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SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

TELECONFERENCE
March 11, 2021
9:04 a.m.

Members Present:

Louis Green, Chairman
Martin Aukongak
Tom Gray
Deahl Katchatag
Ron Kirk
Lloyd Kiyutelluk
Leland Oyoumick
Elmer Seetot

Regional Council Coordinator - Karen Deatherage

Recorded and transcribed by:

Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-227-5312; sahile@gci.net

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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(Teleconference - 03/11/2021)

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(On record)

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: It is now 9:04, I'd
like to call this meeting to order. Karen, roll call.

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MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
First I'd like to make a couple of announcements with
your permission.

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, go ahead.

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MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I want to welcome everybody to the call today, and, as
always we want to thank you for your patience as we
conduct these meetings via teleconference, which
certainly isn't our preferred way but we want to keep
everybody healthy and safe. For those of you on the
phone that don't have a mute button you can use star
six to mute your phones and star six to unmute when you
need to speak, and we very much appreciate folks doing
that. This Council is usually pretty good at that. So
if people could adhere to that that would be super.
The other thing is to please state your name before you
speak so we know who's speaking. We're pretty familiar
with each other but it's just very helpful for the
court reporter and others that don't know who you are
to say your name before you speak. And with that we'll
go ahead and do roll call.

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Louis Green.....

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: Madame.....

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MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry.

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MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes.

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: I was just going to
ask for invocation.

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MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, go ahead, Mr.
Chair.

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, Elmer, can you
2 give an invocation please.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Okay.

5
6 (Invocation)

7
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 Again, I want to remind everybody to mute your phones,
10 between the wind and the snow and the dishes, some of
11 the connections aren't great so if we all mute our
12 phones then we'll be able to hear each other better.

13
14 So I'll start with Louis Green, Jr.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Louis here, thank you.

17
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Elmer Seetot, Jr.

19
20 MR. SEETOT: (In Native) Here.

21
22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Leland Oyoumick.

23
24 MR. OYOUNICK: I'm down here in

25 Unalakleet.

26
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Welcome, Leland.

28
29 Deahl Katchatag.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Martin Aukongak.

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35 MR. AUKONGAK: Here.

36
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Lloyd Kiyutelluk.

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39 MR. KIYUTELLUK: Here. Good morning.

40
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Good morning.

42
43 Tom Gray.

44
45 MR. GRAY: I'm here for a little while
46 from Hawaii.

47
48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Ah, Aloha.

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1 And Ron Kirk.

2

3 (No comments)

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5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Ron may call in. And,
6 Mr. Chair, we received a call from -- when I spoke with
7 Member Saccheus, he said he would be unable to attend
8 the meeting due to medical so he is an excused absence.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
13 that, Karen. Aloha, Tommy.

14

15 MR. GRAY: Yeah, so let me get a bid in
16 sideways. Number 1, I'm in Hawaii. Number 2, it's my
17 wife's birthday. So you guys don't get too much of my
18 time. So let's plan accordingly.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It should be a quick
21 meeting, thank you. We've got quorum and we got
22 Committee members in, we only got one, I think it was
23 Charles was excused, and Ron to call in. So we'll move
24 on in the agenda here.

25

26 Welcome to everybody.

27

28 So Karen I don't know how you want to
29 do these introductions, maybe we should do the Staff
30 and who's attending online first.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 Yeah, generally what I've been doing is just going
34 through the agencies and organizations and allowing
35 people from each of those organizations to introduce
36 themselves so we don't all try to do it at once. If
37 you'd like I can go ahead and proceed with that.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, that would be
40 fine, thank you.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Why don't we start with the Office of Subsistence
44 Management, if you'd introduce yourselves please.

45

46 MS. VOORHEES: Good morning. This is
47 Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist with Office of
48 Subsistence Management.

49

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1 MS. HYER: Good morning. This is Karen
2 Hyer, Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
3 Management.
4

5 MR. VICKERS: Good morning. This is
6 Brent Vickers. I'm the Supervisor, Cultural
7 Anthropologist. I am new with the Office of
8 Subsistence Management so thank you for having me at
9 the meeting and I look forward to at least listening to
10 everyone today, and meeting you all later.
11

12 Thank you.
13

14 MR. KRON: Morning, Mr. Chair. This is
15 Tom Kron from OSM.
16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, OSM. And
18 just for everybody's sake, this is Karen Deatherage
19 with the Office of Subsistence Management up here in
20 beautiful Fairbanks.
21

22 Do we have anybody from the Bureau of
23 Indian Affairs this morning.
24

25 MR. CHEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair and
26 Council members. This is Glenn Chen from the BIA.
27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, welcome Glenn.
29 How about the National Park Service, the folks from
30 NPS.
31

32 MS. HUGHES: Hello, this is Letty
33 Hughes, Bering Land Bridge, National Preserve, Wildlife
34 Biologist based here in Nome.
35

36 MS. BRAEM: Good morning. This is
37 Nikki Braem, Cultural Anthropologist based here in
38 Nome.
39

40 MS. JOCHUM: Good morning. This is Kim
41 Jochum, Subsistence Program Analyst with the Regional
42 Office.
43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry, who was
45 that?
46

47 MS. JOCHUM: That was Kim Jochum, J-O-
48 C-H-U-M. Good morning.
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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Good morning.

2

3 MS. KOELSCH: Jeanette Koelsch,
4 Superintendent, Bering Land Bridge in Nome.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hey, Jeanette,
7 welcome.

8

9 MR. ADKISSON: Ken Adkisson, Resources
10 Program Manager, Bering Land Bridge, Nome.

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Is Hannah on this
13 morning from Kotzebue.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: All right, we'll move
18 on to the Bureau of Land Management.

19

20 MR. MCKEE: Good morning. This is
21 Chris McKee, Subsistence Program Coordinator with the
22 BLM out of Anchorage.

23

24 MR. UBELAKER: Brian Ubelaker.....

25

26 MS. MILLION: Good morning.

27

28 MR. UBELAKER:Wildlife Biologist,
29 Anchorage Field Office. Sorry, Bonnie.

30

31 MR. MILLION: No, it's all good B.
32 Hey, this is Bonnie Million, field manager for the
33 Anchorage Field Office.

34

35 MR. SEPPI: Good morning. This is
36 Bruce Seppi, Anchorage Field Office, BLM.

37

38 MR. SPARKS: And Tom Sparks is
39 listening in. Good morning, everybody, calling in from
40 Nome with Anchorage Field Office. Thank you.

41

42 MR. GUSSE: Good morning. Walker
43 Gusse, Law Enforcement out of Anchorage Field Office.

44

45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Super. Let's see, do
46 we have folks from Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

47

48 MR. BURCH: Good morning, this is Mark
49 Burch.

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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Good morning.

2

3 MR. DUNKER: Good morning everybody.
4 This is Bill Dunker with ADF&G based in Nome, currently
5 calling in from Unalakleet.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Good morning, Bill.
8 We may have some more folks joining us later from Fish
9 and Game.

10

11 MR. CLARK: Yeah, this is Kevin Clark
12 with the Commercial Fisheries here in Nome.

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, and welcome
15 Kevin, and thanks for being on the phone. Is Jim or
16 Jennifer aren't available to speak to the crab issue
17 this morning, would you be able to do that because Tom
18 Gray has some limited time on the phone and he'd like
19 to be involved in that discussion.

20

21 MR. CLARK: Yeah, yeah, no problem.
22 Just -- Jim should be here directly and Jenn wanted me
23 to let her know when it was going to come up so just --
24 I was looking at the agenda this morning and I wasn't
25 really sure when it was coming on, just give me a
26 little bit of a head's up so I can round them up and
27 get them involved.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much.
30 Through the Chair. What I'd like to suggest is that
31 you guys, if you can, come on after the Fish and -- or
32 maybe just right before the Fish and Game wildlife
33 reports under new business. So first up under new
34 business, would that be possible?

35

36 MR. CLARK: Yeah, yeah, I think it
37 should be. I'll get a hold of Jenn, let her know, Jim
38 just walked in so we should be good to go.

39

40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much.
41 Appreciate your patience with that. Okay, so we have
42 Kevin Clark from Fish and Game, anybody else from Fish
43 and Game on the phone -- and, Mark Burch.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. I know Charlie
48 Lean is not going to be able to join us until later
49 this afternoon, but he can give his update on the Board

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1 of Fish petition at that time. And if there anybody
2 else on the phone that would like to introduce
3 themselves.
4

5 MS. FLOREY: Hi. This is Victoria
6 Florey with the National Park Service. I got
7 disconnected earlier. Subsistence Program Analyst at
8 the Regional Office.
9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, thanks.
11 Welcome Victoria. Anybody else with us on the phone
12 this morning.
13

14 (No comments)
15

16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. With that I
17 will turn it over to the Chair, Louis Green, for review
18 and adopt the agenda. Thank you.
19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
21 that, Karen. Thank you folks for chiming in there and
22 taking part again today. So we have an agenda to
23 adopt. Karen, I think you might have some additions to
24 this agenda and under where?
25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 I will go ahead and read those off for you. These are
28 items that came in after the agenda was published. The
29 first is the BLM Anchorage Field Office will be
30 providing an update. The second is the National Park
31 Service will provide an update under individual
32 customary and traditional permits. And then lastly the
33 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program will provide an
34 update on the call for funding opportunity. These
35 agenda items are under agencies with the appropriate
36 agency listed, later on, in the agenda. With the
37 Council's approval, they can be added to the agenda.
38

39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Karen
42 for that. So I would ask a minute to review and then
43 we'll move forward for the action on it.
44

45 MR. GRAY: So this is Tom.
46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Tom.
48

49 MR. GRAY: You guys are forgetting that
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1 Karen just talked to Fish and Game about a crab report
2 or crab deal before the Game Division, so let's make
3 sure that that gets under new business, Jim Menard and
4 his fellows.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Tom. I
7 think that's where we're inserting it, Karen, isn't
8 that right.

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Gray, through
11 the Chair, yes, that is correct. Thank you for
12 bringing that up.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. Are
15 there any additions or corrections that anybody can see
16 -- like I said I'll give it a minute.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 (Teleconference interference -
21 participants not muted - coughing)

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Somebody's got to
24 mute.

25

26 MR. GRAY: So I move to adopt the
27 revised agenda.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Mr.
30 Gray. Tommy makes the motion to move on the agenda,
31 approval of it, is there a second.

32

33 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot. I second the
34 motion.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.
37 Elmer seconds. All those in favor of the motion say
38 aye.

39

40 IN UNISON: Aye.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
43 same sign.

44

45 (No opposing votes)

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, the
48 agenda is approved. So Item No. 6 under Service
49 Awards, what do we have for that?

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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 We do not have any service awards at this time. We
3 prefer to give those in person when we meet next.
4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Boy, this is
7 going rather fast I'm doing all the talking. Tommy,
8 thank you -- I just had to throw that in there. So
9 we're moving on to the election of officers, so I'm
10 going to turn this over to you, Karen, and we'll go
11 from there.

12

13 Thank you.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 This is Karen Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence
17 Management. And what I'll be doing, in my capacity as
18 the delegated Federal officer, is opening up the floor
19 for nominations for Chair of the Seward Peninsula
20 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Once those
21 nominations are mentioned we will go ahead and have a
22 vote and the Chair will be selected and then I will
23 turn the following elections for Vice Chair and
24 Secretary over to the new Chair.

25

26 So with that I'd like to open up the
27 floor to the Council for nominations to serve a one
28 year term as Chair of the Seward Peninsula Subsistence
29 Regional Advisory Council.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 MR. KIYUTELLUK: Good morning. This is
34 Lloyd Kiyutelluk. I nominate Louis Green, Jr.

35

36 MR. GRAY: I move to -- this is Tom
37 Gray, I move to close nominations.

38

39 MR. OYOUMICK: I second that, this is
40 Leland.

41

42 MR. SEETOT: I second the motion.

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. And
45 through the Chair, this is Karen Deatherage. The
46 nominations are closed. All those in favor of electing
47 Louis Green, Jr., as Chair for the Council please
48 signify by saying aye.

49

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1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: All those opposed.

4

5 (No opposing votes)

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much.

8 Louis Green has been elected as Chair of the Seward

9 Peninsula Council. I'll go ahead and turn it over to

10 Chair Green so that he can continue with the remaining

11 officers. Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,

14 Karen. Thank you for the vote of confidence Council

15 members. We'll move on to the Vice Chair nomination

16 and I'll ask somebody to make a nomination, please.

17

18 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot from Brevig.

19 I nominate Mr. Tom Gray for Vice Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second.

22

23 MR. KIYUTELLUK: This is Lloyd, I

24 second, and make motion to close the nominations.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nominations are

27 closed. All those in favor of Mr. Tom Gray as Vice

28 Chair say aye.

29

30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Opposed, same sign.

33

34 (No opposing votes)

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, Mr. Gray

37 is the Vice Chair again. Thank you.

38

39 MR. GRAY: Thank you guys for the vote

40 of confidence.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That moves us on to

43 the Secretary. So I'm looking for a nomination for

44 Secretary please, a first and a second.

45

46 MR. KIYUTELLUK: Lloyd Kiyutelluk. I

47 nominate Elmer Seetot, Jr.

48

49 MR. GRAY: And I second and move to

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1 close nominations.

2

3 MR. SEETOT: Thank you from Lloyd and
4 Tom.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So nominations
7 are closed, first and a second. All those in favor say
8 aye.

9

10 IN UNISON: Aye.

11

12 REPORTER: I'm sorry, who seconded
13 that.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Those, opposed.

16

17 (No opposing votes)

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, Elmer,
20 you're the secretary.

21

22 MR. SEETOT: Thank you.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We'll move on to Item
25 No. 8 and that would be review and approve the previous
26 meeting minutes. If you need to browse through there
27 really quickly and make sure there's no mistakes or
28 additions or comments, I'll give you two minutes, it's
29 9:25.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Madame, go ahead.

34

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 This is Karen Deatherage. For those who have their
37 meeting materials, the minutes begin on Page 8 of your
38 meeting book. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
41 Karen. Council members you got your comments in there,
42 make sure they're close to what you had.

43

44 (Pause)

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: If anybody has any
47 additions or corrections, please speak up.

48

49 (Pause)

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That's our two
2 minutes, so are there any corrections or comments from
3 Council.

4
5 (No comments)

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, is there
8 a motion to.....

9
10 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair.

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Elmer, go
13 ahead.

14
15 MR. SEETOT: I move to adopt the
16 October 28th teleconference minutes.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer. Is
19 there a second.

20
21 MR. AUKONGAK: Second by Martin.

22
23 MR. GRAY: Second.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Second by Martin. All
26 those in favor of approval, say aye.

27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
31 same sign.

32
33 (No opposing votes)

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, the
36 minutes from the last meeting have been approved. That
37 moves us into Item No. 8 of reports, and we'll go
38 around the table here.....

39
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Karen.

43
44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. I
45 apologize for the interruption. I was remiss in
46 informing everybody that we do have a new Council
47 member, Martin Aukongak was appointed by the Secretary
48 of the Interior to serve starting this year until 2023.
49 Martin is from Golovin. And I just want to take a
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1 minute to welcome him and congratulate him on the
2 appointment and we're thrilled to have you on board,
3 Martin, thank you.

4
5 MR. AUKONGAK: Thank you, Karen.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, that's great,
8 Martin, and welcome aboard. You're going to be here
9 for a couple generations.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 MR. AUKONGAK: Thank you, Louis.

14
15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So, again, that
16 brings us to the reports. Council members -- Karen,
17 maybe I should just let you call out a Council member's
18 name and then they can give their report, would
19 probably be the easiest.

20
21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
22 I'd be happy to do that. I'd like to maybe start with
23 Elmer Seetot.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Elmer, are you on the
28 phone and you could give your report to the Council.
29 Thank you.

30
31 MR. SEETOT: This mute is giving me
32 problems. Snow has been very minimal up to this point,
33 tundra has been pretty patchy but in the past with the
34 recent storms we have had fresh snow on the ground.

35
36 Caribou was being harvested towards
37 Kougarok Mountain and in and around Davidson Landing so
38 they're in a northwesterly direction from Brevig
39 Mission.

40
41 Easterly winds have been pretty much
42 prevailing winds all winter so we're pretty much going
43 through the same cold spells as the Interior but not as
44 much.

45
46 The Federal Subsistence Board or the
47 Office of Subsistence Management give residents the
48 opportunity to participate in RACs in their region and
49 then it's been kind of hard to recruit or get members

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1 from the public to serve on the Regional Advisory
2 Council. So I think we just need to keep the pressure
3 up through the media so that the RACs can continue to
4 give guidance to the Federal Subsistence Board.

5

6 That is all I have, thank you.

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Seetot.
9 Through the Chair, I'll call on Leland Oyoumick.

10

11 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, good morning
12 everyone. This is Leland Oyoumick in Unalakleet. We
13 have lots of snow down here and cold like everybody
14 else, once in awhile it gets really warm. Our weather
15 varies sometimes and you don't know what's going to
16 happen.

17

18 But anyway the caribou are way
19 somewhere in the north, the people have gone from here
20 but they're minimal in what they caught, some didn't
21 get anything and some did, but those things are way up
22 there somewhere where Elmer said they were.

23

24 So anyway moose season was good and
25 finally we got smelts, but every time our ice blow away
26 our smelt blow away too, I guess, but that's something
27 I kind of keep an eye on. And I noticed that when the
28 ice goes out it goes away -- our smelts go away too
29 when the smelts are running.

30

31 Other than that it's been okay over
32 here. People have been going up river fishing and
33 getting fish, trouts, and some whitefish.

34

35 Other than that it's been cold like
36 everywhere else. That's all I have for now.

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr.
39 Oyoumick. We'll go on to Lloyd if you'd like to give
40 your report.

41

42 MR. KIYUTELLUK: Good morning, Mr.
43 Chair. Yeah, Shishmaref, right now is doing pretty
44 good. Hunting caribou this past fall was pretty good
45 as far as caribou and moose. This year there were
46 quite a few wolves caug -- moose caught this year this
47 time which is pretty different than the last three
48 years.

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1 And then our oogruk hunting, we were
2 limited because we couldn't go out because of the ice
3 conditions. We all -- we maybe counted about 17 boats
4 hunting in a five mile radius until the ice broke up.
5 But other than that, we did pretty good after we got
6 our walrus.

7
8 And everybody had a good season berry
9 picking.

10
11 So that's pretty much all I have, thank
12 you.

13
14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. How about
15 Mr. Gray, Tom Gray.

16
17 MR. GRAY: Let me figure out my mute
18 button I think I can do a little talking. You know I
19 think berries -- salmonberries was terrible in our
20 area, and even blueberries. Blueberries -- there was
21 berries but not like on a good year.

22
23 All of our ocean hunting, you know,
24 this weather has hampered our spring and fall hunts.
25 It's changed it, I guess, it hasn't really hampered it,
26 we all fill our freezers and get our quota but it's a
27 challenge sometimes to get a couple of oogruks landed
28 or get a beluga whale netted. With the weather
29 changing it, it is a different animal.

30
31 Moose hunting, you know, we need -- my
32 personal opinion in the moose population is that the
33 moose population is increasing but man our moose hunts
34 happen so fast because we only have so many animals
35 that we can kill and if you blink your eye moose
36 hunting's over, you know. A two week hunt is lasting
37 five, six days, and so you need to get on it.

38
39 Caribou, everybody's having to run a
40 long ways for caribou now. Going all the way to
41 Serpentine Hot Springs or up into Buckland area. So
42 it's -- we're in changing times, definitely.

43
44 So that's about all I got, I think.

45
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Member
47 Gray. How about you, Martin, would you like to share
48 with us what's going on in Golovin.

49
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1 MR. AUKONGAK: Yeah, sorry I didn't
2 have a report. Alaska lost a greatest gunsmith
3 machinist, my brother-in-law, Stan Jackson here in
4 Anchorage.

5
6 Last year there was hardly any snow,
7 so, yeah, Tom is right, there's hardly any berries,
8 but, you know, you go where snow was and find some
9 berries.

10
11 Plenty of bears since the mid-90s and
12 probably the cause for that is all the wildfires going
13 on in the south and right there in Fairbanks area.
14 What causes that to make the bears migrate towards this
15 region, and we got a bear problem. And, you know, in
16 order to calculate to help the moose and the caribou,
17 you get rid of the bears and you don't say nothing
18 about it, and that's what it is, you know, you adapt
19 with what's going on with the weather. You see more
20 squirrels coming around this region. And you know I
21 heard some right there in Nome, too, I'm sure Louis can
22 talk about that.

23
24 There's belugas. You know, one of my
25 friends who beluga hunts all the time, you know, he
26 just got a job and he didn't get to go out to get some
27 beluga.

28
29 And there's plenty of wolves
30 with hardly any snow and the moose coming around, you
31 know, there's going to be plenty of wolves. And a
32 friend of mine got seven in a day, and that's a whole
33 pack.

34
35 So, you know, in order for us to adapt,
36 you know, we can hear about what's going on with the
37 regulations, you know, where's the money, that -- for
38 instance you get programs and grants or loans to do
39 what you're going to do but is it going to hurt the
40 animal population, so we got to be careful. So we got
41 to be careful, like we're talking about the crab, more
42 people get a loan to get a crabbing permit and boat,
43 it'll hurt the crab population, and sure enough it did.
44 So maybe that's the reason why there's hardly any crab.
45 When I was growing up there was plenty of crab, and
46 it's not very long ago.

47
48 And I appreciate the confidence of
49 everybody appointing me to be on this Board and I hope
50

0018

1 to help, you know, everybody in the region and the
2 state.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks so much,
7 Martin. And, again, welcome aboard, we're pretty
8 excited about this so. Let's see if Deahl Katchatag,
9 have you joined us on the phone yet.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Deahl. And Ron Kirk,
14 have you had a chance to check in with everybody this
15 morning.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, thank you, Mr.
20 Chair. That's the conclusion of the Council member
21 reports, other than yourself, the Chair's report.
22 Thank you.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you Karen.
25 Thank you, Council members for your reports.

26

27 As for myself in the spring season, the
28 marine hunting didn't happen for me because I had a
29 motor issue for my smaller boat to go out. But
30 throughout the summer we had a few salmon, mostly the
31 pinks and that seems to be about the extent of our runs
32 anymore. I've heard a lot of complaints that there's
33 no silvers, and there's no chum from people. I know
34 that targeting down at the mouth, people were trying to
35 target silvers -- or I mean chum and they were throwing
36 pinks back in. But pinks are in. And it seems to be
37 okay for some but an issue for others.

38

39 Moving in on to the fall hunt. Tommy
40 is right, they only have so many moose in 22, and it's
41 over in a flash. People have gotten aggressive, it
42 takes a lot of money to have the machinery to get out
43 there with and a lot of people don't have it so my crew
44 was successful in our hunt, and we're thankful for
45 that. But I know there's a lot of hunters out there
46 that had to do without.

47

48 And Martin referred to the bears, the
49 predation of the bears and the wolves, it's good to

50

0019

1 hear that people are getting out there and targeting
2 the bears and targeting those wolves. It's the only
3 way we're going to get our herd back. Management's
4 doing what they can do but it is a short season for
5 moose. Tommy said five or six days, I think that's
6 about it and then the area that I hunted it was only
7 three so we were fortunate there.

8

9 After that was over with then beluga
10 season was, and my young crew, my step-son, Messiah and
11 my 12 year old son, Michael, were my new crew this year
12 and I broke them in right, he set our gear out and we
13 -- within 12 hours we had two whale, we were fortunate.
14 I saw a lot of young hunters out there that were
15 getting out and targeting those belugas that Tommy was
16 talking about. We did have a big herd of them coming
17 through on a regular basis. So that's one up for us.
18 We've got another marine mammal source developing and
19 we're getting people out there utilizing them. So
20 that's a good one to see growing.

21

22 Then after that, my young son and I
23 spent time out on the marine waters hunting seaducks
24 and we weren't successful with any good size seals so.

25

26 Made a move up to the Kuzitrin and
27 spent different days out there targeting whitefish,
28 they seemed like they were up and down. I grew up on
29 that river and I remember there was so many of them,
30 there were days and days and nights where you could
31 just sit by the river and listen to them jumping, and I
32 guess maybe I've missed that, by the times that I go
33 out. But I haven't heard anybody talking about the
34 numbers like they used to be.

35

36 So with that, I guess spring hunting is
37 coming around the corner and that's the next move.

38

39 Like Tommy, making a trip from
40 Fairbanks to Nome, I'm hoping to do that from Big Lake
41 to Nome this year. I did it last year with my brother
42 and two nieces and hoping to take my two sons on that
43 ride this year and see some of that country. Those
44 wood bison are something to see on the other side of
45 the range.

46

47 And with that that's all I have at this
48 time. And hoping that we all have a good spring hunt
49 and a good season.

50

0020

1 MR. GRAY: Louis.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Was that you Tom.

4

5 MR. GRAY: Yeah. I -- if you don't
6 mind I'd like to just add a couple of comments.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sure.

9

10 MR. GRAY: Aukongak brought up the
11 issue of crabs, and I just want to make sure it gets in
12 the record, you know, 2020 we had no crabs. I mean
13 crabbing was -- I set pots and it was a total waste of
14 time. I would check pots after four or five days and
15 have one crab, three crab, just terrible. This year I
16 set pots and out of probably a 100 crab that I caught I
17 would guess that maybe 10 -- 8 or 10 were big crab, you
18 know, crab that we're used to eating and then the rest
19 of them were smaller crab. And, you know, we all grew
20 up on this as kids, I spent a lot of time out on the
21 ice as a kid crabbing and the only thing we caught
22 during the winter was these big monster crabs. So the
23 crab fishery has changed, and the word is next year
24 there's going to be a lot of decent crab around.

25

26 But the point that I wanted to make is,
27 you know, we all grew up with the crab fishery and then
28 all of a sudden a commercial crab fishery came in and
29 changed our -- what we're catching. Us subsistence
30 users, and I have to say I've been a commercial crabber
31 too in the wintertime but after seeing what happened
32 here and, you know, this is, I think the second time
33 this die-off has happened since they started commercial
34 fishing. And, you know, we -- and I'll get into it
35 more when Fish and Game talks, but we were used to a
36 certain class of crab and over the last couple years we
37 haven't got it.

38

39 Now the other thing I heard Martin talk
40 about, wolves, wolves and bears. And I don't think the
41 wolves are given enough credit to the damage that's
42 happening to our moose population. I think it was last
43 spring the guys -- in the spring of 2020 the guys
44 counted 17 or 18 dead moose in the Fish River Flats and
45 that was long before the bears showed up. So the
46 wolves are -- they're playing havoc on our resource and
47 moving animals around.

48

49 So I just wanted to insert those two

50

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1 things in the record.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Tommy, thank
6 you, very much for that. And to reflect on the crabs,
7 I'm hearing and seeing that people aren't very
8 successful. I reflect back to a time where before the
9 commercial fishery ever took place was fishing with my
10 cousin, Fred Larson, Jr., we had seven holes,
11 handlining, and one guy would get up and walk around
12 and check each line, if you didn't check them fast
13 enough you'd lose your bait. And then when you'd get
14 back to the snowmachine that we used to get there, the
15 other guy would take off and take his round, we didn't
16 have any time to sit around, we'd just spend a few
17 hours out there pulling out what we wanted and, you
18 know, we haven't really seen that since. There's quite
19 a -- the Bering Sea king crab fishery, the boats, the
20 vessels that came up that targeted those crab stocks
21 really slammed them down and to this day I don't think
22 we've ever rebounded to what we had in the past.

23

24 So, you know, this crab issue we're
25 having right now that Tommy's describing, and let's see
26 Jonathan (indiscernible) our old buddy Bear out there,
27 he's scratching away at it. It's disturbing. It's not
28 a thing that any of us want to see. So hopefully this
29 action that is going to be taken on this at the Board
30 of Fish turns things around. I think that subsistence
31 was always there before commercial, and then after
32 commercial took place, subsistence has had a hard time
33 and it's fading into in the sunset now. So hopefully
34 things will change.

35

36 Anyway that's my followup with Tommy,
37 and that's my report.

38

39 Moving on here, I don't know, are there
40 any other Council members who have any other things to
41 bring up. I know we didn't have Ron there and Deahl, I
42 don't know if they've joined us yet.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: If you did, push your
47 mute button, or star six, and you can talk.

48

49 (No comments)

50

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It doesn't sound like
2 it, Karen. So I'll go on to.....

3

4 MR. OYOUNICK: Hey, Louis, this is
5 Leland. I tried calling Doug's house and told him
6 about our meeting and somebody answered, I don't know
7 what's going on.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, well, thank you
10 for that Leland. So we'll move on to Item No. 10,
11 public and tribal comments on nonagenda items, which is
12 available everyday.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is this -- oh, my
17 goodness, I forgot her name, Karen, help me out here,
18 do we have anybody bringing anything up or are we just
19 waiting for the public -- do we have anybody in public
20 there that you know of?

21

22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 This is Karen Deatherage. I'm not aware of any public
24 members that are interested in speaking but it's good
25 to open this up during the meeting. You might consider
26 opening it up again later on in the meeting if there
27 have been any individuals that have joined us from
28 Kawerak or other organizations.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
33 Karen. Yes, we most certainly will do that. So at
34 this time we have Item No.11, old business, and I don't
35 see any old business. So we'll move on to Item 12
36 under new business. I think we wanted to hear from
37 Fisheries Department first; is that right?

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 This is Karen Deatherage. I'd like to ask if anybody
41 from fisheries, Jim Menard, or Kevin are on the phone
42 that could give us a crab fishery update, for the
43 Council, that would be greatly appreciated. If not
44 we'll go ahead and give them another opportunity
45 shortly.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MR. MENARD: Yeah, this is Jim. I can

50

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1 go ahead.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's great, Jim,
4 thank you so much.

5

6 MR. MENARD: Okay. So the crab --
7 commercial crab fishery opened on February 1st and
8 that's in regulation now. At the last Board meeting
9 they set a hard date and that's similar to when we had
10 a hard date when it used to open on November 15th. The
11 five years previously it was a floating date, it could
12 open on January 15th or later at kind of the discretion
13 of the Department and with the work with the buyer on
14 that. So we did open last year on February 29th, and
15 the year before on March 3rd. With no buyer there is
16 not any great effort we've seen that we've seen in the
17 late teen years, so we do have five who have registered
18 to fish. Four have turned in fish tickets to us for
19 crab. And one is still trying to get out. The four
20 are around Nome here, and one is down in Elim. So we
21 do have that. We expect catches to be real light with
22 only catcher sellers. There is one buyer but he hasn't
23 bought anything, and he's going to be out until April.
24 So the fishery is scheduled to go to April 30th. With
25 the effort we don't think we will get many crab in the
26 commercial fishery. We did get the GHL up there. It's
27 314,000, a little more than that. And the Council met,
28 they give us the OFL, the APC and then we set it by
29 regulation.

30

31 There is a petition in from the
32 Northern Norton Sound Advisory Committee, they would
33 like to see the commercial fishery closed, and there's
34 some discussions about that at the Board there. The
35 Department has to respond to the emergency petition.
36 The Department did respond. Headquarters responds, the
37 Commissioner. And they denied the petition, but now
38 the Board gets to review it so the Board's going to
39 look at it next week. And so some of the petition was
40 that we don't have a buyer -- or, you know, the major
41 impetus of the buyer is they want to buy five inch crab
42 and they feel there's a number under that size and
43 there would be dead loss, you know, by having the
44 commercial fishery and it would affect the smaller size
45 crab. And so one question we would ask to folks there,
46 if they would support a proposal moving the legal size
47 up to five inch, right now it's four and three
48 quarters. So it is possible at the next Board cycle
49 that the Department would submit a proposal moving the
50

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1 legal size up to five inch since this has been
2 expressed about this smaller crab being a legal size.
3 The catcher sellers can sell four and three quarters
4 and above.

5
6 And we do have subsistence out there.
7 We've got -- people said they're catching crab. Some
8 say it's smaller, some say they've been getting some
9 big ones so it seems to be doing a lot better. The
10 subsistence crab this summer, the catch was about three
11 times the previous year, 2019, and about twice what it
12 was in 2018. But that might be expected to have a much
13 better subsistence harvest this past summer since no
14 one commercial fished. So there was no competition
15 there with the commercial fishery.

16
17 And proposals coming in, you can make a
18 proposal to the Board up until, this year, it's -- you
19 know, we're in the finfish cycle but when we get into
20 the shellfish cycle, it's April 10th of next year, you
21 can put a proposal in and you want to -- people have
22 talked about how poor the subsistence has been, and
23 commercial fishing affecting it, so anyone could put a
24 proposal in up until next April 10th of 2022 and a
25 proposal could go in if you wanted to close the
26 commercial fishery, you know, you could put that in or
27 any other proposals you would like to make to the Board
28 of Fisheries and that would probably be scheduled to be
29 taken up March 2023.

30
31 So that's what I can tell you what's
32 going on right now, it is pretty quiet in the
33 commercial fishery and we haven't had a thousand pounds
34 harvested yet in the commercial fishery.

35
36 So I can take some questions on
37 crabbing.

38
39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Jim, thank you for
40 that report. Are there any Council members, questions
41 or comments for Jim.

42
43 MR. GRAY: So I guess I better jump in
44 here because I asked this to be moved around on the
45 agenda.

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, this is
48 your chance to talk Tommy.

49
50

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1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go.

4

5 MR. GRAY: Yeah. So Jim I'm very
6 concerned. I've been out on the -- I've been crabbing
7 since I was a kid and I have never seen it like the
8 last two years. Believe me it's been dismal. And, you
9 know, I'm not a regulation or understand proposals and
10 all that kind of stuff, guy, but I keep hearing
11 subsistence has priority, subsistence has priority,
12 well looking at the last two years I can't believe
13 subsistence has the priority. I mean crabbing has
14 tried to happen in 2020. It got shut down. Not
15 because of Fish and Game, because of the powers to be
16 that made a ruckus and shut it down. And here we are
17 again, no big crabs. I grew up on big crabs. And --
18 and, you know, we've got a ton of little tiny crabs out
19 there that have been coming in waves and a handful of
20 big crabs. You can talk about big crabs all you want,
21 I've got four pots out there and out of 100 crabs I bet
22 I haven't caught eight or 10 what I would consider big
23 crabs.

24

25 So that's the -- but everybody's making
26 a big push shut the crab fishery down, shut it down,
27 shut it down, my concern is we can shut this down, Jim,
28 and you can -- you can wait another year and you're
29 going to have crabs that, quote, are legal size, but my
30 biggest concern is this commercial fishery opens back
31 up again and there's nothing to protect subsistence
32 unless in -- in regulation we have to leave X amount of
33 crab out there, and -- and, you know, up to this point
34 subsistence users last year and this year, I look at
35 the crab that we normally get, you know, 5.5 inch crab
36 or 5 inch crab, it ain't happening, and how do we leave
37 -- how do we convince Fish and Game that to live up to
38 their mandates, subsistence is a priority, how do we
39 leave big crab for subsistence users in the ocean. You
40 know sending a fleet of guys out there, they're going
41 to rape and pillage and they're going to take
42 everything they want or can and once they can't find
43 the size they're after they're going to move and find
44 it somewhere else and we need to protect that
45 subsistence side of things so we have consistency. I
46 mean it's good for the fleet, it's good for the people
47 if, you know, we're leaving -- and I don't know the
48 formulas but we're leaving enough big crab that it
49 satisfies the subsistence users. We've been here for
50

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1 thousands of years, your commercial fleet has been here
2 for a very short time and disrupted our lifestyle and,
3 you know, you're not fulfilling the subsistence needs
4 of the people.

5
6 And it's your job, Jim, to -- you know,
7 we quote regulation and we do this and we do that but
8 it's your job to protect subsistence also. I mean, you
9 know, we can have mandates and locked in -- yep, we
10 locked in 300,000 pounds and go get them boys, but
11 you're the manager, you can say, hey, we're not getting
12 what we're supposed to be getting, let's shut this
13 thing down, let's fix this, but the subsistence user is
14 my concern here, we're getting rolled over.

15
16 So I don't know if you have any
17 comments.

18
19 MR. MENARD: Oh, sure I can give a
20 little -- I know, Tom, you spoke to that, and Martin
21 also spoke about he doesn't see the size of the crab he
22 used to see when he was younger, or the number of crab.
23 Yeah, the commercial fishery started there '77, '78, in
24 the summer, there is a Federal management plan, the
25 Council sets it up and then they give us, you know,
26 what they see based on numbers of like trawl surveys,
27 the most important thing, in these numbers, what's
28 going to recruit in, and then there are the regulations
29 that are the Fish and Game regulations that we have to
30 go by so I think you are giving me a little more power
31 than I have. There are, you know, it's based on the
32 percentage of crab that are going to be legal size and
33 how we calculate that out. We make the calculations
34 then it's there and then the -- we open it up and there
35 we go, it's open subsistence-wise like 365 days a year,
36 it's open all the time but if you guys aren't getting
37 the crab that is going to be something to go to the
38 Board of Fish and get these regulations changed.

39
40 So right now, you know, it's going to
41 come back up according to what our calculations showed,
42 I mean it showed the big drop was coming and the Board
43 -- winter wasn't closed -- the winter commercial
44 fishery wasn't closed last year, they closed effective
45 for the summer fishery anywhere east of 167 west
46 longitude and that's pretty much where most people
47 fish, so the Board did close the fishery. The Board
48 has, you know, more power than us in those -- when they
49 get into those allocation issues. So that is something
50

0027

1 we can't start allocating, you know, changing an
2 allocative decision, the Board's going to have to do
3 that. And so the Board is going to take it up next
4 week and the AC has made the petition and the Board is
5 going to take it up and they will make that decision.
6 We are kind of locked in to what we see, the
7 regulations are laid out, and there was -- the crab
8 planning team, they took the numbers and they gave the
9 buffer of 30 percent, and then that was added, another
10 10 percent by the science and statistical committee
11 based on responses that had been coming from Norton
12 Sound, from the fishermen, that they didn't really like
13 the numbers they were seeing so they gave additional
14 buffer for a percent down, and then the Department then
15 gave an addition buffer down to like the 314, down from
16 the 350. So there was kind of a ratcheting down. But
17 it's still, you know, is the guideline harvest, we go
18 by the numbers, the regulations and to make any
19 changes, as far as we're talking about we need to close
20 down the subsistence -- or the commercial fishery, that
21 is going to have to come from the Board and the
22 Council.

23
24 MR. GRAY: So I'm running to drop --
25 move some people around and bear with me. You know,
26 Jim, I can sympathize with allocations and blah, blah,
27 blah. Again, you know, I don't understand this
28 allocation process -- how do I turn this down -- but
29 the bottom line is the last two years we've had no crab
30 out there. And as a manager, shouldn't that be an
31 indicator to there's something wrong with the process,
32 there's something wrong with the numbers. And I'm glad
33 to hear that there's been a change in numbers but
34 300,000 crab -- or 300,000 pounds of crab when three
35 years ago you could only get.....

36
37 (Teleconference interference -
38 participants not muted)

39
40 MR. GRAY:what 80,000 pounds.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Someone needs to mute
43 their phone.

44
45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Excuse me, Tom, this
46 is Karen Deatherage. Could somebody please mute their
47 phone by pushing star six or the mute button. Thank
48 you very much.

49
50

0028

1 MR. GRAY: Hold this. I got to get my
2 car's beeper off.

3
4 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, it's you Tom, okay.

5
6 MR. GRAY: Well, it's my beeper, I
7 heard people talking in the background. I knew this
8 was going to happen and that's why I only wanted to
9 give a certain amount of time to this meeting.

10
11 But, again, Jim, I'm concerned -- but
12 you talk about this allocation stuff, you know, my way
13 of looking at this thing as a subsistence user, if Fish
14 and Game can't come up with the right allocation and
15 the right numbers, let's give it back to the Feds and
16 let the Feds manage it. I'm just, you know, this is
17 the second time it's happened in the last 20, 30, 40
18 years, and, you know, it's not right for the
19 subsistence users to cower down or let the commercial
20 people just kind of come in and can pillage and take
21 everything and leave us holding the bag. Again, I
22 think this allocation number, I don't care who --
23 somebody does allocation, somebody gives you a number
24 and says, run with it, that allocation process needs to
25 be fixed or let the Feds shut the whole damn project
26 down and give us our crabs back.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, this is Louis.
29 Following up what Tom is talking about, Jim, the Feds,
30 through the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
31 are the ones that set the allocation and I mean the way
32 I understand, of course, and then the State manages
33 that allocation number, correct?

34
35 MR. MENARD: Yeah, that's correct.
36 We're under a Federal management plan, and, yes, they
37 set the ground rules there as far as what's called the
38 overfishing limit, the allowable biological catch, yes,
39 they give us those numbers then. So, yeah, you are
40 right, the Feds do set it.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

43
44 MR. MENARD: And then we finally give
45 the final determination when we set a guideline harvest
46 level that has to be lower than the numbers the Fed
47 sets, and -- okay.

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So then, you
50

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1 know, Tommy is -- your comment that Tommy gives you
2 more powers, don't you -- maybe I was assuming that you
3 had EO but maybe you don't, do you or not?

4
5 MR. MENARD: Well, I have EO authority
6 to open it up. I have EO authority to close it. Say
7 the ice got really bad and I felt we were just losing
8 pots or something, then I would close it earlier than
9 April 30th. The winter fishery can be a funny thing as
10 far as how successful we are going to be in the
11 subsistence fishery because if you look, yet, our
12 subsistence harvest in the 2001 -- well, the 2000/2001
13 winter, that was our lowest harvest ever we had in the
14 subsistence fishery, was under 600 pounds, and we went
15 out and caught 280,000 pounds in the commercial fishery
16 that summer. So it depends on ice. There can be a
17 number of issues in the winter fishery, if the ice
18 isn't good, you know, are people going out -- of
19 course, last year, we only had about half fishing that
20 we normally do in the subsistence fishery, they caught
21 a little over 1,200 pounds and a number of people
22 thought it was closed and that's, you know, it gets
23 confusing to hear, well, we're closed down and don't go
24 out. But it wasn't good overall I would say. You know
25 people said they were catching smaller fish and so that
26 was -- we'd dropped from in the teens, say, like 14,
27 15, 16, 18 as we went along, we were always getting
28 over 10,000 pounds, and then the drop came, the 2018/19
29 subsistence fishery, where we only got about 4,000
30 pounds. So remember that's what the data showed, we
31 were going to come down, that we were dropping and you
32 might have seen the GHL, you know, in '19 was like
33 150,000 in the commercial fishery, and then for the GHL
34 last year it was 170, those were big drop offs from our
35 300, 400, 500,000 years. So it was expected that it
36 was going to drop down, and now it's coming back up.

37
38 So -- but, yeah, I am limited by what
39 -- you know the Council numbers give me and then what's
40 in regulation based on what we set the GHL.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so the emergency
43 order is based on opening, what -- what has to take
44 place critically for you to close it under EO?

45
46 MR. MENARD: Under EO, there would have
47 to be some sort of situation like I said, the winter
48 where we just weren't able to fish through the ice or
49 something like that, that we were losing pots and, you
50

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1 know, it was just a bad thing that we seem to be
2 killing crab, would be ghost fishing or something like
3 that for a little bit, if the pots were getting sent
4 out to see and still fishing, and we were just losing a
5 number of pots. We don't quite have that situation
6 anymore. The Board has made changes. You know, before
7 there was -- it used to be unlimited in the commercial
8 fishery for the winter fishery through the ice, you
9 could fish as many pots as you could get out. And then
10 gradually it went to that limitation of 20 pots. The
11 issue with the 20 was, a number of people who used to
12 be crew then got permits, because it is an open access
13 fishery, anyone can get a commercial permit, you know.
14 And so a number of crew members just got -- so we
15 doubled the number of commercial fishermen that were
16 fishing and so they would just, you know, you're
17 fishing with a couple buddies, you got 20 on your
18 permit, that person gets a permit, they get 20, so now
19 what the Board has done is you get 20 and that's it.
20 You lose a pot, you can't replace them. So that's the
21 restrictions as they've brought it down. It went from
22 unlimited number of pots to 20 and now the new
23 restriction is 20 but they can't come in for
24 replacement anymore. So if they lose their 20 they're
25 done, and that idea is to stop them from pushing the
26 ice edge, you know, when it was -- crab got up to \$7 a
27 pound and -- or close to \$7 a pound and it really took
28 off here in the teens that everybody started crabbing.
29 And now it's more back to the way it used to be, where
30 it's usually less than 10 used to fish and, you know,
31 make a little bit of money, and it's not such a wild
32 west fishery in the winter as it used to be.

33

34 MR. GRAY: Louis, can I jump in here.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, go ahead. I was
37 just going to call on you, Tom, go ahead.

38

39 MR. GRAY: Jim, I'm sorry, but I'll
40 tell you losing crab pots and number of fishermen and
41 so on and so forth doesn't hold a candle to managing
42 that resource. You're -- and I don't want to tell you
43 your job but your job is to manage that crab fishery,
44 the numbers that are coming in and going out just don't
45 match your management scheme, I'm sorry. And you know
46 you have emergency order to close because there's not
47 enough ice out there to fish through and yet when we
48 don't have enough crabs to subsistence crab you won't
49 close it, something's wrong here Jim. Something's

50

0031

1 wrong.

2

3

4 And, you know, you've got this thing
5 blowing up in your face, there's issues going on here
6 and people are tired of having no crab. So, you know,
7 again, it's the resource that we're talking about. I'm
8 talking about 10 years from now I want to make sure
9 there's enough big crab for our subsistence users and
10 the commercial guys aren't taking all the crab off the
11 floor. That's the way it's been managed up to this
12 point and we can point fingers at the Feds, we can
13 point fingers at all kinds of people, but you're the
14 guy on the ground. You're the one with emergency
15 order, I can close it, I can open it, and if that
16 resource is damaged to the point that nobody's catching
17 crabs, it's pretty obvious you ought to be closing it.

17

18 So anyway I'm sorry, I just -- I'm a
19 little frustrated.

20

21 MR. LEAN: Mr. Chair, this is Charlie
22 Lean.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.....

25

26 MR. LEAN: Could I jump in.

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN:Tommy. Thank
29 you, Tommy. Was that you Charlie, I thought I heard
30 you.

31

32 MR. LEAN: Yes, I'm here.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. Go ahead.

35

36 MR. LEAN: Well, I wanted to say a few
37 things. So the -- there are a number of consistencies
38 about the petition. And so what Jim mentioned about
39 the petition and the fact that we were complaining
40 about -- about -- I can't even remember what he said --
41 but the issue is, in the petition, is that they're only
42 reading the regulation book with regard to Norton Sound
43 but there's statewide crab regulations that's -- to be
44 exact, it's 5 AAC 34080, and that regulation requires
45 them to manage to the king and tanner crab management
46 plan. In that plan it states should not conduct a
47 fishery on only recruit crab. It also states that you
48 will maintain -- you will maintain more than one age
49 class in the legal size categories.

50

0032

1 These requirements address what was
2 just brought up and that there should be some large
3 crab and there should be some small crab and our
4 current petition that the Board's to consider complains
5 that the fishery is operating on one quarter of the
6 mature male crab, the crab that can mate. The other
7 three-quarters are not yet legal. And if you look at
8 the skip rate, the crab that don't grow, that are
9 sublegal, they out number the entire part of the
10 population that's legal crab. So we're -- we're
11 conducting a fishery on recruit crab and that's against
12 the law. That's against the statewide crab management
13 law -- regulation. Fish and Game has not acknowledged
14 this in multiple meetings and they have not
15 acknowledged that in their response to our petition.
16 That's why -- that is why the Board of Fish is taking
17 this up again. It's not just about the value of five
18 inch crab or larger, certainly that would help, but
19 that's not the real issue. The real issue is that we
20 are conducting a fishery on crab as soon as they reach
21 legal size and basically are discouraging the sublegal
22 crab from growing because they're spending so much time
23 mating and covering the gap that should be covered by
24 legal sized crab.

25
26 So there is -- there is regulation that
27 states that there should be multiple age classes above
28 legal size, in other words there should be big crab,
29 and Jim does have the emergency order authority -- and
30 the proposal that's the opening date of February 1 --
31 I'll read it -- fishing season established by emergency
32 order to open on or after February 1. That's the
33 language. And so there is the ability to do an
34 emergency order.....

35
36 MR. MENARD: Get the book.

37
38 MR. LEAN:and emergency orders --
39 and -- and restrict fishing seasons. They're not
40 supposed to extend them unless stated in the
41 regulation. But he's stonewalling. And so I am
42 frustrated and I have been lobbying very hard. I think
43 if we have another year's closure on the commercial
44 crab fisheries we will then have multiple age classes
45 above legal size. But currently we barely do. It's
46 about one percent of the crab are larger than the crab
47 right now. So for all intents and purposes we have a
48 recruit fishery, which is illegal.

49
50

0033

1 So that's the petition. It will be
2 heard Tuesday afternoon by the Board of Fish. And I
3 wanted to also say that the buffer place by the North
4 Pacific Council is the largest buffer that can be
5 placed on a crab fishery based on past precedence. So
6 in other words, they took the most precautionary action
7 that they felt that they had a precedence to do so they
8 wouldn't exceed their authority. So basically the
9 Council said that the Norton Sound crab model was very
10 shaky and they lacked confidence and they put a larger
11 buffer on than they did last year and they put the
12 largest buffer that anybody has in place. So that's a
13 hint that somebody should critically look at the model
14 and think about what they're doing and probably follow
15 the king and tanner crab management plan that's in
16 regulation in State regulation.

17
18 So that's all I have.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.

21
22 MR. MENARD: Okay, I'm going to talk a
23 minute here, Louis, if I can get in.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I was just going
26 to offer you the floor there, Jim, go ahead.

27
28 MR. MENARD: Okay. Okay. So, well,
29 I'm going to disagree on a few things. I'm going to
30 read the regulation to you. The Department will open
31 the fishery through the ice only during a fishing
32 season to open February 1st and close April 30th unless
33 extended by emergency order. That is what is the
34 regulation in the book. It doesn't say on or after in
35 the regulation. So it's back to the way it was before.

36
37 Now, if people, like we say, submit a
38 proposal, the Board can't allocate based on the plan.
39 In fact there is a letter from the Commissioner of Fish
40 and Game back to the AOC -- AOC, what am I thinking,
41 politics now -- the AC.....

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Liberal.

44
45 (Laughter)

46
47 MR. MENARD: Yeah, yeah, my liberal
48 roots have shown now.

49
50

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1 (Laughter)

2

3 MR. MENARD: So there is a letter from
4 the Commissioner and he's -- with the Department
5 position and not accepting, you know, the petition from
6 the AC, in that, the AC has the right, you know, to go
7 to the Board, which the Board is going to take up. The
8 Board, you know, there are other concerns but the
9 Board's the one who's going to change this management
10 plan. I mean last year they put in a proposal to close
11 it east of 167 west longitude, one of the Board members
12 said, well, if they want to fish they can go west of
13 that, but I don't think they actually understood you
14 couldn't do that if you were going to do it in the
15 winter, but it did take effect, you know, June 21st was
16 that proposal. So the Board will take it up and we'll
17 say what they say this year. Last year their decision
18 was to close anywhere east of 167 where most of the
19 fleet fishes.

20

21 And a winter fishery can be a hit or
22 miss thing, you know, people are saying -- they're
23 telling me they're doing okay and I'm getting those
24 reports. Then I'm getting reports from like Tom
25 saying, well, it's bad out there. So -- but I'm
26 getting people coming in saying they're getting four to
27 10 nice size crab, you know, in about a three day pull.
28 But some are doing poor in certain locations, and some
29 are doing better than others. So I am getting reports
30 of crab being caught.

31

32 And this question about we have a bunch
33 of smaller crab, we do have that situation that has
34 appeared before, and we have commercial fished before,
35 all these years we've commercial fished. I don't have
36 any numbers from last summer, nobody went commercial
37 fishing, so just trying to base it on what we see in
38 the winter here, if the crab are moving into that area
39 or not, some winters we do have a bust. And we'll see.
40 The Board is going to be the final decider and like we
41 have said before, everyone can submit their proposals
42 and the Board will make the decision. You know if you
43 want to close the commercial fishery in the future, you
44 can put that proposal in. So if you want to support
45 changing the legal size and moving it up to 5 inch. Or
46 if you want to put a proposal in saying there's too
47 many smaller crab compared to what is going to be four
48 and three-quarters or greater, the legal size, say the
49 proposal would be like we have over 50/75 percent of

50

0035

1 the population that is going to be below this amount of
2 total crab based on what the legal male biomass number
3 is, so we set the guideline harvest level is what the
4 legal male biomass is. That's based off of four and
5 three quarters. The estimate is this is the percentage
6 of legal male biomass.

7

8 So I mean there's a number of ways you
9 can look at this and I know Tom's pretty active in the
10 AC and they can come up with a number of proposals to
11 look to restrict the commercial fishery in the future
12 and the Board's going to take a look on this via the
13 emergency petition they've submitted. But we are
14 limited -- we can't allocate, that's a Board decision.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thanks, Jim. So
17 you're saying that the Board of Fish has the allocation
18 ability and the North Pacific Fisheries Management
19 Council is giving a -- like a blanket thing over this?

20

21 MR. MENARD: Right. They're setting
22 the limits and this and that, and then we go to the --
23 because right now the -- like the legal male biomass is
24 listed at over 3million, and by Board of Fish
25 regulation we can fish up to 15 percent of the legal
26 male biomass. That's by Board of Fish regulation.
27 However, if we did that we would be way over what they
28 set as the allowable biological catch of 350,000. So
29 as we go out to seven percent, say, and then we take --
30 gets us that 314, so we're saying we're going to take
31 seven percent of the guideline harvest level which is
32 going to bring us down to 314,000 pounds, even though
33 in Board of Fish regulations it says we could fish 15
34 percent of the legal male biomass. Well, 15 percent,
35 you know, is going to double us, that's going to put us
36 over 60,000 would be allowed in the GHL if the
37 Department went that high, but we can't go that high
38 because there isn't an ABC, the allowable biological
39 catch. The Federal management plan, what the Council
40 has now set is 350,000 is they're going to allow for
41 ABC. So we have to come under that. So then I take
42 seven percent multiply that out by the legal male
43 biomass of 3.93million and we get 314,400 pounds.

44

45 So, yeah, there are two -- the Federal
46 management plan sets the hard stuff, and then we can
47 come -- we have to come under that even though Board of
48 Fish regulations say, you know, we could fish a higher
49 percentage.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Jim.
2 And I've never really been an advocate for the crab
3 fishery. I spent 13 years on the AC and I never liked
4 seeing catch limits go up based on percentages.

5
6 Really, I guess what you said was I
7 think we have an opportunity to put in proposals and I
8 think it's for 2022 and whatever they come up with on
9 the Board of Fish it becomes regulation in '23; I just
10 want to make sure that's the date?

11
12 MR. MENARD: Then the meeting is in
13 '23, it's scheduled for '23 for crab and then by the
14 time the regulations go into effect, unless it's
15 something of emergency usually it gets in by about
16 June. Like last year they closed the fishery east of
17 167 west longitude and that paperwork goes in and when
18 the Lt. Governor signs off on it those regulations are
19 in effect and it was June 21st last year. So -- and so
20 it would be in effect for the summer 2023 season once
21 the Board -- or if there is a season, you know, if
22 there was a proposal, let's just eliminate this
23 commercial fishery, you know, let's go back to the way
24 it was before we had a commercial fishery, let's just
25 go for subsistence so.

26
27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Yes, thank you.
28 I remember a guy named Jim Beaton, who was the Chairman
29 of the Board of Fish at one time saying we shouldn't go
30 big, and we went big, we went so big that crab stocks
31 took a big hit and it's never, in my mind, it's never
32 ever gotten back to normal in the way I think and the
33 way Tommy thinks of those times.

34
35 So has anybody suggested moratoriums.
36 You know, you're having an issue with the climate
37 change issue, the water warming up, everybody's talking
38 about fisheries moving north or to the west, to
39 northwest, or whatever, does that ever come into the
40 conversation at the AC level. I don't know because I'm
41 not there, and I haven't asked Tommy. But, you know,
42 taking a break and letting these crab breed and
43 multiply a little bit maybe we could understand them a
44 little bit better. But I don't -- to me, I feel like
45 we don't quite have a grasp on it, and I'm not trying
46 to insult anybody by saying that, but just over the
47 last 40 years I've just never saw a good recovery.

48
49 Anything to add, Jim.
50

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1 MR. MENARD: Yeah, well, also like you
2 say these changes you're seeing and things are
3 occurring faster and like long-term, but you could
4 submit an agenda change request to the Board with this
5 subsistence concern and they will take it out of cycle
6 if they accept it. You know, if they feel there is
7 some sort of emergency they can take it out of cycle,
8 meaning not wait until 2023. I think what the Board is
9 doing now, you know, they're going to look at it coming
10 up. A couple members said they want to take a look and
11 it takes like two members where this petition that the
12 AC put in and said so they're going to take a look at
13 it. So we'll see what happens.

14
15 But then let's say they make a decision
16 and then you can also do an agenda change request if
17 you want to submit something different.

18
19 So something coming from the AC helps
20 out, you know, a lot better as far as getting the
21 Board's attention. So the AC has put a petition in and
22 we'll see. But you could submit something out of
23 cycle.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, thank you. I'm
26 kind of familiar with that because of the chum wars we
27 were having in the '80s and '90s and the 2000s, so a
28 lot of out of cycle discussions about Area M and
29 interception.

30
31 Charlie, do you have anything to add
32 and then I'll call on Tommy.

33
34 MR. LEAN: I guess I think that the
35 emergency order authority is there. I don't want to get
36 into he said, I said. But I know when I had emergency
37 order authority I could shorten seasons. And I think
38 it's correct that the Board of Fisheries will settle
39 the issue and say again that the regulation 5 AAC
40 34080 takes precedence over local regulations and that
41 managers should first meet that standard and then move
42 on to the Norton Sound regulation.

43
44 So -- and that's not allocation, that's
45 conservation. So I think it's easy to hide behind the
46 allocative aspects of it, but if there were multiple
47 age classes above legal size we wouldn't be having this
48 discussion.

49
50

0038

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Charlie.

4 Tommy.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tommy might be
9 surfing. Jim, have you got anything to followup on the
10 crab thing.

11

12 MR. MENARD: No.

13

14 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot's got a
15 comment.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Elmer go ahead. I was
18 just going to ask the Council if they had anything. go
19 ahead, Elmer.

20

21 MR. SEETOT: Thank you, very much, Mr.
22 Chair. Crab's not your usual environment and
23 biologists worried that they're not in the area. I'll
24 -- other than talking about regulations, regulations
25 and harvest limits and stuff, that Federal and State
26 agencies do -- I'll try to get another perspective on
27 my part. When you're talking about sublegal crab
28 mating and then other stuff, too warm for -- for that
29 species in that certain region. We constantly blame
30 commercial fishermen versus subsistence fishermen but
31 both have regulations that they follow on the removal
32 of species in certain regions. And when some numbers
33 start crashing down all they talk about is pretty much
34 numbers and regulations of that certain species. Any
35 correlation between crabs and -- remember that seals
36 have lesions on their skin, there's something in the
37 water, the ecosystem that there's pretty much getting
38 these species that live in and around the water, you
39 know, certain diseases. We have a lot of ship traffic
40 that is going to the Bering Straits right now on the --
41 on the Russian side we have tankers, ice breakers
42 coming from the north side pretty much year-round now.
43 A lot of traffic in the Bering Straits that come
44 through the Bering Straits. You have a lot of vessels,
45 marine vessels that depart Nome to clean things in the
46 Norton Sound region, is that too much noise pollution,
47 we don't even talk about exhaust -- exhaust residue
48 from ships that are passing through, anything --
49 anything that is -- that enters the water column, it
50

0039

1 eventually will sink to the bottom.

2

3

4 I haven't heard anything -- any
5 research on the water ecosystem in these areas. I know
6 that Bering Sea is pretty shallow, look at the walrus
7 that ate the clams on the west side, they pretty much
8 perished because of the toxic stuff that was in the
9 clams that they were eating. We constantly blame each
10 other, commercial fishermen versus subsistence
11 fishermen, that's pretty much against the knowledge
12 that has been passed down from our people. The State
13 and Federal agencies talk about regulations, harvest,
14 removal, stuff like that. We, as Native people, I have
15 heard something about blaming the commercial fishermen
16 for the decline of crab resources in the Norton Sound
17 region. That's pretty much, don't argue about the
18 animals, just only take what you want, that's something
19 that we kind of overlook.

19

20

21 And also our climate, our weather
22 system has changed so much that we just kind of think
23 that it's normal, it's not normal, it's going to have
24 an affect on the species, whether you're on land, sea
25 or air. Look at all the bird die-off that has occurred
26 in the Bering Sea or in our area from past two summers.
27 Something is happening out there, too much septic
28 systems are going into the waters in and around Alaska.
29 What about all the mining that's occurring, that have
30 occurred or is occurring in the Nome region. Look at
31 all the gold mining people, the activities they are
32 doing, what are they doing to the resources that are in
33 and around the water column. Something -- most of the
34 stuff that I have heard so far is rules, regulations
35 and emergency orders, you have to kind of look at this
36 from different perspectives. It's not -- it's
37 happening to all species, you don't just look at
38 numbers happen to be crash -- you -- it has to start
39 somewhere in the beginning somewhere.

39

40

41 And some members also mentioned fish
42 species are moving further north due to the instability
43 of the water that they reside in. I have seen some of
44 these changes. We're constantly on the lookout and
45 then I hope that things pretty much come to normal.
46 Stuff that we have heard from our ancestors are coming
47 into being. The fish resources will be pretty much
48 gone in the future. And other than that I think that
49 when we talk about rules and regulations compared to,
50 you know, how the ecosystem is in that area, I think

50

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1 that's just being overlooked. And that pretty much has
2 been my comment concerning, you know, the resources in
3 the region.

4
5 Thank you, very much.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilman
8 Seetot for those points and comments.

9
10 I guess -- I had this noted down here
11 that, you know, like he referred to about the species
12 moving north, what kind of data do we have on crab and
13 pollock and, of course halibut. Back in '98 and '99
14 under NSEDC I conducted a couple experimental fisheries
15 out there in the strait and in front of Nome and all
16 the way up around the corner, past Wales, and, you
17 know, I was able to see what critters these fish were
18 eating, the pollock and the -- particularly pollock and
19 cod and crab were, you know, -- and halibut also, they
20 had small crab in them. Does the Norton Sound crab,
21 it's pretty much localized -- is there any data that
22 talks about the cod and the pollock in the area.

23
24 Jim.

25
26 MR. MENARD: I don't have any pollock
27 data but we have heard about cod, you know, moving
28 farther north and, of course, being predated on crab,
29 but as far as hard numbers, no, I don't have anything
30 on that.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Now, would the
33 State be involved in that or would it just be the Feds?

34
35 MR. MENARD: That is Federal fishery.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right, okay. Yeah,
38 and so the other -- I guess the other thing is there's
39 been -- I don't know if it's rumor or if there's been
40 actual news about it but the Russians are supposedly up
41 around the corner running trawlers now, and we got
42 relatively shallow water in this strait, and so, you
43 know, Elmer alluded to the fact that the Russians are
44 running ice breakers, and I knew a Russian ice breaker
45 captain that came to Nome one time and he showed me a
46 manual, yeah, they do move year-round. So their
47 fishing fleet, do they have a trawler fleet up in this
48 area or up above us; does anybody know?

49
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1 MR. LEAN: Last year there were two
2 Russians that went up north of the strait.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that would have
5 been, of course, in the summertime, but no
6 documentation on what they're doing, I guess.

7
8 Charlie.

9
10 MR. LEAN: Right. We don't know. They
11 spent some time so there's a chance they found
12 something.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. All right. So
15 are there any other Council members with any questions
16 or comments for Jim on the crab.

17
18 MR. AUKONGAK: Hey, Louis, this is
19 Martin.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, go ahead,
22 Martin.

23
24 MR. AUKONGAK: You know you admit you
25 saw it was in a decline so it should have been shut
26 down sooner and then in order for the crab to come
27 back, you know, it's pretty logical you'd keep it shut
28 down for maybe another year. You know it's pretty
29 tough in order for the people doing the commercial
30 side, if they wanted to keep doing the commercial, you
31 know, for profit, you know, and then you got tradition,
32 what Louis and Tom, you know, just talked about not too
33 long ago, you'd be able to get big crab, no problem,
34 but now you can't even get them. So my advice, you
35 know, keep it shut down.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Martin.
38 Any other Council members.

39
40 MR. GRAY: This is Tom Gray, I'm back
41 online. I got pulled over by a cop listening to your
42 meeting, got a ticket, you can't drive with a cell
43 phone in your hand.

44
45 (Laughter)

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You can't even calm
48 down down over there in the sunshine with a Matai in
49 your hand.

50

0042

1 MR. GRAY: I know.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You're a rebelrouser.

4

5 (Laughter)

6

7 MR. GRAY: Now the cell phones on the
8 seat and not in my hand so anyway.....

9

10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Both hands on the
11 wheel, Tom. I thought you went surfing.

12

13 MR. GRAY: Yeah. Right.

14

15 (Laughter)

16

17 MR. GRAY: Anyway, I guess.....

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. Go ahead.

20

21 MR. GRAY:just a word, my
22 opinion, we need to shut this fishery down and when
23 they get this allocation thing sorted out, if it takes
24 10 years to sort it out leave that fishery shut down.
25 We want crab, subsistence crab on the grounds after
26 that trawler, or after the commercial fleet goes
27 through. We need crab for subsistence users left on the
28 grounds. Enough of this rape and pillage and take
29 everything that's there.

30

31 You know the subsistence crab fishery,
32 in my opinion, is a heck of a lot more important than
33 the commercial fishery.

34

35 So anyway that's my 10 cents.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, you went up from
38 two cents, that's pretty good.

39

40 MR. GRAY: Yeah.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Inflation. Inflation.

43

44 MR. GRAY: Yeah, and I'll pass a hat to
45 pay my fine for driving with a cell phone in my hand.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And I was trying to do

50

0043

1 earphones in the house and you should learn, earphones.

2

3 Is that all Tom.

4

5 MR. GRAY: Yeah. Yeah. Shut 'er down.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. So are
8 there any other Council members.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, hearing
13 none.....

14

15 MR. AHMASUK: I have a public comment,
16 this is Austin Ahmasuk.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, there you go, go
19 ahead, you got a comment or a question for Jim.

20

21 MR. AHMASUK: Yeah.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

24

25 MR. AHMASUK: For the record, this is
26 Austin Ahmasuk. I want to point out that people in
27 this region we have tried to approach the North Pacific
28 Fishery Management Council to ensure the concerns that
29 Elmer mentioned, that Tom mentioned, and I'm speaking
30 on behalf of myself, by the way -- the concerns that
31 you've mentioned, we try to bring those to the big
32 bodies that have sway, right, and the North Pacific
33 Fishery Management Council, it establishes the
34 allowable bycatch -- the allowable biological catch for
35 this region. The North Pacific Fishery Management has
36 the poorest, most unfriendly public process that exists
37 in the State of Alaska. Members of the public are very
38 frustrated with how the Council works. All of these
39 concerns that some of you have mentioned, a lot of
40 those have been conveyed to the Council regarding
41 climate change, increased shipping, large scale
42 commercial fisheries moving northward, and the North
43 Pacific Fishery Management Council doesn't care. In
44 fact when the North Pacific Fishery Management -- I was
45 there at its last meeting, and the North Pacific
46 Fishery Management Council heard some of these concerns
47 regarding crab, they said go somewhere else with your
48 problem, go to the Board of Fish. That's how much they
49 care about subsistence users in this process.

50

0044

1 So, you know, I fully understand the
2 frustration that we have here at the RAC level, even at
3 the Advisory Committee level, but in reality some huge
4 and other more significant efforts need to be made at
5 the Board of Fish level and the North Pacific Fishery
6 Management Council, because they simply don't care
7 about us. They don't care about us in the region,
8 about subsistence, they're -- the Council process is
9 very commercial fishery oriented. The Council
10 essentially never questions the State of Alaska or the
11 Alaska Fisheries Science Center, the Council members
12 simply believe every word that they say, they don't
13 question -- they don't question their data, and motions
14 are passed with almost no discussion. It even appears
15 that motions are made kind of behind the scenes in
16 order to ensure that commercial fishing is ensured to
17 occur, and that's the situation that we're in now -- or
18 the situation whereby folks from our region asked the
19 Council to stop the fishery, they said go somewhere
20 else with your problems, we don't care about you, and
21 now we are in the situation where we are now.

22
23 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Austin.

26
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And -- go ahead, is
30 this Karen.

31
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Karen. Austin, could you please state your
34 name and spell your last name for us and where you're
35 from so we can make sure we have that on the record and
36 thank you also for testifying.

37
38 MR. AHMASUK: Yeah, Austin Ahmasuk. My
39 last name is spelled A-H-M-A-S-U-K, I'm calling in from
40 Nome.

41
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much.
43 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. Good
46 catch. So Jim we've hammered on this and I just wanted
47 it to be clear, I guess, in my mind, the North Pacific
48 Fisheries Management Council is involved in the
49 allocation for our area, the State has got emergency
50

0045

1 order management for say our districts, correct?

2

3

MR. MENARD: Correct.

4

5

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, and so I guess
6 -- and I know everybody needs to make a dollar here and
7 there but it isn't a very good time right now and most
8 times economically our region is suffering. So -- but
9 when it comes down to one or two or three fishermen
10 permits being fished, I wonder if that is to the
11 detriment of the subsistence fisheries and, you know,
12 economically is it really viable, and I know I sound
13 like I'm picking on people but I'm trying not to, but
14 the idea of conservation, you know, we've dealt with
15 this with the chum wars, '80s, '90s, '20s and into the
16 teens, I was very active in it, the idea that
17 conservation always has to fall on the shoulders of the
18 people that are in the subsistence realm is always
19 troublesome for me to understand how it works.

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You know Austin is talking about the
Council, telling him to go or others to go to the Board
of Fish, well, I guess it is actually the Board of Fish
that has the powers to change things and I guess
through the process, we, as subsistence users and what
not, have to be a little more proactive at it I guess
when it comes to paperwork.

You're in a tough spot and I respect
you for that. I hear the Advisory Council has gotten
aggressive about it and I heard that you gave us,
there's options, to take part in this process, so
appreciate your comments and your answers on this hot
topic of crab fishery. It is, always been a heartburn
to me, and it's not a comfortable chair to sit in.

If there's anything else, or any other
comments or concerns or testimony from the public I'd
like to hear something. We do have fisheries from Fish
and Game here online. Is there anybody out in the
public out there, like Austin, that has any comments or
questions or concerns.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, I guess
we can move on to other fisheries discussion with you
Jim. Appreciate your patience. Do you have anything
to continue with.

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1 MR. MENARD: Oh, okay. I was waiting
2 for the.....

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It doesn't sound like
5 we got any more crab issues, we've hammered it out
6 pretty hard.

7
8 MR. MENARD: Okay. Yeah.

9
10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'd like to kind of
11 move on.

12
13 MR. MENARD: Yeah. Maybe I'll just say
14 quick, like you say, Louis, it's -- yeah, people go to
15 the Board -- right now the threshold level for
16 abundance for having a commercial fishery is 1.25
17 million pounds, so if people want to put a proposal in
18 that you need 3 million pounds, you could do something
19 like that, at the Board of Fisheries, put that you need
20 -- and that any time it falls below that amount then
21 there wouldn't be a commercial fishery. So, yeah, in
22 the future any proposals -- you can even come by here
23 at the office or give us a call, proposals, and
24 Charlie's there too, I mean very helpful to if you want
25 to put a proposal in and we can help you with whatever
26 proposal you want to put in. You know, that's a
27 proposal that then gets discussed by the Board.

28
29 So, all right, we'll move on.

30
31 So salmon, yeah, it was a real surprise
32 last year, just the four year olds didn't show up for
33 the chum. The -- and the silvers are mostly four year
34 olds and so they took a dive too. We didn't expect
35 just the crash we saw with those species, the -- the
36 interesting thing was the silver weight for the silver
37 salmon, previous record low had been 6.4 pounds, which
38 had been just the year before in 2019, and we'd seen
39 that in other years get that low, get 6.5, 6.4, 6.6;
40 the big run year of 2006 the average commercial weight
41 was only 6.6. We had some record runs of silvers
42 recently, '18 was just an incredible run. We've just
43 had some great runs and definitely was unexpected to
44 see the crash that came in 2020.

45
46 Pinks, I only know what I read in the
47 paper that people had concerns about the pinks as far
48 as what the RAC was saying, and that article, and pink
49 salmon are kind of -- seem to be everywhere and
50

0047

1 plugging rivers and some thought that might be a
2 detriment to the other species.

3

4 This year forecasts are for much lower,
5 it is an odd numbered run pink year so the number will
6 be down. Sometimes down to the south though in
7 Shaktoolik and Unalakleet they do get big odd numbered
8 runs. And using an example of an even year run in
9 2019, we had over 3.2 million up the Nome River through
10 the weir there, and in an odd numbered year we've had
11 as low as two and 3,000 in the weir, and like '99,
12 2001, 11,000 in 2003. But the '19 odd numbered years,
13 the last two odd numbered years '17 and '19 have been
14 700,000 through the Nome weir, so we've had some big
15 odd numbered years too. But nothing like an even year,
16 like last year was over 2.2 million. So we do see a
17 lot of pinks. There hasn't been any market interest in
18 pinks but Icicle Seafoods is planning to come up and
19 start to test out if they can make a go of things of
20 buying pink salmon. so it sounds like they're going to
21 be down by Shaktoolik, Unalakleet, though, this year.
22 I don't know if they're going to come as far north as
23 Elim, but I think they're just going to stay down to
24 the south and they're going -- coming in on an odd year
25 and then they're going to look maybe at coming in and
26 buying some fish the following year, depending on what
27 happens this coming summer.

28

29 In particular, the sockeye has dropped
30 off, too. Over at Pilgrim, we kept the limit at 25 the
31 past year, and we didn't raise it until towards the end
32 of the season there. We boosted it up to 50. It was
33 kind of a deal of letting everyone get their 25. A lot
34 of people that can't go down below the weir said they
35 still weren't getting their fish up river, and we kind
36 of let those with the nets, kind of let some pass. The
37 numbers were down at the Pilgrim River for sockeye
38 where we had gotten -- we look over the last several
39 years, 55,000 in '17, 40,000 in '18, 30,000 in '19 and
40 we got 15,000 through in 2020. So it has been coming
41 down. We are going to watch if we're going to get a
42 drop off like we had in the early part of the last
43 decade. Well, it crashed in '09 on us where we only
44 got about 950 through, and then 1,600 through in 2010,
45 which miraculously did pretty well when they returned
46 years later, that total 1,650 did really well. So --
47 but that's something we are going to watch, we're going
48 to watch the sockeye next year. We'll start out with
49 the 25 limit again, that is in regulation, and then we

50

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1 will look to increase it if things go but the last
2 several years we just waved the limit out at Pilgrim
3 River.

4
5 So overall in Norton Sound, we look at
6 the subsistence numbers and they were pretty decent but
7 then, again, that can be a function of if we're not
8 fishing much, you know, commercial-wise, we didn't fish
9 much down in Southern Norton Sound at all. And oddly
10 Nome and Golovin and did a lot better, usually, you
11 know, the big power is down to the south in Norton
12 Sound in the fisheries and Nome's done well in their
13 commercial fishing. The last four years have been the
14 highest silver salmon harvest ever and we got our
15 escapements as far as we thought was satisfactory up
16 north here. So we didn't get them -- didn't get much
17 down to the south though.

18
19 I don't know rather than droning on
20 about things I'm just going to open it up to specific
21 questions people had about the fishery and anything,
22 any concerns there.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Jim.
25 Anybody on the Council have any questions, comments for
26 Jim.

27
28 MR. GRAY: So I guess I better jump in
29 here if I'm -- this is Tom.

30
31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go.

32
33 MR. GRAY: So, Jim, I'm a little
34 concerned about your counting tower, or NSEDC's
35 counting tower. And, you know, the runs, specifically
36 silver salmon. You know it would surprise me if you
37 tell me we got perfect runs and yada, yada, yada with
38 the situation we've had in the past with that counting
39 tower. And where are we at with this counting tower
40 and its usefulness to manage the fishery?

41
42 MR. MENARD: Okay. The counting tower
43 there at -- yeah, Tom's right that is run by NSEDC on
44 the Fish River, and it has been -- had some issues with
45 getting knocked out by high water and that is a
46 situation, you know, that does make it difficult at
47 times. But that tower's been helpful in the sense that
48 sometimes even if they get in and they get knocked out,
49 we can really get a good indication, sometimes of where
50

0049

1 we're going, and like one year they counted for just a
2 short stretch, like say last year, when they counted --
3 well, let me step back.

4
5 Okay, so 2019, by the time they got
6 knocked out silvers were just starting and they counted
7 for like five days of silvers, but what that showed us
8 compared to the previous five years in 2019 was that
9 was the greatest silver count we'd seen up to that
10 point. And so it gave us a good indication of what we
11 were seeing in the catches and in the tower that we
12 were having a great run there. Now, last year they got
13 knocked out a little later and it was tailing what we
14 had seen other years by about one to 3,000 fish. So we
15 do get some sort of indications from that tower but it
16 depends if they can count. And then we go off of other
17 projects on each side, the Quinhagak River's, you know,
18 in Elim, and that one doesn't have the problems of the
19 high water and big -- it isn't as big a river as the
20 Fish, and we do have the counting projects on the Nome
21 side. So we go on each side then and kind of look at
22 it, and then we look at the commercial catches, how
23 they're doing for catch per unit of effort, and they
24 have a lot less, the fish in Golovin, when they get
25 into silvers, we've seen a lot of traveling down to
26 Unalakleet -- of course we didn't see that as much this
27 year because we weren't fishing much down in
28 Unalakleet. But there are other indications when we
29 don't have the tower counting that we do use.

30
31 MR. GRAY: So I guess my comment on
32 this issue, Jim, is if we're going to spend hundreds of
33 thousands of dollars counting fish we need to make it
34 useful. You know the whole program needs to be useful
35 to not just five days out of the silver run or 10 days
36 out of the pink run. The goal needs to make sure that
37 tool, which is the counting tower, is doing as much for
38 you as it can and if it's not doing what we need, you
39 know, you need to look around and see what else we can
40 do. I'm, again, you know, you know me I'm always
41 ranting about silver salmon and if -- in my eyes, if
42 the river system had three times as much silvers coming
43 in that would mean the guys, the commercial fishermen
44 will be getting three times as much and on and on, so
45 everybody wins. And, you know, whether the habitat can
46 handle it, who knows.

47
48 But these towers are just tools in the
49 system and if they're not being functional they need to
50

0050

1 be evaluated and relooked at.

2

3 You're going to always hear from me on
4 silver salmon, that's probably one of the highest
5 priorities in the river system right now, is silvers.

6

7 You know it used to be chum, back in
8 the day, 50, 60 years ago, then it became pinks, and
9 pinks are high but how many families, there's, you
10 know, a probably a third of the families that put dry
11 fish away years ago are doing it today. So everybody's
12 after silvers so -- and if we can help the silvers
13 that's what I'm after.

14

15 So, anyway, tools in the box. And
16 these counting towers are just one tool, you know, the
17 commercial fishing, what they're doing is another tool,
18 and so on and so forth. I do have reservations about,
19 yeah, the first five days of that count was great,
20 well, who knows, that run might have dropped off and
21 became a terrible run, that's how fish run. There's a
22 peak and a low. And it -- you know, runs are early and
23 late and blah, blah, blah, so just because you got five
24 awesome days doesn't mean that run was awesome.

25

26 So anyway I'm preaching to the choir, I
27 suppose.

28

29 MR. MENARD: Yeah, Tom, we'd always
30 like to have more information but we're very thankful
31 for what NSEDC has done and they've put the real effort
32 in as far as trying to get it in. It is a tough place
33 to count there. In '19 the commercial guys did really
34 well so they continued to do well so that's what we
35 kind of hung our hat on and we'll go off of what we
36 call harvest based management, we look at how they're
37 catching compared to historical years past, and they've
38 done pretty decent in Golovin, especially the last
39 three years. But we're very thankful of NSEDC and all
40 the work they've done in salmon, and I'm sure people
41 know things are getting cut back at the State and NSEDC
42 has definitely stepped up and helped out on a lot of
43 things and they're looking at possible other locations
44 for the tower.

45

46 So -- but, yeah, it's -- it's nice that
47 we do have some projects in each of the subdistricts
48 and NSEDC has really helped out with that.

49

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Jim. I got
2 a question for you. What year was that the commercial
3 fishery was opened back up in the Nome subdistrict, I'm
4 wanting to say about six years ago.

5

6 MR. MENARD: Yeah, 2013 was when it
7 opened back up.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. '13. Yeah, and
10 I realize that -- I was there at the meeting and I
11 basically spoke against fishing other species other
12 than pinks. And I thought that if we're going to have
13 any kind of a fishery in the Nome subdistrict, we
14 should be targeting pinks, and I even made the
15 suggestion that we need to be looking at purse seining
16 pinks. Two years ago down at Eighteen Mile on the
17 Safety Sound area I watched pinks, by the millions out
18 there for probably a couple weeks. And I'm familiar
19 with spotting herring and setting herring seines and
20 stuff all the way up to Port Clarence and all the way
21 down to Togiak. It's something I did in the early
22 days. I really have a hard time with this idea that
23 we're targeting silvers so hard with commercial
24 fishing. Although they're there. Again, there's only
25 so many fishermen involved. And so, you know, I can't
26 condemn anybody for wanting to get a -- you know have a
27 better life and make more money at it, but at the
28 expense of subsistence, I think that targeting silvers
29 in a commercial fishery and -- or excuse me -- silvers
30 and -- yeah, silvers, chums, reds and what's left of
31 the king runs is a detrimental thing to all these
32 species. And we do know we have a pink problem. We've
33 got -- our rivers never used to be like this. I know
34 back in the early '80s when the pinks started building
35 up on the Nome River, you know, I watched them because
36 I did a lot of flying that way, what is Fish and Game's
37 management for curbing the pink run.

38

39 I know one thing that just a few years
40 ago and I think it was during the Management Council's
41 -- one of the meetings and I can't remember if it was
42 the first or the second one that they came to Nome,
43 there was a discussion that came up about the
44 combination of having healthy pink and healthy chum
45 runs adds to the goodness and health of the silver
46 runs. There's a correlation there. Well, right now we
47 have -- our chum runs up in the Nome area, and we have,
48 what, seven rivers or so, they're unhealthy, they're
49 unbalanced. And it leads me to believe that somewhere

50

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1 along the line the Board of Fish needs to take a look
2 at it. I would hope that you, as a manager, would, you
3 know, be looking out for the best interest that the
4 idea that subsistence is not being met. Chum salmon is
5 still a fish of desire. And elders that are not even
6 here anymore spent hundreds of hours of testimony in
7 the '80s, '90s and into the 2000s that that was the
8 most important fish. You know I was at the Board of
9 Fish meetings, I testified, I was on the Advisory
10 Committee for 13 years testifying. We're totally
11 upside down now.

12
13 So I guess I know we could put in
14 proposals, but I just really, really don't like to see
15 this commercial fishery that benefits a few in the Nome
16 area when we have an upside down run of pinks. I mean
17 we got way too many pinks.

18
19 Is that a -- with the pinks that we
20 have now, are you -- I hear you say that they did well
21 again.....

22
23 (Teleconference interference -
24 participants not muted)

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN:on -- are the
27 silvers.....

28
29 (Teleconference interference -
30 participants not muted)

31
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello, who's on the
33 phone right now, is that Deahl. Hello.

34
35 (Teleconference interference -
36 participants not muted)

37
38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello, who's talking
39 on the call, we can hear you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Somebody's on a phone
42 call and we can hear you. They're talking on two
43 phones.

44
45 So, anyway, Jim, I guess my question
46 is, do you see anything around with this pinks, is it
47 doing the silvers good or is it bad or is there any
48 data to go with that.

49
50

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1 MR. MENARD: Okay, I think I got
2 your.....

3
4 (Teleconference interference -
5 participants not muted)

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think somebody's
8 talking on two phones. They're on the meeting and then
9 they're talking on.....

10
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello, Lloyd, Lloyd,
12 is that you?

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello. Whoever's
17 talking, could you please mute your phone. Uh-huh, I
18 think it is Lloyd, but I'm not sure he can hear us.

19
20 MR. MENARD: Okay. Well, I'll start to
21 answer there and -- okay, what we've seen long-term is
22 the increase of both pink and silver seem to have been
23 coming up over the decades. And one of the things of
24 pinks is, of course, they come every two years and the
25 silvers every four years, predominately. Pinks are
26 almost -- everything is two years. So the odd numbered
27 -- the ones that spawned in '19 will be coming back in
28 '21, so that's when you hear us say a two year old
29 fish, and then the even years the ones that spawned
30 this past year in 2020, those will return in 2022.
31 Overall we got into this odd/even year cycle in 1985
32 and where the odd year tended to be smaller but even
33 year really started to take off, and in the last five
34 years we've seen a lot of pinks.

35
36 But long-term what we've seen is the
37 silvers have done well with the pinks. And one of the
38 things is that the silvers stay in the rivers for a
39 couple years so the pinks help to provide a lot of food
40 for them when they first come out, these large numbers
41 of pink salmon going out, and the cohos coming out that
42 first winter after they've overwintered, as a fry, get
43 a pretty good feed, and the theory was that they've
44 done well too.

45
46 Chum, we've done a lot better in recent
47 years, as far as chum. It doesn't seem that we get the
48 subsistence effort on chum that we used to. And I
49 don't know, part of that may be the pinks, too, you
50

0054

1 know, do you want to put your net out and get loaded
2 with a bunch of pinks when you're trying to get chum,
3 so, you know, like people are saying pinks are kind of
4 overrunning things in that sense. Wherein silvers you
5 can put your net out later and not have to deal with
6 getting a bunch of pinks in your net and that's why
7 we've had some record subsistence harvest -- and I'll
8 just bring up Nome area, for example, looking at the
9 numbers. So '18 where we got like 5,000 in the
10 subsistence catch and I know people just been doing
11 very well fishing.

12
13 So we would like to get a commercial
14 fishing going on the pinks. It tends to be market
15 situations where it's not as valuable for them. But
16 like you say, possibly getting purse seining going.
17 With Icicle coming up, that is one of the things they
18 are going to look at is they are going to look at, you
19 know, you're allowed to beach seine down in Unalakleet,
20 and they're actually going to look at getting
21 Commissioner's permit for a couple jitney seines where
22 they encircle the fish and see if they're going to be
23 successful, that we could get a buyer in here that
24 would be interested in targeting the pink salmon. So
25 -- but otherwise it's pretty tough, management-wise, to
26 try and knock down the pinks when there's no sort of
27 fishery on them, even if we had a commercial fishery, I
28 don't know how much we could knock them down. But the
29 overall pattern we've seen is an increase in pink,
30 silvers and also sockeye, over the -- if we look over
31 the last couple of decades. You know I can speak to
32 when I've been here.

33
34 And, chum have come back lately, you
35 know, they were down there in the early years, the
36 2000s, but they've come back too, and last year was
37 unusual.

38
39 So -- and I don't know if I answered
40 specifically your question, but long-term pinks and
41 cohos, the line is showing the continually going up
42 over the years and pinks have just skyrocketed in the
43 last five years.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, okay, that kind
46 of gives me an overall picture, just trying to
47 understand it. You mentioned Icicle Seafoods looking
48 at a jitney, why don't they just look into purse
49 seining, purse seining works. It's effective. And it
50

0055

1 can be done in shallow water. We did -- I've seen it
2 work, you know, within 15 feet of water, you know, it
3 achieves the goal. And it makes more sense to me to
4 deal with something -- beach seining, you don't have
5 the purse seine effect so it's a problematic. I saw
6 that in the '80s when it was being attempted down there
7 in the Unalakleet area, when they were trying to beach
8 seine for herring. It was a real fiasco. I had some
9 friends that were actually part of that.

10

11 But I always thought if you were going
12 to seine anything, you might as well just go for it and
13 have purse seining. I don't know if the Department has
14 anything against it or not or it's just not something
15 that anybody's ever brought up and favored.

16

17 The other question I have is Fish and
18 Game, you know, you guys set the tone for the
19 fisheries, now if we have an over abundance of pinks, I
20 guess maybe it's not your responsibility to look for a
21 buyer to buy these pinks, I know in 1998 Norton Sound
22 Seafood Products did have a pink directed -- it was a
23 fishery, they had one of the pollock -- I think it was
24 the Northern Glacier we had up here and I was in charge
25 of the vessels that were tendering and I can't remember
26 what the number was, but you would think that if people
27 want to eat pollock sandwiches they'd sure eat pink
28 sandwiches along the line. So I was just wondering if
29 there's any talk about marketing, and the marketability
30 of these things. You got -- you said something about
31 pink salmon, are you referring to fisheries down in
32 Prince William Sound and Southeast, they're having
33 problems with pinks and there might need to be pinks
34 caught somewhere else. I didn't quite catch on to
35 that, I'm not up on that.

36

37 So do you have the authority to move a
38 fish buyer in somewhere where you want to target a
39 certain species, and are there other areas where
40 they're having a problem. Those are the two questions.

41

42 Thanks, Jim.

43

44 MR. MENARD: Yeah. Well, quickly,
45 yeah, I don't have the authority or the Department
46 doesn't have the authority to tell the buyers what to
47 do in that sense, you know, where to move in and like
48 that. I mean we open the fishery and we hope a buyer's
49 going to come. But what you said was in the 1998,

50

0056

1 yeah, they caught almost 600,000 pink salmon and that
2 was in the commercial fishery in Norton Sound and that
3 was only the '94 harvest of 982,000 was better. Then
4 in 2000 when they came back that was -- I was here at
5 the tail end and they caught 166,000 and I guess
6 economically they needed to catch more and it just
7 wasn't worth it as far as -- you know, you have to go
8 to the buyers and talk to them and what I've always
9 heard is the -- you know, what you call the small
10 chance of making a profit on pinks is you've got to get
11 a huge volume, what they've said, and so a lot of times
12 it doesn't pencil out, and that's what I've heard. You
13 know the margin is so close. So -- but Icicle is
14 looking at these numbers and that's why they want to
15 come up.

16
17 You also talked about purse seining,
18 that would be something we could go to the Board with
19 and say we want to shift this to a purse seine fishery.
20 Like they say, they're going to get a -- going to try a
21 couple jitneys and get this experimental and see what
22 they got and as we come into the 2022 fishery, maybe we
23 can see. It tends to be outlays to the fishermen, you
24 know, to -- you got Norton Sound, which are gillnet
25 permits, and do we have a separate seine permit, or do
26 we allow them to use seines. So that's -- those are
27 all good things we could look at in the future,
28 anything to get a market for pink salmon because we are
29 being overrun now.

30
31 So as far as down -- I did hear there
32 was trouble down in Prince William Sound, yeah, the
33 pinks didn't come back, they, you know, had crashing
34 numbers there. So that is what happened, say down
35 there. And I thought it was last year, and if they've
36 had some other bad years but of course I'm not as up on
37 that, but that is what I had heard.

38
39 And so Icicle has looked at the
40 numbers, they like the numbers they've seen so they
41 just want to give it a try and start out slowly and
42 maybe that's something we can do in the future.

43
44 So the Department, you know, isn't
45 opposed to that, that's something that goes to the
46 Board and the Board makes that decision.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
49 answering those. Yeah, I've always had this worry that
50

0057

1 we're targeting the other species and like I said when
2 they brought it to the table to bring Nome subdistrict
3 back into the commercial fishing scene, I spoke out
4 against targeting anything else and just pinks only.
5 So the reason why I asked the question about other
6 fisheries is generally they get all their pink run --
7 fish in Southeast and Southcentral before anywhere else
8 and they usually get what they want and they're done,
9 the buyers, so it's -- so I'm glad to hear that Icicle
10 is looking in our direction.

11
12 Thank you for your answers on my
13 questions.

14
15 Are there any other Council out there
16 having questions, comments or concerns.

17
18 MR. OYOUMICK: Yep. I just got a
19 comment, this is Leland there, Louis.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, go ahead, you
22 got it.

23
24 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, growing up when we
25 were kids that's the number 1 fish we went after was
26 the humpies to make dry fish. But back then we had
27 good weather to dry fish. Nowadays the weather gets
28 kind of iffy and people put in a lot of time and effort
29 into cutting these humpies and when they don't dry, a
30 little bit of moisture in them and they don't dry good
31 and they don't taste good like when it's perfectly dry
32 out. And that might have an effect on why there's so
33 many humpies now because people don't go after them as
34 much as they used to because of that weather factor.
35 And during humpy season the rain comes whenever it
36 likes to come just like blink your eye and there's rain
37 and not even clouds in the sky and all of a sudden
38 there's rain and that little bit of rain on the fish
39 ruins it. A little moisture ruins the drying process
40 and it just don't taste as good. And I think that might
41 have some contributing factor to why there's so many
42 humpies.

43
44 That's just a thought that I keep
45 thinking of. Because when we were kids growing up
46 that's how we learned to seine, is going after humpies.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

0058

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
2 Leland. Any other Council members.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig
5 Mission.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Elmer.

8
9 MR. SEETOT: Yeah, most of the removal
10 is by humans. We also have to remember there are other
11 natural wildlife resources out there eating the
12 resource, seals, belugas and other stuff. So when we
13 try to argue about a certain species removal, you know,
14 I am not just a fish eater alone, I pretty much use all
15 the natural resources from land, air and sea, so that's
16 very important to us.

17
18 They mentioned something about beach
19 seine, I think that's an appropriate way to kind of
20 catch these smaller fish because they don't have no net
21 marks around their bodies when they stay out too long
22 and stuff like that but they're constantly on the move
23 and also they're looking for new places where they can
24 spawn. There was reports last year of fish being belly
25 up around the Unalakleet River so that's some of the
26 factors I think that we kind of overlook. Mother
27 Nature will pretty much take care of the resources.
28 And then you have many of our activities, man-made,
29 pretty much altered the environment of where these
30 marine mammals, wildlife resources thrive, so that's
31 something that we constantly look at other than just,
32 oh, it's going to be a good run.

33
34 And the gentleman from Unalakleet
35 mentioned about bad weather. We kind of have to adjust
36 our seasons where -- we're targeting the fish that we
37 think are going to make it through the drying season
38 and they're pretty much in prime condition and so
39 that's something we have to constantly look at is the
40 changing weather patterns in and around the harvest
41 seasons.

42
43 Thank you.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
46 Elmer. Any other Council members. Comments, questions
47 or concerns for Jim.

48
49 (No comments)
50

0059

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't hear any. But
2 I do have a question, Jim. Something I haven't looked
3 up yet -- but pink salmon, are they in a contest or
4 feed for other species? Do they eat the same feed as
5 other species, I guess, is more direct.

6
7 MR. MENARD: Well, you know, they're
8 not really much -- I mean they overlap some but it's
9 not much that they're, you know, going to push out --
10 well, of course when they come in they're not eating at
11 all, but, yeah, they do -- they do some, you know.

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I was talking --
14 yeah, my question I guess was about rearing grounds.

15
16 MR. MENARD: Yeah. Yeah, so I mean
17 there's a lot of pinks. There's concern about the chum
18 and the Russians, you know, putting out a lot of chum
19 or the Japanese and the Japanese especially in the --
20 where there's more chum out there now that are
21 competing and we're getting a smaller size chum or
22 something like that. That -- but part of it is the
23 climate that is getting warmer, is that what is giving
24 the advantage to the pink salmon. Because what we are
25 noticing when we fly -- of course, I haven't flown to
26 the north in awhile with the cuts, but used to fly up
27 to Barrow and fly in the rivers from there down, and
28 we're seeing a lot more pink salmon moving north. So
29 we think they do have an advantage. So it's not say so
30 much -- could be the feed, you know, that they're
31 surviving better in the warm water and the feed for the
32 others isn't doing as well, you know, for the bigger
33 fish, that they don't do as well, so that would be a
34 climate thing. There is that theory there.

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So there's no
37 real solid data, okay. So the -- and one last question
38 here. You know, I spend a lot of time up on the Flambo
39 and Eldorado and several years back I noticed that in
40 August, we were picking -- trying to pick berries there
41 like towards the tail end of salmonberry season but
42 seeing fry by the millions and they look like pink fry
43 and chum fry coming out of there hitting the lower --
44 the estuary down there below the mouths of the two
45 rivers where they join. Do you guys have any kind of
46 an idea what's going on with them?

47
48 MR. MENARD: Well, back when there was
49 the Norton Sound Initiative in the early 2000s, Al
50

0060

1 (Indiscernible) did a study there with their nets in
2 catching the fry coming out but they come in -- they
3 will come down in the lower reaches of the river and
4 then into Safety Sound and hold kind of, in more to the
5 brackish water, before they go out, we have noticed
6 that. One of the interesting things when you say up on
7 the Flambo/Eldorado, during our aerial surveys a lot of
8 times we will not see many pink up the Flambo and
9 sometimes it does flip between the Flambo and Eldorado
10 that we'll see more pink on the Flambo than the
11 Eldorado, but usually the Flambo whereas -- you know,
12 Solomon, whatever, close to 500,000 pinks last year and
13 we'll fly the Flambo and we'll only see a few thousand.
14 So that's one interesting thing we've seen in the
15 Flambo is that that tends not to do as well for pinks.
16 And Eldorado gets them but sometimes it does flip where
17 we do get a good year up the Flambo. So -- but they do
18 hold and just kind of climatize towards, they're
19 getting into salt water so Safety Sound does provide
20 that estuary.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes. Yeah, thanks for
23 that. The ones that I saw were actually coming around
24 just right at the mouths of the rivers. It was -- I
25 guess I never was able to remember to ask you about it.

26
27 And I got one other question. I know I
28 had asked a few years ago, a few meetings ago about the
29 king -- taking of kings in the Unalakleet for hatchery
30 purposes, what has taken place over the last three
31 years on that?

32
33 MR. MENARD: Well, NSEDC does their egg
34 takes and they've been doing some egg planting there
35 like trying some areas in the South River and that but
36 the Department, as far as -- the Department doesn't do
37 anything as far as egg takes or plants or anything like
38 that or any sort of hatchery stuff. The only hatchery
39 stuff the Department does now is Sportfish Division,
40 you know, off of Sportfish license revenue. But we
41 don't do anything but NSEDC does do some work and they
42 do some work and that's down in Unalakleet, taking king
43 eggs. And they try to do it also in the Boston, up by
44 White Mountain. But some years they don't get enough
45 kings in the run to warrant an egg take and then
46 they'll take some silvers over there.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. So
49 is there any data on this online or anything, there's
50

0061

1 got to be other marked/returned fish, you know, this is
2 a public resource I'm just curious if the public is in
3 on this. Do we know any negative or positive results.
4 I'd hope there'd be positive results as this takes
5 place but.....

6
7 MR. MENARD: Right. Yeah. The.....

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN:what did the Fish
10 and Game -- you're managing -- I know that the hatchery
11 program is managed by the State so I just thought maybe
12 you could shed some light on it.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 MR. MENARD: Yeah. They've started
17 taking egg takes recently so they should start to see
18 some return here coming this year if they were
19 successful, so we'll see if that plays out down there.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So would we be able to
22 get that information from you?

23
24 MR. MENARD: Sure. Yeah, NSEDC will --
25 part of their permit is then they have to give the
26 information.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. Are
29 there any other Council members, questions, comments or
30 concerns.

31
32 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, comment that
33 I forgot.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, go ahead, Elmer.

36
37 MR. SEETOT: During the south runs in
38 Brevig Mission we noticed that there is an increase of
39 red salmon that enter Salmon Lake during south winds.
40 There was a late -- late increase last spring, foul
41 weather, or bad weather for hanging and drying fish. I
42 noticed that over the -- during my lifetime that
43 there's a lot of green algae at Imuruk Basin, does this
44 affect any of the fish resources that, you know, come
45 out of Salmon Lake and then stay there before they take
46 off. I know that there's a lot of pike and beaver dams
47 in that Kuzitrin River, or Pilgrim River area, does it
48 have any affect on the small fish that are coming out
49 after hatching?

50

0062

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. MENARD: Well, you could have that,
4 Elmer, with, you know, if there's -- if the water gets
5 too warm and we have some oxygen deprivation there,
6 that could be an effect there. So we have seen, like
7 you say the pike, and one of the issues with low kings
8 and we don't have the silvers like we do on the
9 Pilgrim, is those are fresh water species that will
10 stay -- the kings stay like one year in the river and
11 the cohos two, that they get predated pretty heavy on
12 -- by the pike and the chum -- they go to sea as fry so
13 the chum tend to do better -- our counts through the
14 weir that we see then compared to anything. And then
15 the sockeye being up in Salmon Lake are a little
16 farther removed but we do have reports of pike getting
17 into Salmon Lake now, so that's one of our concerns
18 too. So -- but so far it's been pike predation and we
19 haven't noticed a dye-off in Imuruk unless you folks
20 tell us something like that. That could be because of
21 the -- if we get some hot water.

22

23 MR. SEETOT: So there's constant
24 cooling of Salmon Lake from the mountain streams that
25 keep the salmon alive throughout their life cycle up
26 there, at Salmon Lake?

27

28 MR. MENARD: Yeah, we get some -- we
29 got the snow there and so -- and the lake being a
30 larger heat sink as far as the ice is going to stay
31 there longer and -- but -- and it's the same thing we
32 see over at Glacial Lake, but Glacial Lake's definitely
33 colder than Salmon Lake, but, yeah, Salmon Lake tends
34 to be cooler than -- it's warmer in the Pilgrim River.

35

36 MR. SEETOT: Thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer. Any
39 other Council members.

40

41 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, Louis, this is
42 Leland.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

45

46 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, a few years ago we
47 had a die-off in our river and they said the reason was
48 lack of oxygen or whatever and did they ever find out a
49 real reason why the die-off happened besides over

50

0063

1 crowding and no air?

2

3 MR. MENARD: What river are we talking
4 about, Leland, this is Jim.

5

6 MR. OYOUMICK: Unalakleet River.

7

8 MR. MENARD: Oh, okay. No, I'm not
9 familiar. I know Shaktoolik had a die-off there. And
10 we have had die-offs before and we will send the fish
11 in, if you want to give us a fish or something, and
12 pathology will take a look at it. But it was assumed
13 that -- we had a huge die-off up in Kotzebue in 2014,
14 we had a huge run that year and that was -- we just had
15 a big die-off, but that was hot water, lack of oxygen.
16 We sent the fish in, what they tell by the gills is
17 there was a certain type of algae that does better when
18 the water gets a certain temperature, hot-wise, so
19 that's what they surmised was it was the warm water
20 killing them off. And a lot of people were concerned,
21 but four years later, you know, we had another great
22 run up there. So our position was that does happen
23 once in awhile, and it's not a cause for concern unless
24 it starts happening all the time with -- as people talk
25 of climate change, that things are going to change and
26 then we're going to start having massive die-offs and
27 then that is going to be a real affect on the fishery.
28 But it's not expected to be a concern.

29

30 MR. OYOUMICK: Okay, thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, for the
33 question Leland. Any other Council members have
34 questions for Jim.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It doesn't sound like
39 any. And I guess I had been listening to a couple of
40 comments that made me think of Salmon Lake, I know
41 that's a really cold lake, and I did some lake study in
42 the early days as a 16 year old up at Glacial Lake, so
43 deep water, deep sink, and Glacial Lake's about almost
44 100 feet deep and I don't recall what Salmon Lake is.

45

46 But the question I was going to ask was
47 about the fertilization of Salmon Lake, has it possibly
48 happened over there at Glacial Lake also -- what's
49 going on with the fertilization project?

50

0064

1 MR. MENARD: So quick recap. The
2 fertilization started in 1997, and it was NSEDC, ADF&G
3 and BLM were all involved, and so it was five years,
4 they put in 40 tons at Salmon Lake. The study showed
5 that Salmon Lake was nutrient limited, and that Glacial
6 Lake was not, and so that's why they went with Salmon
7 Lake, to put the fertilization in. And then stopped
8 for a couple of years. They only had that record run
9 in 2004 where there was 85,000 through the weir. NSEDC
10 and ADF&G put the 27 tons in there and then we didn't
11 do it again. And NSEDC started up the fertilization
12 again in 2007 and they do their studies and run it by
13 us and then they put fertilization in each year and
14 depending on what it shows, nutrient-wise, you know,
15 they've been as low as eight tons, and they've been as
16 high as 35, 36 tons in some of the years.

17
18 Most recent years '17, '18, '19 when
19 you have some good runs and a lot of fish getting in,
20 then they'll put -- put some more fertilizer in and
21 then if it drops down they'll put a less. So it's just
22 a nutrient driven thing. And NSEDC to this day is the
23 one that does the fertilization and they have continued
24 ever since.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, thanks. And then
27 you probably have a lot of data on that, too, because
28 that's part of the project.

29
30 MR. MENARD: Right.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, so it's
33 adjustable. I guess they're adjusting it with the size
34 of the run.

35
36 MR. MENARD: Right. Yeah.

37
38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: They're not just
39 running a set amount like.....

40
41 MR. MENARD: Right.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN:to begin with
44 when they did the 40 ton, that brought us the great
45 years that we had, then they stopped, and now we're
46 going up and we're putting what we think we need as the
47 run shows signs of it, okay.

48
49 MR. MENARD: And that is -- just
50

0065

1 everybody that is all NSEDC that does that. That is no
2 longer Fish and Game. Fish and Game kind of -- I don't
3 know they said they're out of the fish making business
4 or something, in that sense of commercial fisheries or
5 something, you know, they've kind of turned everything
6 over to private, non-hatchery and the only hatcheries
7 the State run are like the sportfish hatcheries like in
8 Fairbanks or Anchorage there.

9
10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. Yeah, I get it.
11 That happened in the early '90s. The fisheries -- the
12 State got out of the hatchery business. What goes on,
13 though, you guys oversee it.....

14
15 MR. MENARD: Right.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN:Fish and Game
18 actually has the data, right?

19
20 MR. MENARD: Right. Does the
21 permitting and that, yes.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. And do you have
24 any say in any of it?

25
26 MR. MENARD: Sure. Yeah.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

29
30 MR. MENARD: We do.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. So you
33 kind of -- you're having a management -- you have
34 management over it, okay. Well, that's all I had Jim
35 for that.

36
37 Anybody on the Council, one last time
38 around the table to see if anybody has any comments,
39 questions or concerns for Jim on salmon.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So just because there
44 might be some public out there, I'd ask if anybody out
45 there has any questions, concerns of comments.

46
47 (No comments)

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It doesn't sound like
50

0066

1 it. Jim, do you have anything else.

2

3 MR. MENARD: Well, just tell everybody
4 we are open here as far as the door out front is locked
5 but there's a phone, you can call into us, or you can
6 always call us on the phone. We are here. There's --
7 me and Kevin are working, some of the research folks
8 are working remote but we are here and we hope to get
9 through this and open the office back up where everyone
10 can stroll in without having to knock on the door or
11 that. Give us a call if you got any questions, you
12 know, we may not always give you the answer you want to
13 hear but, we do get it from each side. Some think we
14 should be doing it one way, others a different way.
15 But we can help you out with any proposals you want to
16 put in to the Board of Fish.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Jim. I really
19 appreciate you coming to the table for us, you're
20 always welcome.

21

22 MR. MENARD: Okay. All right, sounds
23 good.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So with that I think
26 we would have Mr. Dunker up.....

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello.

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, what do you got,
31 Karen, yeah, go ahead.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hi, Mr. Chair, this is
34 Karen. We haven't had a break this morning so my
35 recommendation, if you wish, is to go ahead now and
36 break for lunch.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What do you mean, I
39 got lunch in my refrigerator right here, I don't need
40 to go anywhere.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I went to the bathroom
45 four times already what are you talking about.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MR. OYOUNICK: I already had my lunch.

50

0067

1 (Laughter)

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MS. DEATHERAGE: And that's just a recommendation you can follow or not. And I did want to add too to your appreciation to Jim Menard and others on this, on participating in today's meeting and providing a lot of helpful information. So it's very much appreciated. But, yeah, Louis, I'll turn it over to you and you can decide if you want to break for lunch and we'll go from there.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. So what kind of timeframe do you think, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Generally it's about an hour. So if you'd like to give people a little more time we could resume the meeting, Mr. Chair, starting at 1:00 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, let's do that.

MR. DUNKER: Hey, Louis, this is Bill Dunker with Fish and Game. I just wanted to let you guys know I am down here in Unalakleet trying to do some wildlife surveys and I've got a pilot that's en route and due to land here at around 2:30 at which point I'm going to have to jump ship and go get in the backseat of a Cub and try and get this moose survey taken care of. So I'm just throwing that out there, my time is a little bit limited this afternoon.

MS. DEATHERAGE: So, Bill, would it be okay -- this is Karen, through the Chair, would it be okay if he started at 1:00 o'clock when we returned.

MR. DUNKER: Yep, that would be okay, I just wanted you guys to be aware.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, well, we'll run you ragged too.

(Laughter)

MR. DUNKER: Okay.

0068

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, 1:00
2 o'clock folks.

3
4 (Off record)

5
6 (On record)

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm going to call the
9 meeting back to order here it's 1:00 o'clock. Do you
10 want to do a roll call, Karen, or do you want me to do
11 it?

12
13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. I can do
14 it if you wish but we can begin the meeting if you'd
15 also like without a quorum until there's action items.

16
17 Thank you.

18
19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, that's a good
20 comment. All right, let's continue the meeting, it's
21 1:02 now. Mr. Dunker, are you online.

22
23 MR. KATCHATAG: Deahl Katchatag. Doug.

24
25 MR. DUNKER: Yeah, I'm here.

26
27 MR. KATCHATAG: Doug.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, hi, Doug, yeah,
30 you're good.

31
32 MR. KATCHATAG: What's the matter with
33 you, Louis.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, you guys were
36 talking at the same time I didn't know who was talking.

37
38 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay.

39
40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. We're going to
41 call on Bill Dunker with Fish and Game.

42
43 MR. DUNKER: Hi, Mr. Chair, I'm here
44 and ready to go when you are.

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You're on.

47
48 MR. DUNKER: Okay. Very good. So,
49 again, this is Bill Dunker. I'm the Unit 22 Area
50

0069

1 Biologist based in Nome. I'm actually calling in from
2 Unalakleet. We're down here right now attempting to
3 complete an abundance survey in the central portion of
4 Unit 22A, and so I know that'll be of interest to you
5 all when it's completed and hope to have that available
6 for folks in the future.

7
8 Looking back over the year or so and
9 some of the work that we've completed since we last
10 spoke in October, I believe it was, we were able to
11 work here in Unalakleet this fall to complete a fall
12 composition survey, again, here in the central portion
13 of Unit 22A. The survey effort at that time covered
14 portions of the mainstem of the Unalakleet River, the
15 North Fork, the North River and the South River as well
16 as a number of the smaller coastal drainages, both
17 north and south of Unalakleet.

18
19 This fall, as some of you might have
20 heard during the -- the other Council members reports
21 and things, particularly from the folks here in
22 Unalakleet, we had a record high harvest of moose here
23 in the central portion of 22A this past fall, in which
24 we took 47 bull moose during the fall hunt. And in
25 spite of that record high harvest the bull/cow ratio
26 that we observed during the fall composition survey
27 remains well above our management objective of 30 bulls
28 per 100 cows. We completed a similar survey in 2016 at
29 which time we found well over 100 bulls per 100 cows
30 and we had similar results this time around.

31
32 As a result of that survey the
33 Department, in consultation with the Bureau of Land
34 Management and the representatives on the Southern
35 Norton Sound Advisory Committee we went ahead and
36 issued an emergency order to open the winter hunt,
37 which we have on the books as a may be announced season
38 for registration permit hunt RM844. The intent was to
39 provide additional hunting opportunity in the area as
40 the result of the biological information that we were
41 able to gain during that fall composition survey. So
42 the hunt itself ran from December 7th through January
43 31st. In total we issued 15 permits for the hunt and
44 there was only one bull that was harvested during that
45 hunt.

46
47 In general, this past year has more or
48 less followed a pattern we've seen play out in Unit 22A
49 since the end of the moose hunting moratorium in the
50

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1 late 2000s. During that time, you know, the moose
2 population has steadily improved. In response to that
3 improving trend, the Board of Game and the Department
4 have made small incremental changes to liberalize hunts
5 administered in the area by increasing harvest quotas,
6 lengthening seasons, increasing the availability of
7 permits, and providing additional hunting opportunity
8 by emergency order. And so moving forward, you know, I
9 expect to see more of that happen as we gain some more
10 understanding of the situation down here. And
11 certainly one of the things that we'll be keeping a
12 very close eye on is the abundance of moose in the
13 area, particularly as it relates to any potential
14 nutritional stress within the population. As it stands
15 right now based on the 2017 survey results we are well
16 above the population objective of six to 800 moose for
17 the entirety of 22A. And so moving forward in addition
18 to continuing to complete fall composition and
19 abundance surveys, we also plan to begin evaluating
20 what, if any, nutritional stress the population may be
21 experiencing at its current density.

22
23 And then as part of that process,
24 moving forward, to potentially liberalizing regulations
25 in the area in response to the current biological
26 information for 22A, in general, we have plans to work
27 closely with residents of Unit 22A and the Southern
28 Norton Sound Advisory Committee in the years to come in
29 order to develop and propose any potential regulatory
30 changes for the area to the Board of Game that reflect
31 the current status of the population, provide
32 additional opportunity as appropriate, and potentially
33 address any possible nutritional stress within the
34 population.

35
36 One thing that I want to just highlight
37 as it pertains to you all and the RAC and some of the
38 recommendations that you make moving forward is in
39 regards to some of the Federal land closures in 22A.
40 They remain in effect, both in the central portion and
41 in the northern portion of the unit and I believe as
42 part of the upcoming wildlife regulatory cycle, a
43 number of those closures will be up for review. And I
44 just would encourage you all to carefully consider the
45 needs for those Federal land closures.

46
47 For starters, these closures don't at
48 this point in time reflect the current biological
49 situation in the area. You know the circumstances that
50

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1 prompted the creation of those closures in the first
2 place really no longer exist in the area currently and
3 moving forward, continuing to retain those closures may
4 limit the effectiveness of future regulatory changes
5 intended to address possible nutritional stress or to
6 provide additional harvest opportunity, you know, when
7 and where appropriate. So just a couple things to bear
8 in mind there, speaking specifically about Unit 22A.

9
10 I think next on the list of things to
11 do for you all is to discuss and potentially generate
12 some Federal wildlife proposals and one thing I would
13 point out as it pertains to 22A is that at the last
14 Board of Game meeting in 2020 the Board adopted some
15 regulatory changes that modified the hunt area boundary
16 for registration permit RM841 here in the central
17 portion of the hunt area. This modification to the
18 boundary line was in response to some concerns that
19 were brought to our attention by folks in Shaktoolik,
20 which is the only community in the northern portion of
21 22A, one of the areas impacted by this boundary change.
22 The boundary at the time and as it was described by
23 folks from Shaktoolik, restricted the opportunity for
24 local hunters to harvest moose from what was described
25 to us as more of their traditional hunting areas in the
26 coastal foothills north of Egavik Creek. So in
27 response to that the Southern Norton Sound Advisory
28 Committee proposed an amendment to a proposal that the
29 Department had submitted to address -- to lengthen
30 seasons here in the central portion. That amendment
31 included the boundary change and was supported
32 unanimously by the Southern Norton Sound Advisory
33 Committee. So as a result the current hunt area for
34 the central portion of 22A, effectively the
35 registration moose hunt RM841 and RM844, the winter
36 hunt, boundary, currently in State regulations includes
37 that portion of 22A in the Unalakleet River drainages
38 and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of
39 the Golsovia River drainage and south of and including
40 the Egavik Creek drainage. Currently under Federal
41 regulations, the hunt area is defined for that same --
42 traditionally the same area is currently defined as
43 that portion in the Unalakleet drainage and all
44 drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of the
45 Golsovia River drainage and south of the Tagoomanik and
46 Shaktoolik River drainage. Ideally, you know, we would
47 have a PowerPoint slide and I'd be showing you guys
48 maps right now but since we're doing this
49 telephonically it's a little challenging so I'll do my
50

0072

1 best to sort of describe it.

2

3

4 But effectively it's the foothills to
5 the south of Shaktoolik, it's an area that's accessible
6 by fourwheelers for hunters in the area. It really is
7 a relatively small area in terms of its overall size,
8 but it has been conveyed to us that it's a really
9 important area for Shaktoolik hunters pursuing moose in
10 the falltime. And one of the challenging things at
11 this point related to this particular area is that
12 under the current regulations, Federal regulations that
13 is, hunters from Shaktoolik are actually prohibited
14 from hunting moose on Federal public lands in this
15 foothill area north of Egavik Creek because as it's
16 defined currently they don't qualify as a Federally-
17 qualified Federal Subsistence Board user in that area.
18 And so it's a pretty major hurdle for, you know, folks
19 in Shaktoolik that are looking to hunt moose by
20 fourwheeler and access the country that way. There's a
21 significant portion of that area that's now more or
22 less off limits under Federal regulations that would
23 otherwise be open under the State regulations for
24 hunters looking to harvest a moose August 1st to
25 September 30th with a general season harvest ticket.

25

26 So I just wanted to bring that to your
27 attention. If it was my recommendation at this point
28 would be to consider submitting a proposal to align
29 those State and Federal regulations and, if so, you
30 know, we could discuss it in greater detail with
31 Unalakleet folks and the hunters in Shaktoolik during
32 our upcoming meetings as we work through the Federal
33 regulatory process.

34

35 That is more or less what I wanted to
36 relay to you all as it relates to moose.

37

38 Most of it's focused on 22A. But I can
39 hit pause for a second and take any questions about
40 some of the stuff that I covered there before I move on
41 to my second topic that I wanted to visit with you all
42 about, being muskox and things.

43

44 So at this time, Mr. Chair, I guess I
45 could take some questions on moose and some of the
46 stuff we've talked about so far.

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Bill.
49 Is there anybody on the Council that has questions,

50

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1 comments or concerns for Bill.

2

3 MR. KATCHATAG: I do, this is Doug.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You got the floor.

6

7 MR. KATCHATAG: This is Doug Katchatag
8 from Unalakleet. There was one moose caught this past
9 fall up near Fish River with bubbles inside his rib
10 cage. Have you heard about that?

11

12 MR. DUNKER: I don't believe I have.
13 I'd be curious to maybe talk with you a little bit more
14 about it. I happen to be here in Unalakleet, too, so if
15 you've got photos to share or anything like that, but
16 I.....

17

18 MR. KATCHATAG: No, I don't have
19 photos. My grandson helped butcher that moose and he
20 said inside the rib cage area there was a lot of air
21 bubbles bigger than marbles and he was pretty
22 concerned, and I told him don't take no meat from that,
23 might be bugs coming out of the permafrost. And I
24 understand you cannot -- they haven't found a way to
25 kill those bugs that are coming out of the permafrost
26 so that's bringing a big concern to me. Because our
27 people -- if people start eating that they may get that
28 same sickness.

29

30 MR. DUNKER: You bet. So I guess one
31 thing I would offer in this instance would be that, you
32 know, a lot of the common parasites that we find in
33 moose, you know, can be killed through -- by thoroughly
34 cooking the meat. We've got some information on our
35 web page about some of the more common parasites that
36 we find in moose and caribou and things like that and
37 the necessary precautions that should be taken by
38 anything that harvests an animal with those kinds of,
39 you know, cysts and things in the meat. For things
40 that are, you know, not on that list, or just seem odd,
41 I'd encourage hunters that come across, you know,
42 things like that to give us a call at the office in
43 Nome. We have a wildlife veterinarian based in
44 Fairbanks and her primary role is to monitor and study
45 different diseases and parasites in our wildlife
46 populations across the state, and, you know, we can get
47 more or less a professional opinion from her about some
48 of the concerns or dangers that might be associated
49 with any given parasites, and she's always more than

50

0074

1 welcome to take samples and provide folks with feedback
2 on what type of ailment an animal may have or parasite
3 and what the concern might be for local hunters.
4

5 MR. KATCHATAG: This moose was caught
6 by a young, that hasn't been raised by a father and
7 hasn't been taught what to look for in animals he
8 catches. So my suggestion would be for the Fish and
9 Game put a note in there license that all moose may not
10 be healthy and to report anything that they find odd in
11 moose.
12

13 MR. DUNKER: Okay, very good. I can
14 send some -- we certainly have some information
15 materials that cover that kind of a topic and I'll make
16 a point to send some down to our local vendor next fall
17 so that folks have access to those resources and
18 things. I appreciate that.
19

20 MR. KATCHATAG: Thank you.
21

22 MR. DUNKER: You bet.
23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Is there any
25 other Council members, any questions, comments or
26 concerns for Bill at this point.
27

28 MR. AUKONGAK: This is Martin.
29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Martin. And
31 any of you guys out there just feel free to speak up.
32 Okay, go ahead Martin.
33

34 MR. AUKONGAK: Yeah, like I said before
35 maybe the abundance of moose had to do with the
36 wildfires they're having in the Interior and have a big
37 fire you have the moose or the bear, or any kind of
38 animal migrate to places where there's no fire and it
39 doesn't take them very long to travel from, you know,
40 the Anchorage area to Fairbanks and Fairbanks towards
41 this area. So that could be a big reason why we got
42 more moose, but it's a good thing, too, so we can have
43 more moose. But the bear population, you know, it's a
44 little bit different story, you know, we don't want too
45 many bears. And to control bears you get two a year, I
46 believe, right, and that'll help out the moose
47 population.
48

49 MR. DUNKER: Martin this is Bill
50

0075

1 Dunker, if I could respond to that. You are correct,
2 we have a two bear a year bag limit in all of 22A, 22B,
3 22D and 22E. The season dates in your neck of the
4 woods are in the 22B hunt area, run from August 1st
5 through June 30th as of the last Board of Game meeting.
6 So this spring will be the first year that those new
7 regulations take effect, and the bear season will be
8 open through to the end of June in 22B with a two bear
9 a year bag limit. One of the other sort of regulations
10 that applies in instances where we've got a two brown
11 bear per regulatory year bag limit, is that those hides
12 are legal for sale, the hides and the skulls with the
13 claws attached, are legal for sale with a permit that
14 we can issue from the Nome Fish and Game office to
15 folks. The primary intent of that permit is mostly to
16 monitor sort of how much -- how many bear hides are
17 sold that are harvested from the state. It's generally
18 been very few but it's an opportunity for folks to
19 potentially, you know, sell and make a little money on
20 the side for their hides and things.

21
22 MR. AUKONGAK: Hum.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You got anything else,
25 Martin.

26
27 MR. AUKONGAK: No. Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. Any
30 other Council members.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So hearing none I'll
35 ask a question Bill. What -- okay, so can you tell me
36 the exact subunits again that are two bears per year.

37
38 MR. DUNKER: It's potentially
39 everywhere but 22C, has a two bear a year bag limit as
40 it stands currently.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
43 That's what I was kind of.....

44
45 MR. DUNKER: That's the easier way to
46 explain it.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I like the way
49 you did it. So now the question is, why are we
50

0076

1 favoring 22C, there's a human population there and
2 there's competition for salmon runs for people under
3 subsistence use, so, you know, the question lies is why
4 isn't it an identical season and an identical take as
5 the rest of them, so they're all under the same roof?

6
7 MR. DUNKER: You bet. So being that
8 it's, you know, an area that's very close to Nome, the
9 biggest thing that sets 22C apart from really any of
10 the other subunits in the area is access. You know
11 it's very near to our home in Nome and people can get
12 out and access nearly every corner of the hunt area
13 within that and so as a result it's always sort of
14 stood apart from the remaining portions of the unit and
15 treated, you know, differently. We have since
16 liberalized the season dates in 22C, they currently run
17 from August 1st to October 30th, close down for the
18 winter months, and now as of -- I think it was the 2017
19 Board of Game meeting, we have since opened up 22C
20 April 1st through, now, to the end of June, as of this
21 year. And with those more liberal season dates we've
22 seen an uptick in harvest within the 22C area. But,
23 again, the biggest thing that sets it apart and the
24 reason that it, you know, differs from the other terms
25 in terms of the bag limit and season dates and permit
26 requirements is because of access, primarily.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So I grew up in
29 a time where we didn't have to worry about bears in 22C
30 because there virtually weren't any and as kids we were
31 free to go anywhere we wanted to, we didn't have to
32 worry about a predator out there, wolves weren't in the
33 picture yet either, so you know there's a lot of people
34 that don't like bears in 22C because of the campsite
35 issues, the robbing of the fish racks and on and on I
36 could go. But -- and then to top it off now they're in
37 the river systems, they can pick out the silvers, they
38 can pick out the chum, you know, salmon species. So
39 what is the reason for not following the other subunits
40 in the timeframe of hunting, which is basically year-
41 round except for a certain portion of time, and two
42 bears per hunter, what is the biological reason for
43 that? You know it wasn't too long in talking about
44 that we didn't have bears to contend with in the area
45 and so it's a human population, I know there's tourism,
46 people have issues with muskox, I've even fought with
47 one with a stick in my yard, so predation has been
48 noted by Fish and Game to pressure those muskox in the
49 town and everybody's always upset with muskox and we
50

0077

1 live with them every summer -- spring and summer, so
2 what's the biological reason for not identifying 22C an
3 equal hunt area as the other subunits in 22?
4

5 MR. DUNKER: Well, Louis, I mean
6 certainly one of the challenges when we talk about our
7 bear populations is the lack of, you know, population
8 information for our bear population. We are planning
9 to work with the National Park Service this coming
10 spring to repeat a survey effort that was completed in
11 2015 again this year in an effort to understand where
12 we're at with bear densities on the Seward Peninsula.
13 You know, but in absence of that, I think that
14 management up to this point has proceeded cautiously
15 because we lack a lot of that biological information
16 about bears in our area. And we've seen, you know,
17 other regulatory changes that liberalize the bear regs
18 in 22C result in an increase in harvest. And so it
19 still remains that 22C stands apart from the remaining
20 portions of the unit because of that access that we
21 talked about and, you know, these other less maybe --
22 I'm trying to think of the right word here, but
23 extreme, I don't know -- pretty liberal regulations
24 that we've applied elsewhere haven't been necessary to
25 see, you know, corresponding increases in harvest in
26 22C, you know, we went from an average annual harvest
27 of, I think it was about 16 bears a year prior to the
28 season changes in 22C, and in the years since then
29 that's bumped up from an average of 16 a year to 25 a
30 year. There were -- the first year that we liberalized
31 the season dates in 22C to allow additional opportunity
32 and, in turn, additional harvest, you know, we saw a
33 substantial uptick in harvest, it nearly doubled in the
34 years since then. So, you know, in the spirit of
35 making small incremental changes moving forward, that's
36 been the approach with 22C bear harvest as a
37 consequence of the ready access that a lot of, you
38 know, our motivated Nome bear hunters have to 22C and
39 the response in harvest that we've seen from less
40 dramatic changes in the regulations.
41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thanks. Yeah, I
43 just have a -- you know I'm starting to sound like my
44 brother Tommy over there. I do have a heartburn with
45 too many bears in the 22C area and always have. I
46 spent 13 years on the -- like I said, on the Northern
47 Norton Advisory Committee and I was the same guy over
48 there, back then I said we need one every year and they
49 said you'll be lucky to get one every two years, well
50

0078

1 we got one every year, I'd like to see two every year,
2 but that's one guy's opinion but there's a lot of other
3 people out there that speak about this problem with
4 these bears and I bring their concerns to the table.

5

6 Anyway, thank you for answering my
7 questions, Bill. If there is no other questions for
8 Bill we'll move on. Are there any other questions,
9 comments, or concerns for Bill, either the Council or
10 anybody that might want to ask him?

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none.

15

16 MR. DUNKER: Sorry, Louis, you broke up
17 there.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I got blanked
24 out, somebody's trying to call me, can you hear me?

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes.

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can you hear me?

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes. I think Mr.
31 Dunker was going to present on muskox next.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes. Somebody was
34 trying to call me and it was cutting you guys
35 completely out, I couldn't hear anything. Go ahead,
36 Bill, you have the floor.

37

38 MR. DUNKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
39 just briefly here, I wanted to provide you guys with an
40 update on where we're at with some of our muskox survey
41 and inventory program activities and then I've got a
42 similar kind of a -- something for you all to consider
43 moving forward as you deliberate on possible Federal
44 wildlife proposals.

45

46 But for starters, we are well on our
47 way to completing another Seward Peninsula muskox
48 survey. We've got about 75 percent of all the
49 transects within the range of the population completed

50

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1 so far. In total, the survey itself includes about
2 6,800 miles of transects spread across the entire range
3 of the Seward Peninsula muskox population from Wales
4 all the way over to, you know, the headwaters of the
5 Nulato River and things here in 22A and up to the
6 Selawik Hills to the north. So it covers a very large
7 area but we're making good progress on it. Another
8 couple of days and we'll have the abundance survey
9 completed and move on to analyzing that information and
10 coordinating all of our composition surveys that will
11 follow after. So we don't have any results from that
12 to present just yet, but next fall I fully anticipate
13 to have that information available for you all to hear
14 about and share with folks as we discuss future quotas
15 and things like that with our cooperators, both
16 National Park Service and BLM.

17
18 With that in mind, we continue to
19 manage harvest within the Seward Peninsula population
20 cooperatively with the National Park Service and the
21 Bureau of Land Management, much the same as we have for
22 the last eight or so years since we went back to the
23 Tier II hunt administration for the Seward Penn. One
24 of the major changes for hunt management within the
25 range of the population is that the Board of Game did
26 adopt regulations during their 2020 meeting to initiate
27 the harvest of muskox from Unit 22A here in, you know,
28 the Nulato Hills and throughout 22A. With the addition
29 of those animals the ANS -- or excuse me, the
30 harvestable surplus for the population as a whole
31 remains below the lower end of the amount necessary for
32 subsistence and so as a consequence that hunt and all
33 the other ones -- excuse me, the hunt here in 22A and
34 the hunt that we've administered historically in other
35 portions of the range will continue to be administered
36 as a Tier II hunt. The 22A hunt is TX090 is the hunt
37 number. We received applications from folks for those
38 permits last fall during the November 1st through
39 December 15th Tier II application period. Those
40 permits have since been issued to hunters. The
41 announcement went out at the, I think it's February
42 18th or 19th and hunters were notified whether or not
43 they received a permit, all 8 permits for the 22A hunt
44 have been issued. The majority of those, or actually
45 all of those permits were issued to Federally-qualified
46 subsistence users and the hunt will open up August 1st
47 of 2021 and run through to March 15th of 2022.

48
49 As far as regulatory changes that you
50

0080

1 all might consider moving forward as it relates to
2 muskox, you know, as part of my job I'm constantly
3 reviewing harvest information and hunt reports that
4 folks submit and using that information to better
5 understand, you know, how well our hunt administration
6 is working, what the harvest level is and things like
7 that. And, in general, you know, the hunt
8 administration, the cooperative management of that
9 harvest for muskox throughout the range works very
10 well. You know, generally if we've identified a
11 harvestable surplus in an area of, you know, X number
12 of muskox the number of permits we issue allows hunters
13 to harvest that number of animals and keep us within
14 our management objective, which currently stands at
15 maintaining harvest at or below 2 percent of the
16 overall population with harvest not to exceed 10
17 percent of the mature bulls within the population. But
18 one exception to that general perspective is in the
19 Unit 22B east portion of the area that we historically
20 offered -- or administered hunts in, as the hunt in 22B
21 is currently administered, our ability to direct
22 harvest to portions of the hunt area based on the
23 distribution of muskox and, in turn, harvestable
24 surplus, it's somewhat limited. In the case of 22B
25 east, looking back at the last five or so years on a
26 pretty regular basis now we have had animals available
27 for harvest in the area that are not being taken, we're
28 effectively under utilizing muskox in that portion of
29 the range. One potential solution that I have
30 encouraged stakeholders to consider in discussions with
31 folks at the Northern Norton Sound AC meeting and other
32 folks that I talk to about this including BLM and other
33 folks on the Federal side, would be to consider
34 splitting the 22B hunt PX105 and the area that it
35 covers, which currently includes all of 22B, into two
36 separate permit hunts. This wouldn't change who's
37 eligible for the hunt or anybody's Tier II scores or
38 anything like that, the only change that we would --
39 that would be necessary would be a change in basically
40 how many permits there are in 22B from one permit
41 covering the whole area to two permits, one covering
42 more or less the western portion and a second permit
43 covering the eastern portion, and effectively change
44 the hunt area descriptions for those as necessary to
45 cover the whole area with two permits instead of one.
46 In thinking about this, that type of a change would
47 allow us to distribute the harvest more effectively
48 based on the results of our population and composition
49 surveys between these two areas, and allow folks to
50

0081

1 utilize animals that are available for harvest in the
2 eastern portion that are currently not being taken,
3 more or less on an annual basis.
4

5 So I will offer that up there as an
6 observation that I have made in reviewing a lot of the
7 harvest information and a possibility to, you know,
8 change things up a little bit and allow for those
9 animals to be, you know, taken and utilized for
10 subsistence resources -- or uses -- excuse me.
11

12 That's all I have on muskox, and,
13 again, I'd be happy to answer any questions that folks
14 might have about our permitting system or the
15 population itself. Again, we're more or less just in a
16 holding pattern until we get some more biological
17 information from the survey that's underway but I
18 certainly look forward to sharing that with you all
19 next fall once we've had a chance to analyze the data
20 and generate our estimates and complete the composition
21 surveys.
22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Bill.
24 I got one quick question because it's fresh up. On
25 that 22B east, what's -- because I don't have a chart
26 in front of me here, where's the boundaries on that on
27 that?
28

29 MR. DUNKER: So generally -- like as it
30 stands currently, the 22B west hunt area is everything
31 west of the Darby Mountains and that's got a season
32 date of January 1st through March 15th. The eastern
33 portion, which would be everything east of the Darby
34 Mountains, including the Koniag, the Tubutulik and the
35 Koyuk River all the way over to the Inglutalik, that's
36 the eastern portion of that permit hunt area. It does
37 have a separate season date August 1st through March
38 15th, but it is the same permit as it stands currently.
39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So you said
41 that was March 15th?
42

43 MR. DUNKER: Yes, sir.
44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. So
46 basically the Darby Mountains are the breaking point.
47

48 MR. DUNKER: Yes. Yeah.
49
50

0082

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: East/West. And then
2 what was that January 1st on the western side, January
3 1?
4

5 MR. DUNKER: Yeah, January 1 through
6 March 15th.
7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. All right,
9 thank you. Any questions out there from Council.
10

11 (No comments)
12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I did have my mute
14 off, I think, just making sure, did anybody have any
15 questions, comments or concerns about muskox with Bill.
16

17 (No comments)
18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Not hearing none.
20 Bill, and that's all you got, you said?
21

22 MR. DUNKER: You bet. Happy to answer
23 any other questions that folks might have about other
24 topics or issues that they have in their area
25 specifically but that's all I have for now and a couple
26 of things I was hoping to just make everyone aware of
27 so.
28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, thank you for
30 your participation at the table, it's certainly good
31 for us to hear all. So with that I think we got the
32 next ADF&G rep is Rick on small game regulatory
33 updates.
34

35 Thank you, Bill.
36

37 MR. DUNKER: You bet. Thanks, Louis.
38 I'm actually going to sign off here, like I said
39 earlier I got a pilot inbound right now and we're going
40 to work on this moose survey so I appreciate you guys
41 having me today but we'll talk to you at a later date.
42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, we're trying to
44 kick you out that door, we want that survey.
45

46 MR. DUNKER: No problem, so do I, I'll
47 get on it.
48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. Go have
50

0083

1 some fun, bye.

2

3

MR. DUNKER: Thank you.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I guess we have that small game regulatory update.

7

8

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So as you're well aware the Board of Game deferred their meetings until the winter of 2021/2022 but at those meetings, what's currently scheduled -- well, what was scheduled for this current winter are two proposals that deal with both Alaska hare or jackrabbits, the big tundra bunnies, and snowshoe hare, also the second native hare species we have in Alaska, and I was just going to provide a brief update on those proposals and their impact.

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So currently under State regulation, on the Seward Peninsula in Unit 22, the small game -- excuse me, the Alaska hare regulations are -- have been more restrictive as of January 2022 [sic] than they were in the past, so in January of 2022 [sic] the Board of Game, at the Nome meeting decided to create a more restrictive season date, more restrictive harvest limits and a salvage requirement for jackrabbits in Unit 22 as well as in Unit 18 and neighboring Unit 23. The only outstanding game management unit in the state that has jackrabbits that currently has no considerable regulatory structure is Unit 17, but obviously that's outside your area, I just wanted to bring attention to it, so that would make species range-wide regulations including season dates, harvest limits and salvage requirements. So it's scheduled to be heard at the Wasilla Board of Game meeting in January of 2022, is a proposal that deals with creating season dates, harvest limits and salvage requirements for Unit 17, around Dillingham. So as I said that would create a range-wide regulatory structure for jackrabbits, obviously also affecting your area.

0084

1 Also to be heard at the statewide
2 meeting -- Board of Game meeting in Fairbanks in March
3 of 2022 we submitted a proposal for snowshoe hare that
4 addresses creating a salvage requirement for snowshoe
5 hare. And as you're likely aware there are two types
6 of salvage under State of Alaska regulations. One is
7 for human consumption, which is what many of us are
8 familiar with under regulations when it comes to big
9 game, in other words having to -- requiring the
10 collection of, for example, the hindquarters, the front
11 shoulders, the backstraps. The second categorization
12 of salvage is for human use. And so that is the
13 categorization that we're seeking for snowshoe hare.
14 And human use is a much broader salvage requirement so
15 that could include things such as for human consumption
16 but it could also include things -- a person could meet
17 the legal salvage requirement by also using the
18 snowshoe hare as trapping bait, dog food, creating fur
19 items as well as consuming the meat, so it's a much
20 broader definition, and as I said that's the definition
21 of salvage that we're seeking for the Alaska Board of
22 Game.

23
24 So it's a brief update, that's
25 essentially all I have. I just wanted to bring those
26 two issues to the attention of the RAC and encourage
27 them to consider potentially supporting similar
28 regulations.

29
30 So thanks for your time and I'm happy
31 to answer any questions.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Rick.
34 Any Council members, comments, concerns, questions.
35 You said this is going to affect our area somewhere
36 along the way.

37
38 (Teleconference interference -
39 participants not muted)

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Do I hear somebody.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Just to reflect on it,
46 Rick, what did you say it was going to do -- it was
47 going to affect all of 22 when they do this?

48
49 MR. MERIZON: So, yep, so just a quick
50

0085

1 reiteration. So the Alaska hare proposal that we've
2 submitted would currently only -- if the Board of Game
3 were to adopt the proposal that we submitted, it would
4 currently only affect Unit 17 but that would create a
5 difference between State and Federal regulations
6 throughout the entire range of the species of
7 jackrabbits.

8

9 The second proposal is the statewide
10 salvage requirement for snowshoe hare, so that would
11 affect all snowshoe hare hunters under State
12 regulations statewide.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And then that would be
15 more than 17 and 22 then, am I understanding that
16 right?

17

18 MR. MERIZON: Yes, that's correct, that
19 would be statewide.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. One more time
22 for Council, anybody, any questions for Rick.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, I have
27 no questions myself. I just asked them, I guess.
28 Rick, I appreciate your report and the update.

29

30 MR. MERIZON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
31 and members of the Council, I appreciate it. And if
32 any questions come up in the future, please, don't
33 hesitate to reach out, I'm happy to field any
34 questions.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I'll let Elmer
37 Fudd know.

38

39 (Laughter)

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, Karen.

44

45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Hey there,
46 thank you, Mr. Chair. Rick, are you still on the
47 phone?

48

49 MR. MERIZON: I am, yes.

50

0086

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rick, I was wondering
2 if -- are you looking to ask the Council here to
3 consider a similar regulations under Federal
4 regulations, because right now it's just no limit and
5 all rural residents for Unit 22 for hare, it.....

6
7 MR. MERIZON: Correct.

8
9 MS. DEATHERAGE:doesn't define it
10 as snowshoe or Arctic.

11
12 MR. MERIZON: That's correct. In --
13 under Federal subsistence regulations in Unit 22 hare
14 encompasses both species.

15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay.

17
18 MR. MERIZON: So we've been doing about
19 three years worth of research on jackrabbits, the big
20 bunny, and what we've been finding and much to --
21 supporting much of what we've heard from many rural
22 residents throughout the species range, not only on the
23 Seward Peninsula, but also throughout the YK Delta, and
24 specifically around Bristol Bay, we've been hearing a
25 lot of concerns about low abundance, and the research
26 that we've been doing on the jackrabbits is further
27 supporting those observations through a number of
28 techniques that we've been using, including collaring
29 and tracking animals, also doing genetic studies
30 through pellet surveys, so I would encourage the RAC to
31 just consider addition -- consider regulations that
32 may, you know, mirror what the State has done just
33 because we are finding that the species is at
34 relatively low abundance.

35
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: And this would be
37 specific to jackrabbits, correct?

38
39 MR. MERIZON: That is correct. As I
40 said we do have a second proposal for snowshoe hare,
41 the smaller hare species but that would only affect
42 salvage, that would not affect limits or season dates,
43 it would only affect salvage.

44
45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, thank you very
46 much.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. That prompted
49 me to ask a question. What are you finding out about
50

0087

1 the feed or why the numbers are seemingly going down?

2

3 MR. MERIZON: Yeah, that's a really good
4 question.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's not a resource
7 abuse is it?

8

9 MR. MERIZON: We haven't been able to
10 determine the cause of the decline. Frankly, we're not
11 even certain when the decline occurred or is occurring.
12 In other words, what we've heard from a number of rural
13 residents, we've traveled all throughout the state,
14 well, Western Alaska, specifically talking to rural
15 residents from the Alaska Peninsula all the way up to
16 Kotzebue and many villages in between and what we've
17 been hearing pretty unanimously is that jackrabbits
18 have been at low abundance for quite some time, much
19 lower than was historically observed back in the early
20 '80s. It obviously varies from location to location,
21 but the general consensus is is that jackrabbits have
22 been at low abundance for some extended period of time,
23 whether it's the last five or 10 years, or the last 30
24 years. Exactly what has caused that decline, we're not
25 certain. All we're trying to do now is to create a
26 method that moving forward we can begin to index
27 abundance throughout the species range in multiple
28 locations. So that from this point forward we can
29 begin to track any further declines or any future
30 increases in abundance.

31

32 But, again, as far as what has caused
33 that decline we currently don't have a good
34 understanding of that.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you, Rick.
37 Yeah, back in April of 1984 my brother and I skied
38 from Shishmaref to Nome and we came across the paths of
39 where these herds of these jackrabbits, and we figured
40 there was 500 in one herd and a thousand in another
41 herd and at that time of the year when they do move, I
42 don't recall what the reasoning is, but other than the
43 fact that they're moving from one place to another
44 because the feed source is diminished or something, and
45 they travel, I don't know if it has anything to do with
46 breeding because doesn't seem to matter about the
47 snowshoe around where I'm from, but -- but do you guys
48 track them when they do this, or there's a lack of this
49 migration now that.....

50

0088

1 MR. MERIZON: So, again, that's a
2 really good question. We've just begun to capture and
3 apply radio collars on a few individuals. They've
4 proven to be very, very challenging to capture, they're
5 actually quite smart and they can avoid traps pretty
6 effectively. But we've developed some techniques that
7 we feel confident moving forward. We've currently got
8 four radio collars out on the landscape and we are
9 tracking their movements daily. So far we've not seen
10 any big movements.

11

12 But to your earlier point about
13 potential habitat loss, or food specifically,
14 availability, what we've noticed in the sort of daily
15 movements of these animals, they do not seem to be food
16 limited in any way, because what we've noticed both
17 with just visual observations on the ground and with
18 monitoring these collars moving around, you know, these
19 animals are moving sometimes a quarter mile, half mile
20 or several miles within a few hours and when we watch
21 these animals on the landscape, as I'm sure many of you
22 on this Council have observed over the years, they
23 don't spend a great deal of time at any one willow bush
24 or alder bush, they take a couple nibbles and then hop
25 to the next bush and then sometimes they'll run for two
26 or three miles, so they don't seem to be food limited.
27 But back to your previous point there about large scale
28 movements, like I said we've just begun to track these
29 collared individuals, so hopefully within a year or
30 two, not only will we have more individuals on the air
31 that we're monitoring but we'll have a better
32 understanding of sort of the -- not only the daily but
33 the yearly movement patterns that, you know, you and
34 others have clearly pointed out to us. So we hope to
35 capture that.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks. What I've --
38 you know, over the last almost 50 years of hunting and
39 targeting them in the wintertime, they seem to always
40 be in a place that's very sparse and windy and I've
41 never been anywhere where there's tons of them in one
42 area. Like snowshoe, Pilgrim Springs in the mid-70s
43 there were so many of them rabbits early '70s, they
44 were everywhere, and they got to the point where they
45 were eating the bark off the cottonwood trees at the
46 snow level and then all of a sudden they just
47 disappeared. And then low and behold they're several
48 miles down the mountain range to the west at like
49 Cobblestone -- other side of Cobblestone -- mosquito

50

0089

1 Pass area. So the Arctic hare, I never did see them in
2 those groups, but came through the area where they've
3 been. That was amazing to see the path they leave
4 behind. And I know snowshoes can do that too, to get
5 to a new location.

6
7 So, anyway, just a bit of more
8 conversation about it, but, anyway, I'll let that go.

9
10 So thank you.

11
12 MR. MERIZON: Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, I guess we'll be
15 addressing that down the road. Anybody else from the
16 Council, questions, comments or concerns for Rick.

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, thank
21 you, Rick.

22
23 MR. MERIZON: All right, thanks for
24 your time, I appreciate it.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep. All right, so
27 that moves us to the next thing on the agenda and it
28 says call for Federal wildlife proposals. Karen, what
29 are we going to -- you're just announcing that, is that
30 what that's for?

31
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Karen Deatherage. And I'd like to turn it over
34 to the OSM -- our OSM anthropologist Hannah Voorhees
35 who will announce the call for Federal wildlife
36 proposals and help the Council determine if there's any
37 proposals they would like to submit this cycle.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks. It didn't
42 have a name on it, thank you. You have the floor.

43
44 MS. VOORHEES: Good afternoon, Mr.
45 Chair and members of the Council. This is Hannah
46 Voorhees, Anthropologist at OSM. And I'll be asking if
47 the Council would like to submit any proposals to
48 change Federal subsistence wildlife regulations. And
49 the materials for this begin on Page 5 of your meeting
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1 books.

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A call for proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations was published in the Federal Register on February 23rd and the Federal Subsistence Board is accepting proposals for 90 days through May 24th, 2021. This is to change Federal regulations for the subsistence harvest of wildlife on Federal public lands.

So this is the opportunity for the Council to discuss, draft, and vote on proposals to change Federal subsistence regulations for the 2022/2024 regulatory years and any proposed changes that are adopted would go into affect on July 1st, 2022. Again, this cycle is only for proposing changes to regulations for wildlife. You may propose changes to season dates, harvest limits, methods and means of harvest and customary and traditional use determination.

And Karen and I are here to support you in this discussion. Let me know if there are any questions and that's the end of my initial call, again, I'm here to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, thank you for that. Are there any Council members that have any considerations for Federal wildlife proposals at this time.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Where's Tommy Gray when you need him.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I haven't got any thoughts on that at the moment. Is there something about the Shaktoolik boundary that concerns anybody?

MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is Hannah Voorhees again. And I can give you an overview of, you know, a possible change you could make in Federal regulations for the Shaktoolik/Unalakleet hunt area boundary building on what Bill presented, if you'd

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1 like.

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, please, thank you.

MS. VOORHEES: Okay. All right, so as Bill noted in January of last year there was a change in State regulations that adjusted the boundary between the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet moose hunting areas and Bill, please correct me if I get anything wrong, but the Shaktoolik area had included the Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik River drainages but not the Egavik Foothills even though that area is a traditional hunting area for Shaktoolik. And although Shaktoolik could technically still have hunted in the Unalakleet area under State regulations, the boundary created confusion and the result is that -- well, there is some -- well, I think there was some confusion with Federal regs as well possibly which I'll clarify in a little bit here, but the result is that Shaktoolik was avoiding the Egavik Foothills and this is not in keeping with their traditional practices since they have used that area historically. So last year, to clear up the confusion, the State hunt boundary for Shaktoolik was expanded south to include the Egavik Hills and the State hunt boundary for the Unalakleet area, or 22A central, was shifted northward -- I'm sorry, it was shifted southward as well, obviously. So after this happened, the Southern Norton Sound AC requested that the Federal Subsistence Board change the hunt area boundary under Federal regulations as well. And this way the State and Federal hunt area boundaries would be matched reducing confusion.

So I want to explain a little bit about the Federal regulations in these two areas.

For those choosing to hunt under Federal regulations, only Unalakleet residents are currently permitted to hunt in the Unit 22A central for the Unalakleet area.

(Teleconference interference - participants not muted)

MS. VOORHEES: And this -- I want to clarify that all residents of Unit 22 have C&T in this area but there's an additional restriction in regulations that limit 22A central to Unalakleet

0092

1 residents only.

2

3

4 So there was a special action request
5 but in by Norton Sound AC, however, the Federal
6 Subsistence Board declined to consider the request at
7 that time since it wasn't found to be time sensitive to
8 align these boundaries and the Board decided to
9 consider the Southern Norton Sound AC's proposal during
10 the regular Federal wildlife proposals, which is now
11 open for proposals -- or regular cycle, excuse me.

12

13 So this proposal will be automatically
14 considered by the Board. The AC does not need to
15 resubmit it. I wanted to present this background
16 information to the Council today in case you would also
17 like to submit a proposal to align the 22A north and
18 22A central hunt boundaries under State and Federal
19 regulations but I also wanted to clarify that because
20 this proposal will be submitted, or, you know,
21 processed by OSM anyway it will come up for your
22 commentary and recommendation further down the road but
23 you also have the option so submit the proposal as a
24 Council at this time, if you'd like, of course.

25

26 So I just wanted to share that
27 background with you and that's all I have.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 Let me know if you have any questions,
32 please.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. So
35 you're saying that we -- well, the advice out there is
36 to mirror as to what the State has now and allow -- I
37 guess what I'm getting at is Egavik, anything up to
38 Egavik is 22A north, and then 22A central is towards
39 Unalakleet and Egavik; is that the break?

40

41 MS. VOORHEES: Currently so.....

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that's Federal
44 right?

45

46 MS. VOORHEES: Yeah. And so under.....

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Not.....

49

50 MS. VOORHEES:Federal

0093

1 regulations, 22A north -- I'm sorry, I didn't mean to
2 speak over you, Mr. Chair -- but I can just clarify the
3 regulation boundaries as they are now under Federal
4 regs. So 22A north, the Shaktoolik area is currently
5 that portion north and including -- north of and
6 including the Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik River drainages
7 and 22A central is that portion in the Unalakleet River
8 drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound,
9 north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the
10 Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik River drainages.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

13

14 MS. VOORHEES: So the proposal is to
15 move the boundary of 22A north to simply be north of
16 the Egavik Creek drainage. So just shift it southwards
17 a bit, is my understanding and, again, Bill can correct
18 me if I'm not reflecting the changes in State
19 regulations accurately.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sorry, I just lost my
22 headset here so I didn't quite follow what you said and
23 I got cut off. Can you please repeat that again.

24

25 MS. VOORHEES: Sure. So currently
26 under Federal regulations the boundary for the -- well,
27 the area description for Unit 22A north is that portion
28 north of and including the Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik
29 River drainages and we're proposing -- I mean if you
30 were to submit a proposal to match State and Federal
31 regulations it would be changed to Unit 22A north being
32 the area in 22A north of the Egavik Creek drainage. So
33 it would just shift to the south.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So what you're saying
36 is you're moving the southeastern boundary down.....

37

38 (Teleconference interference -
39 participants not muted)

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN:near Egavik.

42

43 MS. VOORHEES: Yes. Yes, correct.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. All right. So
46 I've got some Council members from the Unalakleet area,
47 are there any comments from either Leland or Deahl,
48 questions.

49

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0094

1 MR. OYOUNICK: Not really, Louis. I
2 don't know -- just want to go hunt up there, if they
3 do, so.

4
5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I mean there's no
6 reason not to mirror what the State has?

7
8 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair -- or,
9 Mr. Chair. Oh, I'm sorry, were you asking me or were
10 you asking Leland, I'm sorry.

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, I was asking
13 Leland.....

14
15 MS. VOORHEES: Oh, sorry.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN:he's from the
18 area right there so I thought I'd run the question
19 across their table, him and Deahl are both down there
20 in the Unalakleet area. So I think Leland was talking,
21 I didn't quite catch what he said. Leland, could you
22 repeat it please.

23
24 MR. OYOUNICK: Where they go for what
25 they need, you know, for Shaktoolik, I don't got a
26 problem with the folks hunting right there, they do it
27 all the time so why not keep going.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, okay. Okay, so
30 are you asking for an action now or are you asking us
31 to put a proposal in, I'm trying to keep track of this,
32 ma'am?

33
34 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
35 So if the Council does wish to submit a proposal, I
36 believe you would need to vote to do so, to make a
37 motion and vote on that at this time.

38
39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

40
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Karen.

44
45 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen
46 Deatherage. I just want to confirm with Hannah that is
47 there already going to be a proposal put forth to do
48 this, and are you saying that the Council is welcome to
49 also put forth a proposal?

50

0095

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.

4 Karen, yes, that's exactly right. So this was
5 submitted by the Norton Sound AC as a special action
6 and even though the Board declined to consider this
7 proposal out of cycle, they will automatically consider
8 it in cycle. So whether or not the Council submits a
9 proposal, this will be analyzed by OSM and come before
10 the Council down the road for your input.

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Hannah.

13 Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, go ahead Karen,
16 I'm listening.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yeah, so what we're
19 hearing is that this proposal will already be before
20 the Board on the wildlife cycle and the Council can,
21 either, one, go ahead and support or oppose the
22 proposal when it comes before the Council in the fall
23 with an analysis; or, two, they can put forth their own
24 proposal. It could be similar in nature, requesting
25 the same boundaries that align with the State and,
26 therefore, there will be two proposals for that action,
27 or proposed action.

28

29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, thank you, Karen,
32 for weeding that out. If there's anybody on the
33 Council that feels that we need to put in our own
34 proposal, I'm sure that we're going to support the one
35 that's already going to be proposed and we'll be able
36 to talk about it.

37

38 MR. KATCHATAG: Can you hear me?

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, go ahead.

41

42 MR. KATCHATAG: Yeah, if we're going to
43 do that why don't we extend the opening to later in
44 August because only one moose was caught during the
45 Federal opening because the moose are high up on the
46 hills by then because of the bear population on the
47 river and the rivers are always too high by then
48 anyway. So I would like to see that added on to that
49 proposal.

50

0096

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So there's an
2 increase in the area southeast of Egavik, I'm wondering
3 if -- Karen, help me out here, I'm wondering if we
4 should do a proposal and add that in there or can we
5 amend the one that they bring to us. I can't.....

6
7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is
8 Karen. My recommendation, to be honest with you, since
9 they're two very different issues to analyze, the
10 alignment is pretty simple, it's based on just allowing
11 for Federally-qualified users from Shaktoolik to hunt
12 the area, whereas actually changing the season time
13 will have much more of a potential population issue,
14 one way or the other, and so my recommendation would be
15 that if you are satisfied with the proposal that's
16 already in from Northern Norton Sound to go ahead and
17 make a recommendation on that of itself. But if you
18 wish to put in a proposal to change the season for
19 moose hunting in that area, that that would be a stand-
20 alone proposal from the Council.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thanks, for
25 clarifying that. So I just want to make sure now, this
26 proposal that Hannah, you're talking about, is a
27 Northern Norton Sound proposal or a Southern Norton
28 Sound proposal?

29
30 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair. This was a
31 Northern Norton Sound proposal. And I do want to
32 mention that for some reason they chose to withdraw
33 this proposal then, you know, if the Council doesn't
34 make a similar proposal then it wouldn't be considered
35 but we've had no indication that they wish to do that.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You're saying that --
38 they're certainly going to be doing this, Northern
39 Norton Sound, they're certainly putting this for the
40 Board of Game to decide on, right?

41
42 MS. VOORHEES: To the Federal
43 Subsistence Board.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Excuse me, yeah.

46
47 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, as I understand it
48 that is their intent, yes, uh-huh.

49
50

0097

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I don't think I
2 have a problem with that one. This other one might --
3 if we were going to do a different proposal that Deahl
4 was talking about, this is another separate one like
5 you say, Karen. We don't -- I don't know if we have
6 anything to work off of at this point, do we?

7
8 Karen.

9
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. I'm
11 looking up the regulation right now. Is Mr. Katchatag
12 on the phone, through the Chair?

13
14 MR. KATCHATAG: Yeah.

15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Katchatag can
17 you tell me again the specific area that you're talking
18 about, is it 22A overall or are you talking about a
19 subunit of 22A to change the season?

20
21 MR. KATCHATAG: Well, we could change
22 the whole thing but -- if Shaktoolik wants to, but from
23 Unalakleet, we got only one moose on Federal lands in
24 August, when they open up August 1st. It's always too
25 hot, too warm and the river's pretty high by then, the
26 moose are still up on the hills. So I would like to
27 see the extension of the opening. But I don't know, if
28 State is going to continue staying open until the 30th
29 of September I guess we ought to just leave it alone.

30
31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Deahl, so Karen
32 when does the season end on the Federal, start and
33 finish.

34
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

36
37 MR. KATCHATAG: 15th.....

38
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: If you would like I
40 can go ahead and read to you the current regulations
41 for these that we have for the specific areas within
42 Unit 22A.

43
44 The Unit 22A, that portion north of and
45 including the Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik River
46 drainages, one bull starting August 1st through
47 September 30th.

48
49 The second portion of this Federal hunt
50

0098

1 is Unit 22A, that portion in the Unalakleet River
2 drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound
3 north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the
4 Tagoomanik and Shaktoolik River drainages. Is that --
5 let me get some clarification here from Hannah, that is
6 the portion that we're talking about for Unalakleet
7 drainage, that would be the Unit 22A that I just named,
8 for the FM2201 hunt?

9
10 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.
11 Karen, yes, that's correct. The Unalakleet.....

12
13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. And that hunt
14 starts currently on August 15th, Mr. Katchatag and ends
15 on September 14th.....

16
17 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay.

18
19 MS. DEATHERAGE:according to the
20 current regulations.

21
22 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay.

23
24 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Federal public
25 lands are closed to the harvest of moose except by
26 residents of Unalakleet.

27
28 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay.

29
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. So the current
31 hunt is set.....

32
33 MS. VOORHEES: However.....

34
35 MS. DEATHERAGE:for August 15th
36 in Unit 22 in the Unalakleet River drainage.

37
38 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay, thank you.

39
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: You're very welcome.
41 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
44 that Karen. It kind of clarified it. I don't think
45 there's anything to be -- August 15th through September
46 13th, correct, just make sure I got it right?

47
48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair.

49
50

0099

1 MR. OYOUMICK: Hey, Louis, this is
2 Leland.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, go ahead,
5 Leland.

6
7 MR. OYOUMICK: It's called Tagoomanik.

8
9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Leland.

10
11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

12
13 (Laughter)

14
15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Karen, so that's
16 August 15th through September 14th, correct?

17
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair, for
19 the Unalakleet River drainage, which is the area, I
20 believe that Mr. Katchatag is referring to, and he is
21 correct that the Shaktoolik hunt starts August 1st but
22 the Unalakleet drainage hunt starts August 15th. Thank
23 you. Which may satisfy his concerns about the hunt
24 being too early.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, because it goes
27 into September. So that -- and that's within Egavik
28 drainage?

29
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: That is within all
31 drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of the
32 Golsovia River drainage and south of the, what, Leland
33 said, River, and Shaktoolik River drainages.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Because I can't
38 pronounce that, Tagoomanik.

39
40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

41
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yeah, Tagoomanik and
43 Shaktoolik River drainages. So those drainages and
44 then flowing into Norton Sound south of the Golsovia
45 River drainage.

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, and that
48 includes Egavik, so, okay. Deahl, are you satisfied
49 with the dates already?

50

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1 MR. KATCHATAG: Yep.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So we're not --
4 we will not worry about that one. But the other one is
5 the boundary change to mirror what the State has. And
6 since -- I would just say that we could just wait until
7 the Federal Board pulls it up and then we support it at
8 that time. Does anybody disagree?

9

10 MR. KATCHATAG: No, why don't you just
11 do it both ways and then (indiscernible) half the time.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, I guess it's the
14 idea of just they're going to submit it, I don't know
15 why we would need to unless -- Hannah said something
16 like Northern Norton Sound might pull it out, but is
17 that a worry, Hannah?

18

19 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair. No. No, when
20 the letter was sent to the Northern Norton Sound AC by
21 the Federal Subsistence Board noting that this
22 consideration of their special action request would be
23 deferred until the regular cycle it was noted that it
24 would be considered unless they submitted a letter, you
25 know, requesting that it not be considered, and we have
26 not received any correspondence from them to do so, or
27 any indication that they are intending to do so.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So Northern
30 Norton Sound is willing to wait until the cycle, is
31 that what I'm getting?

32

33 MS. VOORHEES: I believe so. There may
34 be members of the Council who would know better than
35 myself if there are any -- if there was any intent,
36 but, no, as far as I know -- there's -- we've had no
37 indication that they're not -- yes, all indications are
38 that they're willing to wait for consideration during
39 this cycle and that they're not intending to withdraw.

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So in other
42 words, the people from Shaktoolik can hunt on the State
43 -- under the State regulations even on Federal lands?
44 No? I need to cross that bridge here, what's.....

45

46 (Teleconference interference -
47 participants not muted)

48

49 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, could you

50

0101

1 repeat that question for me?

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm saying that the
5 State -- the Northern Norton Sound Advisory Committee
6 has written a letter and a special action but the
7 Federal Subsistence Board is putting it off until the
8 cycle and it doesn't sound like the State Advisory
9 Committee is in all too big of a rush and they're
10 willing to wait, and so at our level, the Federal
11 Subsistence Board is -- there's going to be a proposal
12 put into them and then it will bring it to our table
13 and we will either oppose it or support it, correct?

13

14

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MS. VOORHEES: Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Unless there's
a Council, anybody on the Council that thinks we should
take action and write our own proposal, I think we will
be able to just sit and wait until it comes across our
table at a later date. Are there anybody on the
Council who are concerned otherwise.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, well, I don't
hear anybody so I guess we can figure on just waiting
for that proposal to come across in our booklet to deal
with it, when that time comes.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Karen, go ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is Karen Deatherage. And, yes, that proposal will
come forth with any others that affect the region to
the Council for consideration at the October meeting
for their recommendation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Karen, thank
you. And then the deadline for any wildlife proposals
is March -- or May 24th, or did I get something -- is
it March or May?

MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: When was the deadline

0102

1 for wildlife proposals, I'm not seeing it.

2

3 MS. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, it's May
4 24th.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, I did have it
7 right, okay. Okay. All right, so that gets us to.....

8

9 (Teleconference interference -
10 participants not muted)

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We got that one. I
13 think we can -- are there any other call for Federal
14 wildlife proposals from anybody else.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, I think
19 we can move forward to the next item on the agenda
20 which is review and approve the fiscal year 2020 annual
21 report.

22

23 So, Karen.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, do you have
26 the Council charter review on the agenda that you have?

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm trying to go
29 through pages here. What page was it?

30

31 (Teleconference interference -
32 participants not muted)

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hold on just one
35 moment. And also somebody has their mute -- I'm
36 talking about on the agenda that is in the book, the
37 next item after the call for wildlife proposals is the
38 Council charter review which starts on Page.....

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: 29.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE:29. So, yes, I
43 would be happy to present that to the Council, but it
44 is the next item on the agenda.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, ma'am, I think
49 that's where we're at. I didn't hear anybody have any

50

0103

1 other comments or concerns or questions of Hannah on
2 those Federal wildlife proposals -- or excuse me --
3 anyway, I think we can move on to the charter.
4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 This is Karen Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence
7 Management.
8

9 Every two years the Council's charter
10 is renewed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act and
11 before the charter is renewed the Council has a right
12 to review it and discuss any changes that they would
13 like to propose to the Federal Subsistence Board. The
14 Board then reviews any proposed charter changes and if
15 they agree, the request for that is forwarded to the
16 Secretary of the Interior. A lot of the language in
17 your charter is actually required by the Federal
18 Advisory Committee Act and it's implementing policy so
19 you can't change the language. The changes that you
20 can request are changes to the name of your Council or
21 the number of members on your Council, but you will
22 need to have a justifiable reason for it.
23

24 There was a change for the last charter
25 that I think worked out really well for the Council and
26 that was the Secretaries of the Interior approved new
27 language that their charters allow for alternate
28 members may be appointed to the Council to fill
29 vacancies if they occur out of cycle. An alternate
30 member must be approved and appointed by the Secretary
31 before attending a meeting as a representative. And so
32 the term for an appointed alternate member will be the
33 same as the term of the member whose vacancy is being
34 filled. So we need to have a number of applicants in
35 order to -- a number of applications in order to have a
36 pool of individuals ready to step in as alternates and
37 I'll talk about that in just a minute.
38

39 The other issue that we encountered
40 this year, or last year, actually, was that with delays
41 to the Council appointments experienced over the past
42 few years the Council may also want to consider
43 requesting adding a provision to its charter that
44 allows a member to serve after the expiration of his or
45 her term until a successor is appointed.
46

47 I'd like to give you an example. The
48 Western Interior Alaska Council that I also coordinate,
49 because the appointments were delayed they only had
50

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1 four seated members at their Council meeting last
2 February. And so what we are recommending or putting
3 in as a possible recommendation for the Council to
4 consider is changing their charter or including in
5 their charter, that any member of this Advisory Council
6 may serve after the expiration of the member's term
7 until a successor is appointed. In other words, all of
8 you are considered incumbent members right now.
9 Appointments are supposed to be made December 2nd of
10 each year, if those appointments are delayed for any
11 reason then you would continue to serve on the Council
12 until appointments are made.

13

14 And so if you're -- if you think that
15 this would be beneficial to the Seward Peninsula
16 Council, you can move to include that language in your
17 charter under this renewal, if you are not interested
18 in including this provision you can just make any other
19 changes that you would like or you can approve the
20 charter as written. But this is an action item for the
21 Council, and they must approve this charter this cycle.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
26 Karen. I see it as an advantage to include that
27 language but I'd like to hear from Council, other
28 members. Lloyd, are you on.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tom Gray.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Deahl.

37

38 MR. KATCHATAG: Yep, I'm on -- hold on.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

41

42 MR. AUKONGAK: Yeah, I'm here.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I was just
45 wondering if what Karen mentioned about having the
46 language in there, that if you're serving on the
47 Council, and if your time runs out and they haven't had
48 either -- either you reup or they appoint another
49 person in your place, that the charter reads that we
50

0105

1 can serve until a replacement.

2

3 MR. KATCHATAG: Yeah, I agree with
4 that. I think that's a good idea.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I think it's a
7 fail safe, make sure we have enough people at the table
8 to make decisions. Okay, so that's you, how about you,
9 Leland.

10

11 MR. OYOUNICK: Yeah, that sounds okay
12 to me, Louis.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Martin.

15

16 MR. AUKONGAK: I agree with it, Mr.
17 Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Elmer.

20

21 MR. SEETOT: I -- in the military, I
22 think being appointed for three years, that's pretty
23 much the government's job and then I have reservations
24 about that in the way that -- what the government says
25 on paper, still it's pretty much different than what
26 they say. So pretty much like doubletalk or something
27 from dealing with the U.S. Government in the past, but
28 if the majority of the Council members agree to that
29 language then I'm for it. But that's just my opinion,
30 or speech for it.

31

32 Mr. Chair

33

34 MR. KRON: Hey Louis.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, go ahead.

37

38 MR. KRON: Yeah, Louis, this is Tom
39 Kron. I just wanted to followup. I had recommended --
40 you know Karen has been working on this issue for
41 several months -- I had recommended to all of the
42 Regional Councils across Alaska, all 10 of them met,
43 they adopted -- they considered adopting this carryover
44 position and I think all of them to-date have done so.
45 My understanding is the Subsistence Resource
46 Commissions for the Park, they have this exact same
47 provision in their charters, subsequently it was moved
48 into Park regulations but, again, this is something
49 that we have not had in the charters for the Regional

50

0106

1 Councils and it -- again, as Karen mentioned, the past
2 two years the appointments from the Secretary's office
3 have been delayed substantially and that has created
4 real problems with a number of the meetings. Karen
5 mentioned Western Interior, but it also hit Southeast
6 Alaska and YK Delta, they had very small numbers of
7 people for their meetings. The Southeast meeting is
8 next week, they're scrambling to get the word out to
9 the recently appointed members, but anyway the
10 carryover provision would be very helpful. It's
11 'something that's been used in other forums and we're
12 definitely recommending it to the Councils.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Kron.
17 Yeah, I got the temperature of the Council here. So I
18 think we heard why, and I guess it's up to us to have
19 somebody make a motion and we vote on it to add it.

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Am I correct -- oh,
24 Karen, go ahead.

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: You're absolutely
27 correct, Mr. Chair. But I did want to just address Mr.
28 Seetot's concern as well. And that is, you know, it's
29 understandable that the government is supposed to have
30 these appointments by December 2nd of every year when
31 we go through the nomination cycle. This hasn't been
32 done in a timely way. And so this provision actually
33 protects our Councils because it allows them to
34 continue to serve with an adequate number of
35 individuals on the Council to represent the communities
36 and their subsistence needs.

37

38 So putting this language in will
39 actually protect these Councils and their viability to
40 be able to serve all the communities in the region.

41

42 So getting back to Mr. Chair's
43 question, yes, a motion is required and a vote is
44 required to go ahead and include this new language if
45 the Council elects to do that.

46

47 Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you
48 Member Seetot for bringing up your concern.

49

50

0107

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
2 Karen, for that. At this point I think we need to have
3 a motion on the table so I'd ask for a first and a
4 second.

5
6 MR. AUKONGAK: Martin. Move.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second for
9 the language.

10
11 MR. KATCHATAG: Second.

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That's Deahl. So all
14 those in favor of the motion to add the language for a
15 carryover on our appointments, or replacement, say aye.

16
17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18
19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
20 same sign.

21
22 (No opposing votes)

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, motion
25 passes. Karen, we got.....

26
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I'd like to
28 do a roll call real quickly to be sure we have a
29 quorum. I'm concerned because Lloyd is not on the
30 phone. So if I could do that quickly by first names so
31 that I don't have to bungle the last names, I would
32 really appreciate that.

33
34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, that's good, go
35 for it. That was one of my concerns earlier when I was
36 asking -- calling out names and asking how the feeling
37 was. Go ahead.

38
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, yeah, and I
40 appreciate you doing that.

41
42 Leland Oyoumick.

43
44 MR. OYOUNICK: Here.

45
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Deahl Katchatag.

47
48 MR. KATCHATAG: Here.

49
50

0108

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Elmer Seetot.

2

3 MR. SEETOT: Here.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Louis Green.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, thank you.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Martin Aukongak.

10

11 MR. AUKONGAK: Here.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, so that's five
14 out of the nine, so, Mr. Chair, I'm going to check too
15 -- is Lloyd Kiyutelluk on the phone yet.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: It looks like we lost
20 Lloyd.

21

22 Tom Gray, did Tom Gray rejoin us.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Ron Kirk, I
27 believe, has got a work conflict so he won't be able to
28 join. He was going to be able to try -- or he was
29 going to try to get in this morning, but -- okay, Mr.
30 Chair, thanks for allowing that and we do have a quorum
31 so the vote is valid.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
36 Karen. So just for the -- we should have probably done
37 it before -- anyway, what's the verbiage again.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 The Council has moved and adopted to propose the
41 following language to their Council charter: Any
42 member of this Advisory Council may serve after the
43 expiration of the member's term until a successor is
44 appointed.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: So basically when the
49 term expires, either the individual is reappointed to

50

0109

1 the Council, or a replacement appointee is named to the
2 Council.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
7 Karen. I should have done that before we had the vote,
8 just to be clear on the motion.

9

10 All right, so is that all we have on
11 the Council charter review, Karen, to deal with, or do
12 you have more to present.

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, if you
15 would allow me a quick correction, this would be to
16 adopt the charter as written with the new provision of
17 the language that was agreed upon.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, that's fine.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: So the motion was to
24 adopt the charter with the new language that was cited.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes. Is there any
27 other additional stuff for the charter review, Karen.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: No, Mr. Chair, that's
30 it. I appreciate everybody's patience.

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, I'm a Doctor, I
33 have a lot of patients.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so that moves us
38 on into the review and approval of the fiscal year 2020
39 annual report, correct.

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair. This
42 is Karen Deatherage. Again, your favorite Council
43 coordinator. And the Council's 2020 annual report
44 starts on Page 17 of your meeting book. If the Council
45 members recall you drafted this report at your fall
46 meeting held via teleconference last October and you
47 need to finalize the report at this meeting, by either
48 accepting existing information or adding any additional
49 topics from last year.

50

0110

1 I invite you to please take a couple of
2 minutes to read through the report and if you are
3 satisfied that this captures the Council's intent, Mr.
4 Chair can call for a motion to finalize the 2020 annual
5 report to the Board as written.

6
7 I'd like to ask to make sure, does
8 everybody have a copy of their meeting material so that
9 they can reference this material.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: If somebody does not
14 I'd be happy to read the two subject matter in summary
15 of what has been included for the annual report so far.

16

17 Thank you. Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any Council members
20 without your booklet that would like to hear a
21 summarized version of this before we vote on it.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: How short and sweet
26 can you make it, Karen.

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, if you need
29 to hear it I'd be happy to summarize the two issues
30 that the Council put forth as their concerns outside of
31 the regulatory issues for the Seward Peninsula.

32

33 The first concern is the Norton Sound
34 red king crab fishery. What we did in this particular
35 case is we included excerpts from the letter that the
36 Council had authorized to be sent to the National --
37 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council as comments
38 about the proposed 2021 crab fishery in Northern Norton
39 Sound. And so this annual report capsulizes the issues
40 and concerns that the Council brought up to the North
41 Pacific Fisheries Management Council. It was uploaded
42 on to their comment section and it also has been
43 included with the Board of Fish petition that Mr. Lean
44 referenced earlier. And so the major concern is to
45 stop the commercial fishery for crab this year to allow
46 for the sublegal adults to reach legal size so that the
47 long-term conservation of red king crab in Norton Sound
48 can continue.

49

50

0111

1 The second issue which was also
2 discussed in length today, was the Seward Peninsula
3 salmon issue, including very few silver and chum salmon
4 this past summer and fall. And the tens of thousands,
5 if not millions of pink salmon, which may be competing
6 with silver, chum and chinook salmon for resources.
7 And so the Council has included that issue as well in
8 this report. And as a recommendation, the Council is
9 asking that the State of Alaska conduct research on
10 chinook, silver and chum salmon on multiple river
11 drainages in the region that currently do not qualify
12 for research funding under the OSM Fisheries Resource
13 Monitoring Program.

14

15 And so those are the two issues for the
16 annual report that were included, and the Council can
17 change them, they can add to them, or they can accept
18 the annual report as written and finalize it today with
19 a motion.

20

21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 If there's any questions I'd be happy
24 to answer them.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are there any
27 questions, comments or concerns from Council members.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a motion to
32 adopt as written.

33

34 MR. KATCHATAG: So moved.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second.

37

38 MR. KATCHATAG: This is Doug.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sorry, I spoke over
41 somebody.

42

43 MR. KATCHATAG: I said this is Doug, so
44 moved.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Doug moves on
47 it, is there a second.

48

49 MR. SEETOT: Brevig Mission seconds.

50

0112

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer. All
2 those in favor of approving the annual report as
3 written say aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against same
8 sign.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, motion
13 passes. Karen, report goes in as written.

14
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much
16 members of the Council and Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so that moves us
19 into the agency reports. Have we got anybody out there
20 in the public that have comments, questions or concerns
21 at this point, it's been a while since I asked.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There's a mute button
26 or there's star six if you want to talk.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, hearing none,
31 we'll proceed ahead on to agency reports. And I think
32 there's a limit of 15 minutes, and I would ask if
33 there's any tribal governments out there.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are there any Native
38 organizations out there.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I guess that brings us
43 up to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, and
44 I don't recall.....

45
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Diana
47 Stram is on the phone and she was going to do a bycatch
48 update for the Council today.

49
50

0113

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that.

4 Diana, I think you have the floor here.

5

6 MS. STRAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
7 afternoon.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, don't

10 forget.....

11

12 MS. STRAM: Hopefully you can all.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN:there's a mop
15 over in the corner and the squeegee and everything
16 else, make sure you do a good job.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I told you you had the
21 floor.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 MS. STRAM: Good afternoon.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, go ahead.

28

29 MS. STRAM: My name is Diana Stram.
30 I'm with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.
31 And so I just have a brief overview for you of the
32 salmon bycatch management actions that we have in the
33 North Pacific Fisheries.

34

35 So just to be clear, the North Pacific
36 Fishery Management Council, together, manages with the
37 National Marine Fisheries Service for the Federal
38 waters three to 200 miles off shore. We also
39 coordinate with and sometimes jointly manage species
40 with the State of Alaska, which I'll get into in a
41 minute, and the Council makes the recommendations --
42 policy recommendations to the National Marine Fisheries
43 Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service then
44 approves, implements and enforces them.

45

46 In terms of our Council we have 11
47 voting members and four non-voting members. Six are
48 from the State of Alaska. Our Chairman is Simon
49 Kinneen from Nome. And we have three from Washington

50

0114

1 State, Oregon, and the head of the National Marine
2 Fisheries Service. And then we have non-voting members
3 that are advisory from the Coast Guard, Fish and
4 Wildlife, Pacific States, and the U.S. State
5 Department. And then our Executive Director, Mr. David
6 Wittheral also sits at the Council table but not as a
7 voting member.

8
9 In terms of what we manage then, we
10 have primary management of groundfish, so pollock, cod,
11 flatfish. We have joint management of crab species in
12 the Bering Sea only, king crab, snow crab, tanner crab
13 with the State of Alaska. We also manage Alaska-wide
14 scallops with the State of Alaska. And then as it
15 relates to Pacific Halibut that is, for conservation
16 purposes, managed by the International Pacific Halibut
17 Commission, but the North Pacific Council has
18 jurisdiction on the allocation of it. And I'll get
19 into prohibited species in a minute, of which halibut
20 is one, but for herring, salmon and other species that
21 fall solely, the Board of Fisheries and the Alaska
22 Department of Fish and Game. We manage salmon only as
23 bycatch in the off shore groundfish fishery, which is
24 also a prohibited species.

25
26 So our jurisdiction does not extend --
27 generally into Alaska waters, and it does not extend
28 beyond the 200 nautical miles from shore. The Federal
29 management of Pacific Halibut is extended throughout
30 U.S. waters and it's really important that we
31 coordinate between State and Federal management
32 organizations. There's eight fishery management
33 councils in the United States, and, obviously we are
34 the -- we take up the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea
35 and the Arctic.

36
37 So in terms of what bycatch is, salmon
38 and halibut as well as crab and herring are considered
39 a bycatch species in groundfish fisheries and they're
40 specifically defined as prohibited species. So often
41 referred to that as prohibited species catch, or PSC,
42 and what that means is that by law the fish must be
43 avoided, they cannot be sold or retained except for
44 counting, and some are donated to food banks with
45 certain restrictions in terms of food quality.

46
47 So the Council has different measures
48 to reduce bycatch in groundfish fisheries. I'm going
49 to focus only on the salmon measures that we have, we
50

0115

1 also have different catch limits and time and area
2 closures for other prohibited species as well.

3

4

5 And then the Council also encourages
6 the industry efforts to reduce bycatch through gear
7 modifications as well as communication amongst the
8 fleet, there's something called a salmon excluder and
9 there's halibut excluders as well. And what that is is
10 a mechanism in the trawl net to allow both salmon and
11 halibut to escape and not be dropped back.

11

12

13 So specifically we have management
14 measures -- I'll focus on the Bering Sea since that's
15 more your interest and I will make sure that Karen can
16 distribute the presentation if you have other questions
17 as well.

17

18

19 In the Bering Sea salmon is taken
20 pretty much exclusively in the Bering -- the off shore
21 Bering Sea pollock fishery, chum and chinook are taken
22 as bycatch in that pollock fishery. And in terms of
23 management structure, that's a cooperative structure
24 under the American Fisheries Act, so it's a fully
25 rationalized fishery. Because of that and because of
26 the provisions of observer coverage on that we are able
27 to enact a PSC limit so a hard cap, which if it's
28 exceeded, shuts down the fishery, it's divided out by
29 season and by sector. And specifically, there's
30 different measures to minimize salmon in the groundfish
31 fisheries. These came about through the combination of
32 Amendment 91 and 110. So Amendment 91 was when we
33 first developed the PSC limits and the performance
34 standards as well as the incentive plan agreements, and
35 then those were amended by Amendment 110.

35

36

37 So just to -- just to give you a
38 general overview. There's an overall PSC limit and
39 this is for the entire fishery but it's divided out by
40 the four sectors as well as by the winter and the
41 summer season. That limit's at 60,000. There's a
42 performance standard below that at 47,591, again,
43 that's the aggregate but it's divided out specifically
44 for management by sector and season. And the -- each
45 gets their share of that for the year and the intent of
46 the performance standard is to require incentive plan
47 agreements in which the industry has to put forward to
48 the Council each year and manage to avoid bycatch at
49 all levels of encounter. If they were to exceed their
50 lower cap level in more than two, in a rolling seven

50

0116

1 years, then they're held to the lower cap level for the
2 future.

3

4

5 Amendment 110 then that went into
6 place, final action in 2015, and went into place in
7 2016 enacted a lower cap level in years of low chinook
8 abundance. And so what's defined as low chinook
9 abundance is by what we -- working with the Alaska
10 Department of Fish and Game to develop a three river
11 system index of Western Alaska rivers. And so every
12 year ADF&G provides a chinook salmon abundance using
13 the three system index, so Western Alaska, based on the
14 post-season, end run, chinook salmon run size for the
15 combined Kuskokwim, Unalakleet and the Upper Yukon
16 aggregate stock grouping. And so what that means is
17 when that number is put forward by ADF&G, if it is
18 under 250,000 fish then the fishery -- the pollock
19 fishery is under lower caps and lower performance
20 standards for that next year.

20

21

22 In addition to the cap levels in the
23 plan agreement, there are other cooperative measures
24 that the industry is held to. They have to provide a
25 plan which provides incentive to avoid chinook and chum
26 under all levels of encounter rates. They have
27 penalties for failure to avoid chinook at vessel
28 levels, they put into place hot spot closures, it's for
29 short, three to seven day closures in spots of high
30 abundance of either chinook and chum, depending on what
31 they're encountering, and, again, they have salmon
32 escape panels to allow chinook and chum to escape the
33 trawl net so that they are not -- they're not brought
34 on board. And then to the extent possible we work with
35 SeaShare -- the pollock industry has worked with
36 SeaShare to provide donations to food banks.

36

37

38 So in terms of our annual reporting
39 requirements then to the Council. Salmon is full
40 retention on all vessels and we have electronic
41 monitoring provisions to ensure full accountability.
42 So the electronic monitoring is not to count the fish,
43 that's done by observers under full observer coverage,
44 and it's done with a census, so every single salmon is
45 caught but the electronic monitoring is there to make
46 sure that there is full accountability that all salmon
47 are being counted by an observer and are not able to go
48 to any part of the vessel or any containers where the
49 observer can't see them. We have system genetic
50 sampling in the Bering Sea, and a slightly different

50

0117

1 system in the Gulf because of the way it's managed.
2 And then every year, and this will be coming up at our
3 April meeting in two weeks, we get a report from both
4 the industry on their measures to reduce chinook salmon
5 at all levels of abundance as well as genetic reports
6 from the National Marine Fishery Agency geneticist on
7 the stock composition of chinook salmon in the Bering
8 Sea and the Gulf and chum salmon in the Bering Sea and
9 the Gulf. The off shore fisheries do not catch any
10 other salmon species so we focus on the Gulf -- we
11 focus on chinook and chum.

12

13 In terms of trends and breakouts then.
14 We had very high numbers of chinook salmon in the early
15 2000s which is what prompted these programs that were
16 put into place with Amendment 91 and 110, the numbers
17 have been much less than that since that time and the
18 most recent number for chinook in 2020 was 32,423. And
19 they have been well below all of their cap levels since
20 the -- since this program went into place.
21 Genetically, in terms of stock composition, it's
22 roughly about 40 percent of Coastal Western Alaska
23 stocks and the upper Yukon. We can break out the upper
24 Yukon separately as a stock, but at this point right
25 now the rest of the Coastal West Alaska stocks are all
26 in one aggregate grouping. And then we see a high
27 component from British Columbia, this is for chinook
28 again. When we get into chum the highest component is
29 from Asia and we assume that most of those are hatchery
30 fish. So there's a very low proportion of chum from
31 Coastal West Alaska. And, again, those trends were
32 high as well in the early 2000s, have come down since
33 that time, and then in recent years have been much
34 higher and -- in 2020 chum salmon bycatch was about
35 320,000.

36

37 In terms of a relative rate of impact
38 for chinook, we are able to use what we call an adult
39 equivalency model, where we look at -- that we know
40 from the observers the age of the fish that are caught
41 as bycatch and so in general over all years it's
42 usually trends to around three to four year old fish,
43 there's very small numbers of five to six year old
44 fish. We also have the maturation rate so we pull the
45 component that goes back to Western Alaska, we look at
46 the maturity rate and come up with an aggregate,
47 maturity by age across Western Alaska rivers and then
48 we're able to calculate what an adult equivalent, so
49 how many of those fish that were caught as bycatch in
50

0118

1 any one year would have gone back to Western Alaska
2 rivers. Again, we're stuck with an aggregate across
3 all of Coastal West Alaska so we can't say how many
4 would have come back to just the Unalakleet, or to just
5 the -- we have to do it in aggregates. But in the
6 highest years the number of bycatch, it lags, so you
7 might have a really high bycatch year but those fish
8 wouldn't necessarily have been coming back in that year
9 because most of them are three and four year olds. So
10 what you see is in a high bycatch year, you see a
11 lagged impact for a couple years to come and then in
12 the low impact years that we've had in more recent
13 years, the impact rate when we combine it with the run
14 strength is -- has always been less than about two
15 percent. So that's the relative percentage that would
16 be the impact on the aggregate Western Alaska river
17 systems.

18
19 The Upper Yukon can be broken out and
20 there is potential to break the whole Yukon out
21 separately from the Coastal West Alaska groupings, the
22 geneticists are working on that. We do know that from
23 looking at the trends in genetics for the Upper Yukon,
24 as the fishery moves further to the north and west,
25 while the -- the numbers and the -- from the Upper
26 Yukon are very low, as the fishery moves further
27 northwest, that's something that the geneticists have
28 been monitoring to see if that's going to increase the
29 proportion to the Upper Yukon. So when they're moving
30 up past the Pribilofs into the Northwest, there might
31 -- we might see a higher component on it.

32
33 There's been some work ongoing to see
34 if Norton Sound can be broken out for chinook. They
35 don't have that capability yet statistically for the
36 genetics, but we work with the genetics group at the
37 Auke Bay Lab in Juneau and they'll be presenting to the
38 Council in two weeks at our April meeting, which is
39 online, and all of those reports will be posted online
40 before they're updated -- information on both spatial
41 breakouts of bycatch as well as components of the
42 bycatch or the different stock composition groups that
43 we can break them out to.

44
45 Mr. Chairman, that's the summary of my
46 report but I'm happy to answer any questions.

47
48 (Teleconference interference -
49 participants not muted)

50

0119

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
2 Somebody's got to mute their mic on their phone.
3 Karen, I'm hearing hollering and everything in the
4 background, unless Karen's got.....
5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello. Is somebody
7 there, could they press star six to mute your phone, we
8 hear some hammering and stuff going on in the
9 background. Thanks.
10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Diana, thank
12 you.
13

14 MS. STRAM: You're welcome, thank you.
15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'll ask Council
17 members if they have comments, questions or concerns.
18

19 (No comments)
20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm hearing none,
22 maybe my questions will bring up, I have a few.
23

24 I'll start out with the immature
25 salmon, three and four year olds. Of course they're
26 immature salmon, so I guess that leads me to believe --
27 to want to ask a question on these food banks, how much
28 of this fish is retained as edible for human
29 consumption?
30

31 MS. STRAM: Thanks, that's a great
32 question, and one we get a lot. The way that SeaShare,
33 which is the Hunger Relief organization that works with
34 the industry to partner to bring those fish to the food
35 banks, there's certain provisions that the fish have to
36 be headed and gutted and processed and kept on ice so
37 that it's food quality grade. They don't catalog the
38 numbers of -- as fish, they catalog them as the numbers
39 of serving, and so while they are more juvenile fish
40 than adult fish, a lot of those are still brought back
41 into the food banks and processed as servings to
42 different food banks that are across -- in recent
43 years, they've been working really hard to bring a lot
44 of that fish back to distribution centers in Western
45 Alaska.
46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So it's
48 cataloged as serving size, I wonder why it's not
49 counted as a fish and what year class it is, why is
50

0120

1 that not.....

2

3

4 MS. STRAM: Sure. Yeah, I can't answer
5 that because Jim Harmon, who's the Executive Director
6 of SeaShare comes to the Council, and he will also give
7 a report in April, about their food donation programs
8 and their efforts, and for them, they are a hunger
9 relief organization, they're a non-profit hunger relief
10 organization and so they are not trying to catalog how
11 many of the fish that were caught as bycatch are
12 donated to the -- to the food program, they're trying
13 to keep their focus on how many servings they are
14 providing for hunger relief. So the -- the National
15 Marine Fisheries Service doesn't have an accounting
16 method for the number of fish that are donated to Food
17 Share but it would have to come -- it wouldn't come
18 from Food Share, that's not how they're organized. And
19 that question gets asked of him every year, and that's
20 our -- it's not something that we have an ability right
21 now to keep track of that way. We have great senses of
22 the salmon that are caught as bycatch but we don't have
23 a great accounting mechanism to take a single fish and
24 count all the fish that are individually donated of
25 that year to SeaShare.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Huh, well, I find that
27 kind of interesting because counting fish seems to be
28 easier than counting portions, I'm not following on the
29 reasoning, I guess. So.....

30

31 MS. STRAM: If.....

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: we're talking
34 about.....

35

36 MS. STRAM: I could followup a
37 little.....

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. Go ahead.

40

41 MS. STRAM: some of it -- some of
42 it is the prox -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, no, go ahead.

45

46 MS. STRAM: Okay. So a lot of the --
47 because of the way the food donation program works, and
48 it has to be food quality, a lot of this happens at the
49 catcher/processor level, so the off shore processors

50

0121

1 and some of the requirements of the SeaShare program
2 are that the -- all of the fish processing and storage
3 is solely -- the cost of that is solely borne by the
4 industry so I don't have a proportion for how much
5 comes from catcher/processors versus catcher/vessels,
6 but it's usually a higher proportion because they're
7 processed into fillets on board and then those are
8 stored in order to give to food bank -- to SeaShare
9 when they come back to off load, whereas
10 catcher/vessels are on a shore side trip, but they're
11 delivering shore side from their hold so they're not
12 processing any of those fish on board so that's
13 something that has to happen secondarily at the
14 processing plant. It also bears the cost of processing
15 that fish into -- into fillets.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So -- okay, I find
18 that really interesting that this process is happening,
19 we're processing the salmon for making them available
20 for human consumption, but we don't know how many fish
21 we're filleting, I -- okay -- and that's not your
22 fault, I'm just.....

23

24 MS. STRAM: It comes up every year.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, and I'm sure it
27 does for a very good reason. We don't know how many
28 immature fish are being taken in the bycatch and those
29 immature fish, if the trawlers weren't there, what's
30 the percentage of those immature fish becoming mature
31 fish and heading back to their rivers of origin.
32 So.....

33

34 MS. STRAM: Well, we.....

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

37

38 MS. STRAM: Oh, sorry, that is
39 something that we do have information on. So we do
40 have a good estimate of, given the numbers of fish, and
41 the length, we can do age, length conversion so we have
42 a pretty good idea of how many proportion of the fish
43 in a given year are immature. We don't have any -- you
44 know, we use some -- some estimates of natural
45 mortality in the ocean to indicate how many of those
46 three year olds might have eventually made it back to
47 an individual river system three or four years later.
48 So those are the kind of things that we do use the
49 adult equivalency model which gets periodically updated
50

0122

1 to estimate, but it's not some of the -- because we're
2 limited by the genetic stock composition, we're not
3 able to say how many would have gone back to any
4 individual river in any one year, we have to use the
5 aggregate.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, thank you. It
8 sounds like we need a hatchery up here in Western
9 Alaska to really get some real scientific data.
10 According to ADF&G, Jon Linderman, during a meeting a
11 few years ago, he said that -- when I asked him the
12 question, would we have scientific proof if we -- that
13 our fish are being caught in the pollock industry, the
14 pollock fleet if we had marked fish showing up and he
15 said, yes, we would. So the same defense with the --
16 to the Area M fishermen in the State fishery and the
17 pollock fishery is the same, you don't have data, okay.
18 That really still upsets me. It's been a long time and
19 it's still in the same category, we don't have any
20 data.

21
22 Okay, so the observer program, is that
23 100 percent when -- are there 100 percent of the boats
24 out there, vessels, catcher/processors, with observers?
25

26 MS. STRAM: Yes, that's correct. And
27 actually there's observers on every -- because every
28 salmon censused. Part of the -- when we put into place
29 this new management system of caps, in order to ensure
30 compliance with that, the observer coverage for any of
31 the fleets that were under 100 percent, or 200 percent,
32 if you call it that, because you need an observer for
33 each haul when they're off, part of the provisions, in
34 order to enforce that were the 100 percent observer
35 coverage across all of the catches and the observer to
36 census the -- to census the salmon so that every single
37 salmon that's brought on board is caught.

38
39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right. So that -- and
40 you're saying that 100 percent of the vessels out there
41 in the pollock fleet do have observers on them, I've
42 heard otherwise so that's why I'm asking the question.

43
44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46
47 MS. STRAM: On the Bering Sea pollock
48 fleet, they have to have observers and, in fact, many
49 of the -- many of the vessels have more than -- more
50

0123

1 than a single observer on board if they're running, you
2 know, the catcher/processors. And then there's also
3 observers at the shore side plant so that when that
4 catch is -- if it's a catcher/vessel, when that catch
5 is offloaded at the shore side plant that's where they
6 do the census of that -- of all the salmon that was in
7 that hold.

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. All right,
10 thank you. So now I'll call on any Council members,
11 you have any questions, comments or concerns for Diana.

12
13 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, Louis, this is
14 Leland.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Leland.

17
18 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, I was wondering
19 about these guys on the high seas fisheries, do they
20 fish the same area every year or do they drastically
21 move around or where do they fish?

22
23 MS. STRAM: Thank you, that's a great
24 question. I'm sorry I don't have a map to be able to
25 show you. It depends on the aggregations of pollocks,
26 so it's just the Bering Sea pollock fishery that we're
27 talking about, and depending on the aggregations of
28 pollock, especially in the A season, depending on where
29 the ice cover is. So you're talking about north of
30 Unimak, up to the south of the Pribilofs, really far
31 off shore. And then in the B season, depending on the
32 sector, and where they're running into both chinook and
33 pollock because they move off of chinook, it stretches,
34 for the catcher/processors at least, all the way up to
35 the northwest in recent years close to the Russian
36 border. But it is fairly consistent. I mean it varies
37 year to year a little bit but you're just talking about
38 individual concentrations, not widely different areas.
39 They're always fishing in those areas, they just may
40 move off certain ones if their aggregations of pollock
41 aren't very good or they run into chinook.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Does that answer your
44 question, Leland?

45
46 MR. OYOUMICK: Yep, thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: A followup question.
49 Northwest -- the movement is northwest you said and up
50

0124

1 towards the Russian Border, is that around St. Lawrence
2 Island?

3

4 MS. STRAM: That's a great question,
5 I'd have to check, I don't have the map in front of me
6 right now. It's, I believe, a little bit south and
7 further to the west but I can get back to Karen with a
8 map that would show you where the fishing fleet is.

9

10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Great, that would be
11 helpful. Do we know what the Russians are doing?

12

13 MS. STRAM: Unfortunately that question
14 comes up all time, we sometimes get information, we
15 sometimes don't.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, okay. Are there
18 any other Council members with comments, questions or
19 concerns.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, Diana --
24 and that was the extent of your report?

25

26 MS. STRAM: Yes, that is, Mr. Chairman.

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I'm looking at
29 my agenda here. If there are no other further
30 questions or comments or concerns by Council, I think
31 that'll be it for you, Diana, at this time.

32

33 MS. STRAM: Okay, thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, and thank you for
36 your time there and answering all my questions.

37

38 MS. STRAM: Any time.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. So we're
41 on to the Northern Bering Sea juvenile salmon ecology.

42

43 MS. GARCIA: Mr. Chair, this is Sabrina
44 Garcia with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, can
45 you hear me okay?

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep, you're on.

48

49 MS. GARCIA: Great. So I'm going to be

50

0125

1 presenting on some research that the Alaska Department
2 of Fish and Game is doing in the Northern Bering Sea in
3 collaboration with NOAA Fisheries. You should have a
4 PDF presentation in your packets. But I think in the
5 interest of time, if it's okay with you, Mr. Chair, I
6 will skip around the presentation a little bit and try
7 to focus in on items that may be of specific interest
8 to the Council.

9

10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.

11

12 MS. GARCIA: Okay. Okay, so we're
13 going to skip ahead to Slide 3, the title of the slide
14 there, it says, juvenile salmon research in the
15 Northern Bering Sea.

16

17 So the Northern Bering Sea survey, like
18 I mentioned, it's a collaborative survey between NOAA
19 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and these
20 surveys have been going on in the Northern Bering Sea
21 from 2003 to 2019. Unfortunately because of Covid we
22 did not have a survey in 2020. This survey is funded
23 by a salmon focus grant and we do have funding to
24 complete the survey in both 2021 and 2022 so that's
25 great news. The survey samples between Nunivak Island
26 and the Bering Strait. Sometimes if we have time and
27 we get lucky with the weather we sample a little bit
28 farther north as well.

29

30 So as this slide shows, the focus of
31 these surveys is mostly focused on juvenile salmon.

32

33 (Teleconference interference -
34 participants not muted)

35

36 MS. GARCIA: We catch all five species
37 of juvenile salmon when we're on these surveys and
38 while we're focused on juvenile salmon, since we're out
39 in the Bering Sea, these surveys are expensive, we try
40 to study as many aspects of the marine environment as
41 we can. So while we're out there we're taking
42 measurements on temperature and salinity, and other
43 properties of the ocean throughout the entire water
44 column, we're also doing, we call them little mini-
45 trawls for plankton, so tiny plants and animals and
46 that gives us an idea of what food items may be
47 available for forage fish by carrying and also for
48 juvenile salmon. Recently we started to sample the
49 bottom of the ocean which includes, you know, things

50

0126

1 like mud and then clams and critters that live in the
2 mud and we've been testing the sediment and the animals
3 for harmful algae blooms. Throughout the survey we
4 have an observer that identifies and counts seabirds
5 and marine mammals and then what we do is we do a
6 surface trawl, so it's a trawl net that is towed behind
7 the boat in the upper 60 feet of the water column and
8 we tow that trawl net for about 30 minutes. And if you
9 flip to the next slide, Slide 4 in the presentation, it
10 just shows what the surface trawl looks like so you can
11 see the little diagram of the boat, we have the net
12 being towed behind the boat and this net is -- it's
13 modified so that it's fishing at the surface because
14 that's where we know these juvenile salmon are and
15 that's really who we're looking for. And so once we do
16 these 30 minute trawls at these stations throughout the
17 Northern Bering Sea we process our catch, so some
18 things that we're interested in looking at are
19 genetics. We take stomach samples from the juvenile
20 salmon and other species, if they're requested, and
21 that gives us an idea of what they're eating and we can
22 also look at things, at how healthy these fish are, so
23 like what is their condition when we see them in the
24 survey.

25

26 If you flip to the next slide, so it
27 says juvenile chinook salmon distribution in the
28 Northern Bering Sea. You can kind of see -- hopefully
29 you can see a map and it's just showing you where we
30 catch juvenile salmon in our surveys, and we typically
31 catch them across the entire survey but we have these
32 kind of hot areas of juvenile chinook salmon catch just
33 around Nunivak Island and in Norton Sound and just
34 outside the Yukon River.

35

36 If you flip to the next slide.....

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can I ask a question.

39

40 MS. GARCIA: Yes, of course.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, sorry, so you're
43 catching in these hot spots and what time of the year
44 is that?

45

46 MS. GARCIA: Sorry. That's a great
47 question. This survey happens in September of every
48 year. So the juvenile chinook that we're catching,
49 they're two years old, we call them juveniles, they're

50

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1 two years old. They spend one year in the river and
2 then one year in the gravel as eggs and then they
3 migrate into the Bering Sea about May and June, and
4 then we're catching them about three months later in
5 September.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.

8
9 MS. GARCIA: You're welcome. And then
10 on the next slide, the slide is titled juvenile chinook
11 salmon stock composition estimates.

12
13 And basically what this slide is
14 showing -- I know it's a little busy -- the takeaway
15 message from this slide is that most of the chinook
16 salmon, the juvenile chinook salmon, these age two year
17 old fish, most of them are from the Yukon River, about
18 90 percent of them are from the Yukon River, 10 percent
19 -- so that would be -- if you do have the figures in
20 front of you, it would be Lower Yukon, plus Middle
21 Yukon, plus Upper Yukon, but we do get other stocks,
22 and that's in that other Western Alaska figure. That
23 other Western Alaska stock, that includes stocks from
24 Norton Sound but it also includes stocks from the
25 Kuskokwim River and Bristol Bay. And if you do have
26 the figures in front of you one of the things that I'd
27 like to point out is that if you look in 2019, at the
28 proportion of stocks from other Western Alaska, that
29 proportion is really high, it was about 35 percent of
30 the juvenile chinook that we caught were not from the
31 Yukon River. And one of the things that we're thinking
32 is that this might be a signal of juvenile chinook
33 salmon from the Southern Bering Sea system, so like the
34 Kuskokwim or Bristol Bay that are starting to enter our
35 survey area likely due to the warm waters that we've
36 seen in the Bering Sea in the last few years.

37
38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So just -- I don't
39 mean to cut you off again, but.....

40
41 MS. GARCIA: No, that's okay.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN:the area
44 that.....

45
46 MS. GARCIA: If you -- if you have
47 questions, please interrupt me.

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right. And I would
50

0128

1 encourage any other Council member to do the same,
2 thank you. So the area that you're surveying, and
3 you're doing it every year at the same time.....
4

5 MS. GARCIA: Yep.
6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN:is that because
8 of the out-migration, and that's the most likely place
9 you're going to find them and you don't go anywhere
10 else, you don't.....
11

12 MS. GARCIA: Yes, that's a.....
13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN:go out in the big
15 Bering Sea because they're probably not out there, is
16 that the case?
17

18 MS. GARCIA: Yeah. So there's kind of
19 two answers to that question. We sample in September
20 because September -- after September, these fish have
21 survived their first summer in the ocean and a lot of
22 what we know about juvenile salmon is that that first
23 summer in the ocean, it makes or breaks what we see in
24 the future, and I'll speak to that a little bit. So
25 that's one reason why we sample in September. And this
26 survey is ideal, in that, the way that juvenile chinook
27 salmon from these areas, they kind of hang out in the
28 Northern Bering Sea so we know that by sampling in that
29 area we're able to get a good picture of chinook salmon
30 from the Yukon River and a little bit of Norton Sound
31 chinook salmon. So it's basically -- it's we're lucky
32 in the timing and that we're catching these salmon
33 after they've survived a really important period, so
34 that first summer in the ocean, and we also know that
35 this is the area of the Bering Sea where they're
36 hanging out.
37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
39 that. Appreciate it.
40

41 MS. GARCIA: Sure. And so if you flip
42 to the next slide, this one's title total Yukon River
43 juvenile chinook salmon abundance in the Northern
44 Bering Sea.
45

46 So one of the things that we can do
47 from the survey is we can calculate the abundance of
48 Yukon River juvenile chinook salmon. Unfortunately
49 because of the -- we're unable to genetically
50

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1 distinguish Norton Sound chinook from Kuskokwim River
2 chinook from Bristol Bay chinook, we can only do, what
3 I'm about to show, for Yukon River. If in some future,
4 the genetics gets more advanced that we can distinguish
5 Norton Sound fish from Yukon River fish this would be
6 something that we could think about doing for Norton
7 Sound stocks. So basically what this figure shows is
8 the abundance of juvenile chinook salmon in the
9 Northern Bering Sea since the survey started in 2003 to
10 2019. And what I'll point out is that for the last
11 three years we've had below average estimates of
12 juvenile chinook salmon abundance for Yukon River
13 stocks in our survey.

14
15 I'm going to skip -- well, I'm going to
16 just say one thing about this next slide, it's titled,
17 chinook salmon run projection. And the only thing I
18 want to mention from this slide is that the
19 relationship between the number of juvenile chinook
20 salmon that we see in our survey can help us predict
21 how many adults return to the river from those
22 juveniles. So basically if we see more juvenile
23 chinook salmon in the survey, we tend to see more
24 adults that come back to the river from those juveniles
25 and the reverse is also true, when we see less juvenile
26 chinook salmon in the survey we tend to see smaller
27 runs of Yukon River chinook salmon.

28
29 (Teleconference interference -
30 participants not muted)

31
32 MS. GARCIA: And if you flip to the
33 next slide, it's called total Yukon River juvenile
34 chinook salmon run outlook. This is what I was
35 mentioning, is that, we can use the number of juveniles
36 that we catch in the survey to predict how many will
37 return to the rivers. And like I mentioned, we catch
38 these juveniles when they're two years old so they're
39 going to come back to the river two years later as four
40 year olds, or three years later as five year olds, or
41 four years later as six year olds. So this gives us
42 the ability to forecast chinook salmon runs up to three
43 years into the future. And what I'm showing in this
44 figure, those grey bars is the total run size to the
45 river in that year, and then those black bars are what
46 was predicted based on the juvenile catches in the
47 survey. And we started doing this in 2013 so that's
48 why that's the first year that you see those black
49 bars. And what you can see is that in most years we
50

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1 can do a pretty good job of predicting how many adult
2 chinook salmon are going to return to the Yukon River.
3 And unfortunately the forecast for 2021, so this
4 upcoming summer and 2022 is we're expecting to see
5 declining returns of Yukon River chinook salmon.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Diana [sic] do you --
8 in those surveys where you're doing that survey area,
9 do you find older fish in that or not?

10
11 MS. GARCIA: We do. We do catch
12 immature [sic] chinook salmon, we don't catch that many
13 of them. They're a little bit more widely distributed
14 in the Northern Bering Sea so while we run into them,
15 we don't get that many of them.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you.

18
19 MS. GARCIA: Sure. I know some -- some
20 -- earlier in the discussion today there was some talk
21 about the big pink salmon runs that have been coming
22 back to the Norton Sound. If you flip to the next
23 slide, so we should be -- it's on Page 10 and it's
24 titled juvenile pink salmon distribution and abundance.
25 This is pretty similar to what I just presented on the
26 juvenile chinook but now we're looking at juvenile pink
27 salmon. And basically we're doing the same thing,
28 we're using the number of juvenile pink salmon, so
29 these are -- they're going to come back to the river --
30 to the rivers next year. We're using the numbers of
31 juveniles that we catch in the survey to predict how
32 many will come back the following year. And if you do
33 have the packet in front of you, you can see that from
34 2016 through 2019 we've been seeing increasing juvenile
35 pink salmon abundance in the Northern Bering Sea.

36
37 And if you flip to the next slide, so
38 this one's titled pink salmon outlook. Again, what I'm
39 showing is that when we see a lot of pink salmon,
40 juvenile pink salmon in the survey we tend to see a lot
41 of pink salmon come back to rivers in the Northern
42 Bering Sea. So we can't -- we don't have a way to
43 figure out which ones will come back to the Yukon River
44 or which will go back to Norton Sound so this is just
45 -- it's more of an -- it gives us an idea of what we
46 can expect. So we suspect that the increase in
47 juvenile pink salmon abundance is likely -- has
48 something to do with the warming that we've seen in the
49 Northern Bering Sea in the last few years, so we expect
50

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1 that if we continue to see more warming in the Bering
2 Sea we might see more juvenile pink salmon, and, in
3 turn, more adult pink salmon.
4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So what you're saying
6 there is it's basically a warming effect that's making
7 it ripe for pink salmon.
8

9 MS. GARCIA: That's what we think.
10 Just because we've seen these increases in the last
11 three years and these last three years in the Northern
12 Bering Sea have been especially warm. So something's
13 happening -- it might not be in the ocean, it might be
14 in the rivers, we don't know where it's happening but
15 it appears that those conditions are better for pink
16 salmon.
17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So well maybe
19 that means it's -- maybe that means there's no problems
20 in the river system but the favorable conditions are
21 out in the ocean because that's where they're rearing.
22 How does this affect these other salmon species, the
23 way these pinks have been, do you have any indication
24 on how that affects the other ones?
25

26 MS. GARCIA: Sure. So there's been
27 quite a bit of research that shows that pink salmon
28 tend to comp -- might compete with other species. We
29 would expect to see the competition happen mostly
30 between sockeye salmon and chum salmon because those
31 three species tend to eat the same thing. You know,
32 chinook and coho, they're mostly eating fish and squid
33 so they're more similar in their diets. Pink and chum
34 and sockeye salmon they're mostly eating zooplankton,
35 like tiny little animals, and a little bit of fish, so
36 they're more similar in what they eat than chinook and
37 coho. it's a little bit hard to gauge what that
38 competition is like just because we don't really have
39 good estimates of how many pink salmon are in the ocean
40 and so they're -- yeah, there's evidence that they do,
41 and it's something that we just need to keep studying
42 for sure.
43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thanks. Is
45 there any indication that there's anything from the
46 Gulf affecting the Bering Sea side or is there nothing
47 out there yet?
48

49 MS. GARCIA: That's a great question.
50

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1 So from how we -- from what we know about how salmon
2 stocks in the Bering Sea migrate, chinook salmon from
3 Western Alaska tend to stay in the Bering Sea all
4 yearround. So chinook salmon, they're not really
5 affected by Gulf conditions because they're staying in
6 the Bering Sea for the entire year. We believe that
7 the other four species, so pinks, coho, chum and
8 sockeye, they actually overwinter in the Gulf of
9 Alaska, so they leave the Bering Sea, they spend their
10 winters in the Gulf of Alaska. So we do have to think
11 about conditions in the Gulf of Alaska when we try to
12 think about these other species because we know that
13 they are probably spending some of their life cycle in
14 the Gulf of Alaska. I will say that the studies that
15 we have, that this knowledge of them going to the Gulf
16 of Alaska, it's pretty limited, it's based on high seas
17 tagging data and when we have genetic samples
18 available, that's where we're trying -- we're trying
19 to piece together where these salmons are in space and
20 in time and it's based on few data. So while we think
21 we know what they're doing, that's another area where
22 we would -- where more research would be beneficial.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So a question.
25 Hatchery. If there was hatchery fish in these
26 migrations into the Gulf from the Bering Sea, wouldn't
27 that offer some kind of scientific answers?

28
29 MS. GARCIA: Sure. So I really wish
30 that I could show you guys a map. Based on what we
31 know about -- well, I'll first start out with the
32 hatcheries that are distributed in the North Pacific,
33 they're mostly in Japan. There's a few in the
34 Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia, and then the rest of
35 them are in the Pacific Northwest, in British Columbia
36 and then, of course, Southeast Alaska and Prince
37 William Sound. We don't really have hatcheries in the
38 Bering Sea. The only one that we have is a hatchery in
39 Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory that produces chinook
40 salmon and that -- they produce very few. Another
41 thing that we -- so I don't expect there to be a lot of
42 overlap during the juvenile stage, so that's the stage
43 that we study in the Northern Bering Sea. Different
44 species will overlap with hatchery fish but they also
45 overlap with wild fish. So, for example, while Japan
46 and Russia produce hatchery chum and pink salmon, they
47 also produce -- there's also lots of wild chum and pink
48 salmon and so it's -- sometimes it's pretty difficult
49 to figure out if there are hatchery effects or if there
50

0133

1 are wild salmon effects and we also have to think about
2 where these fish overlap, at what stage in their life
3 they're overlapping. And so -- and I guess one more
4 thing I would say is based on what I just showed with
5 the juvenile chinook salmon which is where we can use
6 the number of juveniles to predict the number of
7 adults, what that is telling us, is that the strength
8 of the run is determined in that first summer in the
9 ocean. So that means that whatever happens to these
10 fish afterwards is not really determining the number of
11 fish that's going to come back. Now, while it doesn't
12 affect the numbers that doesn't mean that when they're
13 out in the ocean if they are overlapping with hatchery
14 fish or with wild fish there may be -- affect things
15 like their size at maturity or their age at maturity,
16 but we don't have evidence that it's -- the evidence
17 that we have based on our Western Bering Sea stocks is
18 that the number of fish coming back is determined in
19 those first three months at sea.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right, okay, thank
22 you.

23
24 MS. GARCIA: Sure.

25
26 MR. OYOUMICK: Hey, Louis, this is
27 Leland.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Leland.

30
31 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, I was wondering
32 when you folks are doing your trawl surveys out in the
33 Bering Sea, do you also take water samples and see
34 what's in the water.

35
36 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, that's a great
37 question. At the start -- before we do any trawl
38 surveys -- so every -- when we do the survey we
39 typically sample about 45 stations that are between
40 Nunivak Island and the Bering Strait and at each of
41 those stations we take water and salinity measurements
42 but we also take water samples and from those water
43 samples we try to measure things like how much -- how
44 much microscopic plants are in the water and that could
45 tell us how much food would be available for the tiny
46 animals which would then be food for the small fish and
47 so on. And we also measure things like nutrients in
48 the water. So that's the water side. Then we also do
49 those many plankton which also tell us, you know, how
50

0134

1 many baby crabs are in the water and that just gives us
2 an idea of how productive our stations are where we
3 sample.

4
5 MR. OYOUNICK: Thank you.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, thanks. And
8 you're talking about, you're looking for plankton
9 blooms, what he asked you about, right?

10
11 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, not really looking
12 for plankton blooms, we're just looking for plankton
13 abundance because if we find areas that are really low
14 in plankton abundance that probably tells us that we're
15 not going to see a lot of small fish in that area
16 because there's not a lot of plankton to support those
17 fish.

18
19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, and.....

20
21 MS. GARCIA: And on the other side of
22 that if we -- uh-huh.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, and I just recall
25 you're doing this in September so the plankton
26 basically in the springtime.

27
28 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, exactly.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Moot subject.

31
32 MS. GARCIA: So I'm going to move on to
33 Slide 12, so this one is juvenile chum salmon stock
34 composition. So we're starting some new research on
35 chum salmon and hopefully you guys can see this figure,
36 if you can't the takeaway is that we do these surveys,
37 we catch juvenile chum, luckily with genetics we have
38 the ability to differentiate stocks from the Yukon,
39 stocks from Kotzebue, Coastal Western Alaska, and what
40 we're trying to do is we're trying to develop a model
41 like we have for chinook salmon that lets us forecast
42 into the future. We want to do the same thing for chum
43 salmon. And because we can tell apart Kotzebue and
44 Yukon River fall chum salmon, these are the two stocks
45 that we're looking into potentially creating a forecast
46 for. And what this figure shows, if you can see it, is
47 that as you would expect most of the fish -- most of
48 the juvenile chum salmon from Kotzebue, we find them
49 north of St. Lawrence Island, which makes sense because
50

0135

1 that's pretty close to Kotzebue Sound where these fish
2 would be originating from.

3

4 Did someone have a question.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 MS. GARCIA: Nope, okay. If you flip
9 to the next slide, that's the juvenile fall chum
10 salmon, this is the same thing that I was showing with
11 the juvenile chinook and the juvenile pink. We've
12 estimated how many -- this is fall chum salmon so it's
13 the chum salmon from the Yukon River. I'm just showing
14 what their abundance has been in the Northern Bering
15 Sea for the last -- since 2003. If you have the figure
16 in front of you, that black line is just showing the
17 average across the entire time series. So there's
18 years that are below average, there's some years that
19 are above average.

20

21 One of the things that I wanted to
22 point out is that if you do have the figure, if you see
23 2017, that year we did not see a lot of chum salmon,
24 juvenile chum salmon in our survey. And the chum
25 salmon that we caught in 2017, they would be coming
26 back to their rivers as four year olds in 2020 and what
27 we heard from a lot of managers and fishermen from
28 Kuskokwim, from Yukon River, from Norton Sound, was
29 that chum salmon runs were low in 2020 and that the age
30 four chum did not show up in the numbers that they were
31 expected to show up in. And we kind of saw that in the
32 survey, we saw that in 2017 we didn't see that many
33 chum salmon and so that might have provided us some
34 information of what to expect for these 2020 runs.

35

36 The good news is that if you have the
37 figure in front of you is that the chums that we -- the
38 juvenile chum catches in the survey in 2018 and
39 especially 2019 were well above average, so I'm hoping
40 that this means that the chum salmon runs will be a
41 little bit better next year, fingers crossed.

42

43 (Teleconference interference -
44 participants not muted)

45

46 MS. GARCIA: The next slide just shows
47 the juvenile fall chum salmon to adult relationship.
48 So this, again, just shows us that typically the more
49 juvenile chum that we see in the ocean in our survey,

50

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1 we tend to see more adults coming back from those
2 juvenile chums. So this just, again, shows us that
3 those first three months in the ocean are really
4 important for determining how many fish will come back
5 a few years later.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So just a question,
8 Diana [sic], about the chart with the circles and the
9 pie shape.

10
11 MS. GARCIA: Chart with the circles,
12 yes.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: The stock composition.
15 So stock composition is kind of -- it seems like what
16 you're showing there, it has to do with where they're
17 -- like the rivers of origin, they're close to the
18 rivers of origin, does that come up in your -- go
19 ahead. You can tell.....

20
21 MS. GARCIA: Yep.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN:Kotzebue from
24 Yukon but you can't tell Norton Sound as much from the
25 Yukon.....

26
27 MS. GARCIA: Exactly.

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN:because of the
30 relationship and the area.

31
32 MS. GARCIA: Exactly. So Norton Sound
33 stocks and the summer chum salmon stocks in the Yukon
34 River, they're contained in that Coastal Western
35 Alaska, that grey part of the pie. So you can see that
36 -- and also Kuskokwim. So if you look at the pie
37 towards the bottom of the figure, the grey component is
38 over 50 percent of the pie, so we think that those are
39 all Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay origin chum salmon, and then
40 as you move to the pie in the middle now we're starting
41 to see those summer chum salmon and -- because we're
42 getting pretty close to the Yukon River and we tend to
43 see a little bit less in the farther north, those would
44 probably be some Yukon stocks but also probably mostly
45 Norton Sound. It is interesting that while Kotzebue,
46 it makes up the highest proportion in the farther
47 north, close to Kotzebue, we still do see some Kotzebue
48 fish in the farther south. So that may just be -- it
49 may be an effect of timing if the -- the fish from the
50

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1 southern are from a different survey. So if they're
2 being caught a little bit later that just may mean
3 those Kotzebue fish were starting to migrate south but
4 most of the Kotzebue fish are near Kotzebue and
5 Kotzebue fish are also found in the Chukchi Sea, so
6 farther north. So it's likely that Kotzebue fish are,
7 you know, just outside Kotzebue Sound in that, you
8 know, Bering Strait area and then in the lower Chukchi
9 Sea.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Cool. Interesting.
12 Thank you.

13

14 MS. GARCIA: Sure. And then I think
15 I'm going to -- there's a few more slides on diet, I
16 kind of covered them a little bit. If someone has
17 questions about them I'm happy to answer them.

18

19 The only other thing I wanted to add
20 just from some of the conversations that I heard
21 earlier in today's discussion, somebody had a question
22 about pod and collock -- cod and pollock.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That was good.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 MS. GARCIA: And I did just want to say
29 that in our surveys in these last few years we have
30 been catching both of those species farther north than
31 we typically have in the past. And what we see is that
32 in years where it's pretty warm those fish are able to
33 move a little bit farther north and into the Northern
34 Bering Sea. Another interesting thing that we saw,
35 2019 was the warmest year in the Bering Sea since our
36 surveys started, and typically in our survey we only
37 catch maybe 200 sockeye salmon. In 2019 we caught over
38 a thousand, we had so many sockeye salmon in our survey
39 in 2019 we just -- we didn't -- we couldn't believe it.
40 And we don't do genetics on these sockeye salmon but we
41 suspect that these were fish from Bristol Bay that were
42 moving north in these warmer waters.

43

44 And then like I mentioned earlier, we
45 are starting our genetic analysis on the juvenile
46 chinook is showing us that 2019 had much higher
47 proportions than we typically see of Kuskokwim and
48 Bristol Bay fish. So we are starting to see, you know,
49 some changes in the species that we catch with these

50

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1 warming temperatures.

2

3 With that, I think I'll stop talking
4 and let you guys ask some questions. This is the first
5 time I've presented to the Seward Peninsula RAC and if
6 there's things that you -- some research topics that
7 you guys would like to see more of or less of, I'd be
8 happy to come back and present on that.

9

10 So thank you for your time and for
11 having me here today.

12

13 MR. OYOUMICK: Hey, Louis, this is
14 Leland.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Leland.

17

18 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, I was wondering in
19 your trawl surveys, did you ever catch any kind of
20 funny looking fish with funny growth or any kind of
21 weird stuff on them?

22

23 MS. GARCIA: You know not anything
24 funny looking. You know we do catch salmon that have
25 lamprey wounds and whenever we catch these salmon with
26 those wounds we always make a note, you know, at some
27 point had a lamprey on it. If we do see anything weird
28 we'll make a note of it just so that we can keep track
29 of things like that. But I've been on the survey since
30 2015 and off the top of my head I can't remember any --
31 if you're talking about things like deformities or
32 something like that I can't really remember, nothing
33 really pops out in my head.

34

35 MR. OYOUMICK: Okay, thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Leland.
38 Are there any other Council members with questions,
39 comments or concerns.

40

41 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig
42 Mission.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Elmer.

45

46 MR. SEETOT: The question is does more
47 sea ice result in replenishing the food for the
48 plankton, like algae under the ice where these small
49 creatures that fish, that you mentioned, eat, you know,

50

0139

1 eating plankton, does sea ice result in more food for
2 the plankton.

3

4

Thank you.

5

6

7 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, that's a great
8 question. My understanding of sea ice and plankton
9 dynamics is that the spring blooms are pretty dependent
10 on the sea ice formation. Unfortunately I'm not an
11 expert on sea ice or plankton, so I don't want to speak
12 too much about it in case I get it all wrong. But I'd
13 be happy to look up some information from people that
14 know more about that than I do and maybe send it to
15 Karen who can pass it along to you.

15

16

MR. SEETOT: Thank you.

17

18

19

CHAIRMAN GREEN: And it's not Diana,
it's Sabrina, I called you Diana once or twice.

20

21

MS. GARCIA: Yeah.

22

23

(Laughter)

24

25

26

27

28

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so I wanted to
get back on that early marine ecology of the diets from
'03 to '17. You didn't have anything there for '18 and
then you talked about '19.

29

30

MS. GARCIA: Uh-huh.

31

32

CHAIRMAN GREEN: So.....

33

34

MS. GARCIA: Yeah, so -- go ahead.

35

36

37

38

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I was just going to
say these juveniles, how old are these juveniles in
this?

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MS. GARCIA: So in the figure that
you're referencing, that early marine ecology, that's
just for juvenile chinook salmon and so those are the
two year old fish that we catch in the survey, so they
spent one year in the gravel, one year in the river,
and about three months in the ocean so they're mostly
eating baby crabs, small squid and then a lot of fish.
And the only thing I was trying to show from that
figure in that presentation was that juvenile chinook
salmon, they mostly eat the same thing regardless of

0140

1 whether the water is warm or if it's colder. The only
2 difference is they eat different fish species so in
3 warmer waters they're eating more sandlands and more
4 larval crabs, and in colder waters, when the water's
5 colder they eat more capelin. And that makes sense.
6 Juvenile chinook salmon, they're generalists. That
7 means that they just eat whatever's around. And we
8 know that capelin are more abundant in the Bering Sea
9 when the water is a little bit colder so it does make
10 sense that they're eating more capelin when it's cold
11 because there's more capelin around. All juvenile
12 salmon species are generalists. None of them are
13 focusing on one prey item, which is a good thing, that
14 means that they can shift around and eat whatever's
15 available and easy to catch.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
18 That's interesting information, thanks. Go ahead and
19 go where you're at, I don't know if any Council members
20 have any questions or comments. Anybody.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I guess what I found
25 interesting is they're already eating crab.

26
27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, somebody
31 else, who was that.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Maybe somebody opened
36 their mic by accident.

37
38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, somebody
39 doesn't have their phone on mute.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, we got somebody
42 that needs to mute their phone. Okay, is that the end
43 of your presentation or you had a little bit more,
44 didn't you -- no.

45
46 MS. GARCIA: I -- if the Council's
47 interested I could walk through, I think there were two
48 more slides left.

49
50

0141

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes.

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10 asking any further questions so if you want to walk
11 through those last two slides that'd be great.

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes.

MS. GARCIA: And they were more focused on the early marine ecology of juvenile chinook salmon, and I'd be happy to walk through those if you're all interested, or you can just ask questions from the presentation, whatever you prefer.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I didn't hear anybody asking any further questions so if you want to walk through those last two slides that'd be great.

Thanks.

MS. GARCIA: Sure. So the next slide was juvenile chinook salmon stomach fullness, 2003 to 2017. And so what this is showing, if you have it in front of you, on the bottom of that figure is the temperature of the water, so it goes from about 7.5 degrees celsius to about 10.5 degrees celsius. And what's on the left side of the figure is how full the stomach was. So when we cut open these stomachs sometimes they're empty, sometimes they're half full of food, sometimes they're really full of food and what we've seen is that as the water gets warmer the amount of food that juvenile chinook salmon in their stomachs is less. So they have less food in their stomachs when the water is warmer.

Which would be cause for concern but if you flip to the next slide, it's titled juvenile chinook salmon energetics. Luckily I was able to bug one of my coworkers to get the analysis up to 2019. And what this shows is that as the temperature increases, the energetic condition increases. And the energetic condition just tells how much energy these juvenile chinook salmon have stored in their bodies. So think of the difference, if you see like a really skinny salmon versus a nice thick healthy salmon, that's what the energy -- energetic condition is measuring.

(Teleconference interference - participants not muted)

MS. GARCIA: So as the temperature increases they're able to -- they have higher energy density which tells us that they're able to eat a lot of food and that food is helping them to grow which

0142

1 they're trying to do really fast at this stage but
2 they're also able to store energy for the upcoming
3 winter.

4

5 So what we saw is that in 2019, if you
6 have the figure in front of you, I put a little arrow
7 at 2019, but the water temperature was about 11.5
8 degrees, and what we saw was that the energy condition
9 of the fish, of the juvenile chinook decreased. So
10 that means that at some point the water gets too warm
11 where these fish are not able to eat enough food to
12 both grow really fast and to save enough energy in
13 their bodies to survive their first winter, which is
14 also a time that's pretty critical in their lifetime.

15

16 And so the next slide is just a
17 summary, I know I've covered a lot of information, but
18 if you forget everything I said, it's.....

19

20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Excuse me one minute.
21 Hello, Deahl, or who is on the phone that doesn't have
22 their phone muted, it's really difficult to hear.

23

24 Hello.

25

26 Hello.

27

28 You guys, does that sound like Deahl,
29 Deahl, are you on the phone -- Doug Katchatag, are you
30 on the phone.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello, Doug.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, maybe he's not
39 on the phone anymore because it sounded -- I'm very
40 Sabrina, thank you for your patience with that and if
41 you could continue that'd be great.

42

43 MS. GARCIA: Sure. Should I repeat the
44 last slide that I did or did everybody catch that.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Could you do it again,
47 it was pretty hard to hear you.

48

49 MS. GARCIA: Sure. Sure. So that

50

0143

1 slide, the juvenile chinook salmon energetic condition,
2 what that means is just kind of a measure of how
3 healthy the fish is. So I'm sure when you've all been
4 out fishing you've seen salmon that are pretty skinny
5 looking and then other salmon that look nice and thick
6 and healthy. That's what the energetic condition is,
7 that's what we're measuring, is how healthy these fish
8 are. And what we see with temperature, so on the
9 figure on that slide, I'm just showing the temperature
10 on the bottom and a measure of that energetic condition
11 on the left. So as you increase the energetic
12 condition, just think of that as a nice healthy fatter
13 fish, and as you increase that, maybe a smaller,
14 skinnier fish.

15
16 And what we're seeing is that as the
17 water increases in temperature, juvenile chinook are
18 able to increase -- they're still able to have higher
19 energetic conditions. So that means that at this time
20 in their life, these juvenile salmon are trying to eat
21 as much as they can to grow fast, but also to store
22 energy for the upcoming winter. And so what we see is
23 as the temperature increases they have high -- they can
24 have that higher energetic condition, but then what we
25 see is that at some point it gets too warm and that
26 energetic condition starts to decrease. And that's
27 what I've shown on the figure with that red arrow. And
28 that point, is, that's the data point from 2019 when
29 the water was really warm, it was above 11 degrees
30 celsius and we saw the energetic condition decrease.
31 So what that means is that up to some point they're
32 able to maintain higher energetic condition, but at
33 some point, likely around that 11 degrees it starts to
34 get too warm and they can't eat enough to both grow
35 fast and have enough energy stored in their body.

36
37 And so the last slide just shows a
38 summary of everything I've presented today. I know it's
39 been a lot.

40
41 For chinook salmon, what we're seeing
42 is that the abundance of juvenile chinook salmon has
43 declined in the Northern Bering Sea since 2017 and
44 we're expecting declining run sizes for Yukon River
45 chinook salmon through 2022.

46
47 And we've also seen that the warming
48 climate that is in the Northern Bering Sea is altering
49 the early marine ecology of these juvenile chinook
50

0144

1 salmon. So we're starting to see stocks from the
2 Southern Bering Sea start moving into the Northern
3 Bering Sea during warm years. We also see that these
4 juvenile chinook salmon have less food in their bodies
5 in warmer years. And we saw that their energy -- their
6 energy condition or how healthy they are it started to
7 decline with the really warm temperatures that we saw
8 in the Northern Bering Sea in 2019.

9
10 And then for chum salmon, we saw that
11 in 2018 and 2019 we had record high abundances for chum
12 salmon in the Northern Bering Sea survey. So like I
13 mentioned when we see more juvenile chum salmon, we
14 tend to see more adults come back to the river, so
15 we're hoping that these high abundances of juvenile
16 chum that we saw in 2018 and 2019, that those will turn
17 into improved run sizes over the next few years. And
18 we're still working on these models to look into
19 forecasting or predicting chum salmon returns to the
20 rivers but that model is still new, but we're working
21 on it and hope to develop that for the future.

22
23 And then finally for pink salmon we saw
24 that juvenile abundance has increased in the last three
25 years with these warmer years in the Bering Sea, so we
26 expect that if the Bering Sea continues to increase --
27 continues to warm, we might expect to see continued
28 increases in pink salmon abundance.

29
30 And then the next slide is just -- it
31 has my contact information. If you have questions that
32 I wasn't able to answer today, you can email me. My
33 colleague, Jim Murphy, he started this juvenile salmon
34 research 15 years ago. He has a wealth of knowledge
35 and would also be happy to answer questions. And then
36 I also put a link to a FaceBook group, this is run by
37 myself and another salmon biologist at the Alaska
38 Department of Fish and Game, and we post two to three
39 posts a week mostly about salmon biology in the Bering
40 Sea. And so that's a place, if you want to go and look
41 at some of this research and read some of our posts and
42 there's also information on the Norton Sound coho
43 tagging study. That's a good place to check out.

44
45 So that's all I've got.

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, Sabrina,
48 thank you, very much. That's a lot of information all
49 right, but stuff I haven't heard before so it's
50

0145

1 interesting. I was always wondering about the diets and
2 then you're talking about warm water creating an issue
3 for diet for a juvenile salmon, king salmon, and that
4 could be a problem.

5

6 MS. GARCIA: Yeah.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So anybody on
9 the Council, anybody have any questions, comments or
10 concerns for Sabrina.

11

12 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Elmer.

15

16 MR. SEETOT: On the energetic condition
17 of the salmon, you mentioned on the chart, if they're
18 still in that water without moving, will they stay the
19 same weight or will they lose ener -- lose -- or will
20 they get lean and lose some of their fat reserves while
21 they're in a certain water temperature?

22

23 MS. GARCIA: That's a great question.
24 So what -- and I don't really know how to answer it
25 because the fish that we're measuring, we're kind of
26 using those fish to speak for all the fish, but we
27 don't get to see all the fish, we only get to see the
28 ones that we catch. And so I -- what we do is we try
29 to look at what their energy density is, or their
30 energetic condition and try to see are there years
31 where we're seeing less healthy fish and are there
32 years where we're seeing more healthy fish or average
33 healthy fish. I don't really know because I don't know
34 what the fish that we don't catch, I don't know what
35 they're doing so I can't really speak to what their
36 energetic condition is, but of the fish that we do
37 measure we just try to see -- or what it's telling us
38 is that if they're really skinny that might be telling
39 us that they're having a hard time finding food or they
40 might be needing to move around more to find food, but
41 in moving around more to find food they're using energy
42 to do that.

43

44 So we don't really know how energy
45 density is before the survey or after the survey, this
46 kind of just gives us a snapshot in time.

47

48 MR. SEETOT: Thank you.

49

50

0146

1 MR. OYOUMICK: Hey, Louis, this is
2 Leland.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Leland.

5
6 MR. OYOUMICK: When you folks do your
7 checks on your fish do you.....

8
9 (Line drop)

10
11 MS. GARCIA: Oh, I think I lost Leland.

12
13 (Pause)

14
15 MS. GARCIA: Hello.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 (Pause)

20
21 MS. VOORHEES: Hello, this is Hannah
22 Voorhees, from OSM, it sounds like Karen Deatherage has
23 dropped off as well and she's trying to get back on
24 right now. We may have lost the Chair as well and I'm
25 not sure how many others.

26
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen
28 Deatherage, is Louis on.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yes, I just got on.

31
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Me too. Okay, thank
33 you so much, Hannah.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Uh-oh, did Hannah get
38 dropped.

39
40 MS. VOORHEES: I'm here, thank you,
41 Karen.

42
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, thank goodness.

44
45 MR. OYOUMICK: Did we get disconnected
46 or something.

47
48 MS. GARCIA: I think so. This is
49 Sabrina, I just jumped back on the line.

50

0147

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, that was weird.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We all took a nap.

4

5 (Laughter)

6

7 MR. OYOUNICK: Okay. I was wondering
8 if they opened up the fish and checked their livers,
9 see if the livers were good, that's all.

10

11 MS. GARCIA: Sure. We usually don't
12 open up the fish so for something like the -- actually
13 for all the species we just freeze them whole and then
14 they get sent back to the lab in Juneau and that's when
15 they open them up and take their stomachs out. So we
16 don't actually do any of the processing or any of the
17 analysis on the boat. For things like measuring the
18 energetic condition that I was speaking about earlier,
19 for that analysis, you actually have to grind up the
20 whole fish, so we freeze them and then we don't touch
21 them in the lab and then they kind of get ground up
22 into this salmon paste and that's how we measure their
23 energetic condition. So I haven't looked at the livers
24 and I don't know that anybody else has.

25

26 MR. OYOUNICK: Okay, thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Are there any
29 other Council members with questions, comments or
30 concerns for Sabrina.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, having said that
35 it doesn't sound there are any other questions,
36 Sabrina. And I don't have any either. I really
37 appreciate your presentation, it was informative for
38 me.

39

40 MS. GARCIA: Thank you. And like I
41 said if you think of something afterwards, please feel
42 free to email me or you can message me on the FaceBook
43 group and I'll do my best to answer your questions.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
46 Sabrina. Thanks for your time.

47

48 MS. GARCIA: Thank you.

49

50

0148

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't know if
2 anybody needs a break but we have the next agency
3 report would be National Park Service.
4

5 MS. HUGHES: Hi, this is Letty with
6 Bering Land Bridge. Did you want to take a break or do
7 you just want me to continue forward.
8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think we can
10 continue, I was kind of being silly about it.
11

12 MS. HUGHES: Okay.
13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Everybody's in a place
15 where they needed to, I'm sure they could, but, go
16 ahead, Letty.
17

18 MS. HUGHES: Okay. So for the record
19 I'm Letty Hughes, Wildlife Biologist for Bering Land
20 Bridge National Preserve based in Nome.
21

22 I'll keep this short and sweet. Next
23 time around I will make sure to have a presentation,
24 hopefully we'll be in person, but either way I will
25 hopefully have a little bit more to bring to the table.
26

27 So you heard about this -- some of our
28 upcoming projects. I've mentioned this quite a few
29 times with the Bering Land Bridge fish assemblage and
30 inventory monitoring project that is scheduled to take
31 place starting this summer and that's a project with
32 Fish and Game and Bering Land Bridge. And that was
33 through one of the OSM funding opportunities. So that
34 will not only be documenting fish assemblages but with
35 an emphasis on Pacific salmon, and you've heard a lot
36 about that on salmon today. We will also evaluate
37 genetic variation within those salmon species for
38 potential mixed stock analysis. And of those salmon
39 species identified and sampled we will also collect
40 sex, age and length on those. We won't have any
41 genetics stuff to provide you at the next RAC meeting
42 but hopefully we will be able to talk a little bit
43 about the project and what we have been able to
44 accomplish, at least for the first year, it's a three
45 year project. So we'll be, hopefully, having updates
46 this fall and then again next fall as this gets going.
47

48 The good thing about this project is we
49 can build on it for future work. So potential with
50

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1 temperatures in the water, keeping track of what's
2 going on there with these drainages and also for maybe
3 a future abundance adaptivity assessment through the
4 Park Service when we talk about changes in the
5 environment and what that's doing to species and fish
6 adaptivity.

7

8 The next project, and the State
9 mentioned it earlier today is with the Seward Peninsula
10 muskox, Bering Land Bridge, and -- and Park Service
11 play a big part in that. And so -- and like Bill said
12 we should hopefully have information to provide you at
13 the next RAC meeting, not only on the population
14 abundance but also in terms of distribution of animals
15 and the composition of like sex, and age class. So
16 that will be good. Because it's been since 2017 since
17 we've been able to get our last population estimate.

18

19 The next project we have that's
20 approaching very quickly is Park Service will be
21 conducting a Seward Peninsula brown bear survey. The
22 last one was conducted in 2015. And so this will be
23 just redoing the same survey area so we're comparing
24 apples to apples here, and that's to take place in mid-
25 May. And so we'll at least be able to have maybe a
26 little bit of an update to give by the fall but we'll
27 just have to see how the flying and the survey work
28 goes on that. We'll provide you at least a small
29 update. And then to compare kind of to see what's been
30 going on the last five, six years from the last survey.

31

32 That is all I have from the wildlife
33 side to present and to discuss.

34

35 Are there any questions.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, Letty, this is
38 Louis. You said the brown bear survey, the last time
39 was in -- was it in 2015?

40

41 MS. HUGHES: Correct.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are there any other
44 Council members who have any comments, questions or
45 concerns of Letty?

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 MS. HUGHES: Everything got pushed back

50

0150

1 a year for projects because of the pandemic and so
2 we're just kind of a year off of what was scheduled.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't hear any
5 questions from the Council members. Is there anybody
6 in the public that might have a comment or a question
7 on here.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Doesn't sound like
12 anybody. Is there any other information you're going
13 to report on.

14

15 MS. HUGHES: And, yeah, I just
16 remembered now. So for report -- right now what I have
17 for reported muskox harvest on, at least for the Park
18 Service, the Federal Park Service muskox harvest, so we
19 have another couple days of the open season. It ends
20 March 15th. And so far I have only received one report
21 of Park Service -- a muskox being harvested on a Park
22 Service permit. So if anyone hears of anything or
23 Federal Subsistence Board just send that hunter our
24 way, the State's way and we'll talk and get it
25 accounted for.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You think the weather
28 -- when does the bulk of the hunt take place, is it
29 like this stormy period where we've been in with the
30 end of February and into the first part of March, what
31 do you think?

32

33 MS. HUGHES: You know folks, you know,
34 you know with hunters, folks do like to go out when
35 there's a little bit longer daylight and when
36 temperatures allow but I know folks who have been
37 hunting on Federal permits for muskox and these have
38 been particularly through the BLM permits, they have
39 been hunting muskox for a couple weeks now so they've
40 been going out in all sorts of temperature and weather
41 trying to get their Federal muskox.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So do you think it's
44 an availability issue?

45

46 MS. HUGHES: No. Those muskox, you
47 know, well, one is, you know, you have to travel quite
48 a bit further to get to Federal lands and we talked
49 about, you know, going up to Bering Land Bridge, folks

50

0151

1 who have a permit for that, you know, that's quite the
2 haul so even for someone in Shishmaref who has a
3 Federal muskox permit, you know, they still have to
4 take all that into consideration so depending on how
5 big that Federal area is, you know, muskox are going to
6 either be there or they're not.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, that was my past
9 problem, years ago, they weren't there.

10

11 MS. HUGHES: Yeah. And I have heard
12 from some hunters who've been going out looking for
13 muskox with their BLM Federal permit, how, you know,
14 they were like them group of muskox were a mile from
15 the Federal boundary so those animals were on State
16 land so they just went all that way so that -- that's
17 just what happens.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anything to do with
20 predation with the wolves during the winter?

21

22 MS. HUGHES: I have not heard anything
23 on that. Nothing that I can, you know, say with any
24 certainty.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
27 Council, any members have any questions.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't know if
32 Lloyd's on.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nothing from up north.
37 Okay, have you got anything else there, Letty.

38

39 MS. HUGHES: I do not. I don't know if
40 my other Park Service counterparts do so I'll let them
41 speak up but I have nothing further.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, thank you
44 very much for your time, Letty.

45

46 MS. HUGHES: Thanks.

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So that brings us up
49 to the next person.

50

0152

1 MR. ADKISSON: Louis, this is Ken.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hi.

4

5 MR. ADKISSON: I believe that our
6 Regional Office Staff had a report for you folks on the
7 individual C&T status that you remember we talked about
8 at the last meeting.

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Karen.

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 This is Karen Deatherage. And you are exactly right,
16 Ken, and this is one of the issues that the Council
17 approved to add to the agenda so next up would be
18 Victoria Florey from the Regional Office talking about
19 the individual C&T use permit.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 MS. FLOREY: Hello, this is Victoria.
24 Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Council members. For the
25 record my name is Victoria Florey and I am a
26 Subsistence Program Analyst with the National Park
27 Service's Regional Subsistence Team.

28

29 Today I am here to report on recent
30 decisions made by the Federal Subsistence Board on the
31 process used to make customary and traditional use
32 determinations for individuals.

33

34 And before I start talking about these
35 recent decisions, I just wanted to remind everybody
36 that individual C&Ts are not a new thing but you might
37 not be familiar with them because they're so rare.
38 Less than 10 people have applied for them in the last
39 40 years.

40

41 So individual C&Ts, and these recent
42 Board decisions will not in any way impact your ability
43 to fish, hunt, trap or gather resources. These changes
44 to the individual C&T make the whole process easier and
45 faster for the applicant. It became more streamlined.
46 We didn't want Federally-qualified subsistence users
47 waiting for years to be eligible to go hunt and fish on
48 Park lands, so that's why the Board modified these
49 steps. We are simply now reporting to you what actions
50

0153

1 the Board took. This isn't something that you need to
2 vote on today.

3

4

5 So the Federal Subsistence Board
6 adopted a revised version of the individual C&T process
7 at their January meeting. I will explain the adopted
8 process to you here following a short introduction to
9 individual C&T. Again, no action on your end is
10 required, however, we would appreciate your feedback on
11 the process adopted by the Federal Subsistence Board if
12 you feel like you want to share anything.

12

13

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So you might recall that NPS Staff
offered a lengthy presentation on this issue at your
fall meeting. As a reminder, individual customary and
traditional use determinations are rare. And
eligibility to hunt and trap in National Parks and
National Monuments is a rather complex compared to
other Federal public lands. Almost all customary and
traditional use determinations are for communities and
areas, and not individuals. So last fall we asked all
10 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils and the seven
Park Subsistence Resource Commissions for feedback. We
incorporated the feedback into our proposed process and
this is what was adopted by the Federal Subsistence
Board at its January 2021 meeting.

The revised process includes two
critical recommendations made by the RACs and the SRCs.

First off, there was no delegation of
authority to NPS. The Federal Subsistence Board will
retain the final decisionmaking authority.

Second, the process now includes a
formal recommendation from both the affected RACs and
the affected SRC.

Perhaps the biggest change is that the
process is no longer tied to the lengthy regulatory
proposal cycle. Instead, the application window is
open continuously and once the RACs and SRCs have
weighed in, the Board will take action on the request
at its next public meeting. So this accomplishes an
important goal of being able to process applications in
a timely manner.

Many of the RACs and SRCs voted to
defer action until they had more time to study this

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1 issue. However, the Federal Subsistence Board already
2 took action to help improve the process, the Board
3 still welcomes any feedback that you might have for
4 further improvement, either now or at any point in the
5 future. Ultimately the National Park Service and the
6 Federal Subsistence Board just want this process to be
7 as streamlined and responsive as possible.

8

9 Thank you for your time, and I am happy
10 to answer any questions you have. And if you have any
11 feedback for the Board I am happy to deliver that as
12 well.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
17 Victoria. Any Council members with comments, questions
18 or concerns.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, it doesn't sound
23 like any and I don't have any myself at this point.
24 So, Victoria, thanks for your update.

25

26 MS. FLOREY: Okay, thank you, very
27 much.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I guess that
30 brings us to BLM. Who's going to speak up on this next
31 subject here.

32

33 MS. MILLION: Good afternoon, Mr.
34 Chair. This is Bonnie Million, I am the Field Manager
35 for the BLM's Anchorage Field Office.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go.

38

39 MS. MILLION: Yeah, how 'ya doing.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I got so much writing
44 on my page here I almost lost you.

45

46 MS. MILLION: Oh, I hear you, I hear
47 you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

50

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1 MS. MILLION: So I did want to give the
2 opportunity to let the Council know that we do have a
3 general update for our field office that's included in
4 your meeting materials, I believe on Page 21. It goes
5 over some of the projects that we've been working with
6 ADF&G on, including the muskox count, some aquatics
7 work that we've been doing on the Unalakleet, and some
8 Mountain char up in the Kigs, and some other permafrost
9 monitoring stations and some range monitoring that's
10 going on on the Seward Peninsula, specifically.

11

12 I do realize that the topic
13 specifically that's written into your agenda is dealing
14 with the Bering Sea Western Interior Resource
15 Management Plan, and I think my District Manager, Tom
16 Heinlein, was going to try and call in. Tom, were you
17 able to call in?

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MS. MILLION: No, maybe not. He was
22 having some.....

23

24 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

25

26 MS. MILLION: I'm sorry.

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry to
29 interrupt, Mr. Chair, may I speak?

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sure, go ahead.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. This is
34 Karen. Hi, Bonnie. Just so you know, I'm not sure if
35 you were on the call this morning, but the Council did
36 add the Anchorage Field Office report to the agenda,
37 they approved that this morning so you are on the
38 agenda, and the district office.

39

40 MS. MILLION: Oh, perfect.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay.

43

44 MS. MILLION: Okay, thanks. Sure, and
45 that really was the -- I wanted to keep it short as
46 well, I realize we are long into the afternoon and I
47 didn't want to take up too much time on the updates
48 specifically, especially since so many of our partners
49 have also mentioned them, ADF&G and the Park Service

50

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1 when it comes to the moose counts and the muskox counts
2 there on the Seward Peninsula.

3

4 We are hoping -- I know Bruce Seppi,
5 our Subsistence Biologist, is hoping to get up to Nome
6 to assist with the muskox count later -- a little bit
7 later this winter. So everybody triple-cross your
8 fingers and we hope we'll be able to assist with that.

9

10 So Tom Heinlein's not on the phone so I
11 will pick up the reins for the Bering Sea Western
12 Interior portion of the presentation. As this
13 Subsistence RAC might be aware, the Bureau of Land
14 Management, Anchorage Field Office, has been working on
15 a new resource management plan for about 13.5 million
16 acres in the Kuskokwim River Valley and the lower Yukon
17 -- or actually, middle stretches of the Yukon and the
18 Nulato Hills, and that planning area was called the
19 Bering Sea Western Interior Resource Management Plan.
20 The final environmental impact statement for that
21 resource management plan was released for a 30 day
22 public protest period at the beginning of December
23 2020. That period ended at the beginning of January
24 2021. The received protests were addressed and
25 resolved. And a record of decision for that Bering Sea
26 Western Interior Resource Management Plan was signed on
27 January 16th. So that plan, and that approved resource
28 management plan is in place as the record of decision
29 was signed and it is an approved plan. An item of
30 note; is that, that project was one of the projects
31 that was identified, as with any change in
32 Administration there are always reviews of decisions
33 which occurred within a certain amount of time, and
34 this project is one of those projects. And until we
35 hear differently, that plan is approved and in place.
36 And so I just wanted to let this Subsistence RAC know.

37

38 I'm more than happy to field any
39 questions that you might have.

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Council members, do
42 you have any comments, questions, or concerns for
43 Bonnie.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Everybody's on mute
48 Bonnie.

49

50

0157

1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't have any at
4 this time myself. You know that plan, the plan, where
5 is it at again?

6

7 MS. MILLION: So it is available on the
8 BLM Alaska homepage. I can get a direct link to Karen
9 and she can share that direct link with the Council if
10 that would be helpful.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think so. That
13 would be great.

14

15 MS. MILLION: Absolutely.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Let me find my
18 agenda here. Okay, so I don't hear any questions from
19 any of the Council members.

20

21 MR. SPARKS: Mr. Chair, this is Tom
22 Sparks.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hey, there you go. I
25 was going to ask where's Tom, there you go. Go ahead,
26 Tom.

27

28 MR. SPARKS: I've been really
29 appreciating the meeting today and listening in, thanks
30 for that opportunity. I just want to give a hat's off
31 to Bonnie, not only for the completion of the plan but
32 also it's in our little write-up there about the D1
33 revocations.

34

35 What that means on a practical level is
36 some of the Veterans who qualify will be able to pick
37 more Federal land and as many of you know I worked on
38 the first Veterans Allotment Program, and this is kind
39 of Round 2. It's much different. There's no use and
40 occupancy. Basically you just pick Federal land that's
41 available, and it is first come first serve.

42

43 So the only other thing I wanted to add
44 is that we have been giving information about the
45 number of special recreation permits, the big game
46 guides, and there's one we're currently working on,
47 northeast of Koyuk, in the Inglutalik, there's an
48 individual that's approached us for hunting some bears,
49 name is James Smith. So just wanted to add that to our

50

0158

1 presentation that got added to your packet.

2

3 And with that, Mr. Chair, I'll leave it
4 there, but I welcome the day when we can be together in
5 person and thank you very much.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That wasn't John Smith
8 Pocahontas, was it, or was it James?

9

10 MR. SPARKS: It was James.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 MR. SPARKS: Thank you, sir.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I had to throw a
17 little humor at the end of the day.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, my goodness.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, Louis, may I --
24 Louis, listen to me -- Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: May I make an
29 additional comment regarding the BLM.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You have the floor.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 I would like to encourage all of the Council members to
35 read through what I consider a most excellent report
36 that they have given from the Anchorage Field Office in
37 your meeting materials. It's in the meeting book. And
38 it's a really good snapshot of all the activities that
39 are going on. And so I would encourage you all to read
40 that after the meeting. And I want to thank the BLM
41 for putting together such a fantastic report.

42

43 Thank you, very much, Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, thank you,
46 Karen, for pointing that out. I was reading some of
47 that. So do we have anything else from BLM at this
48 time?

49

50

0159

1 MS. MILLION: No, I believe that covers
2 it. Thank you, so much, Mr. Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, Bonnie,
5 thanks. And, Tom, thanks for piping in there.

6
7 MR. SPARKS: Appreciate that, Mr.
8 Chair, you take care.

9
10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You too, thank you.
11 That brings us to -- oh, we already did the fisheries
12 stuff with Fish and Game because we had Jim on early,
13 we kind of moved that around, I think. Do we have.....

14
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, you are
16 correct.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. So that brings
19 us to OSM, who is.....

20
21 MR. VICKERS: Yes, hello, Mr. Chair,
22 this is Brent Vickers from OSM.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You got the floor.

25
26 MR. VICKERS: First of all -- all
27 right, well, I got the phone, thank you.

28
29 First of all we want to thank you all
30 and all the Council members for your work. It's been
31 very difficult for all of us dealing with the Covid19
32 environment.

33
34 We're holding all 10 winter 2021
35 Regional Advisory Council meetings via teleconference.
36 This decision was made with the utmost consideration
37 and concern for the health and safety of Council
38 members, families, rural communities, the public and
39 Staff, who are all part of the Council meetings. The
40 health and safety of everyone is our highest priority.
41 The Center for Disease Control and Prevention
42 guidelines suggest that people avoid travel and refrain
43 from meeting in person to minimize risk and help
44 prevent the spread of Covid19.

45
46 The Regional Advisory Councils are the
47 foundation of Alaska's Federal Subsistence Management
48 Program. We recognize that holding face to face
49 Council meetings in rural communities across Alaska is
50

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1 preferable for engaging the public most effectively.
2 The Federal Subsistence Management Program is fully
3 committed to resuming in-person Council meetings across
4 Alaska as soon as it is possible to do so safely.

5

6 Since your last Council meeting, the
7 following Staffing changes have occurred.

8

9 Doctor Brent Vickers, who is me,
10 started at OSM as OSM Anthropology Chief in December.

11

12 Greg Risdahl moved over to U.S. Forest
13 Service in January to become their Subsistence Program
14 Leader, and will be the Forest Service representative
15 at the InterAgency Staff Committee.

16

17 We are grateful to have experienced
18 people on the ISC that will remain with the Program as
19 advisors to their Board member.

20

21 George Pappas is currently the acting
22 OSM Fisheries Division Chief, in addition to his normal
23 job as liaison to the State Wildlife and Fisheries
24 Programs.

25

26 Katya Wessels, Council Coordinator, is
27 currently acting as OSM Policy Coordinator. Katya was
28 just selected as Council Coordination Division Chief
29 and will be starting very soon in mid-March.

30

31 Steve Fadden came to us from the U.S.
32 Fish and Wildlife Refuges to be the acting OSM Wildlife
33 Division Chief.

34

35 Sabrina Schmidt has served as one of
36 the clerks at OSM, she has taken a promotion with the
37 military in January.

38

39 Annual Council appointment process is
40 very complex and takes about 15 months to complete. It
41 begins in September of each year when the Federal
42 Subsistence Board announces the application period for
43 the Council membership. During a six month application
44 period the Program conducts extensive statewide
45 recruitment and effort. The Program distributes
46 approximately 2,000 applications throughout Alaska via
47 mail and email to individuals, agencies and
48 organizations. Additionally the Program conducts
49 wide-ranging outreach through a variety of media

50

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1 outlets including, but not limited to newspaper, radio,
2 TV, internet, FaceBook and public conferences. Last
3 year's effort resulted in 74 applications to fill 62
4 [sic] vacated or expiring seats. On January the 15th,
5 2021, OSM received copies of the Regional Advisory
6 Council appointment letters signed by the former
7 Secretary of Interior. At that time we received full
8 appointments only for four Councils. Kodiak/Aleutians,
9 Bristol Bay, Northwest Arctic and Seward Peninsula, and
10 partial appointments for three Councils, Eastern
11 Interior, North Slope and Southcentral. Three
12 Councils, Western Interior, Yukon Kuskokwim Delta
13 Council and Southeast Alaska did not receive any
14 appointments in January 2021. I'm glad to announce
15 that as of Monday, March 8th, we received copies of an
16 additional 27 appointment letters with full seats of
17 appointments on Western Interior, YK Delta, Southeast
18 Alaska, Eastern Interior, North Slope and Southcentral.
19 At this time there are only eight vacant seats on all
20 Councils.

21

22 The application period for this year's
23 2021 Regional Advisory Council appointments is open
24 until tomorrow, March 12th. The application deadline
25 was extended. By December 2nd of this year we're going
26 to have 35 open seats for appointment or reappointment,
27 and as of today we have very few applications to fill
28 these seats. We are encouraging Council members, whose
29 terms will expire in December 2021 to reapply. Your
30 Council Coordinator should have contacted already if
31 your membership expires this coming December. We also
32 encourage other rural Alaskans to apply for Council
33 membership. Serving on a Regional Advisory Councils is
34 the best way to proactively participate in the Federal
35 Subsistence Management regulatory process and help to
36 sustain your traditional way of life. Your
37 participation on the Regional Advisory Councils allows
38 for better regulations to be developed that satisfy the
39 needs of the users in the region, and, at the same
40 time, assure the continued viability of fish and
41 wildlife populations. Please let your coordinator know
42 if you want to reapply or apply or would like to
43 nominate someone so they can get you to the application
44 form. Also please encourage knowledgeable users in
45 your communities to apply at all.

46

47 RealIDs for travel and Council
48 meetings.

49

50

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1 Over the past two years we have been
2 reminding Council members about the changed
3 requirements for IDs at airports. This has been
4 postponed until October 1st, 2021. Note that all
5 Council members will need to make sure they have the
6 required RealID for travel next fall. If you don't
7 have the correct ID, please make sure that you get it
8 before the fall 2021 Council meeting cycle.

9

10 Lawsuit from the State of Alaska.

11

12 On August 10th, 2020, the State of
13 Alaska filed a lawsuit against the Federal Subsistence
14 Board after it adopted emergency special action WSA19-
15 14. This allowed the village of Kake to engage in a
16 community harvest of two antlered moose and five male
17 Sitka black-tailed deer. Also lands in Units 13A and
18 13B to non-Federally-qualified moose and caribou
19 hunters. As part of the lawsuit the State asked the
20 court to issue two preliminary injunctions. One to
21 prevent the unit 13 closure from taking effect and
22 another vacating the Kake hunt and prohibiting the
23 Board from allowing any additional emergency hunts
24 related to the impacts of Covid19. On September the
25 18th the U.S. District Court denied the State's request
26 for a preliminary injunction on the Unit 13 closure.
27 The court found that, because the State has not
28 demonstrated either a likelihood of success or serious
29 questions on the merits of its claims, the court need
30 not consider the remaining elements of the preliminary
31 injunction analysis.

32

33 Two months later on November the 18th,
34 the Court also denied the State's motion for a
35 preliminary injunction on the Kake hunt after Judge
36 Gleason concluded that the State had not demonstrated a
37 likelihood of success on the merits, raising serious
38 questions on the merits of its claim, or demonstrated
39 any likelihood of irreparable harm.

40

41 While these rulings on preliminary
42 injunction are encouraging, they do not resolve the
43 litigation. Settlement negotiations between the
44 Department of Justice, the DOI Solicitor's Office, and
45 USDA Office of General Counsel, and the State are
46 ongoing. The parties have agreed to delay the court
47 proceedings while these discussions are underway.
48 Barring a settlement, the Solicitor's Office now
49 estimates that the briefings should be complete in

50

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1 summer 2021 and that the court will issue its decision
2 in late summer.

3

4 Based on legal guidance, Program Staff
5 does not comment on any active litigation directed
6 against the Federal Subsistence Board beyond what has
7 been set forth here.

8

9 I'd be happy to answer any questions.

10

11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that.
14 Council members, are there any questions.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, hearing none,
19 thank you for that.

20

21 MR. VICKERS: All right, great, then
22 I'm going to move on and I'm going to keep the mic in
23 my hand.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

26

27 MR. VICKERS: And I'm going to give you
28 -- update the Council on the Fisheries Resource
29 Monitoring Program and funding opportunity that closes
30 on March 15th. This is not an action item.

31

32 Is it okay for me to continue, I
33 thought I heard something.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: No, no, you're fine,
36 go ahead, you have the floor.

37

38 MR. VICKERS: Okay, great. Thank you.
39 We are seeking applications for projects that address
40 priority information needs you developed at your last
41 Council member and that gather information to manage
42 and conserve subsistence fisheries in Federal public
43 waters in Alaska. The Monitoring Program is also
44 directed at supporting meaningful involvement in
45 fisheries managed by Alaska Native and rural
46 organizations and promoting collaboration among
47 Federal, State, Alaska Native and local organizations.

48

49 For the 2022 funding cycle it is

50

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1 anticipated that there will be \$2.25 million available
2 for the first year of new projects. Anyone wanting to
3 apply can find information about the program on the
4 Federal Subsistence Management Program web page or by
5 visiting www.grants.gov.
6

7 After the funding opportunity window
8 closes, applications will be reviewed by the Technical
9 Review Committee. The results of that review will be
10 presented to you at your next meeting. This is not an
11 action item.
12

13 If there are any questions I would be
14 happy to address them now.
15

16 This concludes my presentation.
17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Council,
19 any questions, comments, concerns.
20

21 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, this is Ron Kirk,
22 Stebbins, sorry for joining in late.
23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, well, thank you
25 for joining.
26

27 MR. KIRK: Yeah, I just got back from
28 St. Michaels. I'm helping with bilingual class over
29 there so I have to travel to St. Michaels in the
30 morning and come in the afternoon. Was that -- excuse
31 me, who was that, was that about the counting towers?
32

33 MR. VICKERS: No, it's not -- oh, yeah,
34 maybe -- go ahead, sorry.
35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. If somebody
37 could answer his question.
38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I'd be
40 happy to if Mr. Vickers doesn't wish to answer or
41 doesn't -- I know he wasn't at the last meeting.
42

43 MR. VICKERS: Yes, exactly, so, please
44 go ahead, Karen, thank you.
45

46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hey, Ron, first of
47 all, welcome, through the Chair. Oh, my gosh, welcome,
48 through the Chair, glad to hear your voice. Can you
49 all hear me?
50

0165

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You faded but you're
2 back.

3
4 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, thanks.
5 Something just happened really weird. Ron, what Brent
6 just shared with you is that there is now a call for
7 funding opportunities, which is basically a call for
8 proposals for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
9 Program. If you all remember, you came up with some
10 priority information needs from the Council that talked
11 about fish counts and things like that, and now the
12 agencies, tribal organizations and other research
13 organizations have an opportunity to put forth
14 proposals to get funding for those and other projects.
15 And so that call for funding is now open.

16
17 Please correct me if I'm wrong, Brent
18 or Hannah, but that is my understanding at this point.

19
20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks for that,
23 Karen. Ron, does that answer your question?

24
25 MR. KIRK: Yes, Mr. Chair. Brent or
26 Hannah, through the Chair. This is Ron from Stebbins.
27 If I was to ask the Stebbins Tribal Community
28 Association to submit a proposal to open the
29 Pikmiktalik River for monitoring, fish counting, would
30 that -- is that part of what this is?

31
32 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, this
33 is Hannah, Hannah Voorhees with OSM.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Hannah.

36
37 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, for that
38 question. So there is a priority information need for
39 the Pikmiktalik that this Council developed at their
40 last meeting and that priority information need is to
41 create a chinook, chum, and coho abundance estimate for
42 the Pikmiktalik River so we are accepting proposals for
43 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program that address
44 that information need. And, yes, we would welcome such
45 a proposal, however, the funding opportunity currently
46 closes on March 15th, so I'm sorry for that bad news,
47 but, you know, we do have -- this is a two yearly cycle
48 so there'll be further opportunities to highlight the
49 importance of this priority information need for the
50

0166

1 Pikmiktalik and to accept proposals in the future, and
2 OSM is happy to work with you on that Ron.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 MR. KIRK: Okay. If OSM is happy to
7 work with me on that, do I just go through the tribal
8 council or do I go through our non-profit regional
9 organization, Kawerak, Inc.?

10

11 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, this
12 is Hannah. Maybe Karen can help me with this, either
13 Karen on the line.

14

15 MS. HYER: Hannah.

16

17 MS. VOORHEES: You know, either would
18 be acceptable. We accept proposals from a wide range
19 of tribal organizations. And Kawarek, in particular,
20 could bring, you know, a lot of resources and support
21 and background knowledge to an application.

22

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

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Karen.

27

28 MS. HYER: Yeah, I have a hard time
29 trying to figure out how to get myself off of mute, I
30 apologize for that. I just wanted to state that we have
31 had successful proposals from Kawarek in the past and
32 they know the process well so they would be an
33 excellent place to start. But we do accept proposals
34 from anybody.

35

36 Mr. Chairman.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks.

39

40 MR. KIRK: One more question, Mr.
41 Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

44

45 MR. KIRK: Is Kawarek aware of the
46 deadline for the proposals that's ending in March of
47 this year, were they aware of that deadline?

48

49 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman and Council

50

0167

1 members. Our announcement went out some time ago and
2 they would normally be on our mailing list so I can't
3 specifically say if they're aware, but I do believe
4 that they would have received our mailing through our
5 outreach.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It sounds like, Ron,
8 you might want to contact them as soon as you could
9 because the 15th is just on Monday.

10

11 MR. KIRK: Yeah, I'll do that. I'll
12 contact both entities. I'll get a hold of the Stebbins
13 Community Association and Kawarek tomorrow.

14

15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron.
18 Anybody else on the Council have any questions,
19 comments or concerns.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, it sounds like
24 they got all their questions answered and say thank you
25 for the presentation.

26

27 I think that -- like I said, I write
28 all over my agenda here and I have to decipher my own
29 writings. I think we're at Item 14, if there's nothing
30 further from anybody and it has to do with our future
31 meeting dates. And the calendar, I think is on Page
32 26, what do you say, Karen.

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
35 This is Karen Deatherage. And, yes, the calendar is in
36 your meeting book for the fall 2021 Regional Advisory
37 Council meetings. We are keeping our fingers crossed
38 that this will be an in-person meeting. The Council
39 had selected at their last meeting October 26th and
40 October 27th in Nome those dates that they would like
41 to meet in the fall and so you're just required right
42 now at this point in the agenda to go ahead and confirm
43 that those are the dates that you wish to select and
44 that's the location that you wish to hold the meeting
45 in. You don't need a formal motion, at this point it's
46 just if there's any kind of concern or change with the
47 dates or location, you can let that be known.

48

49 Thank you.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so that's --
2 it's not in stone unless there's an issue at this
3 point, is that what you're saying?
4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Right. This is an
6 opportunity for the Council to revisit the times, the
7 dates and the location of that proposed meeting, and if
8 there are no issues then that will be the timeframe
9 that we will set up for the fall cycle meeting.
10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Karen.
12 Anybody on the Council have any objections to what's
13 there now?
14

15 (No comments)
16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, Karen, I
18 think that's where it's at for the time being.
19

20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So that would lead us
23 into the springtime Council meeting, February through
24 March. Anybody have any dates they want to point a
25 finger at.
26

27 (No comments)
28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: If we have it during
30 the Iditarod, there's no dogs in Nome so we don't have
31 to worry about them.
32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 There may be dogs next -- this is for 2022.
35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right.
37

38 (Laughter)
39

40 MS. DEATHERAGE: And so there is a good
41 possibility there will be dogs in Nome and that date
42 would be the week of March 4th and 5th, the Iditarod
43 would start that weekend. That's generally an okay
44 time for the Council to meet, things aren't booked up
45 because the dogs are just leaving Willow. So that
46 might be a week that you would consider, the week of
47 February 28th, actually. The following week is booked
48 up with already two Councils have selected those dates
49 so it's not available. The week of March 14th is
50

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1 available, however.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't have a problem
4 with the February 28th week, anybody else.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Doesn't sound like
9 anybody else has any, are we looking at say a Thursday
10 and Friday, kind of like today and tomorrow -- Karen.

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: That would -- Mr.
13 Chair, thank you, that would be March 3rd and 4th and I
14 have sent an email to the Mini Convention Center to see
15 if they have space available in the Convention Center.
16 What I might recommend, if the Council agrees, March
17 3rd and 4th work, to give me some flexibility during
18 that week, if necessary, based on the venue.

19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So that means
23 what you're asking is you might need to change the
24 dates from the 3rd and the 4th to anywhere during the
25 week, Monday through Friday, if need be?

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 Yes, if you choose 3rd and 4th, that's fine, but I'd
29 just like the Council to give me that flexibility for
30 the venue.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Well.....

35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Sometimes the Iditarod
37 books up the Mini Convention Center.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, so yeah that'd
40 be fine, see where we could fit in. Anybody else have
41 any comments on it.

42

43 MR. AUKONGAK: If not the Mini
44 Convention, try the Covenant Church, it'd be a great
45 place to hold the meeting, the few meetings we've held
46 in there before with the Health Corporation and
47 Kawarek.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's not Old St.

50

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1 Joe's is it Martin?

2

3 MR. AUKONGAK: No, it's the Covenant
4 Church.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, okay, that's good
7 to know, thank you very much. And we could consider
8 that as well. Thank you very much for that
9 information.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, thanks, Martin.
12 I didn't know they had a meeting hall there. Well,
13 that kind of covers our future meeting dates. And that
14 puts us into Item 15, closing comments.

15

16 So I guess I'll just start with the
17 list and I'll start with Lloyd Kiyutelluk, if he's on.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We'll move down to
22 Hawaii 5-0 Tommy Gray.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go to the Big Deahl.
27 Mr. Katchatag, do you have any final comments.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nothing from Doug.

32

33 Leland.

34

35 MR. OYOUNICK: Yeah, hey, it seemed
36 even though the meeting took all day it seemed like it
37 went quick because we had so many interesting stuff
38 that we were going through and I like that stuff on
39 that -- what they're doing in the high seas trying to
40 find out this and that and the other about what's going
41 on. So keep plugging along.

42

43 I am also kind of worried about our
44 silvers, wondering why during that die-off, if they
45 ever have a die-off again I'd like to see them at least
46 look at a couple of carcasses to see if there's
47 anything growing inside. I hope we don't see nothing
48 like that again.

49

50

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1 That would be about it.

2

3 So I liked the meeting.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, Leland,
8 thank you.

9

10 Martin.

11

12 MR. AUKONGAK: It was a great meeting.
13 A lot to absorb here in the afternoon. I will go back
14 and read in the packet what you recommended and
15 appreciate all the information everybody had for the
16 Council. I'm not new to Boards, but I'm new to this
17 Board and hopefully learn fairly quick. And
18 subsistence is a very huge lifestyle for everybody in
19 this region and the State of Alaska, and we put our
20 tradition first and teach our young ones, and it's
21 healthy food. And going back to thinking of
22 construction, you know, Alaska is growing, and when you
23 grow you bring in material off barges and planes and
24 where they come from is different kinds of bugs, and
25 you think about it, those bugs adapt to the new
26 lifestyle here and then basically it's new critters
27 around and our animals start being around them and we
28 don't want that. But that's something to think about,
29 too.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
32 Martin. And welcome to the Council, and I did inform a
33 few people that you're not new to none of this. If I
34 recall you served as Chair of the Norton Sound Health
35 Corporation Board for a period of time.

36

37 MR. AUKONGAK: Yes, sir, thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that.
40 So I'll move on to Elmer.

41

42 MR. SEETOT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Snow cover was kind of late this winter and the weather
44 system coming in from the west resulting in weather
45 warning for advisories on (indiscernible) Peninsula.
46 Changes are here due to the weather and we're finding
47 ways to address these issues, especially during the
48 summer I still see algae in standing water within the
49 communities or in fast flowing creeks like Agiapuk

50

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1 River and some portions further up the river.

2

3 Phone cut out with this teleconference
4 maybe six or seven times and like Tom Gray, you, the
5 Chair Louis, pretty much run the meeting 9:00 to 5:00
6 right on schedule. Many important issues were
7 discussed and hopefully we can get these resolved, and
8 I hope everybody has a good spring season concerning
9 our harvest and our celebration activities during the
10 long sunny days.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.

15 Yeah, we did a Dolly Parton today, 9:00 to 5:00.

16

17 (Laughter)

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: How about you Ronald.

20

21 MR. KIRK: Hello, good afternoon. I'm
22 sorry I didn't catch the meeting in time, I just got
23 the tail end of it. But I just started teaching, help
24 with bilingual class in St. Michael, it's a 10 mile
25 ride, I have to rush over there in the morning and be
26 there by 9:00 and get out and come home, so I'm sorry I
27 missed the majority of the meeting. Better luck with
28 me next time on the next meeting. I hope I'll attend
29 it, I should be able to.

30

31 And Karen, can you send me a copy of
32 the meeting minutes, thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, Ron, don't
35 forget to work on that fish resource issue there with
36 your tribal council.

37

38 MR. KIRK: No, I won't forget. I will
39 give them a call either in five minutes or first thing
40 in the morning.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. So I
43 called all the other Council members, have any of them
44 come back on for comments, last comment.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Lloyd, Tom, or Deahl.

49

50

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1 (No comments)

2

3

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, I don't hear
4 any. So I guess that leaves us with -- since I don't
5 have the total power to adjourn the meeting, I did want
6 to say thanks again for the vote of confidence in
7 retaining the Chair's seat for another year. I hope I
8 can make all the meetings this time and not have any
9 interference and not be able to attend.

10

11

12 So with that, I guess we're right at
13 the end of the day, we're at 4:58 and I would ask for a
14 motion and a second to adjourn the meeting.

15

MR. SEETOT: Motion by Elmer.

16

17

MR. OYOUNICK: Second by Leland.

18

19

MR. AUKONGAK: Second by Martin.

20

21

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Second by Martin. All
22 those in favor of adjourning this meeting say aye.

23

24

IN UNISON: Aye.

25

26

CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
27 same sign.

28

29

(No opposing votes)

30

31

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, the
32 meeting is adjourned. And I would like to thank the
33 Staff, all the Staff members that participated in all
34 these agency reports. I'm sorry I didn't mention that
35 earlier. I appreciate your time. And Jim Menard, he
36 did a really good job, he was there for two and a half
37 hours, I think. I thank Charlie Lean for -- I think
38 he's the Chairman of the Northern Norton Sound Advisory
39 Committee, for coming in and giving his side of the
40 coin.

41

42

But anyway I'll say goodbye to all
43 until the next time.

44

45

46

(Off record)

47

48

49

50

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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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 SEWARD PENINSULA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY
14 COUNCIL MEETING taken electronically on the 11th day of
15 March at Nome, Alaska;

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 27th
27 day of March 2021.

28

29

30

31 _____
32 Salena A. Hile
33 Notary Public, State of Alaska
34 My Commission Expires: 09/16/22

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