

WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Telephonic  
October 14, 2020  
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chairman  
Timothy Gervais  
Don Honea  
Tommy Kriska  
Jenny Pelkola  
Goodwin Semaken

Regional Council Coordinator, Karen Deatherage

Recorded and transcribed by:

Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC  
135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
907-243-0668/sahile@gci.net

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

(Telephonic - 10/14/2020)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is Jack Reakoff in Wiseman. And I'll call the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council fall meeting to order. And so did we have somebody that was going to give an invocation, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: That's up to the Council's discretion, if you'd like to ask that's perfectly fine.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would you like to give an invocation Jenny.

MRS. PELKOLA: Yes. Okay, here I go.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day, Lord, God, we ask that you be with us as we go into our meeting and we have many things to discuss. Lord, I just ask that you watch over us and guide us and Lord we just pray for the Council members that couldn't be here and guide us in our meeting again, Lord. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Amen. So the roll call and establish quorum. Who's going to call the roll, I don't have the list, you want to call that Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. I'd be happy to do roll call. This is Karen Deatherage with OSM.

Don Honea.

MR. HONEA: Yep.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, thanks, Don.

Pollock Simon, Sr.

(No comments)

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.  
4  
5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Tommy Kriska.  
6  
7 (No comments)  
8  
9 MS. DEATHERAGE: He might have his  
10 phone back on mute.  
11  
12 Tim Gervais.  
13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: Here.  
15  
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.  
17  
18 MRS. PELKOLA: Here.  
19  
20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.  
21  
22 MR. SEMAKEN: Here.  
23  
24 MS. DEATHERAGE: Go back to Tom Kriska,  
25 Tom, are you there. If you are unmute your phone so  
26 you can respond to the roll call.  
27  
28 (No comments)  
29  
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay Jack, we can come  
31 back to Tom shortly.  
32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We've got  
34 five Council members here confirmed for the roll call.  
35 Tommy was on there a minute ago but he's muted his  
36 phone. He seemed to be outdoors, there was a bunch of  
37 dogs barking and what not.  
38  
39 So welcome and introductions.  
40  
41 So we're going to go through the  
42 introductions of the people on the call. On this sheet  
43 that Karen sent out, could you state your name, your  
44 agency or your group you represent or the community you  
45 live in. If your last name starts with A through G  
46 please identify yourself.  
47  
48 So go ahead for those who have a last  
49 name of A through G.  
50

1 MR. BLIHOVDE: Hi, this is Boyd  
2 Blihovde and I'm the new Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta  
3 National Wildlife Refuge. So I work for the U.S. Fish  
4 and Wildlife Service and I've been here about three  
5 months and just looking to listen in.

6  
7 Thank you.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
10 Boyd. Welcome on board.

11  
12 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you.

13  
14 MR. KRISKA: This is Tom Kriska calling  
15 in.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tom, we called  
18 roll so we'll put you down there as attending.

19  
20 Other people, agencies, or individuals  
21 with A through G last name, go ahead.

22  
23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Go ahead, we lost you.

24  
25 MR. DECOSSAS: This is Gary Decossas,  
26 fisheries biologist at Yukon Delta National Wildlife  
27 Refuge.

28  
29 MR. BORN: Good morning. This is Ray  
30 Born, Yukon Delta Refuge, Deputy Refuge manager in  
31 Bethel. Thank you.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Ray,  
34 Gary. Go ahead.

35  
36 MR. GUSSE: Good morning, this is  
37 Walker Gusse, a pilot with BLM.

38  
39 MS. FITKA: Hello, good morning. This  
40 is Serena Fitka with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries  
41 Association.

42  
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Go ahead and mute your  
44 phone, Tom.

45  
46 MS. FOX: Good morning, this is Joanna  
47 Fox. I'm the Refuge Manager at Kanuti National  
48 Wildlife Refuge and we're headquartered in Fairbanks.

49  
50

1                               CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
2 Joanna.  
3  
4                               MR. KRISKA: It's hard to mute the  
5 phone off and on with the.....  
6  
7                               MS. DEATHERAGE: Do you have an iPhone  
8 Tom?  
9  
10                              MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I'm on the phone but  
11 it won't mute.  
12  
13                              MS. DEATHERAGE: You have to hit that  
14 mute button.  
15  
16                              MR. KRISKA: I'm trying to figure it  
17 out.  
18  
19                              MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay.  
20  
21                              MR. HARRIS: Good morning. It's Frank  
22 Harris with the Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
23 Office.  
24  
25                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Frank.  
26  
27                              MS. GLEASON: Christy Gleason with  
28 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Yukon area manager  
29 for the fall season.  
30  
31                              (Teleconference interference -  
32 participants phones not muted)  
33  
34                              MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry, who was  
35 that speaking.  
36  
37                              MS. GLEASON: Christy Gleason with Fish  
38 and Game.  
39  
40                              MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.  
41  
42                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hey, Tommy.....  
43  
44                              MR. KRISKA: Once I get on mute then  
45 I'll be okay.  
46  
47                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....we can hear  
48 everything you're saying so, we can't have a  
49 conversation on the side without a mute -- we can't  
50

1 hear others.  
2  
3 MR. KRISKA: I'm having trouble muting  
4 the phone.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Find a kid to show  
7 you how to do that.  
8  
9 (Laughter)  
10  
11 MR. KRISKA: That's what I'm trying to  
12 do.  
13  
14 (Laughter)  
15  
16 MR. KRISKA: Hey, how do you mute the  
17 phone?  
18  
19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mute?  
20  
21 MR. KRISKA: Yep.  
22  
23 MS. DAMBERG: Carol Damberg with the  
24 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage, Alaska.  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Carol.  
27  
28 Other people with A through G, last  
29 names.  
30  
31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Well, this is Karen  
32 Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence Management up  
33 here in Fairbanks.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other A through  
36 G last name on the call.  
37  
38 (No comments)  
39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we're  
41 going to move to G through S, people with last name G  
42 through S, identify yourself please.  
43  
44 MS. MORAN: This is Tina Moran, Kanuti  
45 Refuge in Fairbanks.  
46  
47 REPORTER: Who was that, please?  
48  
49 MS. MORAN: Tina Moran with Kanuti  
50

1 Refuge in Fairbanks.

2

3

REPORTER: Thank you.

4

5

6

Maschmann with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Fairbanks.

7

8

9

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Tina  
and Gerald.

10

11

12

Others.

13

14

15

MR. ROWE: This is Eric Rowe with  
Tanana Chief Conference.

16

17

18

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say your name again.

19

20

MR. ROWE: Eric Rowe, Tanana Chief  
Conference.

21

22

23

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

24

25

26

MS. STUBE: Lisa Stube, Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game here in Fairbanks, Yukon  
River Sportfish Division area management biologist.

27

28

29

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Lisa.

30

31

32

33

MS. JALLEN: Good morning. This is  
Deena Jallen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game up  
here in Fairbanks, the Yukon River summer season  
assistant manager.

34

35

36

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Deena.

37

38

39

40

MR. REAM: Good morning, Mr. Chair and  
members of the Council. This is Joshua Ream, I'm the  
Regional Subsistence Program Manager for the National  
Park Service out of the Anchorage regional office.

41

42

43

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Josh.

44

45

46

MS. MCMILLAN: Hello, Jennifer McMillan  
ecologist for BLM Central Yukon Field Office.

47

48

49

50

MR. STONE: Good morning, Council.

1 Jared Stone, fisheries biologist with the Office of  
2 Subsistence Management.

3  
4 MR. LIND: (In Native) good morning.  
5 Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of  
6 Subsistence Management.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
9 Orville.

10  
11 MR. LIND: Good morning.

12  
13 MR. PAPPAS: Good morning, Jack.  
14 George Pappas, OSM in Los Anchorage.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
17 George.

18  
19 MR. SMITH: Nicholas Smith, Alaska  
20 Department of Fish and Game, Kuskokwim area management  
21 biologist.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Nick.

24  
25 MS. SCHOMOGYI: Good morning, this is  
26 Terese Schomogyi with the Kuskokwim River InterTribal  
27 Fish Commission.

28  
29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Could you spell your  
30 last name, please, for me.

31  
32 MS. SCHOMOGYI: Yes. It's S-C-H-O-M-O-  
33 G-Y-I.

34  
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you very much  
36 and thanks for being here.

37  
38 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, this Robbin  
39 LaVine with the "Office of Subsistence Management.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
42 Robbin.

43  
44 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning. This is  
45 Greg Risdahl, Office of Subsistence Management.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.

48  
49 MR. REBARCHIK: Good morning. This is  
50



1 Bob Rebarchik, Refuge Manager, Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko  
2 Refuges out of Galena.  
3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.  
5  
6 MR. HARWOOD: Good morning. Chris  
7 Harwood, Kanuti Refuge biologist.  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Chris.  
10  
11 MR. JOLY: Hi, Mr. Chairman. This is  
12 Kyle Joly with the National Park Service, Gates of the  
13 Arctic. I'm a wildlife biologist.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Kyle.  
16  
17 MR. MOSES: Good morning, this is Aaron  
18 Moses.  
19  
20 MS. MAXWELL: Good morning, this is  
21 Laramie Maxwell, Western Northern Alaska Environmental  
22 Center.  
23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We had two speakers,  
25 Aaron Moses, good morning.  
26  
27 MS. MAXWELL: Laramie Maxwell with the  
28 Western Northern Alaska Environmental Center.  
29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your first name was  
31 somewhat garbled, can you say that again.  
32  
33 MS. MAXWELL: It's Laramie, spelled L-  
34 A-R-A-M-I-E.  
35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
37 Good morning.  
38  
39 MS. MAXWELL: Good morning.  
40  
41 MS. SAM: This is Suzie Sam with Louden  
42 Tribal Council.  
43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Suzie.  
45  
46 MR. SNODGRASS: Hello. This is Wyatt  
47 Snodgrass with the Koyukuk/Nowitna and Innoko National  
48 Wildlife Refuge.  
49  
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your first name was  
2 garbled, say again.  
3  
4 MR. SNODGRASS: It's Wyatt.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Wyatt?  
7  
8 MR. SNODGRASS: Yep.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
11  
12 MR. SNODGRASS: Thank you.  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any others with the  
15 last name G through S.  
16  
17 MR. KEYES: Good morning this is Matt  
18 Keyes with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the  
19 Fairbanks Field Office.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Matt.  
22  
23 MS. MARTINEZ: This is Mary Martinez  
24 with Calista Corporation.  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Mary.  
27  
28 MR. PIERCE: Yeah, Josh Pierce is on the  
29 phone, too, in the McGrath area office, Fish and Game.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Josh.  
32  
33 Any other people on the phone with G  
34 through S.  
35  
36 MR. SEPPI: Bruce Seppi, BLM, Anchorage  
37 Field Office.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Bruce.  
40  
41 Any others with the last name G through  
42 S.  
43  
44 (No comments)  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Then T through Z,  
47 last names that start with T through Z, identify  
48 yourself, please.  
49  
50

1 MS. VORHEES: Good morning. This is  
2 Hannah Vorhees with OSM.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
5 Hannah.

6  
7 Other people with the last name T  
8 through Z.

9  
10 MR. WHITWORTH: Good morning. This is  
11 Kevin Whitworth with Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish  
12 Commission.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Kevin.

15  
16 MS. PETRIVELLI: And I called in late  
17 but this is Pat Petrivelli with BIA. I missed my  
18 letter.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Pat.

21  
22 Anybody else with T through Z.

23  
24 (No comments)

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Or anybody else that  
27 signed on late and has not identified yourself yet.

28  
29 (No comments)

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And our court  
32 reporter on this one, Karen.

33  
34 REPORTER: Yes, my name is Nickelle.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nickelle, all right,  
37 thank you.

38  
39 Well, I think that identifies everybody  
40 on the call so welcome to the Western Interior Regional  
41 Council meeting. It's a little bit hard being on the  
42 phone but that's what we got to do.

43  
44 Review and adopt the agenda. Does  
45 everybody have the modified agenda, which was modified  
46 last -- yesterday, so do Council members have that, the  
47 modified agenda.

48  
49 Karen, go ahead.

50

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 The agenda that was sent out to the Council members and  
3 Staff that were sent out yesterday includes some  
4 proposed changes so those changes will need to be read  
5 on the record and approved by the Council.  
6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So this is an  
8 updated agenda as of yesterday. I worked with Karen on  
9 this one and some other people.  
10

11 So we would add the Mulchatna Caribou  
12 Herd with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and Alaska Department  
13 of Game.  
14

15 We would add the BLM Ambler, Dalton  
16 Highway Corridor hunting.  
17

18 Recent sheep survey or updates on  
19 surveys and guide permits for the BLM.  
20

21 We would add the Kanuti, Nowitna,  
22 Innoko, Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge and  
23 subsistence coordinators for those.  
24

25 We would add the Subsistence Division  
26 update, Alida Trainor and Chris McDevitt.  
27

28 We would remove the service awards.  
29

30 We would move the YRDFA and Kuskokwim  
31 InterTribal Fish Commission and the U.S. Fish and  
32 Wildlife Service, ADF&G report up to prior to the  
33 fisheries proposal deliberations.  
34

35 Move the BLM and Northern Environmental  
36 Center earlier portion on the agenda regarding the  
37 Ambler Road issue.  
38

39 The future meeting dates would move up  
40 in the agenda also.  
41

42 And under new business we would have  
43 fisheries report, 2020 Yukon River salmon season  
44 summary, Gerald Maschmann and Deena Jallen and Jeff  
45 Estensen.  
46

47 No. 2 would be Kuskokwim River  
48 InterTribal Fish Commission, that'd be Kevin Whitworth.  
49  
50

1                   No. 3 would be the Yukon River Drainage  
2 Fisheries Association, Serena Fitka and Catherine  
3 Moncrieff for YRDFA.

4  
5                   That would cover the agenda  
6 modifications.

7  
8                   So the Chair would entertain a motion  
9 to adopt those modifications or any additions.

10  
11                  MR. MOSES: Excuse me, sorry, Mr.  
12 Chair, this is Aaron Moses.

13  
14                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead,  
15 Aaron.

16  
17                  MR. MOSES: I see that Yukon Delta is  
18 not on the agency reports, I was wondering if we could  
19 include Yukon Delta under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge  
20 agency reports, please.

21  
22                  Thank you.

23  
24                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, that's  
25 appropriate. So that would be Kanuti, Innoko and we'll  
26 add Yukon Delta under that one.

27  
28                  MRS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair, this is Jenny  
29 Pelkola.

30  
31                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

32  
33                  MRS. PELKOLA: I see two sheets for  
34 additions here, two -- three on Native organizations,  
35 do we have to add all those too?

36  
37                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Karen, can you  
38 address that.

39  
40                  MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
41 Jenny, what are you referring to? The additions are  
42 highlighted, they're throughout the agenda of where  
43 they're going to be if the Council approves it but I'm  
44 not sure what other additions you're referring to.

45  
46                  MRS. PELKOLA: I just have an extra  
47 sheet here and it says -- up on the top it says Native  
48 organizations and then after that things that are  
49 highlighted are BLM, Dalton Highway, Ambler Road

1 update, Kanuti National, No.....

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Right. Member  
4 Pelkola, those are the -- that's the second sheet of  
5 the agenda.

6

7 MRS. PELKOLA: Okay, thank you.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: You're welcome.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead, Don.

14

15 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don in Ruby.  
16 I think what's kind of confusing is what she had sent  
17 out recently, the updated agenda is what I'm going by  
18 and if we're going by that it looks okay and so it's  
19 different from the book. I have both of them in front  
20 of me and I think any clarification or I think we got  
21 to follow the one she just sent, correct?

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. The one that's  
24 all highlighted in yellow.

25

26 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was working off  
29 and I read that into the record because it's different  
30 than what's actually published in the book.

31

32 And to address the Native organization  
33 question, Jenny, that would be TCC on there, but any  
34 other Native organizations who would like to speak  
35 would also fall under Native organizations on the  
36 agenda.

37

38 MRS. PELKOLA: Thank you.

39

40 MR. HONEA: I make a motion to adopt  
41 the agenda.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt the  
44 agenda as modified.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a second.

49

50

1 MRS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola seconds.  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny seconds.  
4  
5 Other discussion.  
6  
7 (No comments)  
8  
9 MRS. PELKOLA: Question.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
12 Those in favor of adopting the modified agenda which is  
13 highlighted as the yellow updated agenda 10/13/2020  
14 signify by saying aye.  
15  
16 IN UNISON: Aye.  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.  
19  
20 (No opposing votes)  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
23 let's see, so where do we start here, Karen, we're  
24 going to start with.....  
25  
26 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
27 Karen Deatherage. The next item on the agenda that has  
28 been updated and adopted would be the review and  
29 approve previous meeting minutes.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
32  
33 MS. DEATHERAGE: The meeting minutes  
34 are in your meeting book beginning on Page 5.  
35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So everybody have  
37 their book and their minutes and have reviewed the  
38 minutes.  
39  
40 MRS. PELKOLA: This is Jenny Pelkola.  
41 I have one correction, not very important but I just  
42 thought I better call it out. When you say Ms.  
43 Pelkola, it should be Mrs. Pelkola.  
44  
45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, we'll do that  
46 Jenny.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Jenny.  
49 Any other corrections.  
50

1 MRS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola, I move to  
2 adopt the minutes.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny moves to adopt  
5 the minutes.

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded by Tim.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Tim.  
10 Any further discussion.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 MR. HONEA: Question.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
17 Those in favor of adopting the minutes from our winter  
18 meeting of February 17/18 in Fairbanks signify by  
19 saying aye.

20  
21 IN UNISON: Aye.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Or correction, I  
24 meant March 2nd and 3rd, I was looking at the wrong  
25 paper.

26  
27 So we've adopted the minutes.

28  
29 So we're going to confirm our -- we're  
30 going to jump ahead with this new agenda and confirm  
31 our winter meeting dates. You want to cover that  
32 Karen.

33  
34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Sure, thank you, Mr.  
35 Chair. This is Karen Deatherage with OSM. And the  
36 Council has two meeting dates to confirm, one to  
37 confirm, the other to arrange. I do want the Council  
38 to keep in mind that it is still an unknown whether  
39 these meetings will be held in person.

40  
41 The first is to confirm the winter 2021  
42 meeting date and location. The Council, at its last  
43 meeting voted to hold the meeting February 17th through  
44 18th, 2021 in Fairbanks. So the Council just needs to  
45 confirm that it still wishes to hold those dates for  
46 the meeting.

47  
48 No vote is necessary just confirmation.

49  
50



1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those dates still  
2 work for me. Other Council member comments on those  
3 dates of February 17, 18, 2021.  
4  
5 MR. HONEA: Sounds good to me, this is  
6 Don.  
7  
8 MRS. PELKOLA: Fine.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that good for you  
11 Tim.  
12  
13 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jack. These dates  
14 are appropriate for me.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
17 Council member comments.  
18  
19 MR. KRISKA: It works for me, this is  
20 Tom.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tom.  
23  
24 MR. KRISKA: It works for me, this is  
25 Tom.  
26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, sounds  
28 good. Goodwin.  
29  
30 MR. SEMAKEN: It's fine with me.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So those look  
33 good to the Council members that I've heard Karen. So  
34 we'll still use those dates, 17/18.  
35  
36 Are you still on the call Karen.  
37  
38 (No comments)  
39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm not hearing  
41 Karen right now that's why I'm asking.  
42  
43 So the fall calendar it's on Page 181  
44 of our meeting book, and 181 starts on August 15 and  
45 goes all the way through November 6. So those meeting  
46 dates in early August and September are not appropriate  
47 for me, we're really busy doing fishing and hunting and  
48 stuff and I'm in woodcutting season right now. So this  
49 timeframe for me of October 13, 14, 2021 works good,  
50

1 middle of October works good for me, we're coming out  
2 of the hunting season, and pretty much going into  
3 freeze up and the river's jamming up here now so any  
4 other Council member preferences, in mid-October  
5 through late October.

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

10  
11 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I like the mid-  
12 October date because the late October date I might not  
13 be able to get up to camp with the freeze up so I'd  
14 like to -- I'd prefer it if our meetings could be done  
15 by October 15 or 16.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, that sounds  
18 good.

19  
20 MRS. PELKOLA: This is Jenny Pelkola.  
21 That works fine for me.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other Council  
24 member comments.

25  
26 Goodwin.

27  
28 MR. SEMAKEN: They'll work fine for me.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Don.

31  
32 MR. HONEA: I'm open for any date.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So Tommy are  
35 you still there?

36  
37 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, open any date as  
38 long as -- whatever Don chooses I will do.

39  
40 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

41  
42 (Laughter)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll put down  
45 October 13/14 which is mid-week, that's Columbus day is  
46 Monday and that's usually a holiday thing, so 13/14  
47 October 2021 would be kind of the dates for the fall  
48 2021 meeting.

49  
50

1 Are you there Karen?

2  
3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, I had the honor  
4 of being the first dropped call on this meeting so I am  
5 now back, thank you.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

8  
9 MS. DEATHERAGE: So I had it that the  
10 Council would like October 13/14th and those dates are  
11 still available so I'll go ahead and put you down. You  
12 can certainly select a location for the meeting, but,  
13 again, just be open to the fact that it could be  
14 another teleconference depending on the situation.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Hopefully  
17 we're past Covid by then. So we're selecting a meeting  
18 location, any suggestions from the Council. Of course  
19 the winter/spring of 2021 is in Fairbanks. A lot of  
20 communities have been in lockdown so my suggestion  
21 would be a possible meeting location in Anchorage and  
22 -- because of it's an urban place and it may not be --  
23 well, we'll see, yeah, how the Covid thing goes.

24  
25 Any discussion on the Anchorage  
26 location.

27  
28 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

31  
32 MR. GERVAIS: I think your idea of  
33 Anchorage is fine. I would also putting out to be the  
34 fall meeting, but at some point I would still like to  
35 reach out to YK-Delta RAC and try to do a joint meeting  
36 with them, we're experiencing significant fishery  
37 problems on the Kuskokwim and Mulchatna caribou is  
38 still a big issue so I would like our Council to at  
39 least put out to the YK-Delta that I would like to have  
40 a joint meeting with them in Bethel at some point if  
41 Covid conditions are appropriate and the other members  
42 think that's of value. I know we had one that didn't  
43 work out and I don't know all the politics on it but I  
44 think there's a lot of joint issues that need to be  
45 dealt with between the two Councils and perhaps some  
46 interaction again.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those are very valid  
49 points, Tim, and so we could prioritize the meeting

50

1 location of Bethel, and fall back to Anchorage if not.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
4 Karen Deatherage.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: So YK-Delta Council  
9 met last week and they selected their meeting date for  
10 October 6th and 7th, they did not select the location  
11 but they have already selected their meeting date for  
12 the fall of 2021.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So what.....

17

18 MR. GERVAIS: Jack or Karen, could you  
19 provide some information on what happened last year  
20 when we tried to have a joint Council meeting set up  
21 with YK-Delta.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They met after we  
24 made that proposal to have a joint meeting and they  
25 selected different dates than we did.

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
28 This is Karen Deatherage. Yes, they were given the  
29 opportunity but they selected different dates, and so I  
30 did not get the justification for that but I know they  
31 were given the opportunity.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So YK-Delta RAC has  
34 not been so -- they don't seem to want to meet jointly  
35 with us for various reasons. But at some point it  
36 would be good to have a meeting with them, you know,  
37 because we do have so many different issues that occur  
38 on the Kuskokwim River drainage. So we'll put the  
39 tentative location as Anchorage, would that be good for  
40 the Council for this fall 2021 meeting, which we've  
41 selected the dates of October 13th and 14th, Anchorage  
42 as the meeting location.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Yes, this is Don.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

47

48 MRS. PELKOLA: Yes for Jenny.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2  
3 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, for Tim.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin.

6  
7 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

8  
9 MR. KRISKA: And yes for Tom.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that looks  
12 like the meeting date and location for the fall 2021  
13 meeting Karen.

14  
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
16 October 14 and 15th in Anchorage. Because Anchorage is  
17 outside of the hub area for this Council, if anybody  
18 would like to weigh in on why the Council would like to  
19 meet in Anchorage that would be great for the record.

20  
21 Thank you.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Meeting location in  
24 Anchorage is because of the Covid shutdowns, a lot of  
25 communities have been adverse -- or we had tentatively  
26 wanted to go for this meeting in Aniak, and the Aniak  
27 meeting fell out because of the Covid thing. A lot of  
28 communities are, I feel, are still going to be  
29 reluctant about having people come to the communities  
30 so if at all possible, if we could have an urban  
31 meeting, if we're meeting in the spring in Fairbanks,  
32 an Anchorage meeting would be an urban meeting, it also  
33 is closer to OSM office Staff and so forth and so it  
34 has some high points.

35  
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you for that,  
37 Mr. Chair.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other justification  
40 from the Council members.

41  
42 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I think  
43 yeah you just hit on something there because OSM and  
44 the government agencies are all located, and the fact  
45 that -- only one if we want to have a joint committee  
46 with us this would be ideal instead of having to travel  
47 to Fairbanks, so good justifications.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: Another justification is,  
6 when we do meetings on the Kuskokwim, without  
7 chartering we have to have a lot of extra travel time  
8 to fly out to Fairbanks or Anchorage, and then fly down  
9 to the Kuskokwim, and then return back. So it's been a  
10 lot of extra travel dates when we do the Kuskokwim  
11 meetings and I like getting the better agency, in  
12 person participation, either Fairbanks or Anchorage,  
13 but we have OSM in Anchorage, we have ADF&G in  
14 Anchorage, so it's easier for a lot of various Staff  
15 members to work at an Anchorage venue.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's true. We get  
18 a lot better participation with Alaska Department of  
19 Fish and Game and Federal Staff when we have urban  
20 meetings. At some point this Council would like to  
21 return back to meeting within our region in Aniak or  
22 McGrath or Galena or whatever. Not that we want to  
23 move strictly to urban meetings but we do at this  
24 point, this looks like the best option. We can  
25 reconfirm that fall meeting at the spring meeting, so  
26 further down the road in February and where we're at  
27 with this Covid thing.

28  
29 Any further discussion.

30  
31 (No comments)

32  
33 MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So this was just a  
36 confirmation of those dates tentatively, we're not  
37 actually going to have to vote on them.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The dates were the  
42 13th and 14th, Karen, of October 2021.

43  
44 Are you there, Karen?

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, I am. And I have  
47 that, thank you.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So, okay, we

50

1 set the meeting dates. And let's see here, so we're  
2 moving to Council member reports.

3

4

Karen.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair, before  
7 we move on, I'd like to invite anybody who may have  
8 joined us after introductions to please introduce  
9 themselves and their agency or their community and also  
10 remind everybody to mute their phones when they're not  
11 speaking, say their name when they are speaking and  
12 please don't put us on hold.

13

14

Thanks.

15

16

17

18

19

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Karen.  
Anybody there who has called in since we've begun, and  
has not identified yourself.

20

21

22

23

MS. MILLION: Good morning. This is  
Bonnie Million, I'm the Field Manager for the BLM  
Anchorage Field Office. Apologies for my tardiness.

24

25

26

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
Bonnie. Apology accepted.

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

MR. MATHEWS: Good morning. This is  
Vince. I kind of got walked over earlier, I don't know  
if I got through, but, yeah, I'm with Kanuti Refuge,  
Yukon Flats and Arctic. But I'm also monitoring the  
Eastern Interior meeting. So there'll be other Staff  
that'll be able to help if I'm not available.

34

35

36

37

38

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,  
Vince, I was wondering about you. We didn't hear you  
at all. So any other people get on the call since  
we've started and not identified yourself.

39

40

(No comments)

41

42

43

44

45

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we're  
going to move to Council member reports. So, Jenny,  
would you like to start off with your Council member  
report.

46

47

48

49

50

MRS. PELKOLA: Okay, thank you, Mr.  
Chair. First of all, I would just like to say, again,  
I know I said it last time and I keep saying it, but we  
need to get all our vacant seats filled. And I know

1 we're trying but I think somehow we need to have all  
2 our members. It's so much better to have a full Board  
3 instead of four or five people talking all the time. I  
4 think that would add, you know, more to our Board.

5  
6 I would like to report that the fishing  
7 was pretty poor this year, high water, a lot of drift,  
8 closures of fisheries.

9  
10 And also moose license that we were  
11 able to get here in Galena, I thought that was a big  
12 hit for everybody, we were getting one for the Koyukuk  
13 River, instead of going up to the Koyukuk River  
14 checkpoint to get one, I heard a lot of compliments on  
15 that about how the people were able to get two licenses  
16 this year in Galena instead of going up to Koyukuk  
17 River to get that one for Koyukuk River.

18  
19 The moose -- we saw a lot of cows. We  
20 didn't get our moose this year but we saw a lot of cows  
21 and calves and they looked pretty healthy. And I  
22 noticed, as I was in my fish camp, there weren't that  
23 many outside hunters going by, fewer boats, which I'm  
24 sure made it possible for more people to get their  
25 harvest for the winter.

26  
27 Overall things are going well.

28  
29 I notice we don't have very many birds  
30 like we used to in our area. I don't know what's going  
31 on but we had a pretty good summer, other than we  
32 didn't get any fish, hardly any fishing. I know a lot  
33 of people didn't.

34  
35 But anyway that's all I have to say  
36 right now.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What kind of birds  
39 are you talking about, Jenny, you mean like ducks or  
40 what?

41  
42 MRS. PELKOLA: Yeah, I didn't see  
43 hardly any ducks, geese, they must go farther away from  
44 our area. Hardly any robins, hardly any summer birds  
45 that we used to see. I notice new -- I don't know if  
46 you want to call it a wasp or bumblebees or insect or  
47 something around our area that we couldn't figure out  
48 what it was, it was black and it was weird, but maybe  
49 somebody else has seen some of those.

50



1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those are called  
2 bald-faced wasps and there was a lot of those this  
3 year. They make those great big paper hives. I seen  
4 hardly any ducks in the spring. I didn't even want to  
5 shoot one. There's hardly any ducks. And I keep  
6 talking about -- there was a U.S. Fish and Wildlife guy  
7 here and I was like -- he worked with Migratory Birds,  
8 I says, are you studying this duck problem, what duck  
9 problem, I said there's hardly any ducks, there's very,  
10 very few. Most ducks I seen was teal. Very few  
11 mallards, very few widgeons, very few ducks, period.  
12 And so that's a real, real big concern is the number of  
13 ducks that way, way down, up here and you're seeing the  
14 same thing there.

15  
16 So any other questions from the Council  
17 members for Jenny.

18  
19 (No comments)

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, okay, thanks for  
22 your report, Jenny.

23  
24 So, Don.

25  
26 MR. HONEA: Good morning, everyone.  
27 Hey, I'd like to comment on that. I sit on the TCC  
28 Migratory Bird Committee and, you know, we don't often  
29 hear from the people that we represent or anything  
30 about the numbers so that's pretty interesting to find  
31 out, those numbers are pretty low.

32  
33 And I'd have to agree with Jenny,  
34 fishing was pretty poor. There was a lot of the  
35 hornets that she was talking about, and not only in the  
36 village but out in the fish camp. We use an enclosed  
37 fishing place so they didn't really bother us too much  
38 in beating up the fish. But a lot of high water. You  
39 can get to some of the sloughs and stuff but even up  
40 late in the hunting season and -- but I'm really  
41 interested in whether the State ADF&G has to say about  
42 why the conditions were -- I mean we have always relied  
43 on the summer and fall and this is really, really  
44 detrimental, I think that we weren't able to even put a  
45 net in. I guess when we get to that topic.

46  
47 But other than that the hunting was  
48 pretty good. I think most of the people got a moose  
49 here in the village, we're not hurting in that way.

50

1 But I was -- and this is my opinion, I was not happy or  
2 kind of saddened to see a not a check stations on the  
3 Nowitna this year, maybe because of the Covid but there  
4 was a couple for local and for outside on the Koyukuk,  
5 so the reason why I just didn't like it, it's just open  
6 for abuse when you don't have any check stations plus I  
7 don't know the numbers, I guess I'll find out from the  
8 Refuge later on, what the numbers, when they find out,  
9 what the take was on that.

10

11 But other than that, it was a pretty  
12 good season and I look forward to hearing other Council  
13 reports because like I said I mean I don't know exactly  
14 what goes on in your village. It could be 50 miles, it  
15 could be 100 miles away and that's why I'm kind of  
16 disappointed that we don't have seats that are filled.  
17 I mean I'm just kind of astounded that we don't know if  
18 Kevin over there got on or if anybody got on on the  
19 Kuskokwim and there's -- places are locked, and I don't  
20 know the fishing issues on that river, I -- I've said  
21 that before, I don't know what the fishing conditions  
22 are and I'm not going to speak towards them if I don't  
23 know what they are. So we need those reps and I think  
24 that's a high priority.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.  
29 Anybody got questions for Don.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So all right we'll  
34 go to Goodwin, you got a report of what you've been up  
35 to and what things are looking like down in your area,  
36 in Kaltag.

37

38 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes, good morning, Jack.  
39 Everybody seems to have gotten moose so it was a pretty  
40 good moose hunting. There was hardly no hunters  
41 because of Covid so that was good. They were seeing  
42 moose running across the river, first time we've seen  
43 that here, you know. Wolves howling across the river.  
44 And there's a bunch of moose in our area, I think.

45

46 The fishing, the Creek, we drive over  
47 it and they got a bridge over it, but I never seen  
48 hardly any salmon going up there this summer. You  
49 know, we used to have a (indiscernible - muffled).

50

1 I don't know the Old Village Creek down  
2 here at Threemile did, I think because we got no  
3 monitor and then you got the (indiscernible - muffled)  
4 I don't know how those streams panned out for fish.

5  
6 But yeah fishing was not like I seen  
7 before so and I guess it's pretty low, the dogs and  
8 fall.

9  
10 The moose was good.

11  
12 Like Don was saying, it's important to  
13 get some representation throughout area because big  
14 trouble here trying to figure out their fishing.

15  
16 Other than that, I guess I'm done.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Goodwin. So  
19 we're getting an echo off of somebody's phone.

20  
21 MR. SEMAKEN: Is that mine or.....

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm not sure whose  
24 phone is echoing, but I'm hearing my voice echo.

25  
26 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, me too.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I don't know  
29 what -- so Tommy, do you got a report, are you on  
30 there?

31  
32 MR. KRISKA: Yep, I'm on here, can you  
33 hear me?

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can hear  
36 you great, Tommy, go ahead.

37  
38 MR. KRISKA: Okay. Well, anyways from  
39 what I've seen during the summer the fishing was kind  
40 of -- it was slow, the fish were -- fish were there but  
41 the water was high. I think you had to -- I mean, you  
42 know, we couldn't say there was no fish, there was fish  
43 out there because we got pretty much what we needed but  
44 you had to use different methods of fishing. Like what  
45 we did was once -- I mean we were out there with  
46 everybody else drifting catching one or two in six to  
47 eight hours, nope, this is not working, there are fish  
48 there, so we started setnets, and that's where -- and  
49 then a lot of people did it, as long as -- while we

50

1 were doing that and they got their fish, but it just  
2 had -- you had to find places. A lot of the places on  
3 the Yukon and other areas, I assume that there are  
4 different eddies with the height of the water and it  
5 worked for us so I'm not saying that everybody tried  
6 fishing but I knew that there were some good eddies and  
7 it worked that way.

8  
9 And for the birds, the same as the  
10 fish, when the water is higher during the summer, the  
11 birds are farther back off the river, you know, when  
12 the water is lower you see the birds out along on the  
13 banks. But when it's higher, they're back in the --  
14 back farther into the willows, they're eating the tops  
15 of those willows and whatever is floating up from those  
16 little one foot high willows on the sandbar, so they're  
17 farther back off the river.

18  
19 And this fall, counted ducks on the  
20 Koyukuk, about probably every other bend, or maybe I  
21 think 50 in a flock, so there was a lot of ducks and  
22 there still is right now. But then there seems like a  
23 lot of ducks this year. Not -- we didn't see a lot of  
24 geese so I don't know what happened with that. There's  
25 still a lot of swans, still a lot of cranes, but those  
26 are just overhead flyers, you just see them when  
27 they're flying over.

28  
29 So for the moose, it was -- seemed like  
30 it was pretty good. In the past a lot of our moose  
31 move, I guess, migrated lower than the Koyukuk River,  
32 that's what we were told -- well, actually seen it but  
33 this year all along the Koyukuk River, seemed like up  
34 to Vincent's camp, which is 140 miles up the Koyukuk  
35 River, from Koyukuk, seemed like there was quite a lot  
36 of moose tracks. And we did get our moose up there.  
37 And then another thing on that is I think we're going  
38 to -- during the -- when the Wardens get their -- what  
39 the heck -- anyway -- I wouldn't mind seeing a check  
40 in, registration into the Koyukuk River at some point,  
41 or either request it -- I know they're going to have it  
42 -- have like just the numbers of people -- numbers of  
43 people that are going up the Koyukuk River, it was  
44 quite high seemed to me from what we were told before  
45 there was only so many permits going in there, but then  
46 it turned out to be, there was more hunters, maybe from  
47 the Fairbanks area, Anchorage area, seemed like more  
48 hunters target that upper river, I don't know if it was  
49 due to the Covid or what they -- what's going on but it

50

1 was maybe a little frustrating for a lot of hunters  
2 that just have to see that. They told us -- I think  
3 they said maybe eight or 10 permits, but I seen  
4 probably over 100 or more hunters go up there because I  
5 hunted up there, I went up there like five times in a  
6 boat, around (Indiscernible) area, I just do that --  
7 well, to take the ride, and the pride in hunting. But  
8 then to see all these boats that -- I thought they  
9 weren't going to be so high but they were. I think if  
10 it was local hunters, then it's local hunters, but,  
11 still, there was a lot of people there.

12  
13 Yeah, so during silvers (ph), I guess  
14 there was hardly any silvers. I didn't think one  
15 person fished the Yukon, they weren't supposed to  
16 anyway, but I didn't see anybody out there or say  
17 anything about the fishing.

18  
19 So that's what I got for the animals  
20 and the fish.

21  
22 And then I was thinking about that  
23 meeting that we're planning to have in Anchorage, it  
24 might influence the lower Yukon people to go and then  
25 another thing I heard was to have a meeting around the  
26 Aniak area, maybe if we do something like that it'll  
27 influence the lower Yukon people to join the Western  
28 Interior.

29  
30 So with that that's about all I have.

31  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tommy. I'm  
35 glad to hear that you're seeing more ducks.

36  
37 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me?  
40 Can you hear me Tommy?

41  
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: I can hear you Jack.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, he  
45 might have muted or something.

46  
47 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear us

50

1 Tommy?

2

3

MR. KRISKA: Did I lose you guys?

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear us?

6

7

(No comments)

8

9

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He's not hearing us, we hear him. But I will state that I'm happy to hear that he's seeing ducks. But here there's very few ducks all summer, not just in falltime. And there's good lakes where there's usually lots of different duck broods, virtually none, so that was pretty concerning for up here in the upper Koyukuk, and even North Slope, there was very few ducks over there.

17

18

So are you back again, Tommy?

19

20

MR. KRISKA: Yes.

21

22

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.

23

24

my report?

25

26

27

28

29

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we could hear you but you couldn't hear us talking back to you for some reason.

30

31

32

33

MR. KRISKA: Okay. Well, it's just the headphones I have on, I just figured it out.

34

35

36

37

MR. KRISKA: So I'll go back on mute from here.

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We heard your report. I just wanted to say that I'm glad you're seeing some ducks in the fall in the lower Koyukuk. Up here there's -- no lakes and everything, had no brood, there was no baby ducks, hardly no ducks at all, nice lakes, no ducks. So that's kind of a problem up this way.

MR. KRISKA: Yeah, that's kind of funny. It seems like we were seeing black ducks flying over here heading in a different direction and the

1 geese and the swans, so I assumed they were heading  
2 back down to south Alaska, I'm not really sure. But we  
3 were watching them from here. And usually we don't see  
4 black ducks flying back over there, the middle of the  
5 state, so I don't know what's going on there, but we  
6 seen a lot of flocks these last few days.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I've heard  
9 about black ducks being in some odd places, even the  
10 North Slope was seeing some species of black ducks that  
11 had never been seen over there.

12  
13 MR. KRISKA: Oh, just one more thing I  
14 seen this summer that was kind of crazy, it was some  
15 birds, I don't know what in the heck they were but they  
16 were red with like a red jay, you know how a blue jay  
17 has like a little crown on the back of its head, like a  
18 little pointy thing, but there was red and yellow birds  
19 on the beach of Nulato, and the first time in my life I  
20 ever seen those. I don't even know what the heck they  
21 were, just red and yellow.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those are most  
24 likely are.....

25  
26 MR. KRISKA: I don't know what they  
27 were, first time I ever seen them. I just stopped my  
28 boat coming back from fishing and there were six of  
29 them right there where I landed my boat and I could not  
30 -- I never seen them before -- they say -- but not in  
31 Alaska so.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we seen a lot  
34 of those, those are white-wing crossbills and they came  
35 because there's lots of cones, they eat the spruce  
36 cones, so they get on the ground to eat little pieces  
37 of sand for their gizzards, like a spruce chicken. So  
38 there's a lot of those guys. The females are  
39 yellow/green and the males are red.

40  
41 So, okay, thanks, Tommy.

42  
43 MR. KRISKA: Uh. Okay.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions for  
46 Tommy.

47  
48 MR. KRISKA: Nope, okay.

49  
50

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead.

4  
5 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I  
6 appreciate Tom's report because I know they -- him and  
7 some others really monitor the Koyukuk, and I  
8 appreciate those comments about the ducks and stuff  
9 being in the high water, being back in there because  
10 about 30 miles above here I been back there in August  
11 and I've seen a lot of swans that couldn't fly and  
12 stuff like that, and we just go on by them and let them  
13 go. But those -- I appreciate that report, Tom, and --  
14 for -- really, really interested in the numbers. We've  
15 -- numbers of the moose hunters and it's kind of  
16 interesting, the permits you are talking about. I've  
17 seen a lot of boats go by here, go by our camp, which  
18 is about 20 miles up there, and I guess that they  
19 haven't really gone past Nulato or Kaltag toward the  
20 Innoko, so at least we don't have to worry about that.  
21 But I appreciate that report, I mean that's what I like  
22 to hear, hear the numbers, to see what's going on.

23  
24 So thank you.

25  
26 MR. KRISKA: Yep, you're welcome.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good report, Tommy.  
29 Yeah, you got a good handle on what's going on in your  
30 country there so appreciate your input.

31  
32 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, I have a question  
33 for Tommy.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

36  
37 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Tommy, I didn't hear  
38 it correctly, did you say after you were doing your  
39 initial drift fishing and you were only getting one or  
40 two king salmon for a day of fishing, did you just  
41 switch your location or did you say you switched from  
42 driftnet to a dipnet?

43  
44 MR. KRISKA: No, I switched from a  
45 driftnet to a setnet, and the setnet worked way better  
46 than the driftnet. But you just had to go find the  
47 places, there was some areas that they fished a long  
48 time and no fish and some areas had a bunch of fish.  
49 So to go back to that it was some areas in the shallow

50



1 water, that's where we hit them. And they came in at  
2 night along the shallower parts in the eddy but when  
3 there's higher water you needed to find a different  
4 eddy and that's what we did and it was kind of weird to  
5 have fish nets all the way across, half way in between  
6 halfway and Nulato, the (indiscernible) side, right  
7 along the cut bank, there's an eddy that just formed  
8 there, but once the water dropped it was gone so it was  
9 a hit and miss thing.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's  
12 interesting. I went across the Yukon River bridge the  
13 end of June it was way up into the willows and there  
14 was so much drift down the middle of the river, I don't  
15 even think you could cross the river with a boat, it  
16 was just full of logs. So the fish must have had to go  
17 to the beach to get away from that high velocity.

18  
19 Other questions.

20  
21 MR. KRISKA: Yep. We had nets right  
22 along the cut banks and it was kind of funny but it  
23 worked.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: More questions, Tim.

26  
27 MR. GERVAIS: No, that was it, thanks  
28 for clarifying.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks. Okay,  
31 thanks, Tommy.

32  
33 MR. KRISKA: Okay.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you got a report  
36 Tim.

37  
38 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, did you say  
39 you're ready for my report?

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

42  
43 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you. Good morning  
44 everyone, this is Tim Gervais. I was just thinking  
45 what Tommy was saying about switching to set -- set  
46 gillnet and different locations and I think that's a  
47 really -- it's impressive that they were able to get  
48 their subsistence needs met that way. And I think it's  
49 a (indiscernible) that the subsistence users are going

50

1 to have to use going forward since we're seeing so much  
2 changes from the climate change and what not, we're  
3 getting different species and different fish and animal  
4 behavior and just need to try and not be frustrated  
5 with it and to sit down and think, think about what the  
6 animals are doing and adjust your harvesting strategy  
7 and techniques to meet that.

8  
9 Also I listened to a story this week  
10 where Newtok had lost a bunch of fish from the summer  
11 because they had power outages and I think it's  
12 important for people to realize and diversify where  
13 they're storing their food so that it doesn't all --  
14 freezer storage is fast and convenient if you have a  
15 power source, and a lot of people have kind of evolved  
16 into going that way with it, but canning, drying,  
17 salting is more older techniques, that are more full-  
18 proof as having -- being less susceptible to things  
19 such as power outages and what not.

20  
21 I appreciate everybody being on the  
22 call, I know it's a lot of extra work to do it over the  
23 phone. I don't enjoy it as much. And then I just  
24 appreciate everybody's extra effort in trying to  
25 complete our meeting and communicate well while we're  
26 working with the phone.

27  
28 The amount of vacant seats for our  
29 Council is, it's a big issue, and also I was talking to  
30 Karen last week and she said they were having some  
31 issue with getting Tommy's application redone. If that  
32 can't be approved, I think it's imperative we try to  
33 maintain Tommy's membership on the Council with some  
34 kind of executive order because for two reasons; he's  
35 really good in his subsistence knowledge, and secondly  
36 we don't have enough members to have him not be on the  
37 Council. So for those two reasons I hope some kind of  
38 extra action can be taken to maintain his participation  
39 on the Council and the justification, if anything, is  
40 due to Covid everybody's doing -- no scope of the  
41 Council's structure is different, people are --  
42 everybody's working at home and nobody's traveling and  
43 those reasons alone are reason enough to say, hey,  
44 maybe he didn't follow the letter of the regulation  
45 but (indiscernible - echo) I think an exception should  
46 be made for the various reasons I just stated.

47  
48 Regarding fishing, there was a lot of  
49 areas in the state that had extremely poor salmon runs.  
50

1 It wasn't such an issue on the -- Kuskokwim and the  
2 Yukon -- Prince William Sound, Kotzebue, Southeast,  
3 Chignik sockeyes, those were all way under performing,  
4 or non-performing. There was three fisheries that were  
5 notably for having good returns, one was Bristol Bay  
6 sockeye, another one was Kodiak pinks, and Chignik pink  
7 also had a nice return. So it's interesting to see  
8 which species are doing well and what areas are doing  
9 well as we're trying to, as a Council, and fishermen  
10 around the state are trying to figure out why a lot of  
11 these runs are failing and why we can't count on salmon  
12 the way we used to. We're fortunate in the middle  
13 Yukon that we have a good moose population and good  
14 hunting opportunity to make up in a year like this,  
15 where a lot of people did not get normal amount of  
16 subsistence fish -- subsistence salmon fish they would.

17  
18 When I was -- part of my summer I was  
19 tendering in Bristol Bay and I was talking to another  
20 tender that was working up in Kuskokwim Bay, and they  
21 were buying salmon, commercially-caught salmon that was  
22 being caught between Goodnews Bay and Quinhagak, it  
23 wasn't river caught -- it wasn't Kuskokwim River caught  
24 salmon, but they were targeting red salmon, which is  
25 interesting that that's now a fishery up there, that's  
26 a -- to me that's new within the last 10 years that  
27 they're getting commercial quantities of sockeye or red  
28 salmon. One issue I would like either the Federal or  
29 State or both managers to address is on the -- during  
30 this sockeye fishery that was going on in Kuskokwim  
31 Bay, they were catching king salmon, the one tender  
32 fellow I spoke with said they were having two openers a  
33 week, approximately 60 or 70 permit holders fishing  
34 drift gear, they were catching a lot of times over  
35 10,000 pounds of king salmon, which if they're 18  
36 pounds apiece -- I don't know what the average weight  
37 is on the Kuskokwim, but say it's 18 that's 560 fish an  
38 opener, 1,100 fish a week going into the commercial  
39 fisheries and I think I would like all the stakeholders  
40 on the Kuskokwim River to weigh in on this, if that  
41 economic opportunity from that commercial fishery was  
42 worth having that amount of king salmon taken out of  
43 the river system for spawning so I'd like the managers  
44 and the InterTribal Fish Commissions and the Refuge  
45 managers to comment on what's priorities and what do we  
46 do as a Council, on how do we balance the bycatch in --  
47 of the commercial fish -- of the king salmon in a  
48 commercial sockeye fishery, if it's worth it.

49  
50

1                   That's all I had -- two weeks ago we  
2 had a teleconference with Pippa Kenner and went over  
3 priority information needs for the Yukon. I think Jack  
4 did one the next day for the Kuskokwim, so we can talk  
5 about that when we get to that portion of the meeting.

6  
7                   And that's all I have, thank you.

8  
9                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much, Tim.  
10 That's very enlightening to realize that they had  
11 caught that much king salmon on the outside waters down  
12 towards Goodnews Bay in the drift gillnet fishery,  
13 that's a heck of a lot of king salmon when the  
14 performance of the Kuskokwim was actually really poor  
15 this year. So we'll have further discussions about  
16 that, that's for sure.

17  
18                  MR. GERVAIS: And one more point on  
19 that I forgot to talk about. I would like to know if  
20 the managers have genetic information on those kings to  
21 find out if they are mostly all Kuskokwim kings or some  
22 of them are Yukon and Bristol Bay kings.

23  
24                  Thank you.

25  
26                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, thank you. Any  
27 questions for Tim on his Council member report.

28  
29                  MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

30  
31                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

32  
33                  MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I had a  
34 question for Tim and I appreciate -- by the way I  
35 appreciate his being on our fisheries committee, or  
36 whatever committee he's on there because he has a  
37 pretty good grasp of the numbers and when he was giving  
38 his report about poor fishing, I was wondering if you  
39 could specify that in like our summer chum and fall  
40 chum, is he talking specifically about king runs or the  
41 fall runs and I was not glad to hear, but something  
42 that we're not the only ones facing this. And I guess  
43 when we get into the fisheries things they would be  
44 more specific. But I appreciate his looking in on that  
45 and I was just wondering if he could just specify what  
46 runs he was talking about in the state that are of  
47 concern.

48  
49                  Thank you.  
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

2  
3 Tim.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Thanks, Don.

6  
7 MR. HONEA: Sure.

8  
9 MR. GERVAIS: And Jack or Jenny could  
10 cut me off because I can talk for days about fish.

11  
12 (Laughter)

13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: But I'm going to start  
15 from the north, the Kotzebue -- Kotzebue is mainly a  
16 chum fishery and whereas they had a really great return  
17 in 2019, they only had a mediocre return this year.

18  
19 Bristol Bay, their king run was started  
20 out medium strength -- or low to medium strength and  
21 then it came on to reasonable levels kind of from the  
22 second half of the summer on. The Bristol Bay run  
23 overall was approximately seven days late. So at first  
24 people thought it was going to be a poor run but it  
25 ended up having really high returns, like one of the  
26 top five returns ever. But the fish there are small.  
27 There's so many fish and either with some combination,  
28 which is beyond my scope to be able to put on the  
29 record here, some combination between -- of course when  
30 you have a lot of fish, generally that age class of  
31 fish that's coming back, they're going to be small  
32 because there's less food for them to eat. But I think  
33 in the Bay we see a big trend of -- the fish are just  
34 getting smaller because gillnet being size selected  
35 gear, the larger and medium size fish or standard sized  
36 fish are getting caught, younger ones are the ones that  
37 keep getting up on the spawning grounds, and the size  
38 of fish is declining over the course of 120 years, you  
39 can see where they're going from -- where it used to be  
40 6.5 inch gear, then there was 6 inch gear, 5.5 inch  
41 gear. I started there in 2003 it was 5-1/8 was the  
42 normal gear, now no less than 20 years later, the most  
43 common gear size is 4-3/4 inch, and some people use 4.5  
44 gear, which drifts and there's pink fishing gear for  
45 gillnetting and now that's starting to be common as a  
46 sockeye gear. So that's a significant thing that the  
47 State needs to deal with, I mean not just ADF&G the  
48 whole state of Alaska needs to figure out a better way  
49 to fish to reverse that trend.

50

1 Southeast salmon, that's pink and chum  
2 salmon. The chum salmon is mostly hatchery fish and  
3 both of those chum and pink salmon for southeast  
4 fishermen was poor.

5  
6 Prince William Sound, they did better  
7 on their wild stocks, but 80 percent of what they catch  
8 is hatchery pink salmon and that fish did not survive  
9 well.

10  
11 So I think I'd wanted to get more  
12 information on it, I feel that what the State -- the  
13 amount of hatchery production in the State of Alaska,  
14 and the hatchery production that's going in Russia,  
15 Japan, in Canada and potentially, I don't know if  
16 Washington and Oregon, how much they affect the Alaskan  
17 salmon, but I think there's so much hatchery production  
18 going on that it's really -- when you have big  
19 starvation events, that occurred, like from 2014 to  
20 2016 in the Gulf of Alaska, when you put a lot of  
21 hatchery production on top of the starvation event,  
22 then a lot of fish don't survive when they're out in  
23 the marine environment. So I would like to research to  
24 kind of get a handle on what's going on with -- what's  
25 the amount of food supply available in the ocean and is  
26 that why we're having bad survivability of all these  
27 different salmon, not just -- throughout the state, but  
28 it affects our area because it affects the Kuskokwim  
29 and the Yukon and the Koyukuk Rivers.

30  
31 Sorry to take a lot of time but it's a  
32 big issue, it's a broad topic.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tim.  
35 Yeah, the Bristol Bay sockeye salmon predominately stay  
36 in the Bering Sea, which has a different water  
37 temperature regime and so forth. Your high production  
38 year, usually the size declines, 1965 various, 1970,  
39 various big years they get their -- they're small.  
40 Next year will be big, that cohort's going to come --  
41 there's going to be a bunch of three ocean fish come  
42 back and there's going to be some really large ones.  
43 So I fished in Bristol Bay for 32 years so I know quite  
44 a bit about Bristol Bay sockeye. But it is selective  
45 -- gear size selection for smaller -- letting smaller  
46 fish through the net actually breeds for smaller fish,  
47 that's a known fact. Though we do have some problems  
48 with that on the Yukon River, especially early before  
49 the gear size changes that they had back after 2011,

1 they started into different gear sizes on the Yukon  
2 River for chinook salmon moving to 7.5, which is for  
3 optimum harvest.

4  
5 Any other questions for Tim on his  
6 report.

7  
8 (No comments)

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None.

11  
12 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, this is Tom.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Tom.

15  
16 MR. KRISKA: Hey, Tim, I appreciate you  
17 bringing up that me being on that Western Interior  
18 Regional -- last year, now I remember filling out that  
19 application right at the meeting and turning it in but  
20 I don't know, it might have got lost or whatever  
21 happened with it, but that's one of the reasons I  
22 didn't fill out later on, I filled it out then. So  
23 anyway, it's there somewhere, I know I handed it in,  
24 because I went through all my other -- I keep every --  
25 every time I go to a meeting, for the last 20 years or  
26 whatever, I keep all those documents in a box, I bring  
27 them home and put them away, so I looked through it and  
28 it's not in there so I know I had to have handed it in  
29 during the meeting because I filled it out then. So I  
30 just wanted to thank you for that.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tommy. If you  
33 remember submitting it it may have gotten bunched in  
34 with some other stuff and got discarded. So I'm  
35 looking down our Region 6 list we have here and we have  
36 three vacancies open right now. We have a 2019  
37 vacancy, that's open right now. We got one for 20 --  
38 apparently we have open seats and we would really,  
39 really hate to lose you Tommy on this Council. So if  
40 you're.....

41  
42 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I was talking to  
43 Karen about that and I hope -- I mean I don't mind  
44 staying on there if the Board or something can help me  
45 out with that.

46  
47 Sorry to get off track here but I just  
48 remembered I didn't put that in my report, but I am now  
49 I guess.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2

3 Karen, are you still there.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, thank you, Mr.  
6 Chair. Mr. Kriska, I went into the office and it's  
7 like a ghost town and I went through all the paperwork  
8 from the meeting back in March and I was unable to  
9 locate any application from you. As you know I'm  
10 usually pretty good about keeping up with that stuff  
11 and I just -- I went through everything, and it's very  
12 frustrating because I was hoping to find something and  
13 I can't tell you at this point what kind of action can  
14 or cannot be taken but I certainly will bring this up  
15 with the Board and folks to see what can happen. At  
16 this point, though, what I'd like to ask since we're on  
17 the subject, the Council to do, the new application for  
18 the next cycle is out and we really, really need to get  
19 applicants from -- there are a lot of vacant seats on  
20 this Council and we don't get a lot of applications and  
21 we really need to start getting more and more  
22 applications from folks so we can fill these vacant  
23 seats. If it's an issue with this Council, then we  
24 have other people in the ranks put into those seats.

25

26 Thank you, very much for the discussion  
27 and I'll do what I can from my end.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: And we'll need to mute  
34 a phone, if somebody could, we're getting a lot of  
35 background noise.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is your phone still  
40 open, Tommy.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tommy says he  
45 submitted an application and I vaguely remember him  
46 passing you papers during our meeting right before --  
47 or after a break or something, I recall that. I would  
48 really hate to lose Tommy off of this Council. If he  
49 can -- find out from the Solicitor if he can sign an

50



1 affidavit that he actually did submit an application  
2 and if that can suffice as his -- so the Board has  
3 already made the recommendations to the Secretary of  
4 Interior, that's past now, is that what you're trying  
5 to tell us Karen?

6  
7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, it has, Mr.  
8 Chair.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

11  
12 MS. DEATHERAGE: And it's quite an  
13 extensive process.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that.....

16  
17 MS. DEATHERAGE: But like I said, I  
18 will followup with this conversation and I generally,  
19 as you know, I have one big notebook I bring and  
20 everything goes in there and I went through that  
21 paperwork and I did not -- I was not able to locate an  
22 application so not quite sure what happened to that but  
23 I will follow up for the Council.

24  
25 Thank you.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So are you still  
28 there, Tommy?

29  
30 (No comments)

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently he muted  
33 out. But I do have a big concern about losing Mr.  
34 Kriska from this Council.

35  
36 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I'm here.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So yeah Karen's  
39 telling us that, you know, the Federal Subsistence  
40 Board already reviewed the applications that they had,  
41 yours wasn't found, so they actually submitted the  
42 applications.....

43  
44 MR. KRISKA: Okay.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and the  
47 Secretary of Interior should be appointing, so you're  
48 not actually -- we can't do much about that right now.  
49 But you can submit.....

50

1 MR. KRISKA: Okay.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....another  
4 application for the next appointment, which would be  
5 this coming year.

6  
7 MR. KRISKA: Okay.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I really -- if  
10 you could do that, submit another application to get  
11 back on this Council, I would really appreciate you  
12 coming back on again. Somehow that got lost in the  
13 shuffle along the way.

14  
15 I did think of a question after your  
16 report, did you see very many yearling bull moose when  
17 you're out roaming around down in the lower Koyukuk. I  
18 heard about a lot of winter dead loss moose around  
19 Galena. I was told that there were 12 dead moose  
20 around.....

21  
22 MR. KRISKA: Oh, yeah, there was a lot  
23 of -- the yearlings, we didn't see so many but, boy,  
24 this year there was a lot of newborn calves.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

27  
28 MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the calves, and a  
31 few yearlings, there were some yearlings.

32  
33 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, there were some  
34 yearlings but really I didn't see a lot of them this  
35 year.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

38  
39 MR. KRISKA: But there was a lot of  
40 other moose and I see the newborn calves of this year  
41 but they're not -- the yearlings, it seemed like some  
42 of them were not there.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Can I make a comment.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

49  
50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, is there some kind  
2 of -- I don't even know the terminology on it, but  
3 special action request, or some kind of action that the  
4 WIRAC can take to try to get an exception for Tommy's  
5 application not getting found or processed? I think  
6 there's a lot of justification about it because of the  
7 Covid stuff and people working remotely and I don't  
8 want to have him taken off the Council just because  
9 it's not fitting in their regulation time -- timeline  
10 or what not. And the second reason is we can't have  
11 any more seats go vacant.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: True. This Council  
14 could write a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board  
15 Chair, Anthony Christianson, stating that Mr. Kriska  
16 submitted an application, recalls submitting an  
17 application, this Council would hate to lose him and  
18 request that the Federal Subsistence Board Chair make  
19 an exception with the concurrence of the Solicitor, Ken  
20 Lord, to submit -- process his application and submit  
21 it for appointment to the 2021 membership. I think  
22 that's worth a try.

23  
24 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I'll make a motion  
25 for regarding what you just said.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. If you'd like  
28 to make that motion, Tim, go ahead.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: All right. I would like  
31 to make a motion that the WIRAC draft a letter to  
32 Anthony Christianson and our Solicitor requesting those  
33 -- the Federal Subsistence Board to take the non-  
34 customary action of approving Tommy's application that  
35 was -- it got lost and it needs to talk about Tommy's  
36 good work he's done with us so far and also need to  
37 highlight the fact that we're not getting, through the  
38 existing regulation framework we're not getting our  
39 seats filled, we cannot afford to have more seats  
40 become vacant over an administrative -- that's all it  
41 is, to me, unless anybody has something to say  
42 otherwise, I'm happy to hear it, but to me it just  
43 sounds like as a housekeeping, as to why his  
44 application didn't get found or processed, and so I  
45 think that fits into the spirit of what Tommy was  
46 trying to do by filling out his application to be on  
47 the Board -- on the WIRAC and I think the Federal  
48 Subsistence Board should make a special exception to  
49 approve his previous application that didn't get

50

1 submitted on the existing timeline this summer.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a second  
4 to that motion.

5

6 MR. HONEA: Can I second that with  
7 modifications.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I really like that  
12 idea and we could be specific about it because I mean I  
13 like that but when we were at our McGrath -- at the  
14 McGrath, maybe about a year ago, whatever, I think most  
15 of us were pretty overjoyed or pretty happy that Kevin  
16 Whitworth over there had put in for that and also Anna  
17 Demoski from Nulato here put in that and I actually,  
18 you know, spoke up when they had the call in for  
19 whatever they -- references -- and I'm just kind of  
20 disappointed so I'd like to modify that to -- you know,  
21 we could mention Tommy specifically, but other than  
22 that I mean if there was something that we should put  
23 on our yearly report or something, I don't know where  
24 that stands, and it's really frustrating that McGrath  
25 still does not have anything. So if there was a way to  
26 inject that in there.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin made his  
29 application -- Whitworth -- and he's on the call here,  
30 he made his application, that's been processed through  
31 the Federal Subsistence Board and his application or  
32 appointment is sitting before the Secretary of  
33 Interior's office and hopefully the Secretary of  
34 Interior have acted on those. We don't know what the  
35 Federal Subsistence Board made recommendations, but as  
36 far as I know his application should be before the  
37 Secretary of Interior's office. What we're asking for  
38 in this letter is an exception for Tommy Kriska, that  
39 his application may have been lost or not submitted on  
40 time, and that he has well standing with this Council  
41 and that this Council would support the Federal  
42 Subsistence Board making an exception to approve an  
43 exception for his application moving forward to the  
44 Secretary of Interior, which is going to make  
45 appointments by December 2nd, is when they're supposed  
46 to.

47

48 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 I second that motion then.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So any  
2 further discussion on that motion.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MR. HONEA: Question.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
9 Those in favor of forwarding that letter to the  
10 Chairman of the Federal Subsistence Board regarding  
11 Tommy Kriska's application say aye.

12  
13 IN UNISON: Aye.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

16  
17 (No opposing votes)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion passed.

20  
21 REPORTER: Sorry, who seconded that?

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again?

24  
25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Donald Honea. Donald  
26 Honea seconded the motion.

27  
28 MR. HONEA: Yes.

29  
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.

31  
32 REPORTER: Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Don Honea. So  
35 for the court recorder, she's not familiar with your  
36 voice and so forth, when you speak, Council members  
37 should state their name when they're seconding or  
38 making a motion.

39  
40 MR. HONEA: Thank you. Understood.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair's  
43 report. The Western Interior went over all those Board  
44 of Game proposals. I listened into the Board of Game  
45 meeting and interacted with the Board liaison, which is  
46 George Pappas, on clarification of language for  
47 specific proposals. And one, specifically, that was  
48 one of the bigger affects for this region was a  
49 proposal to lengthen the moose season from September 25

50

1 to October 1 for Unit 24B which is Allakaket, Alatna  
2 and Evansville. The Board passed that proposal and  
3 that was the biggest success of the Koyukuk River  
4 Advisory and the Western Interior Council, to extend  
5 that as moose keep moving later and later in the  
6 season, that is becoming more and more of an issue for  
7 people to meet their subsistence needs. And so I  
8 called the Chief of Allakaket and reminded him on  
9 September 25 to put it on the VHF but their season --  
10 some people weren't aware of that. So that's a good  
11 thing.

12  
13 One of the bad things that the Board of  
14 Game did was lengthen the sheep season of the Dalton  
15 Highway Corridor by two weeks when we've had an over 80  
16 percent decline in the sheep population. I count sheep  
17 and I count no more than 38 sheep in the mountains of  
18 the Dalton Highway Corridor south of Atigun Pass. It's  
19 a bleak situation here, the Department of Fish and Game  
20 has done no survey, they have no data to support and  
21 forcing the proposal to lengthen the sheep season, so I  
22 was highly annoyed by that. I had quite a bit of email  
23 discussion with Region 3 Staff in Fairbanks and the  
24 Commissioner's office, the Division of Wildlife  
25 Conservation in Juneau.

26  
27 I interacted with the Federal  
28 Subsistence Board on the wildlife proposals, and the  
29 Federal Subsistence Board meeting was on teleconference  
30 as we went into Covid shutdown after the WIRAC meeting  
31 in early March, and the Federal Subsistence Board had  
32 to do teleconference just like we're doing right now.  
33 So I interacted with them.

34  
35 I interacted with the Kuskokwim  
36 InterTribal Fish Commission meetings on the pre-season  
37 planning.

38  
39 And I also interacted during the in-  
40 season management as the Kuskokwim River came in really  
41 weak and I actually saw on Facebook fishers from the  
42 lower Kuskokwim actually putting up photos of drift  
43 gillnet fishing during closures at night and asked why  
44 there wasn't any enforcement about that. They were  
45 actually fishing during closures. And so there was --  
46 I am concerned about the harvest on the Kuskokwim  
47 River, there may be significant unreported harvest  
48 because people are fishing illegally.

49  
50

1 I'm also concerned about Tim's  
2 discussion about so much chinook salmon being caught  
3 just outside the mouth of the Kuskokwim River, that was  
4 enlightening. I didn't know about that one.  
5

6 The sheep population and moose  
7 population here in the Central Brooks Range have  
8 declined 30 to 50 percent for moose. We've lost a lot  
9 of the yearlings, a lot of the calves for two years.  
10 We didn't just have one bad winter, we've had two bad  
11 winters, '18/19 and '19/20 were really bad winters with  
12 deep snow. But for the sheep it snowed in September a  
13 foot and a half on top of the mountains, by late  
14 October there was three feet of snow on top and it  
15 rained for a day and a half, an inch and three quarter  
16 of rain in October and then it rained in March and  
17 April glazing the mountains off and that's why we have  
18 no sheep here. To the east of us there's more sheep,  
19 but still significant declines in sheep. The Central  
20 Brooks Range has had a phenomenal weather events for  
21 sheep population here and the Council should be aware  
22 of it. Sheep is a significant subsistence animal in  
23 the mountains, for Allakaket, Alatna, Evansville.....  
24

25 Hello, is anybody there?  
26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm still here, Jack.  
28

29 MR. GERVAIS: We hear you Jack.  
30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I heard it blank out  
32 so something died out there. So, okay, I'll keep  
33 going.

34 So we've had significant reductions in  
35 the numbers of animals, yet, there's more guides than  
36 there's ever been. They closed off Canada, the guides  
37 that are for BLM, they've allowed more permanent -- the  
38 existing guides, they're hiring guides -- there's  
39 multiple guides working with one guide on the same BLM  
40 permit. There's a guide operation working off of a  
41 private property here in Wiseman, they had three  
42 airplanes, they got a 180 SuperCub on floats, they had  
43 two SuperCubs on tundra tires and they just hunted  
44 really hard here. I was complaining to a BLM person  
45 who came into Wiseman about the amount of guides that  
46 they have here and one of the significant issues is the  
47 number of guides that are working under each permit,  
48 the number of assistant guides, and the number of  
49 registered guides hunting under one permittee. So that  
50

1 should be an annual report issue that goes into our  
2 annual report, the BLM issue on permits, and how much  
3 harvest is allocated to one guide under one permit.  
4 It's a significant issue when you have so few animals  
5 that are surviving the brutal winters. Basically there  
6 are seven rams in the Dalton Highway Corridor south of  
7 Atigun Pass. Those rams, most of those rams are sub-  
8 legal, but in two years they're going to become legal  
9 and they will kill those, the sheep will be gone and  
10 we'll be in full reproductive failure. We have no  
11 lambs, of 31 years, there's only three lambs, only 31  
12 years and the Dalton Highway Corridor south of Atigun  
13 Pass, only seven rams, and only three lambs and we  
14 still have lots of wolves and we still have lots of  
15 lynx in the Brooks Range. Lynx kill dall sheep  
16 unbeknownst to a lot of people.

17  
18 So this Covid issue is a big deal for  
19 subsistence users. We have virtually no work, rural  
20 Alaskans basically have very little work, and so  
21 subsistence is a giant thing for rural villages that  
22 have no work, and they rely heavily on the subsistence  
23 resources but, yet, the State of Alaska and the Bureau  
24 of Land Management is in concert in increasing the  
25 guiding force against the subsistence resources by four  
26 times, there were four times as many guides and guide  
27 operations working here. That's a significant impact  
28 of resources. So that's 'under -- when we talk to the  
29 BLM, we're going to be talking about that. The  
30 populations are way down.

31  
32 These Council membership has got to  
33 start increasing from the Department of Interior. The  
34 Department of Interior needs to make the appointments  
35 on time, they have to stop subtracting, they didn't  
36 make an appointment to this Council, they had three  
37 seats to appoint to last round and they appointed two,  
38 they subtracted one of our seats. And I'm concerned  
39 that their objective is to continue to trim down the  
40 Councils, without public comment, there's no public  
41 comment about reducing the membership, that's in our  
42 charter, so the Secretary of Interior's office has to  
43 abide by the charter, the charter states that we have  
44 so many membership and we need to -- we have 10 members  
45 on this Council and the Secretary of Interior has to  
46 abide by the .805 language regarding our Regional  
47 Councils.

48  
49 I wanted to state that Ray Collins, our  
50



1 past member, passed away right before the Federal  
2 Subsistence Board meeting, actually the morning the day  
3 before the meeting, and he was recognized by the  
4 Federal Subsistence Board for his longstanding work  
5 with the Council.

6  
7 I went to the Yukon River fishing  
8 twice, it was bleak fishing down there. There was a  
9 lot of fishing pressure in 5C in mid-July, there was  
10 not that many chinook salmon but there were lots of  
11 broad whitefish, there's a lot of those moving up the  
12 river, but as far as salmon, it's been a bleak  
13 situation on the Yukon River, and the escapements into  
14 Canada through the Eagle Sonar for fall chum was like  
15 23,000. The performance of the chinook into Canada was  
16 like 30-some thousand. So I'm really concerned about  
17 the numbers of salmon escapements on the Yukon River.  
18 That's an issue we'll be discussing also.

19  
20 So that would be my report at this  
21 time.

22  
23 Any questions.

24  
25 MRS. PELKOLA: Jack, this is Jenny. I  
26 appreciate your comments but I strongly agree with you  
27 that we should keep on the backs of the subsistence --  
28 Interior, to keep our Board filled. And also maybe to  
29 remind them of .805 ANILCA, and like you say, I feel  
30 like they are trying to trim the Boards, and I seen  
31 that somewhere, but I think we need to fight back  
32 somehow.

33  
34 Thank you.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Karen,  
37 correct me if I'm wrong, but does not the Federal  
38 Subsistence Board and the Secretary of Interior adopt  
39 our charters?

40  
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
42 This is Karen Deatherage. Yes, they do adopt the  
43 charters. And I think what -- what happened last year  
44 late in the season is that, as you indicated, there  
45 were several applicants that were not approved. The  
46 Office of Subsistence Management really pressured DOI  
47 to get as many Councils up to 70 percent fulfillment so  
48 that they could effectively operate. There is no set  
49 thing in policy with DOI that says they are going to  
50

1 reduce Council membership, it's simply a matter of not  
2 having the appointments made, or not moving candidates  
3 forward. So this is what we're seeing.

4  
5 And as you indicated, we're hoping by  
6 December 2nd, that there will be additional  
7 appointments but we're not sure if those will come in  
8 on time. Last year it wasn't until February that we  
9 received appointments and so it's been a challenging  
10 system. But I do want to make sure people understand,  
11 there has been no formal action taken to reduce the  
12 number of Council members from the current 10 or 13  
13 members stipulated in the charters to lower numbers.  
14 It's just a simple fact that they're just not  
15 appointing the candidates that put forth their  
16 application.

17  
18 Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Exactly. So the  
21 ANILCA statute, which the Secretary of Interior is  
22 obligated to abide by, so that there shall -- rural  
23 residents shall have a meaningful role in subsistence  
24 management and .805 designates these Councils, the  
25 Secretary of Interior's office has approved the make up  
26 of each Council by number of membership and so it's  
27 apparent to me that the Secretary of Interior's office  
28 needs to be reminded that they've not gone through a  
29 public process of reducing the number of Council  
30 members formally and cannot arbitrarily subtract  
31 Council members just because they don't feel like  
32 making appointments when they had a compliment of  
33 applications that were approved by the Federal  
34 Subsistence Board.

35  
36 So don't know how to address that. I do  
37 feel it's an issue that the Federal Subsistence Board  
38 -- we can't speak directly to the Secretary of  
39 Interior's office like the Subsistence Resource  
40 Commission's can, under .808 of ANILCA, Commissions can  
41 talk to the Secretary of Interior whereas Councils  
42 cannot, we have to talk through the Federal Subsistence  
43 Board process. So I feel that this is, again, an issue  
44 which every Council member here has stated, on our  
45 annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board that  
46 this is an issue and these are some of the reasons why  
47 this is an issue. The Secretary of Interior's office  
48 needs to abide by the charters, and by the statute.

49  
50

1 Does the Council feel that this should  
2 be an annual report topic?

3  
4 MR. HONEA: Yes.

5  
6 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Don, yes.

9  
10 MR. GERVAIS: I have a question, Jack.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tim.

13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim, I have a  
15 question for Karen. Are other Councils around the  
16 state have the same exact, or similar experience with  
17 not getting their appointments made or is it just  
18 isolated to the WIRAC?

19  
20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Member  
21 Gervais, that's an excellent question. This is Karen  
22 Deatherage. And, yes, all of the Councils have been  
23 affected, some dramatically, and the Office of  
24 Subsistence Management, as I stated before, had to do  
25 some intense lobbying to get Councils up to a minimum,  
26 or maximum in most cases of 70 percent, you know, or  
27 less -- or 30 percent vacancy, and so this is something  
28 that is Council-wide. Some of you may or may not  
29 recall that there was a very intense review of the  
30 Federal Advisory Committee system, and the OSM  
31 responded over the summer with a historical and  
32 thorough report on the validity and the importance of  
33 the subsistence Councils but this is not just  
34 subsistence Councils, this is the entire Federal  
35 Advisory Committee process has been under extreme  
36 scrutiny with this Administration and so there's a lot  
37 happening across the Board that we don't have a lot of  
38 control over because ultimately when it comes to these  
39 Federal Advisory Committees, it is up to the  
40 Administration to determine whether or not they feel it  
41 is critical or necessary. The good news is in the case  
42 of the Federal Subsistence Councils, it's required  
43 under ANILCA so the threat is not as big. And as Jack  
44 noted, Chairman Reakoff noted, you know, this is under  
45 statute that you're supposed to have reasonable  
46 participation in this program and so I think it's a  
47 very good thing to put in the letter.

48  
49 But, again, this is a nation-wide,  
50

1 across the board, Federal Advisory Committee review  
2 that has occurred and all the Advisory Committee's out  
3 there are having challenges.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Karen.

8

9 MR. GERVAIS: Can I have a follow up,  
10 Jack.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

13

14 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais. So  
15 Karen and Jack, and other Council members, if the  
16 Department Interior's required to appoint people to be  
17 on these Councils and that's law, why can't the WIRAC  
18 work with the -- is the Solicitor an employee of OSM,  
19 is that correct?

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: He's an employee of  
22 the Department of Interior, the U.S. Federal  
23 Government, not of the Office of Subsistence  
24 Management.

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, would it be  
27 the Solicitor the person that would be able to take  
28 action and require Department of Interior to have these  
29 appointments made, if it's law?

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Tim.

32

33 MR. GERVAIS: Like we're talking about  
34 what actions to take and we're talking about drafting a  
35 letter, we're talking about putting it in our annual  
36 report, well, why can't the WIRAC engage with the  
37 Solicitor directly and say, hey, appoint our  
38 membership.

39

40 MRS. PELKOLA: Jack, this is Jenny. I  
41 would also like to add to Tim's. Maybe we can get all  
42 the RACs together and that way our voices will be  
43 stronger.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that this  
46 issue, it should be a letter to the Federal Subsistence  
47 Board regarding this appointment issue that should CC'd  
48 to all the other nine Councils so they're all aware of  
49 what each other's issue is with this. But basically by

50

1 not making the appointments, the Councils are so -- the  
2 regions are so huge that every member is necessary,  
3 that's why there's 10 members for this Council,  
4 minimum. It's not supporting the -- the premise of the  
5 law is that the rural residents have a meaningful role  
6 in fish and wildlife management, and so this is an  
7 issue that the Secretary of Interior's office and the  
8 Administration needs to understand that this is an  
9 important statutory requirement, and so subtracting --  
10 arbitrarily subtracting membership highly affects the  
11 meaningful role of the Council.

12

13 Any other comments on that issue.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
16 Karen Deatherage.

17

18 I just got clarification that our  
19 Solicitor Ken Lord actually works for the Board, just  
20 to be clear. I think one of the things, and he's also  
21 available to advise the Council, my sense at this point  
22 is to get this process started about how serious the  
23 Council believes this issue is and how the Council  
24 believes that it's violating the ANILCA and the  
25 meaningful activity of this Council and the regulatory  
26 process for subsistence in Alaska, I think that the  
27 letter going to the Board is an excellent first step  
28 where the Solicitor can be involved, at the Board  
29 level, and advise the Board as to what action it can  
30 take on behalf of the Council.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The letter that  
35 we'll promulgate and send to the Federal Subsistence  
36 Board should include all 10 other -- the nine other  
37 Regional Councils and CC'd to the Solicitor -- the  
38 Federal Subsistence Board Solicitor, Ken Lord. I think  
39 there should be a motion for this letter to be moved  
40 forward. Would anyone like to make a motion to submit  
41 a letter on this appointment issue regarding the  
42 statutory mandates of ANILCA and the meaningful role  
43 for subsistence management in Alaska by the Regional  
44 Advisory Councils.

45

46 MRS. PELKOLA: I'll second, this is  
47 Jenny.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just made that

50

1 language, do you want to make that motion, Jenny.

2

3 MRS. PELKOLA: Yes.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny made the  
6 motion, do we have a second.

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded by Tim.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Tim.  
11 Further discussion.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
14 Karen Deatherage. Would you like to incorporate both  
15 of the issues the Council's discussed into one letter  
16 to the Board, including Mr. Kriska's appointment, which  
17 does, obviously have some bearing on the second issue  
18 of not having an adequate number of subsistence and  
19 commercial representatives on this Council?

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would you like.....

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Or would you like  
24 those letters to be separate?

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

27

28 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais. I  
29 would like to see Tommy's letter be separate because  
30 the secondary item that came up with the appointments  
31 not being made on time and including all the Councils  
32 on that, I think this issue is going to get drawn out  
33 and take a long time to get resolved, and what we need  
34 to happen with Tommy is we need to have some action on  
35 that within the next couple months. So I would prefer  
36 to see Tommy's letter be separate but you could  
37 reference it in the second letter, you could reference  
38 the issues from the second in Tommy's letter to help  
39 our justification out. But I think because of  
40 timeliness and our trying to get Tommy reappointed  
41 before our spring meeting needs to obviously dealt with  
42 on its own.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I'll agree to  
45 that.

46

47 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is  
2 Don. I agree with Tim. I think the matter of an  
3 appointment like Tommy's is too important to put into  
4 another one and let's just keep them separate.

5  
6 Thank you.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

9  
10 MRS. PELKOLA: Jenny. I also agree.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Jenny.

13  
14 MS. DEATHERAGE: So I appreciate that  
15 input.

16  
17 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim. I have a  
18 comment.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

21  
22 MR. GERVAIS: Well, I guess we could  
23 cover it later but is it possible the Solicitor could  
24 address this Council during this meeting because we're  
25 only meeting twice a year so if we send him a letter  
26 then we're going to lose half a year time waiting for a  
27 response and I would like the Solicitor to address our  
28 options with us during this meeting.

29  
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr.  
31 Gervais. This is Karen Deatherage. The Solicitor can  
32 only address the Council at the direction of the Board.  
33 And we can certainly look into seeing whether or not  
34 that's possible to get Board engagement, to have the  
35 Solicitor address the Council, but at this point, the  
36 Solicitor cannot directly address the Council at this  
37 meeting.

38  
39 Thank you.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that's the  
42 intent of the letter. There'll be two separate  
43 letters, one regarding the exception for Tommy Kriska,  
44 the other letter is to the Federal Subsistence Board  
45 highlighting -- and to the other Councils, and to the  
46 Solicitor highlighting the issue of the full compliment  
47 of membership on the Regional Councils is imperative to  
48 having the Councils accomplish the statutory language  
49 in .805.

50

1 Any further discussion.

2  
3 MR. HONEA: Question.

4  
5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I would  
6 like to ask one more question and I apologize, this is  
7 Karen, for the interruption.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

10  
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Could you tell me who  
12 seconded this motion by Member Pelkola.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny, and seconded  
15 by Don [sic].

16  
17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we still have a  
20 question.

21  
22 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I call for the  
23 question.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Question's  
26 called, those in favor of the motion to submit a letter  
27 to the Federal Subsistence Board signify by saying aye.

28  
29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

32  
33 (No opposing votes)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, motion  
36 passes.

37  
38 So that covered the members report,  
39 Chair's report.

40  
41 So at this point are we taking breaks  
42 Karen, or are we just moving through, people are taking  
43 individual breaks on the call or what's the procedure  
44 here?

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
47 this is Karen Deatherage. That's at the discretion of  
48 your goodself, Mr. Chair.

49  
50



1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do Council  
2 members, do you need a break, or we're working on the  
3 phone here, it's not like we're sitting at a real face  
4 to face meeting.

5  
6 MR. HONEA: Yes, Mr. Chair, I agree, a  
7 10 or 15 minute break would be great.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

10  
11 So I got 11:17, so we can take a break  
12 until 11:30 and come -- I'm going to leave my phone on.

13  
14 (Off record)

15  
16 (On record)

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to bring  
19 this meeting back to order, we've been on a break for a  
20 little over 15 minutes, so do we have the Council back  
21 on the call.

22  
23 So do we have the Council back on the  
24 call.

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: Hi Jack, this is Tim.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim's here. Don.  
29 Jenny.

30  
31 MRS. PELKOLA: Yes, I'm back on.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You there,  
34 Don.

35  
36 (No comments)

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin.

39  
40 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, I'm here.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we got --  
43 Tommy's there so we've got a quorum right now so we're  
44 just going to continue. So Don said he was going to  
45 come back, he needed a break.

46  
47 On the public and tribal comment on  
48 non-agenda items. If we have any kind of public  
49 member, or a tribal member on the call who wants to

50

1 speak on a non-agenda item and we have agenda items  
2 like fishery issues, fisheries proposals, et cetera,  
3 but we're not taking comments on those, but if you have  
4 a comment on any other issue, we would like to hear  
5 those comments.

6  
7 Do we have anybody on the call that  
8 would like to comment, public or tribal.

9  
10 MRS. PELKOLA: Yes, this is Jenny, I  
11 have Suzie here.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

14  
15 MS. SAM: Good morning, everybody. I  
16 was listening to the conversation about the filling of  
17 seats.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

20  
21 MS. SAM: And I remember the Department  
22 used to send us the packets for anybody to apply and I  
23 haven't received from Loudon for a little bit and maybe  
24 a good way to get the information out is to send the  
25 information to the tribes so that they could help try  
26 to fill some of the seats.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yeah, that's a  
29 good idea. Is Orville Lind there, or Karen, can you  
30 answer that question.

31  
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
33 We generally have a list where we do send out to tribes  
34 so Suzie I'll go ahead and check that to make sure you  
35 guys are on there. But I can tell you that I am doing  
36 a special mailing after the Council meeting cycle to  
37 really focus in on the organizations and folks that I  
38 know of that participate in the meeting a lot, too, to  
39 make sure that you guys get some applications in your  
40 hands to help with recruitment. So we'll be doing a  
41 double, and possible triple-take on applications for  
42 this upcoming cycle.

43  
44 But thank you very much for bringing  
45 that up and thank you for helping out.

46  
47 MS. SAM: Okay, thank you.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that

50

1 Gretchen, Suzie.

2

3 Any other public comments on non-agenda  
4 items or tribal comments.

5

6 Do we have any tribes on the call.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So don't hear  
11 anybody else that wants to make a comment at this time.

12

13 So we have the .805(c) report. Karen,  
14 did you want to go over that.

15

16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, thank you, Mr.  
17 Chair. This is Karen Deatherage with the Office of  
18 Subsistence Management.

19

20 And in a nutshell the .805(c) report is  
21 a report we provide, it's on Page 13 by the way of your  
22 meeting books, it's a report we provide to the Chair of  
23 your Council that lets them know how the Board acted on  
24 proposals that were specific to your region or entailed  
25 customary and traditional use from your region or  
26 related to wildlife closures in your region.

27

28 I'm going to read a blurb right now  
29 that specifies what it is, under ANILCA, just so  
30 everybody's on top of it.

31

32 Section .805 of the Alaska National  
33 Interests Land Conservation Act provides that the Board  
34 will accept the recommendations of a Subsistence  
35 Regional Advisory Council regarding take unless;

36

37 1. The recommendation is not supported  
38 by substantial evidence;

39

40 2. The recommendation violates  
41 recognized principals of fish and wildlife  
42 conservation; or

43

44 3. Adopting the recommendation would  
45 be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence  
46 needs.

47

48 When a Council's recommendation is not  
49 adopted, the Board is required by Secretarial

50

1 regulations to set forth the factual basis and reasons  
2 for the decisions. So in other words the Board is  
3 required under ANILCA to defer to the Council  
4 recommendations on proposals unless it didn't meet one  
5 of those three criteria that I read out. If the Board  
6 does act in deference to the Council it has to provide  
7 a reason why it didn't.

8  
9 So this letter that's in your meeting  
10 book outlines the Board's actions.

11  
12 I can tell you that the Board acted in  
13 whole or in part on all of the Councils recommendations  
14 for the wildlife proposals during the last regulatory  
15 cycle. The only proposal where the Board did not act,  
16 according to the regulation -- or the recommendation of  
17 the Council was Proposal 26 regarding snowmachine use  
18 for positioning wolves and wolverines in Unit 9B, 9C,  
19 17B and 17C. What happened in that situation is the  
20 Board deferred that proposal. And the reason why is  
21 because there is a working group that is looking at how  
22 that proposal may or may not work for that area,  
23 particularly with respect to Federal lands, regulations  
24 and acts that such a proposal may or may not violate.  
25 And so that working group is still meeting, off and on,  
26 to come up with a recommendation for the Board.

27  
28 So that proposal has not been acted on.  
29 It doesn't mean that the Board went against the  
30 Council's recommendation, it just deferred it.  
31 Otherwise all the remaining proposals that the Board  
32 made recommendations -- or I mean the Council made  
33 recommendations on, including the wildlife closure  
34 reviews, were adopted by the Board.

35  
36 If you have any questions about any of  
37 this I'd be happy to answer them.

38  
39 Thank you.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Karen. Any  
42 questions.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I was on the call  
47 with the Federal Subsistence Board as they reviewed  
48 these various proposals. The proposals WP20-36, I  
49 interacted with the Board, gave the Board additional  
50

Page 61

1 information regarding moose hunts in the Unit 21D area,  
2 and so I was satisfied, the Federal Subsistence Board  
3 will state for the record that they are voting with the  
4 Council, or against the Council, and they give the --  
5 if they're dissenting against the Council, they give  
6 reasons why they're dissenting against the Council. So  
7 I'm satisfied with the way the Federal Subsistence  
8 Board has been working with the Council.

9  
10 Any other questions or comments on the  
11 .805(c) letter from Anthony Christianson, the Chair.

12  
13 (No comments)

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, so  
16 we're -- let's see we got about 15 minutes to go before  
17 noon here. So where do you want to go here, Karen, we  
18 got about 15 minutes.

19  
20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
21 This is Karen Deatherage. Perhaps you could query the  
22 Council members to see if they would like to take the  
23 lunch break now and come back and get into all the  
24 fishery reports and proposals after that, or whether  
25 they'd like to hear some of the reports prior to the  
26 lunch break.

27  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Council  
31 members, what's your preference.

32  
33 MRS. PELKOLA: Lunch break.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Is that good  
36 for everybody?

37  
38 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don, that  
39 sounds good.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

42  
43 Tim.

44  
45 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this is Tim, either  
46 way is fine.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we'll take  
49 -- it's about a quarter to 12, and so we can come back

50

1 in one hour, it's not that far to the kitchen for most  
2 people, so one hour break.

3  
4 (Laughter)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So 12:45 would be  
7 one hour from now. So we'll come back on the call at  
8 12:45.

9  
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: That sounds great.  
11 Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I want to thank everybody on  
12 the phone, I think this morning went really well and  
13 really appreciate all the input and the patience that  
14 everybody has with this process.

15  
16 Thank you. Have a great lunch.

17  
18 (Off record)

19  
20 (On record)

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're back on  
23 record and we're going to go into the 2020 Yukon River  
24 salmon season summary, Gerald Maschmann and Deena  
25 Jallen will, and then Jeff Estensen for the fall  
26 season. So are you on Gerald and Deena?

27  
28 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, Mr. Chairman,  
29 this is Gerald Maschmann with the U.S. Fish and  
30 Wildlife Service, and I think Deena's on, she's going  
31 to just probably hang back and answer any questions.

32  
33 (Line interruption - not recorded - 12  
34 minutes - refer to Gerald's written report read into  
35 record)

36  
37 MR. HONEA: I remember meeting in  
38 Galena and Ken Chase and I were both of the agreement  
39 at the time we had a discussion on closing the king  
40 runs and we could always depend on the fall and the  
41 summer chum, and the fall -- and boy this is  
42 surprising, this is -- you know, I have never in my  
43 life thought that we would at a half a million or more  
44 be facing a number like less than 200,000. So what are  
45 the experts saying on this, if you will, sir?

46  
47 MR. MASCHMANN: Through the Chair,  
48 thanks, Don, this is Gerald Maschmann. You know, we  
49 don't know yet. There's going to be, I think, a lot of  
50

1 talk this winter. There was some kind of event maybe  
2 late winter 2016, probably, you know, something in, you  
3 know, 2017 when those smolts went out to the Bering  
4 Sea, there was something going on that year that seemed  
5 to wipe out that age class and we wish Sabrina Garcia  
6 or Jim Murphy with NOAA is on, but they, you know, in  
7 their basis sampling out in the Bering Sea they  
8 definitely saw a reduction in chum smolt out in the  
9 Bering Sea so they kind of saw that maybe we were going  
10 to have poor returns for that age class. So I can't  
11 speculate on what happened, you know, spring or summer  
12 of 2017 that hit that age class but it seemed to hit a  
13 lot of different stocks.

14  
15 So and I speculate what happened  
16 happened out in the Bering Sea, and I don't know what  
17 it is, but I think people are going to be talking about  
18 it this winter. So I wish I had an answer, we don't  
19 know.

20  
21 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have another  
24 question there, Don.

25  
26 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I just had one other  
27 question and I'll shut up. Earlier I had asked Tim  
28 because he mentioned some other low numbers in fishing  
29 stocks so if I could ask Gerald this, this fall and  
30 summer chum I mean it's like on the Kuskokwim or  
31 something, were they facing the same things, I want to  
32 know, I want to be specific, were these numbers low  
33 throughout the state.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Gerald.

38  
39 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, this is Gerald,  
40 through the Chair. I think I'll let the Kuskokwim  
41 managers probably talk a little bit more about that,  
42 but, yeah, I think they saw something similar and,  
43 Deena, if you can correct me, but I think Norton Sound  
44 stocks also -- chum stocks kind of this missing age  
45 four class, if I recall. I don't know what Southeast  
46 Alaska or Southcentral chum stocks, if they saw the  
47 same thing or not.

48  
49 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

50

1 MR. MASCHMANN: But it seems like  
2 Western Alaska chum, this age four group just,  
3 something hit them when they went out to the Bering Sea  
4 and Deena I don't know if you have any additional  
5 comment.

6  
7 MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Deena.

10  
11 MS. JALLEN: Yeah, through the Chair.  
12 Thanks, Gerald. Yeah, I'm not super familiar with the  
13 other regions, I was actually -- thought I'd gotten  
14 something in my email today about that but I'll forward  
15 you guys -- Jack, I'll forward you Sabrina's  
16 presentation, she gave a really interesting  
17 presentation on the Bering Sea work that did show  
18 really low numbers of chum juveniles in 2017, but then  
19 the juvenile abundance in '18 and '19 was pretty high  
20 and so I think there's some hope that, you know, those  
21 fish will come back pretty strong but, yeah, the  
22 numbers they saw in 2017 for chum juveniles were like  
23 the second lowest they had seen since 2003 so it does  
24 seem like there was something that was going on in the  
25 ocean that was affecting those fish out there during  
26 the juvenile survey.

27  
28 And I'm checking in with Shawn Larson  
29 to see if he's on and can weigh in on the Kusko, but  
30 I'm not sure if Kusko Staff is on at the moment.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. There was  
33 another question, who was wanting a question, was that  
34 you Don or.....

35  
36 MR. HONEA: No, I asked my question.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And any other  
41 questions for Gerald.

42  
43 Are you there, Tim?

44  
45 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I'm here, Jack.

46  
47 Yeah, I liked Gerald's presentation. I  
48 appreciate the State and Federal managers taking  
49 cautionary management for the commercial and

50



1 subsistence fishery for try to salvage as much as  
2 escapement as we could out of the weak run. What I was  
3 trying to point out during my report this morning was  
4 that there's some really significant, I guess,  
5 dislocations for -- I mean I've only been fishing in  
6 Alaska for a little over two decades but I've never  
7 seen so many areas throughout the entire state that had  
8 extremely weak or failed runs. So I think it's  
9 important for everyone on the Council to understand  
10 that what's going on with the salmon biology right now  
11 is extremely significant and subsistence users need to  
12 understand that resource may be low on certain years  
13 going forward. And what we're seeing this year, and  
14 what we've seen over the last five years with  
15 intermittent success and weakness on the run, I think  
16 we should plan on getting used to it. There's not a --  
17 doesn't seem to be that much consensus on the cause of  
18 the run failures and there probably won't be because  
19 they're so complex. But we need to just pay attention  
20 to what's going on and communicate as subsistence and  
21 commercial and sport groups and keep communicating and  
22 sharing what we know what's going on so we can try to  
23 make the best use of what small available resource is  
24 and we got to maintain these stocks so hopefully maybe  
25 -- maybe we can get better weather patterns or  
26 different ocean or air temperatures that can provide  
27 better survivability conditions for the fish so we can  
28 get past this and get more historic, more dependable  
29 salmon runs.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I have  
32 a couple questions, Gerald.

33  
34 I was wondering what quality of  
35 escapement at Eagle was actually, of the 31,200  
36 chinook, were those healthy large high proportion  
37 females, or is that all just jack males or what kind of  
38 quality escapement happened there getting into Canada.  
39 They do sampling with different suites of nets.

40  
41 MR. MASCHMANN: Jack, this is Gerald.  
42 If you'd just standby here a second.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure.

45  
46 MR. MASCHMANN: I'm thumbing through my  
47 document here, Page 8 of that season summary had  
48 some.....

49  
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I didn't get that.

2  
3 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Our mail is so slow  
6 I don't actually have that. So.....

7  
8 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay. So the chinook  
9 salmon age composition from the Eagle Sonar project,  
10 five percent age four, 30 percent age 5, 53 percent age  
11 6 and 3 percent age 7. The age six component was above  
12 average. The age 7 component was average. And the age  
13 four and five components were below average compared to  
14 the recent 10 year figures. Females made up 54 percent  
15 of the fish sampled, which is above the last 10 year  
16 average of 44 percent. So that seemed to coincide or  
17 with subsistence fishermen on the YR DFA teleconference.  
18 The reports from, you know, 5A, B and C, particularly  
19 with Stan Zuray and some of those fishermen there, they  
20 were seeing a lot, what they described as a lot of  
21 ichthyophonus and a lot of diseased fish.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

24  
25 MR. MASCHMANN: And so maybe the fish  
26 that made it past were the big healthy ones. So folks,  
27 you know, even folks in Old Crow mentioned that the  
28 kings they did catch looked really nice and healthy so  
29 we didn't really have any reports of sick or  
30 ichthyophonus fish from Fort Yukon or Eagle. So, you  
31 know, again, it's too early to speculate but whatever  
32 ichthyophonus infection kind of peaked out in  
33 Subdistricts 5A, B and C, they didn't make it up much  
34 further than that. So but it's speculation right now  
35 but it's what we heard.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another question is,  
38 you know, we talked about water temperature affecting  
39 salmon last year and we talked about deploying, you  
40 know, temperature monitors and velocity monitors for  
41 salmon in all systems, Yukon, Kuskokwim, whatever, was  
42 there any data to show the velocity of the Yukon and  
43 the temperature that would exacerbate this  
44 ichthyophonus issue with chinook?

45  
46 MR. MASCHMANN: Chair, this is Gerald  
47 again.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

50

1 MR. MASCHMANN: No, the temperatures  
2 seemed okay this year. A little warmer than average  
3 for a portion of the season, and a little lower than  
4 average for a portion of the season and then kind of  
5 average for another portion of the season. And, again,  
6 it seemed like we had a lot of rain in the Interior so  
7 water was high, it wasn't particularly warm. So it  
8 doesn't seem like warm water exacerbated that  
9 ichthyophonus, in my opinion.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

12

13 MR. MASCHMANN: And I'm speculating  
14 but.....

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the velocity  
17 is what was way up.

18

19 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, that's -- we --  
20 we've kind of batted that idea around that, you know,  
21 they probably had to work harder, and swim harder to  
22 get to where they were going.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

25

26 MR. MASCHMANN: So maybe that  
27 contributed to mortality or contributed to them maybe  
28 not having enough energy to fight infection, yeah, I  
29 don't know.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that adds to  
32 the question, in the lower river test fishery, were  
33 those fish that were sampled, were they bad or were  
34 they normal or, you know, were they thinner. Because  
35 the longer they have to swim and basically it has to do  
36 with distance in the water column, they have to  
37 actually swim normally three times the distance just to  
38 get with the current, they have to swim four times the  
39 distance because of velocity increase. In late June  
40 the water was bank to bank on the Yukon River 805 miles  
41 from the mouth at the Yukon Bridge and was running  
42 really hard and so that was a huge discharge down in  
43 the rapids. They would have had to really swim hard to  
44 get up that. So there's those factors that I'm trying  
45 to tease out.

46

47 The other was I would like to get that  
48 NOAA smolt report from Deena to review that, I haven't  
49 seen that one. Where was that presented, was that at

50

1 YK-Delta?

2

3 MR. MASCHMANN: Yes, Sabrina Garcia and  
4 Jim Murphy presented both a chinook and chum, what  
5 they've been doing out there collecting chinook and  
6 chum juvenile smolt. Yeah, it was a good presentation  
7 and we'll make sure we get Karen -- send Karen a copy  
8 of that report and get it out to you guys.

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen, Jack.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hi. Was it a  
15 PowerPoint report, because I believe I sent that to you  
16 Jack, a whole bunch of PowerPoints from the Yukon  
17 Kuskokwim Delta meeting. Is that the one you're  
18 talking about Gerald.

19

20 MR. MASCHMANN: Through the Chair, this  
21 is Gerald. Yeah, there's a PowerPoint they presented  
22 which was pretty thorough. Also Sabrina Garcia and the  
23 Alaska Department of Fish and Game kind of put together  
24 an informational flyer on the chum portion. And so  
25 we'll make sure we get that informational flyer.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yeah, I do  
28 have that Karen, thank you. I had that in the wrong  
29 folder.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: No worries, there's a  
32 lot of material Mr. Chair. And, yes, anything you want  
33 to send me Gerald, I'll be sure to get that out to the  
34 Council.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So my comments are,  
39 managers seem to think that the four inch gear on the  
40 bank is somehow protecting chum. In reality chum run  
41 right on the beach. I fish at the Yukon Bridge, I've  
42 caught lots of chum in four inch net right on the  
43 beach, they're swimming like six feet off the bank in  
44 four feet of water. They don't like to buck the  
45 current so they're hugging the bank and those dogs get  
46 caught in the net. So the reality is four inch net,  
47 going to four inch gear does not actually protect chum  
48 at all. You might protect chinook to a certain degree.  
49 But it's pretty detrimental to fish four inch gear for

50

1 dog teams, when you get chum runs like we had. There  
2 was a net fishing at the Yukon River for dogs for dog  
3 feed, he was catching tons of dogs, lots of dogs in the  
4 first part of this month. I was down there on the 2nd  
5 of October and they were catching every chum that went  
6 up the river. I set out on the up stream side of him,  
7 I caught zero chum, he was catching them all in that  
8 hole there by the bridge.

9  
10 So the managers have to really actually  
11 go out and look at what the gear types that they're  
12 mandating and what the kind of conservation that you're  
13 actually trying to achieve, chum gear -- or four inch  
14 net is chum gear in shallow water, they just roll up in  
15 that stuff with web lines -- you know, there's a big  
16 ball of web there and so -- what I saw was there was a  
17 heck of a lot of chums going into the dog pot that  
18 should have been getting up onto the escapement portion  
19 because of all the restrictions.

20  
21 So I just wanted to make that comment.

22  
23 Were you aware of that Gerald.

24  
25 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, Jack, this is  
26 Gerald, Fish and Wildlife. In the fall season we  
27 actually did restrict subsistence salmon fishing with  
28 the four inch mesh. We allowed it for fishing for  
29 other species. We opened using selective gear, such as  
30 dipnets and beach seines and hook and line, live  
31 release fishwheels to target other fish species,  
32 including coho and other non-salmon species. So we do  
33 know that four inch, you know, is going to catch chum  
34 and we did restrict the opportunity somewhat during the  
35 fall season.

36  
37 I don't know if Jeff wants to weigh in  
38 on that.

39  
40 MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair, can you hear  
41 me.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jeff.

44  
45 MR. ESTENSEN: Yes, sorry I've been  
46 trying to -- I'm not sure if my mute button's not  
47 working or whatever. Yeah, I mean Gerald's absolutely  
48 correct, the use of four inch mesh, as explained to the  
49 fishermen, from us, ADF&G and also working with Gerald

50

1 as well, is that the idea is to allow them to fish for  
2 non-salmon species and the understanding is, at least,  
3 what we want to get across to the fishermen is that  
4 we're providing that opportunity with four inch mesh or  
5 less for them to be fishing in areas where they know  
6 they're not going to catch fall chum. I mean obviously  
7 a fall chum would be caught here and there, but the  
8 idea is that fishermen would know where they can fish,  
9 and so forth, where they would have a better  
10 opportunity to catch whitefish, you know, whatever it  
11 might be and not be catching fall chum. And we also  
12 try to tell the fishermen, too, that if you are  
13 catching fall chum that you need to move to a different  
14 spot. So I appreciate hearing your reports about  
15 people catching a lot of fall chum, that's something we  
16 might have to consider moving in the future, if we're,  
17 hopefully not in this position again. But the intent  
18 of using that was not to think that they would still be  
19 able to fish in areas and not catch fall chum, but they  
20 should be fishing in areas where there wasn't any fall  
21 chum so that they could catch non-salmon species.

22  
23 Thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jeff. You  
26 know the chums I saw that they were catching after the  
27 1st of October were really bright and so they're --  
28 and I'm not sure that there's actually -- that Pilot  
29 Station actually captured what was actually -- there  
30 might have been a component passing that was actually  
31 late. So they were catching lots of chum with that --  
32 after it relaxed at 5C, they were still catching lots  
33 of fall chum there with that, you know, with the six  
34 inch mesh or whatever it was.

35  
36 So is there a mechanism for making  
37 assessment after Pilot Station closes down?

38  
39 MR. ESTENSEN: Yes, Mr. Chair, can you  
40 hear me?

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

43  
44 MR. ESTENSEN: Okay. Yeah, this is  
45 Jeff Estensen, Fish and Game fall season manager.  
46 There is actually. And we've been doing this for a  
47 number of years now. We do actually continue the lower  
48 Yukon test fisheries, YRDFA actually is very kind  
49 enough to do that for us and we operate the test

50

1 fisheries down in Emmonak and at middle mouth until  
2 about the 10th of September. We've also seen the  
3 operation of the Mountain Village test fishery until  
4 about the 12th or so, that was this year. Those have  
5 drawn out actually later in other years. The idea is  
6 that the sonar does finish operations around the 7th of  
7 September and we look at what we're catching in the  
8 test fisheries after that time to kind of give us an  
9 indication or an idea of any like later fall chum runs  
10 that come in and also kind of helps us assess what  
11 portion of the coho run comes in after the operation of  
12 the sonar.

13  
14 And this year, you know, by looking at  
15 the CPEs, or number of fish that were caught, we didn't  
16 see much of anything that resembled a late pull for  
17 fall chum so undoubtedly there was still some coming  
18 in, but nothing that resembled like a sizeable pull of  
19 fall chum.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

22  
23 MR. ESTENSEN: I hope that answers your  
24 question.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That does answer my  
27 question, thank you. Appreciate that.

28  
29 So any other questions from the Council  
30 on Gerald's presentation and the data presented from  
31 the Council members.

32  
33 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack, I have one.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

36  
37 MR. GERVAIS: Gerald, what page on the  
38 Yukon preliminary report does it have the information  
39 on the age classes at the Eagle Sonar, or Eagle test  
40 fishery.

41  
42 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, through the  
43 Chair, this is Gerald Maschmann. Tim, the age, sex and  
44 length information starts on Page 7 and specifically  
45 the Eagle is near the top of Page 8.

46  
47 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, I see it. I would  
48 also like to add to the discussion that historically  
49 there's some chum bycatch in Area M of the Kuskokwim

50

1 and Yukon stocks and they are -- for their commercial  
2 seine fishery, and there's very little fishing time  
3 happening north of Unimak Pass on that Area M seine  
4 fishery in August. So even with restricted fishing  
5 down in Area M there still is weak returns going on.  
6 So there's just -- like Gerald's suggesting there's  
7 some kind of ocean event that kept these fish from  
8 surviving.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks Tim.

11

12 Yeah, from what I hear, is that Russia  
13 had the same thing, you know, chums didn't come in over  
14 there either, nor pinks. It's kind of a Pacific-wide  
15 broader issue than just the Yukon that we're talking  
16 about, or the Kuskokwim.

17

18 Any final questions on the  
19 presentation.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none,  
24 thanks so much Gerald. And.....

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: Jack I had a comment for  
27 the managers.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

30

31 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, as the managers talk  
32 with the various researchers amongst themselves through  
33 the winter, I know our Council would really like to  
34 hear what are the potential causes and things we should  
35 be looking at that the weak.....

36

37 REPORTER: I'm sorry, who is this?

38

39 MR. GERVAIS: Tim Gervais.

40

41 REPORTER: Thank you.

42

43 MR. GERVAIS: .....is run failures for  
44 the Yukon and Kuskokwim. So I'd just like to have the  
45 managers and the research people keep us in the loop on  
46 what are potential or probable causes for the poor  
47 fishery performance.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Any other

50



1 comments.

2

3

(No comments)

4

5

6

7

8

9

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I really want to stay in the loop on any additional data that may be -- you know, the Washington State University does a lot of work also, all the information we can get the better.

10

11

12

So, Jenny, you got any questions at all, you're a fisher.

13

14

15

MRS. PELKOLA: No, I'm just listening, it's very interesting, thank you so much.

16

17

18

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

19

20

21

MR. GERVAIS: Jenny, does your camp fish for chum -- or did they fish for chum this summer, I'm interesting in what the quality of the fish was?

22

23

24

MRS. PELKOLA: No, we didn't fish for chum.

25

26

27

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

28

29

30

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

31

32

33

34

35

36

MR. HONEA: Yeah, in answer to Tim's question there, we weren't allowed, I mean even before summer chum and the fall chum even came in we weren't even allowed to fish for them, so that's a quick answer.

37

38

39

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for that comment Don, and Jenny.

40

41

42

Any final questions on the Yukon.

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I really

1 appreciate.....

2

3

MR. SEMAKEN: This is Goodwin.

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin, go ahead.

6

7

MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, we weren't allowed  
8 to fish like Don said. The fish here back in the  
9 creek, were even -- those fall chums going up, that's  
10 why I was kind of worried about the other creeks down  
11 here at Threemile. I have another question, are you  
12 guys monitoring that Illinois Creek over there, you  
13 know, it's across in the Refuge, I think, because there  
14 used to be -- I worked over there before it shutdown, I  
15 know there was some fish going up there, up by -- way  
16 up in the hills, I was just -- I'll wait for the  
17 answer.

18

19

Thanks.

20

21

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Goodwin.

22

23

24

MR. MASCHMANN: This is Gerald with  
Fish and Wildlife.

25

26

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Gerald.

27

28

MR. MASCHMANN: Was that Goodwin.....

29

30

MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah.

31

32

33

MR. MASCHMANN: .....was he talking  
about the Kaltag area.

34

35

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: At Illinois Creek.

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

MR. MASCHMANN: You know we don't  
monitor -- I don't know if we monitor really Illinois  
Creek with aerial surveys but definitely, you know,  
kind of the Kaltag area does have some productive  
rivers around it that we do kind of wish we could  
monitor and unfortunately we can't monitor all of them  
and it's hard enough right now just keeping up with the  
projects we have. So the Alaska Department of Fish and  
Game does do a fair number of aerial surveys, I don't  
know if they do Illinois Creek or not.

47

48

49

50

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

2  
3 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I think  
4 Goodwin brings up a pretty good point. The Illinois  
5 Creek, I believe it's south -- what is it Southwest of  
6 Galena, and it was active years ago and they did a lot  
7 of leaching in that area so I -- like an open pit kind  
8 of a thing so, yeah, it'd be interesting to see what --  
9 a study of the fish that are actually either going in  
10 there to spawn or actually coming out of there. So  
11 yeah it's -- I think -- sometimes, you know, we have to  
12 -- it'd be great to monitor some of these areas.

13  
14 Thank you.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, thanks Don.

17  
18 MR. GERVAIS: I had a comment, Jack.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

21  
22 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais.  
23 Gerald, in your presentation you talked about several  
24 of the weirs not operating because of the Covid, do you  
25 think if there's no cure for the Covid, that these  
26 weirs will be run like if we had hygiene practices or  
27 information on how to operate or do our business with  
28 Covid around, or how -- I feel, as you probably do too,  
29 it's a lot of lost information by not running the  
30 weirs. Do you see much chance that these weirs could  
31 be operational in 2021, even if the Covid exists still?

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Gerald.

34  
35 MR. MASCHMANN: Mr. Chair, this is  
36 Gerald Maschmann, Fish and Wildlife. Tim, right now  
37 we're planning to hire folks for next season to go out  
38 but I can't predict the future, I don't know what folks  
39 would say -- you know, if you, you know, anyone on the  
40 Council and folks in your village, you know, want to  
41 work with Fish and Wildlife to, you know, work on a  
42 plan, you know, I think as an agency we're open to  
43 getting out there and doing -- but doing it safe, but  
44 then, again, we have, you know, kind of bigger --  
45 bigger bureaucracy behind us that kind of tells us yes  
46 or no. So I think anything we can do this winter to,  
47 you know, show support for the projects that we need to  
48 get them in and that, you know, whatever village  
49 happens to be kind of hosting the project, you know,

50

1 that they want the project to continue and they're  
2 willing to work to come up with the proper safety plan,  
3 protocols, you know, I think that'd help.

4  
5 But, again, as far as Federal projects  
6 go we -- you know, we kind of have this bigger  
7 bureaucracy behind us that even if we did everything  
8 right, you know, someone way up the chain could just  
9 say no and then that's it. So I hope we get it going.  
10 I hope we're able to count next year but I can't speak  
11 for anything but the Federal projects and, yeah, that's  
12 it.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

15  
16 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Gerald, are there  
17 -- this is Tim -- are the weir projects deemed non-  
18 essential?

19  
20 MR. MASCHMANN: Through the Chair, Tim.  
21 The way we operate our weirs is we hire -- we have this  
22 sort of open, all over the country application, so we  
23 get a lot of folks from kind of all over the country  
24 and flying them up is expensive for that person, you  
25 know, because they're expecting a job, you know,  
26 they're flying up from all over the Lower 48 and also  
27 in Alaska so, you know, there's some risk involved with  
28 that and then to have people fly up, you know, and  
29 start getting ready for the season and then have  
30 someone kind of up the chain go pull the rug out at the  
31 last second, you know, that kind of messes people up  
32 for other employment for the summer and they've already  
33 spent money on airplane tickets to get up here. So it  
34 makes it harder for us as Feds to kind of, you know,  
35 hang loose until the last minute and then get it going.

36  
37 So unfortunately, you know, as an  
38 agency we have to kind of make this decision sooner in  
39 the winter than being able to just kind of wait until  
40 the last minute and then put it together. So that's  
41 kind of what we deal with as an agency. So it's harder  
42 for us as an agency to get it, you know, going, so.

43  
44 I don't know if I really answered your  
45 question, it's just -- it's hard to say, it kind of has  
46 to be made at the top. But any time that, you know,  
47 you as a village, or your communities can say we  
48 support it and we're willing to work with Fish and  
49 Wildlife to come up with a plan, that makes it look

50

1 better to the folks upstairs, it puts them more at  
2 ease.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. I  
5 think, you know, there's been a lot of protocols, you  
6 know, even Tim to go back to Ruby, there's protocols  
7 about testing and so forth and so I think that that's  
8 something that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going  
9 -- should be -- or the Interior Department, come up  
10 with protocols to do these kinds of field work with  
11 crews, how do you get them tested, how do you  
12 quarantine them until everybody's all safe and then can  
13 go out there and do the work, the very important work  
14 of doing these assessment projects, it doesn't matter  
15 where it's at, Kuskokwim, Yukon systems -- those  
16 assessment works are very important information. We're  
17 just basically having sort of a no information on  
18 escapements basically. We know for sonars, look, Pilot  
19 showed that Eagle helped, but we don't know what's  
20 actually getting onto certain systems. So the Covid  
21 protocols should be more developed more towards this  
22 summer with the testing and so I think that we can move  
23 forward with getting crews that are quarantined and  
24 tested so that everybody's safe to go in the field.

25  
26 But that's just my opinion.

27  
28 Any other questions and comments.

29  
30 (No comments)

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will.....

33  
34 MS. JALLEN: Mr. Chair, this is.....

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead.

37  
38 MS. JALLEN: Mr. Chair, this is Deena  
39 Jallen with Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I can  
40 just add a little bit about projects.

41  
42 First off I'll put in the usual blurb  
43 for other -- a plug for the post-season subsistence  
44 salmon harvest survey, and when we talk about the 2020  
45 season, the big part that's missing is harvest. And so  
46 right now that project is ongoing and, of course, we're  
47 not sending surveyors community to community, door to  
48 door like we normally do, they're doing the surveys by  
49 phone, by mail, over the internet, so if you get

50

1 contacted by a surveyor, you know, please help them  
2 out. They're just trying to help us get that last  
3 piece of the puzzle which is harvest for this year. We  
4 know that fishermen faced a lot of high water and poor  
5 fishing conditions and low salmon abundance, so that  
6 information's going to be super important.

7  
8 Yeah, this year we did have test fish  
9 crews in the lower Yukon and sonar projects that did  
10 successfully operate and a lot of work went into  
11 planning and purchasing supplies, you know, we faced  
12 issues with airline companies going out of business,  
13 and shipping, you know, hassles, everyone out in the  
14 rural areas knows that sort of wrenches got thrown into  
15 the works this year for planning any kind of projects.  
16 So that's something we'll be looking at for planning in  
17 the spring on a -- you know, prioritizing what projects  
18 are going to go forward and then, yeah, of course this  
19 year we also had such high water that made even aerial  
20 surveys challenging. So just kind of a challenging  
21 year all around.

22  
23 We certainly thank the fishermen for  
24 all the information we get, the information that we can  
25 share throughout the year and we'll be having our  
26 meetings coming up in the fall and pre-season meetings  
27 in the spring and, yeah, we certainly look forward to  
28 getting input and looking forward -- or looking towards  
29 next year and try and figure out what sort of new  
30 interesting things will show up, you know, next year  
31 that we didn't necessarily expect.

32  
33 So, yeah, thank you.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, appreciate  
36 those comments, Deena. The Department of Fish and  
37 Game's going to -- do they have a Covid protocol for  
38 crews that go afield, or is the Department still  
39 working on that protocol or what's the status with  
40 that?

41  
42 MS. JALLEN: So, Mr. Chair, in the  
43 spring before sending crews out, each project develop  
44 plans so it's tailored to each project so it may  
45 involve like quarantining crews before they go out, it  
46 may involve like travel plans where -- so like the  
47 Eagle Sonar project, normally a crew would fly in and  
48 out of Eagle because that's so much quicker than doing  
49 the drive, but this year they were solely operated by  
50

1 trucks and so every time a crew changed or any supplies  
2 were delivered they would be, you know, driven from  
3 Fairbanks to Eagle and then they'd go direct from boat  
4 to camp and so they didn't interact with the community.  
5 So each project had their own plans and their own  
6 mitigation strategies that they employed throughout the  
7 season to help addressing impacts from Covid.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Cool. Well,  
10 thanks very much.

11  
12 I wanted to comment, you know,  
13 discharge in the Yukon River, the high water, that had  
14 to do with the extremely deep snow pack that was in the  
15 Brooks Range that discharged out into the Yukon River  
16 system and it was higher than normal snow pack all the  
17 way up into the Yukon Territory, even in the Yukon-  
18 Charley uplands, there was real deep snow over there.  
19 Another interesting and weird thing is the turbidities  
20 in the Brooks Range, we have all these fall-offs (ph)  
21 in the mountains, they're ice cores that are melting  
22 and they're discharging a lot more sediment. The  
23 Middlefork of the Koyukuk where I live usually gets  
24 crystal clear in the summertime, it's been muddy for  
25 two years because of mud that's coming out of the  
26 mountains. As climate change and warming temperatures,  
27 there's some weird chemicals also coming out, Wiseman  
28 Creek and the headwaters is iron ore, there's iron --  
29 this creek has run orange all summer. It's got a whole  
30 bunch of iron oxide that basically the pH wouldn't  
31 allow fish, grayling or anything to go into that thing.  
32 That's coming out of the Gates of the Arctic Park.  
33 There's some odd things happening with climate change  
34 with mineral discharge into the systems and turbidities  
35 into the systems.

36  
37 So I wanted the Council members to be  
38 aware that there's -- and managers to be aware that  
39 there is some impacts to the kind of turbidities and  
40 mineral releases. There's some odd minerals coming out  
41 of -- like Marion Creek right down here is running  
42 really blue water and it has a white powder on the  
43 bottom, don't know what that was, BLM was supposed to  
44 take some water samples on that.

45  
46 But these are impacts that would be to  
47 the fishery resources in this system or in any of the  
48 mountain systems that are now having these meltdowns.

49  
50

1 Any other comments or questions from  
2 the Council on the Yukon River report.

3  
4 MR. HONEA: Hey, Jack, this is Don. I  
5 just wanted to -- Mr. Chair, I just wanted to comment,  
6 thank Gerald for his report, I'm looking forward to  
7 hearing what the Kuskokwim, what their chum fall -- or  
8 summer and fall chum count was. But I just wanted to  
9 say I don't dispute these numbers at the Pilot Station,  
10 you know, checkstation there because I mean I think all  
11 of us have seen -- I'm up here for most of the summer  
12 about 20 miles above Ruby, it's called Big Eddy, it's  
13 not the Big Eddy that's mentioned on the thing there,  
14 but it's a pretty good sized eddy and it seemed like it  
15 was pretty eerily quiet and that we would often see  
16 fish jumping and stuff and we didn't see that this year  
17 and so when you did you'd be kind of surprised. So I'm  
18 looking forward to finding out, you know, why,  
19 throughout the winter, you know, what the problems are.

20  
21 So I appreciate that, thank you.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Don.

24  
25 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim, can I  
26 ask one more.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I would like to  
31 know if Jeff or Gerald know on the chum salmon for the  
32 Yukon, what percent of them are spending their life in  
33 the marine and -- what percent is spending their marine  
34 life in the Gulf of Alaska.

35  
36 MR. MASCHMANN: Mr. Chair, this is  
37 Gerald Maschmann. I don't think I can -- Tim, I don't  
38 think I can answer that, I don't know. I think the  
39 common thought is that Yukon fish are hanging out in  
40 the Bering Sea, they're not going out to the Gulf of  
41 Alaska, but, again, I don't know. I don't know if Jeff  
42 would know on that or not.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there, Jeff.

45  
46 MS. JALLEN: Hold on one second, he's  
47 running over to my phone, this is Deena. Here Jeff.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

50



1 MR. ESTENSEN: Sorry, Mr. Chair, for  
2 some reason my phone doesn't want to come off of mute  
3 so I apologize for that and to the Council members  
4 there. So I really don't know either.  
5

6 I want to say that the majority of them  
7 stay in the Bering Sea and maybe a few go out into the  
8 Gulf of Alaska. I don't know if researcher Bonnie  
9 Borba's on, she might have a little bit more  
10 information, she may be listening in, give her a  
11 second.  
12

13 I can tell you what though, I would be  
14 happy to try to find that information out and pass on  
15 to the Council when I get it.  
16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. It  
18 would seem that some go into the Gulf otherwise Area M  
19 wouldn't have any.  
20

21 (Teleconference interference - line  
22 dropped)  
23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think we've  
25 covered the Yukon pretty well. And appreciate your  
26 report, Gerald and Deena and Jeff for helping out  
27 there. Trying times for the Yukon but we've had a lot  
28 of bad years. I remember back in the '90s we had bad  
29 chum runs and so things came back and so hopefully  
30 we'll go back to our previous happy times.  
31

32 So we're going to move -- what do you  
33 want to do, do you want a short break, we'll go to  
34 Kuskokwim, Karen.  
35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, thank you.  
37 I think we discussed before we started, this next  
38 session that you were going to go into the Yukon River  
39 Drainage.....  
40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
42

43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Because it's Yukon,  
44 and we'll keep things consistent.  
45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: And then we can go  
49 into Kuskokwim.  
50

1 Thank you.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sorry about that.

4  
5 MS. DEATHERAGE: No worries, thanks.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we can go to the  
8 Yukon Drainage Fisheries Association presentation. How  
9 does the Council feel, do you want a break or do you  
10 want to keep going.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see anybody  
15 raising their hand.

16  
17 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

20  
21 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I think  
22 we're doing fine, I would suggest we keep going.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, fine. So  
25 we'll go to Serena and Catherine with YRDFA.

26  
27 MS. FITKA: Good afternoon, Chairman  
28 and Council members.

29  
30 Thank you for the opportunity to  
31 present to the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
32 Council. I am pleased to represent the Yukon River  
33 Drainage Fisheries Association. My name is Serena  
34 Fitka and I am YRDFA's Executive Director. I'd like to  
35 bring your attention to our report in your booklet on  
36 Page 144 and the supplemental updates from YRDFA where  
37 we highlight our accomplishments and update the RACs on  
38 our fisheries research management program projects and  
39 other activities.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

42  
43 MS. FITKA: I'd like to start with our  
44 Yukon River salmon pre-season management meetings which  
45 was held on May 12th, 2020 via teleconference. Due to  
46 Covid19 we were unable to host a face to fact meeting  
47 this year. We had 116 participants join the call and  
48 it lasted for 150 minutes. The main concerns from the  
49 river were the 2019 die-off of chum salmon and the

50

1 ability to harvest fish in light of the pandemic.  
2 Since we are not able to meet face to face we will be  
3 hosting a post-season meeting on December 17th, 2020 by  
4 teleconference.

5  
6 Moving on to the Yukon River in-season  
7 salmon management teleconferences. This year we were  
8 able to extend our teleconferences by having two extra  
9 calls in May, and two extended calls in September.  
10 This year has brought higher than average participation  
11 along with the length of the calls. For the 2020  
12 teleconference season we averaged about 120 minutes  
13 with 80 participants per call. If you look at the  
14 report in the booklet we indicate a breakdown of each  
15 call with the number of participants, length of the  
16 meeting, and highlights. You can also access the  
17 teleconference summaries on our website at  
18 yukonsalmon.org.

19  
20 The communities reported high water  
21 throughout the summer season with reduction of  
22 subsistence harvest for chinook and chum salmon.  
23 Ichthyophonous was reported early on in the season by  
24 fishers and remained prevalent in the salmon throughout  
25 the fishing season. We'll have an article by Stan  
26 Zuray about the disease. If you do not receive the  
27 newsletter we encourage you to become a member by going  
28 to our website at yukonsalmon.org.

29  
30 We were awarded additional funds to  
31 host monthly off-season teleconferences in October,  
32 November, January and February. Our first  
33 teleconference will be held on October 20th at 1:00  
34 p.m., and we will be discussing the Covid relief funds,  
35 the USDA tariff and the fisheries disaster declaration  
36 process. We will have guest speakers from Yukon Delta  
37 Fisheries Development Association, USDA and NOAA as  
38 well. Other monthly topics include a bycatch update  
39 and research presentations pertaining to the Yukon  
40 River. We will be utilizing the State in-season  
41 teleconference number and pin.

42  
43 A group of organizations which include  
44 Jennifer Hooper with AVCP, Stephanie Quinn-Davidson  
45 with the Yukon InterTribal Fish Commission and TCC,  
46 Jennifer Williams and Ragnor Alstrom with Yukon Delta  
47 Fisheries Development Association along with Catherine  
48 Moncrieff and myself of YRDFA have been meeting since  
49 August to discuss how we will approach the fisheries

50

1 disaster requests. It was determined that YRDFA would  
2 take the lead since our organization represents all of  
3 the Alaska communities along the Yukon River. YRDFA  
4 will be partnering with the Yukon Delta Fisheries  
5 Development Association urging the Governor of Alaska  
6 to declare a fisheries disaster for the Yukon River,  
7 not only for commercial, but for subsistence disaster  
8 as well. The letter to the Governor went out on  
9 Friday. I just sent an email to all the tribes  
10 yesterday with a sample support letter and resolution.  
11 We will also be sending the letter to the city offices  
12 and the village corporations asking for their support.  
13 If your tribe or city has already passed a resolution  
14 those can be emailed to Serena@yukonsalmon.org, or  
15 faxed to 272-3142 which will be used as support in our  
16 request to the Governor.

17  
18 I'd like to move on to our next  
19 project. We are contracted by ADF&G to help assist  
20 with the post-season subsistence salmon harvest survey.  
21 We have our intern (indiscernible) coordinating the  
22 local hires in the communities. Due to Covid19 all  
23 surveys are being conducted over the phone and on line.  
24 The project started in the lower Yukon in the community  
25 of Kotlik on September 6th and will work their way up  
26 the river. I believe they are currently in Galena at  
27 this time. We would like to encourage all the  
28 communities to participate during this historical low  
29 salmon run. ADF&Gs goal is to survey 80 percent of  
30 each community.

31  
32 Moving on to the Bering Sea and  
33 Interior Tribal Commission. They just celebrated their  
34 one year anniversary. They had their strategic  
35 planning session last week to create a long-term plan  
36 for the Commission. The Bering Sea and.....

37  
38 (Teleconference interference -  
39 participants not muted)

40  
41 MS. FITKA: .....try to protest BLM's  
42 final resource management plan, if it mirrors BLM's  
43 draft plan. BLM's draft plan opens 99 percent of the  
44 13.5 million acre planning area to mineral development,  
45 rejecting (indiscernible - muffled) of tribal  
46 nominations for watershed protections in almost two  
47 million acres of existing protections. The Tribal  
48 Commission is focused on concerns about irretrievable  
49 damage to watersheds and impacts to food security. BLM

50

1 will report the final plan at the end of the year, end  
2 of this year.

3  
4 I'd like to turn it over to Catherine  
5 Moncrieff at this time.

6  
7  
8 MS. MONCRIEFF: Hi, this is  
9 Catherine, can you hear me?

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
12 fine, Catherine, go right ahead.

13  
14 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay, great, thank you.  
15 Hi, and thank you for the opportunity to report to your  
16 Regional Advisory Council. This is Catherine Moncrieff  
17 and I'm the YRDFA Staff anthropologist.

18  
19 I'd like to give you some highlights of  
20 the in-season subsistence salmon survey program, which  
21 is a Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program funded  
22 project. This year our surveyors were able to conduct  
23 384 interviews with 146 households in 10 Yukon River  
24 communities stretching from Alakanuk to Eagle during  
25 the king salmon season in their communities. This year  
26 we encouraged our surveyors to continue to call into  
27 the teleconferences after their contract ended to gain  
28 more participation and information from their  
29 communities. And, finally, as you can see from the  
30 table in the supplemental report, many of the  
31 participating fishing families did not meet their needs  
32 this year. On the handouts and in our report you can  
33 find additional details about this program's results  
34 from the summer.

35  
36 Next, I'd like to update you on another  
37 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Project.

38  
39 Due to the Covid19 pandemic, we have  
40 requested and received an extension on our partnership  
41 project with the Tanana Chiefs Conference titled:  
42 Local and Traditional Knowledge of Anadromous Fish in  
43 the Yukon Flats with a focus on the Draanjik Basin.  
44 The new end date of this project will be March of 2022.  
45 Both the community meetings and the biological field  
46 work were affected by the pandemic travel restrictions.  
47 After restrictions over the spring and summer, the  
48 biological field work is starting up again and our TCC  
49 partners will be conducting an aerial survey in the

50

1 Kevinjik Creek in the Teedraanjik Drainage to identify  
2 and locate a coho spawning area that has not yet been  
3 added to the anadromous water catalog. They also plana  
4 to take age, sex and length samples and tissue samples  
5 for genetic analysis. Additional biological field work  
6 is planned for spring and summer of 2021 to document  
7 rearing juveniles, spawning adult chinook and chum  
8 salmon. Finally, community meetings to present  
9 proposed results will take place as soon as travel is  
10 safe or we will redesign this portion of the project to  
11 ensure that the communities are able to review the  
12 results of this project.

13  
14 And I don't know if Brian McKenna is  
15 going to be participating in your meeting, he may have  
16 additional information if he is, about the biological  
17 field work, when he gives his report.

18  
19 Next, I'd like to tell you about an  
20 exciting and new project we have starting in December.

21  
22 This new project funded by the North  
23 Pacific Research Board, titled: They Told Us There'd  
24 Come a Time, A Catalog of Elders Warnings. This  
25 project is a partnership between YRDFA and the Tanana  
26 Chiefs Conference Young Adult Emerging Leaders. Our  
27 research team will be trained to do archival research  
28 and ethnographic interviews. Our goal is to seek  
29 traditional ecological knowledge of conservation  
30 practices and warnings of potential declines in salmon.  
31 In the first year we will focus on archival research,  
32 ethnographic interviews in the second year, and in the  
33 final year we'll produce outreach products that share  
34 our results, widely.

35  
36 Now, I'd like to turn it back over to  
37 Serena and we can take questions at the end if you have  
38 any.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

43  
44 MS. FITKA: Thank you, Catherine, for  
45 providing your updates on your projects.

46  
47 YRDFA would like to let you know of  
48 upcoming meetings. Our annual board meeting will take  
49 place December 15th and 16th through teleconference.

50

1 We are requesting nominations for one alternate for the  
2 Coastal communities, (indiscernible) Hooper Bay,  
3 Scammon Bay and Chevak, also alternates for Districts  
4 Y1, Y2, and Y5. We are also looking for two young  
5 fisher seats, one to represent the lower Yukon River  
6 and one to represent the upper Yukon River. Please  
7 contact me if you would like additional information.

8  
9 The post-season meeting will be held on  
10 December 17th and will be utilizing the in-season  
11 teleconference number and code.

12  
13 The off-season teleconferences will be  
14 held the third Tuesday of October and November, January  
15 and February at 1:00 p.m., and like I said before our  
16 first teleconference will be on October 20th and we  
17 will be talking about the available funds for Covid USD  
18 tariff relief funds, and the fisheries disaster  
19 declaration process.

20  
21 Thank you everyone for listening and we  
22 welcome any questions at this time.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
25 Serena. And how old is your young fisher, what's the  
26 age range?

27  
28 MS. FITKA: Our age is 18 to 35.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Young  
31 adults.

32  
33 MS. FITKA: Yes.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any questions  
36 for -- or comments on the YRDFA presentation from the  
37 Council.

38  
39 (No comments)

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council comments or  
42 questions.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't think the  
47 Council has any comments or questions but your report  
48 was very thorough. And, you know, the teleconferences  
49 have always been an important aspect of management for  
50

1 the Yukon River. It's become almost an imperative with  
2 this Covid thing now. The people are used to the  
3 conferences so your meetings by conferences is  
4 important to get people's ideas about what to do this  
5 coming season.

6  
7 So any other comments or questions from  
8 the Council.

9  
10 MR. GERVAIS: I had a comment, Jack,  
11 this is Tim.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead, Tim.

14  
15 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I support what  
16 YRDFA's doing with the traditional ecological  
17 knowledge. I feel bad that we're always losing an  
18 important part of Alaska and Alaskans history with  
19 that, so I fully support the project and I hope to get  
20 some good information from it so a lot of this  
21 knowledge and experience isn't lost and future  
22 generations beyond us will be able to look back and see  
23 how things were back in 2020 and even earlier in these  
24 people's life spans, so thanks for thinking of it and  
25 making efforts to collect the data.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I also agree  
28 with that. The Yukon River went through a huge crash  
29 back in 1919. There was huge hardship on the Yukon  
30 River, and so the elders that are around probably had  
31 parents that went through that and there's probably  
32 plenty of stories about those big salmon declines on  
33 the Yukon River. Dog teams in the upper Yukon were  
34 being killed off because they didn't have fish to feed  
35 their dogs. (Indiscernible) had to go to Congress, to  
36 get them to slow down the commercial fishing on the  
37 Yukon River because the salmon runs were just extremely  
38 bad around that timeframe, around 1919, early 1920, so  
39 that was presented to our Council many years ago. I've  
40 been on this Council awhile so I remember reading about  
41 those huge salmon declines so there are times when the  
42 Yukon River goes through hardships for one reason or  
43 another. Overharvest or bad marine system or various  
44 issues.

45  
46 So I appreciate all that YRDFA's doing  
47 for the Yukon River system and appreciate working with  
48 YRDFA all these many years.

49  
50



1 Do you have any comments, Jenny.  
2  
3 MRS. PELKOLA: No, none at this time.  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin.  
6  
7 MR. SEMAKEN: No.  
8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.  
10  
11 (No comments)  
12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So all right, thanks  
14 so much.  
15  
16 MS. FITKA: Thank you.  
17  
18 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay, thank you.  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, thanks so  
21 much. We're going to -- what do you think, Karen, go  
22 on to Kuskokwim now.  
23  
24 MS. DEATHERAGE: I think, yeah, sure  
25 you could go into the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish  
26 Commission and then Ray Born wants to update on in-  
27 season management.  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. So Kevin, are  
30 you on the phone.  
31  
32 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes, this is Kevin.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So all right  
35 go right ahead.  
36  
37 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, thank you, Mr.  
38 Chair, members of the Council. This is Kevin  
39 Whitworth. I am the fisheries biologist for the  
40 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission, I'm based  
41 here in McGrath.  
42  
43 First of all I just want to thank you  
44 all, the Council, for your support in my application to  
45 become a member of the Western Interior RAC. I'm not  
46 looking to replace Ray. He's got big shoes to replace  
47 and I'm not looking to replace Ray but I do just want  
48 to express my concerns with the makeup of the RAC and  
49 nobody being from the Kuskokwim on the RAC, nobody  
50

1 representing, so I do hope to fill that position and I  
2 can bring a little bit of the Kuskokwim to the RAC.  
3 There's nobody from Aniak to Telida representing this  
4 area, so I just want to thank you guys again for your  
5 support.

6  
7 I'm going to give a 2020 salmon season  
8 summary. But before I do that, just a quick overview  
9 of the Fish Commission's governance.

10  
11 So we're governed by a seven member  
12 executive council. All of our executive council  
13 members are from communities on the Kuskokwim River and  
14 we have an elder plus an elder advisor. So Charlene  
15 Erics is the chair from Chefnak, she's Unit 7. Golda  
16 Frederick, Unit 6. Avery Hoffman from Unit 5. Mike  
17 Williams, Sr., from Unit 4. Gerald Kameroff, Unit 3.  
18 Jonathan Samuelson Unit 2. Joe Petruska is Unit 1.  
19 And James Charles is our elder advisor.

20  
21 We also have an in-season manager  
22 group. The in-season managers are made up of people  
23 from throughout the river. We James Nicori from  
24 Kwethluk. Megan Leary from Aniak. Jackie Cleveland,  
25 she's from Quinhagak. And Avery Hoffman from Bethel.

26  
27 This summer Robert Lekander, he  
28 retired, he just wanted to spend more time on the river  
29 and with his family and so he is retired as the Bethel  
30 representative as the in-season manager and now we have  
31 Avery and we welcome Avery to the group. He's young  
32 and energetic and ready to learn.

33  
34 The Staff, Mary Peltola, she's our  
35 executive director. We have an administrative  
36 assistant, Casey and a volunteer, she just started with  
37 us, too, she's helping with outreach and communication.

38  
39 All of our Staff and executive council  
40 and managers, first of all we just want to welcome the  
41 new Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Manager, Boyd.  
42 We've had a couple meetings with Boyd, we had a Zoom  
43 meet and greet with Boyd and his wife, and we had a  
44 post-season meeting last -- a couple of days ago, it  
45 feels like a week ago. But both very good meetings  
46 with Boyd and a breath of fresh air, and so we all just  
47 want to welcome Boyd to the Kuskokwim.

48  
49 So getting into the 2020 salmon season  
50

1 summary of chinook salmon. During April the Fish  
2 Commission, we released our 2020 chinook salmon  
3 management strategy. I don't think you guys have that  
4 strategy on hand but if you would like to see that  
5 strategy just let me know. I could send that to Karen  
6 or you all at any time. So we released our strategy in  
7 April. The strategy was guided by a conservation-based  
8 approach. It was also informed by the Fish  
9 Commission's management plan that we had done a couple  
10 years ago. It was informed by the best available  
11 science and the new science went into this management  
12 plan (indiscernible - cuts out) the true forecast  
13 uncertainty for the chinook salmon was in this  
14 management strategy and also the risk factors facing  
15 this declined population. A lot went into this  
16 management strategy. It was the first time we had such  
17 a thorough strategy put together, a really good  
18 document.

19  
20 Also this spring ADF&G issued a very  
21 optimistic forecast for the chinook salmon and they  
22 also announced their harvest strategy based on their  
23 optimistic forecast. Their strategy was to allow for  
24 driftnet opportunities every other day for 24 hours per  
25 day.

26  
27 So in May, fortunately the Federal  
28 Subsistence Board supported a SAR, special action  
29 request, to Federalize the fishery, the chinook salmon  
30 fishery and thank you to the Federal Subsistence Board  
31 for supporting the SAR. And also because it was  
32 Federalized, the in-season managers who I described the  
33 group to you, as we have an MOU with the Fish and  
34 Wildlife Service to co-manage the fishery, and by  
35 Federalizing the fishery, the in-season managers are  
36 able to bring their traditional knowledge over the  
37 years of fishing and observing the environment on the  
38 Kuskokwim, they brought that knowledge to the table and  
39 worked with Fish and Wildlife Service to manage the  
40 king salmon fishery.

41  
42 So by the middle of the summer -- or  
43 middle of the season it became more and more abundantly  
44 clear that the run was going to come back poor, the  
45 chinook salmon run, and it was starting to fall below  
46 -- well below the pre-season forecast, the Fish and  
47 Game pre-season forecast, and thank goodness, thank you  
48 to the in-season managers for sticking to their 2020  
49 strategy, they did not budge from sticking to that  
50

1 strategy or wavering away from that strategy, it wasn't  
2 easy but they did, they stuck to that strategy and it  
3 was very important that they did that because if they  
4 hadn't the fishery could have been worse off. So thank  
5 goodness they did that.

6  
7 So the estimated number of chinook fell  
8 short of the Fish Commission although the escapement  
9 numbers for the chinook salmon fell below the Fish  
10 Commission's escapement target, the actions that the  
11 in-season managers did and the advocacy to ensure a  
12 conservation disaster was avoided. And we were able to  
13 get 88,000 chinook salmon on to the spawning grounds  
14 and help try to rebuild this population and hopefully  
15 to meet future subsistence needs. This year we did not  
16 meet our subsistence needs, not even close for chinook  
17 salmon.

18  
19 I'll be brief here, chum salmon. The  
20 Kusko chum run came in well below the pre-season  
21 projection. Most years, people on the Kuskokwim rely  
22 on chum to provide for food security, especially when  
23 there's no chinook salmon like we've seen in the past  
24 10 years or so. The people will wait for chum salmon  
25 to come up the river. If they're not able to fish  
26 because of restrictions for chinook salmon, there is a  
27 little bit of that, people will start to catch chum  
28 salmon. So this year was different, both chinook and  
29 chum salmon never did materialize and the runs were not  
30 good. And so this is creating a food security issue  
31 for people rely on both the king salmon and the chum  
32 salmon.

33  
34 So as the year went on, as the season  
35 went on it became apparent that both chinook and chum  
36 salmon numbers were not going to come in very strong.  
37 So Lamont Albertson had filed a special action request  
38 to Federalize the chum salmon run to try to help save  
39 the last part of the king salmon run and help save the  
40 chum salmon run. That SAR went to the Federal  
41 Subsistence Board and it did fail. Even though the  
42 Office of Subsistence Management, their analysis  
43 supported the special action request and the data  
44 showed that the chum salmon at the time, and the king  
45 salmon were in the ditch and it's just alarming that  
46 the Federal Subsistence Board did not want to adopt  
47 this Federal special action. This was a mistake  
48 especially when a stock could be in a ditch and no  
49 action was taken to try to protect especially the chum  
50

1 salmon.

2  
3 Sockeye. Moving on from chum and  
4 chinook for just a moment. Sockeyes came in --  
5 although they came in healthy, we still had a hard time  
6 trying to harvest the sockeye salmon without negatively  
7 impacting the declined chinook salmon or the chum  
8 salmon fishery. It's difficult, there are means, you  
9 know, like dipnetting, there's other ways to try to get  
10 sockeye salmon but dipnetting is not widely used but  
11 there are some people that are trying to promote it  
12 which is a good thing. There are a lot of sockeye  
13 salmon. But the other thing is we cannot rely on  
14 sockeye salmon because not all villages on the  
15 Kuskokwim have sockeye salmon, most sockeye salmon that  
16 enter the Kuskokwim, a lot of them take a right hand  
17 turn right at the Stony River and they don't go up  
18 river from there. So villages up stream of there do  
19 not have that luxury of having sockeye salmon, they  
20 have to rely on the kings and chum salmon but this year  
21 it was difficult to reach their subsistence needs with  
22 just chum and sockeye -- or excuse me, king and chum.

23  
24 So just to wrap up here, the chinook  
25 and chum runs were very poor. If this trend continues,  
26 subsistence harvesters will not be able to meet minimum  
27 food security needs. It's painful to say that but it's  
28 the truth. And as managers, we cannot, you know,  
29 halfway through the chinook salmon run just say, hey,  
30 the chums will be here, they're going to be here,  
31 they'll help with your food security needs, so we have  
32 to remind ourselves as managers that we cannot do that.  
33 Some years the chum salmon aren't going to show up and  
34 this year it was that way. So it's a real thing, food  
35 security issues.

36  
37 And that's it for me. I will be here  
38 all day today if you guys have any questions, and I'll  
39 be here for part of the morning tomorrow, but not all  
40 day tomorrow.

41  
42 And that's it, thanks, Jack, and thank  
43 you to the Council for this time.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
46 Kevin. Does the Council have questions for Kevin on  
47 InterTribal Fish Commission presentation.

48  
49 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

2  
3 MR. HONEA: Yeah, if you could hear me,  
4 thank you, Mr. Chair.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, loud and clear.

7  
8 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Kevin, I had a question, hey, how you doing -- but I  
10 had a question on your summer chum and your fall chum,  
11 whatever, did you guys -- I guess that this is kind of  
12 a two-fold question, if you guys did not have an  
13 opening for your summer or fall chum, what is that  
14 dependent on, do you guys have a -- like on the Yukon  
15 here we have the checkstation at Pilot that would give  
16 the numbers, do you guys have something similar on the  
17 Kuskokwim there that determines whether you have  
18 windows or not for fishing those, and did they have any  
19 openings at all for the fall and chum on the Kuskokwim.

20  
21 Thank you.

22  
23 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
24 Chair and Don. First of all, I'm doing real well,  
25 thank you for that question. That's a nice question  
26 there. And about to go on vacation tomorrow so I'm  
27 going to even be doing better tomorrow.

28  
29 (Laughter)

30  
31 MR. WHITWORTH: But anyhow that's a  
32 very good question you got there as far as numbers of  
33 chum salmon coming into the system, how is that  
34 detected. So in the lower river there's a community  
35 based harvest management project where, a lot like the  
36 Yukon, there's in-season harvest estimates being  
37 produced or harvest of chum salmon and king salmon, and  
38 then as you work your way up the stream there's a  
39 project called the Bethel Test Fishery, it's like the  
40 Yukon, we have a test fishery as well. It's just up  
41 stream of Bethel. And that gives us run timing  
42 information, it gives us other information, it doesn't  
43 really give us population size estimates all that much  
44 in the early part of the season, and also near Bethel  
45 there is a sonar and we all know the limitations of  
46 sonar. Our sonar here is run by Fish and Game, it's  
47 been run for -- I think this is the third year, fourth  
48 year maybe, but third year for sure, it's still in a  
49 feasibility stage, they're still not really sure if the  
50

1 numbers are really accurate but it gives us a little  
2 bit of the picture of what's going on with the fishery.  
3 There's weir projects -- just like the Yukon, there's a  
4 weir project in the headwaters but that's more of a  
5 post-season indication of how the run is doing.

6  
7 And so this year, as the run  
8 progressed, the chum salmon run, I don't know the  
9 dates, but somewhere at the end of June, it was very  
10 apparent that the chum salmon were not showing up and  
11 that's why Lamont had issued the special action request  
12 to Federalize the chum salmon run to try to save a  
13 little bit of what -- the chum salmon run. And like I  
14 said, that SAR was not -- it failed. And what had  
15 happened -- I'm just looking through my notes here,  
16 give me a minute.

17  
18 (Pause)

19  
20 MR. WHITWORTH: On June 19th is when  
21 that SAR was taken up. The sonar at Bethel showed the  
22 passage of 14,500 chinook salmon and then the  
23 escapement for chum salmon at the time of that SAR was  
24 -- i believe it was below the chinook salmon numbers so  
25 it was very -- it wasn't very good at all. But,  
26 anyhow, the point here is just that the chinook salmon  
27 run and the chum runs were just in the ditch. And  
28 there was no reason after -- after June -- July 7th the  
29 fishery was open completely and there was no window  
30 openers, it was just completely open, no Federal  
31 management to try to restrict some of the harvest to  
32 get some of those fish up to the spawning grounds. And  
33 even though the numbers were not staying good, chinook  
34 and chum, it was a wide open fishery. So very little  
35 protection of those two species.

36  
37 Did that help, Don.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, thank you,  
40 again, for allowing me to ask these questions.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

43  
44 MR. HONEA: Kevin, I appreciate your  
45 answers. I guess what I wanted you to kind of hit on  
46 was the fact was there an opener for summer chums -- I  
47 mean is the checkstations, or the counting stations,  
48 whatever they have, anywhere -- I mean so was there any  
49 openings at all for the summer chums. We had openings

50

1 for chinook here, for kings, and immediately after  
2 that, I guess, when the summer chums started coming in  
3 we didn't get a chance and I was just wondering whether  
4 you answered that or not, whether there was any opening  
5 -- it's kind of interesting on the Kusko, I didn't know  
6 until a couple years ago that you guys even had an  
7 escapement quota or something, like we do on the Yukon,  
8 escapement into Canada, I guess yours is up there to  
9 the headwaters and I don't know if you said you had met  
10 your quota on that.

11  
12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
14 Do you have a response.

15

16 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Don.  
17 Thanks for that question. Now, I got a better idea now  
18 what you were asking. And I'll just back up a little  
19 bit.

20

21 So during the month of June when the  
22 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was co-managing the  
23 chinook salmon run, early in the season, so June 3,  
24 June 6 and June 9, there was three 24 hour setnet  
25 opportunities for chinook salmon. Also at the same  
26 time there was a few chum caught. And I could go  
27 through those harvest numbers if you'd like. But then  
28 later in June, June 12, 15, 18 and 24 there was  
29 driftnet opportunities, 12 hours in length and during  
30 those opportunities we were running the in-season  
31 harvest management program to try to track how much  
32 fish were being harvested during those openers and we  
33 estimated around 23,000 chinook, about 5,500 chum  
34 salmon, about 6,700 sockeye salmon, so all salmon total  
35 35,000 during those openers. And then the time period  
36 after 6/24 is end of June, the fishery was closed until  
37 July 7th or so to try to protect some of the run, but  
38 July 7th it was wide open and talking to fishermen at  
39 that time when July 7th opener occurred there was still  
40 chinook salmon in the river, in the lower river, and  
41 people were catching nine, 10 a day. This is coming  
42 from personal people who just fished, it was not  
43 through the community based harvesting management  
44 program but anyway a lot of chum still and sockeye. So  
45 the fishery was just wide open July 7th.

46

47 So, anyway, I hope that helped Don.

48

49 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

50



1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

2  
3 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
4 thank you Kevin, I have no further questions.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any questions  
7 for Kevin.

8  
9 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim, I  
10 have a question.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: Hi, Kevin, thank you for  
15 your presentation.

16  
17 Can you -- Kevin will you address and  
18 talk about the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission's  
19 stance on allowing a commercial fishery in Kuskokwim  
20 Bay to go on in a year when you're having the weak king  
21 and chum performance?

22  
23 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, through the  
24 Chair. Tim. So that fishery -- and that was an ADF&G  
25 commercial fishery, Nick, when he gives his  
26 presentation he can talk to about that a little bit  
27 more. But it did occur when the king salmon were past  
28 the Bay and into the river so it wasn't -- there wasn't  
29 any worries that the king salmon would be harvested,  
30 and I haven't seen any numbers for that commercial  
31 opener. I have asked for the numbers for that harvest,  
32 the commercial harvest, but I haven't seen them yet.  
33 So I don't know, chum or sockeye, but it was a sockeye  
34 targeted fishery out in the Bay, over 70 boats, I  
35 think. But that's all we know. And we, as a  
36 Commission, did not fight it or did not make any public  
37 announcements about that fishery.

38  
39 So that's all I could say.

40  
41 Thanks, Tim.

42  
43 Mr. Chair.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin. I'd  
46 like to comment. I feel that it's an important issue  
47 that Tim is bringing up. I was unaware that there was  
48 that kind of chinook harvest in that fishery. Chums  
49 run closer to the beach, kings are in deeper water, and  
50

1 sockeye are in shallow water. When we had  
2 interceptions in Bristol Bay, they pulled the fleet in  
3 closer to the beach, that should be talked about, the  
4 prosecution of the sockeye targeted fishery in  
5 Kuskokwim Bay -- it should be talked about during the  
6 winter planning about how that's prosecuted to avoid  
7 chinook and chum interception, coinciding when we have  
8 a -- basically extremely poor returns for the other  
9 Kuskokwim River species chinook and chum.

10  
11 You have a comment or question, Tim, go  
12 ahead.

13  
14 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I wanted Kevin to  
15 comment on how -- so most of the Kuskokwim subsistence  
16 users aren't in a location where they're able to get a  
17 sockeye harvest in their net?

18  
19 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair. Tim. Yeah,  
20 most of the -- I'd say 80 to 90 percent of the  
21 harvesters on the river are able to get sockeye, just  
22 the upper Kuskokwim, above Stony River, where sockeye's  
23 don't occur. But they might occur in very very small  
24 numbers but it's accidental if you catch them at all.

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: Is that new within like  
27 the last six years that the sockeye are significant in  
28 the Kuskokwim?

29  
30 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Tim.  
31 No, sockeye have been in the Kuskokwim for a long time,  
32 elders on the -- within the Kuskokwim River InterTribal  
33 Fish Commission commissioners they've talked about  
34 sockeye for a long time. They just don't think that  
35 they've been this many, or this abundant. And even  
36 here in the upper Kuskokwim, here in McGrath, you know,  
37 I've heard of people recently talking about catching  
38 sockeyes. That may be different -- that's -- them  
39 showing up here is different, but, I mean we catch five  
40 a year up here in McGrath. But they've been around for  
41 awhile. People in Lime Village have dipnetted for  
42 them, you know, prehistoric times and stuff like that  
43 so they've been around for a long time.

44  
45 Mr. Chair, thanks.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for those  
48 comments, Kevin.

49  
50

1 MR. WHITWORTH: And, Mr. Chair, if I  
2 could comment -- make one last comment.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, please do.

5  
6 MR. WHITWORTH: Tim brought up the  
7 commercial fishery out in the Bay, the Kuskokwim River  
8 InterTribal Fish Commission, we -- it's a mixed stock  
9 fishery, so we got king salmon, we got chum salmon and  
10 sockeye salmon, they're all coming up through the  
11 fishery, we're trying to protect the king salmon,  
12 trying to protect chum salmon now, but it can't be done  
13 if you're only going to be managing one of those  
14 species, you got to be managing all of the three  
15 species. If you're going to Federalize one, you got to  
16 -- probably Federalize all of them, that's the only way  
17 it's going to be done to protect these king salmon or  
18 chum.

19  
20 That's my last comment, thanks.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Kevin.  
23 Any other questions or comments for Kevin.

24  
25 (No comments)

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I think you  
28 made a real thorough presentation Kevin, and appreciate  
29 your comments, and your perspective as how the season  
30 progressed and I was on the call for most of that, so  
31 it was exactly how it played out.

32  
33 So hearing no further comments.....

34  
35 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, I was just  
40 -- I had a quick question for Kevin, and this is not  
41 concerning fisheries proposals or anything.

42  
43 I know that he had applied for a  
44 position for Western region and whether he has heard  
45 anything back yet.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those won't be --  
48 the Secretary of Interior appointments won't be made  
49 until December 2nd, so nobody knows what that status

50

1 is.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Oh, okay, yeah, I thought I  
4 heard that earlier. All right, thank you. And thank  
5 you, Kevin, for your report.

6

7 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you guys and Mr.  
8 Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One final question  
11 for you, Kevin. On the sonar, are they fishing a suite  
12 a different gillnets to get an assessment of what  
13 they're actually seeing on the sonar.

14

15 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, through the  
16 Chair, or Mr. Chair. I don't know what sizes they are,  
17 but they do have a multiple of different size nets that  
18 they do, at both the sonar site and the Bethel test  
19 fish site.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.

22

23 MR. WHITWORTH: And one last thing, Mr.  
24 Chair. If you guys want the report -- I know you guys  
25 have the report in your packet, there is an updated  
26 report that's a little bit more lengthy that we put  
27 together, not in time for this meeting, but it is a lot  
28 of my presentation that I just gave is in that report.  
29 Jack, you might have a copy of it. But I could provide  
30 it to anybody if you guys want it.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I got it.

33

34 MR. WHITWORTH: I appreciate it, thank  
35 you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You emailed me the  
38 expanded version and I think that it would be  
39 worthwhile for Council members that want to look at  
40 this data a little closer, like Tim or Don, anybody  
41 else would like to get that? Other Council members?

42

43 MR. HONEA: Yeah, yes, Mr. Chair, I  
44 would. This is Don.

45

46 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is  
47 Goodwin, I'd like to get that.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. If you could

50

1 send that to Karen, that'd be great Kevin.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, thank you. You  
4 guys have a good day.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
7 Ray Born wanted to speak on Kuskokwim. Are you on the  
8 phone still, Ray.

9

10 MR. BORN: Yes, I am, Mr. Chair, thank  
11 you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

14

15 MR. BORN: Yeah, my name's Ray Born.  
16 I'm the Deputy Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta Refuge and  
17 I was the Federal in-season manager for the Kuskokwim  
18 River last summer. And I want to talk to you briefly  
19 and share some information about how it went, basically  
20 from meetings and from the Federal management  
21 perspective.

22

23 I've also talked with Nick Smith, the  
24 ADF&G Kuskokwim manager and he's agreed that this  
25 presentation has a lot of data in there but he will be  
26 available to answer some questions later on.

27

28 I will present some information and  
29 then I will talk kind of about how the season went and  
30 I'll turn it over to Gary DeCossas to talk about the  
31 harvest estimates, post-season updates, and then we'll  
32 kind of open it up for questions after that.

33

34 So the pre-season timeframe, you know,  
35 early March, April, we started talking about what's the  
36 run going to look like. So there's three pre-season  
37 estimates, you know ADF&G, their estimate came in  
38 193,261 with a midpoint of 227. Fish and Wildlife  
39 Service uses a tool that looks at the entire span of  
40 that, and our pre-season estimate came in at 125 to  
41 380, with that midpoint of being 218,000. Dr.  
42 Cunningham working with the InterTribal Fish Commission  
43 came up with one also, 110,000 to 328,000 with midpoint  
44 about 213,000. So I find it significant that all three  
45 estimates were in that range of 213 to 227,000. At  
46 that point, in April, we're looking at it going like  
47 okay that looks like a pretty good run because based  
48 upon this midpoint the InterTribal Fish Commission  
49 escapement range of 110 to 120 and a harvest --

50

1 historical harvest of 88,000, both of those objections  
2 [sic] being met based on what I knew in April. So pre-  
3 season strategy as Kevin alluded to was for driftnet  
4 opportunities starting on 12 June open every other day  
5 for 24 hours, provided about 240 hours of opportunity.  
6 And that was kind of where we started at in April, we  
7 kind of worked -- kind of set the season.

8  
9 As we look back now, the forecast, we  
10 were way off, you know, it did not accurately reflect  
11 it. And actually at all of the midpoints were 50  
12 percent lower than what actually came through on that.  
13 So we definitely had to do some adjustments in-season.

14  
15 Kind of talking about meetings,  
16 important events. We started with the InterTribal Fish  
17 Commission starting in January. We did a science  
18 workshop, we talked about the science behind it and  
19 what we talked about. But overall we had 13 meetings  
20 with the InterTribal Fish Commission, we had an  
21 additional eight meetings with our working group to  
22 kind of talk with managing and what that looks like.  
23 And then so as we go through the season we're kind of  
24 looking through that and pre-season we figured out,  
25 that, okay, we had the strategies we talked about,  
26 where we were going to go, what we were looking at,  
27 we're using the -- looking at the midpoints of about a  
28 little over 200,000, thinking, okay I can meet all the  
29 objectives we're after this year, should be a good  
30 year. The Federal Subsistence Board met on May 1st and  
31 decided that, again, they were going to close that to  
32 non-Federally-qualified users and just leave it for  
33 Federal management from June 1 to July 1, so that kind  
34 of changed some of the dynamics of how we looked at  
35 fishing, but, again, we moved forward with that  
36 direction. We moved forward with that.

37  
38 On about in May then, you know, after  
39 the Federal Subsistence Board met, we met with the  
40 InterTribal Fish Commission a couple of times and then  
41 on May 29th we identified three 24 hour six inch set  
42 gillnet opportunities on those few days, June 3, 6 and  
43 9 for salmon, and that's to provide that early season  
44 opportunity that everybody is interested in.

45  
46 And then later, the next meeting on  
47 June 2nd, and all of a sudden we started looking at it  
48 and going, like, okay, whoa the numbers are coming in a  
49 lot lower than we thought, you know, we're pretty

1 conservative, so that's kind of the timeframe where we  
2 change our strategy from open for driftnets every other  
3 day to something significantly different. As a matter  
4 of fact we changed it down to where we had just four 12  
5 hour driftnet opportunities for six inch driftnets. So  
6 that took that 240 hours of opportunity down to 48  
7 hours of opportunity. You know, again, that's kind of  
8 based on the Fish Commission, we're working with family  
9 or traditional knowledge, we're looking at the science  
10 and saying, yeah, we agree with the Fish Commission  
11 that we should neck down these opportunities for  
12 driftnets, down to what turned out to be just four  
13 opportunities. So, again, that was kind of a really  
14 significant change from where we started in April to  
15 where we were in the early part of June.

16  
17 That was a dramatic adaptation based  
18 upon what we saw in the run.

19  
20 But we continued to have opportunities  
21 with selected gear size, provide some opportunities for  
22 fishing, i.e., like hook and line and dipnets and  
23 things like that to provide people with the opportunity  
24 to get some fish as we understand that's food security  
25 concerns.

26  
27 You know, we met again in June 9th and,  
28 again, talked about working together with the State.  
29 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the State of  
30 Alaska worked with us really well, they helped us  
31 provide that fishery that was orderly by allowing for  
32 the Alaska Wildlife Troopers to provide the patrol  
33 basis. Fish and Wildlife Service had no Federal law  
34 enforcement on the river because of the Sturgeon  
35 Decision and the direction from the Secretary to wait  
36 for further guidance as to whether we can have Federal  
37 management on navigable waters. We're still waiting on  
38 that additional guidance. So that kind of provided us  
39 a kind of a difficult situation with enforcement of --  
40 Kevin mentioned that earlier -- and maybe Jack had  
41 mentioned it as well, why wasn't there enforcement on  
42 there and basically we -- we had limitation of Federal  
43 enforcement on navigable waters. Fortunately Alaska  
44 Wildlife Troopers helped us out with that a lot.

45  
46 Again, as Kevin mentioned, Lamont  
47 Albertson submitted that special action request on June  
48 10th to, again, take -- continue to have closure for  
49 management for chum and sockeye, you know,

50

1 unfortunately no matter what we did at that point the  
2 chum run was pretty much on its way, what it was going  
3 to do, it might not have changed much chum, so  
4 (indiscernible - garbled) keep very very restrictive  
5 timing as far as the opportunities for fishing on that.

6  
7 And as Kevin alluded to, you know, the  
8 Federal Subsistence Board on June 22nd did not support  
9 that closure so, again, we continued forward with the  
10 driftnet opportunities.

11  
12 So last in-season management  
13 (indiscernible - garbled) on June 30th based upon the  
14 direction from the Federal Subsistence Board and on  
15 July 1 it reverted back to Alaska Department of Fish  
16 and Game management at that time. Alaska Department of  
17 Fish and Game kept it closed. They said we are  
18 concerned about this. So we had a working group  
19 meeting on July 6th, all the public testimony said we  
20 needed to fish, we need more opportunities, so at that  
21 time, after that meeting, with unanimous support, ADF&G  
22 lifted the timing restriction on July 7th. However,  
23 they kept the tributaries closed, you know, to protect,  
24 again, those tributaries -- for the salmon bearing  
25 tributaries and they kept those closed until August  
26 1st. So that was kind of an opportunity to do that as  
27 well.

28  
29 And kind of wrapping up the meetings,  
30 we met with the InterTribal Fish Commission last week  
31 on October 9th and we talked kind of through some  
32 lessons learned from that, and talked about better uses  
33 and we'll continue to have those discussions as we go  
34 forward with that.

35  
36 With that, I'm going to turn it over to  
37 Gary to talk about in-season harvest estimates and  
38 post-season updates.

39  
40 Gary.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Gary.

43  
44 MR. DECOSSAS: Thanks, Jack. Thanks  
45 Ray. So Gary DeCossas, fisheries biologist at Yukon  
46 Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

47  
48 I'm just going to go over -- just to  
49 give a brief summary of what I'm about to go over. I'm  
50



1 going to give a presentation on the in-season harvest  
2 estimates as well as post-season updates on the chinook  
3 salmon run, the chum salmon run, and the sockeye salmon  
4 run. So I'll go ahead and start with the in-season  
5 harvest estimates.

6  
7 So as Kevin kind of alluded to earlier,  
8 we harvested around 36,000 salmon in total between June  
9 1 and June 24. 23,000 of that harvest was chinook  
10 salmon. About 7,000 sockeye salmon harvested. About  
11 5,600 chum salmon harvested.

12  
13 Just to kind of put that estimated  
14 total of salmon of 36,000 into perspective, that was  
15 the smallest total salmon harvest since this in-season  
16 harvest monitoring program began in 2016. It was about  
17 a 50 percent reduction in chinook salmon harvest  
18 compared to 2019 and about a 40 percent reduction in  
19 chum and sockeye salmon harvest compared to 2019. As  
20 was stated in the Yukon presentation by Gerald as well  
21 as Kevin's presentation, this reduction in harvest is  
22 due to the weak and late salmon runs that were observed  
23 in 2020. You know just to put that into perspective,  
24 the number of opportunities we provided in 2020, we  
25 provided seven opportunities for a total of 120 hours,  
26 comparing this to 2019, we only had six opportunities  
27 for a total of 72 hours.

28  
29 The only other thing to point out is  
30 during that last Federal harvest opportunity on June  
31 24th, there was some inclement weather in the area.  
32 Really bad -- it seemed like a fall storm almost, came  
33 up from the Bering Sea, we weren't able to fly planes  
34 to count the nets in the water during that opportunity,  
35 but from a lot of public testimony and discussion with  
36 folks in the public, not very many people were able to  
37 go out just because it -- particularly below the Bethel  
38 area, because the waves down there get crazy even when  
39 there's a slight wind and this was a pretty big fall  
40 storm. So that 36,000 total number is probably a  
41 little bit on the high end for harvest estimates. We  
42 kind of had to make an educated guess about that last  
43 opportunity.

44  
45 Moving on, I'll go to the post-season  
46 updates.

47  
48 So for chinook salmon, about 50 percent  
49 of the chinook salmon run was past Bethel area on June  
50

1 26th, that's about four days later than average run  
2 timing. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
3 recently released their preliminary total run size and  
4 escapement numbers in a letter to the North Pacific  
5 Marine Fisheries Management Council, the preliminary  
6 total run size for chinook salmon in 2020 was 116,000.  
7 The preliminary total escapement number was about  
8 88,000. To put that in perspective, that's about 4,000  
9 off the midpoint of the sustainable escapement goal set  
10 by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. So that  
11 escapement goal range is 65,000 to 120,000. So we did  
12 meet the escapement goals for this year.

13  
14 The preliminary harvest that's assumed  
15 by the State right now is about 28,000 chinook salmon,  
16 however, that's just the preliminary harvest total, the  
17 in-season -- the post-season harvest surveys are still  
18 ongoing so we should -- they should have those numbers  
19 ready sometime in the early springtime.

20  
21 So for other assessment projects for  
22 chinook salmon, the Bethel area sonar, was about  
23 106,000 chinook salmon passed that project. For  
24 tributary goals, the Kogrukluk and the George River  
25 escapement goals for chinook salmon were met however  
26 they were below average. The Kwethluk weir did not  
27 operate this year due to Covid concerns, however, there  
28 was an aerial survey done that counted approximately  
29 721 chinook salmon and based on relationships between  
30 aerial surveys and weir passage numbers, it does seem  
31 likely that the escapement goal on the Kwethluk was  
32 made but, of course, that's never going to be known  
33 because the weir didn't operate. But there were  
34 indications we did at least meet the lower bound in the  
35 Kwethluk weir goal.

36  
37 The Takotna weir operated this year but  
38 had a lot of operational issues due to high water but  
39 they were average to below average for escapement  
40 (indiscernible - fades off).

41  
42 The Salmon Pitkafork up there above  
43 McGrath operated this year. Their numbers for chinook  
44 salmon were very similar to 2019.

45  
46 We did have a new weir project operated  
47 this year by Dan Gillikin and the Native Village of  
48 Napaimute, they operated the Salmon and the Aniak weir,  
49 that had operated in the past, previous --

50

1 historically, but they were able to get that weir in  
2 the water this year getting funding through the  
3 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. The chinook  
4 salmon counts that they had at that weir, a little  
5 below average.

6  
7 There are aerial tributary goals  
8 throughout the Kuskokwim for chinook salmon. Those  
9 tributary goals for chinook salmon were met on the  
10 Aniak River, the (Indiscernible - fades out) River and  
11 the Salmon River and the Pitkafork. However there were  
12 two aerial tributary goals that weren't met. Those  
13 were the Kiseralik and the Salmon River, Aniak. To put  
14 that in perspective, the lower bound of the Kiseralik  
15 escapement goal was missed by 50 fish and the lower  
16 bound of the Salmon River, the Aniak was missed by 61  
17 fish.

18  
19 We'll move on to chum salmon now.

20  
21 So about 50 percent of the run, the  
22 chum salmon run passed by the Bethel area on July 9th,  
23 this is about five days later than average. Just to  
24 remind the Council there is no run reconstruction  
25 available for chum salmon, however, the in-season and  
26 weir data did indicate a weak run and just like what  
27 was talked about on the Yukon, by Gerald, you know,  
28 based on the data that was collected, on the Yukon it  
29 appears that there might have been a cohort collapse,  
30 the age four fish, those that spawned in 2016, they  
31 didn't particularly do well. The Bethel area sonar  
32 enumerated about 76,000 chum salmon passed that  
33 project. However, just a word of caution for the sonar  
34 number, we can all recognize that chum salmon numbers  
35 were really low in Western Alaska this year but the max  
36 catch -- so they run that sonar, apportionment of the  
37 fishery, you know, at the sonar site -- the max catch  
38 that -- the maximum catch that they had in that project  
39 was five fish. So they caught five chum once during  
40 the whole time that project was operated. And, in  
41 fact, the majority of those apportionment catches in  
42 that sonar were below four chum salmon for the entire  
43 year. Meanwhile there's another assessment project,  
44 the Bethel test fishery where the catches in that  
45 project were much higher than anything that the sonar  
46 apportionment (ph - fades out) fishery was catching  
47 throughout the year. If that -- that sonar number of  
48 76,000 were to be believed, based on the escapement  
49 assessment projects that are operated in the Kogrukluuk

1 and George, at least, it would suggest that about 30  
2 percent -- 36 percent of the chum salmon run entered  
3 into the Kogrukluk and George Rivers, which is a pretty  
4 high number.

5  
6 But anyway, the other thing to mention  
7 about chum salmon is there's only one system with an  
8 escapement goal, tributary escapement goal for chum  
9 salmon, that's the Kogrukluk River, that escapement  
10 goal was achieved on August 7th, so we did meet the  
11 chum salmon escapement goal.

12  
13 I'll move on to sockeye salmon now.

14  
15 So about 50 percent of the sockeye  
16 salmon run passed by the Bethel area on July 5th,  
17 that's about seven days later than average and this  
18 continues what we've been seeing in the Kuskokwim the  
19 last couple of years, which is sockeye salmon numbers  
20 coming in large numbers, particularly the lake type  
21 sockeye salmon that run up to the Telaquana (ph) Lake  
22 area as well as the sockeye salmon runs being later  
23 than normal. Similar to chum salmon, there's no run  
24 reconstruction available for sockeye salmon. The in-  
25 season data and weir data indicated a below average  
26 river type sockeye run so those would be the sockeye  
27 that run up into the Kogrukluk, the George, the  
28 Kwethluk. But a strong -- there was also a strong lake  
29 type run so there's sockeye salmon that (indiscernible  
30 - fades out). They pass the similar amount of sockeye  
31 salmon that they did in 2019 so it was a fairly strong  
32 run for those fish.

33  
34 The Bethel area sonar enumerated about  
35 575,000 sockeye salmon passed the Bethel area. And  
36 similar to chum salmon, there's only one tributary with  
37 an escapement goal for sockeye salmon and that's the  
38 Kogrukluk and that escapement goal was achieved on July  
39 8th. However, like I mentioned earlier, the river type  
40 run sockeye salmon didn't do so hot and we can see that  
41 in the Kogrukluk escapement numbers, which were both  
42 below the five year and overall averages for sockeye  
43 salmon.

44  
45 And with that being said I'm finished  
46 with my presentation if the Council has any questions  
47 for me or Ray, or Nick.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

50

1 MR. BORN: Thanks very much Gary. A  
2 couple of questions came up kind of in discussion, I  
3 made some notes on. Of course the question about the  
4 commercial fishery in the Kuskokwim Bay for sockeye,  
5 again, most of that -- those kings were caught and they  
6 were headed, you know, for the -- the Goodnews,  
7 Kanektok Rivers. They're basically not Kuskokwim.  
8 That opener -- first opener was on the 29th of June, so  
9 it kind of missed the Kuskokwim chinook issue so that  
10 was kind of an important thing to consider. Another  
11 thing to consider in the Kuskokwim Bay, of course,  
12 that's outside of Fish and Wildlife Service  
13 jurisdiction, our jurisdiction ends, you know, right  
14 there at the mouth of the Kusko. So with that --  
15 working with the Kuskokwim Bay, working with Alaska  
16 Department of Fish and Game, it's kind of the best way  
17 to work through that.

18  
19 Let's see, I heard a question about  
20 priorities. Again, for Fish and Wildlife Service,  
21 first priority goes to subsistence and, of course, in  
22 the Kuskokwim, we have not had a commercial fishery for  
23 several years now and so we're doing the best we can  
24 with that. And I agree we need to pay more attention  
25 on that as well.

26  
27 So that's just a couple of questions I  
28 heard along the way but I'll open it up for any  
29 questions from the RAC.

30  
31 Thank you.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you're saying  
34 that the chinook harvested at the Kuskokwim Bay are  
35 destined for those river systems there, is that through  
36 genetic analysis?

37  
38 MR. BORN: Well, I'll let Gary kind of  
39 talk to that, he's the fisheries biol -- or I don't  
40 know, or Nick are you on the line.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean where do you  
43 get those numb -- well, how do you know that, that's  
44 what I'm asking.

45  
46 MR. BORN: Yep. Gary, you want to.....

47  
48 MR. DECOSSAS: I can kind of respond to  
49 this, this is Gary from Yukon Delta. There are --

50

1 there were some tagging studies that were done in the  
2 '70s, 80s that indicated that a very low percentage of  
3 chinook salmon caught in those Kuskokwim Bay fisheries  
4 were headed to the Kuskokwim River. And kind of like  
5 what Ray said, that commercial fishery was operated  
6 starting on June 29th, and if you remember from my  
7 presentation, the chinook salmon run was late but about  
8 50 percent of the run had passed by the Bethel area on  
9 June 26th. So there is that. That is essentially all  
10 we have to rely on for how many of those.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it would seem  
13 that with the low chinook runs throughout all of  
14 Alaska, those two drainages would be under escaped, are  
15 there assessment projects for those drainages in  
16 Kuskokwim Bay, the.....

17  
18 MR. BORN: Well, again, those are kind  
19 of -- you know, those are down in the Goodnews Bay area  
20 so I'm not aware of any projects down there.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, you know,  
23 these old studies, they don't -- tagging studies don't  
24 actually apply when they have genetic analysis, so I  
25 would suggest.....

26  
27 (Teleconference interference -  
28 participants phones not muted)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....that the  
31 Service actually -- and the Department look at the  
32 genetic analysis for the chinook harvest in Kuskokwim  
33 Bay when we're scrambling for every fish and we're not  
34 meeting subsistence needs in the Kuskokwim, the 50  
35 percent went into the commercial harvest, that's way  
36 too many fish to be giving away. And so this is a  
37 subject that needs to be discussed at the pre-season  
38 planning this coming winter here. What's the genetic  
39 make-up of those fish and that targeted fishery, where  
40 are those fish going. We have better data than old  
41 tagging studies, I know that.

42  
43 I was on the call, and my comment would  
44 be that way into the run we were advocating for  
45 reducing the fishing time and there was way too much  
46 fixation by the Department and the Fish and Wildlife on  
47 that model. The model says this, the model says that  
48 there's going to be all these king salmon, they're just  
49 late, they're just horribly late, and we were like, no,  
50

1 this is a bad sign. The old-timers will tell you a big  
2 run comes early, has a long drawn out peak and tails  
3 off really late. When you're seeing real lag early,  
4 that's meaning that you've got a bad run.

5  
6 So I have another comment, my comment  
7 of watching the fishery on the Kuskokwim River is  
8 there's way too much fixation on that model this year,  
9 the model was way overblown, but the managers continued  
10 to hold tightly to the trailing tails of the skirt of  
11 that model until the run was apparent as a collapse.  
12 So, again, in the future planning, less talk about the  
13 reliance on models and going more towards in-season  
14 management, we got a bad run showing up, let's back off  
15 right away, we were talking backing off right away long  
16 before the Department and way before the Fish and  
17 Wildlife Service was at the InterTribal Fish Commission  
18 level.

19  
20 So that would be my comments on that  
21 presentation.

22  
23 And so does the Council have any other  
24 comment or questions regarding this Fish and Wildlife  
25 presentation on harvest and in-season assessment.

26  
27 MS. PELTOLA: Mr. Chairman.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

30  
31 MS. PELTOLA: This is Mary Peltola.  
32 After Council comments, may I comment?

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, you may.

35  
36 (Teleconference interference -  
37 participants phones not muted)

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody's got some  
40 kind of -- we're picking up some radio or TV signal)

41  
42 REPORTER: Yes, could somebody please  
43 mute their phone, everybody make sure your phone is  
44 muted. Everyone check your own phone.

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mary?

47  
48 MS. PELTOLA: I promise it's not me.

49  
50

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. You were the  
2 last one to speak so that's why I asked.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Council questions  
5 or comments on Kuskokwim River issues and the  
6 presentation.

7  
8 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, I have a comment,  
9 please.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

12  
13 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais.  
14 Ray, you were talking about enforcement, there not  
15 being enforcement from the Federal side, but you said  
16 you got additional help from the State Troopers on  
17 enforcement and what I saw, in the Bay, and in the Gulf  
18 of Alaska this year with the enforcement from the State  
19 Fish and Wildlife Troopers, there was not much  
20 enforcement because of whatever protocol was adopted,  
21 the Fish and Wildlife Troopers were not wanting to  
22 board vessels, they weren't aggressive in giving  
23 tickets to violators and what not. So I just wanted to  
24 -- it sounded like from your comment, you thought the  
25 enforcement was okay because of the additional help  
26 that you got from the State Fish and Wildlife Troopers,  
27 is that accurate? What I'm overall trying to figure  
28 out is what level of illegal fishing, and what's the  
29 amount of unreported harvest, and is there any  
30 enumeration of the unreported fish in the total run  
31 calculation?

32  
33 MR. BORN: Through, the Chair, thank  
34 you Tim. I appreciate that. So, again, if I had my  
35 preferences and of course I don't get that choice, I  
36 would have had Federal officers working with the Alaska  
37 Wildlife Troopers to help us with all that compliance  
38 work, as you talked about, unfortunately it wasn't my  
39 choice, it was above my level that says we can't do  
40 that. So it was not what I wanted it to be but we had  
41 -- fortunately we had some ability to get compliance  
42 with that so I was very pleased with the Alaska  
43 Wildlife Troopers and the work they did and working  
44 together with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to  
45 have enforcement on the river during these  
46 opportunities. So, again, very tough year for  
47 everybody.

48  
49 Thanks, Tim.

50



1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I saw photos on  
2 Facebook of guys fishing at night, it's light all  
3 night, and they had bins full of chinook salmon and  
4 kind of bragging about it, which nobody -- it's not  
5 cultural to brag about stuff like that in the Interior  
6 too much, but these guys were literally bragging about  
7 catching all these fish at night. So the harvest data  
8 that's being presented is actually pretty -- I don't --  
9 what's the fudge -- what's known as a fudge factor,  
10 what's the fudge factor about reported harvested and  
11 what was actually taken? Do you have a calculation of  
12 that Gary?

13  
14                   MR. DECOSSAS: Hey, Jack, I'm finally  
15 back on, I got kicked off. Cell phone reception  
16 apparently.

17  
18                   The fudge factor is -- for the in-  
19 season harvest monitoring estimates are the post-season  
20 harvest surveys that are performed by ADF&G. That's  
21 the best way that I can say that.

22  
23                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In-season and post-  
24 season, there's got to be like a calculation of what  
25 you're not actually capturing?

26  
27                   MR. DECOSSAS: I don't have that data  
28 on hand. But what I will say is that the in-season  
29 harvest monitoring estimates, they do cover just the  
30 harvest between the communities of Tuntutuliak and  
31 Akiak, and based on the post-season harvest surveys, it  
32 -- for the communities between those two areas, our in-  
33 season harvest monitoring estimates match up relatively  
34 well with those that are picked up on the post-season  
35 harvest survey.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, on the call I  
38 said, does anybody fly at night, are the Troopers out  
39 flying at night, does anybody ever see flying around,  
40 you can be in full -- the pilots, I'm not sure why the  
41 Service was not flying, the pilots can fly, they're not  
42 going out with anybody, the enforcement can go out for  
43 a ride and take a look at what's actually going on on  
44 the river at night, that's when guy's are fishing. So  
45 what I'm saying is, I don't know that you're capturing,  
46 with this much.....

47  
48                   MR. BORN: Jack.....

49  
50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:   .....shut down, if  
2     you're actually capturing the kind of harvest that was  
3     actually going on.

4  
5                   Go ahead.

6  
7                   MR. BORN:   Yeah, thanks Jack, and  
8     that's really a good point.   Of course, as I think  
9     about that, that contributes both to the harvest and to  
10    the run size so that's kind of a balance, you know, we  
11    didn't account for that harvest as harvest but we also  
12    didn't account for it as part of the run size, so  
13    that's kind of that -- that balance on that -- so maybe  
14    the run size was bigger than we thought because of the  
15    unreported harvest.   You know, of course, no matter  
16    what you're doing, hunting or fishing, or whatever,  
17    there's always unreported harvest you have to work with  
18    and as we talked before there's ways to kind of figure  
19    that out.

20  
21                   Basically, our pilots are limited to  
22    not flying at night because it increases a risk to  
23    them.   It's just kind of one of those safety decisions  
24    that was made quite awhile ago.   Again, that's way  
25    above my level, because I can't influence that.

26  
27                   So thanks Jack.

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:   That has to do with  
30    civil twilight, the sun's shining all night down there.  
31    At 11:30 the sun is still above the horizon and it's  
32    not civil twilight.   So I would reconsider -- I would  
33    actually have you reconsider what is actually flyable  
34    light at night.   So I'm not going to go there anymore.

35  
36                   So any other Council questions or  
37    comments on the Kuskokwim River performance this year.

38  
39                   MR. GERVAIS:   Jack, I have another  
40    comment.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:   Okay, go ahead, Tim.

43  
44                   MR. GERVAIS:   This is Tim Gervais.   I'm  
45    in agreement with Jack that I feel like either or both  
46    the Federal and State managers should have some kind of  
47    program set up where you are doing genetics on the  
48    chinook bycatch in the Kuskokwim Bay, to see how that  
49    matches up, studies -- tagging studies from the '70s

50

1 and '80s, there could be a lot of -- a lot of things  
2 have changed on where the sandbars are and what's going  
3 on with the water temperature and what not. So I think  
4 it would be useful and good science, good management,  
5 to take some genetic samples on the king salmon that  
6 are caught in the Kuskokwim Bay fishery and verify that  
7 -- whether it matches or doesn't match the tagging  
8 studies from the '70s and '80s. I don't know exactly  
9 what the cost is but it seems maybe somebody could  
10 comment on that. Doesn't it cost less than \$30 a fish  
11 to do a genetic sample on a salmon now?

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got an answer to  
14 that question.

15  
16 MR. SMITH: Nick, with the Department  
17 of Fish and Game.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Nick.

20  
21 MR. SMITH: So this is Nick, the area  
22 management biologist for commercial and subsistence  
23 fisheries for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
24 so I was definitely the one overseeing the commercial  
25 fishery down at the Bay this year, along with working  
26 with Ray and Refuge Staff and above Aniak there in the  
27 State waters.

28  
29 So the question about genetics, so it's  
30 definitely a lot more than \$30 a sample to run a  
31 genetic sample but the money is not the issue. It's  
32 the genetic baseline for all of Coastal Western Alaska.  
33 When a fish is caught out, that you have really no idea  
34 if it's going to Kuskokwim Bay, Kuskokwim River, Yukon,  
35 Bristol Bay, the genetic distinction between those fish  
36 is so narrow that we cannot place them into these tight  
37 little bins of this one was going to the Kanektok, this  
38 one was going to Kwethluk, this one was -- you can go  
39 into the Kuskokwim River -- what we do have the  
40 resolution to do is these larger geographic areas, like  
41 upper Yukon falls out, upper Kuskokwim falls out, so if  
42 you catch a fish down in the Bay, the resolution for  
43 the Bay is the same as the lower and middle Kuskokwim  
44 River. So if we were to put that in -- take the  
45 genetic samples, run them, probability is that it's all  
46 going to link it to say Kuskokwim area, so that's the  
47 tricky part there.

48  
49 And the whole question about the fish  
50

1 being caught in the commercial fishery, so right now  
2 we're at a point where we're just finalizing our season  
3 summaries because it took a little while to get some  
4 data in and some of the coho weirs, and I'm just  
5 finalizing this, but our commercial catch of king  
6 salmon last year in Quinhagak, so W4 that's the closest  
7 one to the Kuskokwim River, was right at about 4,300  
8 king salmon. We flew an aerial survey on the Kanektok  
9 River a week after kind of our normal timeframe of when  
10 we expect peak spawning to be, but we knew we needed to  
11 fly that aerial survey and we got weathered out when we  
12 wanted to fly it, but regardless this would be then,  
13 after peak, when fish are already moving off of the  
14 spawning grounds and we counted 4,405 king salmon in  
15 the Kanektok River, which is within the goal range of  
16 3,900 to 12,000 fish for the Kanektok. We worked  
17 really hard with the community down there this summer  
18 to confirm that they were going to meet their  
19 subsistence needs and that we were going to make this  
20 escapement goal before allowing people to go fishing  
21 commercial down in the Bay, which is why we held off  
22 until most of the fish had either passed into the  
23 River, or were going to be on their way up there and  
24 also what Gary was saying, we were at the 50 percent  
25 point of fish being in Bethel. So, you know, the idea  
26 that a bunch of Kuskokwim River fish are going to get  
27 intercepted in a commercial fishery in Kuskokwim Bay at  
28 the end of June, those fish are extremely lost if  
29 they're going to eventually go spawn in the Kuskokwim  
30 River, because all their spawning mates are already  
31 making their way up the Kuskokwim River. Not to mention  
32 the fact that the fishing districts down in the  
33 Kuskokwim Bay area, W4 extends three miles off of the  
34 coastline and then approximately six miles on either  
35 side of the Kanektok River mouth, so we're talking  
36 about a small area that is right geographically located  
37 on the mouth of the Kanektok River, and then the  
38 Goodnews Bay commercial fishery is located within  
39 Kuskokwim Bay. So -- and Kuskokwim -- or in Goodnews  
40 Bay there was 442 king salmon harvested this year. The  
41 escapement goal was also achieved on our northfork  
42 aerial survey with a count of 1,098 king salmon and the  
43 escapement goal range is 640 to 3,300 fish.

44  
45 So I guess that's my -- I've heard some  
46 questions about the fishery down there and kind of what  
47 we were going on here, and then it seemed like the  
48 perfect time to jump in on the genetic side.

49  
50

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate all  
4 those comments on the genetics. Have they taken  
5 genetic samples on those river systems down there, I  
6 know they've done a lot of genetic work over the years  
7 in the entire Yukon River and Kuskokwim systems,  
8 they've taken genetic samples -- I work with the ADF&G  
9 up here in the upper Koyukuk. Do you have genetic  
10 samples for down there also?

11  
12 MR. SMITH: We do. So back -- this is  
13 Nick again with Fish and Game. So here a number of  
14 years ago there was the Wassup project that I think  
15 probably a lot of people contributed to, and the Bay --  
16 rivers were also included in the genetic collections  
17 there, we've definitely got a couple proposals funded  
18 since then to strengthen our genetic baseline for the  
19 Kuskokwim River, so here 2016/2017 we had a large  
20 effort to try and include a lot more genetic samples  
21 into the Kuskokwim River baseline, but that's one thing  
22 that's always definitely always on the docket of we  
23 need to strengthen the genetic baselines and see if we  
24 can actually get to a point where they find, you know,  
25 the genetic code that allows us to differentiate  
26 between these stocks, especially in the open ocean. I  
27 know we've talked about -- or had presentations in the  
28 past, yeah, once you're out in the open ocean, the  
29 reporting group is really Coastal Western Alaska and it  
30 is tricky because they are all very closely related  
31 genetically.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I'm aware of  
34 that. But eventually we'll be able to discern those  
35 kinds of things. So appreciate your response to those  
36 questions, Nick. Wasn't hearing you there so thanks.

37  
38 Any other Council comments and  
39 questions on the performance of the Kuskokwim River  
40 this year.

41  
42 (No comments)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none from  
45 the Council members. I appreciate all the -- your  
46 presentation Ray and Gary and Nick. And Mary Peltola  
47 wanted to give a comment, are you there Mary?

48  
49 MS. PELTOLA: I am, Mr. Chairman, thank

50

1 you. I really wanted to thank you, in particular, and  
2 your Regional Advisory Council, because without the  
3 support of Western Interior RAC and the YK-Delta RAC,  
4 I'm not sure that the Federal Subsistence Board would  
5 have Federalized the river this year. I think there  
6 was a lot of optimism about how the run would look this  
7 year based on the way it came in in 2019.

8  
9 Unfortunately it did not work out that  
10 way.

11  
12 I do want to correct something that was  
13 stated earlier. The Refuge -- Fish and Wildlife  
14 Service indicated that the Fish Commission had a  
15 forecast, a numbered, you know, ranged forecast with a  
16 midpoint and that's actually not true. There was a  
17 study commissioned by Curry Cunningham, just to prove  
18 the point that forecasts, even if you go back 40 years  
19 in the runs when we had large robust older runs, they  
20 tend to be really broad in range and very uncertain.  
21 And our forecast, usually it's done by James Nicori and  
22 what he uses as a bell weather is how the geese run,  
23 how the geese migration came in. And this spring it  
24 came in -- there were very few geese and they were very  
25 scattered, there weren't very many geese seen, and  
26 that's -- that has been the trend that James Nicori  
27 uses geese as basically his forecast for how he  
28 predicts the chinook run will happen. And every year  
29 it's pretty uncanny how accurate he is.

30  
31 So our Fish Commissioners, either as  
32 in-season managers or as executive council, none of the  
33 individuals or as a group came up with a numbered  
34 range, that's really not something I don't think you'll  
35 ever see peoples from the river really doing, speaking  
36 in terms of large numbers and ranges.

37  
38 Another thing I want to point out is  
39 that our Commissioners were really disciplined this  
40 year and making sure that they stuck to the Kuskokwim  
41 strategy that they had developed this spring. And one  
42 of the things that has become apparent is on the  
43 Kuskokwim, at least, there's no way to really know how  
44 the run is doing in-season until about June 20th, so  
45 there was a lot of, you know, conservative approaches  
46 pushed by the Fish Commission, like instead of fishing  
47 every other day for 24 hours a day, they wanted to do  
48 the 12 hour windowed approach as has been done for the  
49 last six summers. On June 18th the Fish and Wildlife

50

1 Service in a meeting with the Fish Commission proposed  
2 fishing for an additional 57,000 chinook and, again,  
3 there really aren't many Western Science indicators by  
4 June 18th that tell us where we are in the run or how  
5 good the run is doing, and as you were mentioning, it  
6 was a late run, and basically the whole season they  
7 just said they're late. You know, the other concern we  
8 had was that there were fewer chums that were counted  
9 past Bethel sonar than chinook even, so that's a big  
10 concern for us, to have such dramatically lower chum  
11 numbers.

12  
13 But I can't thank you enough and the  
14 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission can't thank  
15 the Western Interior RAC enough, you really saved the  
16 run, and clearly we didn't have enough to harvest and  
17 we didn't come close to our escapement goal, but a  
18 healthy balance was struck in the end.

19  
20 So thank you.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for your  
23 comments, Mary, appreciate those.

24  
25 Any questions for Mary.

26  
27 (No comments)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. In  
30 the end it all came out in the wash but it could have  
31 been better and so we're trying to rebuild these stocks  
32 and so everybody's working together, and appreciate all  
33 -- two heads are better than one.

34  
35 So where are we at here, Karen.

36  
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hi, there Jack -- Mr.  
38 Chairman, this is Karen Deatherage. We are now going  
39 to go into fishery proposals and fishery closure  
40 reviews, which will be presented by Staff from the  
41 Office of Subsistence Management.

42  
43 I wanted to announce a couple of things  
44 first, or at ask at least one thing, and that is, has  
45 anybody joined this teleconference for the Western  
46 Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
47 and not introduced themselves this morning. If you  
48 have could you please introduce yourself, your agency,  
49 organization or community that you represent.

50

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have anybody  
2 on the call that would like to identify themselves.  
3  
4                   (No comments)  
5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I guess we have  
7 the same.  
8  
9                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Well, thank you. Just  
10 wanted to check, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
11  
12                   The second thing is, I do want to  
13 compliment everybody on the call, people have been  
14 doing great with the mute button and also with  
15 introducing themselves before they speak so things are  
16 running very nicely because of that effort and really  
17 appreciate that.  
18  
19                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.  
22 So how's the Council.....  
23  
24                   MRS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair, this is Jenny  
25 Pelkola.  
26  
27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.  
28  
29                   (No comments)  
30  
31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.  
32  
33                   (No comments)  
34  
35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.  
36  
37                   MRS. PELKOLA: Oh, you can't hear me?  
38  
39                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I couldn't hear you.  
40  
41                   MRS. PELKOLA: Can you hear me now?  
42  
43                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I hear you now, go  
44 ahead.  
45  
46                   MRS. PELKOLA: Can we take a break.  
47  
48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. How long  
49 would you like to break for, 15 minutes.  
50



1 MRS. PELKOLA: Sounds good.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll take a  
4 15 minute break, I got 3:30 right now, so 3:45 we'll  
5 come back on.

6  
7 (Off record)

8  
9 (On record)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we're back  
12 on, the presentation, and Hannah Vorhees, are you on?

13  
14 MS. VORHEES: Yeah, hello.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

17  
18 MS. VORHEES: Hello, Mr. Chair and  
19 members of the Council. This is Hannah Vorhees. I'm  
20 an anthropologist with Office of Subsistence  
21 Management. Can you hear me clearly?

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We hear you very  
24 clearly, go right ahead.

25  
26 MS. VORHEES: Great. Fisheries Closure  
27 Review 21-04, which I'll be presenting first begins on  
28 Page 18 of your meeting book. And before presenting  
29 this closure, and the two subsequent closures, I just  
30 wanted to briefly bring your attention to the Federal  
31 Subsistence Board's closure review policy.

32  
33 So if it is necessary to close Federal  
34 public waters to subsistence users, these closures will  
35 be periodically reevaluated to determine whether the  
36 circumstances that justified the closure originally are  
37 still warranted, and when a closure is no longer  
38 needed, actions to remove it are initiated as soon as  
39 possible. Also in previous cycles, closure reviews  
40 stopped with the Council if the Council's  
41 recommendation was to maintain the closure. However,  
42 as of 2018, the Council's recommendation will be  
43 forwarded to the Board, even if that recommendation is  
44 to maintain a closure.

45  
46 As you listen to the presentation of  
47 this proposal, please keep in mind that the Council can  
48 recommend that the Board maintain the closure, modify  
49 the closure or eliminate the closure.

50

1 Jim River is a tributary of the Koyukuk  
2 River. Jim River, including Prospect and Douglas Creek  
3 is closed to subsistence fishing for all species year-  
4 round currently. The same closure is exists under  
5 State regulation. However, sportfishing is currently  
6 allowed under State regulations. So we have a  
7 situation in which subsistence is not allowed while  
8 sportfishing is.

9  
10 The subsistence closure dates to 1992.  
11 It was brought over from State regulations into Federal  
12 regulations at the beginning of the Federal Subsistence  
13 Program and has not been reviewed or modified since.  
14 And this is also the case with the next two fishery  
15 closure reviews that I'll be presenting to you today.

16  
17 Three miles of Jim River exists within  
18 the Kanuti Refuge boundary and are managed by the U.S.  
19 Fish and Wildlife Service. The remainder of the river  
20 is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The  
21 Dalton Highway crosses Jim River, it's corridor  
22 consists of five miles on each side of the highway,  
23 State sport regulations are slightly stricter in this  
24 area than for the rest of Jim River.

25  
26 Coho, chum and chinook salmon spawn in  
27 the Jim River. Aerial surveys have been flown  
28 sporadically from 1960 to 2015 to count chinook and  
29 chum salmon with an average count of 120 live chinook  
30 salmon, summer chum salmon average 278 live fish and  
31 fall chum salmon averaged 103 live fish.

32  
33 During 2009 to 2012 and in 2015, a  
34 number of 183 chinook salmon and 462 chum salmon were  
35 counted per year. There is not an escapement goal for  
36 any salmon species in this drainage.

37  
38 The predominant resident species found  
39 in the Jim River drainage include Arctic Grayling,  
40 burbot, round whitefish, scopin. Population estimates  
41 on Arctic grayling in Jim River were conducted in 1995  
42 and 1997. In 1995 the estimated density was around 240  
43 fish per kilometer. In 1997 the estimated density was  
44 566 fish per kilometer.

45  
46 Communities in the vicinity of Jim  
47 River include Wiseman, Coldfoot, Evansville and  
48 Bettles. And Wiseman has a documented use area for  
49 non-salmon fish that includes the Jim River in areas  
50

1 adjacent to the Dalton Highway. Important non-salmon  
2 species include grayling, sucker and burbot. However,  
3 there is no subsistence harvest data to report in this  
4 system as it's closed to subsistence fishing.

5  
6 Now, I'll move on to effects of  
7 different options to take on this proposal.

8  
9 If this closure -- I'm sorry, closure  
10 review -- if this closure is maintained the Jim River  
11 will continue to be closed to all subsistence fishing  
12 for all species year-round but sportfishing by rod and  
13 reel will continue to be open.

14  
15 If this closure is eliminated,  
16 subsistence fishing would be allowed in Jim River  
17 including Prospect and Douglas Creeks under the  
18 regional Federal subsistence regulations for the Yukon  
19 area.

20  
21 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
22 modify the closure to allow the use of rod and reel  
23 only for subsistence fishing by Federally-qualified  
24 users.

25  
26 Currently -- so the justification for  
27 this modification is that, currently the drainage is  
28 closed to fishing by Federally-qualified users and  
29 remains open to other uses, which does not allow a  
30 subsistence priority. There is likely a small amount  
31 of harvest under restricted State sportfishing,  
32 predominately near the Dalton Highway.

33  
34 This system should be open to limited  
35 subsistence harvest under rod and reel in order to  
36 protect healthy populations in the system. Harvest and  
37 possession limits would be the same as those under  
38 State sport regulations.

39  
40 So as a reminder, the Council's options  
41 are to recommend that the Board maintain the closure,  
42 modify the closure, whether according to OSM's  
43 recommendation here or another modification, or to  
44 recommend that the closure be eliminated altogether.

45  
46 And I did want to let you know that  
47 this proposal has already been considered by the YK-  
48 Delta RAC and Eastern Interior RAC, both of which  
49 deferred to you, the home region.

50

1 Thank you.

2  
3 I am happy to take any questions.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Hannah.

6  
7 Does anybody got any questions on  
8 Hannah's presentation on the proposal, the closure  
9 review.

10  
11 (No comments)

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, the  
14 Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the OSM  
15 preliminary conclusion with modification.

16  
17 MR. GERVAIS: So moved, this is Tim.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim. Do we have a  
20 second.

21  
22 MRS. PELKOLA: Second, Jenny.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Seconded by  
25 Jenny.

26  
27 So Regional Council discussion.

28  
29 (No comments)

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've been on this  
32 Council since 1993, apparently this closure happened  
33 before Councils were even in effect, and this is the  
34 first time that this closure review has come before the  
35 Council. When it was determined that the Federal  
36 Subsistence Board was going to manage fisheries on  
37 Federal public waters, this Council was informed by the  
38 Bureau of Land Management that they had not retained  
39 any water rights and that there would be no Federal  
40 fisheries associated to the Dalton Highway Corridor.

41  
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I apologize  
47 deeply for interrupting. However, we do need to go  
48 through the presentation procedure for proposals as  
49 outlined on Page 16 of the meeting book. And so the

50

1 next step before Board -- before Council discussion and  
2 justification would be the report on Board  
3 consultations, if there were any consultations by  
4 tribes or ANCSA Corporations.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, excuse me.

7  
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: No worries. It's' a  
9 difficult thing because you don't have your name  
10 placard in front of you with these procedures on it,  
11 but as I said these procedures are listed for  
12 everybody's benefit starting on Page 15 of the meeting  
13 materials and we need to go through the process for all  
14 of these proposals.

15  
16 Thank you.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I was looking at  
19 presentation procedure for closure review on Page 17  
20 and it doesn't show it that way so okay I'll conform --  
21 tribal comments. Orville, do you have any tribe or  
22 corporations that have commented on this.

23  
24 (No comments)

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Orville Lind.

27  
28 (No comments)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you on the call  
31 Orville.

32  
33 (No comments)

34  
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Orville  
36 Lind is in the Alaska Native Relations teletraining  
37 right now.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

40  
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: We can ask if Hannah  
42 Vorhees is aware of any tribal consultation for comment  
43 on these proposals.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

46  
47 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Hannah, do you  
50

1 have any knowledge of any tribal consultation.

2

3 MS. VORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
4 No, I do not believe there is any consultations. Frank  
5 Harris is on the line as well and he was involved in  
6 authoring this analysis, so I just wondered if he has  
7 any contrary knowledge, if he would like to mention  
8 that.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
13 Hannah.

14

15 Frank.

16

17 MR. HARRIS: Yeah, I have no knowledge  
18 of any consultation comments or anything to add to  
19 that.

20

21 Thanks.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

24

25 So agency comments, Alaska Department  
26 of Fish and Game, and who would be doing this one --  
27 oh, that would be Lisa Stube. Lisa, are you there?

28

29 MS. STUBE: Yes, yes, yeah, Lisa Stube,  
30 Division of Sportfish. Yeah, I don't -- I'm basically  
31 going to listen.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. This is  
34 comments regarding the Jim River, which apparently is a  
35 high priority sportfish area.

36

37 MS. STUBE: Yeah, the -- the majority  
38 -- I mean I -- I have not seen a statewide harvest  
39 survey and I'm looking through my report. The -- the  
40 biggest sportfishery, pretty much, practically the only  
41 is on Arctic grayling, of which per our regulations,  
42 five per day, five in possession with no size limit are  
43 allowed. As far as sportfishing for salmon, one cannot  
44 sportfish within a 10 mile diameter or five mile radius  
45 of the Dalton Highway, either direction. And since a  
46 lot of the Jim River does follow the Dalton, that  
47 negates that. And I have not seen per the regs really  
48 any salmon harvested of any species on the -- on the  
49 Jim River or its tributaries.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Correct.

2  
3 MS. STUBE: So basically as far as  
4 sportfish it's Arctic grayling.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a  
7 subsistence permit for the Dalton Highway Corridor,  
8 which is the mainstem, Middlefork, Koyukuk, Diettrich  
9 River watershed and the Southfork, but not the Jim  
10 River, so that's excluded from the State permit. So  
11 that would be my comment there.

12  
13 And do we have any Federal agency  
14 comments. The Bureau of Land Management would be the  
15 managing agency.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is there any BLM  
20 person on here for this Federal review closure.

21  
22 MS. MCMILLAN: Hello, this is Jennifer  
23 McMillan. I am on the call for BLM Central Yukon Field  
24 Office, but we don't have a fisheries biologist  
25 available right now to discuss it. Taylor  
26 (Indiscernible) will be our presentation tomorrow so  
27 maybe we can touch on it then.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There was no forward  
30 of any kind of a comment though since you don't have a  
31 fisheries biologist?

32  
33 MS. MCMILLAN: Not -- not that I'm  
34 aware of.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

37  
38 MS. MCMILLAN: But I'll bring it up.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. Is  
41 there anybody from a tribal organization on the call  
42 that would like to speak to the proposal, or this  
43 closure review.

44  
45 (No comments)

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I don't hear any.  
48 Other Regional Councils. We were informed that the  
49 Eastern Interior and YK-Delta Councils have deferred to

50

1 the Western Interior Council on this closure review.

2

3

Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

4

5

6 The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee  
7 has not reviewed this closure, since we have not had a  
8 meeting, and I'm the Chair of the Koyukuk River  
9 Advisory Committee.

10

11

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Subsistence Resource Commission  
comments.

I'm the Vice Chair of the Gates of the  
Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and this issue  
has not been deliberated.

Summary of written and public comment.  
Karen, do we have any written public comment.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
There are no written comments for this.

I'd like to also apologize to you,  
Jack, and others, for the confusion about the  
presentation process for wildlife closure reviews.  
These are newly introduced into the proposal system  
over the last year and a half or so, and so we're  
working out the process.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

MS. DEATHERAGE: And the meeting book  
was printed before changes were made, that, indeed,  
required this proposal presentation procedure for  
fisheries proposals to be also applied to fisheries  
closure reviews. So our apologies for that.

And also just to keep in mind because  
this is a relatively new process with respect to  
formalities that a lot of the agencies and ACs and  
others are going to have to get familiar with  
commenting on these in the future.

Thank you, very much.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
Karen.

MS. STUBE: Yeah, again, my apologies I



1 was unfamiliar with, you know, needing to be prepared  
2 to comment but I do -- do have a table here from the  
3 statewide harvest survey, through the Chair, which I  
4 would be more than happy to send to you of harvest and  
5 catch, that is catch and release estimates going back  
6 to 2008 to 2018. And overall harvest is relatively  
7 low. I think 2017 was 55, 2018 46, but I'd be happy to  
8 send you this table.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How are you getting  
11 those harvest numbers. I've never been asked about  
12 that.

13  
14 MS. STUBE: From the statewide harvest  
15 survey.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's sort of a  
18 random thing.

19  
20 MS. STUBE: Yeah. Yeah, it's a simple  
21 random sampling thing of -- of license holders.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I've fished at  
24 Jim River quite a bit. Some summers I've fished there  
25 a lot. And so those would be minimum harvest numbers  
26 for grayling.

27  
28 And so written comments, there were  
29 none, Karen.

30  
31 And public testimony, do we have any  
32 public testimonies from anybody on the call.

33  
34 (No comments)

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none,  
37 Council recommendation -- oh, we already adopted a  
38 motion to adopt the modified language by OSM, it's  
39 found on Page 27 and 28.

40  
41 So is the recommendation consistent  
42 with established fish and wildlife management  
43 principles, et cetera, et cetera. I was giving sort of  
44 an overview of the history of the Dalton Highway  
45 Corridor and Federal Subsistence Management. We were  
46 told, this Council was told several times, because I  
47 asked it several times at meetings in the late '90s and  
48 early 2000s about Federal subsistence management in the  
49 BLM lands associated to the Dalton Highway and I was  
50

1 told many times, which I didn't press it to the  
2 Solicitor's Office, but I was told that the BLM didn't  
3 retain water rights and they would not have any Federal  
4 subsistence management and now I'm seeing that the  
5 Federal -- or that OSM feels that there needs to be a  
6 recognition of subsistence use by Federally-qualified  
7 subsistence users, which we are because we have a  
8 customary and traditional use of these species.

9  
10 I feel that OSM should clarify for the  
11 Federal Subsistence Board previous statements by the  
12 BLM regarding the non- -- basically no Federal  
13 subsistence in the Dalton Highway Corridor; is that  
14 true or is that not true. Make a note of that, Karen,  
15 this should be before the Federal Subsistence Board,  
16 and if it's not true then we were lied to by the Bureau  
17 of Land Management several years ago. I'm not asking  
18 for anything, I just want a clarification regarding the  
19 Dalton Highway Corridor and Federally-qualified  
20 subsistence regulations.

21  
22 So that's sort of a background for the  
23 Council because this proposal is actually addressing  
24 that issue, is what it's actually doing.

25  
26 So is it beneficial or detrimental to  
27 subsistence needs and uses. Five grayling limit is  
28 actually not achieved subsistence use on the -- on the  
29 Southfork, which in the tagging studies, the Southfork  
30 and Jim River share the same stocks, they go to both  
31 drainages, and in the Southfork Drainage I have an  
32 unlimited subsistence harvest of grayling and so I'm  
33 actually harvesting fish that would actually utilize,  
34 some years, the Jim River Drainage. So I do feel that  
35 rod and reel limit is actually low, but that would be  
36 something that would need to be changed or possibly  
37 modified.

38  
39 But as far as -- I do feel that OSM was  
40 correct in recognizing that there should be a  
41 regulation that allows subsistence fishing by  
42 Federally-qualified in the Federal regulations for the  
43 Jim River with rod and reel and for various species of  
44 fish. Salmon have been precluded from harvest in the  
45 Dalton Highway Corridor since they built this road.  
46 And I tried for several years to try to get salmon  
47 harvest return and it was always opposed by the State  
48 Board of Fish, and so that, even to this day, salmon  
49 fishing has not been returned to the residents. And  
50

1 there's pictures -- you know, there's pictures in  
2 Wiseman of people that took salmon here historically,  
3 previous to the building of this road up the Valley  
4 here. So there's not a large harvestable surplus,  
5 especially on low return years like this, but there is  
6 a harvestable surplus. I collect the genetic samples  
7 for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and there's  
8 numbers of summer chum and chinook salmon that return  
9 to all these upper Koyukuk River drainages.

10  
11 So I'm talking a lot about this  
12 proposal because this is the area where I live. And  
13 I'm talking to the Council about why I intend to  
14 support OSM's modified conclusion to recognize  
15 subsistence use in the Jim River drainage.

16  
17 Any other Council member discussion or  
18 comment.

19  
20 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

23  
24 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I don't have the  
25 booklet in front of me right now, but did you say that  
26 the modification only has a limit of five grayling per  
27 user per day or per person?

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's in  
30 possession, Lisa just read that into the record. And  
31 so that would be a completely different proposal to  
32 change the limits and bag limits and possession limits,  
33 so I -- we're not going to go there, but the OSM  
34 preliminary conclusion is to modify or eliminate the  
35 closure, so this is a modification of the closure  
36 maintaining the closure for -- except for rod and reel  
37 fishing as seen on Page 28 of our meeting book.

38  
39 And so this recognizes that Federal  
40 subsistence users can use rod and reel under this and  
41 so we're also making a note in our justification that  
42 the Bureau of Land Management told the Western Interior  
43 Council at several meetings that they did not retain  
44 Federal subsistence management on water, in the BLM  
45 waters associated to the Dalton Highway -- in the upper  
46 Koyukuk and upper Segriktos drainage, which is the  
47 North Slope drainages that drain down to the Arctic  
48 Ocean. And I would like a clarification from the  
49 Solicitor for the Federal Subsistence Board on this  
50

1 proposal, is that true, and if it's not true then there  
2 should reflect some future proposals to change that  
3 daily bag limit, or bag limit on the Jim River drainage  
4 to reflect customary and traditional harvest.

5  
6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
7 Karen Deatherage.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Karen.

10  
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. My  
12 understanding is that if the Council wishes to adopt  
13 modifying this closure, according to the OSM  
14 modification, they can also further modify the closure  
15 by increasing the limit, the bag limit for the number  
16 of fish. You can propose that further modification.

17  
18 Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Wouldn't that need a  
21 completely different proposal?

22  
23 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's not what I'm  
24 being told by the analyst.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay. Then  
27 let's.....

28  
29 MS. DEATHERAGE: That doesn't mean that  
30 it'll be, you know, approved that portion of it, but at  
31 least the Council can let its desires be known through  
32 that further modification.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

35  
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: And I was just told I  
37 was correct, so that's right.

38  
39 So, yes, you may further modify this  
40 proposal for this closure if you wish to increase the  
41 bag limit for fish on the Jim River.

42  
43 Thank you.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like to  
46 modify the OSM's preliminary conclusion to adopt that  
47 language with a rod and reel but to increase the bag  
48 limit from five to 10 grayling per day, which is a long  
49 ways from the population of Wiseman and Coldfoot, but

50

1 if somebody goes all the way down there, which is 50  
2 miles from where I live, they should at least be able  
3 to catch 10 fish from the Jim River drainage.

4  
5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
6 Karen Deatherage. Again, what I would recommend is  
7 that you make an amendment to the motion that's  
8 currently on the floor to do this.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I'll  
11 make the motion, can I do that? Is that in Robert's  
12 Rules, can the Chair make a motion, Karen?

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Or the Chair will  
17 entertain a motion to adopt the OSM language found on  
18 Page 27 and 28 of the meeting book but to further  
19 modify to increase the bag limit for grayling from five  
20 to 10 per day.

21  
22 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

25  
26 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, may I modify my  
27 original motion to increase the bag limit from five  
28 fish in possession to 10 fish per day?

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Do we have a  
31 second to that.

32  
33 MRS. PELKOLA: I'll second, this is  
34 Jenny.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, seconded by  
37 Jenny. Any further discussion by the Council on this  
38 proposal FCR21-04.

39  
40 MR. MATHEWS: Mr. Chair.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

43  
44 MR. MATHEWS: Somebody needs to explain  
45 the current.....

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who is this?

48  
49 MR. MATHEWS: This is Vince Mathews.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We have a new  
2 court reporter that doesn't recognize your voice,  
3 Vince, go ahead.  
4

5 MR. MATHEWS: Okay, sorry. Someone  
6 needs to explain the current harvest limit under  
7 Federal regulations for grayling. On Page 31 and 32 of  
8 the current fishery regulations, I do not see a current  
9 Federal limitation of grayling for the drainage in  
10 question, so maybe I'm on the wrong path.  
11

12 MS. VORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is Hannah  
13 Vorhees.  
14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Hannah.  
16

17 MS. VORHEES: Yes, the way OSM's  
18 modification was written, there would be for the same  
19 harvest and possession limits that apply for the State,  
20 would apply to the rod and reel subsistence harvest.  
21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But the Council's  
23 current motion is to modify that to increase the bag  
24 limit to 10 per day instead of five in possession.  
25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
27 Karen Deatherage.  
28

29 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.  
30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got two people  
32 talking over each other.  
33

34 Karen, you're saying something.  
35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Just to be clear, Mr.  
37 Chair. The fishery is currently closed to subsistence  
38 users so there is no current limit on that fishery.  
39 What the OSM modification is doing is opening it with,  
40 or recommending opening or modifying that closure to  
41 allow for subsistence users to take up to five fish --  
42 what Tim and Jenny Pelkola have amended is, to allow  
43 for that to be 10 fish per day by rod and reel. That's  
44 where we stand right now with the issue.  
45

46 So, you know, trying to understand what  
47 type of bag limits there was before, there isn't a bag  
48 limit because the fishery has been closed to  
49 subsistence users. It is open to sportfishing, but it  
50

1 has been closed to subsistence users.

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

4

5

6

MS. DEATHERAGE: And right now what the Council is proposing to do is to open it and increase the bag limit that the OSM has recommended.

7

8

9

Thank you.

10

11

12

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Thanks for that clarification on the record, Karen.

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

So it isn't correct that there's a Federal closure to subsistence yet there's sportfishing allowed, that isn't correct, and so there needs to be -- I'm not asking to use any other kind of gear type than rod and reel, but I do feel that the bag limit is insufficient for customary use of grayling. So I agree with the current motion on the table.

21

22

23

Did we have another comment from someone, I heard a man's voice.

24

25

26

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

27

28

29

30

MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

31

32

33

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim. I thought there was somebody else there too.

34

35

36

MR. GERVAIS: Well, I was talking on top of Karen about two minutes ago.

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: So two items. So if this amended language was adopted then a subsistence user could also -- who had a sports license could harvest 10 fish under Federal regulations and another five fish under sportfish regulation, if they had the proper licensing?

46

47

48

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, I don't think that's the way it would go, would it?

49

50

MS. VORHEES: I don't believe it would

1 be cumulative.

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Not.....

4

5

MS. VORHEES: This is Hannah Vorhees.

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MR. GERVAIS: The second point.....

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MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is Karen.

MS. VORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is Hannah Vorhees, may I jump in for a moment.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Hannah.

MS. VORHEES: Thank you. I want to clarify that with the specification of 10 grayling a day as the limit, bag in possession limit, you still -- you've not addressed the issue of salmon, which is, of



1 course, fine if you don't want to, but with this  
2 modification there will be no option for subsistence  
3 fishing for salmon on the Dalton Highway Corridor. If  
4 you would like to consider a bag and possession limit  
5 for salmon, to specify that, that may be an option that  
6 would serve your interests.

7  
8 Thank you.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that  
11 comment, Hannah, but at this time I think this is more  
12 of a less of a test case to find out if BLM was  
13 actually lying to this Council, that they did not --  
14 there would be no Federal subsistence priority fishing  
15 in the Dalton Highway Corridor. So we'll just modify  
16 it to this point 10 grayling per day limit and to  
17 recognize subsistence -- Federal subsistence fishing on  
18 the Jim River using rod and reel.

19  
20 And so it's the upper -- it's spawning  
21 grounds for salmon, so basically if you see a salmon  
22 it's going to be spawning and I'm not going to want to  
23 take that. But there are migratory areas where I would  
24 like to be able to take some summer chum. But I've yet  
25 to -- failed before the State Board of Fish on that  
26 one, several times.

27  
28 So thanks for your comment on that and  
29 we'll see where the Federal Subsistence Board goes with  
30 this, with the Solicitor, during the deliberations of  
31 this proposal FCR21-04.

32  
33 Karen, are you talking.

34  
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
36 I am looking at the Fisheries Closure Review 21-04, the  
37 preliminary conclusion of OSM is to modify the closure  
38 in order to allow Federally-qualified subsistence users  
39 to use rod and reel to harvest fish in the Federal  
40 waters of Jim River, Prospect Creek and Douglas Creeks.  
41 Limits would be the same as those listed under ADF&G  
42 sportfish regulations.

43  
44 Right now -- so my understanding is, is  
45 that this modification by OSM is not limited to  
46 grayling.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: If the Council wants  
2 to limit the take to grayling, we can stick with the  
3 amendment as stated just as long as you make it clear  
4 that the modification by OSM, you are supporting for  
5 all fish.

6  
7 Thank you.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, there's other  
10 bag limits for like whitefish and so forth but we're  
11 not talking about that. Basically the Jim River is  
12 grayling, a few round whitefish, and salmon spawning  
13 areas. That's what the Jim River actually is. So  
14 we're not going to talk about the other bag limits for  
15 the other species of fish, which are more expanded,  
16 we're talking about the grayling bag limit.

17  
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So.....

21  
22 MS. DEATHERAGE: We'll clarify that in  
23 the justification and your amendment just specifies  
24 grayling, so thank you, Mr. Chair, I think we're okay  
25 on that. I just wanted to make sure.

26  
27 Thank you.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're staying with  
30 -- you know, we'll be able to catch a whitefish  
31 incidentally to the grayling fishing, but we're also  
32 discussing the ability of Federal subsistence fishers  
33 to be able to take up to 10 grayling per day and so  
34 that's the modification. We're not modifying the other  
35 bag limits of the other species, or the closure to  
36 salmon, we're just going strictly with the amended  
37 language to the OSM modification.

38  
39 Any further discussion by the Council.

40  
41 (No comments)

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear any, we  
44 have a question.

45  
46 MRS. PELKOLA: Question.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by  
49 Jenny. Those in favor of adoption of the OSM amended  
50

1 language -- modified language found on Page 27 and 28  
2 with the additional modification made by the Western  
3 Interior Regional Council to set a subsistence bag  
4 limit of 10 grayling per day in the Jim River, Prospect  
5 Creek and Douglas Creek drainages, those in favor of  
6 that -- of the motion on the table signify by saying  
7 aye.

8

9

IN UNISON: Aye.

10

11

12

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I hear three votes.  
Let's get a roll call on this one.

13

14

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16

17

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So roll call. I'll  
call the roll.

18

19

Tommy, are you there?

20

21

MR. KRISKA: Yes.

22

23

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

24

25

MR. KRISKA: Did you hear me?

26

27

28

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we got a yes  
vote for the proposal?

29

30

MR. KRISKA: Yep.

31

32

33

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tommy.  
You want to mute your phone again, Tommy.

34

35

Tim.

36

37

MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I support that.

38

39

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Jenny.

40

41

MRS. PELKOLA: Yes.

42

43

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin.

44

45

MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

46

47

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Don.

48

49

(No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then myself. I  
2 don't know what happened to Don, he didn't come back  
3 after that break apparently.

4  
5 So the motion passes with quorum.

6  
7 So Karen, we're going to 5:00 o'clock  
8 today.

9  
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: That is at the Chair's  
11 discretion, Mr. Chair.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Is 5:00  
14 o'clock good for the Council.

15  
16 MRS. PELKOLA: 5:00 o'clock is good.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got 4:30 right  
19 now.

20  
21 MR. GERVAIS: 5:00 o'clock is good.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to go  
24 through Federal Closure Review 21-06, Toklat River  
25 closure, Hannah.

26  
27 MS. VORHEES: Yes, hello, thank you,  
28 Mr. Chair. This is Hannah Vorhees again with OSM. And  
29 now we'll be reviewing Fisheries Closure Review 21-06.  
30 Can you still hear me clearly?

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
33 perfectly fine.

34  
35 MS. VORHEES: This starts on Page 30 of  
36 your book and it's specific to the Toklat River in  
37 Denali National Park.

38  
39 This is a small system located in the  
40 Eastern Interior region and the reason it's being  
41 presented to you today is that Nikolai and Telida are  
42 resident zone communities to Denali National Park and  
43 they are both located in Western Interior. The two  
44 other resident zone communities for Denali National  
45 Park, Cantwell and Southcentral and Eastern Interior  
46 community of Lake Minchumnia. And I will review how  
47 those two Councils have recommended the direction to  
48 take on this proposal.

49  
50

1 All right. So I'll give you a fairly  
2 brief presentation on this closure review. Simply  
3 because it is such a small system that it brings  
4 together multiple regions but please do let me know if  
5 you'd like a more detailed presentation or if you have  
6 any questions afterwards.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, do the  
9 abbreviated one for this, it's the periphery of our  
10 region.

11  
12 MS. VORHEES: Okay. Sure thing.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

15  
16 MS. VORHEES: So the Toklat River is  
17 closed to subsistence fishing under Federal regulations  
18 for all fish from August 15th through May 15th each  
19 year. This is another closure that was brought over  
20 from State regulations at the start of the Federal  
21 Program.

22  
23 It's worth noting that State, sport,  
24 and subsistence regulations have recently changed to  
25 allow fishing for salmon and non-salmon fish on the  
26 Toklat year-round. The exception is about three miles  
27 of spawning area down stream of Federal public lands,  
28 which are still closed.

29  
30 So this means that currently  
31 subsistence and sportfishing are allowed under State  
32 regulations, but there is no Federal subsistence  
33 permitted.

34  
35 Chum and coho salmon have been  
36 documented in this system. And the Tanana River Falls  
37 chum salmon escapement has been met or exceeded every  
38 year since 2001 prior -- with the probable exception of  
39 this year. Surveys are still being done is my  
40 understanding to determine whether escapement will be  
41 met for the current year.

42  
43 The resident zone communities that I  
44 mentioned earlier take non-salmon fish such as grayling  
45 and trout locally, and tend to take salmon such as  
46 chinook and sockeye farther away from their  
47 communities.

48  
49 Just to quickly skip to the preliminary  
50

1 conclusion, OSM suggests eliminating the closure and  
2 opening the Toklat River to subsistence under Federal  
3 regulations.

4  
5 The justification for this is that  
6 prior to the current year, the Tanana River escapement  
7 goal has been met every year since 2001. Federal  
8 public waters on the Toklat River occur up stream of  
9 the primary spawning aggregation and eliminating the  
10 closure will align Federal and State regulations.  
11 Coupled with poor access and closure to all subsistence  
12 fishing in the pre-ANILCA portion of Denali National  
13 Park it's unlikely that Federal subsistence harvest  
14 would have much effect on these stocks.

15  
16 And for your information, this proposal  
17 has already been considered by the Southcentral RAC  
18 which recommended that the closure be eliminated in  
19 keeping with OSM's recommendation. And the Eastern  
20 Interior RAC took no action and they deferred to the  
21 home region but that meeting is currently ongoing and  
22 it's not 100 percent clear to me if they were deferring  
23 both to you and Southcentral, or to Western Interior in  
24 particular, but they decided to take no action.

25  
26 And that concludes my presentation.  
27 Please let me know if you have any questions.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That makes no sense  
30 because Eastern Interior, the Toklat River is in the  
31 Eastern Interior. So I don't know how they came to  
32 that conclusion, but that's them.

33  
34 MS. VORHEES: Mr. Chair, if I may. I  
35 think they're -- yeah, I agree that that is a little  
36 bit confusing and that is what I heard today and if we  
37 get any update I will communicate to them as soon as I  
38 can.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have two  
43 communities that have customary and traditional use in  
44 that area so the presentation, any questions for  
45 Hannah.

46  
47 (No comments)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Was there any tribes  
50

1 consulted then. Hannah, do you know.

2

3 MS. VORHEES: Mr. Chair. Tribal and  
4 ANCSA consultations were carried out on June 10th and  
5 11th and there were no comments on this fisheries  
6 closure review.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
9 that. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Does this  
10 -- are you doing this one Lisa.

11

12 MS. STUBE: No. No. I am -- this is out  
13 of -- this is out of my area, but I think my supervisor  
14 is on the line, Klaus Wuttig, would you like to address  
15 this.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Klaus.

18

19 MR. WUTTIG: Yeah, Hi, this is Klaus  
20 with Fish and Game. I don't have any specific comments  
21 to this one. Just to -- I guess a specific note to  
22 that area where sportfishing and subsistence is  
23 currently closed, that three mile portion that was  
24 referenced, that was done because that's a critical  
25 spawning habitat and at a minimum I think we want to  
26 see that continue to be protected.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Klaus.

31

32 And does the National Park Service, who  
33 would be the Federal agency associated to this. Josh  
34 Ream.

35

36 MR. REAM: Hi, Mr. Chair. This is Josh  
37 Ream for the record. The Denali Subsistence Resource  
38 Commission did vote to lift the closure on the Toklat  
39 River.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And any  
42 further comment from the National Park Service.

43

44 MR. REAM: No, sir.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
47 Any tribal comments on the phone here.

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Advisory Groups,  
2 other Regional Councils; we got their Eastern Interior  
3 and Southcentral's position.

4  
5 Fish and Game Advisory Committees,  
6 don't know. Is anybody aware of any Advisory Committee  
7 meetings on this one.

8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, Mr. Chair.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

12  
13 MR. MATHEWS: This is Vince Mathews  
14 with Kanuti, Arctic and Yukon Flats. And I apologize,  
15 I'm monitoring both Eastern and Western, but Eastern  
16 Interior did take up Fishery Closure 21-06 and they  
17 passed -- well, they passed OSM's preliminary  
18 conclusion to eliminate the closure.

19  
20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, they did adopt  
23 that, okay. Thanks, Vince.

24  
25 And we got the Subsistence Resource  
26 Commission position, which was to eliminate the  
27 closure.

28  
29 Do we have any written comments, Karen.

30  
31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 There's no record of written comments for this closure.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any public  
35 testimony. Is anybody on the phone that would like to  
36 comment on this.

37  
38 (No comments)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear anybody.  
41 Regional Council recommendation. The Chair will  
42 entertain a motion to adopt Fisheries Closure Review  
43 21-06.

44  
45 MR. GERVAIS: So moved by Tim.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Tim. Do we  
48 have a second.

49  
50



1 MRS. PELKOLA: I'll second, this is  
2 Jenny.  
3  
4 MR. SEMAKEN: I will.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Seconded by  
7 Jenny.  
8  
9 Council discussion.  
10  
11 (No comments)  
12  
13 MRS. PELKOLA: Question.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to  
16 comment for the record that we have two communities  
17 that have customary and traditional use within this  
18 closure review and taking the actions of the Eastern  
19 Interior Council into consideration and the Denali  
20 Subsistence Resource Commission which is also one of  
21 our Commissions that would be advising the Western  
22 Interior, I intend to support the elimination of the  
23 closure.  
24  
25 So question's called by Jenny, any  
26 further comments.  
27  
28 (No comments)  
29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
31 Those in favor of -- we're in the affirmative here --  
32 those in favor of eliminating the closure signify by  
33 saying aye.  
34  
35 IN UNISON: Aye.  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.  
38  
39 (No opposing votes)  
40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any opposition.  
42  
43 (No comments)  
44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, motion  
46 passes.  
47  
48 So next would be Fisheries Closure  
49 Review 21-07, Hannah.  
50

1 MS. VORHEES: All right. Am I correct  
2 in understanding we're ready to move on to Fisheries  
3 Closure Review 21-07?  
4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a roger on  
6 that, go right ahead.  
7

8 MS. VORHEES: Okay, great. This is the  
9 final closure review for you to consider today, 21-07,  
10 the analysis begins on Page 39 of your book and this is  
11 for Nome Creek.  
12

13 Nome Creek is a tributary of Beaver  
14 Creek in the Eastern Interior. It's closed to  
15 subsistence fishing for grayling year-round. This  
16 closure review is being presented to you because  
17 residents of the Yukon Northern area have a customary  
18 and traditional use determination for non-salmon in the  
19 Yukon River drainage. Because customary and  
20 traditional use determinations are made very broadly  
21 and inclusively for the Yukon drainage, some  
22 communities in the Western Interior region could  
23 theoretically use this area even though it's a very  
24 small system.  
25

26 When considering a closure located in  
27 another region, the Council can take no action and  
28 defer the proposal to the home region, and as I let you  
29 know you can also act on the proposal and recommend  
30 that the Board maintain the closure, modify it or  
31 eliminate it.  
32

33 Nome Creek is in the White Mountains  
34 Special Recreation Management Area which is  
35 administered by the Bureau of Land Management about 50  
36 air miles north of Fairbanks.  
37

38 Under State regulations the area is  
39 closed to subsistence fishing, sportfishing is allowed  
40 year-round, though all grayling must be released.  
41

42 In terms of options -- I am giving you  
43 an abbreviated version of this presentation and please  
44 let me know if you need more information.  
45

46 The one option you could take is to  
47 eliminate this closure to subsistence for grayling. If  
48 the closure is eliminated subsistence fishing for  
49 grayling would be permitted.  
50

1 OSM rejected this alternative due to  
2 conservation concerns. Under this option, if favored  
3 by the Council, OSM would recommend matching the  
4 harvest limit of five grayling currently in place below  
5 the confluence of Nome Creek and Champion Creek.  
6

7 Another alternative is to close fishing  
8 for grayling to all users. There would continue to be  
9 no subsistence opportunity and sport catch and release  
10 would also be eliminated.  
11

12 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
13 maintain the status quo. This is because grayling are  
14 a species that are highly susceptible to over-  
15 exploitation. Nome Creek is road accessible allowing  
16 for easy access and harvest of fish. Allowing a  
17 subsistence harvest on these stocks has the potential  
18 for local depletion or overharvest. So under this  
19 recommendation the only fishing for grayling would  
20 continue to be catch and release under State sport  
21 regulations.  
22

23 This proposal has already been  
24 considered by YK-Delta, which deferred to the Eastern  
25 Interior. And I have heard that Eastern Interior,  
26 which is meeting concurrently has recommended that the  
27 closure be modified so that it extends to all users.  
28 But there was a possibility of that decision being  
29 looked at again before the end of the meeting.  
30

31 Thank you.  
32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.  
34

35 MS. VORHEES: Let me know if you have  
36 any questions.  
37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the overview  
39 shows that this is deep within the Eastern Interior  
40 region, and so I feel more comfortable with deferral to  
41 the Eastern Interior Council, their deliberation with  
42 the Federal Subsistence Board on this one.  
43

44 So the Chair will entertain a motion to  
45 defer this to the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory  
46 Council.  
47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 This is Karen Deatherage. Unfortunately we still do  
50

1 have to go through the process of opening the floor up  
2 for any comments or recommendations.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll go  
7 there. Tribes, did we have any tribal comments.

8

9 MS. VORHEES: This is Hannah Vorhees.  
10 No, there were no tribal or ANCSA corporation comments.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Alaska  
15 Department of Fish and Game.

16

17 MS. STUBE: Lisa Stube, Sportfish  
18 Division. The one comment I do need to make is this  
19 area is within the Fairbanks non-subsistence area.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's under State  
22 regulations.

23

24 MS. STUBE: Under State regulations,  
25 yes, that's -- that's correct.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That doesn't  
28 actually apply to Federal lands.

29

30 MS. STUBE: Right. Right. I mean  
31 there's -- yeah, I -- I just want to bring that to your  
32 attention.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Which my opinion is,  
35 there's no place for non-subsistence areas in Alaska  
36 period, under State regulations. Those should be State  
37 priority areas is what they should be. Because non-  
38 residents can actually compete in non-subsistence areas  
39 for -- with Alaskan residents, but don't get me started  
40 on that one.

41

42 So the Alaska Department of Fish and  
43 Game's position was to maintain the closure?

44

45 MS. STUBE: Yes. Yes. Yes, to maintain  
46 the -- yeah -- the -- the position was to maintain the  
47 closure of the Jim River to harvest but -- but to still  
48 allow for catch and release.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Now, this is the  
2 Nome Creek.

3  
4 MS. STUBE: On, Nome Creek, yes. And  
5 then once Nome flows in -- into -- into Beaver Creek,  
6 then along Beaver Creek the harvest is -- you know,  
7 it's the same as the general regulations of five Arctic  
8 grayling per day, five in possession, no size limit.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So tribal  
11 organization comments -- or correction, Federal  
12 comments, does the BLM have comments on this one. Are  
13 you doing this one, Jenn, or is this outside of.....

14  
15 (No comments)

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any BLM comments.

18  
19 (No comments)

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, hearing none,  
22 tribal comments.

23  
24 (No comments)

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear anybody  
27 on the phone for tribal comments.

28  
29 The Regional Advisory Council would be  
30 the Eastern Interior -- are you there, Vince.

31  
32 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, I'm here.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're reviewing  
35 this FCR21-07, so Eastern Interior's taken this up?

36  
37 MR. MATHEWS: Yes, they've taken it up  
38 as mentioned by OSM Staff, there possibly could be a  
39 question on the vote, but my understanding on the vote  
40 it was 4/3 to amend OSM's preliminary conclusion to  
41 affect all users relating to -- their justification was  
42 the mortality associated with catch and release. That  
43 subsistence should have a priority over sportfishing  
44 catch and release.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I see, yeah,  
47 okay, well, that's good to know.

48  
49 Advisory Committees.

50

1 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

4  
5 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais. I'm  
6 not understanding that language right, Vince. They're  
7 expanding the modification to all users, meaning what,  
8 all sport, resident and non-resident users.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You there, Vince.

11  
12 MR. MATHEWS: Yes. Sorry, I didn't  
13 know if Jack wanted to speak, the Chair. Yes, all  
14 uses, it would have implied all uses. And that was  
15 supported, like I said my notes and on the record it  
16 said four to three, but I believe they're going to  
17 still look at that vote and the local representative  
18 for that area did vote in support of, you know, all  
19 uses would be closed for that area.....

20  
21 MR. GERVAIS: So that's Eastern.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Including catch and  
24 release?

25  
26 MR. MATHEWS: Including catch and  
27 release, correct. It was a lengthy discussion.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

30  
31 So written comments, Karen.

32  
33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
34 There are no written comments on FCR21-07.

35  
36 Thank you.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

39  
40 Public testimony. Is there anybody on  
41 the phone that wants to testify regarding this  
42 proposal.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council  
47 recommendation. The Chair will entertain a motion to  
48 defer this to the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory  
49 Council, because it's deep within the Eastern Interior

50

1 region. It does not affect any grayling resource that  
2 would stray into the Western Interior region.

3  
4 Do we have a motion to that effect, to  
5 defer.

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: So moved on the deferral  
8 from Tim.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim. Do we  
11 have a second.

12  
13 MR. SEMAKEN: Second.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodwin.

16  
17 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
20 Goodwin. Any further discussion.

21  
22 (No comments)

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
25 question.

26  
27 MRS. PELKOLA: Question.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by  
30 Jenny. Those in favor of deferral to the Eastern  
31 Interior Regional Advisory Council signify by saying  
32 aye.

33  
34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

37  
38 (No opposing votes)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So.....

41  
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
43 Karen Deatherage. I'd like to clarify that Don Honea  
44 is not -- still not on the call so we have six members  
45 voting.

46  
47 Thank you.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yes. Thank  
50

1 you for that clarification. Don dropped off at our  
2 break and didn't come back at 3:45.

3  
4 So we're on Fisheries Proposal 21-01.

5  
6 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair, this is Joshua  
7 Ream with the Park Service.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Joshua.

10  
11 MR. REAM: Thank you. I apologize for  
12 this, I just checked with the Subsistence Coordinator  
13 to verify the vote by the Denali SRC on the closure  
14 review for 21-06.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

17  
18 MR. REAM: And she said though there  
19 was positive discussion on that, they did not take a  
20 formal position. I wanted to clarify that to make sure  
21 if anyone's decision on that proposal within the RAC  
22 was based on that, that it was clear on the record.

23  
24 I apologize.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. No,  
27 I still would have supported elimination of that  
28 closure on 06.

29  
30 MS. PETRIVELLI: Oh, Mr. Chair.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead,  
33 Jenny.

34  
35 MS. PETRIVELLI: This is Pat Petrivelli  
36 with BIA.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, oh, Pat, go  
39 ahead.

40  
41 MS. PETRIVELLI: I just had a point of  
42 clarification and it had to do with the 04 closure  
43 review on the Jim River.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

46  
47 MS. PETRIVELLI: And I just wanted to  
48 bring your attention to Page 22 of the book.

49  
50



1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2  
3 MS. PETRIVELLI: Because it has to do  
4 with whether BLM was telling the truth all those years  
5 and it's Page 22, at the bottom of the page, and it  
6 says that the Federal public waters of the Jim River in  
7 the Fish and Wildlife Refuge, the Kanuti Refuge  
8 boundaries. And then it says the remainder of Jim  
9 River, Prospect and Douglas Creek are on general domain  
10 land managed by BLM, and on general domain lands  
11 managed by BLM, these regulations apply only to non-  
12 navigable waters.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see. Jim River's  
15 not.....

16  
17 MS. PETRIVELLI: So this.....

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....Jim River's not  
20 a navigable stream.

21  
22 MS. PETRIVELLI: So then that --  
23 because it's a non-navigable stream then it would apply  
24 because -- so that.....

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
27 that clarification, I missed that language on Page 22,  
28 but that would.....

29  
30 MS. PETRIVELLI: I guess.....

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....apply -- the  
33 Jim River drainage is non-navigable. You can't get  
34 there by a boat because there's a canyon with a  
35 rockfall in there, it's like a Class 5 to get through  
36 that thing, floating out of it.

37  
38 MS. PETRIVELLI: So I guess when we  
39 have it clarified by the Board, we'll try to make sure  
40 we know exactly what waters of BLM are applicable when  
41 we get to the Board meeting.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I really  
44 appreciate that. I would highly enjoy that  
45 clarification before the Federal Board process on this  
46 proposal. I appreciate it.

47  
48 MS. PETRIVELLI: And especially because  
49 you're more familiar with the Jim River than they are.

50

1 But I'll make sure the BLM InterAgency Staff Committee  
2 person talks to someone knowledgeable and make sure  
3 they know the extent of what BLM's non-navigable waters  
4 would be included in this area.

5  
6 And I had always assumed it was just  
7 waters -- oh, but it's navigable waters on conservation  
8 units, that's where their -- conservation units come  
9 in, is when it's navigable waters. It'll be an  
10 interesting discussion.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
13 that clarification. Let the record reflect that on --  
14 that would be for Proposal.....

15  
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: It's Federal Closure  
17 Review 21-04, Mr. Chair.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's 21-04. I got  
20 to turn on a light. I'm on solar energy and it was  
21 cloudy all day so I'm saving power here, so I can turn  
22 on my light, okay, I'm good.

23  
24 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

27  
28 MR. GERVAIS: I think the WIRAC has  
29 asked for clarification on definition of high water  
30 mark and whether a river is navigable or not and I  
31 don't recall getting any information regarding what --  
32 how those are defined.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll get to that in  
35 our annual report response from the Federal Subsistence  
36 Board and I have issue with their response. So we'll  
37 get to that further on in our agenda, Tim.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, the high water  
42 mark is a big deal and the navigable water issue is a  
43 big deal.

44  
45 So it's -- well, currently I was going  
46 to go on to the next proposal but right now we're at  
47 4:56, and so maybe we'll take up FP21-01 tomorrow  
48 morning at 9:00 o'clock; is that okay with the Council,  
49 to go to an evening break now.

50

1 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, that's okay with  
2 me. This is Tim.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other Council  
5 members.

6  
7 MR. SEMAKEN: This is Goodwin, it's  
8 okay with me.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

11  
12 Jenny.

13  
14 MRS. PELKOLA: Yes.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Maybe we can get Don  
17 back in the morning.

18  
19 Are you there Jenny.

20  
21 MRS. PELKOLA: I'm here. I'm just  
22 learning how to use this phone. I'm at our tribal  
23 office and I sure appreciate them for letting me use  
24 their phone.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, so we're going  
27 to break until 9:00 o'clock tomorrow and so any other  
28 things for us right now, Karen.

29  
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
31 I think it's all good. Again, I just want to thank  
32 everybody for their patience and for muting their  
33 phones and for being succinct and, Mr. Chair, for doing  
34 a great job on the WIRAC's first teleconference.

35  
36 Thank you.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I did want the  
39 Council to know that at the break I checked my Facebook  
40 and Pollock's daughter died, is why he.....

41  
42 MRS. PELKOLA: Oh, no, oh, goodness.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So our condolences  
45 to Pollock and his family. She's been sick for quite  
46 awhile and so that's really sad news. Her brother PJ  
47 Simon was just elected as the TCC President. Pollock,  
48 Jr. So you can say a prayer for the Simon family I'd  
49 appreciate that.

50

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1 And so have a great night, we'll be on  
2 the call at 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

3  
4 (Off record)

5  
6 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)  
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