Management in Anchorage. With me today on
teleconference is OSM's Fisheries Biologist Kevin
Foley. And we are presenting a special action request
that we call FSA23-01. After my presentation we will
ask the Council to provide a recommendation to the
Federal Subsistence Board, more on that later. This is
an action item on your agenda.

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34

35

So what is this special action request.

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The Native Village of Quinhagak is
asking the Federal Subsistence Board to close Federal
public waters of the Kanektok River drainage to the
harvest of both chinook and chum salmon except by
Federally-qualified users for the month of June in 2023
and 2024. For people here in the room, a fact sheet
describing the special action request is available as a
handout on the table at the side of the room, and
Council members have this fact sheet also. The fact
sheet is also accessible at the Office of Subsistence
Management Program web page which is at doi, for
Department of Interior dot.gov/subsistence. You can
hover over statewide on the horizontal menu, click
fisheries and then scroll down to the link below the

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1 text FSA Fisheries Special Action 23-01. This will
2 link -- this link will bring up the fact sheet.

3

4

5 So the mouth of the Kanektok River is
6 near the village of Quinhagak on the east side of
7 Kuskokwim River Bay. The Kanektok River drainage is
8 entirely within and adjacent to the outer boundaries of
9 the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and our Federal
10 public waters that would be affected by this special
11 action request. The primary effect would be on the
12 sportfishery. Sportfishermen would not be eligible to
13 target chinook and chum salmon including catch and
14 release fishing during June.

14

15 (Teleconference interference -
16 participants not muted)

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1 tribes and Native corporations, input from the State
2 and other management agencies and recommendations from
3 the affected Regional Advisory Councils, which are the
4 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Council and the Western Interior
5 Alaska Council. The Board may approve, approve with
6 modification, reject or defer this special action
7 request to the next fisheries regulatory cycle that
8 begins in 2024.

9

10 So to recap.

11

12 The Federal Subsistence Board has
13 received a special action request from the Native
14 Village of Quinhagak to close the Kanektok River
15 drainage to the harvest of chinook and chum salmon
16 except by Federally-qualified subsistence users,
17 basically residents of the region, during the month of
18 June in both 2023 and 2024. The Board is scheduled to
19 meet on Wednesday, April 19th, to act on this special
20 action request. So, again, this is an action item on
21 your agenda. We're asking the Councils to provide a
22 recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board. We
23 are asking you to support, support with modification,
24 not support or defer this special action request.

25

26 The Native Village of Quinhagak
27 submitted a companion proposal, Proposal 94 to the
28 Alaska Board of Game to close the non-resident sport
29 harvest of chum salmon June 1st through July 15th. The
30 proposal was amended but then rejected by the Board of
31 Fisheries at its recent meeting in January. The Board
32 of Fisheries cited a lack of conservation concerns for
33 chum salmon at that time and that ADF&G can address any
34 concerns through emergency order authority as
35 justification for their vote. Last week, the Alaska
36 Department of Fish and Game closed the region,
37 including the Kanektok River drainage to sportfishing
38 targeting of chum salmon including catch and release
39 from April 5th through December to protect chum salmon
40 in periods of low abundance and provide future
41 sportfishing opportunities. In another announcement,
42 the Alaska Board of Fish and Game said it does not
43 anticipate any commercial gillnet openings in Kuskokwim
44 River Bay fishing districts. It said the 2023
45 preseason outlook for chinook and chum salmon in
46 Kuskokwim Bay fishing districts is for well below
47 average runs.

48

49 Mr. Chair. Thank you for your time.

50

0160

1 That concludes my presentation and -- of the special
2 action request submitted by the Native Village of
3 Quinhagak. I, and my colleague, Kevin Foley, or all of
4 us are standing by to try and answer any questions you
5 might have.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Pippa.
8 Do we have any questions or comments for Pippa on this
9 temporary fisheries special request FSA23-01.

10

11 MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie.

14

15 MS. CLEVELAND: Quiana. Through the
16 Chair. This is Jackie. I just wanted to point out
17 when you said amended, did you mean for the dates of
18 June 1 to June 30?

19

20 MS. KENNER: Thank you very much for
21 the question. Through the Chair. Yes.

22

23 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay. Because there
24 was a mix up when we entered both proposals. One was
25 for the dates of June 1 to June 30, which is this one,
26 and then the other was for June 1 to July 15th.

27

28 Thanks.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any other questions or
31 comments for Pippa at this time on Proposal Temporary
32 Special Action Request FSA23-01.

33

34 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
35 Myron.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

38

39 MR. NANENG: I find it ironic that Fish
40 and Game's concerned about the low returns of chums as
41 well as chinook salmon when the Board of Fish has voted
42 to allow for commercial fisheries down in Area M.

43

44 So that's my comment.

45

46 I just wanted to point out that
47 restrictions are being placed on subsistence users
48 while commercial fisheries has been authorized by the
49 Board of Fish.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
2 Is there any other questions or comments at this time
3 from the Council.

4
5 Brooke, go ahead.
6

7 MS. MCDAVID: I just wanted to clarify
8 for the Council because we've been talking about two
9 different issues here. We were talking about the
10 subsistence fishing and the commercial fishing and now
11 this special action specifically addresses sportfishing
12 in the river, and so that is what you will be making a
13 recommendation to the Board about for this FSA23-01;
14 whether or not you think that sportfishing for chinook
15 and chum salmon should be closed to non-Federally-
16 qualified subsistence users during the month of June in
17 the Kanektok River.

18
19 Thank you.

20
21 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
22 Myron.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

25
26 MR. NANENG: Yeah, the reason why I
27 made my comment is that it may be related to
28 sportsfishing, but if there's low returns of chums as
29 well as chinook salmon you can rest assured that
30 they'll do whatever they can to close off subsistence
31 fisheries. That is something that I don't want to see
32 when it seems like it's very hypocritical to allow for
33 commercial fisheries that is known to be intercepting
34 salmon bound for Western Alaska rivers and streams. So
35 that's the reason why I made my comment.

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
38 So noted. If there are no other comments I guess we
39 could entertain a motion at this time.

40
41 MR. NANENG: I would move that this
42 proposal would be strictly limited to sportsfishing,
43 and not to affect subsistence without the opportunity
44 for the Regional Advisory Council as well as the
45 Federal Subsistence Board to address the potential
46 impact on subsistence fishery if they're closing it due
47 to lack of escapements of those salmon stocks. I'm
48 sure you can rest assured that they're going to try to
49 implement or find ways to reduce opportunities for
50

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1 subsistence fishermen.

2

3 That's my comment, and that's the way
4 I'm making my motion.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
7 on the floor by Myron to accept Special Action Request
8 FSA23-01, do I hear a second.

9

10 MR. ANDREW: Second.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by John Andrew.
13 At this time I'll ask for discussion.

14

15 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

18

19 MR. LANDLORD: Kanektok River, is that
20 all of it in Federal waters? Yes?

21

22 MS. KENNER: Thank you for the
23 question. Through the Chair. Yes.

24

25 MR. LANDLORD: Okay, thank you.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

28

29 MS. CLEVELAND: I might have heard that
30 question another way. Did you ask if the whole
31 Kanektok River is Federal water?

32

33 MR. LANDLORD: Yes. (In Yup'ik)

34

35 MS. CLEVELAND: No.

36

37 MR. LANDLORD: Okay.

38

39 MS. CLEVELAND: So at about Mile 43,
40 the Kanektok River becomes -- it becomes Federal waters
41 when we hit the Refuge. So around the halfway point,
42 for lands anyway -- I might be wrong, sorry, Pippa, for
43 the restriction any.....

44

45 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

48

49 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

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1 Just to clarify, for the purposes of Federal fisheries
2 subsistence management, the entire drainage is within
3 the outer boundaries of the Refuge and are considered
4 public waters and under the purview of the Federal
5 Subsistence Board and this Council.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, any more
8 questions or comments from the Council.

9

10 Brooke, go ahead.

11

12 MS. MCDAVID: I would ask that there be
13 a little bit of discussion, justification for while the
14 Council would like to support this.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

19

20 MR. LANDLORD: We have to give our
21 justification to vote if why yes and why no. Okay.
22 When low return on chums and chinooks, I think that's
23 when we should disallow non-subsistence users, is that
24 the word, for sportsfishing or even for commercial,
25 even in the State statutes, I think when fish are in
26 decline, I think subsistence priority takes over in
27 Federal waters.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa you had your hand
30 up.

31

32 MS. KENNER: I was making motions, Mr.
33 Chair, I apologize. This is Pippa Kenner for the
34 record. We did interrupt Mr. Landlord.

35

36 MR. LANDLORD: Go ahead.

37

38 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, I just want to
39 restate what James said to make sure I have it correct
40 for the record. It sounds like you all are in support
41 of this because of the low numbers of chinook and chum
42 salmon currently and you feel that sport and commercial
43 fishing should be restricted at this time for
44 conservation reasons. Is that correct?

45

46 MR. LANDLORD: Yes.

47

48 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you.

49

50

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1 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, go ahead.

4

5 MR. SLATS: Yes. I just have a simple
6 question, would that map up there have what we need to
7 be looking at if we wanted to?

8

9 MS. MCDAVID: There's also a map,
10 Richard, on the handout, on the back.

11

12 MR. SLATS: Oh, I see, okay, thank you.

13

14 MS. MCDAVID: It's zoomed in a lot more
15 than the wall map.....

16

17 MR. SLATS: Right here, okay, thank
18 you.

19

20 MS. MCDAVID:so that you can see
21 the Kanektok drainage.

22

23 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

26

27 MS. KENNER: Thank you, very much, Mr.
28 Chair. For the record this is Pippa Kenner. I just
29 wanted to say that I think some people were a little
30 surprised when we talk about Kwethluk Corporation lands
31 being the waters running through Kweth -- Kwethluk
32 Corporation lands being Federal public waters and I
33 just wanted to put out there that somebody might want
34 to consider that as an amendment -- I just kind of
35 wanted to slow down a little bit until everybody had
36 time to digest that information.

37

38 MS. MCDAVID: Pippa, do you mean
39 Quinhagak, not Kwethluk?

40

41 MS. KENNER: Did I say Kwethluk.....

42

43 MR. ANDREW: Yes.

44

45 MS. KENNER: Why don't I just go home.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MS. KENNER: Why am I even here.

50

0165

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MS. MCDAVID: You're doing great.

4

5 MS. KENNER: One of those K places,
6 yeah, no, I'm sorry. Quinhag -- Quintikot -- Quinhagak
7 Corporation lands. And I was just a little bit
8 concerned that not everybody understood fully what that
9 meant and that maybe Jackie would want to say more.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

14

15 MS. CLEVELAND: There's a little bit of
16 confusion on my end, sorry, Pippa, you said the
17 drainage runs through some corporation land, and that
18 that may affect the operation -- or wait, can you state
19 your question again, sorry?

20

21 MS. KENNER: Thank you, again, for the
22 question. Through the Chair. This is Pippa Kenner for
23 the record. So, Jackie, what I meant to say is that
24 not everybody is aware that even on private lands that
25 run -- waters that run through private lands that are
26 in the Refuge are Federal public waters. And I think
27 this was news to not only you, but maybe some other
28 people, and so the -- the -- these waters that flow
29 through Quinhagak Corporation lands that are used by
30 the sportfishery would also be closed. So I just
31 wanted to make clear what the effect of the proposal
32 would be.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay, that makes sense
37 now. Thanks.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any other
40 questions or comments for Pippa at this time.

41

42 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chair.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, then Richard.

45

46 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chairman, I have no
47 question. Normally whenever you have conservation
48 concern of any species, the Department or the Service
49 usually automatically issues a closure for

50

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1 sportfisheries or a rod and reel fishery. I wonder if
2 this motion is necessary. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

5

6 MS. KENNER: Thank you for the
7 question, Mr. Andrew. Through the Chair. Let me try
8 to clarify that. Do you mean.....

9

10 MR. ANDREW: If you have a conservation
11 concern of any species for this one it's on chinook and
12 chums, usually the Department and Service usually
13 announce a closure for sportfishery, or what you call
14 rod and reel.

15

16 MS. KENNER: Thank you, again, for
17 the.....

18

19 MR. ANDREW: Thank you.

20

21 MS. KENNER:thank you, again, Mr.
22 Andrew, for explaining that. Through the Chair. This
23 is Pippa Kenner. They can. It all depends when they
24 get to the point that they think there is a
25 conservation concern serious enough to close. Same
26 with our Federal in-season manager, he does have the
27 in-season authority to open and close fisheries to non-
28 Federally-qualified users but this is a special request
29 that we've received from a tribe to -- directly to the
30 Board.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 MR. ANDREW: Thank you.

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: This is Brooke. I just
37 wanted to follow up, John, also. So Quinhagak
38 submitted -- the Native Village of Quinhagak submitted
39 this because they feel that there is a conservation
40 concern from their observations and there is limited
41 monitoring of salmon in the Kanektok River so they felt
42 that they wanted to submit this, to be proactive.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, did you have
47 something.

48

49 MR. SLATS: Yes. Prior to that

50

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1 question, what you had just stated awhile ago was new
2 to me so I'm wondering if you could -- could you repeat
3 what you were just saying about the -- that comment you
4 just made. Pippa.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa.

7

8 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
9 Slats. Through the Chair. This is Pippa Kenner for
10 the record. I think you're talking about the private
11 lands and corporation lands?

12

13 MR. SLATS: (Nods affirmatively)

14

15 MS. KENNER: Okay. So private lands
16 including tribal corporation lands, the waters that
17 flow in those lands that are within the Refuge for the
18 purposes of management of subsistence fisheries are
19 under the jurisdiction of the Federal Subsistence Board
20 so the Federal Subsistence Board, the in-season manager
21 through his delegated authority can open and close
22 those fisheries, you know, based on conservation and
23 other concerns, if he has a justification.

24

25 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

26

27 MS. KENNER: You're welcome.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, Pippa, you
30 mentioned someone that was online that may help you, I
31 was wondering if that person might have any comments.

32

33 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, I think you're
34 talking about my co-worker Kevin Foley. Kevin, do you
35 have any comments?

36

37 MR. FOLEY: Mr. Chair. It's Kevin
38 Foley, for the record, Office of Subsistence
39 Management, Fisheries Biologist. Thank you for taking
40 up this matter. I do not have anything to add at this
41 point. Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Any
44 more questions or comments at this time. Jackie, go
45 ahead.

46

47 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyaná. Through the
48 Chair. From Native Village of Quinhagak's perspective,
49 the other reason we submitted this proposal, besides to
50

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1 be proactive, is because there were people who were
2 concerned of the mortality rate of sportfish, of catch
3 and release. There were observations of seeing more
4 dead fish along the gravel bars when we do have years
5 of sportfish in comparison to the year we didn't have
6 it in 2020, people -- or local residents were observing
7 that there were a lot less dead fish on the bars.

8
9 So the -- maybe it's not in the
10 language, but I remember that being our other reason
11 why they addressed it as well.

12
13 Thanks.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

16
17 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
18 did have one other concern about understanding the
19 effects of this proposal. In part of the justification
20 it sounds like we are going to say that, you know,
21 because of conservation concerns of chinook and chum
22 salmon, the commercial fishery and the sportfishery
23 should be restricted at this time, and I just wanted to
24 remind everybody we're just talking about the
25 sportfishery. And I'm not sure if Quinhagak wants the
26 commercial fishery closed. But when this proposal --
27 in this proposal it won't have any affects in marine
28 waters.

29
30 Just wanted to point that out.

31
32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, you had a
35 question Bill [sic].

36
37 MR. BLIHVDE: If I could. This is
38 Boyd Blihovde, the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta
39 National Wildlife Refuge. Mr. Chair. I guess it's a
40 question and a comment. I wanted to clarify and make
41 sure that I understand it.

42
43 But the way I understand it is that
44 this only would affect the targeting and the retention
45 of these two species. So there's going to be
46 sportsfishing going on on the Kanektok River unless the
47 proposal was somehow amended. And I just wanted to
48 clarify and make sure that that's understood.

49
50

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1 That's similar to what happens on the
2 Kwethluk River and other salmon bearing tributaries on
3 the Kuskokwim when it's closed to sportfishing, is
4 that, we can't or we haven't been able to justify
5 closing all fishing with rod and reel for sportsfish
6 because they're targeting other species sometimes like
7 rainbow trout, grayling.

8
9 Just want to make sure everybody
10 understands that, and that I understand it too.

11
12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Thank
13 you for that clarification.

14
15 Jackie, go ahead.

16
17 MS. CLEVELAND: So thanks Boyd for
18 pointing that out. I can also add that, yes, there are
19 still going to be sportfish activities on the river for
20 the other species such as trout, yeah, so mostly trout
21 is what they'll be targeting. I just wanted to
22 clarify, thanks.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.

25
26 James, go ahead.

27
28 MR. LANDLORD: Thank you for your
29 comment, Boyd. This special action is only for chinook
30 and chum and he brought up that -- and you brought up
31 that trout and grayling are also caught for
32 sportfishermen.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie.

35
36 MS. CLEVELAND: Through the Chair.
37 Yes, so I meant by that that there are other species in
38 the river at the same time as chinook and chum. Like
39 there's reds but they never bite so the only way you
40 can catch those by rod and reel is if you snag them, or
41 by accident. So around that time, if they're not
42 targeting chums or kings, they're targeting trout,
43 which we have a trout population with grayling, but
44 they're mostly targeting rainbow and dollies and chum
45 would be, from what I've read and heard, secondary, in
46 their targets.

47
48 So they'll still be there, for the
49 trout mainly.

50

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1 MR. LANDLORD: Does Quinhagak want to
2 amend to include grayling or trout? Grayling I think
3 come in the falltime, in -- in spring, how about trout?
4

5 MS. CLEVELAND: Through the Chair.
6 Although we do have a little concern over the other
7 species, because of the pike population that's been
8 introduced and growing steadily, it's still not --
9 we're still catching trout and we're told by managers
10 that to get rid of the -- a species it has to be
11 somehow -- you have to get rid of 70 percent of the
12 pike in order to make an impact. So that's kind of
13 complicated now. But there is still enough trout to
14 allow for sport at this time.
15

16 What was the other part of the -- (In
17 Yup'ik), or did I answer you James?
18

19 MR. LANDLORD: I think Boyd brought it
20 up that we might want to amend this proposal.....
21

22 MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah, Qu yana.
23

24 MR. LANDLORD:to include trout
25 and grayling because they might be accidentally caught
26 too rather than the chinook and chum.
27

28 MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah, Qu yana, for
29 reminding me. In order for that to happen, the whole
30 Council would need to vote on amending the proposal.
31 So I wouldn't have that answer for you today, on behalf
32 of the Council, they are meeting tomorrow.
33

34 MR. LANDLORD: Thank you.
35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.
37

38 MS. MCDAVID: I just have a suggestion
39 that since the Native Village of Quinhagak wouldn't be
40 able to meet, that maybe we would leave the special
41 action as is unless there's something that the Council
42 wants to change.
43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.
45

46 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
47 the record this is Pippa Kenner. I'm not sure but it
48 might help to clarify that when -- if this special
49 action was approved by the Board, when it was
50

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1 implemented by the Federal in-season manager, it's
2 likely there would be -- it would result in gear
3 restrictions, gear that specifically targets chinook
4 and chum salmon, probably would not be allowed. And if
5 somebody caught a chinook or chum salmon they would
6 have to immediately return them live back to the water.
7 So this isn't catch and release fishing. You wouldn't
8 have the gear that specifically targets those types of
9 fish.

10

11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more comments or
14 questions for Pippa at this time.

15

16 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

19

20 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 Through the Chair. I have two questions. First one is
22 for Jackie. Jackie, are you needing our support
23 because I believe we still can support your proposal as
24 long as we put the amended language in our support so
25 that if it does go back to your tribe, that they will
26 see the changes that we would like to see or we support
27 with the changes, that way we're not having to wait
28 until our next meeting to give some support. Because
29 after we're done with this meeting, I don't believe
30 we'll be able to give any support. So I really, truly
31 want to make sure that we're supporting your community
32 and your tribe.

33

34 The second question, Mr. Chair.
35 Through the Chair. Is going to be to our Board Staff.

36

37 Are we -- can -- can we give our
38 support with the suggested amended language so that we
39 can ensure that we're supporting our communities and
40 tribes.

41

42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

45

46 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes, so, right, Alissa,
47 we are asking for the Board's support today. As is.
48 As is.

49

50

0172

1 Thanks.

2

3 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is

4 Myron.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

7

8 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I made that motion
9 to support the restriction of the sportsfishing to non-
10 Federally-qualified fishermen in light of the issues
11 that are addressing chums and chinooks and I think for
12 the time being now to get that implemented before this
13 coming summer we need to support that proposal so that
14 it can move forward to the bigger Board for their
15 approval. So -- but they -- I would support the
16 proposal as presented right now. If there are going to
17 be any amendments then they can come up with the
18 amendments at the fall meeting.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Myron.
21 I feel the same way too. I don't think we should wait
22 for the next cycle to bring this up again. I think
23 they're asking that this proposal, special action
24 request, be implemented during this June and June of
25 2024, and I don't want to see it brought up in the next
26 cycle so I think we should act on this, as written, by
27 Quinhagak and that it be adopted by this Board as is.

28

29 If there's no other.....

30

31 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

34

35 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Through the Chair. Was Myron's motion seconded?

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Tina.

39

40 REPORTER: Yes.

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, Myron's original
43 motion was to support the special action and it was
44 seconded by John Andrew.

45

46 MS. ROGERS: Oh, okay. Thank you, Mr.
47 Chair. Through the Chair. Call question.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. If there's no

50

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1 other comments, Alissa calls for the question. All
2 those in favor of the special action request to FSA23-
3 01 signify by saying aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those opposed signify
8 by saying nay.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
13 carries. Thank you.

14
15 (Pause)

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. We're
18 back to our regular agenda. We'll go ahead and
19 continue with under new business, wildlife reports.
20 First on the list is Yukon Delta Refuge.

21
22 MS. MCDAVID: They did that yesterday.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, they did that
25 yesterday. Next we have online is Togiak Refuge, Andy
26 Aderman with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Andy, if
27 you're available online, you're next.

28
29 MR. ADERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. This
30 is Andy Aderman, can you hear me okay?

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, we can hear you,
33 thank you.

34
35 MR. ADERMAN: Okay. My report is in
36 your meeting books starting at Page 40. But I just
37 want to talk to two things real quick.

38
39 I'm going to go to Page 41 first and
40 then lower down on Page 41 mentions a moose survey that
41 we did last October. It occurred in the Goodnews River
42 drainage and also in the Togiak drainage area, which is
43 just outside of your region. So what we found is the
44 moose population is about a little less than 500 in the
45 Goodnews area. And that's consistent with a survey
46 that we did back in 2020, where we counted a minimum of
47 450 moose. So I think the population is increasing but
48 at a slower rate there in Goodnews.

49
50

1 The other item, I'm going to go back to
2 Page 40 and it has to do with Mulchatna caribou. Most
3 of what I have written there you saw at your fall
4 meeting. Updates are in that lowest paragraph there.
5 We were able to get out and do a composition survey
6 last October on the caribou that are in the area from
7 Quinhagak south down to Cape Newenham, Cape Pierce area
8 and then going northeast as far as the Meyokoik River
9 (ph). And what we found was 44 bulls per 100 cows and
10 46 calves per 100 cows, which are really really strong
11 measures for both bulls and calves.

12
13 Let's see, the other thing is we had
14 collared some caribou a year ago out in that area and
15 those caribou have stayed, essentially, in the same
16 area where they were captured. We, being Fish and Game
17 and Fish and Wildlife Service deployed some more
18 collars in the area north of Goodnews Bay last month,
19 and so far those animals are staying in the same
20 general area as where they were caught. It's a little
21 early yet to tell what these caribou are going to do.
22 We've seen caribou out in this area for the last 15, 20
23 years, but in smaller numbers, you know, 15, 20 years
24 ago. We counted a minimum of 470 caribou last June,
25 and I'm sure we missed some along the way.

26
27 The last thing I'd like to talk about
28 is something that came up yesterday, somebody mentioned
29 -- I think it might have been you, Mr. Chairman, report
30 on hoof rot. And what I know about hoof rot in the
31 Mulchatna Caribou Herd is it occurred in 1999 where
32 several caribou were seen limping, had swollen joints
33 down near the hoof and it probably killed some caribou,
34 it probably helped the predators that eat caribou,
35 wolves and bears, probably make it a little easier for
36 them to catch, but -- and hoof rot is caused by a
37 bacteria that is in the soil. It's a natural bacteria.
38 It's been there all along. What happens, and it's
39 mainly with caribou and reindeer is they have a skin
40 break just above the hoof and the bacteria gets in that
41 skin break and then they become infected and it swells
42 the joint, it gets like an abscessed, it'll be kind of
43 pussy and, yeah, theoretically they say people could
44 get it but there's never been a documented case of
45 people actually getting hoof rot themselves.

46
47 And I guess the last thing is, if you
48 would, let me defer to Alaska Department of Fish and
49 Game and give a real quick brief update on brucellosis
50

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1 in the Mulchatna Herd, and then I'll take any questions
2 after that.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Andy.

5

6 MR. ADERMAN: Okay.

7

8 MR. LANDSIEDEL: Good morning, Mr.

9 Chair. This is John Landsiedel, Area Biologist for
10 Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Dillingham. We
11 work very closely with Togiak National Wildlife Refuge
12 in capture and radiomarking and sampling the Mulchatna
13 Caribou Herd.

14

15 And as most of you well know the
16 Western Mulchatna reside closer to you over the winters
17 than they do us in Dillingham. Our research biologists
18 have put pretty extensive work in over the last decade
19 and it appears that brucellosis is present in the herd
20 right now, it's in all the sampling. It roughly occurs
21 at about a 37 percent prevalence rate in the herd.
22 It's spread through afterbirth and breeding so bodily
23 fluids. Bulls can spread it to cows, cows can spread
24 it to cows, primarily on the calving grounds is kind of
25 what we suspect if not through the breeding season. It
26 can cause their joints to swell up and their testicles
27 to swell up as well which reduces their ability to move
28 through the landscape potentially making them more
29 susceptible to predation. We can get it through
30 improper meat care and exposing yourselves to bodily
31 fluids, not necessarily blood, I wouldn't first say,
32 but I wouldn't 'want to get blood inside a cut or
33 anything, and I don't say that to scare anyone, but the
34 Department does have information regarding proper
35 cooking techniques to reduce the risk. And by all
36 indications it is more prevalent, there's more
37 brucellosis prevalent in the Western Mulchatna Caribou.

38

39 And with that I'll kick it back to
40 Andy.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, John.

43

44 MR. ADERMAN: Yeah, if any -- Mr.

45 Chairman. If there are any questions about what I
46 reported on in the moose or the caribou, I'll try to
47 answer those.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Do we

50

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1 have any questions or comments for Andy at this time.
2 Go ahead, Jackie.

3

4 MS. CLEVELAND: Hi, Andy, this is
5 Jackie. I wanted to ask about your -- it says that
6 there was another -- or that you guys had planned to
7 deploy additional radio collars on caribou in this area
8 in March of 2023 and I'm wondering if there happens to
9 be a count for that March 2023 -- I don't know if it's
10 called a survey, but are the numb -- or based on your
11 observations from that March 2023, are the caribou
12 numbers rising from the last numbers of 12,000 or so?

13

14 Thanks.

15

16 MR. ADERMAN: Through the Chair. Ms.
17 Cleveland. I believe the caribou numbers have been
18 increasing all along. What we were doing last month
19 was capturing, we were targeting cow caribou and -- and
20 we'd select usually one animal from a group and tag
21 that animal and move on but we weren't actually doing a
22 count per se, but we didn't have any trouble finding
23 caribou on the landscape and, you know, they were
24 scattered from Jacksmith Bay all the way down to Cape
25 Newenham, and even a little bit northeast of there
26 going towards Togiak. But I really believe that the
27 numbers of caribou are increasing in that area, but it
28 remains to be seen, you know, if some of these collars
29 move off and go somewhere else and, you know, whether
30 they return or not, that might be a migratory animal
31 but so far it seems like the caribou in that area stay
32 pretty close to where we initially encountered them and
33 caught them.

34

35 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Do we
38 have any questions or comments for Andy at this time.

39

40 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
41 Myron.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

44

45 MR. NANENG: Yeah, Andy, this is Myron
46 Naneng. I'm originally from the village of Hooper Bay
47 and I've hunted moose up around Kusilvak, which is
48 north of Scammon Bay, and I know that there's a large
49 number of moose up near the mouth of the Yukon and

50

0177

1 we're seeing a lot of moose migrating south towards
2 Hooper Bay and even swimming across the bay towards the
3 other side of the bay and now there's more sightings of
4 moose down in Nelson Island and it seems like they're
5 moving kind of towards the south. Have you observed
6 any moose increases due to that migration, if any?

7
8 MR. ADERMAN: Through the Chair. Mr.
9 Naneng. I don't get up that area much beyond Kanektok
10 River area. But, you know, that drainage has certainly
11 increased here in the last 10 years. It went from
12 single digit numbers of moose to, I think our last
13 count was 236 and that was a couple of years ago. We
14 have some collared moose in -- that were collared in
15 the upper Kanektok River that I know one of them moved
16 over towards the Great Ridge, remains to be seen if it
17 comes back. But it doesn't surprise me that, you know,
18 moose are expanding out into new areas where people
19 haven't seen them in the past or haven't seen very
20 many. So I think they're just -- they're looking for a
21 place to call home, if that makes sense.

22
23 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I think it makes
24 sense because we're seeing moose on the lower Kuskokwim
25 River areas that we've never seen before. I know
26 there's a boundary between YK Delta Refuge and the
27 Togiak Refuge, but those moose don't recognize
28 boundaries and so I wouldn't be surprised if they're
29 migrating down south because animals don't know of any
30 boundaries that ever exist except your mental capacity
31 we make boundaries.

32
33 MR. ADERMAN: I understand that
34 completely. Okay.

35
36 MR. NANENG: So I just ask that
37 question because with a lot -- since the moose
38 population is expanding further south than they ever
39 did before.

40
41 MR. ADERMAN: I appreciate your
42 observation, thank you.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Any
45 more questions or comments for Andy at this time.

46
47 Wassilly.

48
49 MR. ALEXIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

50

0178

1 This is Wassilly Alexie. I'm from Russian Mission. I
2 just got a comment. I caught a moose, I think it was
3 December, around Russian Mission area. Have you guys
4 ever encountered a moose with -- this moose I caught,
5 it had on the back, two foot by two foot section of no
6 hair, no fur on the back and maybe two or three inch
7 crust of puss all the way around the back of the moose.
8 First time I ever seen that.

9
10 MR. ADERMAN: Through the Chair. Mr.
11 Alexie. I have seen moose before that were missing
12 extensive patches of hair on their back and had an
13 injury, which I took to mean that that animal had an
14 encounter, most likely with a brown bear, and was able
15 to get away from it, at least temporarily. You know, I
16 think an animal that's injured like that, you know,
17 they're not as mobile and, you know, if that wound is
18 pussy and probably smells pretty bad, they probably had
19 every bear or wolf, you know, tracking them down. Not
20 that they can't make it but it's a little tougher life
21 to live being injured.

22
23 So I don't think it's all that unusual.
24 Probably most moose end up dying that are in that
25 situation. But it happens.

26
27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does that answer your
28 question, Wassilly?

29
30 MR. ALEXIE: Yes, thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I know you mentioned
33 about the population increase in that area but
34 increasing at a slow rate. Is there any reason for
35 that, is that the feed that they rely on that's making
36 the moose population grow at a slow rate?

37
38 MR. ADERMAN: It could be habitat. I
39 don't think so. And I say that because we -- we track
40 these cows in the spring, mainly starting mid-May, to
41 early June. We're interested to see who's having
42 calves and how many calves, are they having twins or
43 are they having singles or nothing at all and we've
44 observed in the Goodnews drainage a couple times cow
45 moose with triplet calves. And if a population is
46 having lots of calves they're not nutritionally
47 stressed. You know if they don't find enough to eat
48 they're probably not going to get pregnant or if they
49 do they can't carry a calf to term. And so that occurs
50

0179

1 in areas where there's a super high density or a number
2 of moose that, you know, the habitat can't support
3 long-term.

4
5 So the other thing is, you know, 15
6 years ago there weren't very many moose in like the
7 Goodnews or Kanektok and now that has changed and it
8 probably took a little bit for predators, mainly brown
9 bears, but I'd throw wolves in there as well, kind of
10 key in on those calving cows and adult moose for that
11 matter, but I think sometimes it takes a little bit --
12 a few years before bears get proficient at hunting
13 moose, and, anyway, that can help slow down the growth.
14 You know calves are pretty easy to get at, rather than
15 adults but they get both.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.
18 Another question I had was you mentioned that you have
19 collared caribou and they stayed in the area where they
20 were captured. In my mind I know caribou migrate long
21 distances, even to calve. I know Western Caribou Herd
22 does migrate a long ways. And maybe you could kind of
23 educate me on why they're staying in the same area
24 where they're captured.

25
26 Thank you.

27
28 MR. ADERMAN: Mr. Chair. I think it's
29 because there's really good habitat in that area that
30 they're staying in. The caribou that we caught were
31 well rounded, you couldn't hardly see any rib bones,
32 you know, through the skin. They were, you know, in
33 pretty good shape for, you know, March. You're most of
34 the way through the winter. But I think there's really
35 good lichen that they like to eat and there's a fair
36 amount of willows along the streams and other places.
37 They eat a lot of willow leaves when they first come
38 out and, again, we'll have to see, you know, what
39 happens with these ones that we collared, and see if
40 they -- they might end up moving and they may just
41 relocate to another area and stay put or they may go
42 there, you know, like a different wintering area and
43 then they go back, maybe towards the Coast to have
44 their calves. It just -- it just -- we'll know more as
45 time goes on.

46
47 But, yeah -- and then the areas -- the
48 other parts of the Mulchatna Herd use, or have used in
49 the past have changed. Some wintering areas over by
50

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1 Lake Iliamna, that was the traditional wintering area,
2 I think, back in the '70s, '80s, and early '90s and
3 then that's -- that's changed somewhat over time. And,
4 yeah, nothing ever stays the same, it just may take
5 awhile before they decide to move into different areas
6 or not.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. And
9 the next question I have is, I know, probably Yukon
10 Delta would best fit this question, if there's any
11 collaring still going on on the Yukon Delta side, just
12 to if any of those moose that are migrating south would
13 be good to know if there's still collaring going on
14 with Yukon Delta.

15
16 MR. ADERMAN: Yes, and I would
17 encourage you to talk with Patrick Jones with Fish and
18 Game there. I know he's been involved with some
19 collaring moose but he could tell you better where and
20 how many and what those collared moose are doing.

21
22 MR. BLIHOVDE: Through the Chair. This
23 is Boyd at Yukon National Wildlife Refuge. I don't
24 know if Patrick Jones is on so if he's not I can answer
25 for you.

26
27 We support and help them at times with
28 that collaring project. They're collaring between --
29 on the Yukon, between roughly Paimiut and down to the
30 Coast getting close to Emmonak. And they've seen some
31 interesting things with movement, some of the collared
32 animals going from the Yukon to the Kuskokwim or from
33 the Paimiut area out to the Coast, great distances. So
34 I agree with him there that Patrick Jones could give a
35 lot more information on the details.

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, that
38 answers my question. Any more questions at this time.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank
43 you, Andy. Thank you, John, for your report.

44
45 MR. ADERMAN: Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, next on the
48 agenda is the wildlife closure reviews by Tom Plank,
49 OSM, Wildlife.

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1 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Members of the Council. My name is Tom Plank and I'm a
3 Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
4 Management. And before we get into the closure review
5 analysis, I will provide an overview of the process for
6 these reviews.

7
8 In August 2020 the Board approved a
9 revised closure policy which stipulated all closures
10 will be reviewed every four years. The policy also
11 specified that closures, similar to regulatory
12 proposals, will be presented to the Councils for a
13 recommendation and then to the Board for a final
14 decision. However, regulatory actions on closure
15 reviews are limited to retaining, rescinding or
16 modifying the closures. Actions such as changing
17 seasons, harvest limits or delegated authority to in-
18 season managers are outside the scope of closure
19 reviews. To this end closure review analysis are being
20 presented to the Councils now during the call for
21 wildlife proposals to inform their decisions on whether
22 or not to submit a proposal addressing the closures
23 that would be outside the scope of the closure review.

24
25 This is not an action item. It is just
26 informational. However, if Councils do decide to
27 support a proposal to address the closure, a motion and
28 vote is needed. The Councils will make a formal
29 recommendation on the closure reviews during their fall
30 2023 meetings and the Federal Subsistence Board will
31 take final action on these closure reviews in April
32 2024.

33
34 So before I proceed to the summary of
35 analysis, are there any questions on the closure review
36 process?

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tom. Do we
39 have any questions or comments for Tom at this time
40 regarding wildlife closures.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Seeing none, go ahead,
45 Tom.

46
47 MR. PLANK: Thank you, again, Mr.
48 Chair. Members of the Board. Again, for the record my
49 name is Tom Plank, Wildlife Biologist, Office of
50

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1 Subsistence Management.

2

3

4 And I will be presenting a summary of
5 the analysis for Closure Review, WCR24-38, which begins
6 on Page 46 of your meeting books.

6

7

8 Wildlife Closure Review 24-38 pertains
9 to the closure of moose hunting in a portion of Unit 18
10 except by residents of the 13 communities located
11 within the hunt area plus Kalskag and lower Kalskag.
12 Unit 18 is depicted in Figure 1 on Page 48 and is
13 referred to as the Kuskokwim hunt area.

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The moose population was small during
the 1990s, which led to a harvest moratorium beginning
in 2004. The moratorium was effective in allowing the
establishment of a harvestable population and it
appears that the population along the Kuskokwim main
stem and tributaries continues to grow. Lack of snow
cover in recent years precluded population surveys in
2015 and 2020. A survey completed in 2020 shows an
increase in the moose population in different zones
which exceeds State population objectives. Current --
browse surveys indicate that the population in Zone 1
is potentially reaching a point that will limit or stop
growth and Zone 2 is about one half of what it could

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1 be.

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Bull/cow ratios have been consistently above the minimum State management objective until 2020 when it fell to 25 bulls per 100 cows. Calf/cow ratio also remains high which may indicate a growing population. The harvest has been allowed in the Kuskokwim hunt area since 2009 by State registration permit. The harvest has increased notably since then doubling between 2014 and 2017. And since 2011 reported harvest has averaged 183 moose annually.

The demand still outweighs moose availability. And from 2009 to 2019 an average of approximately 1,450 hunters have obtained permits to harvest moose in the Kuskokwim hunt area each year but only 10 percent of permitholders have successfully harvested moose.

The OSM recommendation is to maintain the closure in Unit 18 because demand still far outweighs the number of moose available for harvest and retaining the closure ensures that the 15 communities that have demonstrated the most dependence on this resource continue to have a subsistence priority on Federal public lands.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. I'd be happy to field any questions.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tom. Do we have any questions or comments for Tom at this time on WCR24-38.

MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.

MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question, I'm not -- a little bit of generic information in there about the boundary lines for the Kwethluk and Kasigluk because it doesn't show what you brought out there. But I do know on the Kasigluk River, I think the boundary lines at the mouth of what you call the Columbia Creek, but in Yup'ik they call it (In Yup'ik), and I'm not too familiar but last time when I saw it it was at the base of Three Step, because Three Step starts right at Kwethluk, at the base of the Three Step, on the east side it's right in the (In

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1 Yup'ik) and there's a little place where you go across,
2 they say that's the boundary line and hardly anybody
3 reaches that by boat and a few miles below there's a
4 little place called -- there's no trees, I don't know
5 what they call it, but there's several lakes where they
6 go for geese right there, and that would be an ideal
7 line for it. But on the Kwethluk it's between Three
8 Step and the mouth of Magic Creek, or a place called
9 Kwethluk, that means Old River. My people, they are
10 familiar with the mouth of Magic Creek or Kwethluk, and
11 on and off they've been asking if they could move that
12 boundary line to -- at the very mouth of Magic Creek,
13 or Kwethluk, it's a little bit below Three Step on
14 -- on the Kwethluk River. And I'm talking about three
15 different rivers right now. Because I've been up there
16 by boat and most of the time when the water level is
17 low we have trouble reaching Zone 2 area. Only people
18 in small jet boats or bigger jet boats that come up
19 from Bethel usually make it, not too many, and they
20 have trouble filling their quota from Zone 2 and people
21 in small outboard motors rather not go up that far
22 because you'll ruin two or three props trying to make
23 it up to that boundary line and they're really
24 expensive. And if your motor blows up you need 10,000
25 bucks to replace it, anywhere from 8 to 10,000 and I'm
26 talking about real life. I've experienced that, too,
27 myself, because my grand nephew's borrow my boat and
28 they say -- they'll call me, we had a break, or our
29 engine blew up and I said to them maybe you got to wait
30 for three years for another motor.

31
32 Thank you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Tom, go ahead.

35
36 MR. ANDREW: My -- my question is, how
37 do we change those boundary lines? Thank you.

38
39 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
40 Mr. Andrew. I'll have to check on that because I'm not
41 that familiar with the area to be honest with you. I
42 would ask for Boyd's help on that.

43
44 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, I think he's
45 familiar with the lines up there.

46
47 MR. PLANK: Thank you, sir.

48
49 MR. ANDREW: Boyd's familiar with the
50

0185

1 lines, I think, yeah. But for my village, coming from
2 my village we know the local rivers. Thank you.

3

4 MR. BLIHOVDE: Yes, you're right, you
5 do. Through the Chair. This is Boyd, again, from
6 Yukon Delta, and so two things.

7

8 You're right, access is difficult
9 during the summer and during that September period when
10 the hunt is going on, you're right. And that is one of
11 the justifications that we made for the winter hunt
12 that Tom mentioned, is that, we've had difficulty or
13 just the local population of people have had difficulty
14 in meeting the quota which is right around 110 animals
15 in Zone 2, referred to as Unit 2, we usually call it
16 Zone 2 of Unit 18. And so because of that difficulty
17 for access we said, well, let's have this winter hunt
18 as another opportunity when snowmachines could be used
19 to go up into that unit maybe a little bit easier. And
20 we're looking at -- we were just talking with Tom about
21 discussing other ways we could change that -- you know,
22 proposed changes to that winter hunt to make it even a
23 little bit more accommodating to people. So that's one
24 thing.

25

26 Two is that Zone 2 of Unit 18, I wasn't
27 here when it was established but it was sort of an
28 agreement with the State of Alaska, ADF&G to sort of
29 separate Unit 18 into what's mostly State land in Zone
30 1 and mostly Federal land in Zone 2, and so the reason
31 that boundary was established was because once you get
32 to Mudd Hut on the Kwethluk and Magic Creek and then
33 obviously up towards Three Step you're almost entirely
34 in Federal land and it keeps people out of any trouble
35 with law enforcement because that zone is essentially
36 right there at Magic Creek currently so it's right
37 there on the Kwethluk on Magic Creek, and we've told
38 law enforcement on the Federal side, if people are
39 close to that Magic Creek area, you know, don't be hard
40 on them, don't give them tickets for being right there
41 because it's a -- a moose may be shot and then move a
42 great distance before somebody picks it up. So that's
43 hard to enforce that line anyway, and we can't put
44 boundary signs it's just too big of an area to go and
45 put boundary lines at every spot because that's been
46 proposed to.

47

48 But I just wanted you to know why that
49 came up and it's mostly because of a management
50

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1 boundary of Federal versus State, and so we're kind of
2 limited on how far we could move it because it needs to
3 be on Fed -- you have to be on Federal land technically
4 in Zone 2 and be a Federally-qualified user.

5

6 MR. ANDREW: It may be cheaper to buy
7 buoys and mark the rivers. You just anchor them on the
8 side of the river and that's your boundary line.

9

10 MR. BLIHOVDE: That's been brought up
11 too.

12

13 MR. ANDREW: Or make a big giant red
14 flag on both sides of the river.

15

16 MR. BLIHOVDE: That's.....

17

18 MR. ANDREW: Or right at your boundary
19 line.

20

21 MR. BLIHOVDE: I wish -- yeah, there's
22 got to be a way. One thing I would just recommend to
23 anybody out there who's listening from the public, too,
24 is the app, OnX, if you have your phone and you've got
25 that OnX app it tells you if you're on Native allotment
26 land, if you're on private land, State land and it's
27 fairly accurate even without a signal, cell phone
28 signal, so that's helpful too.

29

30 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, the local boys up
31 there they know their boundary lines but it's a problem
32 for people that never traveled the river before or
33 people that come up from, most of them the Bethel area,
34 they always have trouble navigating the river,
35 especially at low water.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

38

39 MS. MCDAVID: I just wanted to follow
40 up, too, that it is possible to submit a proposal
41 requesting that the boundaries be changed but we could
42 maybe confer.....

43

44 MR. ANDREW: Certain cycle or time.

45

46 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, so the call for
47 proposals is open but we would probably want to have a
48 little further discussion about exactly what you would
49 like to see changed and the impacts that it would have.

50

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1 MR. BLIHOVDE: And if I could, Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Boyd.

4

5 MR. BLIHOVDE: This is Boyd again. And
6 I will say that we've heard some criticisms for our --
7 you know I don't like it to be called a closure, it's a
8 restriction on the users, right, that it's restricted
9 down to just Federally-qualified users and those 15
10 communities that Tom mentioned, and you could call that
11 a closure, I guess, or a restriction that not everybody
12 in Alaska, or not everybody in the United States is
13 allowed to get that permit and come hunt in that zone.
14 But I support it because especially now, we've talked
15 to others in other agencies, especially now with the
16 caribou closure and salmon populations like they are,
17 that I feel it's not the right time to open it up
18 further to other users. The 15 villages that have that
19 right to hunt there, I think, really need it, and we're
20 trying to give other opportunities, like for these
21 winter opportunities so that more permits could be
22 available.

23

24 That's my opinion, thanks.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

27

28 MS. MCDAVID: Also because -- I just
29 wanted to point out that this -- the Federally-
30 qualified subsistence users are the residents of these
31 15 communities so something the Council, in reviewing
32 this closure, should make sure is that there aren't
33 additional communities who you might feel have
34 customary and traditional use of this area, that you
35 might consider adding. If these 15 communities
36 represent the folks that use this area, that's just
37 something to think about.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, who would best
42 answer that question about other users that may be
43 included in this proposal?

44

45 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. I think
46 that's up to you guys, if you -- if you have -- you
47 know, just from being residents of the area, if you
48 know of anyone. Thank you.

49

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa.

2

3 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
4 the record, this is Pippa Kenner. I personally have
5 never heard from the communities of Kwig, Kong but I've
6 always wondered if maybe they should be included. The
7 15 communities are included as part of what we call a
8 Section .804 of ANILCA prioritization based on who's
9 most dependent on the resources. So I think if you are
10 going to consider modifying that, what I see as the
11 communities that might be considered are Kwig and Kong.

12

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Pippa,
16 for that clarification. I know probably John would
17 best answer that question because he utilizes that
18 river and knows who, indeed, are the areas that may be
19 hunting in those areas too. Maybe if we could maybe
20 have John kind of also include those villages that may
21 use that resource in those two areas I think it would
22 be beneficial for us to add those villages too if
23 they're utilizing those two zones for moose hunting.

24

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

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

29

30 MR. NANENG: Yeah, what villages were
31 just mentioned that they were not included?

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Kwig and Kong and
34 Quinhagak [sic].

35

36 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I just want to
37 comment that I've gone down hunt -- bird hunting during
38 the falltime down at Kwig and close to Kong. We've
39 seen moose there in that area. There's moose that show
40 up every year down in that area and local people have
41 observed them. And they go to one of the sloughs just
42 a little bit below Tuntutuliak and I've heard that
43 they've hunted moose in that area too during the
44 falltime when it's been opened. So I know that people
45 from the village of Kong and Kwig have gone all the way
46 up the Yukon River up above Talawixsak to go moose
47 hunting before moose started appearing down river
48 towards the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. So I would
49 think that they would be included in this proposal so
50

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1 that you can give them opportunity because they also
2 rely on moose for extra meat during the wintertime.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Myron.
5 So you're proposing to include the villages of Kwig,
6 Kong and Quinhagak?

7

8 MR. NANENG: Yes, I am.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. So
11 noted. Any more comments or questions for Pippa or Tom
12 at this time.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Tim, you had your hand
17 raised, I'll give you a chance to comment.

18

19 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
20 Chair. Tim Andrew for the record. We don't usually
21 get this option to ask questions of people presenting
22 outside of the Council process. But I'd like to point
23 out on Page 55, Table 1, if you take a look at the
24 table there you see some pretty significant changes in
25 the bull to cow ratio and calf to cow ratios from 2007
26 when it was documented. We went from 98 bulls per 100
27 cows down to 25 bulls per 100 cows in 2020. Same thing
28 with the calf to cow ratio, from 73 down to 45. And
29 those are pretty significant drops in what I can
30 observe there. And the reading information behind
31 that, it doesn't really disclose why that's happening
32 to this certain moose population and I'd just like to
33 see if I can possibly get a clear cause of what exactly
34 is happening with the moose on those two data points.

35

36 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37

38 I'll just go back to my seat and
39 listen.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Tim.

42

43 Tom.

44

45 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46 Thank you, Tim. I would ask if ADF&G or if somebody is
47 online that that would better be able to answer that
48 question, or maybe Boyd.

49

50

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1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. BLIHOVDE: I'll give a pause to see
4 if anybody's going to speak up, but this is Boyd from
5 Yukon Delta. And in my opinion that's an easy one.
6 Because our hunts and especially since that time, Tim,
7 has been just bull hunts. So we've only had a bull
8 hunt in Unit 18, Zone 1 and 2, ADF&G and our Zone 2
9 hunt, we've agreed, just needed to be bull only and we
10 were comfortable with talking to biologists there, that
11 having a 30 to 100 or three to one, cow to calf -- I'm
12 sorry, cow to bull ratio, so that is what we've gone
13 with and even been talking about a cow hunt, opening
14 something like that in the future if the population
15 keeps increasing and that would help address that ratio
16 issue. But we feel there's enough bulls out there,
17 biologically, to breed with the cows that are out
18 there.

19

20 So I guess that's all the explanation
21 on that one.

22

23 I did want to bring up, if I could, Mr.
24 Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Boyd.

27

28 MR. BLIHOVDE: Christopher Tulik back
29 there brought up a good question that I didn't know the
30 answer to, is this process, is it okay for us to
31 discuss timing of the hunt or are we pretty much bound
32 by the open season that the State has and is that what
33 we're currently following. I think we are, but, you
34 know, if there's no way to change that, because you
35 bring up access and, you know, timing affects access
36 for our folks going to Zone 2.

37

38 MS. KENNER: No, now is the time.

39

40 MR. BLIHOVDE: Great. Thank you.

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: This is Brooke. To
43 answer Boyd's question, the Council does have the
44 opportunity to submit both Federal and State proposals
45 to change regulations at this time.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Tim, go ahead.

48

49 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, if I can ask a

50

0191

1 follow up question and perhaps discussion. In the
2 literature behind the closure review, the cow -- or
3 calf to cow ratio, there's a discussion about the
4 twinning rates and the number of calves to cow, which
5 indicates their nutritional value decreasing, and could
6 this be the cause in Zone 2 that -- that the calf to
7 cow ratio is declining because of the feed -- food
8 situation out there because the moose population
9 increases.

10

11 MR. BLIHOVDE: Well, I'm glad you
12 phrased it -- this is Boyd again from Yukon Delta.
13 Well, I'm glad you phrased it, if it could be, and the
14 answer there is yes. And the State biologist and our
15 biologist have talked a lot about, just like the Yukon
16 we're seeing a lot of moose, especially in the winter,
17 congregating in those islands along the main river
18 channels where there's lots of willows and they're
19 dependent on those willows, you see the browse, you
20 know, lines, and so there's concern that during the
21 wintertime, at least, there's limited food
22 availability. So that's why we're starting to discuss
23 those ideas of different things like a cow hunt
24 opportunity in the future and things.

25

26 So thanks Tim.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. You
29 mentioned if there's anyone from ADF&G that might be
30 online too, unless we answered the question already.

31

32 Brooke, go ahead.

33

34 MS. MCDAVID: Well, I do want to give
35 ADF&G an opportunity to respond if they're available at
36 this time. I also can let you all know that if they're
37 not, we can arrange to try to plan for a presentation
38 on the moose this -- at the fall meeting.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We'll go ahead and take
41 that route. Do you have more to present Tom -- go
42 ahead, Brooke.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry, just one more
45 comment, Mr. Chair. I did want to make sure that we
46 circle back around to the possible addition of those
47 three communities that were mentioned and perhaps after
48 lunch we could -- when we do the call for proposals, we
49 could get clarification from our wildlife supervisor

50

0192

1 about what action the Council would need to take to add
2 those communities and revisit that at that time.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
7 Brooke. Thank you, Tom, appreciate your presentation.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 So if we could go ahead and take a
12 lunch break and then circle back -- yeah, we can go
13 ahead and take a lunch break and then come back again
14 and continue with this proposal.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 MS. MCDAVID: What time do you want to
19 come back.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: The time now is 12:07,
22 we could come back at 1:30. Lunch break until 1:30.
23 We'll come back at 1:30. Thank you. Thank you all
24 that's online.

25

26 (Off record)

27

28 (On record)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Good afternoon,
31 we're back on record and we'll continue our meeting.
32 The time now is 1:42. Maybe just for the record if we
33 could announce the Council members that are online with
34 us this afternoon.

35

36 MR. NANENG: This is Myron, I'm online.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Myron.

39

40 MS. EVAN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
41 Norma Evan here.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, are you with
46 us?

47

48 MS. ROGERS: I'm here, thank you, Mr.
49 Chair.

50

0193

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. We're all
2 present so we could go ahead and continue our meeting.
3 For housekeeping or next item that we'd like to bring
4 up I'll turn it over to Brooke at this time.

5

6 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Before we jump back over to Tom with the next closure
8 review information, Chris Tulik did give me that job
9 announcement flier for the RIT positions that they let
10 us know that they're hiring for, yesterday, I'm going
11 to go ahead and pass a copy out to you guys so that you
12 can take it back to your village and if you know anyone
13 you think might be a good fit to encourage them to
14 apply.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Tom. When
21 you're ready you could go ahead and proceed.

22

23 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
24 members of the Board. For the record my name is Tom
25 Plank, and I'm a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of
26 Subsistence Management. And now I'll be presenting a
27 summary of the analysis for Closure Review WCR24-43
28 which begins on Page 65 of your meeting books.

29

30 Wildlife Closure Review 24-43 pertains
31 to the closure of moose hunting in Unit 19A Remainder
32 to everyone except residents of the six local
33 communities. Unit 19A Remainder is depicted in Map 1
34 on Page 66 and includes the western portion of Unit
35 19A.

36

37 Unit 19A Remainder was closed under
38 Federal regulations in 2007 because of conservation
39 concerns including low productivity, low bull/cow
40 ratios and high hunting pressure. A Section .804
41 analysis determined that residents of Tuluksak, lower
42 Kalskag, upper Kalskag, Aniak and Chuathbaluk and
43 Crooked Creek to be most dependent on Unit 19A
44 Remainder moose populations. Authority was delegated
45 to the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Manager to
46 annually establish harvest quotas and permits, number
47 of permits. The closure for the Lime Village
48 Management Area was eliminated in 2020. And then in
49 2022 the Board of Game adopted Proposal 171 dividing
50

0194

1 Unit 19A into two subunits, 19A and 19E, which is on
2 Map 2 on Page 71 of your meeting books.

3
4 Unit 19A Remainder primarily falls into
5 the Aniak survey area. ADF&G surveys this area
6 opportunistically. While the moose population in the
7 Aniak survey area appears relatively stable between
8 2006 and 2010, it increased significantly in 2017.
9 Density estimates for the Aniak survey area in 2017
10 were well above the management objective and highest
11 ever recorded. ADF&G also surveyed the entire western
12 portion of Unit 19A for the first time in 2017 and
13 density estimates for the larger area were just below
14 management objectives. In 2020 the western portion of
15 19A increased to 5,200 moose with a density of .9 moose
16 per square mile. While bull/cow ratios are within
17 management objectives they were on the lower end in
18 2016 and 2017 averaging 21 bulls per 100 cows. Calf/
19 cow ratios have met or exceeded management objectives
20 since 2011. Predation likely influenced moose
21 abundance in Unit 19 and may be limiting population
22 growth.

23
24 In 2019 ADF&G estimated the harvestable
25 surplus for Unit 19A Remainder at 160 to 165 moose per
26 year. Total reported harvest is roughly about 150
27 moose per year, however, low bull/cow ratios in 2016
28 and 2017 suggest few surplus bulls are available for
29 harvest.

30
31 OSM's recommendation is to maintain the
32 closure in Unit 19A. No change to the closure in the
33 western Unit 19A is recommended due to low bull/cow
34 ratios in 2016 and 2017 and because reported harvest
35 estimates -- approximates the same as the harvestable
36 surplus. Additionally, density estimates are below
37 management objectives and the Yukon Delta Refuge
38 Manager has delegated authority to adjust in-season
39 harvest parameters.

40
41 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the
42 Council. I'd be happy to field any questions.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tom. Do we
45 have any questions for Tom or comments at this time.

46
47 MR. SLATS: What pages were you on?

48
49 MR. PLANK: Thank you. Through the
50

0195

1 Chair. The closure review starts on Page 65 in your
2 books.

3

4 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Again, is there any
7 questions or comments from the Council at this time in
8 regards to WCR24-43.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, you can
13 go ahead and proceed.

14

15 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry, I lost my train of
16 thought.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 MS. MCDAVID: So if the Council doesn't
21 want to have any more discussion about that closure
22 review, it will come up at your fall meeting for you to
23 vote on at that time so it was informational at this
24 stage and you can move on to the next agenda item if
25 you would like.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I think that's
28 the process that we'd like to take.

29

30 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Myron.

33

34 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I want to know if we
35 added the two villages that I suggested, Kwig and Kong
36 to that Unit 18 closure area.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

39

40 MS. MCDAVID: Thanks for that question,
41 Myron. So the next item on the agenda is the call for
42 wildlife proposals and that will be the time where we
43 can draft the proposal to add those two communities and
44 I think also Quinhagak was the third community to that
45 list.

46

47 MR. NANENG: Yukon Delta National
48 Wildlife Refuge

49

50

0196

1 MS. MCDAVID: And if you're okay we'll
2 let Tom go ahead and give the introduction to the call
3 for wildlife proposals and then we'll circle back to
4 that suggestion.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MR. NANENG: Okay, thanks for the
9 clarification.

10
11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Tom.

12
13 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And,
14 again for the -- thank you, Mr. Chair and members of
15 the Council. And, again, for the record my name is Tom
16 Plank, I'm a Wildlife Biologist with OSM. And like
17 Brooke said now is the call for the wildlife proposals
18 and the Council's opportunity to submit proposals to
19 change Federal subsistence wildlife harvest
20 regulations. An informational flier on how to submit a
21 proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations can
22 be found in Tab 2 of your meeting books. Proposals
23 need to include the regulations you wish to change, the
24 specific changes you are proposing, an explanation of
25 why the regulation change should be made and any
26 additional information that may help in evaluating the
27 proposed change.

28
29 The window to submit proposals opened
30 February 27th and closes April 12th. The Council can
31 vote to submit a proposal during this meeting and your
32 Council Coordinator will then officially submit it.
33 Also the opportunity for Councils to submit proposals
34 is available during this entire meeting. If a Council
35 member thinks of a proposal later or in response to
36 another agenda item they are welcome to suggest
37 submitting a proposal then. Of course anyone can
38 submit a proposal as an individual as long as it's
39 before the submission window closes.

40
41 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42
43 I'd be happy to answer any questions
44 about the proposal process and will standby while the
45 Council discusses possible proposals to submit.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Tom.
48 Do we have any questions or comments for Tom at this
49 time in regards to proposals, change to wildlife.
50

0197

1 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
2 Myron.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.
5

6 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I move that we add
7 Quinhagak, Kwig and Kong to that Unit 18 proposal in
8 that closed area.
9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Myron.
11

12 MR. NANENG: And have our Council Staff
13 submit that as an amendment to that proposal.
14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
16 Motion on the floor by Myron to include the three
17 villages that were mentioned earlier, Quinhagak, Kwig
18 and Kong. Is there a second.
19

20 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.
21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by Jackie.
23

24 Discussion.
25

26 Pippa, go ahead.
27

28 MS. KENNER: Nevermind.
29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. It's been moved
31 and seconded, we're at discussion stage now.
32

33 MR. NANENG: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, this
34 is Myron.
35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.
37

38 MR. NANENG: Yeah, when I've gone bird
39 hunting or during the falltime down around Kwig and
40 Kong area, I've observed some moose in that area
41 running around, like in October, and I know that people
42 from the two villages have gone all the way up to above
43 Talkwiksak to moose hunting in the past before the --
44 the moose openings that are occurring down in the lower
45 river so that's why I'm supporting that the three
46 villages be included in this proposal.
47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Any
49 more comments in regards to the proposal.
50

0198

1 MR. BLIHOVDE: Mr. Chair.

2

3 MR. NANENG: I call for the question.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, if there's no
6 other comments the question is on the floor. All those
7 in.....

8

9 MR. NANENG: I think there was somebody
10 who wanted to.....

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Myron, I
13 didn't get that.

14

15 MR. NANENG: Yeah, somebody wanted to
16 call for your attention, Mr. Chair.

17

18 MR. BLIHOVDE: Yeah, Mr. Chair -- Mr.
19 Oney, this is Boyd, the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta.
20 And I just wanted to make a clarifying comment that --
21 to make sure that everybody understands that -- and to
22 make sure maybe I'm not understanding -- but the area,
23 quote/unquote that's closed or restricted in Unit 18 is
24 just Zone 2 we call it, and it is -- like John Andrew
25 was referring to, a line that cuts across close to the
26 Three Step Mountain area, it's just a little down
27 stream on the Kwethluk River of that, so I'm sure Myron
28 may already know that but I just want to make sure that
29 he does know, that that's the only thing we're talking
30 about, is just adding those villages to that Zone 2,
31 which it is -- it is quite a distance and it opens at
32 roughly the same time Zone 1 does, which -- and -- and
33 it can stay open at slightly different times, but at
34 the time that there's a moose hunt in Zone 1, you know,
35 and Zone 1 can close at times and Zone 2 still be open
36 but I just want to make sure that Myron knows that
37 that's quite a distance for them to travel.

38

39 That's all.

40

41 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I understand that
42 but it's like over 300 miles roundtrip to go up to
43 Talaweiktsak and back from those villages so looking at
44 the map it's a lot shorter travel for those villages to
45 go to Zone 2 area than compared to having to travel all
46 the way beyond the Kuskokwim corporation lands to go
47 moose hunting. So that's why I'm suggesting the three
48 villages to be included.

49

50

0199

1 MR. BLIHOVDE: Fair enough. I just
2 wanted to make sure, thank you.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

5
6 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. And through
7 the Chair. I just wanted to add that Quinhagak does,
8 in fact, hunt in Zone 1 and 2. Not -- not as much, of
9 course as Eek and Tunt, but there are years when it is
10 more difficult for us to get a moose and the chances
11 are better in Zone 1 and 2 and some do travel in there,
12 which is important for us being that we have a closed
13 caribou season.

14
15 Thanks.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie.

18
19 Okay, if there's no other comments or
20 questions, if someone could call for the question.

21
22 MR. NANENG: I call for question, Mr.
23 Chair. This is Myron.

24
25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Myron calls for
26 the question. All those in favor of supporting a
27 proposal signify by saying aye.

28
29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those opposed signify
32 by saying nay.

33
34 (No opposing votes)

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
37 carries. Thank you.

38
39 Okay, is there anyone else from the
40 Council that would like to include other proposals
41 since we're on that agenda item now.

42
43 Jackie, go ahead.

44
45 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks again, this is
46 Jackie. I wanted to mention that the Native Village of
47 Quinhagak is planning to submit a proposal to extend
48 the existing moose hunt we have, which is from
49 September 1 to 30 and we want to extend it from
50

0200

1 September 1 to October 15 to match our neighboring
2 drainages and because we are in a -- we go through
3 times of food insecurity in the winter so say when Zone
4 1 or 2 opens for a winter hunt, how much we wish we
5 could be a part of that.

6
7 Thanks.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie. My
10 understanding is that you want to extend the moose hunt
11 from September 1 to October -- from September 1 to
12 September 30 to September 1 to October 15.

13
14 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, is there a
17 second.

18
19 MS. MCDAVID: Do you want to.....

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Tom, go ahead.

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Just a point of
24 clarification, I think Jackie was not necessarily
25 asking that the Council put in this proposal, just to
26 make you aware of what the Native Village of Quinhagak
27 is planning to do.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, I see.

30
31 MS. MCDAVID: But I think Tom has a
32 point he would like to clarify.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Tom.

35
36 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
37 just wanted to clarify with Member Jackie, when you
38 said you wanted to extend it to October 15, just to
39 verify which one of the regulations because there's two
40 of them there. One of them is south of the Eek River
41 drainage, north of the Goodnews River drainage, and the
42 other one is Goodnews River drainage and south of the
43 Unit 18 boundary. I just wanted to verify, are you
44 planning both of those or just one of those?

45
46 MS. CLEVELAND: Through the Chair, can
47 you say the second one -- oh, here it is never mind.

48
49 (Pause)

50

0201

1 MS. CLEVELAND: So that part I didn't
2 see before, I'm sorry, so I wanted to ask -- and things
3 look different when they're in the books, you know, so
4 I believe both of them include Quinhagak.

5
6 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame Chair
7 [sic]. No, one includes Quinhagak and one is from the
8 Goodnews River south to the Unit 18 boundary.

9
10 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay. So that Unit 18
11 boundary got me confused for a second, sorry. So it is
12 for south of Eek River drainage and north of Goodnews
13 River drainages, what we know. And then they have --
14 when we're applying for a hunting permit it has a
15 different number, and, I'm sorry, I don't remember it.
16 R, I think 17.

17
18 MR. PLANK: Through the Chair. I think
19 it's RM617.

20
21 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes. I knew it had 17
22 and R. So that's the area I'm referring to, thanks.

23
24 MS. KENNER: And through the Chair.
25 I'd like to add this, I spoke before -- this is Pippa
26 Kenner for the record.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie.

29
30 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks. And sorry I
31 didn't mention before, this was just for your
32 information and to -- I was going to mention that it
33 will come up in November for us to vote on, and that
34 was it.

35
36 Thanks.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie. Is
39 there any more call for proposals at this time.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 MS. MCDAVID: Any changes that folks
44 would like to see in your communities for the hunting
45 regs.

46
47 (Pause)

48
49 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair asked me to
50

0202

1 just mention that a member of the proposal had brought
2 up a muskox proposal that they intend to submit and I
3 believe that was a Board of Game proposal. The Council
4 will have the opportunity to take that up at the fall
5 meeting and vote on that if you would like, then.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.

8
9 (Pause)

10
11 MS. MCDAVID: If the Council -- any
12 Council members think of additional proposals by the
13 end of the meeting that maybe haven't come up now we
14 can still submit a proposal by the end of the meeting
15 so we could move on, I guess, Mr. Chair, if there are
16 no other suggested proposals for Federal regulations at
17 this time.

18
19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
20 Brooke, for that. If there's no others we could
21 continue with our agenda. Next in line is call for
22 Alaska Board of Game Western region proposals.

23
24 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
25 there is a concurrent call for proposals for Board of
26 Game proposals for the State of Alaska. So the call
27 for proposals that Tom just shared with us was for
28 Federal. On Page 83 of your meeting books you will see
29 the call for proposals for the Board of Game. The
30 proposal deadline for the Western region is Monday, May
31 1st, and Board of Game will be meeting in Fairbanks
32 next year in March to take up Interior -- nope, nope,
33 sorry, wrong dates -- that's from Interior -- for the
34 Western region in January next year.

35
36 So if the Council is interested in
37 submitting any Board of Game proposals this would be
38 the time to bring those forward.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is there any
43 recommendations coming from the Council on anything
44 that they see with the Board of Game proposals.

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, just keep
49 in mind that the deadline is May 1, 2023 so if you have
50

0203

1 any ideas or any proposals you'd like to submit please
2 mention that.

3

4 We could go ahead and move on to the
5 next item on the agenda. The next item is.....

6

7 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair, sorry to jump
8 in. We did do the temporary fisheries special action
9 and the Board of Fish proposal before lunch, and we did
10 the Council charter review already so that would bring
11 us down to 12H to review the annual report.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke. We
14 are now on H, review and approve FY22 Annual Report.

15

16 Brooke.

17

18 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
19 at your fall meeting the Council brought up a number of
20 topics that you wanted included in your annual report
21 and I drafted that and your draft annual report does
22 start on Page 88 of your meeting books. If you'd like
23 to look through that, there were some additional topics
24 that we heard talked about earlier. One was potential
25 stipend, the topic of adding that. And also a topic
26 about muskox.

27

28 (Pause)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John.

31

32 MR. ANDREW: (In Yup'ik) On subject of
33 the annual report.

34

35 INTERPRETER: Every year since 1992 we
36 have been joining in the Federal Subsistence Board year
37 after year. And when we take part in a meeting we
38 leave our family to come here for the meeting and since
39 1992 our Council stipend has never been increased even
40 though we struggle to be here. I, myself, would like
41 to ask from the Councils, the YK RAC to increase our
42 stipend.

43

44 Earlier Jackie mentioned about the
45 Bering Sea area and how they asked for additional
46 stipend so we need help to increase our stipends, every
47 one of us that come to the meeting, not including the
48 Staff but just the Council members. Ever since
49 Regional Advisory Council formed we have never
50

0204

1 addressed it or increased.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John.

6

7 Brooke.

8

9 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
10 just passed out to you the draft letter that Jackie had
11 brought up earlier, that the Central Bering Sea AC had
12 drafted, and there is also a second page and this is
13 from the Federal Advisory Committee Act and that is the
14 Act that governs your Council's activities and it
15 explains in this Act about compensation guidelines.

16

17 So the Board -- the Federal Subsistence
18 Board doesn't have jurisdiction to give you payment for
19 being -- for your time on the Council, that would have
20 to come from the Secretarial level, so if you do want
21 to request a stipend it would be my suggestion to make
22 a motion to write a letter to the Board asking the
23 Board to forward that request to the Secretary.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.

28

29 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
30 I'd like to make a motion to request the Secretary of
31 the Interior that we have our Coordinator write a
32 letter requesting for assistance on our stipends.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, John.
37 Motion on the floor by John Andrew to request to write
38 a letter to Department of Interior to put in a stipend
39 request to -- because of our time that's taken away and
40 to be able to be here and also mention about no
41 increase for a number of years. Do I hear a second.

42

43 MR. LANDLORD: Second the motion.
44 James Landlord.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by James
47 Landlord. Discussion.

48

49 Jackie.

50

0205

1 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. This is
2 Jackie. I am sharing this letter today as an example,
3 or I guess a template example, maybe something similar
4 that we can ask for for this group. This was a
5 collaboration -- this letter came into reality after
6 the cooperation of David Carl -- it's mostly his
7 language in here and then they called me for some input
8 and I offered some additional input and then our
9 Coordinator wrote it. But it seems pretty simple. If
10 there are any questions, though, I'll try to answer
11 them about this letter.

12
13 Thanks.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
16 questions or comments for Jackie at this time regarding
17 to the template that was handed out.

18
19 Brooke, go ahead.

20
21 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. Perhaps
22 Jackie could just read a couple of the points, the main
23 points in the letter for justification, for the record,
24 and then we'll also have this as part of the written
25 record.

26
27 Thanks.

28
29 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay. This is Jackie
30 again. So for a couple years now David Carl has been
31 bringing up the issue during our meetings that
32 sometimes we go home at a negative balance after
33 meetings because of not getting per diem and with a
34 high rate of everything, the cost of everything here.
35 He has been a member a lot longer than I have so he
36 spoke that it's just never been adjusted for the whole
37 10 years he's been on the Council but, yet, inflation
38 rises and cost of living is rising. And then I kind of
39 offered that we do offer the local and indigenous
40 knowledge perspective from our rural areas which, you
41 know, we still feel under represented and under valued
42 and this is -- by not getting a stipend or doing this
43 as a voluntary job also plays into that. And I felt
44 that to make a well rounded decision in the end, you
45 know, we are -- our indigenous knowledge is needed, our
46 observations in our villages are needed, we are the
47 ones that are there in the front lines. So I feel
48 like, you know, they need our observations in order to
49 make sound decisions.
50

0206

1 And then I also added there are -- you
2 know we work as tribes and not bureaus and the -- I
3 guess this makes sense for the bureaus because, you
4 know, they're on the road system, they have cheaper
5 grocery stores they can survive from and don't have to
6 travel and these smaller aircrafts that often get
7 cancelled a lot too and we get weathered in a lot,
8 there's also a language barrier, we pay the most for
9 everything, our cost of living is the highest. And we
10 have customary and traditional ties to the land and
11 water where we're at. So these decisions that are made
12 are more -- they have a more profound effect on us
13 because we are there, like I said on the front lines
14 and living nit and surviving.

15
16 The other Board members seemed to agree
17 about all these points.

18
19 And, the last paragraph was by -- David
20 Carl's point is that when we are at these meetings,
21 we're pretty much the only ones that aren't paid. The
22 -- you know the Staff are paid, the bigger Board are
23 paid and, yet, we are still getting the lower side of
24 the per diem that they often -- or we often end up
25 spending our own money on these trips for.

26
27 And those are the points that we made.

28
29 Doi.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
32 Jackie. Is there any more additions.

33
34 Richard, go ahead.

35
36 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
37 Richard Slats for the record. I don't have anything
38 against the letter or the suggestion or the
39 recommendation. But, you know, I just wanted to point
40 out that the per diem and the Federal per diem rates,
41 the (Indiscernible) set standards are set, they have a
42 scale for per diems, room and board and meals and
43 incidentals, travel to different villages -- it varies
44 for different villages. Meals and incidentals are, you
45 know, like has to do with hotels and things like this.
46 But -- and those are set, set rates for different
47 communities. And those are given.

48
49 But the thing that we worked on in the
50

0207

1 past with a different organization that I was with is
2 for the executive board members to conduct -- because
3 we had a fiscal sponsor -- or a fiscal sponsor applied
4 and got grant money for additional -- additional money
5 that we could use and at that time we called it
6 honorarium. I don't know if that would be if that
7 would be but honorarium is what it was called.

8
9 And, you know, like for when we travel,
10 you know, these people travel away from their
11 communities and they have families, children that they
12 still have to feed. And while they're away from their
13 families they would like to be able to do some shopping
14 and get some things because we're all from villages.
15 And then so -- and then more times than not when we
16 travel away from our villages we get stranded, things
17 like this, and me, I just like to sav -- you know, when
18 we go out to eat and everybody goes to good
19 restaurants, I just sneak away and go buy a hot dog or
20 something and then try to come home with, you know, a
21 little bit -- you know, whatever I could save up so I
22 could use that for my utilities, you know, utility
23 payment.

24
25 So I'm thinking that if we can set up
26 -- come to an agreement to have a set rate on a daily
27 basis so that that could be added on to our per diem.
28 But, you know, for the day. And that's something that
29 could be worked with the Office of Subsistence
30 Management and those people that appointed us. So I
31 just wanted to point these things out and I agree with,
32 you know, like it's really hard for -- even for a
33 single kid like me to come here and -- and, you know,
34 like I end up using all my per diem for, you know, like
35 things for, you know, just being here because it's --
36 Bethel is expensive and, you know, just like that. And
37 it's just like when we travel away, anywhere else, we
38 just always -- almost always end up using our per diem
39 before we even get home and sometimes it just would be
40 nice to be able to go out and do some shopping and take
41 some things home for our families and things like that.

42
43 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard.
46 Any more comments at this time.

47
48 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, this is
49 Myron.

50

0208

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

2

3 MR. NANENG: Yeah, good afternoon

4 everyone. I could hear what people are saying but if,
5 you know, for those of us that are hosting, or in a
6 host community that is holding the meeting we don't get
7 paid anything. We don't even get paid for attending a
8 meeting. I believe there should be at least some kind
9 of stipend, not a per diem, but a stipend for all Board
10 members who are participating at a meeting. It does
11 not have to be the full amount that is being paid for
12 those that have to come from villages but a stipend
13 would be appreciated. I know -- I've talked about this
14 with Robert Hoffman and myself, and he said oh you're
15 volunteering your time to be on the Regional Advisory
16 Council, yet it seems like everybody else is getting
17 paid to be on the Regional Advisory Council and even by
18 the big Board level.

19

20 So I just want to point that out, Mr.
21 Chairman, that it would be at least appreciated if
22 there was at least a stipend for those where the hos --
23 those people that live in a host village of a meeting.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
26 I'll go ahead and take Tim, if you could make it short.

27

28 MR. ANDREW: I'll make it real short as
29 far as this topic but I have an addition a little bit
30 later.

31

32 I fully support what Jackie is saying,
33 what RB Slats is saying about the need for stipends.
34 You know the Federal Subsistence Management cannot do
35 anything without you. They need you. They need your
36 expertise. The Federal Subsistence Board needs your
37 expertise. You have a unique expertise for the Yukon
38 Kuskokwim Delta, we live here. We subsist. We gather.
39 We observe things. There is no way that the Federal
40 Subsistence Board can possibly attain that knowledge
41 without your involvement in the process.

42

43 A lot of you take your personal time to
44 come here to Bethel and go travel to villages and go
45 travel to Anchorage for meetings, it takes a lot of
46 time away from your families, it takes a lot of time
47 away from your jobs, a lot of time away from you
48 subsisting, going out and gathering things that you
49 need to survive. You know there is a significant cost
50

0209

1 that is not being recognized under FACA, Federal
2 Advisory Committee Act or any other Act that affects
3 your service to the resources of the Yukon Delta
4 National Wildlife Refuge and its residents and also its
5 subsistence users. Your participation is valuable in
6 my eyes.

7

8 You know each year we struggle to find
9 people to serve in your capacity. A lot of people
10 don't have the time, they can't afford to give up the
11 time to serve. Three days here in Bethel in the fall
12 and in the springs. That's a lot of time away from
13 work, a lot of time away from home and a lot of
14 sacrifice. So I totally support this. Joe Blow
15 Citizen Tim Andrew supports your efforts to gain a
16 stipend for your services.

17

18 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tim. If
21 there's no other comments or questions we could ask for
22 a question.

23

24 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman, I would also
25 like to -- I forgot to mention this, that we -- while
26 we're working on these things that we should also -- I
27 would also like to suggest an Area M letter to go along
28 with what we're working on, while we're working on
29 this. This could be a different -- or could be done at
30 a later time, thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke.

33

34 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you for that
35 suggestion Richard. We do have a motion on the table
36 to write this particular letter to the Secretary now
37 and we could call -- someone could call the question
38 for that and then we could take up your suggestion.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.

43

44 MR. ANDREW: Question.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, question's been
47 called to elevate the stipends for our annual report,
48 all those in favor signify by saying aye.

49

50

0210

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed, signify by
4 saying nay.

5

6 (No opposing votes)

7

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

10

11 Richard, go ahead and bring up your
12 comments regarding muskox, I believe, or to write a
13 letter?

14

15 (Pause)

16

17 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman. I wanted to
18 point out Item 3 on the letter.....

19

20 MR. ANDREW: Annual report.

21

22 MR. SLATS:interception and
23 bycatch of AYK salmon in the Alaska Peninsula region,
24 Area M and Bering Sea commercial fisheries.

25

26 While we were talking earlier today it
27 came up that it might be a good point and, you know,
28 like I would also like to suggest that we, as a Board,
29 or Council, Advisory Council, that we suggest an Area M
30 letter to the Secretary of the Interior.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 MR. ANDREW: Motion.

35

36 MR. SLATS: Do I need to do this in a
37 motion, Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes.

40

41 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, I second the
42 motion for discussion purposes.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, there's a motion
45 on the floor by Richard to write a letter to the
46 Secretary of the Interior to elevate our concerns for
47 Area M and seconded by Myron.

48

49 Discussion.

50

0211

1 MR. NANENG: Okay, Mr. Chairman, this
2 is Myron.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.
5

6 MR. NANENG: I would like to add in
7 that letter that the State of Alaska is a party to the
8 Yukon/Canada Treaty that many times is being utilized
9 to reduce subsistence fishing opportunities for the
10 Yukon River because of their objective to meet the
11 escapement goal of chinook salmon into Canada. You
12 know if there's a good run of chums and low returns of
13 chinook salmon, and even the chum fisheries were closed
14 because they're trying to prevent interception of
15 chinook salmon on the Yukon River. So I just want to
16 point that out for the rest of the Board. So I'd like
17 to request that that be added, and I make a motion to
18 that effect.

19
20 An amending motion to the letter.
21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.
23

24 MS. MCDAVID: Myron, this is Brooke.
25 I'm not sure we have to have a motion to add things to
26 the letter. You can discuss what you would like
27 included in the letter at this point and I'll add it as
28 part of the justification.

29
30 MR. NANENG: Yeah, I just want the
31 record to reflect that we had this discussion about the
32 restrictions that are placed on the Yukon River
33 subsistence fishermen because of that Treaty
34 obligation.

35
36 MS. MCDAVID: I have noted your point
37 down, Myron, and we'll be sure to include that in the
38 letter. Did you have any other points you think are
39 important to include in the letter to the Secretary?

40
41 MR. NANENG: Okay. So that was what I
42 wanted to raise as part of it.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Myron.
45 So noted.

46
47 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry, through the Chair.
48 And I misspoke, the letter will be to the Board asking
49 the Board to elevate it to the Secretary. Thank you.
50

0212

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more discussion
2 from the Council.

3
4 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman.

5
6 MR. NANENG: I call for.....

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We have a commentary,
9 Richard, go ahead.

10
11 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman, if this
12 letter could also include the chums along with the
13 kings -- the kings and the chums -- include the chums.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke.

18
19 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 And I will note that the subject came up earlier in the
21 meeting and if you would like to reference those
22 earlier comments about the Area M issue by Council
23 members you could do that and I can refer back to those
24 comments.

25
26 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

29
30 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 Through the Chair. Can I make a request for a
32 clarification of the purpose of this letter. It seems
33 like -- we had a request to put this letter in so the
34 Council members could receive a stipend. We should
35 keep our subjects separated, that way they're not
36 getting mixed messages. Because that's what I'm afraid
37 is going to happen, they're going to receive this
38 letter, they're going to look at the letter and they're
39 going to be questioning what we're trying -- what are
40 we trying to achieve in this letter. So we could do
41 separate letters specific to those subjects so our
42 point could get across to the Department of Interior.

43
44 One thing I've learned being in the
45 positions that I have been, making sure that the
46 subject line and the intention of the letter is simple
47 and also not mixed messages.

48
49 So that might be a suggestion, Mr.
50

0213

1 Chair. Through the Chair. Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,

4 Alissa. Point of clarification will be given by

5 Brooke.

6

7 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair.

8 Alissa, you are correct. We are intending to have two

9 separate letters to avoid meshing these two -- very

10 separate issues. So we will send one letter about the

11 stipend and now we welcome any comments you might have

12 -- that you'd like to have included in the letter about

13 Area M.

14

15 MS. ROGERS: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Any

18 more questions or comments at this time.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

23

24 MR. LANDLORD: When one of the Board of

25 Fish made a comment that according to the surveys that

26 Alaska does in the villages, he said the villages have

27 alternative fish to catch and he mentioned whitefish,

28 sheefish and lush, they didn't want to prove

29 interception of chums and chinook. I think those are

30 separate -- sheefish, whitefish and lush don't -- I

31 don't think they go out into the ocean. We were

32 talking about interception of chums and chinook,

33 especially chums in Area M, False Pass and they -- one

34 Board member mentioned that we have other alternative

35 fish to eat in the Yukon River and I don't think that's

36 a good reason to say no on Proposal 140, because

37 they're intercepting fish out there on False Pass. And

38 that's what we wanted -- we were asking to open some

39 hours so they could pass and they could go into the

40 Yukon River and the Kuskokwim River but they still said

41 no.

42

43 Quayana.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, James. Tim,

46 go ahead, I'll take you if you can make it short.

47

48 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, thank you, Mr.

49 Chair. I had indicated earlier that I had one more

50

0214

1 thing about this letter -- annual report.

2

3

4 One thing that we cannot disregard in
5 the Bering Sea as far as our salmon, what's happening
6 on the Russian side. You know this Bering Sea is like
7 a bowl of soup, United States takes a bit out of it,
8 Russia side takes a bit out of it, it goes down and
9 down and down. Right now we don't know what's
10 happening on the other side of the ocean as far as our
11 salmon, chinook salmon, chum salmon and everything else
12 that eats out of the Bering Sea. We don't know what
13 the bycatch is like over there, we don't know if
14 there's interception issues over there. We don't know
15 what's happening with our salmon on that side of the
16 border. And it appears to me like it's an issue that
17 we have to write, or to encourage the Secretary of
18 Interior to involve the Department of State in asking
19 these questions on what's happening on the Russian
20 side.

20

21 I don't know the dynamics of going
22 through this process but I thought it would be
23 important to try and understand what's happening on the
24 Russian side.

25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Tim.

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: Do Council members wish
31 that we include something along the lines of what Tim
32 just brought up also in the letter.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: To include it in the same
37 letter. I just want to make sure that that ask comes
38 from the Council and not just from a member of the
39 public. Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, Raymond Oney
42 here. Yeah, I think we should include that also
43 because if we're going to try and conserve the fish we
44 have to look at the pictures as a whole. We just
45 can't, like I said, the cycle of life is important to
46 us, no matter whether it's international, national, or
47 in-river, so that's what we're made of. That's why
48 we're still here today because of what we've done in
49 the past and what we're seeing today. So the depletion
50

50

0215

1 of salmon needs to be addressed as a whole, not only
2 in-river users, it needs to be -- we have to look at
3 the whole picture in order for us to take a stand with
4 those other international people that may be destroying
5 some of our fish because like you said it's like a soup
6 bowl and everybody takes a pinch out of it and we do
7 need -- we need to make that known to the Federal
8 Subsistence Board to elevate that to the Department of
9 Interior to let it to bring it out to where it needs to
10 go to let them know that we need -- we need answers
11 like that in order for us to start rebuilding our
12 stocks.

13

14 And then back to the letter to
15 Department of Interior, is there any more comments that
16 we'd like to add from the Council.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, is there
21 a question.

22

23 MR. LANDLORD: Question, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, a motion on the
26 floor by -- question by James. All those in favor of
27 writing a letter to the Secretary of Interior signify
28 by saying aye.

29

30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those opposed signify
33 by saying nay.

34

35 (No opposing votes)

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
38 carries. Thank you.

39

40 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

43

44 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 Through the Chair. This might be a question for our
46 Staff, would it be possible if we could write a letter
47 to the North Pacific Management Fishery Council [sic]
48 and -- and let's see who else here -- request changes
49 to Alaska Department of Board of Fish, Area M fishing
50

0216

1 regulations, would we -- is that within our purview to
2 create that letter.

3

4 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa, this is your
5 Coordinator. Just to clarify. So you're wanting to
6 ask the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to --
7 I'm sorry, I didn't quite understand, do something
8 related to the Board of Fish?

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Yes. I would like us to
11 -- I would like to see us about writing a letter to the
12 North Pacific Management Fishery about the Area M
13 fisheries regulations to the Board of Fish, because the
14 Board of Fish is governed by the North Pacific
15 Management Fishery -- for us to make changes in regards
16 to adding to their tool box, reducing the amount of
17 size -- and reducing the amount of hours we're going to
18 need to start with them, to put that proposal so that
19 we can continue making changes -- but I -- first, I
20 wanted to find out if it is possible for our Council to
21 write a letter directly to the North Pacific Management
22 Council or do we have to go through the Federal
23 Subsistence Board first, and are they going to pass
24 this through or are they going to send it back to us
25 and tell us we're (cuts off).....

26

27 MS. MCDAVID: Thanks for clarifying
28 Alissa. You, as a Council, are able to write directly
29 to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council,
30 however, I am pretty sure, and I don't want to
31 misspeak, if somebody else wants to jump in, I do not
32 think that the North Pacific Fisheries Management
33 Council has any control over the Board of Fish because
34 they're two separate processes, one is Federal and one
35 is State.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 (Pause)

40

41 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa, if you have
42 concerns about the Board of Fish that are related to
43 Area M and you wanted to share those I think those
44 could also be added to the letter going to the
45 Secretary of Interior.

46

47 MS. ROGERS: From our last meeting --
48 in our last meeting we had the -- we had requested a
49 letter from our YKRAC, Western Interior, Eastern

50

0217

1 Interior, Seward Peninsula, all the Councils that are
2 speaking to the reduction of chinook salmon and chum
3 salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea commercial fishery. I
4 was wondering would we be able to collectively create
5 another letter similar to this so that we can continue
6 to keep the pressure on the North Pacific Management
7 Council to the declines of chinook and chum?

8
9 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa, yes, you could --
10 you could write another letter about the chinook and
11 chum bycatch caps that you all had wanted to see in
12 your previous letter to continue that conversation.

13
14 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
15 Through the Chair. I make a motion on the floor to
16 continue our letter as a collective Regional Advisory
17 Councils with Western Interior Alaska, Eastern Interior
18 Alaska, Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Councils
19 that was drafted -- I don't remember when it was
20 drafted but I have the draft in front of me -- sorry,
21 I'm not feeling so well so my -- my -- I'm trying to
22 speak while I have 102 fever right now -- so the
23 Council further requests the Federal Subsistence Board
24 to elevate the concerns expressed in this letter to the
25 Secretary of Commerce and then in bullet -- on the
26 subsistence salmon fishing on the Yukon and Kuskokwim
27 River that was catastrophic for this year, and then it
28 also goes on to the justification -- or sorry -- the
29 need for subsistence representation on the North
30 Pacific Management Council, that we can do updated
31 information about the importance of subsistence as well
32 in this letter.

33
34 And then if we could possibly also add,
35 Mr. Chair, some areas in which we may be able to
36 support in regards to Area M fishery, the bycatch
37 fishery by reducing fishing hours. And then also
38 adding in reduction of gear (indiscernible - cuts out)
39 -- gear types and the.....

40
41 MS. MCDAVID: Alissa, you're breaking
42 up, I'm sorry, we're having trouble understanding you.

43
44 MS. ROGERS: So to include -- let me
45 see if I can get closer. Can you hear me now?

46
47 MS. MCDAVID: Try again.

48
49 MS. ROGERS: Sorry. I apologize. I'm
50

0218

1 trying to talk as loud as I can. So include in that
2 letter that we have written we'd like to continue on to
3 write -- and a couple of additional bulletin points to
4 add to that letter would be possible tools for the
5 management in Area M, would be to reduce the hours,
6 fishing hours, reduce the gear type, reduce the sockeye
7 and chum caps, reduce the intercept fishery, chinook
8 cap, restrict the fishing areas and locations, reducing
9 the fishing periods and request that June 13th will be
10 the delayed, the start date and the last bulletin would
11 be to have window openers instead of having the fishery
12 open 24/7.

13

14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. As
17 you heard the motion, do I hear a second.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is there a second to
22 Alissa's motion.

23

24 MS. EVAN: I second, this is Norma.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, seconded by
27 Norma. Discussion.

28

29 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

32

33 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. So just as a
34 reminder, the motion on the table is to write a letter
35 to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and
36 to also include the other RACs of the region as we did
37 last year. Some of the points that Alissa brought up
38 we can add to that letter, some of the points she
39 brought up were related to Area M, which can go in that
40 other letter. But now would be the time to discuss
41 anything related to the letter to the North Pacific
42 Fisheries Management Council.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more additions to
47 the letter to North Pacific Fisheries Management
48 Council.

49

50

0219

1 Richard, go ahead.

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair -- oh, go ahead.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard and then

6 Alissa.

7

8 MR. SLATS: Yeah, thank you, Mr.

9 Chairman. By the time they will read our letter they
10 will not be able to see it because the North Pacific
11 Fisheries Management Council is holding their meeting
12 starting yesterday up until the 11th. Their advisory
13 panel, you know, like a group like us that makes
14 recommendations or advises to the Council is meeting
15 starting today and ends on the 7th. My suggestion is
16 that we extend our stay and extend our travel and go
17 testify in person, or send a delegate.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard.

20

21 Alissa.

22

23 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 Through the Chair. Just reading off some notes that we
25 had from the prior meeting and the creation of the
26 prior letter. States that 95 percent of all America's
27 wild caught salmon comes from our Alaska fisheries.
28 And in order to create -- allow for passage of those
29 salmon to our rivers, we would need to reduce the
30 fishing hours and also reduce the standby hours. Those
31 are two additional items that we need to add to our
32 letter that we didn't have in our prior letter,
33 favorable for the managers on the Aleutian Islands.

34

35 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. Any
38 more comments or inclusions to the letter to the North
39 Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

40

41 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chairman.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Henry, go ahead.

44

45 MR. PARKS: For the record my name is
46 Henry. I just want to ask to see if it is possible for
47 one of the Council members, or the whole team to be
48 with us at our upcoming fall meeting. That's just my
49 question. Like one of those members, or the whole
50

0220

1 Council members to be with us.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Henry.

6

7 Brooke.

8

9 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair.

10 Henry. We can reach out to Staff with the National --
11 with the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
12 and see if anyone would like to attend our meeting. We
13 do usually have Dr. Diana Stram present, but she's not
14 a member of the Council, she's a Staff scientist for
15 the Council, and -- but we can certainly give an
16 invitation, it will not guarantee that anyone does
17 come.

18

19 FATHER NICOLAI: Mr. Chairman, can a
20 member of the audience say something.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, there's a motion
23 on the floor by the Board at this time.

24

25 FATHER NICOLAI: Mr. Chairman, can
26 someone from the audience comment or not?

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If you can make it
29 short I'd appreciate it. Thank you. And for the
30 record state your name and where you're from.

31

32 FATHER NICOLAI: This is Father Martin
33 Nicolai from Kwethluk. I'm sorry to be such a person
34 of bad (In Yup'ik) but for Alissa's request, all those
35 items that she put forth on this Council to write a
36 letter concerning all those things, they were already
37 talked about and voted on in the past February Board of
38 Fish meeting and some of us were there to listen to
39 these things and they came in the form of proposals, to
40 shorten the hours, to you know -- for the fish to pass,
41 to those other areas of Alaska and elsewhere. During
42 the Board of Fish they voted down all those proposals,
43 including Proposal 140 so no matter what we say here
44 now, no matter how many letters we write they're not
45 going to act upon it. I don't think so.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,

50

0221

1 Martin. And I wanted to reiterate.....

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY:some of the words
6 that Tim had mentioned earlier too regarding scientific
7 booklets that North Pacific Fisheries Management uses
8 and it could be volumes and volumes of that and my
9 suggestion would be, that, because we're already
10 writing a letter to the Department of Interior to
11 elevate those concerns that Fish and Game and North
12 Pacific aren't really listening to us and we want to
13 elevate through -- the Federal Subsistence Board to
14 elevate those concerns to the Department of Interior
15 because we're not getting any good answers or being
16 declined year after year. So like Martin Nicolai said
17 these things are already brought up, and if we could
18 just stick to that letter to the Department of Interior
19 to elevate our concerns in that way to whatever
20 direction that it needs to go from there. I believe
21 those issues will be addressed -- that's all I wanted
22 to say.

23

24 Alissa, go ahead.

25

26 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 Through the Chair. Mr. Nicolai, if you were there the
28 proposal that was created through my tribe,
29 Orutsararmiut Native Council, that I had proposed to be
30 created, it had passed. So they took up one of the
31 proposals that I had created and they had amended the
32 language to change the times and change the, I believe,
33 gear restrictions or something to that effect, so our
34 voices are being heard. They're not being heard the
35 way we want to be heard but they are being heard.

36

37 I can understand what it means to feel
38 frustrated, it's a long -- it's been a long time trying
39 to fight Area M and bycatch or trying to find ways of
40 fixing solutions that seem very difficult for us to
41 fix. But I believe in supporting the continuation and
42 the pressure that needs to be done in order for us to
43 continuously keep reminding them and keep telling them
44 that we are here, our voices are here, we're telling
45 you. That way when we go back in history and people
46 are asking, where were these people, how come they
47 didn't say anything, we'll go back and we'll say the
48 Council wrote a letter, the people requested their
49 voices to be heard, on paper, they got a hold of their
50

0222

1 leaders and they kept trying and trying and trying.

2

3 So I truly believe that reaching out to
4 whoever and everyone we need to reach out so everyone's
5 on the same page is very beneficial for our voice to be
6 heard. And I encourage you not to give up, and I truly
7 encourage you and your tribe to reach out and send
8 letters and keep talking even if it sounds like we're
9 talking to a brick wall. I promise you our voices are
10 being heard.

11

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. If
15 there's no other comments can someone call for the
16 question.

17

18 MR. LANDLORD: Call for question.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, James calls for
21 the question. All those in favor of writing a letter
22 to North Pacific Fisheries Management Council to
23 include the other three RACs signify by saying aye.

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those not in favor
28 signify by saying nay.

29

30 (No opposing votes)

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
33 carries. Thank you.

34

35 Is there any more additions that we
36 would like to see included in our annual report or
37 letters to anyone at this time.

38

39 Brooke, go ahead.

40

41 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. I did hear
42 mentioned earlier that the topic of muskox should be
43 included. If the Council wishes for that topic to be
44 included it'd be great to have just a little bit of
45 discussion about that.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. I know

50

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1 it was mentioned earlier or yesterday about seeing
2 increase of muskox inland from -- on the main land, and
3 if -- I know people are beginning to see the population
4 grow in some areas and if there's a way that either
5 Fish and Wildlife or Alaska Department of Fish and Game
6 would at least update us on -- even put together an
7 analysis, or whatever you call it, to give us, you
8 know, information that could make us -- give us better
9 decisionmaking, if we're going to move forward with
10 muskox for the future.

11

12 Pippa, did you want to comment.

13

14 MS. KENNER: (Shakes head negatively)

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Any comments,
17 questions at this time in regards to muskox.

18

19 MS. EVAN: I have a comment on muskox,
20 this Norma, Marshall.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma, go ahead.

23

24 MS. EVAN: Last spring after the ice
25 left on the Yukon when people started voting there was
26 a lone muskox on the big sand bar near the mouth of
27 (indiscernible), and there were seeing, I think,
28 (indiscernible) slough, there was pictures and posts so
29 there is an increase in the Marshall region also.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma.

32

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

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

37

38 MR. NANENG: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
39 Chairman. Back in the days when Fish and Wildlife and
40 the State of Alaska were talking about bringing muskox
41 out to the region, first it was out to Nunivak, the
42 next place was to Nelson Island. The comments back
43 then was to try and give -- grow the muskox herd to the
44 point where people in the future will be able to hunt
45 them for food. I know there's muskox up in Kuslivak,
46 there's some a round Kalskag and there's some in
47 between Bethel and the Johnson River. So I don't know
48 exactly how much the herd has grown since the
49 relocation of those muskox to the area. And I think

50

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1 there needs to be -- you know, right now people hunt
2 muskox but having to go to a certain village to get a
3 ticket and also come to Bethel to pick up a permit and
4 not everyone is able to afford that. I think if muskox
5 are going to be relocated to our area villages that
6 there should be an opportunity for people to hunt them
7 because in the past when one person caught a muskox
8 over in (Indiscernible) they were cited for killing a
9 muskox, and yet -- I believe the villages were the ones
10 that gave permission to Fish and Wildlife and State of
11 Alaska to relocate those muskox on to our lands and
12 instead of thanking us -- I would say ended up making
13 criminals out of a few people from our region.

14

15 So I think that it should be an
16 opportunity to hunt for muskox for food, and open and
17 not necessarily by permit but if they're on Federal
18 lands they should be for Federally-qualified
19 subsistence users.

20

21 So that's my comment.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Myron.

26

27 Any more other comments or questions at
28 this time in regards to muskox.

29

30 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa and then Chris
33 Tulik. Go ahead, Alissa.

34

35 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Through the Chair. Can -- Brooke, would you be able to
37 let us know if we currently have a muskox subsistence
38 regulation in the book? I don't have a regulation book
39 in front of me right now.

40

41 MS. MCDAVID: I'll ask our.....

42

43 MS. ROGERS: And what is.....

44

45 MS. MCDAVID: Thanks for that question,
46 Alissa. Our Staff are going to provide you with an
47 answer shortly. Thank you.

48

49 (Pause)

50

0225

1 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame Chair
2 [sic]. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. So Alissa this
3 is a really good question. Through the Chair.

4
5 Currently we have an unusual customary
6 and traditional use determination for muskox in Unit
7 18, including Nunivak and Nelson Island. It's called a
8 no Federal subsistence priority. These were the types
9 of determinations that were adopted at the beginning of
10 the program when we thought the program was almost
11 immediately going to go back to State management of
12 subsistence uses on Federal public land, therefore, we
13 have no customary and traditional use determination and
14 without one we can't adopt regulations.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

17
18 MS. MCDAVID: I just wanted to follow
19 up on what Pippa said, and, say, that because the call
20 for Federal proposals is open and Pippa can correct me
21 if I'm wrong, if the Council wanted to submit a C&T
22 proposal for muskox, now, is an opportunity to do so.

23
24 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

27
28 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 Through the Chair. I'd like to make a motion on the
30 floor for musk C&T. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair, this is Myron.
33 I'd second the motion for discussion purposes.

34
35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Thank
36 you. There's a motion on the floor by Alissa to
37 request for a C&T for muskox and seconded by Myron.

38
39 Discussion.

40
41 MR. NANENG: Okay, Mr. Chair, this is
42 Myron. My question is, you know, since the time that
43 the muskox have been translocated from other parts of
44 the world to the YK Delta, now some of the natural
45 animals we have customary and traditional use with.....

46
47 (Teleconference interference -
48 background yelling)

49
50

0226

1 MR. NANENG:and never having to
2 have to get a permit. So is the customary and
3 traditional use of those muskox going to
4 (indiscernible) permits that people have had to get to
5 be able to get to hunt muskox down in Nelson Island and
6 Nunivak, that's -- that's very limiting. So I need
7 further clarification from OSM as to what they mean by
8 customary and traditional use of muskox.....

9
10 (Teleconference interference -
11 background yelling)

12
13 MR. NANENG:when our people have
14 been restricted from being able to hunt these for food.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

17
18 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
19 just wanted to follow up on your question, Myron, and
20 other Staff could please jump in if I misspeak. But I
21 think the C&T proposal would be the first step in
22 getting the customary and traditional use recognized
23 and then to actually establish a hunt, a separate
24 proposal would need to be submitted, is that -- and I
25 would like clarification on that.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 MS. KENNER: Wow, great question. This
30 is Pippa with OSM. So I've had a little bit of time to
31 think about this now. So you're right, it can be
32 combined in one proposal and the Council will deal with
33 the customary and traditional use determination first
34 and then will immediately go to area, harvest limit and
35 season once they determine how many people they're
36 providing for through the C&T.

37
38 I do have one other thing to say
39 though, you know, there's three -- we look at muskox in
40 kind of three different populations. There's a --
41 there's Nunivak Island, Nelson Island and then the main
42 land, so you might want to include, you know, just one
43 of those areas, like maybe we're talking about the main
44 land right now. That's my suggestion right now.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

49
50

0227

1 MS. MCDAVID: I have a clarifying
2 question that might help the Council. Is the main land
3 population, does that include the animals in the
4 Coastal area that come all the way up to, like Norma
5 was talking about, near Marshall, or would that be a
6 separate herd. Thank you.

7
8 MS. KENNER: Hey, really good question
9 again. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. Through the
10 Chair. Yeah, so, you know, Nunivak Island is a
11 distinct geographical place and Nelson Island actually
12 is too. There's a river that separates that Nelson
13 Island from the main land, and I can't remember what
14 that river is called but anything off Nelson Island
15 would be considered the main land.

16
17 MS. MCDAVID: Okay. So there would be
18 no distinction between further in land and closer to
19 the Coast as far as main land would encompass all of
20 that?

21
22 MS. KENNER: That's what I described.
23 There may be other descriptions.

24
25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll go ahead and
26 take.....

27
28 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chair.....

29
30 CHAIRMAN ONEY:Tim and then I'd
31 like to have Chris comment too because he's been
32 raising his hand in the back. Chris, can you come up
33 to the front and be right after Tim.

34
35 MR. ANDREW: Okay, thank you, Mr.
36 Chair. Just to clarify my proposal. It is not
37 addressing Nelson Island. It is not addressing
38 Nunivak. Those have already been taken care of. They
39 have their regulations in place because C&T has already
40 been taken care of. The Board of Game has done their
41 process. The Federal Subsistence Board has done their
42 process out there. This is the main land population.
43 This is the (Indiscernible) Herd, this is the Mudd
44 Volcano Herd, this is the Tundra Herd, but -- you know
45 21E herd, it's the Kilbuk Herd, main land muskox, those
46 different herds, they have a distinct population. They
47 have a distinct, whatever you call, muskox habitat that
48 they stay in. Some wander off. Like Norma said they
49 wander off to different places and establish their
50

0228

1 herds in various places, it's not just one great big
2 herd, it's just these pockets that I'm trying to
3 identify and identify a huntable population.
4

5 Now, the C&T process that Pippa and
6 Brooke are talking about are kind of related to this
7 but how that C&T comes out, I don't know, I can't
8 foretell that issue.
9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tim.
13

14 Chris.
15

16 MR. TULIK: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
17 Chairman. Chris Tulik for the record. I just wanted
18 to add to what Myron was talking about where the
19 animals were spotted. I will tell you that -- because
20 I've been traveling the Delta for much of my time and
21 I've seen these animals pretty much everywhere
22 traveling out to the Yukon, either -- along the Coastal
23 trail directly to the Pilot Station and up through here
24 -- from here to Marshall and then on my way from along
25 the Coast from -- through Kong and Kwig, Kipnuk, and up
26 through there, and even right in the middle of our
27 region here, in Unit 18, I've seen these animals and
28 they're all over. And I will say that these animals
29 are transplanted animals from Nunivak Island. They
30 were transplanted in, I believe, 1969, and there were a
31 few of them that were transplanted out there. And then
32 they -- their population started growing out there on
33 Nelson Island and we've been around them from -- since
34 that time and we've never considered these animals
35 customary and traditional species. We've never
36 harvested them until they were finally opened for a
37 legal hunt in 1980 -- '84 I believe.
38

39 So I can't quite agree with how Tim is
40 trying to distinguish the population on the main land
41 because all of these animals that we are seeing here on
42 the main land are from Nelson Island. I mean the
43 animals that we are seeing on the main land, the muskox
44 that we are seeing on the main land are part of the
45 larger population of the Nelson Island population, and
46 we should consider them as one herd rather trying to
47 distinguish them or separate them in regions.
48

49 Guyana.
50

0229

1 That's all I wanted to point out, thank
2 you, Mr. Chairman.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Any
5 more.....

6
7 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, I just want
8 to make a comment.

9
10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

11
12 MR. NANENG: Yeah, so in essence we can
13 call the muskox the invasive species that were
14 transplanted by wildlife managers saying that at some
15 point in the future that these animals will be used as
16 a source of food for the people that live in the YK
17 Delta.

18
19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Myron.

20
21 Brooke, go ahead.

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
24 this has been some good discussion. I just kind of
25 wanted to bring us back to the first point that Myron
26 had, or sorry if it wasn't Myron, someone brought up
27 that we need to establish C&T for muskox and then you
28 could also decide if you want to have a hunt open for
29 them -- proposed hunt -- a proposal.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
32 Brooke.

33
34 Pippa.

35
36 MS. KENNER: Yeah, and then the other
37 way to do it is to put a proposal in for -- in State
38 regulations that would apply on all lands.

39
40 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

43
44 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 Through the Chair. My motion on the floor was for --
46 I'm sorry my brain just went blank -- my motion on the
47 floor was to create a customary and traditional use for
48 muskox so that we can create regulations or do
49 proposals -- or, sorry -- create regulations in regards
50

0230

1 to the ability for Federally-qualified subsistence
2 users to hunt muskox on the land. I am support of this
3 to create the customary and traditional aspect. And
4 then after that's done, later down the road, after we
5 get the information and data that OSM collects, then we
6 can decide on how we would like to see that distributed
7 as subsistence harvest.

8
9 I think we're getting too far ahead of
10 the actual project itself.

11
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
15 Alissa, for that -- I know it's been a motion and
16 seconded, we had a lengthy discussion on it already. I
17 think, like you mentioned, that C&T needs to be
18 established in order for us to consider, you know, even
19 for future hunts.

20
21 Brooke, go ahead.

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Just a point of
24 clarification for the intent of this motion, would it
25 be for all residents of Unit 18?

26
27 MS. ROGERS: Yes.

28
29 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If there's no other
32 further discussion on this, is there a call for the
33 question.

34
35 MS. ROGERS: Question.

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, question's been
38 called. All those in favor signify by -- by creating a
39 C&T for muskox for Unit 18 signify by saying aye.

40
41 IN UNISON: Aye.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those that oppose
44 signify by saying nay.

45
46 (No opposing votes)

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
49 carries. Thank you.

50

0231

1 Is there any more proposals that you'd
2 like to consider at this time.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

7
8 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 I'll just bring us back to our annual report quickly,
10 because we do need a motion for the annual report. So
11 we have the annual report as written, with the topics
12 as written, we've decided to write additional letters
13 to go along with our annual report and then there were
14 two additional topics that will be added to the annual
15 report, one is about the stipend and the second is
16 about muskox. So the Council could entertain a motion
17 to approve the annual report with those two additions
18 if you would like to wrap up this agenda item.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke.

23
24 Richard, go ahead.

25
26 MR. SLATS: Just to clarify and make
27 sure that I'm on the same page, is that we're going to
28 write to letters to the Secretary, one for our
29 honorarium or stipends, and the second letter was going
30 to be for the Area M?

31
32 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Yes,
33 that's correct, Richard.

34
35 MR. SLATS: Yeah, thank you. Now, is
36 this going to make it a third letter if we write a
37 letter on muskox?

38
39 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Just
40 to clarify. No, Richard, we're not going to write a
41 letter.

42
43 MR. SLATS: Oh, okay.

44
45 MS. MCDAVID: We're just going to -- so
46 in your books on Page -- starting on Page 88 is your
47 annual report.

48
49 MR. SLATS: Okay.

50

0232

1 MS. MCDAVID: And we are just intending
2 to add an additional paragraph to that report that.....

3
4 MR. SLATS: Okay.

5
6 MS. MCDAVID:includes muskox.
7 Thanks.

8
9 MR. SLATS: Okay.

10
11 MS. MCDAVID: But we do need to approve
12 the annual report with the additions.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Is there a
15 motion on the floor to include the two in our annual
16 report, at this time.

17
18 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Henry, go ahead.

21
22 MR. PARKS: For the record, Henry
23 Parks. I move to accept our annual report with two
24 additional letters.

25
26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
27 on the floor by Henry Parks from Nunapitchuk to include
28 two letters in our annual report, do I hear a second.

29
30 MR. ALEXIE: I'll second.....

31
32 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.

33
34 MR. ALEXIE:this is Wassilly.

35
36 MS. ROGERS: Second.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by Wassilly.

39 All of those in favor signify by saying aye.

40
41 IN UNISON: Aye.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those opposed signify
44 by saying nay.

45
46 (No opposing votes)

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
49 carries. Thank you. Let's go ahead and take a 10
50

0233

1 minute break before we move on to the next agenda item.

2

3 (Off record)

4

5 (On record)

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We are back in order

8 again. On the list we have Fisheries Resource

9 Monitoring Program update. Pippa Kenner.

10

11 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
12 members of the Council. Are we ready for fun, okay,
13 this is a good topic. My name is Pippa Kenner and I am
14 an Anthropologist at the Office of Subsistence
15 Management in Anchorage. And joining me on the
16 teleconference is Fisheries Biologist Kevin Foley with
17 OSM. Hi, Kevin, are you there?

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MS. KENNER: He must be on the -- he
22 will be in a minute.

23

24 We plan to provide an update on two
25 fisheries program topics, including the Fisheries
26 Resource Monitoring Program and the Partners for
27 Fisheries Monitoring. These will be brief updates and
28 none are action items.

29

30 (Teleconference interference -
31 participants not muted)

32

33 MS. KENNER: First up is the Fisheries
34 Resource Monitoring Program. What is it.

35

36 The mission of the Monitoring Program
37 is to identify and provide information needed to
38 sustain subsistence fisheries in Federal public lands.
39 The Monitoring Program also supports meaningful
40 involvement in fisheries management by Alaska Native
41 and rural organizations and promotes collaboration
42 among State, Federal, Alaska Native and local
43 organizations. These funding opportunities seek
44 applicants for projects that address priority
45 information needs that were developed by this Council
46 at the fall meeting.

47

48 For the 2024 funding cycle it is
49 anticipated that approximately 2.25 million dollars

50

0234

1 will be available for the first year of new projects.
2 The call for proposals closed in February and
3 applications for funding will be reviewed by Technical
4 Review Committee, that's what we're getting ready to do
5 now, and summaries of project proposals submitted for
6 your region will be presented to you at your next
7 meeting for your input on who we should fund.

8
9 If there are any questions we're happy
10 to address them now.

11
12 That's the end of my presentation for
13 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Pippa,
16 for that update. Do we have any questions or comments
17 for Pippa at this time in regards to the Fisheries
18 Resource Monitoring Program.

19
20 MS. KENNER: I -- I just got a
21 question, there is no presentation in your materials
22 for this update.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
25 questions or comments for Pippa at this time.

26
27 Jackie, go ahead.

28
29 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyanana. Through the
30 Chair. Hi Pippa I had a -- well, we've always actually
31 wondered, in Quinhagak, in our bay, if we could have a
32 monitoring program there as well and I know it's not in
33 Federal waters, but can you think of an avenue of how
34 our subsistence fishery can be included in a monitoring
35 program through the Department of Interior?

36
37 MS. KENNER: Thank you very much for
38 the question. Through the Chair. This is Pippa Kenner
39 with OSM. The first thing we could do is next year,
40 when we're developing our priority information needs,
41 we might want to discuss the need for fish monitoring
42 in the Kanektok River, and then when the call goes out
43 for proposals, what we could do is work with you and
44 develop a proposal to have some kind of monitoring in
45 the river for salmon passage. I'm sorry we missed that
46 this go around, so we can start working on it now.
47 Yes, as far as eligibility, the Federal nexus with the
48 Kanektok River is clear, it's within the Refuge, it's
49 Federal public waters and we care about those
50

0235

1 subsistence users. Yeah.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does that answer your
4 question, Jackie.

5

6 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes, thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Do we
9 have any more questions or comments for Pippa at this
10 time.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, we could
15 go ahead and move on to the next item.

16

17 MS. KENNER: I have one more thing to
18 present, Mr. Chair.....

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, sorry. Oh, sorry.

21

22 MS. KENNER:I'm sorry for
23 interrupting you.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Pippa.

26

27 MS. KENNER: Okay. Next up is an
28 update on our Partners for Fisheries Monitoring
29 Program.

30

31 This winter the Office of Subsistence
32 Management sought proposals for this program to
33 strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in
34 Federal subsistence management. The Partners Program
35 funds salaries for biologists and social scientists or
36 education positions in Alaska Native and rural non-
37 profit organizations with the intent of increasing the
38 organizations ability to participate in Federal
39 Subsistence Management. The Program also supports a
40 variety of opportunities for local and rural students
41 to connect with subsistence resource monitoring and
42 management through science camps and paid internships.
43 For this funding cycle it is anticipated.....

44

45 (Teleconference interference -
46 participants not muted)

47

48 MS. KENNER:\$1 million will be
49 available yearly. There are 15 proposals received

50

0236

1 during this cycle and the review panel met in mid-
2 February to determine which applicants would be funded,
3 and more information about that will be provided in the
4 near future through a release from OSM basically
5 telling you what organizations were funded.

6
7 Karen Hyer, with OSM, is the point
8 person in our office for this program.

9
10 There are seven partners currently
11 funded through the end of 2023. I'd like to tell you
12 what they are, particularly, locally there's the Native
13 Village of Napaimute, the Orutsararmiut Native Council,
14 or ONC, so locally those are the two groups that
15 received funding through this program, very
16 successfully.

17
18 I'd like to stop now because we have
19 presentations from these two partners and I'll leave it
20 up to Brooke to direct me, or us.

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Brooke.

23
24 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 And thank you, Pippa. First we do have an open mic on
26 the teleconference, if everyone could please check
27 their phones, press your mute button or star, six,
28 because we are about to have another presenter here in
29 the room. And, Mr. Chair, for the Council's
30 information, Dan Gillikin with Native Village of
31 Napaimute, he does have a presentation for us but he's
32 currently in another meeting so at this time I'd like
33 to invite Delen Hooper up to give her report and she
34 does have slides. I'll be showing those on the wall
35 behind us but they're also in your book -- or
36 supplemental materials in Tab 3.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Delen, you
39 have the floor.

40
41 MS. HOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
42 name is Delen Hooper and I am the Partners Program
43 Coordinator at ONC. This is my first year in this
44 position after working with ONC as a fisheries
45 technician. And I will now begin this presentation.

46
47 I will go over what I will present to
48 you all today. We have the 2023 summer projects, the
49 summer 2022 in-season crew, the ASL data results, post-
50

0237

1 season subsistence harvest survey project, Kusko Neqa,
2 and the updates on the NR Staff.

3

4 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry to interrupt,
5 Delen. If you could just maybe say like next slide
6 when you want us to advance the slides.

7

8 MS. HOOPER: Sorry.

9

10 MS. MCDAVID: That's okay.

11

12 MS. HOOPER: I'm on Slide 3 now.

13

14 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you.

15

16 MS. HOOPER: I will now talk about the
17 in-season projects that we will participate in this
18 summer. We will be conducting harvest surveys down at
19 the boat harbor and down at the fish camps. Chinook
20 salmon ASL and otolith sampling, distributing fish to
21 the elders, the disabled and the sick, cross-training
22 internship opportunities and the sonar project.

23

24 And sorry I was still on that slide.

25

26 MS. MCDAVID: Sorry.

27

28 MS. HOOPER: For science and cultural
29 camp. We are hoping to have roughly 15 students and
30 the camp dates are from July 11th to the 20th.
31 Attending this camp the students will earn two college
32 credits and the youth peer mentors are also eligible to
33 earn those credits if they attend the classes and do
34 some of the work the students will also be doing. We
35 also have job opportunities for this camp, which
36 include the YPM, which is the youth peer mentors, the
37 overnight monitors and the dorm coordinator and mentor.
38 During science and culture camp the students will do
39 many interesting activities like going to the ONC fish
40 camp and learning things like ethnobotany and skeleton
41 articulation. We are currently still reaching out to
42 ADF&G and to Cary (Indiscernible) about the Kwethluk
43 weir and jarring and canning.

44

45 You can go to the next slide.

46

47 And here is the 2022 in-season crew.

48

49 Danielle Lowrey, Avery Hoffman, myself,

50

0238

1 Taj Tony and Jamin Crow. We want to give a big thanks
2 to them for all the hard work that they did last
3 season.

4
5 And you can go to the next slide.

6
7 And this is the 2022 subsistence
8 results of the ASL sampling program. The majority of
9 chinook sampled was aged four to five. Age 4 being 58
10 percent and Age 5 being 35 percent. 16 percent of the
11 chinook sampled were female and the average length was
12 621 millimeters. Overall, the subsistence harvest of
13 chinook salmon in 2022 was mostly comprised of young,
14 small male fish. This was, in part, due to the
15 widespread of -- widespread use of 6 inch mesh gear
16 instead of the 8 inch gear that was used in the past.
17 ASL data is important for monitoring trends and
18 patterns and escapement quality and to evaluate
19 population health.

20
21 Thank you for helping us contribute --
22 thank you for helping us continue this valuable data
23 set.

24
25 And you can go to the next slide.

26
27 The fisheries technician -- this is the
28 2022 otolith sampling. The fisheries technicians will
29 take out two ear stones from the chinook salmon, both
30 ADF&G and the University of Washington are able to make
31 this project happen and for that we thank them. In
32 2022 390 chinook salmon were sampled.

33
34 And you can go to the next slide.

35
36 In 2022 we delivered -- we distributed
37 579 fish from May 29 to June 30. And that is pretty
38 low compared to the other seasons.

39
40 You can go to the next slide.

41
42 And this is the post-season subsistence
43 harvest survey project. The goal of 350 Bethel surveys
44 met and 369 were completed by ONC techs. The 2022
45 season summary will be available soon.

46
47 And you can go to the next slide.

48
49 (Pause)

50

0239

1 MS. MCDAVID: One moment, we're having
2 technical difficulties. Thank you.

3
4 (Pause)

5
6 MS. MCDAVID: We're having an issue
7 with the computer that doesn't seem to be an easy fix.
8 I guess I would suggest to continue following along
9 with the handout that's printed out and you could
10 continue Delen, and I can get copies for Council
11 members that don't have it in front of them. Thanks,
12 and sorry about that.

13
14 MS. HOOPER: Thank you, Brooke.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You could go ahead and
17 continue.

18
19 MS. HOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
20 will now talk about Kusko Nega. It is a BIA tribal
21 climate resilience grant funded project. This process
22 intends to bring people from the river and agencies,
23 intertribal groups and others connected to the
24 Kuskokwim to discuss the values we hold for the
25 Kuskokwim River, differing management strategies and
26 the trade offs under different scenarios, ultimately to
27 protect and ensure sustainable healthy salmon
28 populations far into the future. We held our first in-
29 person community meeting in November of 2022 and intend
30 on having another meeting this spring or fall of 2023.
31 This project is carried on in collaboration with Alaska
32 Department of Fish and Game, the Yukon Delta National
33 Wildlife Refuge, AVCP, Association of Village Council
34 Presidents, OSM, the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
35 Commission, University of Washington and the University
36 of Alaska-Fairbanks.

37
38 And I will now give you an update on
39 the NR Staff. Mary Matthias, Interim Natural Resources
40 Director and Environmental Program Coordinator. Kylie
41 Ford, NALEMP Project Manager and Tribal Liaison. And
42 new additions to our team, Nia Long, Natural Resources
43 Technician, and myself, Partners for Fisheries
44 Monitoring Program Coordinator, and Janessa Esquible,
45 Contractor, Student Researcher.

46
47 And we are also hiring for the
48 positions of NALEMP manager and coordinator, a Partners
49 biologist, tribal advocate and communications position,
50

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1 environmental program coordinator, and we would really
2 appreciate if you could share these within your
3 agencies -- or within your networks -- sorry.

4

5 And last, but not least, we would like
6 to say thanks to the Office of Subsistence Management,
7 our project partners and community members to continue
8 to engage in our projects of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

9

10 And that is all that I have for you
11 today.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Delen, for
14 your presentation. Do we have any questions or
15 comments for her at this time from the Council.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Keep up the good work.
20 It sounds like you're doing lots over the summer.
21 Maybe my question is who does your fishing for you, is
22 it the in-season crew that's distributing the fish or
23 doing studies for what you're doing, does the crew do
24 the fishing for you?

25

26 MS. HOOPER: Bethel Test Fish does the
27 fishing for us.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.

30

31 MS. HOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If there's no other
34 questions thank you for your presentation. Very
35 interesting. Keep up the good work.

36

37 MS. HOOPER: Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Like Brooke said we'll
40 take up the Native Village of Napaimute in the morning.
41 Next on the agenda is the regulatory cycle update,
42 Pippa go ahead -- I mean Brooke go ahead.

43

44 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. We're going
45 to go ahead and cross of the regulatory cycle update
46 since we gave an update on the Federal Subsistence
47 Board actions, that pretty much covered that update
48 earlier in the meeting.

49

50

0241

1 If I could make a suggestion. We do
2 have Michael Cameron here from NOAA to give a
3 presentation on the marine mammals research he's
4 involved in. Perhaps we could -- and he does need to
5 present today so perhaps we could invite him to come
6 next.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. And we
9 could go ahead and call on Mike Cameron from NOAA
10 Fisheries to give us an update on marine mammal. Mr.
11 Cameron, you have the mic.

12
13 MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
14 I also have a presentation that's up on the screen
15 behind you. My name is Michael Cameron. I'd like to
16 thank the Council for the opportunity to talk today
17 about our program of research. I know that these
18 Regional Advisory Councils don't always include marine
19 mammals, but the Alaska Native Ice Seal Committee
20 recommended that we come here to give a presentation.

21
22 One thing to be aware of is that when I
23 use the term, subsistence, I'm referring specifically
24 to Alaska Native subsistence hunting and use of marine
25 mammals. The Polar Ecosystem's Program or PEP is part
26 of NOAA Fisheries Marine Mammal Lab in Seattle,
27 Washington. Some of you might know the name Peter
28 Boving, he was the leader of the Polar Ecosystem's
29 program for many years. He's stepped down -- still
30 with the program but stepped down and I've taken over
31 those duties now.

32
33 Next slide.

34
35 Just a little bit about myself. I've
36 been with the Polar Ecosystem Program for about two
37 decades. I have a lot of experience monitoring seals
38 in polar environments, mostly Antarctica and Alaska and
39 I have a lot of time working in co-management. I
40 wanted to just show my family here, this is my wife
41 Colen, born in Texas, moved to Seattle when we got
42 married. My son is Colin, he was given the Inupiaq
43 name Anugi by John Goodwin in Kotzebue, and my
44 daughter, Kate, who was also given the Inupiaq name
45 Silakutaq by Billie Adams in Utqiagvik. I bring this
46 up just to show that I've had a lot of experience
47 working with Alaska Native groups and communities and
48 we have a lot of shared interests and values and have a
49 long history of cooperating and working with one
50

0242

1 another.

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Next slide.

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Next slide.

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Next slide.

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So as I mentioned, NOAA has a co-management agreement with the Alaska Native Ice Seal Committee. The Ice Seal Committee is comprised of five regions take ice associated seals for subsistence purposes. At these meetings there are two representatives from each of the five regions, usually it's an administrative or management focused representative and then also an Alaska Native seal hunting representative to provide a biological perspective. From the YK Delta region the two representatives are Jennifer Hooper and Albert Simon. There's also a working group, that includes the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, University of Alaska at

0243

1 Fairbanks and other institutions, and together we
2 develop what's called an Alaska Ice Seal Research Plan.
3 The most recent one is online at the website above
4 created for the year 2023. This is basically a joint
5 document that the Ice Seal Committee and NOAA and all
6 of the other partners come together to identify
7 important research that should happen and allows us to
8 help prioritize it and search for money, frankly. All
9 of the research I'll be discussing was research that
10 was developed as part of this Alaska Ice Seal Research
11 Initiative.

12

13 Next slide.

14

15 So the work that we do at the Alaska
16 Fisheries Science Center Polar Ecosystem Program is
17 primarily then to monitor and study bearded, ringed,
18 ribbon, spotted and harbor seals in Alaska to support
19 scientific management and co-management with Alaska
20 Native groups. We do this mostly in two ways. One is
21 by conducting aerial surveys. We've been doing those
22 since the 1990s, I'll talk a little bit about that.
23 And also we have a very long time series of working
24 with villages and working out of ships at sea to
25 capture animals, sample and tag them and release them
26 and I'll talk about that as well.

27

28 We also have a significant part of our
29 program that specializes in the development of new
30 models for analyzing the data.

31

32 Next slide.

33

34 So overall, we want to understand how
35 many seals are in the population, what their seasonal
36 movements are, how healthy they are and how they're
37 responding to habitat changes.

38

39 Next slide.

40

41 Often what that means is we're able to
42 get access to these seals using the NOAA Ship Oscar
43 Dyson. We go to the southern edge of the Bering Sea
44 pack ice in the spring. Early on we would conduct this
45 work in May and June but more recently we've been doing
46 the work in April so that we could conduct some of our
47 studies on mother pup pairs at a crucial time of their
48 life history. In general, we do these surveys every
49 other year now in even years. We had to skip 2020 for
50

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1 Covid but we will be back in the Bering Sea again in
2 April of 2024, next year.

3
4 So as I mentioned we bring the Oscar
5 Dyson up to the ice edge, at that point we launch a
6 number of small inflatable boats, we quietly move
7 through the pack ice silently, communicating with
8 radios that are in our ears and as we identify a seal
9 on a flow that we think we can capture, we encircle it
10 and all collectively come in at the same time towards
11 the flow, hopefully the animal's still sleeping, we can
12 jump out on to the flow and capture it in what's
13 essentially a salmon landing net, which you can see
14 here.

15
16 Where we do this work, we're mostly
17 capturing ribbon and spotted seals, although we do have
18 the opportunity to capture the occasionally ringed seal
19 or small bearded seal.

20
21 Next slide.

22
23 So once an animal is captured we'll
24 instrument it with a satellite link tag. These are
25 bits of -- these are electronic equipments that are
26 affixed to the animal that provide information on the
27 animal's movement, also on its diving behavior or
28 foraging behavior. Those two together give us a lot of
29 information that we use to study about the habitat use.
30 How these different seals are using the habitat. These
31 tags also have a sensor that records when the tag
32 itself is dry, in order for that to happen the animal
33 has to be hauled out on top of the sea ice.
34 Information on haul out or when the timing of when an
35 animal goes -- hauls on to the ice and goes back into
36 the water varies with time of day, species, age class
37 and day of year. All that information is very useful
38 for us in our aerial surveys, which we'll talk about in
39 a minute. Our aerial surveys can only count the
40 animals that are hauled out on top of the ice so we
41 need to correct for the proportion of the population
42 that's present when we're surveying but we can't see
43 them because they're under water, and these tags give
44 us that information.

45
46 We also effectively give them a full
47 physical. We have a veterinarian that comes out with
48 us on our trips who provides a full physical collecting
49 information on the seal's health and condition, blood
50

0245

1 work, testing for contaminants and a host of other
2 issues, potential issues. These information can go
3 into helping us to understand some of the recent
4 impacts of the unusual mortality events that have
5 occurred and also to help us to identify stock
6 structure. Lately we've been putting in an increased
7 effort on understanding body condition, or how healthy
8 the population is.

9

10 Go to the next slide.

11

12 This is just a map of where we normally
13 conduct our work, in this black circle, usually it's to
14 the west of St. Matthews, so in general far away from
15 communities and so very unlikely to be impacting any of
16 the hunting. We tend to do it out this far west mostly
17 because we get higher concentrations of ribbon seals
18 when we go west. Spotted seals tend to be evenly
19 distributed all along the southern edge of the Bering
20 Sea ice but there tend to be more ribbon seals the
21 closer to the center of the Bering Sea you get and so
22 this is why we choose this location.

23

24 You can see these pink zones that are
25 kind of around all of the Coastal areas. I'll talk
26 about that in a minute, but those are buffer zones
27 where we have agreements based on long discussions with
28 the Ice Seal Committee and other groups that our large
29 ship will never be entering in while we're conducting
30 our work in April. Again, our primary goal is to not
31 cause disturbance.

32

33 Next slide.

34

35 The Ice Seal Committee recommended that
36 we enhance our work by including an Alaska Native seal
37 hunter on all of our future expeditions on the Oscar
38 Dyson. We were very excited about this. And in 2019
39 we agreed that the -- the Ice Seal Committee agreed
40 that we should be working with Kawerak up in the Bering
41 Strait region to help identify somebody for this first
42 project. Unfortunately Covid meant that we had to
43 postpone that work until 2022 when Kawarek selected
44 Austin Ahmasuk here. For us, this was an amazing way
45 to share information and work together on species that
46 we both care about and to help understand these animals
47 in many different ways. It was a learning experience
48 and something that we wish to continue. For me, the
49 best part was just the dinner table at night when we

50

0246

1 were talking about all of the things that we saw and
2 learning about how all the different people kind of
3 interpreted what we saw under different lenses, and for
4 me it was a real eye opener. We will be continuing
5 this work again, partnering with a community in 2024.
6 We will be letting the Ice Seal Committee identify the
7 region that we'll be working with in 2024 but if you're
8 interested or know of someone who might be interested
9 in participating on this cruise, away from your family
10 for a month in April, during prime hunting season,
11 still, we'd love to have you and it is a paid position.
12 So the best way to do that would be to contact Jennifer
13 Hooper and let them know that this is something you
14 might be interested in.

15

16 Next slide.

17

18 As I mentioned, we don't like to
19 disturb animals for lots of reasons, in particular, the
20 hunt, but also because like the hunters disturbing an
21 animal impacts our science. Our work requires stealth
22 and quiet and any disturbance would impact our ability
23 to capture the seal. The Oscar Dyson, itself, is
24 actually one of the most acoustically quiet ships on
25 the water because it was designed that way for
26 fisheries research, not wanting to be able to scare the
27 fish in the nets. The agreements that we've kind of --
28 the protocols we've kind of agreed upon with the Ice
29 Seal Committee are the ship will never go within 12
30 nautical miles of the Coast, and all of those named
31 locations there are villages where we know people hunt
32 for ice associated seals, we'll never go within 30
33 nautical miles of any of those villages. If we ever
34 see large congregations of walrus or whales or a single
35 hunter we'll move to another location. We also send
36 out emails daily from the ship before our work with a
37 map of where we are, our plan for the day and a way to
38 communicate with us if you have -- if you want to tell
39 us something, something like please don't go to that
40 location because I plan to be hunting that day.

41

42 If you are interested in being put on
43 that listserve, we already have 200 people on it,
44 please reach out to me, give me your email and I'll add
45 you to the listserve and whenever we're out we send
46 these emails out to everybody on that.

47

48 Next one.

49

50

0247

1 The next project that we work on are
2 the aerial surveys. Our goal with the aerial surveys
3 is to determine the abundance and distribution of seals
4 and we also add to polar data that's collected by the
5 Fish and Wildlife Service. Largely, these have been
6 international collaborations. Seals, as has already
7 been mentioned today, seals, like fish, don't care much
8 about political boundaries and so it doesn't make a
9 whole lot of sense for only the United States to be
10 serving, so when we conduct these surveys we have our
11 colleagues in Russia conducting identical surveys using
12 the same methodology at the same time of day in the
13 same months. As such, with this cooperative effort
14 that we have with our Russian colleagues we're able to
15 analyze the data together to get a much more useful
16 understanding of these seal populations in the Bering
17 and in the Chukchi Sea. We had hoped to continue that
18 with our work in the Beaufort Sea but Covid, again,
19 prevented us from having those sort of cooperative
20 relationships with Canada, we hope to be able to
21 continue that later.

22
23 A lot of this work, of course, requires
24 communication, not just with our scientific partners
25 but with all of the other Alaska Native tribal
26 organizations and communities that are listed up there.
27 All of our work, both scientifically and for the impact
28 of disturbance gets discussed and one reason I'm here
29 today is to just learn if there's any other ideas or
30 concepts that folks here think that we should be
31 incorporating in our research.

32
33 We do plan to be conducting this work
34 again in the Bering Sea in 2024 and in the Chukchi Sea
35 in 2026, and hopefully in the Beaufort in 2028. So
36 next April will be a busy year for us in the Bering Sea
37 and near your communities.

38
39 Next slide.

40
41 In the past our surveys were done by
42 essentially having a person look out the window and
43 either count what they saw or using a hand held camera
44 take pictures of what they saw. We've learned that
45 that was inefficient. We now have a camera suite, a
46 sensor package in the belly port, it's combination of
47 color cameras, thermal infrared cameras and also ultra
48 violet cameras and I'll explain that a little bit
49 later.
50

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1 The thermal cameras essentially allow
2 us to identify a hot spot on the ice, which is usually
3 a seal, we then look at the corresponding color camera
4 to help us identify that hot spot to species, or even
5 sex or age in some cases. The ultra violet camera is
6 useful in helping us to identify polar bears.

7
8 We fly between 1,000 and 1,200 feet so
9 high enough to have little disturbance on whales or
10 seals below and we fly at about 120 knots.

11
12 Next slide.

13
14 So this is just a quick example of the
15 sorts of imagery that we'll get back. On the left is
16 thermal imagery with two hot spots, little bright white
17 spots that I've circled in yellow. We then look at the
18 color paired image on the right hand side and can see
19 that those two hot spots were, in fact, bearded seals.

20
21 Next slide.

22
23 I'm not going to be going through these
24 next few slides in great detail. You have them in your
25 packets, you have the numbers that are listed there on
26 the side, but these are some of the model results of
27 our population estimates. My main purpose for this
28 slide, though, is to explain that we took -- we took
29 time into account in these surveys, and by that we
30 can't conduct an entire survey of the Bering or the
31 Chukchi Sea in a single day or even in a single week,
32 it takes multiple weeks to do this and during that
33 time, especially because we're doing it in April and
34 May the sea ice field itself is changing, so we need to
35 take account of the sea ice as it is melting during the
36 course of our survey. And this just shows you how some
37 of those changes can occur from month to month -- or
38 excuse me, from week to week.

39
40 Next slide.

41
42 This is, again, sort of the same thing,
43 just showing you the actual population estimates we
44 have. These right here are just of the eastern Bering
45 Sea, or the U.S. side that I'm showing you. The next
46 slide I'll give you the Russian side. The interesting
47 thing here is that -- from these distributions from
48 these heat maps, or color coded maps here you can see
49 how the seals are distributing themselves differently
50

0249

1 among the pack ice. Spotted seals, as I mentioned at
2 the bottom tend to be more or less evenly distributed
3 at the southern most edge of the sea ice. Bearded
4 seals farther north. Ribbon seals farther to the west.
5 And ringed seals also farther north. So from this we
6 can start to see these real habitat differences showing
7 up in these surveys.

8

9 Next slide.

10

11 I'm not going to go over this but feel
12 free to take a look at it if you'd like. This is just
13 the total combination of all of the U.S. and Russia
14 abundance estimates and all of the papers -- the
15 research papers that all these numbers came from.

16

17 And last slide.

18

19 So this slide right here was just to
20 let you all know that we are planning to conduct this
21 work, these aerial surveys again in 2024. As opposed
22 to previous surveys in 2012 and 2013 of the Bering
23 where it took us five to seven weeks to complete this
24 survey with two aircraft, we now have a much faster
25 aircraft and much better cameras so we can now conduct
26 this work with just one aircraft over a three week
27 period. The advantages are great. For one the camera
28 quality itself is better so we'll have a better
29 opportunity to identify seals to species and measure
30 them but also with being able to fly faster, slightly
31 higher we're having less impact, or less potential
32 impact on disturbance. Also by being able to shorten
33 our survey window we're able to minimize the impacts
34 that I mentioned earlier of melting sea ice during the
35 period of the survey. These tracks that you're seeing
36 here are just kind of our best case scenario if we --
37 if there was never any weather in the Bering Sea this
38 is what we would do, obviously our final tracks won't
39 end up looking like this. But in the same way that we
40 had daily communications on the vessel work, we'll be
41 communicating daily letting everybody know where we
42 plan to work and what airports we'll be operating out
43 of. Bethel is one of our primary airports, as you can
44 see here, with a number of flights scheduled to be
45 based out of Bethel. It's also one of our primary
46 secondary airports. So you'll be seeing a lot of us in
47 April of 2024.

48

49 We're very excited to be able to

50

0250

1 conduct this work and I'd like to thank you for being
2 able to let me present today.

3
4 Oh, that reminds me, I forgot one more
5 thing.

6
7 In the same way that we'll be having an
8 Alaska Native participant aboard the vessel work we
9 plan to have one or more Alaska Native subsistence
10 hunter per -- participants aboard these aerial surveys
11 as well. We're unsure right now if we're going to be
12 having a different person from multiple communities
13 throughout the surveys or if we'll just be having one
14 person joining us on the entire month long survey.
15 We'll come back to that a little later.

16
17 But, again, thank you for the time and
18 if there's any questions I'd like to take some.

19
20
21 (No comments)

22
23 MR. CAMERON: Okay, well, thank you
24 very much.

25
26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Mike,
27 for that marine mammal update. Very good presentation.
28 It's good to know what's going on out at the Bering Sea
29 as far as the sea mammals. Do we have any questions or
30 comments for Mike at this time.

31
32 Jackie, go ahead.

33
34 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, then Alissa.

37
38 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana. Through the
39 Chair. Thank you so much for presenting today. I feel
40 like a lot of the questions I wrote down later came up
41 like about the ribbon seal and if there's an increase
42 in the population, so it's good to see that there's an
43 increase there.

44
45 My other, I guess it's a question. So
46 in my area one observation with seals and climate
47 change and maybe the warming of the ocean is our seals
48 are moving away from the Coast and I'm sure that's
49 happening everywhere, we are having to travel a lot
50

0251

1 further out than we used to further risking our lives.
2 And the other issue we're noticing is from hunters
3 reporting that because of so much fresh water melt in
4 our river system -- water sheds melting out into the
5 ocean, the bouncy of the seals are not the same and
6 they tend to sink faster because there's more fresh
7 water. Are you hearing that from across the Coast
8 here?

9
10 MR. CAMERON: Yes, and no, and I'll
11 explain that. I'll say that in my experience at these
12 Ice Seal Committee meetings, one of my favorite parts
13 is each region gives a report on what life has been
14 like over the last year and hunting seals. And it's
15 become clear for the last few years that folks in the
16 more southern part of the state are experiencing issues
17 much more severe than the folks in the northern part of
18 the state and you might expect that because these are
19 probably in many ways related to changing sea ice,
20 which is probably related to warming water and that's
21 going to be impacting folks in the south before it
22 impacts folks in the north. But what you mentioned
23 about changes in distribution, potentially changes in
24 body condition, health of the animals are things that
25 are being witnessed, we did a study from 2007 to 2018
26 and we were able to document that there was a -- we
27 were able to provide evidence that there was a change
28 in the body conditions of these animals, especially
29 ribbon seals but pups of all age classes were, over
30 time, getting thinner and thinner when they were being
31 weaned which can't be a good thing.

32
33 (Teleconference interference -
34 participants not muted)

35
36 MR. CAMERON: Those observations,
37 though, aren't really being seen in the farther north
38 for the reasons that I mentioned, at least not yet. I
39 had heard once before about the freshening of the water
40 impacting the buoyancy, obviously the fatness of the
41 seal would also be impacting buoyancy -- it's a good
42 rep -- I had forgotten about the freshness, though, of
43 the water until you mentioned that so thank you.
44 That's something that we can also be looking at --
45 asking more about at these Ice Seal Committee meetings.

46
47 It occurred to me that I should have
48 also mentioned one other thing and I guess I didn't
49 have a slide for it. The bearded and the ringed seal
50

0252

1 in Alaska waters have been listed as threatened under
2 the Endangered Species Act. It was a decision that was
3 based off of the prediction that the decreasing sea ice
4 would be impacting the population. What that means is
5 that right now their populations are high, their
6 populations are large. A listing of threatened means
7 that they could become endangered later so it's sort of
8 like waving a flag and making sure we start paying
9 attention to these. There's no restriction on Alaska
10 Native hunting of any ice associated seal including the
11 ringed seal and the bearded seal even though they are
12 listed. There's no restriction on hunting.

13
14 And I think there was a caller online.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Yeah, Alissa,
17 you were next, go ahead.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, are you there?

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Maybe we could circle
26 back to her if she's not on. Is there any other
27 Council members who has any questions or comments for
28 Mike at this time.

29
30 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chairman.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Henry, go ahead.

33
34 MR. PARKS: For the record, Henry
35 Parks. I have two questions. Now, you present -- on
36 your presentation you guys are studying all kinds of
37 seals down there at the Bering Sea so what's their main
38 source of food? That might not be a good question but
39 I'm just asking, what's the main source of food?

40
41 And then when the ice sea goes out down
42 there at the Coast, where do they migrate?

43
44 MR. CAMERON: Those are great
45 questions. They're also -- every species is different
46 in many ways. So the food that they eat is often
47 species dependent. Bearded seals tend to prioritize
48 benthic creatures, so clams, scallops, shrimp on the
49 bottom. They don't spend as much time foraging in the
50

0253

1 mid-water zone. Spotted seals and ringed seals, they
2 will be foraging in the mid-water zones so they'll be
3 going after cod, saffron cod, Arctic cod, things like
4 that. Ribbon seals are known to be deep divers, at
5 least during the time after when they leave the sea ice
6 so a lot of squid and octopus are found as part of
7 their diet as long a lot of fish -- all these animals
8 are generally predators meaning that they're not going
9 to eat something if it's right in front of them but
10 it's where they tend to forage which is where they find
11 most of their food.

12

13 Your second question was where they go
14 after the sea ice leaves.

15

16 Different animals do different things.
17 For the most part, these animals tend to follow the
18 receding sea ice edge through summer, through the
19 Bering Strait and into the Chukchi Sea. That's
20 certainly true for ringed and bearded, some spotted and
21 ribbons will do that. Ribbon seals are less likely to
22 follow that pattern as religiously. Ribbon seals, we
23 know, can go much farther north than any of these seals
24 in a single migration but they can also go as far south
25 as Washington State or even northern Oregon, so there's
26 a lot more movement of these ribbon seals. Usually
27 they tend to be younger animals, just kind of curious
28 teenagers, not really sure where to go but they will
29 take these much longer migrations in a single season.

30

31 MR. PARKS: Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Any more
34 questions or comments for Mike at this time.

35

36 Richard.

37

38 MR. SLATS: Yes, the question that
39 Henry had asked about the diet for the different types
40 of seals and when there is low number of returns on our
41 salmon and the type of fish, I wonder, you know, like
42 if they're having a hard time because there's no fish
43 out there. But a quick question is, what was the third
44 village on Gambell, there was Gambell, Savoonga?

45

46 MR. CAMERON: That was a known hunting
47 camp for walrus.

48

49 MR. SLATS: Oh, hunting camp.

50

0254

1 MR. CAMERON: I'm not sure what the
2 name of it was.....

3
4 MR. SLATS: Okay. Okay, thank you.

5
6 MR. CAMERON:but it was just a
7 camp that they occupy at certain times of the year.

8
9 MR. SLATS: Okay. And there was a news
10 brief on high mortality event along the coast of
11 Russia, has anyone ever find out when there is an
12 unusually high number of sea mammals, I didn't catch
13 exactly what type of sea mammals. But in the past
14 there's been grey whales washing up along the coast of,
15 you know, our coast and seals that are -- I wonder if
16 those are what those numbers are and, if so, seals
17 that have been washing up if they're still continuing.
18 I know they would have to be continuing with the -- but
19 if there's an increase in numbers or any of those
20 things. Those were my questions.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 MR. CAMERON: Yeah, thank you. That's
25 a really important question. In my talk I mentioned,
26 really briefly, UME, or unusual mortality event. And
27 that is something that is sort of declared by NOAA when
28 the number of strandings gets to be particularly high
29 in a given year. And recently we've had two unusual
30 mortality events, almost back to back. The first was
31 from 2011 to 2016 and the second was from 2018 to 2022.
32 And what it means is that during these times there were
33 much higher numbers of marine mammals of nearly all
34 species that are washing up dead or sick on the beaches
35 and this was happening in both Russia, as you
36 mentioned, but also all along the Alaska Coast. When
37 something's declared a UME that allows the government
38 to put a little bit more money towards trying to
39 understand it. The first UME from 2011 to 2016, mostly
40 it was characterized by animals that were in addition
41 to not being well physically, they were bald and.....

42
43 (Teleconference interference -
44 participants not muted - children)

45
46 MR. CAMERON:they had sore spots
47 and lesions on their skin, and a lot of younger
48 animals.

49
50

0255

1 There's been a lot of work trying to
2 find out what the cause of that UME was and after years
3 of research it's inclusive. They've tested all of the
4 known pathogens, contaminants, there was a
5 consideration that maybe it was related to radiation
6 from Fukushima but there's never -- we've never had a
7 smoking gun on that one.

8

9 On the most recent UME from 2018 to
10 2022, that one was more closely tied to emaciated
11 animals that were under -- they were malnourished, that
12 were smaller, weaker, less fat, thinner, and from that
13 reason it give -- seems to be much more likely that
14 it's a bottom up forcing. Meaning there's something
15 going on in the whole ecosystem that's impacting it.

16

17 2018 and '19, as I'm sure you all
18 remember, was some of the lowest ice ever recorded in
19 April, and some of the hottest weather -- or excuse me,
20 warmest water ever recorded in April. So those things
21 combined suggest that a changing ecosystem from warming
22 water and reduction of sea ice probably impacted the
23 prey base which impacted these seals ability to feed in
24 exactly the way that you mentioned.

25

26 MR. SLATS: Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, are you still
29 online, do you have a question or comment for Mike, if
30 you're still on.

31

32 (Teleconference interference -
33 participants not muted - children)

34

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

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, James.

41

42 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, thank you. Thank
43 you, Michael. I'm glad -- I appreciate NOAA responded
44 when, I don't know how many years ago the Coastal
45 people were complaining about the seals, they were
46 finding seals that maybe were sick or whatever, but
47 they were ill and there were a lot of complaints in one
48 of the meetings and I appreciate NOAA responded and go
49 out and do research on the seals. There were a lot of

50

0256

1 concerns about -- because we thought it was -- I was
2 surprised that Mountain Village was on there and even
3 those kind of inland -- our young men go out to the
4 Bering Sea and hunt seals and whales.

5

6 I'm glad that NOAA responded and is
7 doing research on the seals.

8

9 Quyana.

10

11 MR. CAMERON: Thank you. I should also
12 mention that a lot of the work, especially the work
13 you're referring to which was part of the UME, was work
14 done from the North Slope Borough, the Alaska
15 Department of Fish and Game and the University of
16 Alaska-Fairbanks. It was really a huge cooperative
17 effort to go out to villages to collect samples from
18 harvested animals. That was critical in helping us to
19 do some of this testing. The work, then of the testing
20 was done by those organizations including NOAA, so
21 really it was a group effort that was allowed to happen
22 because of the cooperative relationships that we have
23 built up through the Ice Seal Committee.

24

25 MR. LANDLORD: Yeah, we call seal oil
26 (In Yup'ik) in our -- in everything. We have (In
27 Yup'ik).

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more questions or
30 comments from Mike at this time.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, are you still
35 there>

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I know you called in
40 earlier, do you have a question or comment for Mike at
41 this time.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Jackie.

46

47 MS. CLEVELAND: Just a quick question.
48 Going back to their diet and which species eat what and
49 where they go. I thought for sure I would hear
50

0257

1 herring.

2

3

MR. CAMERON: Uh-huh.

4

5

6

MS. CLEVELAND: Do none of the ice seals eat herring because I know fur seals do?

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

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29

MR. CAMERON: Yeah, not as -- at least not during the times of year that we're sampling or if they do it's prob -- there's not as prevalent in their stomachs to make it a primary food source. It is likely that it's more important later in the year when they're not around sea ice anymore, but at the time of year that we're sampling and we're collecting, and we're looking through the stomachs and doing this work they're not as prevalent in the diet. Certainly not as prevalent as fur seals, or steller sea lions, no.

30

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. My question is you mentioned there were two species of seals that are on the Endangered Species list, I know with their changing weather patterns and ecosystem there seems like there's a big domino effect with the resources that are affecting a lot of these, not only seals, but whales and walruses, knowing that there's two species of endangered seals, with the weather change, you know, fasttracking, is there any chance that we'll be seeing, you know, where hunting will be stopped?

MR. CAMERON: So first I'll just make sure that we recognize that we're making a distinction between Threatened and Endangered. So it's under the Endangered Species Act, but the listing is not that they're endangered, it's that they're threatened. So the short answer is, it's been repeated many times in -- I think maybe in the body of the Act, and certainly in other locations related to the Act, that there's no restriction on Alaska Native hunting, that there's no evidence that Alaska Native hunting, as it's been practiced, is negatively impacting the population so there's no expectation that -- right now that anyone will want to institute any kind of a quota system at all. There's been no discussion of that and anytime anybody even brings it up we want to make it very clear, please keep hunting. There's no restrictions. And no expectation for restrictions in the future.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you for saying that, acknowledging that the hunters do not

0258

1 contribute to any of the losses of the species that
2 they're hunting. I wish they'd say that the same for
3 salmon that we're experiencing today.

4

5 So if there's no other questions I
6 appreciate your presentation and updates on the sea
7 mammals.

8

9 Thank you, very much.

10

11 MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

12

13 (Pause)

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, Council, maybe
16 due to the shortness of time we could go ahead and move
17 down to future meeting dates, if you could consider our
18 fall 2023 meeting date and location, and also select
19 preferred winter 2024 All Council meeting dates, and
20 also to select fall 2024 meeting date and location.

21

22 Brooke, go ahead.

23

24 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
25 it's okay with you I'd like to guide the conversation
26 one meeting at a time.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay.

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: And first at your last
31 meeting you did select your meeting dates and locations
32 for fall 2023 and that's on the first calendar that I
33 just passed out to you. That was chosen as October
34 10th through October 12th and your preferred location
35 was to have the meeting in Anchorage with the back up
36 location of Bethel. Do you still want to do Anchorage
37 we'll try to get a venue reserved right away so we know
38 it doesn't book up and, yeah, I'll turn it over to you
39 if you want to confirm those dates and locations for
40 the fall meeting.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Council, what is your
43 recommendation.

44

45 (Pause)

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

48

49 MS. CLEVELAND: I think we should keep

50

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1 it the same if everybody else agrees. It's after moose
2 hunt -- well, maybe it's the last week of moose hunting
3 actually but we'll see. I know we choose dates based
4 on our subsistence lifestyle and also it's before AFN,
5 so I think I -- I still like it unless I was still
6 hunting that week.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, so noted. Anyone
9 else.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I think
14 we just need to confirm with the Council of those dates
15 and the place to have our fall meeting -- do we need
16 that in the form of a motion -- all right, hearing
17 none, I guess we could go ahead and keep the dates that
18 you selected last fall for October 10 and 11 and first
19 choice was in Anchorage with Bethel as an alternative
20 if things don't work out.

21

22 MR. ANDREW: 10, 11 and 12.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: 10, 11 and 12, correct.
25 Okay, so noted. Next is select preferred winter 2024
26 All Council meeting dates.

27

28 Brooke.

29

30 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
31 you all turn the page, the next meeting calendar is for
32 the winter 2024 meeting. So this one is a little bit
33 different. You heard me mention yesterday that OSM is
34 planning to have an All Council meeting next winter
35 during the month of March. So we will be bringing all
36 the members of all the RACs across the state to meet
37 together in Anchorage. This will give an opportunity
38 to work with other RACs that have similar concerns as
39 you and also learn more about the Federal Subsistence
40 Program. They are planning a four to five day meeting
41 so we are asking you to select a preferred time during
42 the month of March. And we're -- we will choose it
43 probably based on what the most RACs prefer.

44

45 There is a Board of Game meeting during
46 the month of March so I think we'll definitely trying
47 to avoid that. But one thing to note on here, you'll
48 notice that the Eastern Interior Council, they
49 requested that we meet across a weekend because it will
50

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1 -- people will have to take less time off work and
2 because certain Council members cannot travel on like a
3 Monday and -- or a Sunday -- they can't travel on the
4 weekend basically because of the flight schedules to
5 their communities, but that was the only other thing I
6 wanted to point out.

7

8 I'll turn it over to you all to select
9 a preferred week.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Is there any
14 recommendations coming from the Council.

15

16 (Teleconference interference -
17 participants not muted - children)

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, if there's no
22 recommendation coming from this Council, as you
23 mentioned, if there's a majority of the other RAC
24 Councils that want to meet and they're all in support
25 of those dates, I think we could go that route, would
26 be my recommendation.

27

28 Jackie, do you have any questions or
29 comments.

30

31 MS. CLEVELAND: Wait, what did he ask
32 -- oh, I like the idea of having it over the weekend
33 because, yeah, some of us do work the week and when we
34 leave our jobs, you know, we're not paid for that whole
35 week and there's no compensation for that, which is
36 what we all agreed to. But I do like the weekend idea
37 for that reason. But I'm open to any of it.

38

39 MR. ANDREW: March 3 through 7.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: That was -- Jackie's
42 recommendation was to have our meeting through the
43 weekend. As you mentioned, we don't work on weekends,
44 people that do work, and weekends would be good because
45 during the week there's a lot of activities going on so
46 I'd be in support of having the meeting even on
47 weekends.

48

49 Richard.

50

0261

1 MR. SLATS: March 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

2

3 REPORTER: Richard.

4

5 MR. SLATS: We could be in there with
6 BRAC and CRAC and ERAC.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Would that
9 matter which weekend that you'd like to see chosen?

10

11 MR. SLATS: So we could see what the
12 other RACs are doing?

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I think it's all
15 going to be together.

16

17 MR. SLATS: Oh, okay.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Everyone's going to be
20 meeting together.

21

22 MR. SLATS: Okay.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We're going to meet
25 with all the other RACs at this time and we're just
26 looking to see what days you prefer, and Jackie
27 mentioned to have it on a weekend. And if a majority
28 of them say weekend then that's the route that we'll
29 take, for all the RACs to meet.

30

31 Brooke.

32

33 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
34 will note most of the -- the majority of the RACs
35 wanted to meet early in March as possible. And some of
36 them met before the EIRAC met so they didn't get to
37 really talk about the weekend option so, yeah, that's
38 all I wanted to say.

39

40 (Pause)

41

42 MS. MCDAVID: There will be discussion
43 with -- amongst Staff at OSM about the final selection
44 so you guys shouldn't worry about the other Councils,
45 decide what would work best for you all and we'll take
46 that into consideration.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. So
49 next item is the.....

50

0262

1 MS. MCDAVID: I'm sorry, Ray -- Mr.
2 Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, go ahead.
5

6 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. Could you
7 just verify what your selection was, I was arranging
8 for Member Landlord to get a ride to the airport.
9

10 MR. ANDREW: We should have it in the
11 middle of the week, not on the weekend.
12

13 REPORTER: John, your mic, please.
14

15 MR. ANDREW: As long as we have it in
16 the middle of the week and not on the weekends because
17 then we have no Staff support.
18

19 (Laughter)
20

21 MS. MCDAVID: Well, Staff will be
22 working on the weekend, and we're okay with that. We
23 just want to make it easier for you guys.
24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: It's like saying, jump,
26 and all just say, how hi.
27

28 (Pause)
29

30 MR. SLATS: (No microphone)
31

32 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, if you -- just to
33 clarify what Richard said, he said one of the Councils
34 made two choices, you're welcome to do that if you
35 want, make your first choice to meet on the weekend and
36 then, if not, select a mid-week; it's up to you.
37

38 (Pause)
39

40 MR. NANENG: But what if it's bird
41 hunting season or seal hunting season.
42

43 MS. MCDAVID: Myron it could be that --
44 if you think there's conflict you should let us know
45 when would be the best time.
46

47 MR. NANENG: Yeah. Having it during
48 the week is fine because the weekends we usually go
49 hunting or fishing.
50

0263

1 (Pause)

2

3

MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman, I would make a suggestion to have our winter 2024 meeting during the week of March 4 through the 8 along with those three other Regional Advisory Councils, during that same week, so that we could see what some of the other RACs are doing.

9

10 MS. MCDAVID: That sounds good. And
11 did I hear correctly if it is on a weekend, though, you
12 would be okay with that but you would prefer March 4
13 through the 8th.

14

15 MR. ALEXIE: This is Wassilly. For
16 some of us we don't have airlines that fly on weekends
17 so if we do start on Monday and we have to travel on
18 Sunday it's going to be pretty hard for some of us to
19 get in.

20

21 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you for speaking
22 up, Wassilly, that it affects you too in your
23 community. Some of those lower Yukon communities, not
24 just the Interior communities. So it sounds like
25 Wassilly is suggesting we should maybe start on --
26 follow the dates that the EIRAC selected, so that he --
27 he could attend.

28

29 You could just say you want to do the
30 first week -- as early in March as possible and I think
31 that would suffice, including the weekend.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I'd recommend
34 that too, make it plain and simple, the first week in
35 March to include weekends.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing no other
40 recommendations so that's the route we'll take for our
41 winter 2024 Regional Advisory Council meeting.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
46 the last meeting will be fall 2024. And you can select
47 your preferred meeting dates, you can select two days,
48 or if you would prefer to have a three day meeting
49 because it will be a fisheries regulat -- the fisheries
50

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1 proposals will be taken up at this meeting in fall 2024
2 and the only dates you can't select are when there are
3 already two RACs meeting in one week, we can't have
4 three meetings in one week, so if one RAC is meeting
5 you can overlap with one of them.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you,
10 Brooke. Any recommendations from the Council for fall
11 2024 meeting.

12
13 (Pause)

14
15 MR. NANENG: If it's going to be in
16 October make sure it's not during AFN week.

17
18 MS. MCDAVID: Myron, this is Brooke.
19 Do you know what week that typically is, is it later in
20 October?

21
22 MS. CLEVELAND: It's usually here or
23 here.

24
25 MR. NANENG: It's usually around the
26 20th, 19th and 20th, around that timeframe, and they're
27 going to meet next month, May 17th to set the dates, I
28 guess.

29
30 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, that will be the
31 dates for fall 2024?

32
33 MR. NANENG: Yeah. For AFN Convention,
34 it's usually about the 20th of October. And next
35 month, in May, they'll probably select the date and
36 place, this coming year it will probably end up being
37 in Fairbanks.

38
39 MS. MCDAVID: Okay, thank you, Myron,
40 for weighing in on that. I will remind the Council
41 that you will have an opportunity to revisit this
42 meeting selection, it won't be set in stone. So at the
43 fall meeting this year you'll get to look at this again
44 and see if you want to make any changes. This meeting
45 is still about a year and a half out, but we just
46 wanted to get something on the calendar for the
47 meantime.

48
49 Thanks.
50

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1 MR. NANENG: Or this coming fall
2 meeting might be in Fairbanks because they just had AFN
3 Convention here twice, and the third year, they usually
4 have one in Fairbanks and then they go back to
5 Anchorage for a couple more years.

6
7 MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

10
11 MS. CLEVELAND: I'll just throw out
12 some weeks. I'm going to suggest the week of August 25
13 or the week of October 7.....

14
15 MS. MCDAVID: You can't meet that week.

16
17 MS. CLEVELAND: Oh, yeah, yeah, there's
18 three -- oh, you can only have two -- okay. I guess it
19 would help if we knew when AFN was but October 15, 16,
20 17 or something or 16, 17, 18 if we're not going to be
21 -- if it's not during AFN. So middle of August -- or
22 end of August or mid-October. I'm just trying to avoid
23 moose, everything -- thanks -- moose and AFN.

24
25 MR. NANENG: Just remember that AFN is
26 usually around the 20th, and sometimes a few days.....

27
28 MS. MCDAVID: If you.....

29
30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

31
32 MS. MCDAVID: If you do want to select
33 the week of October 14th, you could -- and it turns out
34 that AFN will be happening that week you can change
35 your meeting date at the next meeting.

36
37 MR. NANENG: Well, let's go ahead and
38 have that as a tentative date.

39
40 MS. MCDAVID: Well, Myron, we're
41 talking about -- I'm sorry, this is in fall 2024, not
42 fall 2023, not this year but next year.

43
44 MR. NANENG: Yes, that's what I mean.

45
46 MS. MCDAVID: Okay.

47
48 REPORTER: He said go with that
49 route.....

50

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1 MS. MCDAVID: Oh, did you say go with
2 that route, I'm sorry, I didn't hear you correctly.

3

4 REPORTER:and then you could
5 always change it if it's the week of AFN.

6

7 MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah.

8

9 MS. MCDAVID: Okay. So just to repeat
10 what I'm hearing in the room here I'm hearing the week
11 of October 15th and then we'll change at the next
12 meeting if we find out that it overlaps with AFN.
13 Which three days would you prefer, Tuesday, Wednesday,
14 Thursday -- October 15, 16, 17.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron.

17

18 MR. NANENG: I guess that would be good
19 but I could find out within the next couple of days
20 what they're looking at as a tentative calendar for
21 AFN, but, however, also one of the things to keep in
22 mind is that some of the village corporations have
23 meetings that week in preparation for the AFN
24 Convention. I would go with -- tentatively go with
25 those dates.

26

27 MS. MCDAVID: Okay. What about meeting
28 location. You will be meeting in Anchorage twice
29 before this meeting, just as a reminder.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: And also to recommend
32 that it be a three day meeting, rather than two. I
33 think three day meetings would be beneficial because if
34 we're going to be taking up Board of Fish proposals
35 because we already know, you know, it takes a lot of
36 time to consider those proposals, so to include a three
37 day meeting for the fall.

38

39 (Pause)

40

41 MS. MCDAVID: Any location suggestions,
42 do you guys want to meet in Bethel again, you want to
43 meet out in a village.

44

45 MR. ANDREW: In Bethel. I like this
46 hall over here, nice and quiet.

47

48 MS. MCDAVID: Well, I'm not hearing any
49 suggestions, does Bethel sound okay for you guys.

50

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1 MR. ANDREW: Bethel.

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

6

7 MS. ROGERS: I think we should just
8 leave it up to the Department, we usually don't get to
9 go where we want to go regardless of where we say we
10 want to go so.

11

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

15

16 MS. MCDAVID: Thanks, Mr. Chair.
17 Alissa, we did really try to go to a village this time.
18 Alakanuk was not able to host us because of the impacts
19 of Typhoon Merbok and Mountain Village was not able to
20 host us because they didn't have the infrastructure
21 either. So I guess I would suggest if you all do want
22 to meet in a rural community besides Bethel, just make
23 sure kind of that we know ahead of time that they have
24 the facilities that they could host us and that would
25 just include having a meeting venue and some places for
26 us to stay.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 (Pause)

31

32 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chairman.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Henry, go ahead.

35

36 MR. PARKS: Henry Parks. It would be
37 better for us to meet here, in Bethel, because out in
38 the Bush they -- I don't believe they got -- we won't
39 have lodging over there, you know, who knows, that
40 could be an issue, too, because, you know -- that's
41 just my concern.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. So noted.
46 Go ahead, John.

47

48 MR. ANDREW: A couple of reasons why I
49 don't like it in the village anymore because I used to

50

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1 be in her seat before. Because when we go out in the
2 village, they have poor internet and no structure at
3 the airport and we're waiting in the rain, the cold
4 weather, it's kind of -- at my age I can't handle that
5 cold weather anymore. I'd rather have it over in
6 Bethel. You got better internet, better than my
7 village, and you have wifi and your phone works better
8 over here too. Because back home you can try to work
9 with your electronics, half the time they don't work,
10 two or three days in a row. GCI is a curse to us.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 MR. ANDREW: I'm sorry, I'm sad to say
15 that.

16

17 (Laughter)

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: So the recommendation
20 is Bethel for the fall meeting also to include a three
21 day meeting.

22

23 If there's no other comments I think
24 that will conclude our future meeting dates. I'm sure
25 we'll get updates as we move forward, as we get closer
26 to those dates, so thank you for your input.

27

28 Brooke, do we have anything else that
29 we need to take care of.

30

31 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chairman, can you
32 reiterate the date and times of our future meetings?

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

35

36 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Sure
37 thing Richard. So for fall 2023, this year, the dates
38 are October 10, 11 and 12, and that will be in
39 Anchorage.

40

41 MR. SLATS: Okay.

42

43 MS. MCDAVID: For winter 2024, it's not
44 confirmed but what you're recommending is March 1st
45 through the 5th.

46

47 MS. CLEVELAND: Well, 4 and.....

48

49 MS. MCDAVID: Well, I thought you guys

50

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1 said as early in March including a weekend because of
2 Wassilly.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay.

5
6 MR. SLATS: Okay.

7
8 MS. MCDAVID: Reconfirming. All right.
9 And then for fall 2024, we have October 15th through
10 the 17th in Bethel.

11
12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You're good Richard.

13
14 MR. SLATS: Okay. You have fall 20 --
15 can you repeat winter 2024, March.....

16
17 MS. MCDAVID: March 1 through 5, and
18 that is just your suggested -- your recommendation.....

19
20 MR. SLATS: Okay.

21
22 MS. MCDAVID:because the other
23 RACs will also.....

24
25 MR. SLATS: Okay, right. And the fall,
26 October 2023, the dates are?

27
28 MS. MCDAVID: 2024.

29
30 MR. SLATS: 2024, I mean.

31
32 MS. MCDAVID: October 15th through the
33 17th, 2024.

34
35 MR. SLATS: Okay, thank you.

36
37 MS. MCDAVID: You're welcome.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Thank
40 you for your input in setting those future meeting
41 dates. Is there anything that we need to take up for
42 the day Brooke?

43
44 MS. MCDAVID: Mr. Chair. I think that
45 concludes all of the Council's action items unless
46 there's another proposal we might want to talk about
47 tomorrow morning, but tomorrow we can start in with
48 some of the additional reports and we'll have one from
49 ONC after public comments on non-agenda items.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
2 Brooke. And those that have signed up to give public
3 testimony on non-agenda items, if you could be here, or
4 if you're online -- I know we've gone a little over on
5 those public comments, maybe if we could limit that to
6 maybe 10 minutes at the most, that would be beneficial
7 because we're planning to end this meeting some time
8 after lunch tomorrow. And keep in mind that tomorrow
9 morning at 10 we have Fish and Wildlife Service
10 Regional Office calling in and then also a call from
11 Washington, D.C., Department of Interior. So if we
12 could keep those times in mind to give them a chance to
13 call in and hear what they've got to say.

14

15 So if there's nothing else we could go
16 ahead and recess for the evening.

17

18 Thank you. Thank you, everyone.

19

20 MR. NANENG: Mr. Chairman, it's Myron.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Myron, go ahead.

23

24 MR. NANENG: Tomorrow I have a hospital
25 appointment.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you for
28 letting us know, we'll do a roll call and then if
29 you're not here we'll excuse you and if you can, you
30 know, you could call in but if not we'll so note your
31 absence.

32

33 MR. NANENG: Okay, thanks.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: That will conclude our
36 meeting for today, we'll recess for the night.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 (Off record)

41

42

43 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

44

45

46

47

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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

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8 state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court
9 Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

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17 THAT the transcript is a true and
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