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WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Dimond Hotel
April 4, 2023
Anchorage, Alaska
9:05 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chairman
Timothy Gervais
Tommy Kriska
Jenny Pelkola
Darrell Vent

Regional Council Coordinator, Nissa Pilcher

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

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(Anchorage, Alaska - 4/4/2023)

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(On record)

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8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have Darrell
9 at the meeting now and so we need four members and so
10 Tim Gervais is on the phone. So I'd bring this meeting
11 to order, it's now 9:05. And so we should have a
12 little overview of what happened yesterday.

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Ravn was flying down to Aniak, the Staff was on the plane, the plane had to turn around, mechanical, that meeting got completely blown of the water because nobody could get to Aniak, Staff couldn't get to Aniak until this evening and we would have only had a one day meeting. It was not adequate to achieve all of our agenda that we have. So I worked with OSM Staff to get the meeting moved over here to Anchorage. We were on a charter coming down from the north, the charter just flew basically from Nulato direct to Anchorage, so the meeting's here and we're in the Dimond Center Hotel. And so that's what happened there. And we're going to try and get a two day meeting out of this because we've quite a big agenda and various issues to cover.

So we're going to have an invocation. Would you like to say an invocation for us Jenny. You want to turn your mic on.

(Invocation)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to call the meeting to order and establish roll call. Let's see you want to call the roll there, Nissa.

MS. PILCHER: Good morning. For the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council.

Roll call.

So Pollock Simon, Sr., from Allakaket is excused.

Kevin Whitworth from McGrath is excused.

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1 Jack Reakoff from Wiseman.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.

4

5 MS. PILCHER: Tim Gervais, Ruby.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 MS. PILCHER: Tim, are you on still.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your mic is muted,
14 Tim, if you're there.

15

16 MS. PILCHER: Okay, we'll keep going.
17 He is online, he'll hopefully pop up here soon.

18

19 Darrell Vent, Sr., Huslia.

20

21 MR. VENT: Here.

22

23 MS. PILCHER: Jenny Pelkola, Galena.

24

25 MS. PELKOLA: Here.

26

27 MS. PILCHER: And then Tommy Kriska,
28 Nulato.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 MR. VENT: Maybe tell them how to
33 unmute their mic.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Star six.

36

37 MR. VENT: Star six, okay, yeah.

38

39 MS. PILCHER: As a reminder it's star,
40 six to both mute and unmute. I do believe that Tom was
41 planning on calling in as well so hopefully when he
42 does call in he will speak up.

43

44 But with, I guess Tim did speak up
45 earlier.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we have to
48 have Tim acknowledge -- are you there Tim.

49

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1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you were in
4 contact with Tommy this morning, Darrell?

5

6 MR. VENT: Yeah, he should be calling
7 in, yeah, I told him to call yeah.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we need
10 to.....

11

12 MR. VENT: We need one more before we
13 get started.

14

15 (Pause)

16

17 MS. PILCHER: I could keep going with
18 the meeting announcements.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, you could go
21 over the meeting announcements until we can establish
22 quorum. Go ahead, Nissa.

23

24 MS. PILCHER: All right. So welcome,
25 good morning everyone. Welcome to the Western Interior
26 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meeting. My name
27 is Nissa Pilcher and I am the Council Coordinator for
28 this Council and the designated Federal officer for
29 this meeting. I do have a few housekeeping
30 announcements to make before we get started.

31

32 For those attending our meeting in
33 person please make sure you sign in at the front table.
34 There is a sign in sheet for each day of the meeting.
35 Meeting materials are also located on that table.

36

37 For those joining us on the phone, you
38 can find the agenda and the meeting materials online on
39 the Federal Subsistence Program website. That internet
40 address is www.doi.gov/subsistence. Under the regions
41 tab choose Western Interior, and then scroll down to
42 the meeting materials button. For all participants on
43 the phone please remember to mute your phones when you
44 are not speaking. If you do not have a mute button on
45 your phone you can press star, six and that will mute
46 your phone. If you would like to speak unmute your
47 phone by, again, pressing star, six. If a line is not
48 muted and creates a distraction the operator will mute
49 it for you.

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1 I do have a current membership update.

2

3

4 So Pollock Simon, Sr., was the only
5 incumbent to submit their application during last years
6 application period and was actually the only applicant
7 at all. So we are currently down -- down one seat due
8 to a member resigning the previous summer as well as
9 the two seats from expired seats for a total of three
10 vacant seats. The application period for the Regional
11 Advisory Council just closed on March 7th for the 2024
12 year, so hopefully from there we can get all of those
13 remaining seats filled.

13

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15 A note on supplying comments to the

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Council.

For those wanting to address the
Council on non-agenda topics there will be an
opportunity for this each morning. The Chair will
announce this opportunity and call on individuals who
wish to address the Council. For folks here in person,
please fill out a blue card located on the information
table to indicate your wish to address the Council
either during this time or during a specific agenda
topic and hand it to me and I will relay that to the
Chair. The Chair will also ask if there's anyone on
the phone that would like to provide comment after
people have commented in person. For those on the
phone who would like to speak start by saying, Mr.
Chair, And wait to be recognized by Chairman Reakoff
before speaking. Please identify yourself for the
record by stating your first and last name and if you
are representing any affiliation other than just
yourself when it is your turn to comment. If you would
like to written -- submit a written comment instead or
in addition to oral comments you may turn those in to
me or by emailing subsistence@fws.gov.

(Cell phone ringing)

MS. PILCHER: Be sure to include your
name and affiliation on written comments.

One more brief note on Council member
conduct and ethics.

As Council members, you represent the
people of your region to the Federal Subsistence Board,
the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, agency

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1 Staff and the general public. As Secretarial
2 appointees, Council members also represent the Federal
3 Subsistence Management Program to the people of their
4 region, therefore, Council members are expected to
5 engage respectfully towards all persons both at public
6 meetings and elsewhere. Additionally, the Department's
7 policy regarding the ethics responsibility of Advisory
8 Committee members states that no Council or
9 subcommittee member will participate in any specific
10 party matter including lease, license permit, contract
11 claim agreement or related litigation with the
12 Department in which the member has a direct financial
13 interest. If any topic will be discussed during the
14 meeting where you may have a conflict of interest,
15 please make a conflict of interest statement on the
16 record and recuse yourself from the discussion.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,
19 Nissa. So Tim Gervais, did you come back online, and
20 if your phone is muted, star, six.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 MS. PELKOLA: Hum.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He was there.

27
28 MR. VENT: Is Tom there.

29
30 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there Tom?

33
34 MR. VENT: Oh, there's Tom.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who is this?

37
38 MR. KRISKA: Yes, I am.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Tom.

41
42 MR. KRISKA: Tom Kriska.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good. Yeah,
45 we really need you, we weren't making quorum until just
46 now. So Tom's on the phone. And so we're going to go
47 around the room and have introductions here for
48 whoever's in the room here. You want to state who you
49 -- introductions, who's in the room here.
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1 MR. VICKERS: Sorry, I was writing down
2 who was -- who was here in the room. My name is Brent
3 Vickers. I am the Anthropology Division Supervisor for
4 the Office of Subsistence Management. I will be
5 representing the leadership team for OSM during this
6 meeting. So thank you, everyone, for being able to get
7 here in beautiful Anchorage -- is that where we are, in
8 Anchorage today, I hope you guys had a great trip. We
9 had a fun little tour of -- on the airplane yesterday
10 and happy to be back.

11
12 Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Brent.

15
16 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning. Brian
17 Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence
18 Management.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Brian.

21
22 MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning. Liz
23 Williams, Anthropologist, Office of Subsistence
24 Management.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

27
28 MS. KLEIN: Hi. Good morning. I'm
29 Jill Klein, I'm with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as
30 the Regional Subsistence Coordinator. And I heard you
31 had come back in to Anchorage and so I wanted to jump
32 on this opportunity to see all of you in person so nice
33 to be here.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for coming
36 over Jill. And so we were just talking about, I've
37 been on the Council for 30 years now but Jill's been
38 around a heck of a long time too. She was at YRDFA and
39 various places with the State. So, okay, then who's on
40 the phone, we're going to go over who's actually on the
41 call other than the Council members.

42
43 Go ahead.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: So if we can, I'm going
46 to do a quick rundown based on affiliation and then at
47 the last part we'll do an introduction based -- or the
48 public, I guess.

49
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1 So first do we have any tribal
2 governments or Native organizations online that would
3 like to introduce themselves.

4
5 MS. QUILLAN: Yes, hi, could you hear
6 me?

7
8 MS. PILCHER: Sure can.

9
10 MS. QUILLAN: Michelle Quillan, and I'm
11 the Outreach Coordinator in the Tribal Resource
12 Stewardship Program here at Tanana Chiefs Conference.

13
14 MS. PILCHER: All right, so we'll move
15 on to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service non-OSM
16 affiliated, and also if I breeze through you or if I
17 miss you just feel free to speak up just to get your
18 name on the record. Thanks.

19
20 So Fish and Wildlife Service non-OSM
21 affiliated.

22
23 MR. HAVENER: Good morning. This is
24 Jeremy Havener, Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko Wildlife Refuge.
25 Just calling in from Galena.

26
27 MR. MOSES: Good morning. This is
28 Aaron Moses, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

29
30 MS. FOX: Good morning. This is Joanna
31 Fox, Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge.

32
33 MS. MORAN: Good morning. This is Tina
34 Moran with Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge.

35
36 MR. HOWARD: Good morning. This is
37 Chris Howard with Kanuti as well.

38
39 MS. REAKOFF: Good morning. This is
40 Kristan Reakoff with Kanuti also.

41
42 MS. PILCHER: All right. So let's move
43 on to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service OSM affiliated.

44
45 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, Mr. Chair
46 and memBers of the Council. This is Robbin LaVine,
47 Subsistence Policy Coordinator with OSM. And I'm glad
48 to hear you guys made it and you made quorum.

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1 MR. FOLEY: Good morning, Mr. Chair
2 and.....

3
4 MS. PILCHER: All right.
5

6 MR. FOLEY:members of the
7 Council. This is Kevin Foley, Office of Subsistence
8 Management Fish Biologist. Thank you very much.
9

10 MS. PILCHER: All right. Is there
11 anyone on for U.S. Forest Service.
12

13 (No comments)
14

15 MS. PILCHER: Anyone on for National
16 Park Service.
17

18 MS. CRAVER: Good morning, Mr. Chair
19 and members of the Council. This is Amy Craver from
20 Denali National Park and Preserve.
21

22 (Dog barking)
23

24 MS. PILCHER: And how about.....
25

26 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Mr. Chair
27 and members of the Council. This is Eva Patton with
28 the National Park Service Subsistence Program in
29 Anchorage. Good morning.
30

31 MS. FLOREY: Good morning. This is
32 Victoria Florey, National Park Service, Anchorage.
33

34 MS. OKADA: Good morning. This is
35 Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator for Gates of the
36 Arctic National Park and Preserve calling from
37 Fairbanks. Thanks.
38

39 MS. PILCHER: How about Bureau of Land
40 Management.
41

42 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, good morning.
43 This is Erin Julianus, BLM, Central Yukon Field Office
44 calling in from Fairbanks.
45

46 MR. SEPPI: Good morning. This is
47 Bruce Seppi with Anchorage Field Office, BLM. I'll be
48 in person here shortly, I just found out you were over
49 there. Thanks.
50

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1 MS. PILCHER: How about the Alaska
2 Department of Fish and Game, or BLM, if I missed
3 somebody.
4

5 MR. RANSBURY: This is Shane Ransbury.
6 I work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for
7 fall season fisheries on the Yukon.
8

9 MS. PILCHER: All right. How about
10 anybody I missed or any members of the public.
11

12 MR. SIMON: Good morning. This is Jim
13 Simon. A Consultant with Kuskokwim River InterTribal
14 Fish Commission and Tanana Chief Conference.
15

16 MR. MASCHMANN: Good morning. This is
17 Gerald.....
18

19 MR. PEARSON: Good morning. This
20 is.....
21

22 MR. MASCHMANN:Maschmann.....
23

24 MR. PEARSON:Brian Pearson with
25 the North Slope Borough, Department of Wildlife
26 Management. Good morning.
27

28 MR. MASCHMANN: Good morning. This is
29 Gerald Maschmann with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
30 Service in Fairbanks.
31

32 MS. PILCHER: All right. On that last
33 one it looks like we -- so it was Jim, Brian and
34 Gerald, did we miss anybody introduce themselves?
35

36 (No comments)
37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that seems to be
39 everybody that's on the phone with us. We're still
40 looking for Tim Gervais, he was there just before the
41 meeting, so did you come on Tim.
42

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

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And where are
46 you at?
47

48 MR. GERVAIS: I'm in Seldovia right
49 now.
50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.
2 So I was just wondering about your cell service there.
3 So, okay, good to have you on the call also. So we're
4 really tight on quorum for this meeting so we need
5 participation and plus we got a lot of important issues
6 to cover.

7
8 So the next is review and adopt the
9 agenda.

10

11 I spent all this past week -- I got
12 stuff going on at home but I wrote out a sheep
13 management plan and so we'd like to review that
14 management plan briefly, where should we put that
15 Nissa? We had that discussion under our annual report
16 but my intention is that there is no sheep management
17 plan for the State or Federal government. I wrote out
18 an outline of what needs to be done to manage Alaska
19 dall sheep, especially in our region, in the heavily
20 hunted areas, and so we need to insert that for
21 discussion so I would like -- my intention is to have
22 -- submit that -- the Council review it but then submit
23 it to OSM to be reviewed and then have final discussion
24 on that sheep management plan to be submitted --
25 transmitted to the Federal Subsistence Board at our
26 fall meeting is what I would like. So I would like
27 Staff to review that management plan this summer
28 sometime. I kind of just dropped this in their lap and
29 I figure they'll make comment. So that's the
30 progression that I would like to have with the Federal
31 -- all Federal managers. U.S. Fish and Wildlife,
32 Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and
33 U.S. -- et cetera, so that has to be reviewed
34 throughout the summer.

35

36 So where are we going to put that,
37 Nissa.

38

39 MS. PILCHER: Wherever you want -- so
40 one suggestion would be that you could take it up
41 around when you are reviewing and approving your annual
42 report since it did come up there.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

45

46 MS. PILCHER: So you could.....

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

49

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1 MS. PILCHER: So you could either take
2 it up before or after.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that's the
5 best place to put it is in the annual report, under
6 that topic and then we'll morphe our annual report to
7 reflect that there's a sheep management plan produced
8 and that it's in review internally and it'll be
9 forthcoming so that's what we'll do with that.

10
11 So I also wrote a proposal to the Board
12 of Game and I'll discuss that with the Council and
13 that's an agenda change request to the Board of Game.
14 And then the Council will have some various proposals
15 to promulgate for Federal and State proposals.

16
17 So any other agenda additions.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In the room here we
22 have a pink sheet and your agenda should be very
23 similar -- did you get the new agenda Tim and Tommy?
24 You have to download that one probably.

25
26 MS. PILCHER: I believe Tim did but Tom
27 didn't, I'll make sure he does.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So Nissa's
30 going to send you the updated agenda but it's very
31 similar to our other one. It just basically has some
32 time certain things, additions for basically the way
33 the meeting works.

34
35 Any comments on the agenda from Council
36 members.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim, any comments on
41 the agenda, or Tom.

42
43 MR. GERVAIS: No.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Comments,
46 Jenny.

47
48 MS. PELKOLA: No.

49
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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrell, comments on
2 the agenda.

3
4 MR. VENT: Is there a.....

5
6 REPORTER: Darrell, turn your mic on.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Turn -- yeah.

9
10 MR. VENT: Is there a proposal that was
11 submitted by Suzanne or did we.....

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, where were we
14 going to put that, that was the discussion on the BLM's
15 Resource Management Plan for Western Interior Bering
16 Sea?

17
18 MS. PILCHER: That is on there, it's
19 Item 12Q.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

22
23 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, on the colored.....

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: On the colored
26 sheet, okay.

27
28 MS. PILCHER:on the most recent
29 agenda.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: On the pink sheet
32 there.

33
34 MR. VENT: Okay.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got the pink
37 sheet?

38
39 MR. VENT: I got a green sheet.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

42
43 (Laughter)

44
45 MR. VENT: I was wondering where the
46 pink sheet was.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, it's right
49 there under.....

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1 MS. PELKOLA: Did you say Q?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Q.

4

5 MR. VENT: Yep.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's -- yeah,
8 that's there. So any other discussion on the agenda.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair will
13 entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as modified.

14

15 MR. VENT: So moved by Darrell.

16

17 MS. PELKOLA: I second.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Darrell,
20 seconded by Jenny. Question on the motion. Those in
21 favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

22

23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

26

27 (No opposing votes)

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Tommy.

30

31 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I said aye.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I just
34 heard -- when you vote I'd like you to state your name
35 because I -- we're -- it's kind of unclear who's
36 actually speaking. So did you say aye also Tim?

37

38 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, aye.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.
41 So then we're moving down to election of officers. So
42 go ahead, Nissa.

43

44 MS. PILCHER: Good morning. This is
45 Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator with OSM. In
46 accordance with the Council charter Council members
47 elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for a one year
48 term. This term usually starts at the beginning of the
49 calendar year. Member Reakoff is the current Chair,
50

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1 Member Pelkola is the current Vice Chair and Member
2 Vent is the current Secretary.

3

4 I would like to open the floor for
5 nominations for the Council's Chair. Once that
6 individual is elected I will then turn the proceedings
7 back over to them. Just as a note, according to
8 Robert's Rules the nominations need to be seconded.

9

10 So I open the floor for nominations for
11 Chair.

12

13 MS. PELKOLA: I nominate Jack.....

14

15 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I nominate
16 Jack Reakoff.

17

18 MS. PELKOLA: I second.

19

20 MR. KRISKA: Second.

21

22 MR. VENT: Oh, another second.

23

24 MR. VENT: Move to close nominations.

25

26 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

27

28 (Laughter)

29

30 MS. PILCHER: You guys are going too
31 fast for me to even type. Okay.

32

33 REPORTER: Nissa, your mic.

34

35 MS. PILCHER: Okay. I guess, so all in
36 -- actually do we need to vote -- it looks like there's
37 one nomination for Chairman, which is Member Reakoff,
38 just because I'm unclear if we need to vote let's vote
39 just -- just to do it.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 MS. PILCHER: All in favor say aye.

44

45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46

47 MS. PILCHER: All right, that sounded
48 like Tim and Tom.

49

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1 Okay. All right. Member Reakoff.....

2

3 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

4

5 MS. PILCHER: Thanks. Member

6 Reakoff.....

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim I said aye.

9

10 MS. PILCHER:is voted again the
11 Chair -- understand, thanks -- and I will turn the
12 meeting back over to him.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The Chair
15 will open the floor for Vice Chair.

16

17 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: I'd like to nominate
22 Jenny for Vice Chair, please.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any
25 other nominations.

26

27 MR. KRISKA: Second.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got a nomination
30 and second. No other nominations so Jenny is the only
31 nominee. We'll take a vote.

32

33 Those in favor of Jenny as Vice Chair
34 for the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council
35 signify by saying aye.

36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,
40 Jenny, for taking that spot. And then Darrell is our
41 Secretary currently.

42

43 MS. PELKOLA: I nominate Darrell.

44

45 MR. VENT: I nominate Tim.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have two
48 nominations, Darrell and Tim.

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1 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim, I have
2 a question for Darrell.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

5
6 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Darrell, I just
7 wanted your opinion, if you enjoyed being Secretary and
8 wanted to continue with it?

9
10 MR. VENT: Well, if you beat me out
11 then I guess that means you win.

12
13 (Laughter)

14
15 MR. GERVAIS: All right, I'd like to
16 nominate Darrell to continue to be Secretary.

17
18 MR. KRISKA: Second.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So should we
21 take this vote, Nissa.

22
23 MS. PILCHER: Roll call.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Roll call.

26
27 MS. PILCHER: All right, so first all
28 -- this is for Member Tim -- Member Tim -- for Tim to
29 be Secretary.

30
31 Darrell.

32
33 MR. VENT: Yes.

34
35 MS. PELKOLA: Who's for who?

36
37 MS. PILCHER: This is for Tim.

38
39 MS. PELKOLA: Tim.

40
41 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, for Secretary. So
42 it's aye, so we'll vote aye -- we'll vote on Tim and
43 then we'll vote on Darrell -- okay.

44
45 MS. PELKOLA: Okay. Wait, no, yes is
46 for Tim.

47
48 MS. PILCHER: Yes is for Tim, uh-huh,
49 okay, we'll get there. Jenny.

50

0018

1 REPORTER: Jenny, make sure you turn
2 your mic on there so I can record you.

3
4 MS. PELKOLA: No.

5
6 MS. PILCHER: Jack.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

9
10 MS. PILCHER: Tim.

11
12 MR. VENT: Yes, Tim.

13
14 MR. GERVAIS: No.

15
16 (Laughter)

17
18 MS. PILCHER: And Tom.

19
20 MR. KRISKA: No.

21
22 MS. PILCHER: Okay. Well, so the
23 desire now is -- or a yea or nay, we could vote again
24 but ultimately Darrell would remain Secretary so.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that --
27 the vote is clear that Darrell would receive the
28 majority of the vote so thanks for serving Darrell.

29
30 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And thanks for being
33 in the nomination Tim. So that's the election of
34 officers. Review and approve previous minutes --
35 meeting minutes. So I've read the meeting minutes
36 which are on Page 5 of our meeting book, any comments
37 on the minutes.

38
39 MR. VENT: I looked it over, I didn't
40 have any. This is Darrell.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got some
43 additional minutes laying around here -- you lost your
44 book or.....

45
46 MR. VENT: No, I got it.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay.

49
50

0019

1 MR. VENT: Yeah, I read it already.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I misunderstood.

4

5 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay. So I've
8 gone through them, I don't see any corrections.

9

10 MR. VENT: Make a motion to approve.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a motion to
13 approve.

14

15 MS. PELKOLA: I'll second, this is
16 Jenny.

17

18 MR. KRISKA: So moved.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Jenny seconded,
21 and we had another second. Any -- so Tim and Tom, do
22 you have any additions or comments on the agenda -- or
23 correction, the minutes from the.....

24

25 MR. KRISKA: No.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Correction. The
28 minutes from the meeting of October 19 and 20 in
29 Fairbanks. I heard Tom say no.

30

31 MR. KRISKA: No.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Tim.

34

35 MR. GERVAIS: Jack this is Tim, I don't
36 have any changes to the minutes.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I have no
39 corrections, Darrell had none and what -- Jenny, do you
40 have any?

41

42 MS. PELKOLA: No.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So those in
45 favor of adopting the minutes from the fall meeting in
46 2022 in Fairbanks, signify by saying aye.

47

48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49

50

0020

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Minutes
2 adopted. And Council member's reports. So we'll go to
3 Jenny first. She's been on this Council a long time,
4 so, Jenny.

5
6 MS. PELKOLA: Okay, good morning
7 everyone. First of all I would like to say thank you
8 to Jack for making this meeting. I struggled through
9 the last one but I guess we got through it.

10
11 I would just like to say that in Galena
12 we have a lot of moose all over town. They're coming
13 in our yards, standing on the bottom of our stairs, and
14 I understand on Friday night there was an attack on
15 somebody, a moose attacked someone so I don't know,
16 they're just starting to move into our neighborhood so
17 we don't know what to do about that.

18
19 I don't know the situation on the
20 wolves as I've been close to home and traveling to
21 Fairbanks monthly with my husband for medical.

22
23 But other than that it seems like it's
24 pretty quiet around home. They just had a big stick
25 dance in Kaltag and Carnival in Huslia and Tanana so
26 the Carnivals are starting to -- starting up now.

27
28 I didn't really get a chance to talk to
29 too many people about, you know, their concerns at this
30 time because of my traveling and Covid, I guess, we're
31 still very cautious on Covid and staying close to home
32 as my husband and I both got it and we got it pretty
33 badly but, you know, it's hard to be around people, big
34 crowds of people, we just have to watch ourselves.

35
36 Other than that I really don't have
37 anything. Maybe something will come later.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. And
40 so Darrell.

41
42 MR. VENT: Well, let's see. I've been
43 noticing in the last maybe 10 -- five, 10 years that
44 we're having a real decline in our subsistence use.
45 Not only in the area I'm at but I been noticing in
46 other areas that they've been really worrying about our
47 practice for traditional and hunting in our areas.
48 And, you know, with this becoming real drastic -- I
49 know Jack has these sheep up in his area, well, we
50

0021

1 have, you know, a lot of animals in our area too and
2 right now, you know, it's becoming harder and harder to
3 rely on these because we can't go out to our fish
4 camps, there's no fish. We haven't been out there to
5 fish camps probably in the last five years. I mean the
6 people haven't been going out there anymore because
7 there's not enough to depend on.

8
9 (Teleconference interference -
10 participants not muted)

11
12 MR. VENT: You know our people survived
13 on these for years and all of a sudden we're with loss
14 right now. And that's not the only animal that I think
15 that we're being, you know, depleted on. We're
16 worrying about our caribou and they're trying to put in
17 a road that's going to really limit our capabilities of
18 catching any. I remember back in the early '70s we had
19 a lot of caribou, we were called the Caribou Clan, our
20 people were called the Caribou Clan because that's what
21 we relied on most of the time.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Standby there.
24 Somebody's washing dishes, you want to mute your phone,
25 star, six. Somebody that's washing dishes, mute your
26 phone, star, six.

27
28 Go ahead, Darrell.

29
30 MR. VENT: Okay. It sounded like they
31 were really going to work there.

32
33 (Laughter)

34
35 MR. VENT: Okay.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I like to wash
38 dishes.....

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 MR. VENT: Now, I'll get back to my
43 train of thought here. I'm just mentioning that we're
44 putting ourselves in a hard place here. I mean we know
45 subsistence is supposed to be a priority and we've been
46 hearing, you know, they've been catching a lot of fish
47 out in the ocean. They were saying something like 280
48 million and we said, you know, the amount of fish that
49 they were distributing with commercial, 280 million,
50

0022

1 that's quite a bit of fish and we're not allowed to
2 fish on the Yukon River.

3
4 Our people, you know, put away a lot of
5 fish in the falltime, I mean all summer, you know, we
6 practically get ready for the fall. And it's been --
7 this year, you know, our people used to think we were
8 rich because we had all these foods. It wasn't about
9 money and now we're really relying on these moose and
10 people are talking about them wandering all over
11 through town. The only reason why moose would, you
12 know, come into our area is that there's a lot of
13 predation out there. And they tend to hang around in
14 the villages because that's the only place they feel
15 safe. So, you know, there's tell tale signs when
16 you're out there living in the villages. You
17 understand what the moose are doing, they want to come
18 in because that's where they -- they're in a safe
19 haven, our people will protect them -- even so we hunt
20 them and still something that we tend to do is because
21 we have no protection from predation. This predation
22 is really a bad thing in the upper Huslia River area.
23 We notice that the grizzlies tend to depend on these
24 young calves because they can't catch no more salmon.
25 So the moose are starting to move closer to the
26 villages. And when you have these big animals running
27 around out there they tend to scare them into areas
28 that they don't usually -- the reason I'm saying all
29 this is that, you know, we have to really start
30 thinking about what the Federal government is going to
31 do for us here in the villages. They say subsistence
32 is a priority and we're not seeing that right now.

33
34 We're getting depleted on our
35 resources.

36
37 Our fish.

38
39 Our animals.

40
41 Our gathering.

42
43 The temperature change up here in
44 Alaska has been really drastic on our gathering. We
45 haven't been able to get the blueberries like we
46 usually do and the salmonberries like we usually do.
47 The temperatures is not right no more. It's like we
48 have a colder spring -- I mean not colder springs, but
49 colder summers when berries are supposed to be
50

0023

1 ripening. And it's just been hard on our people.

2

3 I just wanted to mention that, you
4 know, that's something that we have to take into
5 consideration here when we're sitting here on the
6 Federal Subsistence Board, like we have to report what
7 we see in our villages. If we don't do that then we're
8 not going to get anything done with it.

9

10 So the Federal Subsistence Board is
11 really going to have to take a look at this decrease
12 and decline in our food sources.

13

14 So that's just something I wanted to
15 mention, thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrell. So
18 on the phone, Council Member Tom Kriska, do you want to
19 give your report.

20

21 MR. KRISKA: Yes. Good morning, can
22 you hear me?

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, get a little
25 closer to your mic or.....

26

27 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Do you want to
30 get a little closer to your mic or.....

31

32 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you muted?

35

36 MR. KRISKA: Well, this is about -- no,
37 I'm not muted.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

40

41 MR. KRISKA: Hello.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you, can
44 you hear me?

45

46 MR. KRISKA: Speaking right in the --
47 hello.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So go ahead, Tom.

50

0024

1 MR. GERVAIS: I can hear you good,
2 Tommy, on the phone.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

5
6 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I don't know about
7 this phone so we're out in the -- not only our moose
8 and everything -- and our bears and everything are they
9 depleting, our phone's don't work the best out here
10 either.

11
12 So anyway, the same thing as Darrell
13 was saying, you know, it's getting harder and harder
14 out here in the Bush to do anything about anything. I
15 mean a lot of our resources are diminishing, they're
16 just going away, the fish are not there. The black
17 bears are -- it seems like a lot of them are all --
18 there's not many around, there's more grizzlies, a lot
19 of the moose are in the villages. We try to keep the
20 wolves down but they keep moving in from some other
21 place. We've been getting like 50 on average a year.

22
23 And, you know, that -- I was -- I said
24 it before but I'm going to say it again, you know, I
25 kind of -- what the State is up to and the Federal, the
26 way they, you know, put permits out there on the
27 abundance of moose and in this area, Koyukuk, Huslia,
28 Nulato, Kaltag, all of us we try to keep the moose and
29 the bears down. We are the ones that are spending the
30 money to keep the moose so they'll be a little -- you
31 know, keep the numbers up there on the moose. And then
32 for the Fish and Game, the State and the Feds come in
33 and they see an abundance of moose for what us Natives
34 year after year, ever since I was a kid, and the people
35 before them keep the numbers down so that -- of the
36 wolves and the bears so that way our moose numbers
37 would be stable. But then to -- then the State and the
38 Feds come in, without even, you know, assisting us in
39 any way and to come in and target those numbers of
40 moose with permits for outside hunting, you know, for
41 draw permits. And that's really -- not only me is
42 saying that, there's the whole Interior saying it, why
43 are we doing this and they're getting the money for
44 hunts that are coming in our area kind of just -- you
45 know they're not doing nothing, they write down paper
46 and everything in their offices but they don't come out
47 here and, you know, try to keep the numbers stable. So
48 it kind of -- it pisses me off there in a way because
49 we do -- on me, for myself, I spent like maybe three to
50

0025

1 \$5,000 a year going out there to keep these numbers
2 down, that's just me, there's a bunch of us that do
3 that.

4
5 And, you know, in the summer -- the
6 summertime, our fishing is not there so the moose are
7 -- we're fighting, you know, what the heck -- competing
8 against the hunters from out of state and other people
9 that's running our area for the moose, they shoot what
10 bears are left, the black bears so there's hardly --
11 you barely see a black bear anymore. You see the
12 grizzlies out there.

13
14 But, you know, and the fishing -- well,
15 the moose are not there, the bears are not there, the
16 fish is not there, the berries last year weren't there
17 so I wish that one of those guys would come out there
18 and, you know, live out in this country for a year,
19 they probably wouldn't survive because you got to know
20 what you're doing and if it's really hard to depend on
21 any kind of stores and gas prices up \$10 a gallon.
22 Flying in food, you buy, say for instance two pounds of
23 food in Fairbanks and to bring it back out there it's
24 \$2 a pound to get it back out here. So you could
25 imagine the prices for the food in these stores out
26 here are double. I mean I was looking at a box of Ritz
27 the other day, it was \$9.80 for a little box of Ritz
28 crackers and a lot of these prices are way up there
29 because the way the situation is. And like Darrell
30 said, you know, I wish the Feds and those guys would
31 kind of, you know, do something for us. I don't know
32 what to do but I know for sure they could -- you know
33 Feds and the State could -- and whoever, the North
34 Pacific Fisheries or whoever kind of help us out with
35 dropping the numbers of fishing out there in Area M and
36 out in the ocean out there with the trawlers and all
37 that because it's really devastating out here.

38
39 And I really don't know what to do
40 about all this, you know, it's just fight until you're
41 blue in the face but that's all you're going to come
42 back with is a blue face and a headache going to the
43 meetings, or the way the situation -- or the system is
44 set. It's pretty tough out here and it's hard to see
45 -- I -- I help out a lot, and I'm sorry I missed that
46 plane yesterday because I was trying to do something
47 for some other people that's got things coming on this
48 summer and -- and, well, I thought I'd be back. But I
49 lost something, I had to go find it, otherwise it's
50

0026

1 going to snow and I'd never find it again. But, anyway
2 it's just -- it's just sort of getting -- I mean we're
3 never going to leave this country regardless of what
4 happens, the State and the Feds they run out of money,
5 whatever, I hope it -- maybe -- I'm almost hoping it
6 happens soon because I mean we'll all be in dire
7 straits, we are already in dire straits. And if that
8 funding goes away and subsistence goes away it will
9 deplete the people, I guess, I don't know. I shouldn't
10 say that maybe they might do that.

11
12 But, anyway, everything is getting to
13 -- where I feel I'm okay, I mean, you know, for --
14 before I was like in paradise back in the day when I
15 was younger because we had all that food out there, now
16 it's getting -- it's just going away, the whole thing
17 is like going away. I'm okay but our people, that's
18 who I really work for and that's why I go to so many
19 meetings to try to do something for them to make it
20 easier because coming out here and you have to
21 physically do a lot of this stuff for -- and it just
22 can't be done even by the strongest guys they have out
23 here.

24
25 So I better not keep on going.

26
27 I have so much to say about the system
28 and the situations that we're in right now, and I hope
29 they're listening because we really need help. I know
30 that the government can give them only so much and
31 that's it, assistance, and I don't know. I'm kind of
32 really worried about that assistance goes away that
33 it's just going to be done, I don't know.

34
35 But, thank you for having your ears on,
36 I'll be hear. I have so much to say but that's enough
37 for now. Thank you so much.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tommy. A
40 couple questions. How deep is the snow in the Koyukuk
41 -- you've been out roaming around, how deep is that
42 snow and has it got -- did you get rain -- does it have
43 crust in the snow, are those moose having a tough time,
44 getting cut up, or are they just -- are they yarding up
45 or is it just -- just too many wolves pushing them in
46 to certain spots?

47
48 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, the moose -- hey, I
49 don't help only the people but I go out there and, I
50

0027

1 don't know, wardens or whoever may see my trails all
2 over, but for every place on the sandbars I drive right
3 through there, there's snow and the young willows to
4 bring trail down to every sandbar. Just break trails
5 right along, and the willows are three or four feet
6 high, hoping I don't hit a stump, but I do that about
7 two or three on every sandbar behind -- in little
8 meadows and stuff like that, along the willow lines and
9 keep the moose eating otherwise I've been seeing a few
10 dead calves again, but I think those calves, they might
11 have starved because once the ice get on those willows
12 -- and it didn't rain -- it rained a total of three
13 times this year in this area. Heavy. And I forget
14 what -- in December, and that really crystalized and it
15 got like 1/8 inch coated all the willowbark, all the
16 way so with those moose eating that, they had to eat
17 the ice and what they needed for their nutrition. And
18 the snow is deep and I think some of these areas, you
19 know, we got a lot of the wolves around so -- but the
20 moose are still coming in to the village and they're
21 using the roads, I guess to maybe shake themselves off,
22 you know, what a relief. But, you know, in a lot of
23 places even the super wides were having trouble.

24
25 This year, this whole month of March in
26 the past -- right when March come around we start
27 hunting. Well, that March didn't start until about two
28 days ago. We finally started staying on top of the
29 snow and can get around a little bit but before that --
30 with that rain on top we were busting through that rain
31 with those super wides and that thing will just bring
32 you right down and we were getting stuck with the super
33 wides also. So it's pretty tough in the snow. I know
34 those moose have it pretty tough because that half inch
35 of ice is about one foot up on their ankles, that was
36 in December. Then there's another crust on top of that
37 probably two-thirds of a way up and then that was just
38 from this recent rain. So now the top is starting to
39 freeze a little bit, you know, where it's hard to punch
40 through and then, yeah, they're just having a tough
41 time and those wolves are running right on top of that
42 and what the heck, the bears. You know a few years ago
43 we shot one on the 28th, last year another one in March
44 and this year, March 20 -- what the heck -- the 24th,
45 there's one up there behind Bishop Mountain, that's out
46 already on March -- last week. So that came out -- I
47 guess he came out during the rain. He must got
48 glaciated out or rained out or something, but that's
49 between Galena and Koyukuk, the snowmachine trail to
50

0028

1 Portage. He was there, I don't know where he went, but
2 I think he might have went back in the den but we
3 didn't find out that, I don't know where the -- it's
4 around there, it just snowed and blowed so its tracks
5 got covered.

6
7 But, yeah, the conditions are -- the
8 snow is deep, we're kind of worried about a little high
9 water this year. I don't know, I just know the moose
10 are having a tough time right now.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's what I
13 wanted to know.

14
15 MR. KRISKA: Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's what I want
18 to know Tommy. That sounds pretty bad. That's what
19 happened in Fairbanks, that crust, layers of crust in
20 the snowpack killed a lot of calves. It makes them
21 really sore and they don't really want to push that.
22 So that's bad news.

23
24 MR. KRISKA: Yep. Some of those
25 calves, I came across two or three of them that the
26 wolves went right by them, like what the heck, they
27 didn't even -- well, the wolves, they're fat too this
28 year, they -- they've been eating good all winter.

29
30 But I lost -- let me see -- I was just
31 going to say that -- anyway, I lost my train of thought
32 here. I'll think about it in time here.

33
34 Yeah, so, anyway, everything is just
35 having a tough time out there.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right,
38 appreciate that comment. You know I saw that before
39 when there's really deep snow those wolves are on top,
40 they don't eat skinny moose, they don't eat starving
41 moose, they.....

42
43 MR. KRISKA: Nope.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:want those big
46 fat cows, they.....

47
48 MR. KRISKA: No, they don't.

49
50

0029

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: go after the
2 big fat cows because they can catch those. In this
3 kind of snow they catch those, they eat like pigs when
4 it's like this.

5
6 MR. KRISKA: Uh-huh.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then they have a
9 lot of pups. That's the other thing is they have a lot
10 of pups.

11
12 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, that's true. A
13 couple of years ago when they had that advantage too
14 they kill the cow and the calf and the cow was in
15 pretty good shape it looked like and both of them, they
16 just ripped the top and just busted the -- just opened
17 the ribs open and took the heart out like they knew
18 what they were doing, they just took it out and left
19 it, both of them, side by side.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, okay,
22 appreciate that report. And so.....

23
24 (Teleconference interference -
25 participants not muted)

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're getting a
28 radio, you want to mute out there Tommy because we're
29 getting your VHF.

30
31 MR. KRISKA: I'll turn my radio down
32 here.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Tim, do you want
35 to give a report.

36
37 MR. GERVAIS: Sure. Good morning,
38 Jack. Council members. Staff.

39
40 The first thing I'd like to talk about
41 on my report is it seems like these big snow years,
42 that that's just going to be the way it is going
43 forward. With our warmer falls and the Bering Sea ice
44 not forming early and coming low enough, we're just
45 getting a lot more moisture into the Western Interior,
46 and unfortunately it's going to affect -- it's going to
47 affect our animals and it's also going to create a lot
48 bigger risk for the breakups. But it seems like with
49 our general climate trends that the big snow years are
50

0030

1 going to more of a normal thing than an anomaly so we
2 need to get used to it and as we were talking about how
3 we do our management for moose and bears, we need to
4 understand that the big snow years are probably going
5 to be more common than what we traditionally have with,
6 you know, thigh deep, waist deep snow.

7

8 The second item is we have two bycatch
9 task force. The North Pacific Management Council task
10 force that Kevin was part of and then the State of
11 Alaska bycatch task force. I would definitely like to
12 hear Kevin's detailed report on how the deliberations
13 went with the North Pacific Management Council task
14 force and I appreciate the extra time he put in on
15 being with that.

16

17 I talked with a fellow on the State
18 task force and he said the general gist of that was
19 they just want to acknowledge a problem with bycatch
20 but not really take any corrective actions with the
21 trawl fleet and the main business plan, or the main
22 political strategy is just to keep them going fishing,
23 fishing at their normal levels for pollock and other
24 groundfish and just, for reasons I can't explain, it
25 doesn't seem fair to me or what I would consider a
26 reasonable person that they're letting the salmon
27 resource get damaged from it. I think there was an
28 issue back in 2007, I think was one of the more
29 damaging years when there was actually so much bycatch
30 that there was never the -- the marine ecosystem where
31 we believe our king salmon -- Kuskokwim and Yukon king
32 salmon are spending their wintertime, that was so
33 damaged and depleted from that bycatch in 2007 and
34 because there wasn't any real slow down, significant
35 slow down to bycatch then, I think the population was
36 never able to recover.

37

38 I have seen -- in recent history we
39 have a situation in Washington State where the tribes
40 felt they weren't getting enough fish and they ended up
41 actually suing the State of Washington because they
42 felt them not getting the fish was a violation of their
43 treaty rights and they actually won that decision, it's
44 called the Bolt Decision in 1974 and then that gave the
45 tribes 50 percent -- they gave them the right to manage
46 50 percent of the harvest for the whole state, just --
47 it's just what the judge said. If they're not getting
48 the fish they need under the current State management,
49 we're going to give the tribes management of half of

50

0031

1 the fishery and crab resource and they were successful
2 with that in '74, there was a lot of appeals. It
3 actually went to the United States Supreme Court in
4 1979 and was upheld. So that particular case was a
5 situation where when the tribes weren't getting good
6 enough remedy and the salmon resource was suffering
7 without any sign of come back, took legal action to get
8 more protection and transfer the management from the
9 State of Washington over to the tribes and that system
10 is still in place.

11

12 And, I don't know, that's a lot of --
13 that's a pretty extreme amount of legal work but that
14 is just a case in point of something that happened when
15 the tribes weren't getting their fair share of the
16 salmon and the resources getting depleted by the
17 existing management structure.

18

19 I talked with a lady who's heavily
20 involved in what's going on with Alaska hatcheries and
21 she was telling me that -- I asked what the amount of
22 hatchery release fish was for the state and she thought
23 it was 1.8 billion pink salmon are released per year
24 and 1.2 billion chum, so that's -- that total is 3
25 billion fish put out in the sea creating more -- it's
26 more mouths to feed, it's kind of what we see when we
27 try to modify nature's system with, you know, synthetic
28 breeding and rearing. It can go wrong. And in the
29 current situation the State of Alaska it seems like
30 it's going wrong also. Nissa shared an article on this
31 hatchery practice is getting research and, yeah, it may
32 not be as all beneficial as it initially was thought to
33 be in the '60s and '70s where it was thought to be a
34 solution but now it may be causing more harm than good.
35 So need to all keep paying attention to that and try to
36 -- try to get these hatchery releases released -- or
37 reduced for the State of Alaska. But unfortunately
38 that's not the whole story. I mean we got Canada.
39 Specifically British Columbia doing a lot of hatchery
40 and farming. Have Japan. Korea. Russia. All doing
41 hatchery releases so we're getting a lot of -- a lot
42 more than just these 3 billion fish put out in the
43 North Pacific for salmon. And the pink salmon, you
44 know, people think that's like small fish but they're
45 growing, they grow into four pounds in the course of
46 two years so that's a lot of calories and that's
47 competition for the wild salmon to eat.

48

49 I would -- we didn't get much relief in
50

0032

1 the Board of Fish meeting on the Area M issues. I
2 didn't feel that they were going to take much action
3 with that. For reasons I can't explain the State and
4 the Board of Fish, they seemed to just not want to be
5 limiting the commercial harvest, or the commercial
6 sector very much. And as commercial user seat on this
7 Council, and, I, myself, am a commercial fisherman, I
8 disagree that they should put so much deference to the
9 commercial sector. Commercial harvest should only be
10 occurring when there's -- when the resource can support
11 it and when subsistence needs are being met. They're
12 definitely not being met. I feel like when North
13 Pacific Management Council enacted that Amendment 51
14 [sic] in 2009, you know, it came on the table as being
15 a measure to protect salmon but in hindsight I see that
16 all it really did was it legalized bycatch and it moved
17 it from being a prohibitive species to an allowable cap
18 so that -- that we're seeing what is it now, 2009, it's
19 coming up on 14 years now and we basically continue to
20 have lower and lower performance on our king run and
21 then the last three years low performance on the chum
22 run. So we got to somehow get -- get State and Federal
23 managers to give us some relief on the amount of king
24 salmon that are being -- king and chum salmon that are
25 being taken out through bycatch or interception.

26
27 I would also request that this Council
28 put together a letter to the Commissioner of Fish and
29 Game and can be the -- what is it, the Director of
30 Commercial Fisheries. I would like to see where ADF&G
31 is collecting genetic information from -- I don't -- I
32 don't really -- I'm not really that concerned with
33 Prince William Sound or Cook Inlet, but like Kodiak,
34 Chignik, Area M and Kuskokwim commercial fisheries, I
35 would like to see the State provide representative
36 samples on what those fleets are catching, whether it's
37 gillnet, seine, set net, I would like to get a
38 representative genetic sample for all those areas that
39 are statistically relevant that people can look at and
40 we can better understand where -- where the fish are
41 swimming by, where they're getting caught, how much of
42 an issue it is.

43
44 And that's about it for right now.

45
46 Thank you for putting up with the
47 telephone connection. I didn't want to -- I wanted to
48 attend the meeting in person but I had some family
49 stuff come up and I will work more diligently in my
50

0033

1 scheduling on future meetings so I can do it in person.
2 I feel it's hard for communication and it just creates
3 extra stress amongst the Council.

4
5 I'd also thank -- or wish Jack, Jenny
6 and Darrell good luck with their officer positions. I
7 appreciate them making the extra effort to fill those
8 positions.

9
10 That's it, Jack.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tim.
13 So, yes, I agree that a letter to the Commissioner of
14 Fish and Game, Director of Commercial Fisheries, also
15 -- there is an imperative need for genetic monitoring
16 of the representative bycatch in Area M and where else
17 would you like that, that would be the intercepted
18 fisheries, the mixed stock fisheries at Area M; is that
19 what you're referring to only or?

20
21 MR. GERVAIS: Well, we got Area M,
22 sometimes we're getting this gillnet fishery in -- I
23 don't even know what area they call it, it's off of
24 Quinhagak, it's Kuskokwim Bay, that -- it's a sockeye
25 fishery but it's occurring in June and July. But to be
26 fair, and not just put all the burden on Area M, they
27 should just evaluate it for whatever's going on in the
28 Kuskokwim, Area M, Chignik and Kodiak, and just -- it
29 would just -- that way we're just not isolating the
30 problem to Area M when it could be -- could be -- the
31 other areas could have some impact on what's going on
32 with the interception.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yes, I
35 understand that. And those would be mixed stock
36 fisheries also. So would you like to make a motion to
37 transmit that letter to the -- promulgate the letter to
38 the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and
39 Game and the Director of Commercial Fisheries at the
40 Alaska Department of Fish and Game regarding this
41 bycatch genetic monitoring issue. If you close your
42 eyes and stick your head in the sand you have no idea
43 where these fish are going so they can just say they
44 are Asian stocks when they really are, predominately,
45 in the passes are going through the passes, that's
46 where the bottleneck where chum and chinook have reared
47 in the North Pacific, Gulf area are moving through and
48 are getting that mixed stock fisheries and those Kodiak
49 -- you're 'right, Kodiak has some of that, Chignik to a
50

0034

1 certain degree would have that also.

2

3 So would you like to make that motion,
4 Tim.

5

6 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. So moved.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a second
9 to transmit that letter.

10

11 MR. KRISKA: Second.

12

13 MR. VENT: Second, this is Darrell. I
14 second. I just had one little.....

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we'll discuss
17 it.

18

19 MR. VENT: Okay.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, we got a
22 second from Darrell. Go ahead Darrell.

23

24 MR. VENT: Yeah. I, you know, agree
25 with Tim on some of these issues we've been in that
26 State meeting with Area M and some discussions came up
27 about how they fish out there in the ocean and what
28 kind of fish they're catching. I spoke on this before
29 in the last fall meeting when I spoke about that
30 hatcheries, they have a lot of fish that they inject
31 into the water but are they taking all that hatchery
32 fish back out is the problem. Because that hatchery
33 fish seems to be hard on the natural stock because they
34 -- they tend to be more aggressive on the food sources
35 out there.

36

37 Also the length of the -- or the depth
38 of the nets seem to be taking a lot of stuff off the
39 bottom of the ocean where the food source is. And, you
40 know, that's been some of the issues that, you know,
41 we've been trying to limit them on because these fish
42 resources that they're catching is above that where the
43 -- where the hatchery fish are. The hatchery fish are
44 above where the lower natural stocks are, and they
45 don't want to give up that area. When they're saying
46 bycatch they don't want anything to do with their
47 fishing and we're having a tough time trying to make
48 sure that our natural stock is not being something
49 that they could deplete out there but they are taking
50

0035

1 everything out there in the ocean because of the sizes,
2 or the depths of their nets, which drag along the
3 bottom of the ocean sometimes and that's kind of what's
4 hurting the ecosystem out there. Not only that but the
5 hatchery fish.

6
7 I'd just like to mention that, that's
8 something that we need to try to get under discussion
9 maybe in this letter too, also.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So would you.....

12
13 MR. GERVAIS: So Darrell.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

16
17 MR. GERVAIS: Through the Chair.
18 Darrell. So you were at the South Peninsula, Chignik
19 Board of Fish meeting?

20
21 MR. VENT: I was at the Area M, yes, we
22 came in for that, and I think I was there like about
23 probably 12 days at the meeting. It was a long
24 meeting. A lot of discussion. And, you know, we
25 implied everything that needs to be done for
26 subsistence and our proposal was rejected, Proposal 140
27 and it was because the Board is predominately more
28 toward commercial and we noticed that when we put the
29 proposal in. We had a lot of people backing it but it
30 just didn't go through as we wanted it to.

31
32 We were trying to make them work with
33 us and it didn't work.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Tim do you have a
36 comment.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I can't hear you
41 Tim. So I would like to include the discussion about
42 the hatchery release, the Alaska Department of Fish and
43 Game would be basically permitting hatcheries to dump
44 -- to dump 1.6 billion -- or what did Tim say here, 1.6
45 billion pink salmon, and basically three billion smolt
46 into the ocean. Everybody knows that pinks are
47 ferocious little feeders.

48
49 MR. GERVAIS: I was on -- I was on mute
50

0036

1 there.

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead, Tim.

4

5

MR. GERVAIS: May I have a question to

6

Darrell, Jack?

7

8

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead Tim. Go

9

ahead.

10

11

(No comments)

12

13

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're muted again.

14

You're muted again, we can't hear you.

15

16

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Yes, okay, here we

17

go. So I was talking with some seiners from the Alaska

18

Peninsula. Their recommendation was to fish gear,

19

seine gear that was shallower than 200 meshes deep

20

because they feel that the chum -- in the marine

21

environment the chum are swimming deeper than the

22

sockeye and by using a shallow -- that's a relatively

23

shallow seine, 200 mesh. A lot of seines are 350 --

24

325, 350, 375 meshes deep. But I didn't see anything

25

in the Board of Fish proposals to try to limit the

26

depth of seines in the June and early July fishery.

27

And I was just asking Darrell if he recalls anybody in

28

committee or in public testimony talking about going

29

that route, of trying to limit the depth of the seines

30

in the early part of summer for the Area M fishermen?

31

32

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

33

34

MR. VENT: Yeah, Mr. Chair. We did

35

have discussions on that. There was some proposals in

36

there that we were trying to support to limit the depth

37

size of the nets and that was also rejected because

38

this commercial fishing is pretty important that Area M

39

compared to our natural fish stocks and it -- it really

40

would help us if we had any kind of way to, you know,

41

get a proposal that would be able to pass through that

42

State Board of Fish. It was looking good for 140 when

43

we thought we had a real good chance of passing it and

44

they voted it down, it was rejected.

45

46

The thing that, you know, really got to

47

me was that the amount of hatchery fish. I thought,

48

you know, it was more from international but I found

49

out that the United States was one of the biggest

50

0037

1 injectors of hatchery fish in the whole International
2 Waters there. So we -- we -- you know, like Jack said,
3 we really have to try to limit them on what they're
4 doing. Because if they don't take all that fish back
5 out, like the pinks, they're going to kill our natural
6 stock and we need to make sure that we limit them on
7 how much fish that they could put back into the ocean
8 there.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So my
11 question for you, Tim, would you like to include to the
12 Commissioner's letter, Director of Commercial
13 Fisheries, discussion about limiting the hatchery
14 releases? They permit the hatchery releases in Alaska.
15 Limit the hatchery releases to analyze the what the
16 trophic level of the North Pacific Gulf of Alaska Ocean
17 can support in relation to hatchery release in
18 conjunction with the reduced -- the over competition
19 with the wild stocks.

20
21 This is a big giant issue.

22
23 And the Department of Fish and Game has
24 got to get their head out of the sand and they have to
25 start looking at what this hatchery thing is doing when
26 we have warm water blobs that move into the North
27 Pacific and obliterate the food chain and then we got
28 to keep dumping out static amounts of hatchery fish.
29 This is one of the major issues of our returns for chum
30 and chinook coming back into the Kuskokwim and Yukon
31 River. A lot of those stocks go down into the North
32 Gulf.

33
34 Would you like to include that hatchery
35 discussion in this letter regarding this genetic
36 monitoring to the Commissioner?

37
38 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Yes, I would. And
39 I can -- let's see what's today, Tuesday, I would like
40 to talk to this lady that's involved with the issue and
41 get a little bit more information and I could email the
42 Council a draft of the letter within a week's time and
43 work with Nissa on it also and everybody could take a
44 look at it and put any revisions or additions on to it
45 if they desire, if that timeline works. But I need a
46 week to get my draft out.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, you can
49 be the primary on developing that letter. That letter
50

0038

1 should have a long CC list to all the Regional
2 Councils, Federal Regional Advisory Council, that CC
3 should also go to all the Advisory Committees that are
4 affected, there's how many 86?

5

6 MS. PILCHER: 84.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 84 Advisory
9 Committees in Alaska. And the other stock -- or the
10 other share -- people who have stake, you know, various
11 user groups that, you know, the Bristol Bay Native
12 Corporation, all the Corps should have that letter,
13 TCC, AVCP, we all have to be on the same sheet of
14 music. We can't just talk to the Commissioner because
15 he's going to wad it up and stick it in the garbage but
16 if everybody keeps saying the same thing it'll start to
17 get traction.

18

19 The Commissioner's dodging the issue.

20

21 His managers, they have.....

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I'd also like to
24 point out one other.....

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

27

28 MR. GERVAIS:issue that keeps
29 coming up and it's whether it's bycatch or
30 interception, just understanding the fact that when any
31 kind of management action is affecting people's cash
32 flow, or number of fish or pounds of fish they're
33 catching, even though you would think everybody would
34 just always -- well, in the past when I was a little
35 more naive I thought everybody would just favor
36 conservation knowing that as long as you have strong
37 stocks that the abundance that could be used for
38 commercial fishing would be there but now at this
39 stage, I'm just always -- always step back by seeing
40 that when it comes to seeing any kind of restriction to
41 fishing time or harvest, harvest amounts people --
42 people won't let go of what they currently have in the
43 sake of conservation. So just whatever. Just human
44 nature. And something we have to realize that people
45 are just not going to stop fishing because there's some
46 detrimental aspect of it -- to the stock.

47

48 So just need to keep in mind that --
49 realize what the mind set of the other stakeholders of

50

0039

1 the user groups is, that we're up against, they just
2 don't want to back down on commercial harvest for
3 revenue or in the government's case, tax revenue, so
4 keep in mind that everybody's just not concerned with
5 conservation for the sake of conservation.

6
7 That's it.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, yeah, the
10 letter's basically the need for genetic monitoring of
11 the mixed stocks fisheries enumerated and the hatchery
12 issue depleting the returns is a major driver of the
13 depletion of the returns. If there's lots of fish
14 coming back then everybody's going to be happy,
15 commercial, subsistence, everybody's going to be happy
16 then. So this letter is strictly addressing things
17 that the Department needs to stop evading the issue,
18 they need to get the genetic -- I worked on a genetic
19 project taking samples in the upper Koyukuk, they have
20 a genetic profile of the stocks on the Yukon River and
21 Kuskokwim River, they have that, we need the genetic
22 monitoring in the commercial fisheries, in the mixed
23 stock fisheries. And the Department has to step up to
24 the plate on reducing or assessing how many hatchery
25 fish can be released into the ocean, they're releasing
26 too many fish. It's very apparent that those fish out
27 compete chinook and other species on the high seas.

28
29 So that's the primary issue.

30
31 And the periphery will fix itself if we
32 get lots of returns coming back. So that's the letter,
33 it then goes to all stakeholders in the fishery, the
34 Regional Councils, the ACs, tribes, everybody has to
35 read this letter and start driving the Commissioner.
36 They're not going to listen to us, but the Commissioner
37 will listen to a lot of people if they start talking on
38 the same sheet of music and that's where we have to go
39 with this issue.

40
41 So that's the letter to be promulgated,
42 you'll help Nissa write the letter and I'll look it
43 over and then we'll send that to the Commissioner with
44 that long, long CC'd list.

45
46 So any further discussion, we need to
47 move along here. Discussion on the letter. I need a
48 vote -- or question.

49
50

0040

1 MR. VENT: You need a motion?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim made the motion
4 and you seconded.

5

6 MS. PILCHER: Tim made a motion, you
7 seconded so we just need to vote.

8

9 MR. VENT: Call for question.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
12 Those in favor of developing the letter on genetic
13 monitoring the mixed stock fishery -- commercial
14 fisheries and hatchery release correlations to trophic
15 levels in the ocean, in the marine system signify by --
16 oh, you want to add the net -- we can make an agenda
17 request proposal, that's a different issue, so we don't
18 want to get too many things in the same pot. So that's
19 the issue for the letter. Tim will write the letter
20 with Nissa and we'll transmit that out.

21

22 So those in favor of that letter being
23 written signify by saying aye.

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that --
28 thanks for that discussion Tim. That's a very
29 important issue. The net depth, the seine net, that
30 can be submitted as an agenda change request to the
31 Board of Fish. The Board of Fish dodged a bullet, they
32 don't want to hear that. Well, we're going to go --
33 make them come back to it, at least have them look at
34 an agenda change request to limit seine gear in Area M,
35 or what's referred to as Area M during the mixed stock.
36 The target is 6.2 percent of the Bristol Bay projected
37 run, that's the problem. And so if the chums -- I know
38 chums swim deeper in the water, that's why they got a
39 big pupil in their eye, that's why they catch them in
40 hot water in the Bering Sea in the North Pacific
41 pollock fishery because the fish will go to deeper
42 water, that's why they're bumping those trawl nets
43 right off the bottom, because all the fish are
44 concentrated on the bottom and the North Pacific
45 Fisheries Management Council should be limiting the
46 depth of the pelagic fishery to no further -- to no
47 closer to the bottom than 200 feet, 300 feet, they
48 should never touch the bottom with that trawl gear
49 damaging crabs and so I don't know why anybody's not

50

0041

1 talking about that one. That's annoying.

2

3 But the reality is this net depth issue
4 can be submitted as -- when we get to proposals as an
5 agenda change request. So we'll go there. Put that on
6 -- make a note of that for further on in our agenda.

7

8 So we're transmitting that letter,
9 we're not going to continue with that.

10

11 I'm going to give my report and then
12 we're going to go for a bathroom break after that one.

13

14 So I was hurt, had a significant fall,
15 as you knew because I didn't attend the Western
16 Interior fall meeting. I basically laid on my couch
17 with my feet above my heart so my feet wouldn't balloon
18 if I st up. I was crawling until late November. I
19 used a walker until December. And I finally could walk
20 a little bit. I could walk 400 yards by mid-January. I
21 could not get out trapping or wood cutting but I did
22 drive on the road when I could drive a car. And I was
23 monitoring what was going on in the country. I always
24 have my hand on the pulse of what's happening out there
25 in the woods just like anybody does.

26

27 So we got pretty deep snow again this
28 year. We had rain in October and so the sheep had wet
29 snow early but the north edge of the Brooks Range took
30 a real beating. We have dry -- fairly dry snow on the
31 south side, deep, it's 32 inches in my yard and we've
32 had about 85 inches of snowfall this winter, which is
33 fairly deep, but we didn't get rain on the south side,
34 but the north side, Toolik Research Station had .69 of
35 an inch on the 5th of December. It melted the snow and
36 it glazed the ground. And the caribou adjusted to
37 that, they went way out to the north, they went away
38 from that. They went east and they went north. Then
39 they came back and they went way to the south, they
40 went into the Atigun Valleys and the valleys that were
41 blown out and dried out. But the sheep can't leave.
42 So the sheep on the north edge had a real hard winter
43 again with rain on snow events.

44

45 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Arctic
46 National Wildlife Refuge needs to be on this Western
47 Interior call. We have customary and traditional use
48 of Unit 24 -- correction 26B and portions of 24, 26A
49 for our Regional Council -- or regional membership.

50

0042

1 I've been trying to get the Arctic National Wildlife
2 Refuge to do a survey. They did a survey from 1986 to
3 2012, a composition survey and survey of the Atigun
4 Gorge, which the road is a half a mile from the Arctic
5 Refuge. So the Arctic Refuge comes right next to the
6 road. And that's important data. It showed very
7 important aspects that I'll be discussing in the
8 management plan that I promulgated. The Arctic Refuge
9 needs to reinitialize doing that composition survey in
10 the Atigun Gorge because that area is being impacted
11 by, now the third year in a row, of rain on snow events
12 on the north edge of the Brooks Range. They don't want
13 to talk to the Western Interior, but we have C&T over
14 there and I would like the North Slope Regional
15 Advisory Council to be also aware that they have had
16 rain on snow in the mountains. And so I would like
17 them, at the next meeting, to be aware of that issue.

18
19 This is a big deal.

20
21 And so we have deep snow. The moose
22 are getting through the snow. The wolf population has
23 retracted fairly significantly because -- in the area
24 where I live because the Porcupine Caribou Herd keeps
25 coming to the east of the east of the Dalton Highway,
26 so the wolves -- it just sucks all the wolves over
27 there and the wolves stay over there with the caribou
28 all winter, they completely disappear, there's hardly
29 any wolves around. There was one big pack south of
30 Wiseman down at Coldfoot and I trained a young guy to
31 trap wolves and he caught five wolves down there, he
32 got into that pack of wolves and took some of those
33 wolves. They were killing moose like crazy down there
34 in Slade Creek. So the reality is there are large
35 packs, residual large packs that are core packs and
36 those wolves are taking a lot of moose wherever they
37 reside. A lot of wolves had moved towards the caribou.
38 And a lot of wolves have cannablized other members of
39 the general wolf population. So the wolf population is
40 actually lower than it used to be but you travel the
41 country, there's very few snowshoe hares, there's a few
42 red squirrels, there's lots of spruce grouse but there
43 are -- there's not a lot of food for like lynx and so
44 forth. There are lynx though, a few.

45
46 So I'm concerned about the tawdering
47 sheep population still. We were successful in getting
48 the Federal Subsistence Board to have a two year
49 moratorium in the described area in the Dalton Highway
50

0043

1 Corridor Management Area but I'm concerned about how
2 the hunt is going to -- I don't know that we can stop
3 it any further. But I would like this Council to
4 submit an agenda change request to redo how
5 sporthunting takes dall sheep. They just don't take
6 full-curl sheep. Well, it's full-curl management, no,
7 it's not. It's full-curl, (indiscernible) broken, or
8 eight years of age. The public cannot age sheep to
9 save their lives let alone -- in their hand, let alone
10 in the field, they're killing sub-legal sheep en mass.
11 When there's no adult rams in the groups they will kill
12 sub-legal sheep hoping that they're eight years of age.
13 That's not happening. That's why we had to fight for
14 the closure.

15
16 So an agenda change request -- I have
17 written an agenda change request to eliminate the
18 public aging sheep at eight years of age. That's a
19 real easy fix for the Board of Game to go with that
20 addresses the issue of killing only the older rams,
21 period, no guessing at the ages anymore.

22
23 So we -- I'm concerned about the sheep
24 population recovery. If we -- our closure will go for
25 not if the public shows up with the idea that there's
26 apparently unlimited or too many sheep -- rumor has it
27 there's too many dall sheep -- Mr. Vickers here ran
28 into hunters at Galbraith that thought that the closure
29 had to do with we're hiding all the dall sheep because
30 there were too many of them. What did you say there,
31 Brent, the bottom line is the public is completely
32 confused, they don't know a sheep from carpet tacks.

33
34 So go ahead.

35
36 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 For the record this is Brent Vickers from OSM. The
38 Chair and I were just having a conversation before the
39 meeting started because I was able to visit with him up
40 in beautiful Coldfoot and Wiseman area and while up
41 there, Staff and I ran into some hunters and were just
42 chitchatting and the hunters -- we didn't tell them we
43 were Federal Staff but the hunters presented to us a
44 conspiracy theory on the closure in which had something
45 to do with the Feds did this because of too many sheep
46 were in the area and the Feds wanted to hide something.
47 It was a little bit confusing and I couldn't get all --
48 I wish I had walked through the plan with them but I
49 did -- nonetheless I was just sharing it because it was
50

0044

1 sort of a comical but maybe not so comical data point
2 for me, and was sharing that with the Chair.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Board of Game
7 is in a quandary how to modulate this hunting pressure
8 down. They have to step up to the plate and address
9 this aging issue. They're seizing sheep that are
10 three-quarter curl that are aged at six and seven years
11 old. That was presented to the Board of Game. They
12 need -- it's apparent to me what they need to do but
13 apparently the Staff doesn't know what they need to do.
14 So they need to have a proposal, agenda change request
15 proposal and I've written that proposal and I would
16 like the Council to submit that when we get to that.

17

18 So that would be my discussion.

19

20 I participated in the Federal
21 Subsistence Board fisheries meeting on the phone. I
22 didn't travel to the meeting. I've -- I intend to have
23 an Advisory Committee meeting on the 11th of April and
24 so I've been trying to get a Koyukuk River Advisory
25 Committee meeting together and so I have a whole bunch
26 of other meetings. I got a Gates of the Arctic
27 Subsistence Resource Commission meeting in April. I
28 got this ungulate meeting in Anchorage, which I plan to
29 bring my -- the Western Interior, if adopted, the
30 Western Interior's management plan before that ungulate
31 group, because as you can see I wrote a whole bunch
32 about the ecology of sheep. I learned -- at the Board
33 of Game meeting in 2015 when the Central Arctic Herd
34 had fallen 66 percent and I went to the -- I wrote a
35 record copy for the Alaska Board of Game that said --
36 well, I thought I should just give a little ecology
37 here, sheep are -- or correction -- caribou cows don't
38 typically have a calf until they're three years of age
39 and they never have a twin. I had four Board members
40 come up to me and go I didn't know they only had one
41 calf. I was like -- and I just noticed that the
42 Governor's has appointed more of these Mat-Su Valley
43 people who don't seem to know anything about the
44 ecology of animals, so we need to actually spell it
45 out, what they actually do, what they actually eat,
46 what they actually -- the whole ecology thing is a big
47 deal with the Board process.

48

49 So I intend to attend that ungulate

50

0045

1 meeting, talking about various management issues that I
2 don't agree with, with the Alaska Department of Fish
3 and Game, especially regarding caribou. They got it
4 completely wrong there. So I will be attending those.

5

6 So that would be my report right now.

7

8 So any questions or comments.

9

10 Darrell.

11

12 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just had one on the
13 issues of our land species there. You know through the
14 years we've always been having issues with what kind of
15 hunting the -- the pressure that's put on by
16 sporthunters or, you know, hunters that are looking to
17 get that horn off that animals. You know the thing
18 that really bothers me is that, you know, we have all
19 these animals out there, what they call breeders, and I
20 mentioned that before, and when you put a lot of
21 pressure on these hunt -- you know, the breeders, the
22 predator species seem to increase because this happened
23 before in the Huslia area. We had to have a fly in to
24 -- you know, people with airplanes to go look for these
25 predators because there were getting too many of them
26 because they were killing off all the breeder bulls.
27 And I think that same thing happened with the caribou
28 right now and they're blaming it on the female -- the
29 low female count, but that's not the issue, it's
30 because these wolves have so much to eat out there,
31 they just skip over the skinny ones and go right for
32 the females. So that's, you know, some of the issues
33 that's happening in the northwest area.

34

35 You know people are up there
36 complaining and saying, you know, how come we're
37 getting cutoff from our food source and it's because
38 there's too much hunting pressure on the big breeding
39 animals. That has to be included in some of these
40 talks on how we see what they're doing to our areas so
41 we have to limit them on catching those bulls. If we
42 don't do that then we're really going to have a
43 predation problem.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We will have a
46 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group discussion
47 later on in the agenda. So I have concerns about the
48 Western Arctic Herd myself.

49

50

0046

1 MR. VENT: Yep.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further
4 comments or discussions on the Council members reports.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so we're going
9 to go to public and tribal comments on non-agenda items
10 but first we're going to go for a bathroom break for
11 about 10 minutes. We'll come back -- it's a quarter to
12 11:00, we'll come back at 11:00 o'clock, prompt, and
13 we're going to start into listening to the public
14 tribal -- public and tribal comments on non-agenda
15 items.

16

17 (Off record)

18

19 (On record)

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I actually forgot we
22 actually have a time certain presentation by an
23 official in Washington, D.C., Brian Newland. So I'm
24 trying to gather.....

25

26 MR. GARRIOTT: Okay.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If Brian Newland is
29 on the call, I'm trying to gather the Council back
30 together again.

31

32 MR. GARRIOTT: Hi, Brian is unable to
33 be here but I'm filling in for him today. This is
34 Wizipan Garriott, Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary
35 for Indian Affairs.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You want to say your
38 name and spell it for the record for our court
39 recorder. You're a little bit garbled. Are you closer
40 to your mic.

41

42 MR. GARRIOTT: Hold on one sec, let me
43 -- this -- is this a little bit better?

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's quite a bit
46 better.

47

48 MR. GARRIOTT: Okay. There you go, I
49 figured I'd try my headphones instead of just the

50

0047

1 speaker. Yeah, name, first name W-I-Z-I-P-A-N, last
2 name Garriott, G-A-R-R-I-O-T-T.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

5

6 MR. GARRIOTT: And my title is
7 Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian
8 Affairs.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.
11 I'm trying to gather my Council members together.

12

13 (Teleconference interference -
14 participants not muted)

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And, Tim
17 Gervais, are you on the phone, on the call -- Council
18 Member Tim Gervais?

19

20 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack, I'm here.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Jenny and
23 Darrell took off and I would like them -- they're
24 trying to find them in the hallways here.

25

26 (Pause)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I just need one
29 more.

30

31 MS. PILCHER: This isn't an action
32 item.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again.

35

36 MS. PILCHER: This isn't an action item
37 it's just an informational.....

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I would like
40 the Council to be aware of this issue.

41

42 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. Yeah, no,
43 understand.

44

45 (Pause)

46

47 MS. PILCHER: We are having some issues
48 with the phone lines as well, we are not affected in
49 the room but it does appear that those calling in to

50

0048

1 listen are having a hard time at times, so while we are
2 attempting to collect the members back into the room
3 we're going to disconnect real quickly. Don't do
4 anything online, everything's just going to happen in
5 the room and we're going to try to reroute the system
6 so we can fix it. And my apologies very much to the
7 individual calling in right now that we have run over
8 on your time certain, so apologies there.

9

10 MR. GARRIOTT: No worries.

11

12 (Pause)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So everybody on the
15 phone, the court recorder's reconfigured that and so
16 hopefully our outgoing transmission will be clear and
17 consistent. We waited for Jenny, she's about six or
18 eight minutes late, and so we got -- we have the
19 Principle Deputy BIA Wiziapan Garriott on the phone so
20 you -- and Tim and Tom Kriska -- Tom Kriska and Tim
21 Gervais are you there? I want to make sure that we got
22 the most Council members here.

23

24 MR. KRISKA: Yes.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

27

28 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack.

29

30 MR. KRISKA: This is Tom.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, that's great.
33 So go ahead, Mr. Garriott we'll give you the floor.

34

35 MR. GARRIOTT: Absolutely, thank you,
36 Mr. Chair and members of the Council. I'm really glad
37 to be with you today. My name is Wiziapan Garriott,
38 everyone calls me Wizi, so that's fine, and I serve as
39 the Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian
40 Affairs. I'm the individual who serves directly under
41 Mr. Brian Newland who is the Assistant Secretary for
42 Indian Affairs. And at Indian Affairs we oversee.....

43

44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46

47 MR. GARRIOTT:directly the Bureau
48 of Indian Affairs.....

49

50

0049

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting -- one
2 moment there -- one moment there Wizi.

3
4 (Teleconference interference -
5 participants not muted)

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting a
8 bunch of feedback. Just push star, six, or push -- oh,
9 there we're good now. Whoever did that, we're good, so
10 go right ahead again Mr. Garriott.

11
12 MR. GARRIOTT: We're good.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're good
15 now.

16
17 MR. GARRIOTT: Okay. Yep. Yep. And,
18 then as I was mentioning, the Office of the Assistant
19 Secretary oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau
20 of Trust Administration, Bureau of Indian Education as
21 well as a number of other offices that are directly
22 under the Secretary's office, like the Office of Indian
23 Economic Development and others. Brian Newland, the
24 Assistant Secretary had planned to be here today but
25 just was unavailable due to some scheduling conflicts.

26
27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29
30 MR. GARRIOTT: But I really appreciate
31 the Council making some time for us on today's agenda.

32
33 I'm here to provide some information
34 about the Department of Interior's proposal to move the
35 Office of Subsistence Management from the Fish and
36 Wildlife Service to the Office of the Assistant
37 Secretary for Indian Affairs. This proposal was
38 included in the President's fiscal year '24 budget
39 proposal to Congress which was released a week and a
40 half ago.

41
42 As many of you know, the Department of
43 Interior, in partnership with the U.S. Department of
44 Agriculture with participation from NOAA hosted three
45 tribal consultation sessions and a listening session on
46 how to improve the Federal Subsistence Management
47 Program there in Alaska and how to meet Alaska Native
48 subsistence needs. The top ask from those who
49 participated was to move OSM from the Fish and Wildlife
50

0050

1 Service to the direct supervision of the Office of the
2 Secretary. Moving OSM from Fish and Wildlife Service
3 was the big ask when similar questions were asked in
4 2010 as well. So this is something that's been
5 consistently said over a number of years.

6
7 And as you know, better than anybody,
8 you know, subsistence practices are a vital and
9 integral part of the way Alaska Native communities and
10 people, as well as non-Native, rural Alaskans live and,
11 you know, people depend heavily on subsistence
12 practices for their food needs and nutritional needs,
13 the social, cultural and traditional and economic
14 needs, you know, is so important.

15
16 You know comments from the consultation
17 sessions that we held last year pointed to some of the
18 adverse impacts that climate change is having on Alaska
19 Native subsistence practices in Alaska Native
20 communities and as we all know these impacts impact all
21 subsistence users. The consultations also highlighted
22 the need to expand partnerships, tribal partnerships
23 and include the incorporation of indigenous into our
24 management -- subsistence management practices.

25
26 You know elevating the Office, OSM to
27 the level of the Assistant Secretary within the Office
28 of the Secretary will help ensure that the Program, you
29 know, meets the -- gets a higher level of visibility
30 and access to the resources to carry out its mission
31 and goals. Again, this is a proposal but if adopted,
32 you know, we'll be able to continue to support the
33 Federal Subsistence Management Program for the benefit
34 of all rural users, you know, consistent with Title
35 VIII. The Department believes this will strengthen the
36 Program and be a benefit to everyone and provide
37 opportunities for our office, the Assistant Secretary's
38 Office to leverage, you know, indigenous knowledge and
39 really enhance partnerships of tribes.

40
41 Under the proposal, you know, all of
42 OSM's function's and funding would move from Fish and
43 Wildlife Service to the Assistant Secretary's office.
44 All of the OSM Staff would retain their positions,
45 their roles and responsibilities unless they decided to
46 remain with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

47
48 You know as part of the proposal, you
49 know, we're requesting an additional 2.5 million for
50

0051

1 the Program with 1.5 million going to the existing FRMP
2 Program and 1 million to begin a Wildlife Resource
3 Monitoring Program, similar to the Fisheries Resource
4 Monitoring Program. This is something -- one of the
5 recommendations that we heard.

6
7 It's important to note that the
8 proposal would not go into effect unless its enacted by
9 Congress in the Fiscal Year '24 Appropriations Bill.
10 The proposal is now before Congress, it's part of the
11 President's budget and we'll be continuing to work with
12 Congress over the next several months as we work on the
13 Fiscal Year '24 budget.

14
15 Mr. Chair, I want to thank you and
16 would be happy to take any questions that you or other
17 members.....

18
19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: The proposal is
20 before Congress now.

21
22 (Teleconference interference -
23 participants not muted)

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thank you. So
26 it's my understanding that Congress would have to
27 include the final Appropriation from the President's
28 recommendation, am I clear on that?

29
30 MR. GARRIOTT: Yes. We -- so a big
31 part of this is the funding piece and kind of where the
32 funding goes so in our budget proposal we're
33 recommending that the funding be moved from Fish and
34 Wildlife Service to Indian Affairs and then that
35 effectively allows us to move the office. And so it's
36 not in effect now and would not go into effect unless
37 it's passed by Congress when they -- if they pass a
38 budget.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I am happy to
41 hear that there was a Wildlife Resource Monitoring
42 funding, an additional appropriation to OSM. So I
43 would like to go around the room and ask Council
44 members if there are questions or comments.

45
46 You have a question or comment,
47 Darrell.

48
49 MR. VENT: Yeah. It seems like -- I
50

0052

1 don't know if this would be in the right step or
2 direction but I think we need to start addressing some
3 of the issues we're having up here because we're so
4 heavily regulated with the State and Federal
5 regulations that we need to address our concerns to
6 someone. I mean we're at an advisory capacity and we
7 know that we have issues up here but we can't really
8 direct them toward the people that need to be directed
9 toward because it's hard for us to work with either the
10 Federal or the State because we can't sit at the table
11 and discuss our issues. I think that getting us more
12 involved as a tribe will address some of the issues
13 that we have with our subsistence use. So I'm glad
14 that we're trying to -- you're trying to work with us
15 in order to address these issues. I appreciate that.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have any
18 comments, Jenny.

19

20 MS. PELKOLA: Well, I missed the first
21 part, but I know sitting on this Council for years,
22 we've always -- our intention was always to work for
23 our people and we've come across a lot of roadblocks
24 but we keep on trudging through them and trying to work
25 with people that will help us. And it seems like a lot
26 of times our hands are tied because people talk about
27 tradition and, you know, they understand -- they want
28 to help our people but they actually -- to understand a
29 tradition and how our people live you have to be there
30 to see it firsthand. I've learned a lot over the years
31 from Jack about caribou. I didn't really know anything
32 about caribou and I have learned that they have one,
33 you know, one baby. And just listening to him talk, he
34 lives right there in the woods with the animals and he
35 understands it very well. And I think for people to
36 talk about tradition and talk about our way of life and
37 stuff like that, you have to be there, you have to come
38 around the people and really see it for yourself, until
39 then, if that -- if we don't have the people that come
40 out or try to work with us or we work with them, it's a
41 difficult thing to understand.

42

43 I know when my husband first moved to
44 our area, my area in Galena he didn't understand the
45 tradition and way of life and living over there over 40
46 years he's learned and now I hear him talking just like
47 we do, like we need to preserve our wildlife otherwise,
48 you know, they're going to run us out of here, we're
49 going to run out of moose, we're going to run out of
50

0053

1 what we subsist on.

2

3

4 So I just hope that we'll be able to
5 work together and I know the intentions of the Federal
6 government is to -- or the Feds, to work with us, but
7 like I say you have to be there, live amongst the
8 people or come out, or go to the village and try to get
9 data and talk to the people then you'll understand a
10 little bit about tradition.

10

11

That's all I have to say.

12

13

Thank you, Jack.

14

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So I'll
17 go to Tom Kriska on the phone, you have comments about
18 the basically OSM moving from the U.S. Fish and
19 Wildlife Service to under the BIA, you have comments on
20 that Tom.

20

21

22 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I kind of -- I hope
23 that will work in some way because the way it is right
24 now, you know, all our Title VIII law, they're in
25 place, they're written, they were agreed on many years
26 ago and now every one of them, or a lot of the Title
27 VIII laws are broken by the State, the Feds, it's not
28 being followed at all. And like Jenny said, is that, I
29 really wish they would come out here in the Interior
30 and look at our life maybe for a week because there's a
31 lot of villages in the Interior all along this Yukon,
32 that they come up and observe that for a week, not just
33 for a week, not just a day, fly in and fly out, check
34 it out there's a lot of different -- get the whole
35 story from the people, that's who you want to work for,
36 because that's who we're here for, we're here for the
37 people. And it seems like everything we do, all we do
38 is educate the State and educate the Feds then that
39 whole story is rewritten and then used -- I don't like
40 to say used against us but it seems like they -- all we
41 do is educate them and we're paying for it.

41

42

43 I just hope something will come of it.
44 If it's going.....

44

45

46 (Teleconference interference -
47 participants not muted)

47

48

49 MR. KRISKA:to make a big
50 difference in our way of life.....

50

0054

1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted)

3

4 MR. KRISKA: Something has to be done
5 on the State and the Fed side, that's for sure coming
6 from the White House or wherever, we need the help and
7 I hope it's going to be on something like this rather
8 than we wind up farther without our food. I mean it's
9 getting so bad that it needs to be investigated.
10 That's what I should say.

11

12 Okay. Well, I don't -- I'm glad
13 they're there and I hope they do something, that's all
14 I can say. We've been fighting for this.....

15

16 (Teleconference interference -
17 participants not muted)

18

19 MR. KRISKA:way of -- going to
20 these meetings and it still it seems like it's getting
21 worse and worse is all I can say, I don't know. I
22 don't know. It hasn't gotten any better.

23

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: They don't
25 understand.....

26

27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29

30 MR. KRISKA: But the Title VIII, like I
31 said, that'd be start go back and visit all those laws
32 that were in place or all those agreements that were in
33 place and then go from there, you know, go back and
34 look at it and try to figure out -- because we know
35 what laws are broken but it seems like overruled all
36 the time and money, take over our subsistence, they'd
37 rather make money than us living, I guess, I don't
38 know.

39

40 But, anyway, okay, thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tom.
43 Yeah, we're getting bleedover from other people on the
44 call. You're -- if you're not speaking push star, six
45 so that you don't bleed into the conversation on the
46 phone.

47

48 So Tim Gervais, you got comments on
49 this proposal by the Presidential Office to move OSM

50

0055

1 from U.S. Fish and Wildlife to under the Bureau of
2 Indian Affairs. You have comments.

3

4 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I had a hard time
5 with the audio on that. But in general I'm opposed to
6 it. I think ANILCA spells out that the Office of
7 Subsistence of Management is supposed to represent
8 Federally-qualified users and there's a lot of
9 Federally-qualified users that are not tribal --
10 members of Federally-recognized tribes. So I feel it's
11 strange to have the BIA be in charge of the OSM. I
12 don't.....

13

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Irritating because
15 he's.....

16

17 (Teleconference interference -
18 participants not muted)

19

20 MR. GERVAIS:really think it
21 doesn't match up really well to me.

22

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: They're against
24 us.

25

26 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah.

27

28 (Teleconference interference -
29 participants not muted)

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're still getting
32 feedback from people on the call that haven't muted
33 your phone, push star, six, if you're not speaking. Do
34 you have a response to that Mr. Garriott.

35

36 MR. GARRIOTT: Yeah, no, it's a little
37 bit hard to hear because of the feedback but I really
38 appreciate all of the comments.....

39

40 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's going to.....

41

42 MR. GARRIOTT:that have been made
43 so far and, you know, I think one thing to -- a couple
44 of things.

45

46 One, just to be clear, that this is
47 being -- you know the proposed move is to the Office of
48 the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, not the
49 Bureau of Indian Affairs.

50

0056

1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted - on hold)

3
4 MR. GARRIOTT: The Bureau of Indian
5 Affairs is an office -- it's a bureau that is overseen
6 by the Assistant Secretary.....

7
8 (Teleconference interference -
9 participants not muted)

10
11 MR. GARRIOTT:so we are not
12 proposing to move it to the bureau. And, you know, one
13 of the things that's important to note is that, you
14 know, within -- if it's within the Office of the
15 Assistant Secretary, you know, that only those
16 positions that are -- you know there's not a higher
17 Indian requirement there and, you know, it's also
18 really important to understand that ANILCA is the law,
19 right, ANILCA is still the law. And that, you know,
20 the Program is for the benefit for subsistence
21 management is still the law and that this is the
22 Program that will be administered for all rural
23 Alaskans and subsistence users and there are a lot of
24 -- there are a number of instances where we oversee
25 various programs that benefit non-Indian, you know,
26 irrigation and power, and so, you know, we're -- we see
27 this as an enhancement where we will not be able to --
28 we won't be diminishing our service to all rural
29 Alaskans and really we see this as an elevation of
30 enhancement.

31
32 We also heard, I think, from the first
33 three comments, you know, concerns about, you know,
34 hearing from folks, being on the ground and
35 understanding, you know, kind of Alaska Native and
36 rural Alaska lives. And one thing I think I, you know,
37 didn't mention, I'm from an Indian Tribe in South
38 Dakota, we hunt, we practice our traditional life ways
39 and there's a lot of others in our office who are from
40 rural and indigenous communities that, you know, still
41 practice those life ways so the comment that it's hard
42 to understand unless you're there on the ground, I
43 really -- that really resonates with me because I
44 totally understand what you're talking about. And, you
45 know, we feel that by having this direct line to the
46 Office of the Assistant Secretary, when there's a
47 recommendation, when issues need to be addressed in the
48 management of the Program, that we'll be able to do
49 that in a more effective way and manner.
50

0057

1 So I really appreciate those comments
2 and questions. Thanks.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I appreciate
5 that clarification. See when I hear Assistant under
6 the Bureau of Indian Affairs I just defaulted to the
7 Bureau. We don't understand the tiers in the Secretary
8 of Interior's office and so that's where we were
9 unclear about. So your clarification is taken.

10
11 I do feel that moving OSM higher into
12 the Secretary's Office, we have a lot of problems with
13 getting appointments to our Regional Councils and to
14 the Subsistence Resource Commissions for the Parks so
15 there's issues that happen that are bottlenecked in
16 Washington and I feel that moving it further up the
17 food chain would actually be beneficial to the Program.
18 That's my opinion of it.

19
20 But I'm concerned -- my original --
21 when I heard of it was the concern about OSM's budget
22 being reduced, but I hear about increasing the budget
23 because we have a lot of resources that are having
24 issues, caribou, moose, fish, we got all these various
25 issues and so these need to be addressed and OSM is
26 under more and more burden for resource monitoring
27 issues and in Council discussions and advocacies. And
28 so I understand now we're -- that it'd be right under
29 the Secretary of Interior, that's what I understand,
30 that would be beneficial to the Program so that the
31 Program can actually have a voice -- in other words, it
32 was too far -- the voice was too far away from
33 Washington, previously, with OSM going through the U.S.
34 Fish and Wildlife, it never seemed to get high enough
35 into the food chain where -- we need to accelerate
36 these nominations -- or these appointments because
37 sometimes I've seen Subsistence Resource Commission
38 appointments sit there -- I've got one that's sitting
39 there right now, it's been sitting there for over a
40 year in Washington because nothing's happening. So
41 this -- hopefully this will help move this -- some of
42 the working relationship with the Office of Subsistence
43 Management and the Washington -- the Department of
44 Interior's Office will be more responsive to one
45 another.

46
47 That will be my comments.

48
49 Thank you.

50

0058

1 Did you want further comment, Tim,
2 since I basically refuted what you were saying.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there Tim.

7
8 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I'll just have to
9 do some reading up. I'm completely unaware of what the
10 Secretary of Indian Affairs does, I'm confusing it with
11 -- I'm not on board with the proposal based on what I
12 know right now.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate
15 your position. You know it's a platform to voice
16 various aspects of -- and I appreciate you looking
17 further into that. So I think that covers the issue, I
18 really appreciate you being on. Is there any public
19 online comments, other Regional Councils or public
20 members that want to speak to this issue that have
21 listened in on this.

22
23 MR. GARRIOTT: Mr. Chair. In addition
24 to the.....

25
26 (Teleconference interference -
27 participants not muted)

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're really.....

30
31 MR. GARRIOTT:you know to the
32 consultations.....

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You've gotten really
35 weak, you want to speak closer to the mic or do what
36 you were doing before.

37
38 MR. GARRIOTT: Is this a little bit
39 better?

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a lot better.

42
43 MR. GARRIOTT: I was just going to say
44 in addition to the consultations that we have, you
45 know, we continue to have a lot of meetings. We're
46 meeting with all of the Regional Councils to, you know,
47 have this exact conversation and, you know, one of the
48 things we're really committed to is, you know, full
49 transparency which is why we're having these

50

0059

1 conversations and happy to just continue answer any
2 questions that you may as they come up. And one of the
3 things I heard was budget and responsiveness, you know,
4 so the 1.5 million increase -- so it's an overall 2.5
5 million increase with 1.5 for Fisheries Resource
6 Monitoring and then 1 million for the Wildlife
7 Resource Monitoring. And, you know, really hear you on
8 the responsiveness side of things and we're -- that's a
9 big reason for the move is so that we can be more
10 responsive.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thank you for
13 that clarification. Any further discussion from the
14 public or Council members.

15
16 (Teleconference interference -
17 participants not muted)

18
19 MS. PHILLIPS: This is Patricia
20 Phillips.

21
22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Patricia Phillips,
23 let's listen.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is someone trying to
26 make a comment, you got to speak into your mic.

27
28 MS. PHILLIPS: This is Patricia
29 Phillips from Pelican.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead and
32 speak up, Patricia.

33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. I was
35 curious, the Office of Subsistence Management, will its
36 office location remain the same in Anchorage even
37 though it's going to be under the authority of Bureau
38 of Indian Affairs.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 MR. GARRIOTT: The existing Staff will
43 remain unless they don't want to move over but the
44 Staff and the field Staff up in Alaska will remain in
45 place and, you know, really the kind of change there is
46 having a closer line to D.C. But the Staff in the
47 field remain the same.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the physical
50

0060

1 office will change to another building here in
2 Anchorage or the Staff cohesion will stay the same and
3 is there a move of the office or the office stays where
4 it's at, that's what some of the concerns are, is that
5 we have a hard time getting OSM Staff and we don't want
6 to lose them if they have to like move somewhere else
7 or are unhappy so I would hope that if any change is to
8 occur that they would consult extensively with OSM
9 Staff about what could maintain the make up of our
10 office.

11

12 MR. GARRIOTT: Well, that remains the
13 same. It really -- you know, I think part of -- well,
14 in the field it remains the same, right, in the state
15 it's going to remain the same in terms of Staff,
16 physical location, et cetera, but it means that you
17 have a closer line directly to D.C.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Although the
20 Fish and Wildlife's building collapsed, or portions of
21 it collapsed so maybe they want to move.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The roof caved in at
26 the main Fish and Wildlife office in Anchorage.
27 Yesterday I says we should have a meeting there and
28 they went like, no, our office building has imploded or
29 something, so maybe they do want to move. Just a
30 head's up on that one.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So okay I really
35 appreciate your comments. Thanks for taking the time
36 to be on this call, Mr. Garriott, and have a great day.

37

38 MR. GARRIOTT: Thank you. And I really
39 appreciate all of the comments.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So where are we at
42 Nissa.

43

44 (Pause)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. We're going
47 to public and tribal comments on non-agenda items. So
48 do we have any public or tribal comments on anything
49 that's not on our agenda. This is kind of the time to
50

0061

1 do that, or the time in the meeting.

2

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's not the BIA,
4 and that's incorrect.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your mic is open.
7 So if you have comments we would like to hear your
8 comments on any non-agenda comments.

9

10 (Teleconference interference -
11 participants not muted)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting quite
14 a bit of discussion not on topic, not addressing the
15 Council. If you're not speaking to the Council please
16 mute your phone.

17

18 So I would like to get comments from
19 the public or tribes. Anybody from TCC, or Kuskokwim
20 InterTribal Fish Commission, anybody that has non-
21 agenda items, I would like that now.

22

23 MR. GILLIKIN: Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

26

27 MR. GILLIKIN: Mr. Chair, thank you.
28 This is Dan Gillikin in Aniak with the Native Village
29 of Napaimute.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

32

33 MR. GILLIKIN: I actually did have a
34 question for the Deputy Secretary there about where in-
35 season management authority would lie, and would that
36 still be with the managers at the conservation units,
37 i.e., the Refuge managers or Park managers because it
38 seems like that would be really important for the
39 management to have somebody right there at that
40 conservation unit make the decisions that have to be
41 done almost on a daily basis and if it's all the way
42 back in Washington, D.C., where that decision's going
43 to be made that's going to be very problematic.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that Dan.
46 I was asking if the public had any comments when he was
47 on the phone. But it's my opinion, or impression that
48 the Federal Subsistence Board has actually made that
49 delegated authority and has signed that off and the

50

0062

1 Federal Subsistence Board would not -- it would not
2 change, you know, the Secretary's office, basically the
3 various agencies and the Secretary of Interior makes
4 those Subsistence Board appointments so I don't think
5 that delegated authority would change significantly.

6
7 That's just my opinion, and the Staff
8 in the room is shaking their head also. So I don't
9 think that the delegated authorities will change
10 significantly.

11
12 You copy that.

13
14 MR. GILLIKIN: I did, Mr. Chair, thank
15 you very much.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do appreciate that
18 comment though, that would have been a good one, it's
19 on the record, though, that there's a concern about
20 that.

21
22 So we do want to have -- there's
23 various delegated authorities for in-season management
24 on fish and wildlife under the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

25
26 So any other tribal comments or public
27 comments, just the public that may be on the phone.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there
32 Patricia, did you have any comments from Southeast RAC?

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So don't hear any
37 comments so we're going to drop down to old business
38 here. We're on A, followup on the May 2023 American
39 Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference. Brian
40 is going to give us an overview of that. That would be
41 on Page 16 of our Regional Advisory Council book here.

42
43 All right, go ahead, Brian.

44
45 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46 Good morning. For the record my name is Brian
47 Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

48
49 During your fall 2022 meeting you heard
50

0063

1 about the Caribou and Ungulate Conference taking place
2 in Anchorage this May.

3
4 All Councils nominated one member to
5 attend the conference and provide input on Alaska
6 Ungulate Management Symposium. An informational flyer,
7 as you stated can be found about this conference no
8 Page 16 of your meeting books.

9
10 Before I proceed would any Council
11 members like an overview of the conference?

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 MR. UBELAKER: Moving on.

16
17 On Page 17 of the meeting books please
18 find a summary of all potential topics suggested by the
19 Councils for discussion during the State and Federal
20 Ungulate Management in Alaska Symposium.

21
22 This session is intended to be a
23 neutral forum for Council members, State Fish and Game
24 Advisory Committee members, National Park Service,
25 Subsistence Resource Commission members, Federal and
26 State agency Staff and other interested parties to
27 discuss ungulate management in Alaska, specifically
28 regarding harvest regulations.

29
30 During the fall 2022 meeting cycle all
31 Councils provided input on potential topics to discuss
32 during this symposium. Several Councils asked for a
33 follow-up summary list during these winter meetings.
34 Councils are now being asked to review the list and
35 provide additional feedback for this symposium such as
36 highlighting topics of particular interest or providing
37 clarification on topics.

38
39 OSM Staff will then decide which topics
40 will be discussed during the symposium based on
41 feedback from all 10 Councils, prioritizing topics that
42 are relevant statewide and applicable to all regions
43 and Councils.

44
45 Now, Mr. Chair, I'll turn the
46 discussion over to you. Any additional feedback will
47 be very helpful in finalizing the discussion topics for
48 the symposium.

49
50

0064

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Darrell is going
2 to attend that meeting as well as I. Darrell will
3 attend for the Regional Council and then I sit on the
4 Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and
5 I will be attending for the Gates of the Arctic
6 Subsistence Resource Commission so I will be there but
7 I will under that aspect.

8
9 So did you have any comments on these
10 finalized potential topics.

11
12 Go ahead, Darrell.

13
14 MR. VENT: Yeah, you know, I'm curious
15 of who's going to be attending in the Northwest area.
16 I think they had some information like up at -- I was
17 up in Anaktuvuk and they were talking about caribou and
18 they had to go all the way up to Nuiqsut in order to
19 get caribou because their migration pattern was
20 diverted, and I'm assuming that that's the same thing
21 that's happening in the Northwest area. They're being
22 diverted by the hunt. There's too many hunters and
23 when I was talking about the bulls, I think they're
24 being affected and it's causing more predation and so,
25 you know, people are pointing fingers and saying it's
26 the low count of females, it's -- it's not -- you know
27 the overall problem is we're getting too many bulls
28 taken out of there and we need to address some of
29 these problems and stop pointing fingers and start
30 working with the animals. Because if you look at the
31 way that it's being diverted, there's a lot of hunting
32 pressure that's going on in certain areas and people
33 that usually hunt in these other areas they're getting
34 their caribou late now. So there's, you know, issues
35 that need to be brought up when it comes to how the
36 hunting pressure on caribou is being done up there.

37
38 Those are some of the problems that I
39 think that we're going to have to start to address.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those would be
42 under herd composition discussion which I'm sure will
43 take place at that meeting. It's just part of the
44 discussion.

45
46 Under Point 18, I'll state for the
47 record, harvest management strategies when caribou
48 populations are too high, showing signs of nutritional
49 stress. My opinion is this has become far too -- far
50

0065

1 too common with managers assuming that caribou
2 populations get high, nutritionally stressed with
3 winter feed lichens and that the populations decline.
4 And I will write a comment, an extensive comment under
5 ecology of caribou as that's absolutely wrong.
6 Agencies talk to themselves too much and they decide
7 that caribou -- the caribou nutritional stress showing
8 calf weights are restricted so we got to shoot the tar
9 out of them when the calf rates go down -- calf
10 weights. The reality is nutritional stress is not
11 specifically tied to winter habitat, lichen, because
12 caribou are a migratory species. And I told the
13 Department of Fish and Game several years ago, back in
14 2010, caribou used to have these huge migrations and
15 these trails are etched into the ground, Mulchatna has
16 caribou trails going all the way to Ruby and there's
17 elders in Ruby who talked extensively during the Gold
18 Rush of caribou swimming across the Yukon by the
19 thousands and thousands in the Gold Rush, those were
20 the Mulchatna Caribou, or the herd -- the herd used to
21 winter on the north edge of the Alaska Range, used to
22 go north of the Yukon River. In 200 -- correction,
23 1997, caribou Mulchatna went north of the Kuskokwim
24 River, the first time for decades, and went north of
25 McGrath and started utilizing the massive amounts of
26 lichen habitats but, oh, my gosh, they're getting too
27 many, we have to shoot the tar out of them. The
28 Department of Fish and Game allowed non-residents to
29 shoot five bull caribou -- there was dead caribou
30 laying everywhere, the mortalities were so high that
31 the bull/cow ratios went to 14 bulls per 100 cows with
32 one large bull per 100 cow causing a reproduction
33 failure in the herd and the herd declined dramatically.
34 And it took 10 years, 10 years for those young bulls to
35 recover to get back to 28 bulls per 100 cows.

36

37 That was mismanagement.

38

39 So this issue here I'm going to speak
40 extensively on because it's just a given that herd calf
41 weights decline because of range, calf weights decline
42 because of spring timing, they decline because of the
43 heat of the summer, over pollination of the flowers,
44 the wild flowers and their forbes and their pollens,
45 their protein sources go away, there's a lot of reasons
46 why calf weights go down, not just lichen quality on
47 calving grounds.

48

49 So this is a giant issue.

50

0066

1 Nelchina Herd declined from 55,000 in
2 2017 down to 17,000, oh, we just have to shoot the tar
3 out of them when they got light calf weights; yeah, you
4 just wiped the herd out, now they're below their
5 predator threshold, it's going to do just what
6 Mulchatna did, it's going to stagger because the herd
7 cannot -- it has to maintain enough animals to survive
8 various weather events. So the reality is this is just
9 a given, that caribou calf weights affect -- the
10 populations get too -- they haven't achieved their
11 population status that they historically have. The
12 Fortymile Herd has never achieved 500,000 to 250,000
13 that used to go north of the Yukon River into the
14 Kokrine and Ray Mountains to the Northwest, they used
15 to go into the Ogilvie Mountains to the north,
16 northeast, and they used to go all the way across the
17 White Mountains. Elders in Nenana told me that caribou
18 used to come off the hills at Nenana by the thousands
19 and go out to the west. Caribou used to have these
20 huge migration patterns that's not documented because
21 no one looks at the land stat to show where these
22 migrations actually occurred.

23
24 So this is a big deal.

25
26 We're wiping out caribou herds with
27 impunity in the urban access areas because the
28 assumption is that they're right, they're wrong, the
29 managers are wrong. They made the assumption
30 incorrectly. The peer review was incorrect, that the
31 herd calf weights decline because of range stressing,
32 that's -- no, that has to do with other factors, and we
33 got to enumerate those factors. And we have to know
34 where these caribou used to live.

35
36 That'll be one of my discussion topics
37 but I wanted it on the record because we're talking
38 about these various points here.

39
40 Darrell.

41
42 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just wanted to
43 mention one comment about that. There is what's called
44 hunting stress. When you hunt them too much they tend
45 to stress out and also predation stress. They have to
46 run away from predators and they have no time to eat
47 and so there's a lot of stress out there that's really
48 affecting them right now.

49
50

0067

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to
2 insert Topic 25, which would be analyzing historical
3 range use of caribou herds for migration from core
4 calving areas throughout the entire State of Alaska and
5 the Yukon Territory that we share caribou herds with.
6 That is not an issue that's been addressed, it's a giant
7 topic.

8
9 And Subject No. 26 will be reevaluating
10 what causes calf weight declines from nutritional
11 stress in summer, in late spring and other issues that
12 not necessarily have anything to do with lichen
13 availability.

14
15 So those would be the additions to the
16 list.

17
18 Any other comments.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got any other
23 comments Tom, or Tim, on the phone.

24
25 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim. I don't
26 have any comments.

27
28 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's doesn't
29 (indiscernible) I don't have a clue to what this guy
30 just talked about.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Whoever is talking
33 is clueless but your -- close your mic, we're looking
34 for Tom Kriska and Tim Gervais to speak to the -- we're
35 talking about an ungulate workshop that's going to
36 occur in early May and the list of topics that need to
37 be discussed. So Tim or Tom, are you on there.

38
39 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jack, this is Tim.
40 I'm on there, I don't have a comment on the caribou
41 issue right now.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom.

44
45 (Teleconference interference -
46 participants not muted)

47
48 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, this is Tom, I don't
49 really have a comment on there. I know that a lot of
50

0068

1 the hunting when the caribou are migrating and the
2 hunters get up in front of them, a lot of them get
3 diverted and then a lot of hunters.....

4
5 (Teleconference interference -
6 participants not muted)

7
8 MR. KRISKA:too many hunters
9 divert those caribou.

10
11 And there's someone on the background
12 that keeps talking that's not on mute and I can't hear
13 anything that you guys are saying. I don't know who
14 they are.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you're right,
17 Tom, I keep saying they have to -- people who are not
18 speaking push star, six, you keep bleeding into this
19 meeting. So if you called into this call push star,
20 six so we don't have to listen to you -- you're
21 bleeding over and disrupting this meeting.

22
23 So the caribou migration disruption is
24 one of the topics Tom, so we'll be discussing that at
25 the ungulate meeting also.

26
27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think that kind
31 of covers this issue for topics and it'll be a full
32 agenda and I'm not sure that it will actually all be
33 covered at the ungulate group -- work group, which
34 includes other species besides caribou, including dall
35 sheep.

36
37 So all right, thanks, Brian.

38
39 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to go
42 to Council correspondence update, Nissa.

43
44 MS. PILCHER: All right, good morning
45 everyone. Once again for the record Nissa Pilcher,
46 Council Coordinator.

47
48 So beginning on Page 18 of your meeting
49 books you will find copies of correspondence that have
50

0069

1 been sent since the fall meeting. There are four
2 letters -- there are not four letters included for your
3 reference -- sorry.

4
5 The first letter starts on Page 18 and
6 is a letter from your Council to the Bureau of Land
7 Management to resubmit all correspondence your Council
8 had previously submitted to BLM on the proposed Ambler
9 Mining District Industrial Access Road. If you guys
10 remember from the fall meeting they did reopen up the
11 comment period on that and your Council requested that
12 all previous correspondence be resubmitted to them.

13
14 The second letter is on Page 27, it's a
15 copy of the Council comments to the Board of Fisheries
16 proposals that was sent to them for both the Arctic,
17 Yukon, Kuskokwim meeting as well as the Alaska
18 Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, Chignik finfish meeting,
19 which is otherwise called -- sometimes called the Area
20 M meeting.

21
22 A third letter was drafted to go to the
23 Commissioner of ADF&G with concerns over the extreme
24 subsistence restrictions that were placed on the people
25 of the Kuskokwim River this last year but it was unable
26 to make it through OSM's internal review process fast
27 enough to be submitted during the AYK Board of Fish
28 meeting and was subsequently not sent so it is not
29 included in this book but it is an internal record --
30 it remains.

31
32 An additional letter that the Council
33 requested be drafted and sent to NOAA requesting they
34 conduct a full NEPA process on the Bering Sea ecosystem
35 to include freshwater environments has not been drafted
36 at this time. Member Whitworth was the member that
37 made that initial motion and he let me know through
38 email over correspondence that NOAA may be talking
39 about the revision of their EIS in February, so this
40 letter wasn't needed at this time so it has not been
41 drafted.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: I just kind of wanted to
46 make sure everybody knew I was doing what I was
47 supposed -- what you guys had asked me to do.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

50

0070

1 MS. PILCHER: So that does conclude my
2 update on Council correspondence. I'm happy to answer
3 any questions the Council may have about any of the
4 letters. And as a note there is going to be a
5 discussion later on in the meeting about the Council
6 correspondence policy with OSM. But that's further on
7 at a time certain tomorrow.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yes, any
10 comments of questions regarding the correspondence that
11 we dealt with this past -- from the last meeting.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim or Tom, you have
16 any questions or comments.

17
18 MR. GERVAIS: No, thank you, Jack.

19
20 MR. KRISKA: No.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, okay, thanks,
23 Tom. And discussion of hatchery fish, depletion of
24 trophic biomass of wild fish stocks, meeting handout,
25 where would we find that, is that in our packet here
26 or?

27
28 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, that's in the
29 manilla folder. That's the article that Tim had me
30 email out to everyone. This was an agenda topic he
31 wanted to add to the agenda.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So did you want to
34 speak to that further Tim.

35
36 MS. PILCHER: It should be the very top
37 one.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Oh, yes, this
40 article. Tim, are you there?

41
42 MR. GERVAIS: Jack -- Jack, I was
43 broken on what Nissa was saying, you want me to -- you
44 asked me if I wanted to comment regarding what?

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We kind of covered
47 the, you know, release -- the supplementary release of
48 hatchery fish and the article is basically, that may
49 cause over stress of the indigenous stocks. Did you
50

0071

1 want to comment further on that.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Not particularly. Just
4 that it's -- I thought it was good, some of the
5 research has started to show that the long time
6 management practice in the United States and other
7 parts of the world now people are starting to realize
8 that there's a lot of detrimental aspects to it. So I
9 would just encourage the Board members to try to learn
10 more on the topic and hopefully we can -- we can bring
11 more specifics to the Council and I think at this point
12 our action of write a letter to the Commissioner of
13 Fish and Game and Director of Commercial Fisheries and
14 see what kind of response we can get out of that, is
15 the appropriate step.

16

17 So I just encourage everybody, if they
18 haven't read it, to go over the document that Nissa
19 distributed on the hatchery fish and to realize it's a
20 big issue and it extends well -- it extends well beyond
21 the United States and one of the more serious aspect of
22 it is that this Council, or this State is not going to
23 -- they're not going to have much influence on what
24 these other countries do. Canada -- Canada, for
25 example, they've been really -- their department, or
26 whatever they -- I think it's DFO, Department of
27 Fisheries and Oceans, they are very defensive about
28 their farmed salmon program and so I don't -- I would
29 not expect any of these other countries to take much
30 corrective action if this is hatchery issue becomes
31 more vocal. I think it's going to be a problem that
32 we're going to have to deal with for a long, long time.
33 And I don't think even like Russia would not -- a lot
34 of that research is falling apart due to the diplomatic
35 problems with the war so I think like we're not going
36 to get good numbers from what they're doing with their
37 hatchery program.

38

39 So just have to realize it's an issue
40 and a lot of the issue we can't even have any bearing
41 on, about all we can make an influence on or attempt to
42 make influence on is what happens within the state.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I appreciate your
45 comments. So we'll include this various discussions
46 with that letter to the Commissioner of Fish and Game
47 and the Director of Commercial Fisheries.

48

49 I skipped over the Kanuti Complexing

50

0072

1 response. There's -- that's a time certain response by
2 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Brian Glaspell will be at
3 1:30 p.m., tomorrow, so right after lunch we're going
4 to have that discussion about complexing of Kanuti and
5 basically the complexing issue and the effects on
6 Refuge management and the affects on this Council,
7 which we wrote a letter regarding that to the U.S. Fish
8 and Wildlife Director this winter.

9
10 But that's time certain for Kanuti
11 Staff. That's time certain for tomorrow at 1:30, so
12 Joanna, Tina will be dealing with that at that time.

13
14 So that kind of covers our old
15 business, 11. We're coming up on new business. It's
16 12:00 o'clock. One hour for lunch would be good. We
17 have a lot of agenda, we got a lot of stuff to cover so
18 we don't have time for long, long lunch breaks and so
19 forth like the Board of Fish might do, or somebody else
20 might do, but not this Council. So we'll recess until
21 1 p.m., and come back online.

22
23 So Tim and Tom, if you could come back
24 we're going to be talking about discussion of the
25 results of the North Pacific Fisheries Management
26 Council and State bycatch task force. So that's the
27 next discussion topic under new business.

28
29 All right, have a great lunch.

30
31 (Off record)

32
33 (On record)

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So are you there,
36 Tim Gervais.

37
38 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I'm here.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Are you there
41 Tom Kriska.

42
43 MR. KRISKA: Yes. Yes, I'm here.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good. So we got
46 quorum back again. Darrell's still out. So we're
47 going to continue on to new business, discussion of the
48 results of the North Pacific Fisheries Management
49 Council and bycatch task force. And who's leading this
50

0073

1 discussion.....

2

3 MS. PILCHER: Tim.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:Tim, are you
6 going to give us discussion on this?

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello, Tim, are you
11 on mute?

12

13 MR. GERVAIS: What's the question,
14 Jack?

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on discussion
17 Item the results of the North Pacific Fisheries
18 Management Council and State bycatch task force.
19 That's the agenda item, A, under new business. Did you
20 want to have further discussion about that or where do
21 you want to go with that?

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I was hoping that
24 Kevin could give us a report about what happened with
25 the North Pacific Council task force but.....

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Standby one second.
28 Did you get a hold of.....

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: But this is not.....

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Standby there one
33 minute, Tim. did you get a hold of Kevin Whitworth at
34 all, is he responding or?

35

36 MS. PILCHER: (Shakes head negatively)

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, yeah, he's not
39 available so continue, go ahead.

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: That's fine. So talking
42 -- I talked with a couple members on the State of
43 Alaska bycatch task force and they -- they well, make a
44 long story short, just kind of -- they just want to --
45 they just kind of want it to be business as usual for
46 them -- for the trawl fleet. They really l don't want
47 to slow down or effect their production in fishing time
48 very much and so it's not going to -- it's not going to
49 yield the results that we were hopeful about. And I

50

0074

1 think it's just like -- it's turned into just like a --
2 (indiscernible) the State taking some action regarding
3 and putting out more information but as far as like
4 regulating the -- regulating or restricting the causes
5 of the bycatch, they're not looking to take for
6 definitive action on that unfortunately.

7

8 Because apparently the trawl fleet
9 lobbyist are too strong, we can't get the political
10 will to get any meaningful change out of that at this
11 time.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that was the
14 State's task force that came to that conclusion, Tim?

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question, Tim, that
19 was the State's task force you were referring to?

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Yes, State of Alaska
22 task force.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: It'll just -- it'll be
27 more efficient if we can get it from Kevin at our
28 winter meeting, he could just cover the North Pacific
29 Council meeting then, but I didn't see any -- from what
30 I reviewed on the North Pacific Fisheries Management
31 Council task force it didn't result in any meaningful
32 change in the harvest regime.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's really
35 frustrating for both management bodies, the State Board
36 of Fish, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
37 to take all that testimony about the hardship of salmon
38 returns not coming back and not coming up with some way
39 to avoid -- which I've heard no discussion, yet, about
40 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council could
41 put depth restrictions on that gear, that trawl gear,
42 it just can't be down on the bottom because what
43 happened -- the warm water moved into the Bering Sea in
44 2019 and all of the stocks, all salmon stocks were
45 trying to avoid that warm water, and they all
46 compressed into the cooler pools and so they just let
47 the trawl fleet drag right through there and suck up
48 all the crabs, suck up all -- the bycatch on these warm
49 water years goes way up on chum salmon because they've

50

0075

1 gone down into those cooler pools, it's like move the
2 fleet, move the fleet up, they've got bathymetric
3 monitors on that gear, they could move that up.

4

5 Did you hear any discussion like that
6 Tim, at all?

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question for you
11 there, Tim?

12

13 MR. GERVAIS: I didn't hear that --
14 but, no, from what I saw I didn't see any restrictions
15 in that depth -- depth specific fishing thing. And
16 they're not going to go for it because there's a lot of
17 trawl industry people on the task force and they don't
18 want their harvesting to be restricted by that. It's
19 just the nature of -- the North Pacific Council is
20 entrenched with the trawl industry and to them salmon
21 is -- isn't really a resource, it's just a nuisance to
22 the fleet that they have to work around and have some
23 kind of observation measures for but they're not --
24 they're not on board with taking responsibility for
25 trying to adjust their harvesting methods so that
26 they're not as impactful on the salmon species.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: It's just the way it is.
31 I mean it's -- we know historically trawling has been
32 detrimental for decades in several parts of the world
33 and they don't want to slow it down now because some
34 companies -- some of the process companies and some of
35 the fishing companies make huge amounts of money doing
36 this and they want to make sure that they lobby hard to
37 be able to continue to do business as usual.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So at this point we
40 -- I would like to know what information Kevin has but
41 he's not responding. He was in Fairbanks for the
42 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission -- or
43 correction, in Anchorage here for the InterTribal Fish
44 Commission meeting in conjunction with the North
45 Pacific Fisheries Management Council but apparently
46 being director he's got bigger fish to fry and so at
47 some point we'll get his impressions as a Council
48 member but that's not going to happen today apparently.

49

50

0076

1 So that's enough discourse on that
2 issue right now.

3
4 I want to move into B, regional
5 wildlife reports.....

6
7 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

10
11 MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you. For the
12 record this is Jim Simon. I'm a consultant with the
13 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission. And,
14 yeah, it's unfortunate that Kevin doesn't have a clone
15 because he is attending the North Pacific Fisheries
16 Management Council meeting that also started today and
17 is sitting on the new Salmon Bycatch Committee
18 established to provide advice to the North Pacific
19 Fisheries Management Council. There have been -- has
20 been movement forward in getting Staff to develop
21 recommendations for evaluating information as to
22 whether or not a chums bycatch limits could be put into
23 place. I'm not up to speed on that personally, on
24 where that is but I know that that is a high priority
25 for the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission and then
26 that annual meeting begins tomorrow and goes through
27 the 6th of April.

28
29 There is also a listening session that
30 Congresswoman Peltola will be hosting at the Anchorage
31 Hilton, which is where the North Pacific Fisheries
32 Management Council is being held and that will be from
33 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., a listening session with our
34 Congresswoman about bycatch issues and other concerns
35 with the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

36
37 Sorry, that's all I have for you at
38 this time on Kevin Whitworth's behalf.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we really
43 appreciate that Jim. That's very necessary information
44 for this Council to be aware of. You know we're sort
45 of in the dark about what's actually going on over
46 there. I am, me, personally. And so I would like the
47 bycatch work group, if you could make a couple notes to
48 convey over to Kevin, the bycatch has to look at how
49 deep the trawl gear is going and where the majority of
50

0077

1 bycatch for chum and chinook is occurring. You know
2 they could move that gear up off the bottom, it would
3 be more -- so there's a temperature -- salmon are
4 temperature reliant and so there's a temp -- they've
5 got thermometers on that gear, they got depth sounding
6 equipment on it, they could move that gear up to where
7 they would vastly reduce the salmon bycatch. So depth
8 and temperature should be a huge part of the discussion
9 for the salmon bycatch work group.

10

11 If you could convey my comment over to
12 Kevin I would appreciate that because he's kind of
13 incommunicado but -- are you in Anchorage right now,
14 Jim?

15

16 MR. SIMON: No, I am in Salcha headed
17 to Anchorage later during this meeting.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So if you
20 could just -- if you could convey my concerns that
21 there's not enough thinking outside of the box going on
22 with this work group stuff.

23

24 So, okay, that kind of covers that
25 topic.

26

27 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair. I'll do that.
28 I do understand that that fishery is considered a mid-
29 water trawl but that recent information demonstrates
30 that something like 80 percent of the time it is
31 hitting the bottom. So I do know there are others who
32 are working on that as long as -- you know, the Tanana
33 Chiefs Conference, Kawerak, AVCP, as well as the Yukon
34 River InterTribal Fish Commission all working with the
35 tribal consortium trying to have a unified approach to
36 addressing some of these issues. I don't Staff that
37 group personally but I will endeavor to relay your
38 request to Kevin Whitworth.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, appreciate
43 that. I'm glad that other groups are working on that
44 issue. But the depth and temperature are a big part of
45 this problem. The warmer the water got, the deeper the
46 chums went and the higher the bycatches went. So they
47 need to move -- and the pollock come off the bottom at
48 night and they'll actually come up out of those zones
49 so they need to disallow them from getting down on the
50

0078

1 bottom and the crab fleet will be really happy about
2 that also. There's a bunch of different user groups
3 that are really annoyed with the kind of bycatch that's
4 been incurred in these warm water years.

5

6 So thank you so much on that.

7

8 We're going to move to new business B.
9 Regional wildlife reports, Kyle Joly, National Park
10 Service may have a presentation, have not received it
11 as of the creation of this version of the agenda. Are
12 you on the phone there Kyle Joly?

13

14 MR. JOLY: Mr. Chairman, this is Kyle
15 Joly, can you hear me okay?

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you good
18 now, go ahead.

19

20 MR. JOLY: Great, thank you. Yeah, I
21 was asked to provide an update on the Western Arctic
22 Herd. I'm prepared to do that. I have given slides to
23 Nissa and I don't know if she's prepared to show those.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The slide is up on
26 our screen so we're on the first page, Western Arctic
27 Herd update. It's got some nice people looking at
28 caribou there.

29

30 MR. JOLY: Great, thanks. I'll just
31 say next slide as we move through. For those on the
32 phone, I apologize, I was out in the field, but Nissa
33 did send it to the other Council members.

34

35 So next slide.

36

37 So this is a graphic of the Western
38 Arctic Herd population size up to 2019.

39

40 Next slide.

41

42 So the thing I want to point out here
43 is the similarities between 2019 and 1970, almost
44 identical population sizes, both on the downward trend.
45 For people who are not familiar the decline between
46 1970 and 1976 was very dramatic and it's still very
47 much a part of people's thoughts because harvest
48 regulations changed dramatically and ended up being one
49 bull per household which many people are still angry

50

0079

1 about.

2

3

Next slide, Slide 4.

4

5

6 So here is the next two population
7 estimates added to the slide. It's 188,000 in 2021,
8 164,000 in 2022. I've colored the last one yellow to
9 note that it's the most current estimate and also that
10 yellow is the color of preservative management in the
11 Western Arctic Herd Working Group's management plan and
12 that's currently the management level that we are at.

12

13

Next slide, Slide 5.

14

15

16 Just a quick note that we've been on
17 about a 12 percent decline per year over the last few
18 years.

18

19

Next slide.

20

21

22 This shows you where we'd be if we
23 continue on that same downward trend of about 12
24 percent. That red dot is 124,000 animals in 2024.
25 That's when regulations could change through regulatory
26 cycles both on the State and Federal side. We would be
27 under critical management in the working group's plan
28 at 124,000.

28

29

30 Feel free to interrupt at any time if
31 you have questions. I'm going to keep going otherwise.

31

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Keep going, we're
34 following along. Thank you.

34

35

36 MR. JOLY: Great. Okay, next slide,
37 Slide 7.

37

38

39 This just shows the population trend
40 and bringing you back again to 1970 where we had a
41 similar type of situation, people wonder, you know, can
42 we keep going down with the Western Arctic Herd, my
43 guess is that, you know, we're just not sure but we
44 have seen it in the past. We have gone down all the
45 way down to 75,000 animals back in 1976.

45

46

So the next slide, Slide 8.

47

48

49 This is a busy slide but usually the
50 question comes, why is the herd declining. The best

50

0080

1 answer is no one really knows for sure but this slide
2 does show that there are linkages between the climate
3 and so this black line where it says herd size, it's
4 the same black line that goes up and down so that's the
5 population trend. You'll notice that in the years
6 where what is known as the Pacific decadal oscillation,
7 those are the colored bars on there below the line,
8 that's called the negative phase when the herd tends to
9 decline and when the bars are above that median line
10 the herd tends to increase and we've seen that cycle
11 after cycle. The information on the right is just to
12 show you through surveys and indigenous reports and
13 historic reports we have documented that the Western
14 Arctic Herd has gone through these cycles for at least
15 150 years, probably thousands of years, and these
16 cycles have coincided as far back as we have
17 information on the Pacific decadal oscillation.

18

19 Next slide, please.

20

21 So here -- I was told that you wanted
22 some information that was presented at the Northwest
23 Arctic RAC and so this is some information that Alex
24 Hansen provided. He is out currently deploying collars
25 with my colleague Matt Cameron so he wasn't able to
26 come.

27

28 So one of the pieces of information
29 that helps us understand where the herd is going is
30 calving or what we call parturition rates so how many
31 cows have calves. So on average, the long-term average
32 is about 70 percent of females give birth each year.
33 The last few years it's been low. The last three years
34 it's been 66 percent. And so people were wondering if
35 that might be a root cause.

36

37 Next slide, Slide 10.

38

39 But it doesn't appear to be because the
40 highest five year period of calving rates was 83
41 percent and that was between 2015 and 2019. This is
42 the highest ever since Fish and Game started tracking
43 in 1992. So calving doesn't seem to be the driver of
44 what's going on in the decline.

45

46 The other bit of information that gets
47 collected is recruitment, or the proportion of short-
48 yearlings so animals that are coming up on a year of
49 age. This number has been above or at average for the

50

0081

1 last seven years so it doesn't appear that recruitment
2 is a critical issue at this point.

3

4 Next slide, Slide 12.

5

6 This is where I think we're getting
7 into the meat of what's going on with the caribou
8 decline. They track survival of adult females and it's
9 been below average 12 of the last 17 years, and that's
10 concurrent with the decline since 2013.

11

12 So next slide, Slide 13.

13

14 I just want to bring everyone back to
15 2007, that's when we first had a major decline in the
16 population census. It dropped off the high of 490,000
17 to 377,000. At that time some people were thinking, or
18 possibly hoping that, you know, this was a blip, it was
19 a one time decline but knowing that these large herds
20 like the Western Arctic Herd tend to oscillate, we were
21 wondering if this might be the start of one of those
22 down cycles and so we launched an investigation with
23 the help of Alex Prichard.

24

25 Next slide, Slide 14.

26

27 Alex works for ABR, it's a researching
28 firm out of Fairbanks, and he developed a population
29 model for the herd and he published that report back in
30 2009.

31

32 Next slide, Slide 15.

33

34 Some of the key takeaways of this
35 report was that we thought that the herd would continue
36 to decline in the near future. The scenario that we
37 thought most probable turned out to be quite accurate.
38 The estimate in 2018 was 246,000 using the population
39 model and the photo census in 2019 turned up 244,000.
40 In the years intervening the model hasn't predicted as
41 much of decline that has continued so it was not quite
42 -- it was a little more conservative than the actual
43 decline. The other key findings was that adult
44 survival had the largest impact on population size and
45 we needed a more than three percent increase in adult
46 survival to stabilize the population. And, lastly, the
47 percentage of cow harvest can greatly impact the
48 harvest -- or excuse me, the population trajectory.

49

50

0082

1 Next slide, Slide 16.

2

3

4 So harvest is where we have the most
5 ability to effect change. Obviously we have very
6 little effect on things like climate, habitat, but
7 hunting is where we can effect change. So one of the
8 things that we've been talking about is trying to
9 reduce overall harvest, but also the harvest of cows.
10 One thing to think about is that, you know, the same
11 number of people out on the landscape want to harvest
12 the same amount of caribou but as the herd decreases,
13 that same number, absolute number of animals harvested
14 turns into a larger and larger percentage of the herd
15 being harvested. So as the herd declines we have to be
16 more and more cautious about harvest.

16

17 Next slide, Slide 17.

18

19

20 Obviously this is a very important
21 subject. There's over a million pounds of meat
22 harvested annually out of the herd. When the herd was
23 at its largest extent, over 40 villages used the herd
24 for subsistence purposes, but the herd's range is now
25 shrinking.

25

26 Next slide, Slide 18.

27

28

29 So this is a slide to try and get
30 people to think. It's kind of a then and now. You
31 know we think about the decline in the '70s and the
32 decline that we're facing now and, you know, what's
33 changed between those time periods. And I would argue
34 almost everything has. Obviously, you know, our
35 machines have gotten stronger and faster, more
36 reliable. One of the things I think is kind of
37 underrated is that picture of the telephone and
38 Facebook. Back in the day a hunter would need to go
39 out, he would successfully harvest, he would come back
40 a few days later, he may or may not find someone in the
41 village with a phone, that person might talk to
42 somebody else, one of the few people that had a phone
43 in the village and then those people would have to go
44 out a few days and get their caribou. So it was a
45 fairly slow process of getting the word out. But
46 nowadays with satellite communications, people can
47 successfully harvest and people know almost
48 immediately. The other one has been talked about is
49 competition, kind of that bottom picture. There was a
50 lot less competition in the '70s. The photo in the

50

0083

1 bottom right there, it might be hard to see, but
2 there's actually six boats going after one group of
3 caribou.

4

5 So I'm going to switch now to Slide 19
6 and move away from demographics and talk about
7 distribution, migrations and movements.

8

9 So caribou have the longest terrestrial
10 migrations on the planet. They're twice as long as the
11 famed wildebeest zebra migrations in the Serengeti. At
12 the peak of the Western Arctic Herd's population they
13 had the longest migrations of any caribou herd on the
14 planet, almost a thousand miles long. Caribou are on
15 the move almost all the time and in 10 years a caribou,
16 if it walked a straight line could cover the distance
17 enough to circle the globe. Some animals that live
18 long enough could do it twice in a lifetime.

19

20 The next slide is Slide 20.

21

22 It is a review of our last year of
23 work, which we have an annual report for. So our work
24 here is run from September to August, so that is
25 September 2021 through August 2022. We were able to
26 put out 33 GPS collars. They were all put out with net
27 guns. We've given up at Onion Portage. It's just not
28 been a reliable place to go catch caribou anymore which
29 is quite striking after 40 years of deploying collars
30 there. A lot of change, especially in the winter range
31 use and that has affected a lot of people. There's
32 zero percent in BELA, BELA is the short name for Bering
33 LandBridge so the northern Seward Peninsula. It's been
34 four years up to August 2022, years in a row where no
35 caribou -- no collared caribou have gone out to that
36 Preserve. This year it doesn't look like any are going
37 to make it so it'll be five years in a row. And that's
38 a pretty striking change. Just six, seven years ago we
39 had as many as 75 percent of our collars going out to
40 Bering LandBridge. On the flip side we had 42 percent
41 of our collars end up in KOVA, which is an acronym for
42 Kobuk Valley National Park so that's along the Kobuk
43 down stream of Ambler. The first eight years that we
44 had GPS collars out we didn't have a single animal
45 winter in the Park, this year the winter of '21/22 we
46 had 42 percent and that's 40 times the average so on
47 average we've had about one percent of our collars out
48 there. We also had record use of Kobuk Valley in the
49 fall.

50

0084

1 Next slide is 21.

2

3

4 So this is the annual range for that
5 same time period. You can see that the use was heavily
6 focused on the area around the villages of Kobuk,
7 Shungnak, Ambler. They spent the whole winter there.
8 We deployed collars there last spring and there was
9 animals literally in the village of Kobuk at times.

10

11 Next slide is Slide 22.

12

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0085

1 percent of animals that we have collared that cross the
2 Kobuk River. For years it was about 82 percent. We
3 thought that was kind of normal, there would always be
4 some animals that stayed up on the North Slope for the
5 winter but it seemed like 80-so percent coming across
6 the Kobuk River is what we thought of as normal. And
7 then starting in 2016 to 2020 there was a really big
8 change and it's only about 34 percent of the animals
9 were crossing with a low of six percent in 2020.

10
11 2021 it did bounce back a bit. It was
12 73 percent of the animals crossed but only 10 percent
13 of the animals made it across the Selawik River, which
14 is the next river to the south. So while there was a
15 decent amount of animals that migrated, they didn't
16 migrate very far south. Besides migrating -- less
17 migration, caribou are also migrating later.

18
19 We'll go to Slide 27.

20
21 And we'll go to Slide 28.

22
23 So in 2010, which is when we first had
24 GPS data it was pretty common for animals to cross in
25 late August, the first animals to cross the Kobuk River
26 in late August, and people were thinking that even by
27 2010 that the migration seemed like it was a little bit
28 late but jump forward just 10 years.

29
30 Next slide.

31
32 The first caribou that crossed the
33 Kobuk River in 2020 was November 2nd. So a full two
34 months, plus, more late with the migration. And that
35 has had really strong impacts.

36
37 Next slide.

38
39 Especially on the hunting.

40
41 Slide 30.

42
43 So with these late migrations, hunting
44 on the Kobuk River and some of the other bigger rivers
45 hunters like to focus on big fat bulls and that's good.
46 It's less impact on the population, you know, the
47 females are the ones carrying the young, the next
48 generation, and they're a polygamist species, which
49 means that bulls are able to fertilize a lot of cows.

50

0086

1 One bull can fertilize a lot of cows so harvesting of
2 individual bulls is less impactful than harvesting
3 cows. You know with these late migrations the bulls
4 get into the rut and their meat becomes stinky, as you
5 know, and so people switch to cows. Besides the cows
6 being the birth engine for the herd, they also have
7 less meat, they're much smaller than bulls and so you
8 need to harvest more cows to get the same amount of
9 meat as you would if you were harvesting these large
10 bulls.

11

12 Next slide.

13

14 So this is looking at the timing of
15 crossing the Kobuk River. This is the average time
16 that collars [sic] are crossing. You'll notice the
17 last five years have been the latest five years so
18 we're definitely seeing a change and they're coming
19 much later.

20

21 Next slide is Slide 32.

22

23 This is the same slide that I've added
24 when the first animals cross the Kobuk River and you
25 can see there's a fairly dramatic shift from the early
26 years, 2010/2011 which isn't that long ago to what
27 we're seeing now is much, much later caribou migrations
28 in the fall.

29

30 The next slide is Slide 33.

31

32 This is that same graphic but looking
33 at when the animals are crossing the Selawik River
34 moving north in their spring migration. There isn't
35 really a strong pattern. 2012/2013 were late springs,
36 deep snow and I think that slowed them down quite a
37 bit. But besides that there isn't a whole lot of
38 pattern that I'm seeing there and I think that's
39 because caribou really want to get to the calving
40 grounds and so they'll move out as best they can
41 regardless of conditions so you don't see as much
42 impact on the trends there.

43

44 Slide 34.

45

46 I throw this in, this is the movements
47 in September, so these white squiggly lines are
48 individual caribou and how they move during September
49 which is the sport hunting season. You know looking at

50

0087

1 this I'm not seeing real large barriers of movement
2 during this season. We did conduct a study that was
3 published back in 2016 looking at potential impacts of
4 sporthunters on the distribution of -- on the migratory
5 movements of caribou and our study found that we
6 couldn't find large scale impacts on migration by the
7 sporthunting activities but, you know, the caveat is
8 that our data is somewhat coarse. We're collecting GPS
9 locations every eight hours so if an animal was
10 deflected, delayed for say 16 hours and moved just a
11 couple miles down stream that would obviously ruin some
12 individual subsistence hunter's hunt but it wouldn't
13 show up on our analysis.

14

15 Next slide is 35.

16

17 So one place that we have distinctly
18 noticed a barrier effect is the Red Dog Road. That's
19 that black line kind of running from southwest to
20 northeast from the port site to the mine site. We have
21 a paper out on this as well documenting significant
22 impacts of delaying migration. That was published back
23 in 2016. This movement data that you're seeing here,
24 the red dots of where they were in November and the
25 greenish lines are their movement path and you can see
26 that they really got stuck at the road, a lot of them
27 were delayed, a lot of them were deflected. Of these
28 10 collared animals, two eventually were able to cross
29 the road and they wintered down south of the Kobuk,
30 they both survived the winter and the rest of the year.
31 Of the eight that stayed north of the road, didn't make
32 it across the road, only 62 percent survived.

33

34 Next slide is Slide 36.

35

36 I just want to quickly run through a
37 bunch of publications and products that have come out
38 recently. So this first one here is documenting
39 vegetation change. I just pulled up the lichen cover
40 map but they have it for shrubs and trees. This was
41 done by Matt Mekander of ABR and you can see here this
42 is a zoom in of just the Seward Peninsula region where
43 the caribou had been spending a lot of time up until
44 about five years ago and you could see some rather
45 substantial declines in lichen abundance, lichen cover
46 specifically and, you know, in many places 10 to 20
47 percent reduction in cover which tend to mean the
48 difference between really good winter range and not
49 very good winter range.

50

0088

1 Next slide, Slide 37.

2

3

4 So this was a paper that was led by my
5 colleague Matt Cameron for his PhD thesis. Basically
6 we wanted to quantify what many subsistence hunters
7 already knew which is what are the factors that help
8 start off fall migrations, what drives them on their
9 fall migration and you all know this, but we were able
10 to quantify it accumulating snow and cold temperatures
11 in the fall tend to get caribou moving on their fall
12 migrations.

12

13 Next slide, 38.

14

15

16 This next paper is called caribou and
17 reindeer migrations in the changing Arctic. So it's
18 just a review paper looking across the entire Arctic
19 and what factors are influencing changes in migrations
20 and obviously there's a whole lot of different things
21 that are impacting them, weather, population size
22 development, disturbance, habitat, all sorts of
23 different things. All these papers are publicly
24 available, I can send them to you, we also have these
25 links which have very short public versions to give you
26 an overview to see if you're interested in them. And
27 either I can send them to you or you can request Nissa
28 to get them from me and we can send them to you through
29 her.

29

30 Next slide is Slide 39.

31

32

33 I was asked to do a paper for a journal
34 that's specifically for younger folks, so middle age --
35 middle school aged kids, so sixth, seventh, eighth and
36 ninth graders is the target audience. And so we wrote
37 up a paper looking at the effects of climate on caribou
38 population oscillations.

38

39 Next slide is Slide 40.

40

41

42 This paper came out in December and
43 basically we know, especially like when we were at
44 Onion Portage when we put out all the collars in one
45 place at one time, that they don't really represent the
46 herd, they were just, you know, all in that one same
47 spot. And we were wondering when could they be
48 considered mixed up with the rest of the herd. And
49 initially we thought we'd have to wait until like
50 insect aggregations when the whole herd gets together

50

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1 kind of in early, mid-July, but we were able to figure
2 out a new analysis technique and we learned that even
3 by calving, the cows are all randomly distributed and
4 that helped us increase our sample size for a number of
5 different things so that was really helpful for us.

6
7 The next slide is Slide 41.

8
9 It's the last article. This one just
10 came out about a month ago. It's a paper on trying to
11 better map rain on snow or icing events and so we were
12 able to combine a couple different techniques and
13 better identify where icing is going on across the
14 Arctic but specifically in Alaska. So that is -- that
15 paper, and it's also again publicly available.

16
17 Next slide is Slide 42.

18
19 It's probably hard to see but there's
20 tens of thousands of caribou in this picture and that's
21 what everyone wants. Everyone wants lots and lots of
22 caribou out there. You know the Western Arctic Herd
23 reached 500,000, others have reached a million, some of
24 those herds are now in extended low periods. Jack had
25 mentioned some of them, one of them is the Mulchatna
26 Herd had hit 200,000 and is now been in the extended
27 low period. So, you know, my thoughts are, you know,
28 we have to all work together to try and avoid those
29 types of situations so we give the herd the best chance
30 to rebound.

31
32 Next slide.

33
34 So I've thrown a lot of information at
35 you. There's obviously a lot more. I've thrown up a
36 couple web pages that might be helpful and it includes
37 all our publications from our program.

38
39 The next slide is Slide 44.

40
41 We were just talking about this before
42 the lunch break but we have a great opportunity to
43 learn and share information coming up, North American
44 Caribou Work Shop. It hasn't been in the state of
45 Alaska since the 2004 and it was 20 years before that
46 one that the previous one was so it's a pretty rare
47 opportunity. There's about 500 people who are already
48 coming to the conference. There's going to be 170
49 different talks from caribou, reindeer, muskox experts
50

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1 from across the country but across the world. There's
2 people from 10 different countries attending the
3 conference. So if you are interested in learning or
4 sharing information about caribou and muskox this would
5 be a great opportunity to do it.

6
7 And then my last slide, Slide 45.

8
9 I'd be happy to take any questions
10 before you guys run off.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much Kyle.
13 And do the Council members have questions or comments.

14
15 Darrell.

16
17 MR. VENT: Yeah, this is correlated
18 with the hunters. When the caribou, you know, didn't
19 cross that road, is there any information why they
20 didn't cross the road?

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kyle.

23
24 MR. JOLY: That's a great question.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

27
28 MR. JOLY: Go ahead?

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

31
32 MR. JOLY: Oh, okay. Yeah, no, that's
33 a great question. Right now all we know is that the
34 animals are getting deflected and delayed around the
35 road. We are not sure whether it's traffic, hunters
36 off the road, changed habitat near the road because of
37 road dust, noise, there's all sorts of different
38 possibilities that could be impacting caribou movements
39 in that area and we don't know specifically what that
40 is. Our goal is to continue to study the situation so
41 we can hopefully identify what some of those root
42 causes are so we can try and mitigate the impacts.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment to that
45 Kyle and Darrell, is I live on the Haul Road. The
46 Porcupine Caribou Herd has been trying to cross that
47 Haul Road for five years. When they come near the road
48 they see all those headlights going back and forth,
49 back and forth and what the caribou -- in the caribou's
50

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1 mind headlights mean SnoGos patrolling back and forth
2 and they get chased down. The SnoGos, they don't want
3 to go near them. So that analysis should incorporate
4 does the Red Dog Mine actually have trucks with
5 headlights on, that's a big issue in a caribou's mind.
6

7 Just the noise of vehicles, that's
8 another thing. They get hunted with a snowmachine,
9 they don't want to -- is there high pitch noises, is
10 there times when the caribou come near the road and
11 they could just stop the traffic, they don't have to
12 haul material everyday. Once the herd starts across
13 and it's a refuted issue, the lead cows, once they lay
14 down those scent trails to cross the road you can't
15 stop them from coming. Then you're going to have to
16 make sure the trucks don't run over the caribou
17 crossing the road.

18
19 So there's some issues with this road
20 thing.
21

22 The Porcupine Herd is very reluctant to
23 cross the Dalton Highway for years now. They're
24 working up their courage and so eventually they will.
25 But once they come across they'll be thousands that
26 cross following the lead cows. And this lead cow
27 thing, I've told the agencies, you need to go out and
28 collar some leaders, don't just collar caribou
29 randomly, you need to collar leaders because they have
30 a dominant scent and other caribou follow them. I have
31 my opinions about stuff.
32

33 So does that answer your question,
34 Darrell?
35

36 MR. VENT: Well, it answers part of it.
37 I remember, you know, these migration patterns, they
38 used to have a big migration pattern down in Central,
39 what they call the Central Herd, and once that Pipeline
40 Road went in it really drastically dropped the numbers
41 coming in to our area because we don't have the fall
42 caribou no more. We used to have quite a bit. But now
43 it's a whole different. You know they only got two
44 paths and if they put a road in further over on the
45 north side -- northwest side it's going to make it even
46 more -- more dramatic -- more drastic cuts on our
47 taking of caribou. So that's one of the reasons, you
48 know, we're really worried there.
49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So other questions,
2 Darrell or Jenny.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim or Tommy, are
7 you on the phone and have questions on this caribou
8 presentations.

9
10 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack, this is.....

11
12 MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

13
14 MR. GERVAIS: Go ahead, Tommy.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead Tommy. I
17 hear Tommy there, go ahead.

18
19 MR. KRISKA: Okay. Anyway my thing was
20 if those caribou are having a hard time crossing the
21 roads -- my question to the Fish and Game guy there do
22 they hunt on both sides of the road or just the one?

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kyle, do you want to
25 answer that?

26
27 MR. JOLY: Yeah, for the record this is
28 Kyle Joly. I'm with the National Park Service. So we
29 -- I know that people are hunting off the road, I do
30 not have information if they're hunting off both sides
31 of the road but that's something we should be looking
32 into for sure.

33
34 MR. KRISKA: I -- this is Tom. I think
35 that if anything, you know, just like hunting anything,
36 if there's something out there they're going to turn
37 away or they're going to save themselves. So I think
38 that what they should change is the regulations, the
39 oncoming, if they're coming from the left to the right
40 crossing the road they should let them cross the road
41 and hunt only on the other side of the road. Let them
42 cross the road first instead of deflecting them out,
43 or, you know, making them go a different way before
44 they get to that road. I mean it's like the road
45 itself out there, wherever their perimeter of hunting
46 is, they're going to run into that and they're going to
47 be going off and maybe they have certain path, and if
48 they get deflected off their path and then they're
49 going to get -- like anything else they're going to
50

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1 regroup and -- I don't know.

2

3 It's just that I think that they should
4 be -- let them get to the road and cross the road and
5 only hunt on the other side of the road. There's a
6 chance to get something but that -- that's just me. I
7 think.....

8

9 (Dog barking)

10

11 MR. KRISKA: Shut up. That's my dog.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MR. KRISKA: He arguing for the
16 attention.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 MR. KRISKA: Hey, you knock it off, you
21 sit.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 MR. KRISKA: Sorry. He's thinking
26 about this caribou, I guess. He's trying to argue his
27 point.

28

29 (Laughter)

30

31 MR. KRISKA: But I say hunt on the
32 opposite of the road. Once they cross go ahead and
33 hunt but before they get to the road kind of rules and
34 regulations.

35

36 Okay, thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I actually agree
39 with you, Tommy, that managers are going to have to get
40 it through their head, there are lead cows that lead
41 migrations. Once those leaders go across the road then
42 the rest of the caribou want to follow them, so
43 protecting the lead cows when they get near the road
44 and basically reducing the traffic so that the cows
45 will go across the road then the hunting should only
46 occur on the down stream side of the road so that the
47 harvest does not continue to deflect the caribou away
48 from the road so that the caribou will continue to
49 cross. It's the way the management's going to have to

50

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1 be. If they build the Ambler Road this is what the
2 managers are going to have to go to.

3
4 So I do agree with you that there needs
5 to be a recognition that there are lead animals, the
6 lead migration and that there has to be somewhat
7 controls on traffic when there's large herds that want
8 to migrate. Large herds want to migrate, small herds
9 don't go anywheres. That's just the way caribou work.

10
11 So any other comments, Tommy, on that.

12
13 MR. KRISKA: Yes, I have one more.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

16
17 MR. KRISKA: It's just like hunting
18 anything else. When you're hunting wolves --
19 everything has a leader regardless of what they are.
20 The -- just like hunting wolves or trapping wolves, you
21 catch the leader then all the rest of them they're just
22 kind of out in the area two or three days and there
23 seems like four or five would go that way, and four or
24 five would go the other way. It's the same difference.

25
26 But if they -- you know, they go by you
27 and then go on their way but I think it's the same with
28 caribou. If their leader is coming down the road the
29 first -- I know for the Natives, we all like the fat,
30 we're not hunting for horns, but definitely that's
31 probably the first one is going to go down and then
32 once the leader is gone and then what, maybe they shot
33 the leaders before they even get to the road and then
34 they're kind of running all over the country wondering
35 what to do. They're young and, you know, I think that
36 the Fish and Game just needs to take a look at that and
37 make it to where they let them cross the road and then
38 hunt on the other side and they'll still have their
39 leader, that's what I'm saying there.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tommy. What
44 I -- for the people in the room who don't know much
45 about caribou physiology, probably never skinned one
46 before, really looked at them very close, they have a
47 big interdigital gland right between their front hoof,
48 front and back. The back gland, the last foot that
49 travels the track is a large and nozzled gland that
50

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1 actually touches the ground. And when those lead cows
2 travel that cows got a dominant scent and other caribou
3 want to follow it. That's what this is all about.
4 It's not just some random thing, it's her specific
5 scent. Actually there's two or three, four of these
6 big lead cows, they fight over that position. They're
7 all these Type A personalities and they're out in front
8 and everybody wants to follow them, they got some kind
9 of dominant scent and -- Tommy's dog probably could
10 smell it but we don't know much about it, we don't
11 think in the olfactory.

12
13 So that's what this stuff is all about.
14 It's not whooey, no, it's TEK, this is what we talk
15 about. And I've talked to plenty of biologists that
16 got the audacity to say that there's no such thing as
17 lead cows, it's like, well, whatever, I don't agree
18 with science -- so there's traditional ecological
19 knowledge that says there are lead cows, lead caribou
20 that lead migrations and you have to not hunt them, or
21 not deflect them while they're migrating.

22
23 And so then Tim Gervais wanted to have
24 something to say there, go ahead, Tim.

25
26 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Jack. I was
27 just commenting -- I didn't see the slide show but it
28 sounds like that (indiscernible) at least on the Kobuk
29 River sounds like a really significant event, the
30 nutrition and, you know, have the caribou
31 (indiscernible) their winter forage so I mean that's
32 some climate event that we're not going to be able to
33 change but it sure seems like a significant amount of
34 trevocation occurring in that region.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, well, this
37 ungulate group that's going to meet in May, they're
38 going to be talking about a lot of different aspects of
39 caribou, ungulate management. And apparently somebody
40 has decided that we need to mix in some of these
41 citizen/scientists that actually -- where do I come up
42 with this stuff, Raymond Paniak, the Paniak family in
43 Anaktuvuk Pass, that had an intricate knowledge of
44 caribou migrations and what caribou do and how to look
45 at caribou for health and all kinds of TEK. TEK is not
46 ethnic, TEK is knowledge. So I had a lot of training
47 with elders over in Anaktuvuk, elders in Wiseman when I
48 was a kid, and there is a lot of traditional ecological
49 knowledge about this caribou stuff and we get a -- and
50

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1 we're incensed when we're not listened to about what's
2 going on with these caribou migrations, we get incensed
3 about it because people can be completely wrong and yet
4 they have the audacity to act like they know what
5 they're talking about. Well, they don't seem to know
6 what they're talking about.

7

8 So I'm passing around the room, Kyle,
9 it's a schematic drawn up by Beth Lenart. I had her
10 develop a schematic of the GPS collars of Porcupine
11 Caribou in 2018/2019 winter and it shows the caribou
12 deflecting off of the Dalton Highway all the way along
13 the Dalton Highway, they do not cross. Not one caribou
14 collar crossed that road. This is -- I said what the
15 -- this was presented to the Gates of the Arctic
16 Subsistence Resource Commission, I says, this is
17 graphic as to how caribou migrations are deflected by
18 roads. Take a picture. It's graphic as to what that
19 Ambler Road will do to the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
20 once they build a road. And especially if they allow
21 cow harvest when they're in migration.

22

23 My opinion is, and I'm opinionated,
24 cows should never be harvested when migrating, all the
25 way through October 1. We should let the cows go where
26 they need to go and don't shoot them until after
27 they're done migrating.

28

29 You had a comment there, Darrell. And
30 I have comments to Kyle also.

31

32 MR. VENT: Yeah, I think they should
33 have that study, you know, study that cow migration
34 that leads because if you could tell by that paper you
35 got there it looks like the cows got shot out.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, they just don't
38 cross the road.

39

40 MR. VENT: Well, I think.....

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They bounce off.

43

44 MR. VENT: Well, I think that, you
45 know, people know that -- and the hunters know that if
46 you knock those cows out they'll hang around that area.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What you're seeing
49 it in that diagram, and I'll explain it to.....

50

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1 MR. VENT: But, you know, I noticed
2 that up in the Northwest too, that they're not crossing
3 in certain places because when they get shot out like
4 that, the cows that lead, they'll hang around the area,
5 it makes it easier for hunters to access those other
6 caribou around there. But you know I'm not for sure
7 but, you know, you could look at a lot of areas and if
8 they -- like say the Fortymile Herd, now we know if
9 they're letting the cows through they'll go right
10 across. Animals will follow their leaders but we have
11 to, you know, try to understand, is that one of the
12 reasons why they're not crossing, we don't know.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, these caribou
15 in this picture, there was zero harvest, none would
16 cross the road, none came -- even attempted to stay
17 near that road. So we got no Porcupine caribou and
18 neither did the sporthunters. The road was a complete
19 barrier to the Porcupine migration and still is. You
20 could get a map that looks just like that right now.

21
22 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any other
25 comments. Tim.

26
27 MR. VENT: Well, I'd just like to
28 include that, you know, just if they did do that, would
29 that be the -- that's just mine.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

32
33 MR. GERVAIS: No, that's just -- thank
34 you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your mic is way
37 down, Tim, if you -- okay -- I didn't hear you Tim if
38 you were talking.

39
40 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I don't have -- I
41 don't have any more questions.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks.
44 So.....

45
46 MS. PELKOLA: I've got something.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Jenny, go
49 ahead.

50

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1 MS. PELKOLA: I just have -- just
2 listening to all this, is there like a month or a time
3 that the caribou pass, like all of September, is there
4 a pattern?

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He had -- Kyle had
7 the presentation where they used to migrate
8 predominately in August.....

9
10 MS. PELKOLA: August.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:now they don't
13 even come until November.

14
15 MS. PELKOLA: Uh-huh.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that's the
18 problem. Caribou bulls go completely bad in the first
19 part of October. You can't even gag one down so when
20 the herd shows up really super late then it's basically
21 forcing everybody to shoot cows and letting all those
22 rutting bulls go through. So the caribou migration
23 change is a real big deal. So see here they're around
24 August 20th, the first arrivals, so people have access
25 to them early when they're still big bulls, they're
26 really super fat, those bulls. And then it shifts all
27 the way into -- once you start going into late
28 September and October then those bulls, predominately
29 when the main herd's showing up there in early October
30 those big bulls are shot and then they got to kill cows
31 which are only half the size of a bull so you have to
32 kill a lot more of them. So it turns into a big
33 problem.

34
35 So my comments would be I've been in
36 the Brooks Range a heck of a long time and we had deep
37 snow in 1970, really deep snow. There was huge
38 mortalities on moose in the Tanana Valley, and you can
39 go back into the records and look at those snow depths.
40 These caribou didn't just arbitrarily start into a
41 decline, they were -- these declines started with deep
42 snows, and in 1964 was a really late spring so already
43 the herd started to stagger and by 1970 we got a deep
44 snow year. With all that deep snow it doesn't melt off
45 fast enough and they don't get protein sources and bad
46 things start to happen to the herd, yet there was
47 static high harvest. You could sell caribou, no closed
48 season, no limit and you could use them for dog food
49 and dog feed was a big deal. I've seen stacks of
50

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1 caribou as high as my head stacked up for dog feed in
2 Anaktuvuk Pass. I mean there was like thousands of
3 caribou killed for dog food. In 1975 the herd crashes.
4 It wasn't just a change to one bull, it also eliminated
5 feeding animals to dogs, which basically eliminated the
6 dog food aspect for caribou. That made a huge
7 difference on reduction of caribou harvest.

8

9 So I would encourage managers to not
10 just look at this as some arbitrary change.

11

12 You can look at 1964. My dad was
13 flying a ski plane off the Bettles runway all the way
14 until late May. It was a bad, bad year. But it was
15 just one -- it was just one event, it wasn't back to
16 back.

17

18 Other aspects, you know, the weather
19 events that you were talking about, Kyle, are you
20 taking into consideration rain on snow events and late
21 springs in your weather events analysis for these
22 declines? A re you looking at -- back into the '60s
23 because this caribou declined and to start happening in
24 1970, that's when data started to be developed. And
25 the reason the data was developed was because my dad
26 was commenting heavily, in fact, he got into a kind of
27 a big discussion with the Commissioner of Fish and Game
28 in the Fairbanks about the decline of the Western
29 Arctic Caribou Herd and the Department was like,
30 everything's great until they actually went out there
31 in 1970, '3 and '4 and started looking at the caribou,
32 it wasn't until 1975 they went to emergency closure.
33 It was so bad they decided they better do something.

34

35 So are you looking back into the
36 weather data, which Bettles and various reporting
37 stations got long-term weather data showing spring
38 events. Spring events are a big deal on caribou. And
39 then warming trends, Kotzebue and various places have
40 data that shows those warming events, and according to
41 Jim Dau, this main augmentation of the Western Arctic
42 decline was augmented by rain on snow events. How far
43 back are you looking in the data Kyle?

44

45 MR. JOLY: So lots of good questions,
46 thank you, Chairman Reakoff. So I would say that
47 broadly we were able to look way back, all the way to
48 1850 with the Pacific decadal oscillation, and one of
49 the things -- two of the things that phenomena is

50

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1 linked with, so it's a weather pattern that people
2 probably hear more about is ElNino, so it's a similar
3 type thing where changes in the surface temperature of
4 sea water creates change on land and so those changes
5 are primarily precipitation and change in temperature.
6 And so, you know, the PDO is an index of those two
7 things on the landscape. So in a broad sense we're
8 able to look way back in history and see that
9 connection between climate and caribou ups and downs.

10

11 And then more recently with icing, you
12 know, that -- that paper that we talked about, the very
13 last one, that one just came out about a month ago and
14 so we're kind of still in the early stages of figuring
15 out how to map those icing events very reliably across
16 big scales and so we have not yet been able to tie
17 those specifically to populations ups and downs.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

20

21 MR. JOLY: Certainly they're important
22 as you note.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So another aspect of
25 this is the harvest rates now of like so many cow
26 caribou, have you looked at what the human population
27 change from around 1970 to 2023, the number of
28 households, the number of people relying on caribou
29 with the understanding that the data of where the
30 Western Arctic Herd used to migrate is not reflective
31 of what happened in 1973.

32

33 Darrell said the caribou quit coming in
34 1973, that's what happened. The caribou shifted range
35 from predominately to the east on the John River,
36 Northfork and coming down into the Koyukuk Flats and
37 moved far to the west and started crossing the Kobuk
38 River in 1973. That shifted the herd with bag limits
39 into a high use area. There was way more people
40 because there's way more fish [sic] on the Kobuk River
41 and the Selawik and so it shifted the caribou
42 migrations into high use areas. And the number
43 statuses that they were then, they couldn't sustain
44 that, that's what makes that herd go way down.

45

46 My dad flew over to Shungnak Village in
47 1973, they didn't have caribou, he landed at Shungnak
48 and was talking to Joe Sun (ph) over there, there was
49 caribou stacked up like cord wood on the beach. They

50

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1 hadn't' had caribou there for years, they were stacking
2 them up like crazy because they showed up. So there's
3 -- there's blanks in the scientific knowledge, but the
4 shifts in migration are integral as to -- and with the
5 sustained high harvest was highly detrimental.

6
7 We -- you're right we need to shift
8 away from high harvest of cows right now, the sooner
9 the better.

10
11 So are you looking at populations of
12 humans that are using the caribou in 1970 versus 2023,
13 Kyle?

14
15 MR. JOLY: Thank you, Chairman Reakoff.
16 We haven't done that. I think that would be a very
17 interesting project to undertake and also kind of the
18 range of how far people were getting. But, yeah,
19 certainly there's a lot more people and access along
20 the Kobuk than there is in the upper Koyukuk. So, you
21 know, we're kind of seeing similar patterns today, you
22 know, the -- the herd has been primarily up in the
23 Brooks Range the last few years. This year, out in
24 northwest, Gates of the Arctic, they're harder to
25 access even with today's phenomenal snowmachines,
26 they're really far out and we suspect that harvest
27 patterns have greatly changed and certainly talking to
28 people who are on the periphery of the range, you know,
29 they've gone from regularly harvesting caribou to not
30 seeing caribou at all.

31
32 I know at the working group meeting in
33 December, the Chairman, Vern Cleveland, said that, hey,
34 I'm a hunter and I haven't even seen a caribou in three
35 years so the changes in migration have huge impacts to
36 subsistence harvest.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One of the things
39 that I would like you to look at is household
40 populations in 1970 and the use of caribou for dog food
41 through 1975. That's something to consi -- it was a
42 major consideration. I took a screenshot of your
43 presentation of where the 2022 migration -- October
44 migrations are, yeah, they're minuscule compared to
45 where the majority of the herd used to migrate
46 previously.

47
48 So a couple more questions here.

49
50

0102

1 Oh, no, these are just notes. Okay, I
2 think I've covered all my questions.

3

4 Any further comments from the Council.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I look forward to
9 further discussions with the Gates of the Arctic
10 Subsistence Resource Commission on this issue and
11 looking forward to this caribou ungulate work group
12 also, discussions.

13

14 MR. JOLY: Great. Well, thank you very
15 much Chairman Reakoff. I always appreciate the
16 opportunity to share what little knowledge I have and
17 to learn from all of you in your great experiences, so
18 thank you for the opportunity. And I'll talk to you at
19 the Gates Subsistence -- or the Subsistence Resource
20 Commission here in a couple weeks.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Kyle.

23

24 So Nissa what should we -- right here?

25

26 MS. PILCHER: Uh-huh.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we're
29 going to No. C, wildlife closure review, Brian.

30

31 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 For the record my name is Brian Ubelaker, Wildlife
33 Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.
34 Before we get into the closure review analysis, I would
35 like to provide an overview of the process for these
36 reviews.

37

38 In August of 2020 the Federal
39 Subsistence Board approved a revised closure policy
40 which stipulated all closures will be reviewed every
41 four years. The policy also specified the closures
42 similar to regulatory proposals will be presented to
43 the Councils for a recommendation and then to the Board
44 for a final decision. However, regulatory actions on
45 closure reviews are limited to retaining, rescinding or
46 modifying the closure. Actions such as changing
47 seasons and harvest limits or delegating authority to
48 in-season manager are outside of the scope of closure
49 reviews. To this end, closure review analysis are

50

0103

1 being presented to the Councils now, during the call
2 for wildlife proposals, to inform their decision on
3 whether or not to submit a proposal addressing the
4 closure that would be outside the scope of the closure
5 review.

6

7 These are not action items, these are
8 just informational. However if Councils do decide to
9 submit a proposal to address the closure a motion and
10 vote is needed.

11

12

13 The Councils will make a formal
14 recommendation on the closure reviews during their fall
15 2023 meetings and the Federal Subsistence Board will
16 take action on these closure reviews in April of 2024.

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MR. UBELAKER: I will jump right in.
Wildlife Closure Review WCR24-20, which is found on
Page 30 of your meeting books reviews the closure to
moose hunting in the Kanuti Controlled Use Area of Unit
24B except by Federally-qualified subsistence users.

The Kanuti CUA was created in 1979
under State regulations to address user conflicts and
biological concerns and is important in maintaining
reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of moose.
In 1990 the CUA was adopted into Federal Subsistence
regulations from State regulations. In 2010 the Board
established the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge and BLM
lands as a separate hunt area within Unit 24B and added
a winter season. And then in 2012 the hunt areas in
Unit 24B were redefined to reduce user confusion by
realigning State and Federal hunt area boundaries. In
2016 a winter season was established up stream of the
Henshaw Creek drainage. This resulted in the Henshaw

0104

1 Creek Hunt area and Unit 24B remainder being collapsed
2 into one hunt area. This rearrangement made all of the
3 Kanuti CUA part of Unit 24B Remainder again. In 2020
4 the Board reviewed this closure and decided to maintain
5 status quo. While there was no conservation concern
6 for moose at the time, the subsistence needs of
7 Allakaket and Alatna were not being met.

8
9 Between 1989 and 2021 the moose
10 population in Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge ranged
11 from 551 to 2,010 moose. Since 1999 the highest
12 population estimate was 1,311 moose in 2017. Most
13 recently the 2021 estimate was down to 952 moose.
14 Population models indicate no trend in the data
15 suggesting the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge moose
16 population has been stable since 1999. High bull/cow
17 ratios indicate sufficient numbers for breeding and
18 that bulls are not being overharvested. High calf to
19 cow ratios in seven of the last 10 years suggest
20 adequate productivity for population growth. In 2021
21 the calf to cow ratio was 22 to 100 cows indicating a
22 stable moose population. While this number is on the
23 low side of the 20 to 30 to 100 cow ratio, two of the
24 last three winters have been severe, which is thought
25 to be a factor in this decline.

26
27 The management plan prescribes a
28 maximum annual harvest rate of five percent for the
29 Kanuti CUA moose population. Given the closure to non-
30 Federally-qualified users all moose harvest on Federal
31 public lands in the CUA occurs under Federal
32 regulations by Federally-qualified subsistence users.
33 Between 2006 and 2018 moose harvest by Federal
34 registration permit totaled 37 moose ranging from zero
35 to five moose reported harvested per year, while at the
36 same time a total of 371 Federal permits were issued
37 indicating low success rates. Between 2006 and 2017
38 annual reported moose harvest under State regulations
39 in Unit 24B ranged from 23 to 49 moose and averaged 35.
40 Since the closure of the CUA in 1992 reported moose
41 harvest, moose hunters and harvest success rates under
42 State regulations in Unit 24B have all trended
43 downward. Illegal and unreported moose harvest in Unit
44 24 is believed to be significant. Between 2006 and
45 2015 ADF&G has estimated unreported moose harvest for
46 all of Unit 24 as 135 to 144 moose per year and that 60
47 to 70 percent of unreported harvest are cows.

48
49 The Kanuti CUA was closed for
50

0105

1 conservation and continuation of subsistence uses
2 reasons. Biologically the closure no longer seems
3 warranted, primarily due to very high bull to cow
4 ratios and stable moose populations. Since 1992
5 average annual report harvested from Unit 24B has
6 declined and most harvest occurs in September. This
7 suggests opening the Kanuti CUA from December 15th
8 through April 15th to non-Federally-qualified users may
9 result in small increases in reported moose harvest. A
10 rural subsistence priority would be maintained during
11 the Federal fall season when the majority of moose are
12 harvested. Federally-qualified users have noted that
13 they're relying more on moose and other large mammals
14 as salmon levels have declined. Harvest data for the
15 area is limited and estimated high unreported harvest
16 rates preclude accurate harvest information. Whether
17 or not subsistence needs of Federally-qualified
18 subsistence users are being met is unknown, although
19 high bull to cow ratios indicate bull moose are
20 available for harvest.

21

22 Modifying the closure to eliminate the
23 winter season closure from December 15th through April
24 15th would be the conservative approach. Maintaining a
25 closure from August 15th through October 1st helps
26 community members of Allakaket and Alatna to meet
27 their subsistence needs, while opening the winter
28 season addresses the lack of conservation concern.

29

30 Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary
31 conclusion to modify the closure to eliminate the
32 closure during the winter season and to clarify
33 regulatory language.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 I will standby for any questions the
38 Council may have.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Questions.
41 Go ahead, Darrell.

42

43 MR. VENT: Yeah, I'm just curious,
44 what's the take for moose in that area compared to
45 subsistence use with like commercial, or big game
46 hunting or transporting, do we have any information on
47 that? Do they take more than the users -- are they
48 allowed to hunt in that area?

49

50

0106

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a closed area
2 so there's been no other than subsistence users within
3 that controlled use area. There's quite a bit of
4 harvest just outside of the controlled use area by fly
5 in hunters sort around the periphery of this area, and
6 there's a lot of boat hunters that go down the
7 Southfork, down the Middlefork Valley and they hunt
8 really close to the closure area also so there's -- so
9 there's -- so go ahead, I was just explaining that, go
10 ahead.

11

12 MR. VENT: Okay. So that was just one
13 of my questions there, you know, if they're not meeting
14 their subsistence needs here in the villages, since
15 rural preference is a priority, are they going to open
16 it up to -- why are the hunters -- you know, hunting
17 close to those areas, do they have any reason, is that
18 State land, is that State controlled, or what's going
19 on there that's keeping this population low? Are we
20 going to address those problems if there is a problem
21 there?

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you want to
24 answer that, Brian.

25

26 MR. UBELAKER: I was just going to
27 interject that I did not write this analysis, I am
28 merely presenting it.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

31

32 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

33

34 MR. UBELAKER: But I do believe that,
35 Kendra, the author is online and hopefully she can jump
36 in and answer this question as she is more familiar
37 than I am.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there
40 Kendra.

41

42 MS. HOMAN: Can you hear me?

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you now,
45 go right ahead.

46

47 MS. HOLMAN: So for the record this is
48 Kendra Holman, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

49

50

0107

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're breaking up
2 quite.....

3
4 MS. HOLMAN: So.....

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:you want to --
7 you're breaking up quite a bit do you want to move
8 closer to your mic or come off speaker or something.

9
10 MS. HOLMAN: Let's see if that's any
11 better.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's excellent, go
14 ahead.

15
16 MS. HOLMAN: Okay. So if I heard -- it
17 was kind of echoey so I was having a hard time hearing
18 but if I heard correct, the -- at this point -- so it
19 was unknown if those villages were making their
20 subsistence harvest needs four years ago when this was
21 reviewed, so if there's anyone who has any knowledge
22 towards that from those villages or from that area it
23 would be great to have that information. The
24 information that we have at this point indicates the
25 population is stable. We've been through some really
26 rough winters. And even with what the State believes
27 is the historical unreported harvest, the population is
28 still maintaining stable.

29
30 This proposal to open during the winter
31 was partially based on we could look at data for when
32 the State harvest was at its highest off of the Federal
33 lands so when the -- that is at it's highest is in the
34 fall so in order to maintain that fall subsistence
35 priority under ANILCA at this point it's believed that
36 that fall needs to be maintained, closure, however,
37 there is no indication that there is any kind of
38 conservation concern for moose at this point where
39 there is very minimal harvest in the winter in the
40 State areas. It's believed that the conservative
41 approach would be to open that and monitor to see how
42 things go for another couple years.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,
45 Kendra.

46
47 MS. HOLMAN: I'm hoping that answered
48 the question.

49
50

0108

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I -- Darrell, you
2 got a comment.

3
4 MR. VENT: Yeah, you know, from the
5 people that, you know, I talk with up there in the
6 Allakaket/Alatna area, they haven't had good harvest up
7 in that area. They were talking about it and they
8 said, you know, it's pretty hard for them to get a
9 moose. Sometimes some families had to go without and
10 they had to share what they caught and it didn't
11 really, you know, sustain their needs where, you know,
12 it's -- it's hard when you have high water and you're
13 trying to hunt and you can't see nothing along the bars
14 because the bars are not really there no more, the
15 temperature change has something to do with it, maybe.
16 But I know in the Huslia area we didn't have no bars so
17 it was really hard hunting. And I assume it's the same
18 way up there with the water, you know, at that time of
19 the year it's not usually there, but it's happening
20 now. And I'm thinking, you know, that's probably one
21 of the reasons that they're not having good harvest up
22 there in their area because when I talked to them, they
23 said, no, we didn't meet our needs and I said, okay,
24 I'll mention that.

25
26 But I wish Pollock was here, he would
27 probably say the same thing.

28
29 And also when they were doing this wolf
30 hunt, you know, to, you know, increase the moose
31 population there they weren't allowed to hunt on
32 Federal lands and that's where a lot of those wolves
33 were running in to in order to get away from these
34 planes going in there looking for them, or the
35 choppers, whatever was -- you know, they were utilizing
36 to hunt the wolves. But I think, you know, that I have
37 to talk more with Pollock on this situation, if I get a
38 chance, maybe I will this weekend. I know they're
39 having Carnival up there.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any comments
42 Tommy on this closure review.

43
44 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, just I think like
45 Darrell was saying it was high water last fall but I
46 think the temperature -- or I mean the climate change,
47 I don't know if the moose moves out or migrated south
48 because think about it, there's lots more moose down on
49 the, you know, south Alaska along the -- like the lower
50

0109

1 Yukon, a lot of our moose moved down that area. I
2 don't know if they shipped it from up that way, or what
3 the heck's the deal. But it seems like the last 15, 20
4 years a lot of our game shifted down and I don't know
5 if that's part of it. But the high water was a big
6 factor last fall. It was -- you had to walk if you
7 wanted a moose.

8

9 So that's all I got on that part.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, you have any
12 comments Tim. I have comments on this closure review.

13

14 Tim.

15

16 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this is Tim. Not
17 at this time, Jack.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So my comments would
20 be.....

21

22 MR. VENT: Jack.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead,
25 Darrell.

26

27 MR. VENT: Yeah, I also forgot to
28 mention that when I was talking with them there that it
29 seems like the bulls weren't moving at a certain time.
30 You know usually when you have this rutting season
31 coming on, it didn't seem like it was happening at the
32 time, it seemed like it was delayed or something,
33 because the moose wasn't really moving, there was high
34 water so it made it really a lot more increased boat
35 movement to try to get a moose. We had to use more
36 fuel in order to get, you know, what we need there.
37 And the hunting season, it seems like the bulls were
38 still -- in October, they still didn't have snow, I
39 don't know what's going on. It's something strange
40 that we're -- our people are saying don't seem right, I
41 don't know. I just couldn't figure that out.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have comments
44 Jenny.

45

46 MS. PELKOLA: (Shakes head negatively)

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So my comments on
49 that is, yeah, we killed an adult bull moose on the

50

0110

1 15th of September, he had no smell. I had never ever
2 seen a big bull that didn't have smell in the middle of
3 -- and the fat was white. And when we caught him I cut
4 the -- cut the pelvis there was no smell in that urine,
5 none, which is highly unusual. So moose aren't -- they
6 were triggering to go into rut but, yeah, they do
7 eventually but they weren't triggering on time so their
8 movements were fairly minimal early in the season.
9 This is becoming more common with these warmer, wet
10 falls.

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The moose population on the Kanuti has had some real hard times. In 2018, 2019 we had really deep snow. I had five and a half feet of snow in my yard in 2018/19 but we had rain on snow in October and then we had rain on snow in mid-March. We had six weeks of the moose breaking crust on four and a half, five feet of snow and cut themselves all up, there was blood all over the place. When I was cutting wood, I could walk on the snow, just like walking on the sidewalk, cutting the wood, and the moose were like having a really tough time. So I got the data from -- the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee got the data from Glenn Stout, so the yearling bull numbers in -- in the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge was three bulls per 100 -- three yearlings per 100 cows, showing a really low recruitment level for young bulls entering the population. Well, 1920 [sic] was also a similar event. So those are the -- those yearlings are showing -- in 2020/21 -- they flew the survey in the fall of '21, it shows that we have lags in these -- in bull recruitments.

But then going back to the analysis, you know, this whole April 15 to Ap -- or correction, December 15th through April 15th winter moose hunt, that was driven by this Council. This Council fought for a winter hunt for 24B for Allakaket and so that's a one bull limit, meaning it's got to be an antlered bull so by -- anyway we went through a lot of analysis with this and Glenn Stout is an excellent biologist and Glenn Stout says that by December 15th 60 percent of bull moose have lost their antlers and so there's many bulls that don't have antlers and only some have -- small ones would have antlers and those would be the ones you'd more likely want to kill anyways. Then they -- starting around the end of March, the first part of April, like right now, they start growing antlers, so that becomes legal again. So once they got fuzzy

0111

1 growing antlers, and down in Huslia's going to have a
2 moose hunt here soon.

3

4 MR. VENT: Yeah.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so that's what
7 that's going to -- the ones that are growing antlers
8 are going to be legal. And there's hardly any with hard
9 antlers left.

10

11 So I'm not opposed, myself, to
12 modifying the closure as suggested by OSM, to allow the
13 other hunters to hunt during this winter hunt which
14 they're not going to show up there unless they got
15 antlers. Let me tell you, as soon as those bull
16 caribou lose antlers and off the Haul Road and the
17 first part of November, through the middle, the 10th of
18 December, that's it, they don't really want them
19 anymore. They got to have a hard antler.

20

21 So I don't see that there's going to be
22 a huge attraction. And this -- they're going to have a
23 heck of a -- they can't get to Allakaket. So there'll
24 be a few moose, in fact, this hunt has been in place
25 for several years and I've asked Glenn Stout several
26 times, have you had any harvest on this winter hunt in
27 the areas outside of the controlled use area, unh-unh,
28 none. They had like two permits issued and nobody went
29 so this is not going to be a big deal.

30

31 So I'm not opposed to OSM's conclusion
32 to modify the closure to allow the winter hunt, myself.
33 So I'm not opposed to that. So I agree with OSM on
34 that aspect.

35

36 So I do feel strongly that we do have
37 to maintain our subsistence priority for the August 25
38 to October 1 timeframe to maintain the closure during
39 that fall hunt. That's very important. That's when
40 people can go out with boats. They go way up -- high
41 water, for them, way in the upper drainage, that's a
42 big deal.

43

44 MR. VENT: Yep.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They could go way up
47 the Kanuti River, way up -- they could go way up the
48 Southfork, way up into the upper drainage and so that's
49 a big deal for the people in the upper drainage, they

50

0112

1 can go up the Alatna, it gives them a lot more access.
2 But when it gets wet like that the moose move up on the
3 side hill, we got lots of terrain there to -- the moose
4 will move up on the side hills. Yeah, they're like
5 four or 500 yards off the river up on the hill, kind of
6 hard to get to them.

7

8 So is action needed on this?

9

10 MR. UBELAKER: No.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No action taken,
13 action will occur in the fall cycle?

14

15 MR. UBELAKER: Correct. This is just
16 to give you if you.....

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Discussion.

19

20 MR. UBELAKER:have any ideas to p
21 ut in a proposal to change it, this is seeds for those
22 ideas.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. So it would
25 be incumbent on the Council to make this proposal to
26 rescind this -- modify this closure, or it will come up
27 -- that modification could come up during the Board's
28 deliberation?

29

30 MR. UBELAKER: In the fall, when you
31 vote to give your recommendation on this.....

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

34

35 MR. UBELAKER:you could vote in
36 favor of the OSM recommendation.....

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

39

40 MR. UBELAKER:to modify.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

43

44 MR. UBELAKER: That would go in front
45 of the Board and they will make their decision based on
46 that.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll get to
49 that and hopefully we'll have a bigger present. I'm

50

0113

1 hoping for a bigger Council presence here.

2

3 Okay, so that covers that one.

4

5 Telegraphic back to OSM, I'm not in
6 disagreement with their conclusion, Kendra.

7

8 So we're going to No. 2 here, are you
9 doing these also Brian?

10

11 MR. UBELAKER: You are stuck with me
12 for awhile, sir.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. WCR24-43.

15

16 MR. UBELAKER: Yes. And, once, again,
17 for the record Brian Ubelaker, OSM.

18

19 Wildlife Closure Review WCR24-43 found
20 on Page 48 of your meeting books pertains to the
21 closure of moose hunting in Unit 19A Remainder to
22 everyone except residents of six local communities.

23

24 Unit 19A Remainder was closed under
25 Federal regulations in 2007 because of conservation
26 concerns including low productivity, low bull to cow
27 ratios and high hunting pressure. A Section .804
28 analysis determined residents of, and I apologize I'm
29 going to butcher most of these, Tuluksak, lower
30 Kalskag, upper Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, and Crooked
31 Creek to be most dependent on the Unit 19A Remainder
32 moose population. Authority was delegated to the Yukon
33 Delta National Wildlife Refuge Manager to annually
34 establish harvest quotas and number of permits. The
35 closure for the Lime Village Management Area was
36 eliminated in 2020. And then in 2022 the Board of Game
37 adopted Proposal 171, which divided Unit 19A into two
38 subunits.

39

40 Unit 19A Remainder primarily falls in
41 the Aniak survey area while the moose population in the
42 Aniak survey area appeared relatively stable between
43 2006 and 2010, it increased significantly in 2017.
44 Density estimates for the Aniak survey area were well
45 above management objectives and the highest ever
46 recorded at 1.3 moose per square mile. Fish and Game
47 also surveyed the entire western portion of Unit 19A
48 for the first time in 2017 and density estimates for
49 this larger area were just below management objectives

50

0114

1 at .7 moose per square mile. In 2020 the western
2 portion of 19A increased to 5,200 moose with a density
3 of .9 moose per square mile. While bull to cow ratios
4 are within management objectives they were on the lower
5 end in 2016 and 2017 averaging 21 bulls to 100 cows.
6 Calf to cow ratios have met or exceeded management
7 objectives since 2011.

8

9 In 2019 Alaska Department of Fish and
10 Game estimated the harvestable surplus for Unit 19A
11 Remainder at 160 to 165 moose per year. Total reported
12 harvest averages 150 moose per year, however, low bull
13 to cow ratios in 2016 and 2017 suggest few surplus
14 bulls were available for harvest.

15

16 No change to the closure in western
17 Unit 19A is recommended due to low bull to cow ratios
18 and because reported harvest is right at the
19 harvestable surplus level. Additionally, density
20 estimates are below management objectives and the Yukon
21 Delta Refuge Manager has delegated authority to adjust
22 in-season harvest parameters.

23

24 Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary
25 conclusion to maintain status quo on this closure.

26

27 And I will standby for any questions
28 you may have.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Questions on this
31 closure.

32

33 MR. VENT: That's McGrath.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we need Kevin
36 Whitworth here.

37

38 MR. VENT: Yeah.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we would have
41 probably got quite a bit of discussion if we were down
42 in Aniak, I'm sure we would have gotten that. So Tim
43 or Tommy, any comments on this closure review, 24-43,
44 for Unit 19A.

45

46 MR. KRISKA: No.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

49

50

0115

1 MR. VENT: No, he said.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, okay. So I
5 don't have any questions on the presentation. My
6 comment is the bull/cow ratios are too low to allow
7 additional harvest. All available bulls are needed for
8 subsistence. That'd be my comment.

8

9

10 So, okay, that pretty much covers that.

10

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We have a crossover proposal for Unit
18. This is WCR24-38.

MR. UBELAKER: Correct. And WCR24-38
is found on Page 63 of your meeting books and reviews
the closure to moose hunting in a portion of Unit 18,
commonly referred to as the Unit 18 Kuskokwim, and is
only open to residents of 13 communities in the hunt
area plus Kalskag and lower Kalskag.

This closure has been in place in some
form since 1991. At that time all Federal public lands
within Unit 18 were closed to non-Federally-qualified
users. In 2010 the current boundaries of the lower
Kusko hunt area were established and the closure within
the new hunt area was modified to allow moose harvest
only by residents of the 15 communities that were found
to be the most dependent on this resource.

In 2022 the Board extended the fall
season and established a May be announced winter season
and delegated authority to the Yukon Delta Manager to
announce the winter season. In November 2022 the Board
amended the delegation to -- the delegation of
authority to delegate the Yukon Delta National Wildlife
Refuge the additional authority to determine the number
of permits to be issued and any needed permit
conditions for the may be announced winter season.

The moose population was small enough
during the 1990s to implement a harvest moratorium,
which began in 2004. The moratorium was effective in
allowing the establishment of a harvestable population
and it appears that the population along the Kuskokwim
main stem and the tributaries continues to grow. Lack
of snow cover precluded population surveys between 2015
and 2020. The survey completed in 2020 showed an
increase of the moose population that exceeded State
objectives. Bull to cow ratios have been consistently

0116

1 above the minimum State management objective since 2020
2 when it fell to 25 bulls per 100 cows, and the calf to
3 cow ratios are high which may indicate a growing
4 population.

5

6 Harvest has been allowed in the
7 Kuskokwim hunt area since 2009 by State registration
8 permit. Harvest has increased notably since then,
9 doubling between 2014 and 2017 and averaging 183 moose
10 annually since 2011. However, demands still outweighs
11 moose availability. From 2009 to 2019 an average of
12 1,450 hunters have obtained moose permits each year but
13 only 10 percent of permitholders have successfully
14 harvested moose. Since demands for moose far outweigh
15 the number available for harvest this closure will
16 ensure that the 15 communities that have demonstrated
17 the most dependence on this resource continue to have a
18 subsistence priority on Federal lands.

19

20 Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary
21 recommendation to maintain the closure in Unit 18.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 And I will standby for questions.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim or Tommy.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny.

36

37 MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. Go ahead,
40 Tommy.

41

42 MR. KRISKA: This is Tom.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

45

46 MR. KRISKA: Well, anyway I was just
47 wondering a question for the biologist there, are they
48 seeing a lot more moose down there or the population is
49 okay, really high, if you could -- just a question.

50

0117

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Could you answer
2 that again Brian.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. I am
5 not the author of this analysis.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

8
9 MR. UBELAKER: But what I do understand
10 is the survey in 2020 showed an increase in the
11 population which put it above State management
12 objectives.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

15
16 MR. UBELAKER: And if that -- if
17 there's more info needed I can dig into it.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

20
21 MR. UBELAKER: That's what I know right
22 now.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But basically
25 there's a lot of hunter demand for this hunt and the
26 closure is to non-subsistence users and so every last
27 moose available is required for local subsistence
28 because that's a -- basically predominately in the
29 Refuge so it's necessary to maintain the closure to
30 prioritize the opportunity for rural subsistence users.

31
32 Does that make sense Tommy?

33
34 MR. KRISKA: Yes. Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll review the
37 proposal again at our fall meeting.

38
39 MR. UBELAKER: Correct.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're just
42 kind of getting it square in our head, that's what
43 we're doing right now reviewing these. So we have --
44 we've covered that one, so D is Temporary Special
45 Action Request FSA23-01 and so who's presenting this
46 one. Okay, go ahead.

47
48 Brent.

49
50

0118

1 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 I'll just go ahead, sure. All right. Good afternoon,
3 Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. My name, for the
4 record, is Brent Vickers, and I am the Anthropology
5 Division Supervisor at the Office of Subsistence
6 Management. This is an update on Fisheries Temporary
7 Special Action FSA23-01. After my presentation we will
8 ask the Council to provide a recommendation on the
9 temporary special action request. So this is an action
10 item.

11

12 Information about this temporary
13 special action request is accessible at the Federal
14 Subsistence Management Program webpage at
15 doi.gov/subsistence. You can hover over the link if
16 you go there and the link will bring up a fact sheet
17 for the special action request, FSA23-01.

18

19 For the people in this room, the fact
20 sheet is available on a handout at the table -- or, no,
21 it's on Page 132 of your meeting books -- sorry.

22

23 The special action request asks the
24 Board to close Federal public waters of the Kanektok
25 River drainage to the harvest of chinook and chum
26 salmon except by Federally-qualified subsistence users
27 for the month of June in both 2023 and 2024. So this
28 year and next, the month of June only. This does not
29 apply to the marine waters of Kuskokwim Bay.

30

31 The Native Village of Quinhagak's
32 reasons for submitting the temporary special action
33 requests are that chum salmon stocks in western Alaska
34 are in decline with the poorest returns on record,
35 escapements throughout Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim region
36 are not being met and the long period of decline of
37 chinook salmon stocks throughout the state. They
38 suggest that the precautionary management action -- or
39 they supr -- they suggest that precautionary management
40 actions are necessary due to the lack of available
41 salmon assessment data for the Kanektok River
42 particularly for chum salmon.

43

44 Office of Subsistence Management is
45 currently analyzing the request, including the
46 potential affects it will have on chinook and chum
47 salmon populations and opportunities for Federally-
48 qualified and non-Federally-qualified users. The
49 analysis will be presented at the Federal Subsistence
50

0119

1 Board -- to the Federal Subsistence Board on Wednesday,
2 April 19th from 1:00 o'clock to 4:00 o'clock, p.m.

3

4

5 As we are unable to provide this
6 Council with a completed analysis for your review and
7 recommendation ahead of this meeting, we are asking for
8 the Council's recommendation and comments which will be
9 included for the analysis -- in the analysis for Board
10 consideration. When making its decision the Federal
11 Subsistence Board will consider the OSM Staff analysis,
12 public testimonies, input from tribal and Native
13 corporations, input from the State and other management
14 agencies and recommendations and comments from the
15 affected Regional Advisory Councils, which includes
16 this Council, the Western Interior. The Board may
17 approve, approve with modification, reject or defer
18 this special action request.

18

19

20 To recap, the Federal Subsistence Board
21 has received a special action request from the Native
22 Village of Quinhagak asking the Federal Subsistence
23 Board to close the Federal public waters of the
24 Kanektok River drainage to the harvests of chinook and
25 chum salmon except by Federally-qualified subsistence
26 users during the month of June in both 2023 and 2024.
27 The Board meeting is Wednesday, April 19th to act on
28 this special action request.

28

29

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Thank you for your time. This
concludes my update on FSA23-01.

I, and my colleagues, particularly, I
think, Kevin Foley, who is on the phone and the lead
author on this request, are standing by to answer any
questions you may have.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So my question is
this drainage is out of our region and how are we
getting a crossover or why are we addressing this?

MR. VICKERS: Thank you for the
question, Mr. Chair. Because the drainage is part of
the Kuskokwim area and all.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I see.

MR. VICKERS:all residents of the
Kuskokwim area, which includes many of the communities
along the Kuskokwim and Western Interior have custom --

0120

1 have C&T for this.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

4

5 MR. VICKERS: It's a long way to travel

6 but.....

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

9

10 MR. VICKERS:yeah, you do have

11 customary and traditional use determinations.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any questions or
14 comments. This is an action item. The Board is going
15 to act on this and we need to take a -- we can have
16 different options -- go ahead, Darrell.

17

18 MR. VENT: Yeah, what area is this on
19 our -- on the western, is this under Western or is it
20 on the.....

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's a map on

23 Page 135 here.

24

25 MR. VENT: Yep.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And it shows this is
28 like slightly south of the Kuskokwim River but it's in
29 the Kuskokwim area and we have customary and
30 traditional use for the Kusko -- our region has
31 customary and traditional use for salmon so it's --
32 that's why we're getting it.

33

34 MR. VENT: Okay.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any -- we do have
37 to take action on it. So Tim or.....

38

39 REPORTER: Jack.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me, sorry
42 about that Nathan, I didn't have the mic on for all
43 that. So Tim or Tommy, do you have comments on this
44 special action request.

45

46 MR. KRISKA: No. No comments. I have
47 to look into it, look at this.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

50

0121

1 MR. KRISKA: Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks Tommy.

4

5 MR. GERVAIS: No comments, Jack. This
6 is Tim.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I have no comment
11 on it.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I didn't hear
14 you real clear before. Okay, so do you have any
15 comments Jenny?

16

17 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah. Too bad we don't
18 have anybody on our board from -- although Kevin is not
19 here, but he would know.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

22

23 MS. PELKOLA: But if it's a good deal
24 for the area I think, you know, we should support it.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that would be my
27 comment and my position on the special action request.
28 All of these salmon stocks have been having some real
29 hardships and so this is precautionary and allocates
30 towards the local people and so I'm in favor of the
31 special action request and I think that we should take
32 an action to support -- oh, go ahead.

33

34 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
35 just had one thought, that may -- you may want to know,
36 the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta meeting is today,
37 concurrently, and I wanted to check to see if anyone
38 online, if they have met, or have discussed this and
39 made a recommendation on this action, yet, in case you
40 would like to hear that action.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to hear
43 that.

44

45 MR. VICKERS: So, Kevin, or anyone
46 else, has the YK Delta been able to meet with -- Brian,
47 do you have an answer?

48

49 MR. UBELAKER: I just got a note from

50

0122

1 Lisa that said they have not gotten to it yet.

2

3 MR. VICKERS: Okay, thank you. They
4 have not been able to. All right, thank you, it just
5 struck my mind that maybe they have already. All
6 right, sorry, for interrupting. Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would feel more
9 comfortable about taking this up later in our meeting
10 tomorrow, this issue, and see what YK Delta's done.
11 They may have some more pertinent information for us.

12

13 Nissa.

14

15 MS. PILCHER: One hiccup might be they
16 have a three day meeting and I don't know when it's
17 coming up on their agenda but we can certainly push it
18 towards the end of your agenda and hope that they take
19 it up..

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If some OSM Staff
22 can look at YK Delta's agenda and see where they're
23 going to -- if this is going to come up today or
24 tomorrow. So -- but we'll give them a little time. So
25 we'll move this -- make a note and we'll put that down
26 towards the bottom of our meeting, maybe after -- maybe
27 right above agency reports or something like that.

28

29 MR. VENT: I just messaged Kevin to let
30 him know.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, well, let's
33 see that one is -- okay, I'm going to move that down to
34 right above agency reports and so hopefully YK Delta
35 will have some further information and OSM can inform
36 us to that.

37

38 So we'll move forward, away from that
39 one, to WSA22-05, reduce caribou harvest limits in Unit
40 23 and -- and caribou -- that was -- okay, Brian,
41 you're going to.....

42

43 MR. UBELAKER: I'm back up.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay.

46

47 MS. WILLIAMS: It's that kind of a
48 presentation.

49

50

0123

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Mr.

4 Chair and members of the Council. I'm Liz Williams,

5 Anthropologist with OSM.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

8

9 MS. WILLIAMS: And this is not in your

10 book but it is an action item because it's a special

11 action request that came from the Northwest Arctic

12 Council at their meeting just a couple weeks ago.

13

14 So what it is, is it's about caribou in

15 Unit 23 and it's been named WSA22-05. So we will be

16 looking for your recommendation. And just for clarity

17 the Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council proposed

18 this special action.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So one moment, is

21 this in our -- in this packet here, Nissa?

22

23 MS. PILCHER: It is in this one.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

26

27 MS. PILCHER: And it should be the

28 third piece of paper. It should be the third piece of

29 paper.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

32

33 MS. PILCHER: That one.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

36

37 MS. WILLIAMS: May I see that.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It doesn't have a

40 number on it. Okay, continue -- continue Liz. It's

41 the third piece of paper, it should say Northwest

42 Arctic Regional Advisory Council Special Action Request

43 at the top and probably -- apparently didn't have a

44 number at that time.

45

46 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct. It was

47 just given a number recently.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Continue.

50

0124

1 MS. WILLIAMS: So the basic thing about
2 this is the Northwest Arctic Council has proposed that
3 they will change the limit to -- in Unit 23 to four
4 caribou per year. So four bulls, or three bulls and
5 one cow only.

6
7 This would be for the remainder of the
8 2022 to 2024 regulatory season which ends June 24th.

9
10 Now, the current limit in Unit 23 is a
11 harvest limit of five caribou per day under Federal
12 subsistence regulations. So this is a major harvest
13 reduction. They're being submitted in response to
14 basically what we learned in Kyle's presentation, or
15 what you might have already known and the most recent
16 estimate of caribou is 164,000 in the 2022 census.

17
18 So it's also expected to align with
19 proposals submitted by the Kotzebue AC and the Western
20 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group to the Board of Game.

21
22 The working group also expressed its
23 intent to submit a proposal to the Federal Subsistence
24 Board as well.

25
26 So there's going to be more than one
27 proposal about this before the Federal Subsistence
28 Board.

29
30 In addition to their special action
31 request the Northwest Arctic Council is going to submit
32 this as a standard regulatory proposal during the
33 wildlife proposal opening, which is right now through
34 April 14th. So, if adopted, it would go into effect in
35 July 2024 after the special action time ends.

36
37 And so residents of Unit 22 have a
38 customary and traditional use determination for caribou
39 in Unit 23 so that's why it's coming before this
40 Council. There's going to be a public hearing, an
41 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act consultation that
42 will both be conducted by the Office of Subsistence
43 Management if the corporations want it. The public
44 hearing, I think is pretty much a done deal though, I
45 don't think that has to be by request. Is that
46 correct, Nissa?

47
48 (No comments)

49
50

0125

1 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay, sorry, never mind.
2 Anyway, there's not yet an analysis for WSA22-05, but
3 this is your opportunity as a Council to weigh in. And
4 let's see, Brian is here to answer wildlife questions.

5
6 There's a couple of things I wanted to
7 bring up. The Council, in October 2022 meeting, fall
8 2022 talked about how hard this cut would be and how
9 shocking it would be but, I mean, it's part of Inupiaq
10 values to sort of limit your harvest when you see the
11 population going down, we don't know if it's harvest,
12 but this is the one thing they have in their control to
13 maybe affect it.

14
15 The other thing is, in your response to
16 your question to Kyle, that Council did discuss the
17 increase of the human population in that area and the
18 effects, so while there may not have been any
19 subsistence study about it or biological study about
20 it, the -- or I guess demographic study I should say,
21 but the people on the Council definitely know that that
22 is a factor.

23
24 So, with that, if you have any
25 questions we will try to answer them. And, again, this
26 is something for you to decide on at this meeting, if
27 you decide to do so.

28
29 Thanks.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Liz.
32 And so Northwest Arctic Council only included Unit 23,
33 they didn't include the rest of the Western Arctic
34 Caribou Herd's realm, and so it's incumbent upon this
35 Council to amend this special action request to include
36 Unit 24, the entirety of Unit 24 because the Western
37 Arctic Caribou Herd used to routinely migrate through
38 Unit 24A, it's not just 24B, so we have to include this
39 -- because if everybody's -- if somebody's going to
40 take a cut, we're all going to take this cut equitably,
41 and so we need to have a special action request
42 requesting that the entirety of the Western Arctic
43 Caribou Herd's range, including Unit 22, 23, portions
44 of 26 and 24 be included in the special action request.

45
46 So I would like to make a motion to
47 support Special Action Request 22-05 with an amendment
48 to include the entire range of the Western Arctic
49 Caribou Herd so everybody's on the same sheet of music
50

0126

1 and nobody gets five caribou a day bag limit, which is
2 1,850 a year. So if we're going to take cuts
3 everybody's going to have to take these cuts across the
4 board.

5

6 And so I am fully of the strong opinion
7 that taking this level of cow harvest, with no
8 consideration of incidental harvest mortality.
9 Shooting into a -- you're shooting into an aggregating
10 species that typically is at longer ranges so the
11 incidental harvest mortality -- the Department of Fish
12 and Game completely ignores that aspect is a large
13 factor also of undocumented harvest.

14

15 So I'll state that on the record.

16

17 And so this is what the Western Arctic
18 Caribou Herd Working Group came up with. I'm fully
19 supportive of that work group. And I will state for
20 the record here that I was very unhappy as a WIRAC
21 member and an AC Chair to not be able to listen to the
22 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Work Group's meeting on the
23 phone, and I asked -- I requested the Coordinator to
24 allow us to have a call in number. Darrell and I
25 would've called into this because we're on the Koyukuk
26 River AC, she wouldn't give us a number, she wouldn't
27 allow us to -- she didn't allow a whole bunch of the
28 public to actually access that meeting. So that's --
29 if OSM has anything to do with that -- well, it should.
30 So it should be known that the -- well, we'll talk
31 about it at the AC meeting.

32

33 But the reality is that the Advisory
34 Committees and the Councils need to be listening in --
35 to listen to all the various aspects of these -- of
36 that work group.

37

38 MR. VENT: Uh-huh. Yes.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm stating that
41 on the record that we weren't privy to -- I was hearing
42 rumors about what they did as far as this regulation
43 but -- so the Chair will entertain a motion to --
44 Nissa.

45

46 MS. PILCHER: One comment about
47 procedure. It was pointed out that the current --
48 while this special action is scoped for Unit 23, so
49 like the public hearing and all that.

50

0127

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

2

3 MS. PILCHER: So in order for the
4 Federal Subsistence Board to really take action on a
5 much wider scope would be to actually create a whole
6 new wildlife special.....

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

9

10 MS. PILCHER:request a whole new
11 special action.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So -- well, this
14 should have happened but it hasn't. Each Council seems
15 to be pussyfooting around, they're staying within their
16 little region, well, that's not the way this works. We
17 got a caribou herd that roams throughout many regions.

18

19 So you had a comment there, Liz.

20

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. There was a little
22 footnote in here that did include the regions that the
23 Western Arctic Caribou Herd was going to submit and
24 they were going to say that they were making the
25 recommendation throughout the range of the herd and
26 that, you know, Unit 23, but also 21B, 22, 23, 26A,
27 24B, 24C and 24D. So I don't know if that helps but
28 that was in there.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But the Western
31 Arctic Caribou Herd Work Group is strictly looking for
32 a regulatory remedy which is one regulatory year out
33 and Northwest Arctic is concerned about this season.

34

35 So the Chair will entertain a motion to
36 submit an additional special action request requesting
37 a four caribou bag limit, with no more than one to be a
38 cow caribou for the entirety of the Western Arctic
39 Caribou Herd's range, which is Unit 22, portions of
40 21D, 24 and 23 and 26 -- and portions of 26A. Have I
41 missed anything there Brian, in the Western Arctic
42 Caribou Herd range?

43

44 MR. UBELAKER: I was writing, I'm
45 sorry.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that would be the
48 described area of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd's
49 range, which includes part of 21D.

50

0128

1 Darrell.

2

3 MR. VENT: I'll second that motion.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Oh, I'm just
6 stating that I'll entertain a motion.

7

8 MR. VENT: Oh, okay.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you'll make the
11 motion, Darrell.

12

13 MR. VENT: Yeah, I'll make the motion.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do I have a
16 second to that.0

17

18 MS. PELKOLA: I'll second.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.
21 On discussion of that, Tom and Tim, I'd like you to
22 weigh in on this discussion about this -- the need to
23 address this, basically steep decline, that's been
24 modeled, as Kyle showed us, that will go to levels that
25 we were seeing in 1975, soon.

26

27 So Tom -- Tommy you got comments on
28 this special action request to go to four caribou with
29 only one cow.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there?

34

35 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, I guess, whatever is
36 good for the system there I'd go for that. But, yeah
37 -- yeah.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, Northwest
40 Arctic Regional Advisory Council was concerned enough
41 that they felt that they needed to address this this
42 year, not next year, so I'm of the -- I agree with
43 them. So that's what our Council would be doing, would
44 be to put the whole herd on the plate for the Federal
45 Subsistence Board to look at.

46

47 So Tim, any comments.

48

49 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jack this is Tim.

50

0129

1 Yeah, based on the current data, this special action
2 request is justified for conservation concerns.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And, Jenny,
5 you have a comment.

6

7 MS. PELKOLA: No.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrell, comment.

10

11 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just wanted to
12 clarify that, you know, we wanted to put in a special
13 action request to support Proposal -- what was that
14 one.....

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 22-05.

17

18 MR. VENT:22-05, but also wanted
19 to entertain another motion to put additional areas
20 into that, how.....

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we made a
23 motion to make the additional areas, that's your
24 motion, that's what we're deliberating right now. We
25 could also take up 22-05 and support that after this
26 motion.

27

28 MR. VENT: I'd like that to be noted
29 that Nissa stated that, you know, they want to make
30 sure that 23 gets is but also that we can entertain
31 another motion to put another proposal in for
32 additional areas of that. That way, you know, we're
33 not going to make it fail -- I don't want to, you know,
34 to have it not pass because we added additional
35 language to it, but just to make sure that the proposal
36 passes.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. So the
39 motion on the table is for the entire range of the
40 Western Arctic Caribou Herd, which is Unit 22, portions
41 of 21D, 24, 23 and portions of 26A, so that's on the
42 table right now and then we can take up this motion to
43 support Special Action Request 22-05 also.

44

45 MR. VENT: Okay. I was just clarifying
46 that, thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the justification
49 for the special action request would be the precipitous

50

0130

1 decline of the Western Arctic Herd, the modeling shows
2 that we could be at levels that were seen in 1975 soon,
3 there's no calculation about the incidental harvest
4 mortalities that -- with the high levels of harvest, so
5 the endurance of the harvest is in the -- and the need
6 for conservation of cow caribou is imperative at this
7 time.

8

9 So that would be the justifications for
10 the special action request to the Federal Subsistence
11 Board.

12

13 Any further comments.

14

15 MR. VENT: Yes.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

18

19 MR. VENT: Just one. Yeah, I -- you
20 know, this area has been heavily hunted, I know that
21 they were having issues with a lot of the areas that
22 were being hunted. And I was talking about diversion,
23 you know, how the caribou, they tend to shy away from
24 areas after awhile when they get shot at too much.
25 There's too much hunting going on, hunting stress,
26 they'll go to different areas. And, you know, it's
27 like with -- maybe we don't know but maybe fishing is
28 the same way, if -- they got to go to different areas
29 if they're having too much pressure, but we don't have
30 no data on any kind of stuff, but that's -- that's the
31 nature, you know, of animals, they'll divert if they
32 have to. And, you know, some people were talking about
33 that over in Shungnak and I was saying, you know, why
34 -- why would that happen, you know, well, they said
35 there's a lot of big game hunters that's going in in
36 these upper areas around Kiana and those areas that
37 might have, you know, changed the diversion and I said
38 well maybe that might be what's going on, just getting
39 too much pressure. I was up in Anaktuvuk and they said
40 they used to come right down right through the valley
41 there and they said the last through years nothing had
42 been coming through, there was too much hunting
43 pressure up on the other side of the river. Like Tommy
44 was talking about, you know, you hunt on one side of
45 that river, they don't want to come across no more.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

48

49 MR. VENT: So, you know, maybe that

50

0131

1 might be something that we can discuss more in this
2 caribou thing. So I just thought I'd mention that.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, I'll
5 talk about around Anaktuvuk.....

6

7 REPORTER: Jack. Jack.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:here in a
10 minute after our -- oh, excuse me -- we're going to
11 talk about that a little bit further about that, but we
12 want to move this to a vote.

13

14 So those in favor of submitting a
15 special action request, we'll call it Special Action
16 Request 23-06, to close -- basically reduce the bag
17 limit to four caribou, no more than one may be a cow
18 caribou within the range of the Western Arctic Caribou
19 Herd, including portions of Game Management Unit 26A,
20 23, 24, and 21D and 22.

21

22 So those in favor of submitting that
23 proposal signify by saying aye.

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So
28 then supplementary discussion about Anaktuvuk Pass.
29 The caribou, they have a controlled use area to the
30 north to eliminate the -- to control the number of
31 hunters coming to that area with aircraft. The caribou
32 did show up, there's caribou right in Anaktuvuk Pass
33 right now, and they came -- they came in January, they
34 went way out -- the rain -- the rain on the snow made
35 the caribou -- they were against the base of the
36 mountains not too far from them, the caribou went way
37 out, they went around and then they went up the
38 drainage. They suddenly decided, it's getting too cold
39 and it's too deep of snow on the coast so they came
40 charging into the valleys and they came straight into
41 the -- some of them came across, up near the road, came
42 up the Ikkilik River and came over to Anaktuvuk and
43 some of them came right straight up. They got caribou
44 feeding right outside of the village right now.

45

46 MR. VENT: Good.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: People got --
49 they're not fat, they're not the prime meat but they do

50

0132

1 have caribou meat now and they're super happy about
2 that.

3

4 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we want to take
7 up Special Action Request 22-05 -- oh, go ahead.

8

9 MS. PILCHER: Just doublechecking, the
10 time period would be the same as 22-05, so it would be
11 the remainder.....

12

13 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

16

17 MS. PILCHER:of this current.....

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It would be the same
20 seasons. It's strictly.....

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Okay. Yeah, so the
23 proposal will.....

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:to change bag
26 limit is what it's doing, so it's not changing seasons
27 or some of the other things there.

28

29 So the Chair will entertain a motion to
30 adopt Special Action Request 22-05 submitted by the
31 Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council.

32

33 MR. VENT: Yes, so moved.

34

35 MS. PELKOLA: So moved.

36

37 MR. VENT: Oh.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

40

41 MR. VENT: Second.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrell.

44

45 MR. GERVAIS: Second.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Tim's affirmative
48 of that. This is basically the same discussion on the
49 same issue but we're just endorsing Northwest Arctic
50

0133

1 Council's Proposal 22-05.

2

3 Any other discussion.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a question
8 on the motion.

9

10 MR. VENT: Question.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
13 Proposal Special Action Request 22-05 as presented
14 before the Council signify by saying aye.

15

16 IN UNISON: Aye.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Tim, I heard one
19 aye from Tim or Tommy.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

22

23 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks Tommy.
26 Thanks Tim. Okay, Special Action Request 22-05 is
27 adopted -- endorsed.

28

29 And so call for Federal wildlife
30 proposals. Brian.

31

32 MR. UBELAKER: Yes, sir, back to me,
33 Mr. Chair. Hello, Mr. Chair and members of the
34 Council. Once, again, for the record, Brian Ubelaker,
35 Wildlife Biologist, OSM.

36

37 Now is the time for the call for
38 wildlife proposals and the Council's opportunity to
39 submit proposals to change Federal subsistence wildlife
40 harvest regulations. An informational flier on how to
41 submit a proposal to change Federal subsistence
42 regulations can be found on Page 83 of your meeting
43 books. Proposals need to include the regulations you
44 wish to change, the specific changes you are proposing,
45 an explanation of why the regulation change should be
46 made and any additional information that may help in
47 evaluating the proposed change.

48

49 The window to submit proposals opened

50

0134

1 February 27th and closes April 12th. The Council can
2 vote to submit a proposal during this meeting and your
3 Council Coordinator will then officially submit it.
4 Also the opportunity for Councils to submit proposals
5 is available during this entire meeting. If a Council
6 member thinks of a proposal later or in response to
7 another agenda item they are welcome to suggest
8 submitting a proposal then. Of course anyone can
9 submit a proposal as an individual before the
10 submission window closes.

11
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13
14 I am happy to answer any questions
15 about the proposal process and will standby while the
16 Council discusses possible proposals to submit.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Brian.
19 So it came to our attention that the Board of Game
20 divided State Game Management Unit 19A into two
21 separate subunits 19A and 19E during their March 2022
22 meeting. This regula -- so we need to submit a change
23 before the Federal Subsistence Board to reflect what
24 the Board of Game has done dividing Unit 19 into an
25 additional subunit. So we -- so the change would
26 request the dividing of Unit 19A into two subunits, 19A
27 and 19E.

28
29 So the existing regulation consists of
30 the Kuskokwim River drainage down stream from and
31 including the Moose Creek drainage on the north bank
32 and down stream from and including the Stoney River
33 drainage on the south bank excluding 19B.

34
35 The proposed regulation would be,
36 reflecting what the State Board of Game has done, is
37 19A consists of the Kuskokwim River drainage down
38 stream from and including the George River and down
39 stream from and including the Downey River -- or Downey
40 Creek drainage. 19E, which is an additional subunit
41 consists of the Kuskokwim River drainage up stream from
42 and excluding the George River drainage and up stream
43 from and including the Downey Creek drainage.

44
45 This proposal is being submitted
46 because the Alaska Board of Game divided Game
47 Management Unit 19 into two separate subunits. This
48 regulatory change would align Federal boundaries with
49 State boundaries to reduce regulatory complexity.

50

0135

1 And so I appreciate the outline of this
2 proposal.

3
4 So the Chair would like to entertain a
5 motion to submit this as a Federal Subsistence Board
6 proposal. It's basically a housekeeping proposal. Do
7 we have a motion to submit this proposal as read into
8 the record.

9
10 MR. VENT: So moved.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Darrell.

13 Have a second.

14
15 MS. PELKOLA: Second the motion.

16
17 MR. KRISKA: Second.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny second. So
20 any further discussion on this regulatory need.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny's called the
27 question on the proposal. Those in favor of submitting
28 this proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board signify
29 by saying aye.

30
31 IN UNISON: Aye.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same.....

34
35 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

36
37 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:sign.

40
41 (No opposing votes)

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those are ayes. So
44 I have to wait a little longer. So I recognize your
45 affirmatives as supporting the regulation for
46 submission. Thank you.

47
48 So let's see. There's.....

49
50

0136

1 MR. VENT: Hey, Jack, I got a question.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

4

5 MR. VENT: You know a lot of the
6 communities and tribes, they got allotments over there,
7 and when they made decisions on these allotments, I
8 always ask this -- they're always asking me, you know,
9 is it legal to hunt on these allotments and those are
10 considered private lands.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

13

14 MR. VENT: And in order to review, or
15 go back to try to figure out, you know, our people, you
16 know, they want to know if I can hunt in my back yard
17 and I can't really answer that for them because I don't
18 know where their allotment ends or anything like that.
19 Because in order to be legal, you have to be outside
20 the allotment. Is that correct?

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No -- well, not
23 under Federal -- under Federal regulations allotments
24 fall under State regulations. So if there's a special
25 Federal regulation, the allotment is actually
26 considered State land. It'd be like if it were State
27 -- if there were State properties there. So
28 corporation lands and allotments and State lands, those
29 fall under State jurisdiction. But Federal lands that
30 are surrounding -- if there's a special regulation and
31 the allotment is 160 acres and it's all opened around
32 it, they could hunt outside of their allotment, right
33 close to their allotment, but they couldn't hunt -- but
34 if the State season is open, you can hunt on your
35 allotment just like you can anywheres else. It's not
36 closed, if it's open under State regulations.

37

38 MR. VENT: Okay. Well, under
39 controlled use areas, would that same thing apply?

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Under the controlled
42 use area as long as they access the area with like no
43 aircraft, or whatever the restriction is in the
44 controlled use area, they still would be able to hunt.
45 Like if the season is open, Koyukuk Flats is all open
46 under State regulations, the allotments are open
47 equitably so you can hunt on the allotment, no problem.

48

49 MR. VENT: Okay.

50

0137

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's only when
2 there's special Federal regulations they don't apply to
3 the allotments or the Native Corp lands. All those
4 corp lands around Huslia are not open unless it's --
5 under Federal regulations unless there's a State hunt.
6 So like this winter hunt only applies to the Federal
7 lands, not the corp lands around Huslia. It's the same
8 thing that applies to the allotments.

9

10 So any further questions about that,
11 State and Federal jurisdictions.

12

13 MR. VENT: (Shakes head negatively)

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. So there's --
16 we're under Federal wildlife proposals. And so I -- we
17 made that special action request and the -- the Western
18 Arctic Caribou Herd Work Group is going to submit a
19 Federal proposal for the entire Western Arctic Caribou
20 Herd's range so we don't have to address that because
21 that will come forward next year in our fall
22 deliberations on those proposals and the Federal
23 Subsistence Board will deliberate that in April of
24 2024.

25

26 MR. VENT: Is that E.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again?

29

30 MR. VENT: Is that E or?

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're on E,
33 that's what we're under, Federal wildlife proposals.

34

35 MR. VENT: Okay.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any Council
38 members have issues that would relate to submitting
39 proposals to the Federal Subsistence Board. Tim or
40 Tommy, Jenny, Darrell.

41

42 MR. VENT: I just had a question on
43 those allotments, that's all I had.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: No, not -- no thanks,
48 this is Tim.

49

50

0138

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that you, Tim.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I said, no, I don't
4 have anything to bring up to the Federal Subsistence
5 Board.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any Federal
8 proposals, Tommy.

9

10 MR. KRISKA: No.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'm -- as you
13 well know, I am concerned about the sheep in the Brooks
14 Range. And currently within the Gates of the Arctic
15 Park there is a -- the current regulation for 24A and
16 24B in the Park is three sheep, no more than one of
17 which may be a ewe. And so I'm -- the harvest is very
18 low but I will state for the record I'm concerned about
19 that level of even ram harvest and even one ewe. But
20 the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission
21 is going to meet in -- like the 18th, 19th of April,
22 and so I think that the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence
23 Resource Commission should actually address this issue,
24 but I will state for the record for the RAC, I'm still
25 concerned about the low levels of dall sheep and the
26 recovery of the dall sheep. Because we just -- we got
27 another deep snow year. Like I said rain and -- it
28 rained an inch and a half in early October with snow on
29 the mountains and so the sheep went into winter with
30 rain on top, but then we went for a dry snow after that
31 so it's not layered and so I -- I just wanted to put
32 that on the record.

33

34 Nissa.

35

36 MS. PILCHER: Just to clarify, the
37 Federal Subsistence Board proposals will be due on the
38 12th and the SRC isn't going to meet until the 18th so
39 they won't be meeting until after.....

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay.

42

43 MS. PILCHER:the proposals are
44 due.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, we
47 should put it on the table. So the -- I would like to
48 submit a proposal then -- I would have liked to have
49 deliberated it more with the Gates of the Arctic

50

0139

1 Subsistence -- but they'll have a chance to comment on
2 it.

3
4 I'd like to submit a proposal to reduce
5 the bag limit from three sheep, no more than one of
6 which may be a ewe to one ram in the Gates of the
7 Arctic Park under Federal subsistence -- one ram -- not
8 a curl or -- just one ram, to drop back into protection
9 mode for this sheep population.

10

11 So that would be the proposal.

12

13 So -- which is Units 24A and 26B,
14 excluding the Anaktuvuk Pass resident portion, which
15 there's another whole hunt described for them in the
16 Upper John River, within the Gates of the Arctic
17 National Park, no more than -- right now it's currently
18 three sheep, no more than one may be a ewe by Federal
19 registration permit SF -- FS2411, only. I would like
20 to change the FS2411 permit to reflect that no more
21 than -- the bag limit will be one ram.

22

23 This -- and so this permit is required
24 -- exception -- sorry, for Alatna and Allakaket who
25 will report by National Park Service community harvest
26 system, so they -- they hunt sheep up there, they
27 didn't want to have the permit and so those communities
28 we agreed would harvest under the Gates of the Arctic,
29 context, the tribal council, to find out what kind of
30 harvest happened for Allakaket and Alatna.

31

32 So that's the proposal -- the proposed
33 language. Do we have a motion to submit that proposal.

34

35 MR. VENT: It would be, what proposal,
36 No. 23-07?

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We don't know what
39 the -- OSM will assign it a number. I just threw out a
40 number awhile ago.

41

42 MR. VENT: Okay.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Brian.

45

46 MR. UBELAKER: I would like to clarify,
47 I believe what my pea brain heard was you said 24A and
48 26B?

49

50

0140

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, correction,
2 yeah, I meant -- my mouth was speaking incorrectly, 24A
3 and 24B, which is in the -- I'm reading out of the
4 Federal subsistence book, excluding the Anaktuvuk Pass
5 residents, that portion within the Gates of the Arctic
6 National Park, the new bag limit will read, one ram by
7 Federal subsistence registration permit FS2411, except
8 for the residents of Alatna and Allakaket, who will
9 report by National Park Service's community harvest
10 system. That's the regulatory change.

11

12 Thanks for that clarification, Brian, I
13 appreciate that.

14

15 So it's strictly for 24A and 24B. That
16 would be the proposal. Are you making that motion,
17 Darrell.

18

19 MR. VENT: Yes, I'm making a motion for
20 that.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Darrell makes
23 the motion. Do we have a second.

24

25 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.
28 Further discussion.

29

30 MS. PILCHER: Did you want to add
31 Northwest.....

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, that's Anaktuvuk
34 and I want Northwest Arctic -- or North Slope Regional
35 Advisory Council to deal with that. So I'm not dealing
36 with Anaktuvuk Pass because they fall within the North
37 Slope Regional Advisory Council's area and they can
38 deal with their own issues because I don't want to -- I
39 included them in the Dalton Highway Corridor area in
40 that closure because they don't actually utilize that
41 area that much and so WIRAC had to take the front on
42 that.

43

44 So the motion is on the table.

45

46 Further discussion, Darrell.

47

48 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just wanted to note
49 that I know some guys went up hunting around Alatna and

50

0141

1 Allakaket area and they weren't really successful, it's
2 a lot more harder it seems like to be catching up in
3 the area because I know they went up there and they
4 were up there for like five days and they weren't very
5 successful there.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's become really
8 hard to find sheep. I used to go out and find like
9 bunches.....

10
11 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:of sheep just
14 all over the place. Now you can go -- I hunted all
15 fall and I can't stop myself when I'm moose hunting,
16 from looking at the mountains, I went all the way to
17 the head of the Diettrich River, all the way down below
18 Coldfoot, I saw four sheep. All fall. I look at the
19 hills a lot. The sheep are way back. I know they're
20 there. In the spring I found them all aggregated but
21 they're -- they're really hard to find and they're not
22 that plentiful.

23
24 MR. VENT: Uh-huh. Yeah.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's -- so
27 we're going to take -- call for question on submitting
28 that proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board
29 regarding dall sheep.

30
31 MR. VENT: Question.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
34 Those in favor of submitting the proposal signify by
35 saying aye.

36
37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38
39 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, Tommy.

42
43 MR. GERVAIS: Aye in support.

44
45 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We got all
48 Council members affirmative on that.

49
50

0142

1 Any other issues the Council feels
2 could be addressed with the Federal Subsistence Board.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't think so.

7
8 Nissa.

9
10 MS. PILCHER: One thing to say as a
11 reminder is Brian did touch on those closure reviews
12 earlier. And if I bumble this, please, someone jump in
13 and stop me. So one of the things that could happen if
14 -- so the Federal Subsistence Board is going to talk
15 about the closure reviews, if they decide to take any
16 down, or remove them basically.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

19
20 MS. PILCHER: This would be an
21 opportunity to put in a proposal to change how that
22 hunt structure could be if that closure is removed, so
23 basically adding side bars to the hunt. Not saying
24 that you guys need to do anything, not saying that the
25 closures will be removed.....

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

28
29 MS. PILCHER:I'm just saying that
30 this is an opportunity and why we structured it so that
31 the closure reviews were discussed at kind of the same
32 time that proposals were.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that would
35 sort of allude to this Kanuti closure review. So the
36 State season addresses -- we went through a lot of work
37 with the State to develop that hunt scenario, antlered
38 bulls, only, from December 15 to April 15. The
39 regulation addresses what our concerns are, we do not
40 need a -- we don't have to do anything because we have
41 a coinciding Federal and State hunt right now and so I
42 don't feel that we need to submit any kind of Federal
43 remedy at this time regarding that.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: Okay.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think we've
48 covered the Federal proposal aspects. And so should we
49 have a potty break here, Nissa -- so we could have like
50

0143

1 a -- so right now it's about 3:40, if we come back on
2 record at 3:50, 3:55, 15 minutes break and we'll come
3 back on record at 3:55.

4

5 (Off record)

6

7 (On record)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we're going to
10 come back on record. Are you there Tim and Tommy.

11

12 MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there, Tim.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So anyway we're
19 going to reconvene.

20

21 So we've dropped down to call for State
22 of Alaska, Board of Game wildlife proposals, and this
23 call goes through May 1. And so this is region --
24 Interior Region, Western Arctic -- Arctic Western
25 region, so that would be Game Management Units 19, 20,
26 21, 24, 25, 26B, 26C, 18, 22, 23 and 26A. So in your
27 yellow binder -- and did this get out to our other
28 Council members?

29

30 MS. PILCHER: Tim, not Tom.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Tim got this
33 agenda change request that I've written for dall sheep
34 to the Board of Game. And then because this -- this is
35 a regional call, the agenda change request that you
36 have in your packet, which is this, is a Statewide
37 request, and this is a statewide issue and it really
38 should be addressed by the Board of Game as a statewide
39 issue. It's all of this stuff here.

40

41 Basically it's to eliminate hunters
42 counting rings on dall sheep to be able to harvest and
43 that's what we need to -- needs to be eliminated to
44 address this sub-legal take, or killing immature rams
45 is what it's actually doing. But we should also Okay.
46 if the Board doesn't take it up as an ACR, agenda
47 change request, they're going to have to sit down with
48 the Board -- do they sit with the Board of Fish and
49 Board of Game sits together and they take up agenda
50

0144

1 change requests at the same time or?

2

3 MS. PILCHER: No, agenda change
4 requests are just through one board or the other, so
5 this would just be through the Board of Game.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One board or the
8 other. So they have from July 1 to November 1 they're
9 going to take these agenda change requests so if we
10 adopt this to submit, Nissa will submit it after July 1
11 and then the Board will be able to deliberate whether
12 they want to take it up.

13

14 REPORTER: Jack.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So this agenda
17 change request -- excuse me, my mic was off.

18

19 (Teleconference interference -
20 participants not muted)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This agenda change
23 request.....

24

25 REPORTER: Hold on. Hold on Jack. It
26 looks like the phone just cut out.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The phone cut out.

29

30 (Pause)

31

32 REPORTER: Go ahead.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we just found out
35 that the call had dropped so we're back online, can
36 everybody on the call hear me?

37

38 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me
41 Tommy and Tim?

42

43 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

44

45 MR. KRISKA: Yes.

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: I lost you for about 10
48 seconds.

49

50

0145

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay, we're
2 good. So we're reviewing an agenda change request
3 proposal that I wrote for the consideration of the
4 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council and I state
5 the regulatory language of the 5 AAC 92.99 90 -- 990
6 (indiscernible) (a) (b) (c) definition of a full curl --
7 or a legal ram. It allows full curl, 360 degrees of
8 curl, both horns broken or counting rings to eight
9 years of age.

10

11 (Teleconference interference -
12 participants not muted)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What is the prob --
15 and under 2, what is the problem you would like the
16 Board to address and state, in detail, the nature of
17 the current problem. Address only one issue.

18

19 Most of the -- and this is the language
20 submitted as justification or the discussion of the
21 issue.

22

23 (Teleconference interference -
24 participants not muted)

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Most of the current
27 statewide dall sheep populations are far below
28 historical carrying capacity. Rain on snow with late
29 springs in 2012 and '13 as well as multiple subsequent
30 winters have decimated multiple cohorts. Most ram
31 groups do not have full curl or both horns broken to
32 choose from. Those cohorts are missing right now.

33

34 The only option currently legally
35 allowed if there are no full curl or broomed rams in
36 the group is to count rings at a distance. Most
37 hunters, even professional biologists can mistakenly
38 count eight rings on a three-quarter and 7/8ths rams on
39 the mountainside, which would not be full curl. Many
40 hunters cannot age sheep when in hand, and this is
41 documented on Facebook on the sheep page, hunters will
42 put up a sheep and say how old is it and the hunters
43 are all over the map and most of them are 60 to 80
44 percent of the time are wrong, they still can't count
45 sheep when it's laying five feet in front of the
46 camera, so this is a real issue.

47

48 This is documented with the high
49 numbers of young rams being seized by the Department at
50

0146

1 sealing, so they're taking sheep in that are three-
2 quarter curl and they're not legal rings, they're not
3 eight rings. The mistaken count of a annuli and the
4 loss of the very few young recruiting breeding rams is
5 of critical concern to the sustainability of sheep
6 population recovery. Very few rams do not achieve true
7 full curl or break both horns within their life spans
8 to become true full curl legal.

9

10 What solution would you prefer.

11

12 The proposed regulatory change would
13 repeal and eliminate Criteria C statewide that states:
14 sheep is -- the sheep is at least eight years of age as
15 determined from horn growth annuli 5 AAC Code 92.90990,
16 so that basically would eliminate counting of rings in
17 the field and so basically that's the up shot.

18

19 So it's a non-allocatory issue.

20

21 State in detail how this ACR meets the
22 criteria as stated above.

23

24 Under (c), does the request identify a
25 biological concern of the population, or a threat to
26 meeting objectives for the population.

27

28 The mistake of -- here's the meets the
29 biological criteria for an agenda change request. The
30 mistaken over count of annuli of rams not meeting full
31 curl or both horns broken causes hunters to take a
32 chance that the sheep is legal. Many times they are
33 not. The loss of the very few, young recruiting
34 breeding rams is of critical concern to the
35 sustainability of the dall sheep population's recovery.
36 This issue needs to be addressed statewide. This
37 change will have little effect to hunter harvest where
38 mature rams will be taken with true full curl or both
39 horns broken.

40

41 What will happen if this problem is not
42 solved before the next regulatory cycle.

43

44 Dall sheep rams younger than eight
45 years of age, which are typically three-quarter to just
46 under full curl will continue to be killed by mistaken
47 hunters guessing at ripples on horns at a distance.
48 Hunters need to have a clear regulation that only
49 allows true full curl harvest.

50

0147

1 And this would be submitted -- so --
2 oh, there's some other things here on the third page.

3
4 State why your ACR is not predominately
5 allocative, because it's not allocating at all. It's
6 strictly defining a legal animal.

7
8 State the involvement -- state your
9 involvement in this issue that is the subject of the
10 ACR.

11
12 The Western Interior Regional Advisory
13 Council has members that are sheep hunters as well as
14 many public individuals that hunt sheep within the
15 region. Many residents have deep concerns to help
16 bring the sheep populations back to carrying capacity
17 with true sustained yield harvest of only full curl
18 rams.

19
20 State whether this ACR has been
21 considered before either as a proposal or as an ACR, if
22 so, during which Board of Game meeting.

23
24 The recent additional dall sheep
25 population declined with data to identify them below
26 carrying capacity as well as the take of several
27 illegal sub-full curl rams could not have been proposed
28 last regulatory cycle. It is critical to address this
29 issue statewide through the ACR process.

30
31 And so that's the end of the ACR
32 proposal. I had to read it into the record because
33 some of our Council members didn't actually have the
34 document in hand because I was so busy I just finished
35 that one.

36
37 So the Chair would like to entertain a
38 motion -- I added additional -- some data from the
39 composition surveys done in the Atigun River at the
40 end. The Chair would like to entertain a motion to
41 submit this ACR to the Board of Game for an agenda
42 change request.

43
44 MS. PELKOLA: So moved.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

47
48 MR. VENT: Second.

49
50

0148

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrell.
2 Further discussion.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tommy or Tim, any
7 discussion.

8
9 (No comments)

10
11 MS. PELKOLA: I have something.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

14
15 MS. PELKOLA: I don't know how to word
16 it but this one part where you say something about the
17 curl I don't really understand the curl and stuff like
18 that but.....

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I can.....

21
22 MS. PELKOLA:do you have research
23 or something to back it up like?

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the research
26 -- it's the regulations, the Board of Game regulations
27 are here, and in the regulation book it shows what
28 we're talking about, on Page 33 of your regulation
29 book.

30
31 MS. PELKOLA: Which one?

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not this one, the
34 State Board of Game regulations, the other one that's
35 got the little boat on it. So on Page 33 of your State
36 regulation book it shows the three criteria laid out in
37 little pictures.

38
39 So the first one, which we're not
40 eliminating the first one, is the full curl, which
41 shows the horn going all the way around from the base
42 all the way to the tip.

43
44 The next one is both horns broken,
45 which we're not wanting to get rid of that either
46 because they do break off their horns.

47
48 What I don't agree with is the third
49 picture showing these rings, or these annuli. Most
50

0149

1 hunters, they don't know which ripple is what and
2 they're killing sheep that are sub-legal chronically.
3 It's become a chronic issue.

4

5 And then the State Board of Game
6 reviewed -- the Department of Fish and Game presented
7 on October 19 overlapping with the WIRAC meeting a long
8 presentation to the Board of Game and they showed, as
9 an example, a three-quarter curl ram, which would never
10 be legal under -- if we eliminate the counting of
11 rings, but the hunters had decided that it was eight
12 years of age and, of course, wasn't. This was not an
13 unusual event. This is becoming more common as large
14 adult rams that weren't born in 2012, '13 and '14 or
15 are eliminated through bad winters are not present, so
16 hunters come up to a bunch of young rams, oh, I guess
17 that one must be eight years old, and shoot it. This
18 is a big problem.

19

20 This is what this proposal addresses.

21

22 MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's the
25 graphic photos, or pictures that we're discussing.

26

27 MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions
30 or comments.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We need a call for
35 question.

36

37 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

38

39 MR. VENT: Question.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
42 submitting agenda change request to the State Board of
43 Game eliminating Criteria C for assessing a full -- a
44 legal dall sheep ram, signify by saying aye.

45

46 IN UNISON: Aye.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.....

49

50

0150

1 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:same sign.

4

5 Okay, we got Tim, and Tommy, do we got
6 ayes out of you guys.

7

8 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we're good.

11

12 So I would like to submit for the
13 regional call, which we're talking about, the Board of
14 Game has now a call for proposals through May 1 to have
15 a regional -- regionwide proposal that says exactly the
16 same thing as this ACR except it applies only to Game
17 Management Units 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, 26C and 18,
18 22, 23 and 26A. If the Board does not -- adopt this
19 ACR then they don't have to address a proposal at the
20 regional meeting which will be in March of 2024. And
21 so I would like to submit the exact same proposal but
22 as a proposal for these -- the regional call.

23

24 Is that clear, Nissa?

25

26 MS. PILCHER: (Nods affirmatively)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nissa used to be
29 Board support so she knows what I'm talking about.

30

31 So we would basically submit exactly
32 the same language for the ACR, except it would be more
33 defined for the regions that are open for call for
34 proposals.

35

36 So the Chair will entertain a motion to
37 submit a regional proposal stating the same thing as
38 the ACR but it will be for the regional call which will
39 be up on May 1.

40

41 MS. PELKOLA: So moved.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

44

45 MR. VENT: Second.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrell.
48 Basically the same discussion, same justification.

49

50

0151

1 Any further comments. You have any
2 comments Tim or Tommy.

3
4 MR. KRISKA: No comment for Tom.

5
6 MR. GERVAIS: No.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So call for
9 question.

10
11 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
14 Those in favor of submitting a proposal -- a regional
15 proposal for the described game management units to
16 eliminate Criteria C from definition of an adult legal
17 ram signify by saying aye.

18
19 IN UNISON: Aye.

20
21 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.

24
25 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we have one
28 aye -- I think that was Tommy, is that -- are you
29 there, Tim.

30
31 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this is Tim, I had
32 an aye for affirmative.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And you too,
35 Tommy.

36
37 MR. KRISKA: Aye for affirmative.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good. So
40 that's those proposals.

41
42 MS. PILCHER: Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Nissa.

45
46 MS. PILCHER: There was some discussion
47 earlier about a Board of Fish agenda change request
48 about net fathom depth but I only bring that up if
49 we're done with the wildlife proposals.

50

0152

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So give me one
2 moment here. I have to look at the Board of -- the
3 State regulations so let me look in here real quick.
4 There may be one more proposal.

5
6 (Pause)

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sorry.

9
10 (Pause)

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nope, I think we're
13 good on that one. So, okay, so then Darrell was
14 talking about, during the discussion at the Board of
15 Fish, about limiting seine net gear to a certain depth
16 for avoidance of chum salmon and chinook salmon and so
17 were you on that -- involved in that -- or listening to
18 that conversation also, Tim, about this seine net depth
19 for Area M?

20
21 MR. GERVAIS: I wasn't -- I wasn't
22 involved with that conversation with Board of Fish,
23 however, I believe the regulation we should propose is
24 for Area M to have a maximum allowable net depth in the
25 200 -- 225, that's two whole strips of net plus 25 so
26 maximum net depth of 225 and then I'd need to figure
27 out some kind of language to apply when the chum
28 migration is moving around Unimak Island, that would be
29 during June and Jun -- Jul -- or June and July
30 fisheries in Area M.

31
32 So let me start again.

33
34 Maximum allowable seine depth of 225
35 meshes for June and July in Area M.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And that's
38 pretty much what's your understanding also Darrell.

39
40 MR. VENT: Yeah. And just could you
41 explain how long those nets were, I mean those nets
42 were pretty good in size, long.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you know the
45 length of the gear there Tim, that's like 150 fathom
46 gear or?

47
48 MR. GERVAIS: What's your question
49 again, Jack?

50

0153

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Length of the gear,
2 is that 150 fathom seines there?

3

4 MR. GERVAIS: Oh, no, I'd have to look
5 at a reg book on Area M. I imagine they're net length
6 is 250 or 245 but I wasn't going to address the length
7 at all.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Just address the depth in
12 an effort for chum salmon conservation.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Understood.
15 That would be quite a leap to try to restrict the gear
16 length but the depth. I think if the seine community
17 was actually discussing it, I think they are
18 understanding that they could actually live with
19 something like that, to try to avoid chum and chinook
20 that swim deeper in the profile.

21

22 So would you like to state this -- this
23 will be an ACR to the State Board of Fish, would you
24 like to state that clearly for the record, again, Tim,
25 so that we could have that on record and then submit
26 that for an agenda change request which will be --
27 they're also between July 1 and November 1 -- Nissa.

28

29 MS. PILCHER: I believe it's 60 days
30 before the First Board of Fish meeting so there's a
31 little bit more time there, but it would be sometime
32 this summer or early fall.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it would be --
35 yes, it would be still a lag before we could submit it,
36 but we will submit it when it becomes appropriate to
37 the State Board of Fish to address this issue. And if
38 you could work with Nissa on the justification language
39 I would appreciate that, about the profile of where the
40 fish actually swim in the water column for those
41 various species like sockeye are fairly close to the
42 surface. The intended species of harvest is the 6.2
43 percent of the Bristol Bay sockeye, that's what they're
44 supposed to be after. So can you work with Nissa on
45 the justification language for the ACR, Tim?

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I will.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, okay. So

50

0154

1 basically the intention of the proposal is to avoid
2 incidental harvest mortalities of chinook and chum
3 salmon in the Area M fishery.

4

5 So would you like to make that motion
6 to submit that ACR Tim, or Darrell.

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, so.....

9

10 MR. VENT: Second.

11

12 MR. GERVAIS:moved.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Tim,
15 seconded by Darrell. And further discussion. Any
16 further discussion, Tim.

17

18 MR. GERVAIS: No, just in talking with
19 a bunch of different seiners and their parts of the
20 Kodiak, Chignik and Area M, everybody seems in
21 agreement a good method of chum conservation is by
22 limiting the seine depth to 200, 225 but I'm putting
23 the proposal in at 225 because that -- when you build a
24 net it usually comes in -- the web comes in strips of
25 100 meshes and you add them together, so to make it
26 simple to build a net, 225 is the appropriate length to
27 not have it be a hard net to build.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What's the current
30 depths that are being fished?

31

32 MR. GERVAIS: I'd have to look at a reg
33 book. I could give you that information tomorrow
34 morning, I don't have that in front of me today.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, no problem.
37 So go ahead Darrell.

38

39 MR. VENT: No, what he's talking about
40 is the length and what we're -- that's the depth, or?

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He's talking about
43 depth.

44

45 MR. VENT: Okay. So he wants 225 at
46 the depth?

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

49

50

0155

1 MR. VENT: Okay. Just to clarify that
2 because he started saying length and depth and I got
3 kind of turned around there.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, it's the depth
6 of where the salmon are swimming and so the net comes
7 in 100 foot -- 100 mesh depths.....

8
9 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:so two of those
12 would be -- you don't want to make it burdensome to
13 where the seiners go, no, we don't want that depth, you
14 know we can't make the net, we can't cut our gear like
15 that so we want to make it to where the seiners will
16 actually -- are talking about conserving chum and if we
17 want to move forward with this issue, because nothing
18 is happening at the Board of Fish so far. So we.....

19
20 MR. VENT: So in that language maybe
21 they can include about, you know, that net when it's
22 hitting the bottom there, that would be probably one of
23 the reasons that.....

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, that's trawl
26 gear and they're diving that gear way underneath the
27 water. That's a completely different net, that's a
28 mid-water -- it's supposed to be a mid-water trawl and
29 they're just sinking that net all the way to the bottom
30 of the ocean and so that's a completely different
31 thing. Seiners, basically encircle.....

32
33 MR. VENT: They circle them.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:and then if the
36 meshes aren't deep enough then they won't actually --
37 when they purse they're not -- they're catching mostly
38 sockeye off the top and hardly any of the chums or
39 kings will be on the surface.

40
41 MR. VENT: Okay. That expl -- that
42 explains it because I know they were talking about that
43 over on the eastern side, they had these escapement --
44 or escape -- escape openings for the fish that usually
45 try to get them out of that net so you don't have to
46 pull them up.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, those are the
49 trawl nets and that has an escape hatch on the top so
50

0156

1 they can -- so they can escape and it works pretty well
2 for chinook, it doesn't work real well for chums.

3

4 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, so that's all
7 good discussion to have on the record. We're totally
8 find with that, the more talk the better.

9

10 So that would be the proposal -- ACR
11 proposal to submit to the Board of Fish regarding the
12 Area M net strips for fishing for -- during the June
13 and July fishery and Tim will finalize that language
14 with Nissa to be submitted during the call for ACR for
15 the Board of Fish.

16

17 Any further discussion.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MR. VENT: Question.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
24 Those in favor of submitting the ACR for Area M for net
25 depth for seine fishery signify by saying aye.

26

27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28

29 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

30

31 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good. Those
34 opposed, same sign. None.

35

36 (Laughter)

37

38 (No opposing votes)

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I get to
41 rattling, sorry about that. And so we -- let's see I
42 think that covers our State proposal, fish and wildlife
43 -- or game proposals, rather. So we'll go -- moving
44 down, we're down to Council charter review.

45

46 Nissa.

47

48 MS. PILCHER: All right. Thank you,
49 Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. For the record my

50

0157

1 name is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator with OSM.

2

3 Your Council's 2021 charter can be
4 found on Page 160 in your meeting book, that's that
5 black comb-bound book.

6

7 All 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory
8 Councils were chartered under the Federal Advisory
9 Committee Act, also known as FACA. Under the Act, each
10 Council charter needs to be renewed every two years, so
11 approximately a year before it is renewed each Council
12 can have a discussion to see if there's anything you
13 want to change.

14

15 Some of the changes made to the
16 charters over the past four years include language on
17 carryover terms, which allows the Council members to
18 continue to serve on the Council if a new round of
19 appointments have not been made before the winter
20 Council meetings.

21

22

23 Another change in language added a
24 clause on out of cycle alternate appointments that
25 allows vacated seats to be filled by previous years
26 applicants, if there was enough.

27

28 These two language additions hopefully
29 allow less vacant seats on the Council during meeting
30 cycles.

31

32 While most of the language currently in
33 the charter is required by FACA and it's implementing
34 policies and cannot be changed, the Council can request
35 to make modifications to their charter on such things
36 as the Council name, how many seats make up your
37 Council, how frequent your Council meets, or the
38 request for a youth seat on a Council, which a couple
39 of the Councils have done over the last couple years.

40

41 If the Council would like to make a
42 request for modification you would need to provide
43 justification for the modification. This request would
44 then go to the InterAgency Staff Committee, then the
45 Federal Subsistence Board and then on to the Secretary
46 of Interior and Agriculture for their approval.

47

48 Please let me know if your Council
49 would like to vote to retain the current charter as
50

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1 written or vote to request a modification at this time.

2

3

4 This is an action item.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So have there been
7 any other Councils addressing issues that we should be
8 aware of?

9

10 MS. PILCHER: Not that I'm aware of.
11 The only one that seems like -- several Councils have
12 added -- and I shouldn't say, several, a couple, is the
13 request for a youth seat. I think Eastern Interior
14 recently adopted language they -- instead of calling it
15 a youth seat I believe it's five or six different words
16 so it's more complicated than just saying a youth seat.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

19

20 MS. PILCHER: But that's the added --
21 and Western Interior -- one of the other things that's
22 been -- seems like is becoming more common is a request
23 for geographic diversity, which your Council already
24 has and, of course, it's based on the applicant pool we
25 receive.....

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

28

29 MS. PILCHER:and not necessarily
30 what we'd like.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So the
33 Council could request a youth seat to encourage youth
34 participation?

35

36 MS. PILCHER: They sure could. And I
37 don't know exactly what the Eastern Interior's seat
38 looks like.

39

40 MR. VENT: I think when we were over at
41 TCC they were calling them merging.....

42

43 REPORTER: Darrell, microphone. Mic.

44

45 MR. VENT:leaders.

46

47 MS. PELKOLA: You need to turn your mic
48 on.

49

50

0159

1 REPORTER: Turn your mic on.

2

3 MR. VENT: Oh. What they were saying
4 was it it's called emerging leaders.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

7

8 MR. VENT: It's just, you know, they
9 try to give them a good -- you know a name that
10 they'll.....

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

13

14 MR. VENT:you know, kind of
15 sticks in their head so.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we used to
18 have a Chairman of this Council, Tom -- or Ron Sam, he
19 told me when he was a kid, he was like running around
20 playing and all the elders in the community said it,
21 and he was a smart kid, so they told him you're not
22 going to run around and play when we're having
23 meetings, you're going to come to meetings and you're
24 going to learn how to be a leader. So you see the
25 Doyon Board forming membership, there's Ron, because he
26 was trained as a kid to be a leader. So I'm way into
27 this emerging leader thing, and I like that terminology
28 and so we should use that.

29

30 So the emerging leader, there should be
31 a seat of a young emerging leader at this table, or to
32 be listen to how the process works and it will help,
33 hopefully, with our membership as they move -- they
34 soon will be adults and so that would be a great thing.

35

36 Did they set age criteria to that, and
37 the selection process, is there any kind of Councils
38 that -- oh, go ahead there, Darrell.

39

40 MR. VENT: I think it was maybe 16 to
41 22 or something like that. Just because they wanted,
42 you know, these younger ones that have -- you know,
43 they have Alaska Native studies and everything in there
44 for ANILCA and ANCSA and they wanted them to better
45 understand what the process is because when we sit here
46 on this, you know, there's a lot of regulations and
47 proposals and everything that we have to go through and
48 they want them to kind of get a head's up from starting
49 when they're at that age, in school, and they're

50

0160

1 hearing all this information on ANCSA and they can ask
2 all these questions.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

5

6 MR. VENT: So I think that was
7 something why they said 16. I'm not sure why the
8 reason was though.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

11

12 MR. VENT: But I think it was something
13 like that, then 22, because by then they should be
14 ready to start working with the community.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. And the
17 recommendation process, is there, like the principals
18 of the schools, or the tribal council, or who's making
19 the recommendations?

20

21 MR. VENT: Well, right now it's working
22 with TCC in the Hunting and Fishing Task Force, we have
23 an elder and I think a lot of the other -- we have an
24 elder that advise and then we also have the youth and
25 then we were having a tough time filling that youth
26 spot so we had to start a program and, that, emerging
27 leaders came in, they started working with them and I
28 think they got about maybe 12 of them now.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, they do.

31

32 MR. VENT: Yeah, they have quite a bit
33 -- they have a pool there, and they probably -- if we
34 could try to maybe get a suggestion from Ben Stevens or
35 one of them to see who would he -- you know, who they
36 would recommend, and they'd choose -- those young
37 people, they choose who would be able to -- a good one
38 to sit on this board so maybe that might be.....

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They vote among
41 themselves, that's -- they vote among themselves?

42

43 MR. VENT: Yeah. Yeah, well, they want
44 somebody to represent who -- like not talk too much or
45 maybe being calm or something.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: TCC is a big region
48 so there would be youth emerging leaders that would be
49 in our -- that are from our region, so they should be

50

0161

1 from like one of our councils, or areas from our
2 Council's region.

3

4 MR. VENT: Well, I think we should, you
5 know, also consider that there's the Bethel area, too,
6 so if we do choose one from that area, maybe the
7 following year we should try to move it around and see
8 if we can.....

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, no, YK Delta
11 can get their own -- their own emerging leaders.

12

13 MR. VENT: Oh, okay.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would prefer to
16 draw from the pool that TCC has identified.....

17

18 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:and then those
21 emerging leaders, if they got six in Eastern and six in
22 Western, one of the Western leaders, emerging leaders
23 could come to this Council meeting. It wouldn't do
24 them any good to go to the YK Delta, I just don't -- I
25 think they should be still emersed in the region. How
26 do you feel on that Jenny?

27

28 MR. KRISKA: Mr. Chair.

29

30 MS. PELKOLA: I agree.

31

32 MR. VENT: Okay. Because I.....

33

34 MR. KRISKA: Mr. Chair.

35

36 MR. VENT:you know, I -- because
37 we.....

38

39 REPORTER: Jack. Jack, someone on the
40 phone wants to talk too.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, we got somebody
43 on the phone there.

44

45 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, this is Tom.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tom.

48

49 MR. KRISKA: I think that emerging --

50

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1 okay, I think that emerging leaders would be a great
2 start for a lot of these young ones and they do have 12
3 and we thought of that before, how could we get them to
4 sit in on some of these meetings because it would be a
5 big plus and they're really interested and there's some
6 from a lot of different areas which is good for -- you
7 know, for if this goes further into the future, they're
8 very interested in what we're doing. And like Darrell
9 said if you get a hold of the leader of all that, is
10 Shannon Earhart, of TCC, or Ben Stevens, and I think
11 that would be great if one of them could sit at these
12 meetings. And I'm going to go to a meeting with them
13 next week and I could bring that up to them.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I feel that,
16 you know, we -- just appointing one -- you know, we
17 need to have like at least two or three that are
18 identified and then we -- you know, like one would be
19 the primary and then we'd have alternates so we do have
20 attendance because if somebody can't come or they, oh,
21 I'm going to Yale this fall and I can't attend, well,
22 we need to have an alternate.

23

24 So go ahead, Darrell.

25

26 MR. VENT: Yeah, that is, you know,
27 something that we considered because when we go to
28 meetings, you know, we recognize the age group in that
29 meetings and it all seems to be -- even with our
30 corporations we started getting worried so we had to
31 invite more shareholders, you know, just to get more
32 participation in that level. Because like here in
33 these meetings here we're having a hard time, you know,
34 trying to fill these seats so this is one way that we
35 thought, you know, would be getting these seats filled
36 in these areas because people would be interested, they
37 know what they're talking about then. You know they
38 just don't want to go to a meeting and just sit there,
39 they want to participate but they don't know how.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

42

43 MR. VENT: So this would give them an
44 idea. And I think when you're saying that, you know,
45 well, one is a primary, well, TCC might be able to help
46 more with that because they want, you know, they want
47 like maybe two people to attend so they'd pay for
48 someone to come here just to sit with the other person
49 so it's like reinforcement for them so they could, you

50

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1 know, feel comfortable in these meetings. So it's
2 something that I think, you know, maybe if we discuss
3 with Ben or Nissa discusses with Ben and try to get
4 that kind of participation would be good.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Jenny.

7

8 MS. PELKOLA: I think Galena does that
9 with their school board. They have a student on there,
10 a student rep, and the student travels if the school
11 board travels.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

14

15 MS. PELKOLA: So I think it's a good
16 idea to have emerging leaders also on here. And that
17 way they learn and like Darrell said, if they come in
18 pairs I think they do better at a meeting.....

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

21

22 MS. PELKOLA:instead of sitting
23 with all -- all of us.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Right.

26

27 Nissa.

28

29 MS. PILCHER: I do believe when the
30 Eastern Interior was discussing this they were looking
31 at a younger age range but it was brought up that we
32 needed somebody at least 18 years old, in part, because
33 like the school board, the school would take
34 responsibility for them.....

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

37

38 MS. PILCHER:with this they would
39 have to go through the same nomination application and
40 interview process that the Council members would and
41 get appointed by the Secretary and then since they're
42 traveling we need them to be at least 18.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I see.

45

46 MS. PILCHER: For, I don't know, legal
47 purposes, or what not. So the Eastern Interior did
48 request, they call it a -- emergent leaders is a -- is
49 a good one but they said, honorary young adult

50

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1 developmental seat, is what they coined it as. And the
2 idea is that -- oop, I went too far, sorry, PDF.

3

4

5 The idea was that they'd attend
6 meetings, become familiar with how they're conducted,
7 Robert's Rules of Order, participate in discussion,
8 learn how to develop regulatory proposals and
9 recommendations. They'd be a permanent resident of the
10 Eastern Interior because, of course, this was their
11 request, and actively participate in subsistence
12 activities and hopefully -- or be studying a resource
13 management related field at some school. The call for
14 the applicants for the seat would be issued together
15 with the regular call for applicants for vacant and
16 expiring Council seats and the applicants would be
17 interviewed using the typical InterAgen -- InterAgency
18 nomination panel process with the InterAgency Staff
19 Committee making recommendations to the Board.

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1 MS. PELKOLA: Uh-huh.

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:we would
4 request their comments, they would participate with the
5 meeting. Just like the State of Alaska does, they're
6 not voting with the Federal Subsistence Board but
7 they're at the table participating and commenting.

8

9 MS. PELKOLA: Uh-huh.

10

11

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Because they might
12 have an aspect we didn't think about, you know, I -- I
13 think this is a positive thing. I think the call
14 should be -- you know the nomination process should be
15 the emerging leaders, or school boards and so forth,
16 maybe Galena's got an emerging leader that's not on the
17 TCC list, there should be a wider-based call. That
18 should be -- that also could be worked with the OSM
19 Native Liaison could work with various tribes on
20 submitting -- sending out the call for this emerging
21 leader seat.

22

23

So we would request two emerging leader
24 positions. We won't go along with OSM's, we'll just
25 stay with TCC has, where they would have to be in the
26 region, live within the region, participate in
27 subsistence or be involved in some fish and wildlife
28 management studies or at least interested.....

29

30 MR. KRISKA: Mr. Chair.

31

32

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, got another
33 comment there, go ahead, Tommy.

34

35

MR. KRISKA: Okay. Our emerging
36 leaders, they come to our meetings with us but they
37 have their own chaperons and supervisors that are with
38 them at all times. And I'm thinking that we don't --
39 you know like only one of the Fish and Game people that
40 are sitting in this meetings, maybe we just could
41 invite them to go to the meeting to see what it is,
42 rather than going through all kinds of -- you know,
43 just to get them -- to show them what we're doing
44 rather than getting them involved in through the whole
45 chain of command.

46

47

Thank you.

48

49

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you would foresee

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1 basically sending a request to Tanana Chiefs to
2 chaperon or be with the emergent leaders to attend
3 Western Interior Council meetings, not officially under
4 the OSM hat, but have -- be recognized as emergent
5 leaders at our table?

6
7 MR. KRISKA: Yes.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And Darrell.

10
11 MR. KRISKA: So that -- the thing is
12 it's all a learning process so they -- so they get
13 involved and then they can go through the thing with
14 the government or whatever they have to do and it's --
15 it's just a big training thing and you need that
16 because it's hard to find anybody, you know, like we
17 all know that it's hard to find members. So in the
18 future, you know, they'll probably be there.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nissa you got a
23 comment. Nissa.

24
25 MS. PILCHER: Yep. We may be looking
26 at two different things here. So one could be a
27 request to change your charter to include a youth seat,
28 however you want to call it.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

31
32 MS. PILCHER: And another could be you
33 guys could direct me to start conversation with TCC
34 about trying to get an emergent leader to come -- or
35 leaders to come to future Council meetings and
36 participate and basically laying out the welcome matt
37 saying you're welcome to come, we'd like you to
38 participate, you could have a seat at the table if you
39 -- like if the Council wanted, that kind of thing. So
40 that could be outside of -- outside of OSM. That could
41 be a.....

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: So you might be looking
46 at two different things and in which case you might get
47 three or four emergent leaders at the table.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrell.

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1 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just wanted to make
2 sure that you guys understand that these emergent
3 leaders, they're sitting in these classes with Ben's
4 wife there and they're going through ANILCA and ANCSA
5 and they're going through a lot of the Native history
6 so this is why they're sitting in there. They want
7 someone to get interested in how to participate in
8 these proposals, regulations, or any change requests or
9 anything like that. They have to understand, you know,
10 the whole process of why this all came along.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

13

14 MR. VENT: Because right now, you know,
15 when we look at it, compared to the Lower 48, you know,
16 they're saying how easy their process is down there
17 where ours is State, Federal, private, you know, we're
18 -- we're heavily regulated and it doesn't seem to be,
19 you know, given us the benefit, you know, our people as
20 for subsistence right now, you know, the way we're
21 looking at it.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

24

25 MR. VENT: But they -- you know, like
26 you're talking about, you know, okay we can go from 18
27 to 26 for here, but from Ben and them's side it's going
28 to be at a younger age, but we -- we want to do that
29 because, you know, by the time they get out of college
30 and, you know, maybe they don't have the time right now
31 when they're in college, like you're saying but when
32 they do have that time, maybe they were interested but
33 they couldn't really participate so we have to give
34 them the benefit of the doubt to get them into the
35 program in order to do that. So maybe we have to
36 extend that age limit because by the time they're out
37 of college maybe they'll be ready for it.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we could do
40 two things. We could have an emergent leaders seat but
41 we invite, or request through the Coordinator, we'll go
42 through TCC and draw from their pool of emergent
43 leaders so that they're invited to the meetings, so to
44 participate in the meeting and learn about the meeting
45 process but then they may be interested in being -- in
46 submitting a nomination request for a seat at this more
47 of a permanent emergent leader seat at our table.

48

49 Nissa.

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1 MS. PILCHER: One thing that was in
2 another paragraph that I didn't read off is that one of
3 the parts of your application process is kind of a
4 historic use pattern so let's say, someone that is 60
5 will score better on the application process than
6 someone that is 17 -- not 17, let's go with 21, just
7 because of.....

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

10
11 MS. PILCHER:the years they've
12 spent in the field.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

15
16 MS. PILCHER: And the way the Eastern
17 Interior worded their request was that that portion of
18 the application would be removed in these youth seats
19 so basically you wouldn't be worried about -- not
20 competing, but basically going up against an elder for
21 a seat because then the elder generally wins out.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

24
25 MS. PILCHER: So that's.....

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Tier II problems.

28
29 MS. PILCHER: Okay, I (indiscernible -
30 laughing)

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so we
33 need to take action on our charter. The charter so far
34 looks good but we would like to have this emergent
35 leader seat, we would also like to direct OSM -- our
36 OSM Staff Coordinator to work with TCC to invite
37 emergent leaders with their chaperon or whatever you
38 want to call those.....

39
40 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:and to
43 participate in our meetings also so that they can --
44 with the objective of including them in our discussions
45 and comments.

46
47 Darrell.

48
49 MR. VENT: Yeah, I like that idea

50

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1 because if they have the chaperon then, you know, this
2 legality thing that she's talking about, it kind of
3 goes along with that and then we could get them in
4 there at the younger age.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Do you have
7 any more comments Tommy or Tim.

8

9 MR. GERVAIS: Not right now, Jack.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And Tommy.

12

13 MR. KRISKA: No, not right now. That'd
14 be something good to look into, that's about all I
15 have.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so
18 Nissa's incorporating that into our charter discussion
19 and so I think we're pretty good with that, to include
20 an emerging leader seat plus inviting TCC to accompany
21 various emergent leaders to participate in our meetings
22 through commenting -- through our deliberation and
23 comments -- not deliberating but comments on the
24 various issues that we're discussing at this table.

25

26 That's what this Council's about, is a
27 forum to provide the ability for the public to comment.

28

29 So any other additions to this charter.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't think so,
34 other than that that we've stated. So I need a motion
35 to adopt the charter with the amendment for an emergent
36 leader seat. Go ahead, Darrell.

37

38 MR. VENT: I make a motion.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt by
41 Darrell.

42

43 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.
46 Do we have a call for question.

47

48 MR. VENT: Question.

49

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
2 Those in favor of adoption of our current charter with
3 the addition of the emergent leader seat and invite the
4 TCC signify by saying aye.

5
6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7
8 MR. KRISKA: Aye.

9
10 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that
13 covers that issue. So we got the review and approval
14 of the 2022 annual report is going to take kind of a
15 long time.

16
17 MS. PILCHER: You could just approve
18 it.

19
20 (Laughter)

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, no, there's
23 going to be some talk, there's going to be discussion
24 with that one. There's the sheep management plan that
25 I've developed, which is going to be part of our annual
26 report topics.

27
28 So at this point I would feel more
29 inclined, since it's only like 7 minutes until 5:00
30 that we recess for tonight and then so we're up for
31 9:00 a.m., tomorrow morning, sharp, because we do have
32 -- we still have quite a bit of agenda before us and we
33 have all the tribal organizations and the various
34 agency reports that we have to go through. So we got
35 kind of a big day tomorrow so if we can come on record
36 at 9:00 o'clock, that would be really great.

37
38 So any comments, Tim or Tommy, does
39 that sound good.

40
41 MR. KRISKA: Sounds good.

42
43 MR. GERVAIS: No comments from me, and
44 I appreciate everybody's participation.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say that again.

47
48 MR. GERVAIS: Just saying that I
49 appreciate everybody's participation.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tim.
2 Thanks for your participation being on the phone, you
3 and Tommy got a hard spot, I been there, yeah, a blind
4 spot so to speak.

5
6 So, okay, we'll see you tomorrow
7 morning at 9:00 o'clock. Have a great evening.

8
9 (Off record)

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11 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

4) ss.

5 STATE OF ALASKA)

6

7 I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the
8 state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court
9 Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

10

11 THAT the foregoing pages numbered ____ through
12 ____ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the
13 WESTERN INTERIOR SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
14 MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 4th day
15 of April 2023;

16

17 THAT the transcript is a true and
18 correct transcript requested to be transcribed and
19 thereafter transcribed by under my direction and
20 reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and
21 ability;

22

23 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or
24 party interested in any way in this action.

25

26 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 4th
27 day of May 2023.

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Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/26