

0154

SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

Old St. Joseph's Hall

Nome, Alaska
March 23, 2023
9:07 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Louis Green, Chairman
Martin Aukongak
Tom Gray
Raymond Hunt
Ronald Kirk
Mary Freytag
Robert Moses
Elmer Seetot

Regional Council Coordinator - Nissa Pilcher

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0155

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

2

3 (Nome, Alaska - 3/23/2023)

4

5 (On record)

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tina, are we ready?

8

9 REPORTER: Yes, we're on, ready.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Good morning. We're
12 going to call this meeting to order at 9:07. Nissa,
13 what, I'm going to turn it over to you for a minute for
14 introductions, checking on who's online, go ahead.

15

16 MS. PILCHER: Good morning everybody.
17 For the record this is Nissa Pilcher, Council
18 Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory
19 Council. This is Day 2. Just to let -- so in the
20 room, Council members.

21

22 We've got Mary Freytag.

23

24 Raymond Hunt.

25

26 Louis Green.

27

28 Tom Gray.

29

30 Elmer Seetot.

31

32 And Martin.....

33

34 MR. AUKONGAK: A.

35

36 (Laughter)

37

38 MS. PILCHER: On the phone do we have

39 Ronald Kirk.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 MS. PILCHER: And how about Robert.

44

45 MR. MOSES: Yes, I'm here.

46

47 MS. PILCHER: Okay. Hello Robert.

48

49 MR. MOSES: Good morning.

50

0156

1 MS. PILCHER: Good morning. Just so we
2 know who else is online, can we get a quick rundown of
3 who else called in. First, if there's any tribal or
4 Native organizations online, if you could let us know
5 you're on.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 MS. PILCHER: Okay. And, once, again,
10 if I shoot past you just speak up, okay.

11
12 All right, how about U.S. Fish and
13 Wildlife Service not affiliated with OSM.

14
15 MS. KLEIN: Good morning. This is Jill
16 Klein. Listening in again from Anchorage. I'm the
17 Regional Subsistence Coordinator with U.S. Fish and
18 Wildlife Service.

19
20 MS. PILCHER: All right. How about
21 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, OSM affiliated.

22
23 MR. LIND: Good morning.....

24
25 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, everyone,
26 this is.....

27
28 MR. LIND:Chairman and Board
29 members. This is.....

30
31 MS. LAVINE:Robbin.....

32
33 MS. PILCHER: Is that Orville?

34
35 MR. LIND: Yes, good morning, it's
36 Orville, Native Liaison for OSM. Good morning, Robbin.

37
38 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, Orville.
39 This is Robbin LaVine, the Subsistence Policy
40 Coordinator with OSM.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, we're in
43 good company today, we've got Orvi.....

44
45 MR. STONE: Good morning, Council.
46 This is Jarred Stone, Fisheries Biologist with the
47 Office of Subsistence Management.

48
49 MS. PILCHER: All right. U.S. Forest
50

0157

1 Service.

2

3 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning everyone,
4 this is Greg Risdahl, USDA Forest Service, Subsistence
5 Program Lead and InterAgency Staff Committee member
6 back today. Thank you.

7

8 MS. PILCHER: Thank you. National Park
9 Service.

10

11 MS. PATTON: Good morning everyone.
12 This is Eva Patton, Subsistence Program Manager for the
13 National Park Service in Anchorage and InterAgency
14 Staff Committee member. Good morning.

15

16 MR. ADKISSON: Good.....

17

18 MS. PILCHER: Do we.....

19

20 MR. ADKISSON:morning. Ken
21 Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome, Alaska.

22

23 MS. PILCHER: BLM.

24

25 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning. Dillon
26 Patterson, National Park Service, Regional Subsistence
27 Program.

28

29 MS. PILCHER: Sorry for jumping the gun
30 there. Anybody from BLM on.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MS. PILCHER: Okay, how about Alaska
35 Department of Fish and Game.

36

37 MR. VIALPANDO: I'll go back real
38 quick. BLM. This is Jake Vialpando, the Field Manager
39 in Anchorage. Good morning.

40

41 MS. PILCHER: Good morning.

42

43 REPORTER: Who was it?

44

45 MS. PILCHER: Could you state your name
46 again, it was a little muddled?

47

48 MR. VIALPANDO: Yes, Jake Vialpando,
49 Anchorage Field Manager at BLM.

50

0158

1 REPORTER: Who is it Chris?

2

3 MR. MCKEE: Jake Vialpando.

4

5 MS. PILCHER: How about members of the
6 public that are on.

7

8 MR. BURCH: Good morning. This is Mark
9 Burch. I may have missed my opportunity to introduce
10 myself almost for the second day in a row, sorry about
11 that.

12

13 MS. PILCHER: No problem, sorry. We
14 get -- I'm trying to speed through, too. So thanks for
15 calling in Mark. I think that concludes the
16 introductions unless I missed somebody or spoke over
17 somebody.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thanks, Nissa.
20 I think we're going to start with Scott Ayers.

21

22 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
23 morning, Council members. This is Scott Ayers from
24 OSM. I wanted to start out our second day with a quick
25 note to the group.

26

27 There were a couple of salty comments
28 yesterday and we need to try to avoid those moving
29 forward. You all are discussing topics that you are
30 clearly passionate about, which is why we're here, I
31 just wanted to remind the group that this is a public
32 meeting of a FACA chartered committee and that we need
33 to make sure that we are keeping our discussions civil.
34 I hope we have a productive day and look forward to the
35 rest of the agenda.

36

37 That's all I had, thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Scott.
40 Appreciate that.

41

42 MR. KIRK: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
43 Ron Kirk, Stebbins.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron.
46 You're on, we got you marked down now, thanks.

47

48 (Pause)

49

50

0159

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Gay, you're on
2 deck.

3
4 MS. SHEFFIELD: All right, thanks.
5 Thank you very much for having me here. This is my
6 first RAC meeting so I'm learning.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And we're 24 hours
9 late I'll have you know.

10
11 MS. SHEFFIELD: I know, that's okay.

12
13 (Laughter)

14
15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And, Nissa, can you
16 take care of that.

17
18 (Laughter)

19
20 MS. SHEFFIELD: That's all right. We
21 know it's better to get it worked out than rush it.

22
23 So my name is Gay Sheffield. I work at
24 UAF-Alaska SeaGrant here in Nome. I'm housed at
25 Northwest Campus and people don't really know, I think,
26 what Alaska SeaGrant is, but it is a NOAA program that
27 is embedded in Land Grant Colleges, which is what UAF
28 is. So our mission is research and service -- well,
29 research, service and education. So that's my contact
30 phone there and also my email.

31
32 So to talk about -- I was asked to talk
33 about marine mammals but I'm going to put it in
34 context. Yesterday it was really interesting for me to
35 see what you guys are talking about, all the land
36 issues, land animal issues, so I'm going to talk about
37 the ocean.

38
39 I started working up here in '92 and
40 have spent most of my time working west of Nome and on
41 the island, so my emphasis is in the marine
42 environment. So we're going to talk about is where we
43 are right now and some -- three of the wildlife
44 concerns for -- are marine wildlife, health concerns
45 for marine wildlife coming up. I don't want to be a
46 Chicken Little but it's better to, since I was asked,
47 I'll let you know what is potentially coming, and we're
48 going to need everybody's help this summer.

49
50

0160

1 So this map shows in that little green
2 box, shows the Bering Sea from about Diomedes down to
3 Bristol Bay. These are temperatures for -- average
4 temperatures, sea surface temperatures for the ocean in
5 that green box. It's huge. And you can see the
6 timeline on the bottom goes from 100-whatever, 22 years
7 ago, right to now. So for May to September where we
8 have open water, you can see that the cold years, the
9 coldest years for water temperature was from -- they
10 went from 1900 to 1960 and right after that you can see
11 -- or right before that, in the '50s the temperature
12 starts going up. It is shocking that the -- I don't
13 know what that is, maybe the 10 hottest years of water
14 has been about the last 15. So that is the big story
15 for us and I just wanted to make that -- because I know
16 you guys are talking about land issues.

17
18 Right now, as of March 12th, this shows
19 you the extent, so the southward movement, or how far
20 south the ice has gone in the Bering Sea, how many
21 kilometers, it doesn't matter if it's U.S. or Russian,
22 it's just how much ice has gone south. So this is from
23 1978 to this March 12th, and all the squiggles is every
24 single year and you could see that in November, yep,
25 the ice starts growing and then usually by April we get
26 a big pulse of, you know, the ice is all the way down
27 as far as it's going to be and then by May, June, it's
28 going north, we're melting in place. So the two lowest
29 squiggles that were seemingly way out of bounds on the
30 bottom, those little grey squiggles, each squiggle of
31 grey is a year and the black line is the average of all
32 those squiggles. So '18 and 2019 are the ones on the
33 very bottom. So you can see that recently we've had
34 some rough years with our ice. Currently, last year,
35 everyone was like, well, the ice is back, you know, and
36 we couldn't really -- it was very easy to go south and
37 retreat. And this year you can see where we are and it
38 looks like there will be our longest extent, the most
39 southerly extent of the ice will have occurred in
40 February for this year, which is unusual -- getting to
41 be normal. Here is where we are as of March 15th, this
42 is prior to the storm we just had and we don't know,
43 you know, of course, the strength of what's coming in
44 on Saturday but it should move even more because it's
45 going to come straight out of the south, should move
46 the ice around. What is noticeable is -- I wish the --
47 the ice edge is kind of from -- you can't see it here
48 unless you know your map but the southern gulf of
49 Anadyr from Cape Navarin and a southeasterly projection
50

0161

1 down towards Nunivak is the main ice, it should be
2 noted that Kotzebue Sound is already shattered and
3 starting to show movement. And actually most of the
4 ice is shattered and there's thin high clouds up in the
5 Chuckchi but there's been open water off of Wellen* and
6 Shishmaref, and recently Savoonga and I mean prior to
7 the last storm, the north shore of St. Lawrence Island
8 was open to about 50 miles.

9

10 What does this mean?

11

12 So from 2010 to -- I just have these
13 two years to sort of show because 2010 was the first
14 time NOAA actually did a bottom trawl survey and got
15 temperatures and a very high resolution of the ocean
16 bottom. They do the southern Bering Sea which runs
17 from the Pribilofs in a southeast direction to the
18 border, and then they do Bristol Bay down to the
19 Pribilofs -- down to the Aleutians. So on this one you
20 can see that in 2010 that black/blue, that is a normal
21 reflection later once the ice has retreated of the cold
22 water, and I won't -- if anyone wants to talk about how
23 that happens, I'm happy to, but for the sake of time I
24 won't, just know that anything that lives in the
25 southern Bering Sea and likes warm water and doesn't
26 like cold water, that big tongue of blue stops the
27 forward progression. They can sneak in up on our west
28 coast where you can see where the river runoff is and
29 where warmer temperatures -- but you need that
30 black/blue, that is minus -- that's colder than
31 freezing water, that's liquid on the bottom and that
32 stops a lot of the fish from the south and keeps our
33 northern Bering Sea ecosystem in place, which is full
34 of small fatty forage fish for example, which feeds our
35 millions of seabirds and young seals, things like that.

36

37 Right now, in 2021, this is two years
38 ago, you can see that the black/blue has retreated and
39 that is actually recovering from -- there was no
40 black/blue basically in 2018/2019 and it's actually
41 gotten warmer along the coast, so anything that.....

42

43 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, I'm going to step
44 out for a minute, I got to bring my wife to the
45 airport.

46

47 MS. PILCHER: What was that Ron?

48

49 REPORTER: He's got to go to the

50

0162

1 airport.

2

3 MS. PILCHER: Okay, gotcha, thanks,
4 Ronald.

5

6 MS. SHEFFIELD: All right. So anything
7 that is from the south and the southern Bering Sea is
8 the one where the commercial fishermen are -- what you
9 guys were mentioning yesterday, the commercial
10 fishermen are feeding, you know, 45 percent of the
11 United States come out of the southeastern Bering Sea
12 and those are large fish, they are predatory fish and
13 they are commercially valuable fish. Those fish have
14 been swimming up into -- and now they can, they can go
15 up where it's warmer now and there's no barrier, the
16 gate is kind of open, so we see that, we've seen that
17 for the last several years, right, people were catching
18 Pacific -- big Pacific cod in their net -- in their
19 cages out here and the pollock and what not have come
20 north, changing a lot. This is just where we are as of
21 the three month sea surface temperature average so this
22 is December through February, December, January and
23 February, a three month average, it's in fahrenheit,
24 and you can see this is departure from normal so where
25 the ice is or where the temperatures are where they
26 should be are it is white, where it is a little colder
27 it is blue. And the blue is because last year we had a
28 lot of open water as well and now we have some ice down
29 there so it is a little colder. But what is really
30 striking is the red. The red is now -- it used to just
31 be more on the Russian side, and now it goes all the
32 way across and this is, what, so one and up to 2.5
33 degrees or more fahrenheit warmer than it should be,
34 still cold, but it's warmer than it should be for the
35 three month average. So we know that the waters are
36 coming north in the spring and that's what we should
37 anticipate that is there's a striking difference there
38 now between the temperatures.

39

40 And just as a harbinger of where I'm
41 going, these have already been turned in, we had
42 Shishmaref report this murre, a gentleman from -- he
43 was working with a loader and he hopped off and took
44 this picture, this was February 26th, Diomedes is
45 reporting in the open water that they have had at the
46 end of February, eider ducks and murre and also just
47 -- just actually I was going to come in and say, yeah,
48 last night but on -- just on the other day there
49 someone handed me this murre, they were coming back

50

0163

1 from crabbing on West Beach and they watched two ravens
2 kill this thing and they ripped out the guts quickly
3 before he could get to it, but he handed me this still
4 warm murre. So that's unusual for our region to be
5 seeing these types of seabirds in February and March.
6 So it'll be interesting to see where our next ice
7 overhead image, what it looks like.

8

9 So here's the three things.

10

11 Again, I don't want to be Chicken
12 Little, but these are realistic things to think about.

13

14 We have had all three. So maybe we
15 will again. What do to about it, what it looks like,
16 that kind of thing. That's what I'm going to do.

17

18 So I mentioned that those big fish come
19 up and I call it ecological havoc and what has resulted
20 in what looks like hunger. Poor body condition for a
21 lot of our seabirds. This has been ongoing since 2017
22 since when the gate really opened up and that warm
23 water rushed in and the big fish followed their waters,
24 it was really their temperature, their waters, they're
25 okay with it. And our blue cod, Arctic cod, Tom cod,
26 those kind of small fatty fish, eulachons, kind of went
27 down. In 2018, 2019 there was so many young bearded,
28 ringed and spotted seals that were emaciated and you
29 can see those pictures on the lower right, that NOAA
30 declared an unusual mortality event for those, which is
31 at the national level, which sort of shows you the
32 concern.

33

34 So when you see something that's
35 hungry, what you could see on the beach is something
36 that's thin, something that looks tired, or
37 approachable, or just dead.

38

39 I don't know, the U.S. Fish and
40 Wildlife Service is in charge of seabirds, they are
41 authorized for that and NOAA -- NOAA is in charge of
42 our seals so I couldn't tell you right now the
43 population level for birds, if it's having an effect
44 these several years of hunger, but it certainly is a
45 food security threat for people in this region. Also
46 having the seals -- I think we learned yesterday
47 they're not really worried about the numbers but it is
48 a daunting and not a good trend to see animals in poor
49 condition in what was -- we are the Bering Strait

50

0164

1 region, we are the bread basket, we should be rich at
2 sea. So to see starving, hungry animals should be of
3 concern.

4

5 All right.

6

7 But we've been living with that, we've
8 been living with that, sort of situation.

9

10 Highly pathogenic Avian Influenza,
11 H5N1, or the bird flu, it's not new to us now, we saw
12 it in seabirds and land birds, it was -- it's a very
13 difficult situation for us because the Fish and
14 Wildlife Service limited collecting of birds because of
15 human health concerns so I was allowed to collect birds
16 and some people within the North Slope Borough, like
17 their vet are allowed to collect birds. So between
18 Brandon Ahmasuk, he's the Natural Resources Director at
19 Kawerak, he and I were able to get about 15 really --
20 you know you want pristine dead birds, which is hard to
21 do. So we got about 15 of those and we got glaucous
22 gulls, tested positive, certainly there were more than
23 15 birds, there were literally hundreds of birds
24 reported from the Bering Strait region from Unalakleet
25 to Port Clarence, Brevig, Wales, Shishmaref, just in
26 our region and everybody saw that, Safety Sound, there
27 was a big event in the spring. Also there was a red
28 fox in Unalakleet that was rabid and now the Fish and
29 Game, I believe is testing all foxes for rabies and
30 Avian Influenza because it has jumped into animals.
31 I'm just sticking to the -- and mammals, I'm just
32 sticking to our region. Red fox in the Bering Strait
33 region have -- were positive for Avian Influenza as
34 well as in the Aleutians. They're currently testing
35 the foxes this year as well for both. So we know it's
36 crossed over elsewhere in the state into brown bear and
37 black bear and then in the U.S. alone, this is a global
38 event, in the U.S. alone it's jumped into multiple
39 different types of mammals like mink, and raccoons and
40 so forth.

41

42 Last year on the East Coast of the
43 U.S., they actually -- NOAA had an unusual mortality
44 event in the Gulf of Maine for harbor and grey seals
45 because of the increased number of deaths and they
46 tested positive for Avian Influenza as well as a
47 dolphin in Florida. Since 2022, this winter, globally,
48 it has caught on, the Caspian seals in the Caspian Sea
49 in Russia are having a mortality event, they are having
50

0165

1 a large die-off. It is in sea lions in South America.
2 It is in small citations like harbor porpoise in
3 England and in Sweden, and so we should anticipate in
4 our birds and potentially our land animals, a return of
5 Avian Influenza and we are -- I am currently part of
6 the stranding -- marine mammal stranding network and
7 NOAA is gearing up to try to figure out what tissues we
8 need to be collecting to test the marine mammals for
9 Avian Influenza.

10

11 What is Avian Influenza, or the bird
12 flu look like. At the -- at the very end stages you'll
13 be able to walk up to the birds. We saw that last
14 year. And seals -- I was asking -- they are now
15 posting some of the symptoms, very similar. You may
16 see seizures, and in the next slide I'll show you what
17 that looks like in birds, and, of course, that, to me,
18 is actually a relief in a way because someone who is
19 harvesting will see an animal seizing and know that
20 there is something wrong, or the animal will just be
21 dead and will just be dead on the beach.

22

23 There is a threat, right, food
24 security.

25

26 But also with Avian Influenza, it is --
27 I think we've only had one person sick in the country
28 so far but it is a global event and the switch from
29 being a poultry disease to a wild bird disease to being
30 a mammal disease is making people -- we can get it --
31 it has not happened in great numbers on this go around,
32 but it is switching and doing things we have not seen
33 before or in a very long time so there is a potential
34 to human health impact to this, that's why you're going
35 to see notices this year again, just like last year,
36 that say wear gloves, you know, if you see an animal,
37 report it and all that.

38

39 All right.

40

41 So this first one is from Golovin Bay.
42 I hope this will work. This is a brant. This is the
43 kind of thing you might see. This was last spring.
44 This circling is pretty diagnos -- a pretty -- a big
45 symptom of Avian Influenza. The birds are -- they're
46 having this seizure, their brain is swelling and
47 they're having a lot of neurological problems.

48

49 This next one is the south side of St.

50

0166

1 Lawrence Island. This is a seagull, too bad it's not
2 dark, but you can see it's having trouble with its
3 head. It's not able to do what it wants to do. It's
4 -- it's -- there it's shaking its head. There's a
5 fourwheeler right there, it can't get away from it.

6

7 And then this was not from this region,
8 but this was just a few weeks ago in Kodiak so it
9 hasn't left yet. This is what it might look like in a
10 big bird of prey, this is a Golden Eagle, or young bald
11 eagle, I'm not a bird person, on Kodiak. There are
12 people walking their dog, this is in Bushkin Bay Park,
13 which there is dogs around. This eagle doesn't want to
14 be there. And that's the kind of thing you should look
15 for in the birds, if that's helpful.

16

17 And this is sort of near the end stage,
18 that bird will probably be gone in a few hours.

19

20 They may be fat. It's a fast acting
21 disease once it gets going. And so the birds could be
22 fat and dead.

23

24 So I don't know, if you guys want to do
25 questions at the end or anything like that.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 MS. SHEFFIELD: Harmful algae bloom.
30 If you've been reading the Nome Nugget and listening to
31 the radio and stuff, is everyone kind of familiar or do
32 you want me to go over what a harmful algae bloom event
33 is.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

36

37 MS. SHEFFIELD: Go ahead, go over it,
38 or keep moving. Do you know, what do you want me to
39 do?

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

42

43 MS. SHEFFIELD: Do you want me to
44 describe what a harmful -- is everyone familiar with
45 harmful algae bloom?

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't know if
48 everyone is familiar with it, it's a good idea to go
49 over it.

50

0167

1 MS. SHEFFIELD: Okay. So we have lots
2 of algae. We need algae to live. That's the base of
3 the food chain in the ocean and it gives us the air we
4 breath and it's really super important and everyone's
5 been noticing there's more algae because it's gotten
6 warmer, they've noticed it on rocks and things like
7 that. There are, unfortunately -- well, fortunately
8 we've been blessed. In cold water you don't normally
9 see harmful algae species. There's a bazillion
10 different types of algae. There are some in the south
11 that like warm water. We have them in Alaska, we have
12 them in the Bering and Chuckchi and Beaufort Sea
13 actually in very, very small numbers, but there are
14 some types that protect themselves by making a very
15 strong poison. Unfortunately it affects your nervous
16 system and it can affect your health if it is in high
17 concentration. Well, we never really had to worry
18 about it too much in recent years because our water's
19 been cold and it's been around and so it's not new, the
20 animals have been dealing with it. However, the water
21 has gotten warmer, and starting in -- so what happens
22 is if you get a type of algae that is not one that we
23 want to see, if it's in low numbers, not a problem.
24 What a plant, which is what an algae is, it's just a
25 one cell plant, what it needs is lots of daylight,
26 nutrient rich water, in this case, not soil but water,
27 and it needs warmth. So lately we've been seeing that
28 certain types of algae are showing up and the word
29 bloom is when conditions are just right for it it
30 explodes and starts splitting and splitting and making
31 lots and lots of it, lots and lots of it. So if you're
32 like a clam and, again, it really only affects the
33 nervous system of things like birds and mammals, it
34 doesn't bother the clams, it doesn't bother the crab,
35 they'll be eating lots of it because if lots of it is
36 in the water they don't -- they don't care, and they're
37 just going to eat it. If you fill your little clam
38 stomach with that particular type of algae and then say
39 you're a walrus and you eat 50 pounds of that clam and
40 that clam is full of the wrong kind of algae with that
41 nerve poison, you're going to eat it and then you're
42 going to digest it and then boy you're going to get a
43 dose of poison. Normally, like I say, we have such low
44 numbers, it's in things, it's in our animals but it's
45 very low but what has happened recently is in 2017
46 Diomedes shot a walrus, they called it and it came over
47 to the beach. There was a bunch of walrus out front
48 but this one climbed out of the water, a bull, put its
49 head down and for the next 45 minutes never moved,
50

0168

1 while people were walking around it. That was in 2017.
2 So there was a big discussion; shoot it, don't shoot
3 it, what's the matter with it and so forth. It's so
4 tired. It's so tired. I got a phone call, it's so
5 tired, what do we -- well, I said it's up to you guys,
6 but anyway it got harvested and then there was a -- I
7 got another phone call, should we eat it, or no, well,
8 because of its behavior, again, I said you know what
9 just -- if you could get some of the unuk out of the
10 intestine, some of the fecal matter, send in three feet
11 of intestine, I'll get it tested because that sounds
12 like something that might be -- something that might be
13 more nerve, you know, a tired bull walrus, that's a lot
14 of tiredness for him to be on the beach, under the
15 corporation store for 45 minutes not doing anything
16 with people walking around him. So it turned out, that
17 was amazing, Diomedes did send in a whole suite of
18 samples including the three feet of intestine, we were
19 able to get the fecal matter, the unuk out, and the
20 saxitoxin, the poison associated with this particular
21 type of algae, the algae's called alexandrium, there's
22 tons of different types but, in particular, this was
23 alexandrium, which we know we have in small numbers,
24 except the poison in his unuk was five times over the
25 seafood safety limit for the commercial sale of clams.
26 Now, why is it like that. That is the only information
27 we have to show what is good or not good for people,
28 it's a Federal regulatory marker for the sale of clams.
29 We know that for commercial -- because, you know, gulf
30 of Alaska, Southeast, holy cow, they have to live with
31 this all the time. They've got much warmer water, they
32 get harmful algae all the time of this alexandrium,
33 they know the poison, it happens all the time and they
34 eat a lot of clams. Know that all the clam --
35 commercial clam harvesting is tested for free by the
36 State of Alaska. So if you have a bunch of clams and
37 you're going to sell them you're going to get it tested
38 by the State of Alaska. If you're a subsistence user
39 the State does not recognize subsistence in shellfish,
40 it's recreational or commercial. It hasn't been a
41 problem in Southeast Alaska, they figured all that out
42 and there's a lot of commercial clamming down there but
43 now this problem coming north is a little different
44 because we don't recreationally clam, or if you're
45 shooting a walrus for subsistence and you want to eat
46 out of the stomach, right, you just -- then that --
47 that's something they're wrapping their head around.

48

49 Anyway so that was in 2017, which kind

50

0169

1 of was a warning. Like, how did that walrus get that
2 much in his poo, he must have eaten something. So
3 there's some research that's been going on by NOAA and
4 a whole bunch of other groups, but, in particular,
5 WoodsHole Oceanographic Institute getting money from a
6 whole host of different places and in 2018 and 2019
7 they were on the U.S. Coast Guard Ice Breaker Healy and
8 they were sampling all the way up from St. Lawrence
9 Island up to Utqiagvik and they found two places where
10 the clams were above the seafood safety limit and that
11 was 70 miles north, northwest of Savoonga, between
12 Savoonga and Diomede and about 50 miles north of Point
13 Hope, and they were testing everything. So these were
14 two hot spots where they found clams that had more than
15 should have been good for human consumption in those
16 two locations, the rest of it was fine.

17
18 Last year, and these are all the
19 headlines, I hope somebody been's reading the Nome
20 Nugget so it'll be not unfamiliar, we had an event, a
21 big event, we had a research vessel that their whole
22 job was to check for algae. And sure enough, they
23 started -- left Nome were going to St. Lawrence Island
24 and then they were going to go up through the Strait to
25 Utqiagvik, come down, back to Nome, reoutfit and go do
26 the trail again. So that's from July to -- mid-July to
27 late August, early September, and along their way from
28 south of St. Lawrence Island to north of Shishmaref is
29 where they found massive persistent, and what would be
30 considered, honestly, a dangerous level of the algae.
31 Now, this was from July to August, late August, early
32 September, there were warnings put out, we're working
33 closely with the Department of Public Health on this,
34 with Norton Sound Health Corporation, with a whole
35 host, I mean I'm just one person and I'm not the boss
36 of this at all, I'm just trying to make sure that we
37 are getting what the agencies need to test our foods
38 and, anyway, you should know about this.

39
40 What would it look like.

41
42 If you have shellfish poisoning,
43 paralytic shellfish poisoning, which is what happens
44 when you have too much alexandrium that produces the
45 poison, saxitoxin, if you have too much of that and
46 you've eaten it, you -- for people you can get tingly
47 fingers and your lips tingle and then you'll be
48 throwing up, diarrhea and what not, you should go
49 contact -- if you've been eating any shellfish and you
50

0170

1 feel sick you should contact your local health care
2 people immediately.

3

4 For the animals, and I can't talk about
5 health care, but for the animals, the animals will look
6 tired, right, approachable, it blocks your nerve
7 signaling. So you're going to eventually paralytic,
8 you're going to get paralyzed temporarily, but what
9 happens is your diaphragm in an animal, or whoever,
10 mammal, if your diaphragm becomes paralyzed that's a
11 problem for breathing, so that's the worse case.

12

13 So the animals will look tired, or
14 approachable or just dead as well.

15

16 That is also a food security problem
17 locally and definitely a potential human health impact
18 if you're eating shellfish, like crab, if you're eating
19 the whole crab -- it's not in the legs, but if you're
20 eating the whole crab that could be a problem if we had
21 a -- if we have a bloom. Now, we did have one last
22 year, we don't know what's' going to happen this year,
23 but, luckily, just want to emphasize, that no one was
24 sick or harmed by eating their Native foods in last
25 July during this event. There were notifications going
26 out to every community, Department of Public Health was
27 involved, Norton Sound Health Corporation was very much
28 involved, so they were sending out lots of messaging.

29

30 All right, now, these are kind of all
31 the people, not even, I could even fill this page
32 again. I put the local responders up on top and
33 everyone else down below, and some of those down below
34 should be up on top, like Eskimo Walrus Commission, but
35 these are the ones really literally responding, and
36 we're all first responders. We are all first
37 responders to this, we have been for years. We've seen
38 the hunger, we've seen the seals lose their hair,
39 right, there was all that business. It's not our first
40 rodeo. So I'm just bringing this up but we don't have
41 any of the Federal entities that would be responding
42 here in Nome, so it is on us to take pictures and
43 notify.

44

45 What can you do.

46

47 Some of these are going to be tricky
48 because like last year they told us not to touch the
49 birds, that is good advice. But what can you do, you

50

0171

1 can take video of those seizures, like those people did
2 in Golovin and south side of St. Lawrence Island and
3 Kodiak. That is hugely important. The Fish and
4 Wildlife and NOAA need to know and Fish and Wildlife is
5 in charge also of walrus and polar bear, they need to
6 know what is going on and by taking those photos, doing
7 the video, those are all documented. That is all a
8 serious documentation plus it's a clue to show what's
9 going on up here. So I really emphasize that, the cell
10 phone is really a good weapon. I mean people don't go
11 hunting to take photos but do bring your cell phone, if
12 you see the unusual, if you start seeing numbers of
13 birds. I will be collecting birds.

14
15 So for the first one just take photos.
16 If you start seeing any animal, marine mammal, or a
17 land animal, there's been video of the fox in
18 Unalakleet seizing, you know, doing a lot of jerking
19 head motions, repetitively, get a video of that.
20 Report it. People, Fish and Game, or someone in the
21 area will hopefully give better instruction or will
22 come out. Fish and Game, myself, Kawerak, am I missing
23 anybody.

24
25 Right now for the seabirds, I will take
26 whole seabirds and they will go to Fish and Wildlife
27 Service. They will be tested now, unusually this year,
28 they're going to the State lab, not the Federal lab,
29 I'm not sure, that's their issue. And for marine
30 mammals there will be -- they're determining right now
31 whether they want anal and oral swabs just like in
32 Covid days, right, up your nose, you do the same thing
33 for a seal or beluga, you swab the blowhole or the
34 butthole, but it looks like brain may be a better
35 tissue so, you know, if -- for marine mammals it may be
36 a kind of thing where you want the head, like a seal
37 head or something, I don't know if it can be, I think
38 it can be the brain tissue, it's okay if it's been head
39 shot, you can just get some brain tissue. There will
40 be more information coming out in that but I just
41 wanted to make you guys aware.

42
43 And then for harmful algae bloom,
44 that, the whole seabird again will be sent to the Fish
45 and Wildlife Service and it will get tested by the
46 Federal lab for harmful algae bloom. For marine
47 mammals what will be -- there will be notices going up
48 in about -- as soon as -- again, our ice conditions --
49 pretty soon here, requests to work with, or get three
50

0172

1 feet of uncleaned intestine, that's so it's easy, just
2 chop it off near the anus, stick it in a ziplock, I
3 will do the glorious job of getting the unuk out and
4 getting that contained and shipped out for harmful
5 algae testing, and that will be anything; beluga,
6 bowhead, oogruk, bearded seal, spotted seal, ribbons,
7 anything that is marine oriented. There's also the
8 Norton Sound Health Corporation and myself, we will
9 also be taking, and we will be put up signs for this as
10 well, these are all going out to the villages as well,
11 to -- if you have concerns over your seafoods like
12 crab, tuna (otherwise known as oopa (ph) on the island,
13 St. Lawrence, send it in. We are working minimally
14 with a research project at this time, that is all we
15 have at the time, and for harmful algae and they will
16 do their best to turn it around. If it is looking like
17 we are having a bloom underway and then we will switch
18 and there will be an emphasis to get those samples
19 tested immediately through the Native Village of
20 Sitka's lab.

21

22 And I think that is it for response.

23

24 Oh, the Norton Sound Health Corporation
25 is currently -- has about five communities, I think
26 Golovin might be one, where they are -- there's been a
27 tribal resolution and they're working with all our
28 communities to try to get this -- I know Savoonga's on
29 board, I think Unalakleet's on board, and that is
30 sampling, weekly, the water. And there are people
31 trained and getting paid through, I believe it's the
32 IGAP Program to look and identify through these really
33 nice microscopes that are now out in some of these
34 communities, they're trained to look for the
35 alexandrium, and if -- and if the numbers go up they'll
36 call it in to the Norton Sound Health Corporation.
37 They're reporting every week. We do it here in Nome as
38 well. So I encourage if any of you who are on the
39 Council, and Norton Sound Health Corporation are coming
40 in to talk about that, I would really recommend doing
41 that seawater sampling program, it is a part of the
42 already paid for duties of the IGAP program if you have
43 that, and we'll be doing that in Nome as well.

44

45 And that's it.

46

47 Those are contacts.

48

49 That's my number. That is Charles,

50

0173

1 Chuck M*'s number, he'll be dealing with marine
2 mammals, and also for birds I threw up there for the
3 Fish and Wildlife, that is going to be their hotline
4 number for 24/7, I understand, for reporting anything
5 wonky with the birds, any kind of birds.

6
7 That's it.

8
9 Thank you, very much for having me, and
10 I hope that is what you were looking for.

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Gay.
13 Charlie, you had a question or something, or a comment.

14
15 MR. LEAN: Just on fish, since that's
16 my thing, is there's a lab in Anchorage that does fish
17 pathology at Fish and Game, and if you find a fish I
18 heard earlier in the meeting that the Tom Cod were in
19 small numbers and small in size, that's an indication
20 -- they had an epidemic sweep through. Typically
21 that's a fungus. But if you find a fish that's rotten
22 inside or sick, you don't want to freeze it, you want
23 to refrigerate it. If you freeze it, it's worthless.
24 But if you can get a fresh refrigerated sick fish to
25 that lab in Anchorage, call Fish and Game, ask for the
26 pathology lab, they'll tell you how to get it there,
27 and that's really useful. I've done that many times
28 and they come back with a nice call back of what's
29 wrong.

30
31 And on crab, NSEDC is required to check
32 commercial crab for edibility but they don't check for
33 PCB because it's only in the gut and not in the muscle.
34 So if you're really concerned, the State says that just
35 eating the muscle of crab is okay but if you eat the
36 butter or the yellow stuff inside that -- that's where
37 the PCB would be.

38
39 Thanks.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Charlie.

42
43 MS. SHEFFIELD: Do you want me to leave
44 these?

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sure. That way people
47 can bring them back to their hometowns there.

48
49 I wanted to ask a question. Now,
50

0174

1 saxitoxin, now, you can't cook it out of the animal?

2

3 MS. SHEFFIELD: No, you cannot cook it,
4 you.....

5

6 REPORTER: Can you turn on that
7 microphone -- thanks.

8

9 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah, you cannot --
10 thanks. You cannot cook it, you cannot freeze it out.
11 So it is water soluble but it is some really potent
12 stuff. The Army tried to weaponize it, they probably
13 have, actually, because it is so persistent and it's
14 hard to break it down. It is a nerve toxin and so when
15 you eat something it goes right in your blood stream,
16 it goes right up here and it starts blocking your --
17 it's a sodium channel blocker so it starts blocking
18 your signal so, you know, you're telling make a fist
19 and pretty soon, ahh, I can't make a fist, there's
20 nothing wrong with me, I can't make a fist, that's the
21 signaling. So it's a nerve toxin, it goes that way.
22 It works that way. And it can work pretty quickly.
23 That's why some people, if you get a dose right away
24 you start feeling the tingly lips.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What can reverse it?

27

28 MS. SHEFFIELD: Nothing. So what
29 they'll do, if you have a serious case of it, they'll
30 try to -- like I say, you'll -- the hard part is when
31 your diaphragm gets paralyzed, so they can -- if it's
32 really that bad, which, you know, that occurs
33 sometimes, they'll put you on a ventilator, they'll
34 medivac you out and put you on a ventilator. But
35 you'll -- you know, your body will be shedding it every
36 -- and trying to get it out of you as fast as possible.
37 You'll know something's wrong.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
40 Anybody else have questions.

41

42 MS. FREYTAG: May I.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Mary.

45

46 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah.

47

48 MS. FREYTAG: Yes, just going back
49 to.....

50

0175

1 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair.

2

3 MS. FREYTAG:what Charlie was
4 saying about the crab, were they testing the crab also
5 because the crab are, they eat anything and everything
6 so -- and a lot of our residents subsist on the crab
7 and they send out to the villagers that can't go out
8 and get them so I just was concerned about that and if
9 they do the crab.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 MS. SHEFFIELD: Good question. So the
14 -- Charlie was right, like the stomach of the crab, the
15 guts of the crab are where it would be, right, it would
16 eat the algae and it would have the poison in the guts.
17 So that -- know that it is not in the legs. So the
18 meat -- if you break off the legs you wouldn't have
19 exposure to it, but if you cook it all as whole in the
20 pot, it wouldn't be a good thing because then it would
21 let go and it'd be all in the juice. But they are,
22 Norton Sound Health Corporation is looking -- going to
23 look at crab. I think they just ordered, or they have
24 plans to order 10 crab from different places and that's
25 why they're asking, if you want to send in seafood like
26 tuna kits. Again, the big problem was from July to
27 late August last year, so right now it's not such a
28 concern until the water heats up.

29

30 MS. FREYTAG: Yeah, a lot of the
31 residents that do subsist on the crab towards the --
32 they like to drink the juice.....

33

34 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah. Yeah, eat the
35 gills.

36

37 MS. FREYTAG:you know from right
38 there instead of the legs, we call that the soup and
39 it's a delicacy. So thank you.

40

41 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah. Yeah. And it's
42 -- it is just something to be aware of and hopefully
43 we'll get more information if -- and certainly there'll
44 be notification if something goes out. Along those
45 lines there is a study ongoing on walruses so the --
46 they're taking the NOAA researcher, her name is Kathy
47 LaFayette out of Seattle, she's working at St. Lawrence
48 Island and taking a full suite of tissue from walrus so
49 she's taking unuk and then she tests the intestine,

50

0176

1 she's testing the kidney, she's testing the liver,
2 she's testing the meat, she's testing the blubber.
3 Right now it looks like meat and blubber will -- are
4 not affected in any dangerous way and I think she does
5 not know yet regarding kidney, liver, intestine so if
6 that's a help, too, for anybody who's hunting marine
7 mammals.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mary. Ron,
10 online had a question or comment. Ron.

11

12 MR. KIRK: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 Through the Chair. What was that number you have,
14 ma'am, and do you have a phone number we can contact
15 you?

16

17 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah. Do you mean me
18 or.....

19

20 MR. KIRK: Yeah, you.

21

22 MS. SHEFFIELD: My number is 907-434-
23 1149. And I live here in Nome. My name is Gay
24 Sheffield.

25

26 MR. KIRK: Okay. I have another
27 question. You say this algae is active when the water
28 gets warm; is that correct, and if that is correct,
29 what will happen to our kelp coming spring when the
30 water warms up and the herring fish come in? See, I've
31 been bringing up this issue to the scientists and to
32 Fish and Wildlife for years about our ocean water, the
33 bedding, the bedding of our ocean out there. Every
34 time the Earth shifts our ocean floor cracks open and
35 every time it cracks open we don't know what comes out
36 from under the ground out there under the ocean. It
37 could be mercury, it could be something harmful like
38 that. And anything like that that's going to affect
39 our subsistence way of life is very important to us,
40 that stuff needs to be studied out there. What I'm
41 concerned about is this algae that you're talking
42 about, it mingles with the plankton and if the plankton
43 is out there in the ocean and the fish eat the
44 plankton, the smaller fish eat the plankton and then
45 the bigger fish eat the smaller fish we'll be in dire
46 trouble. We're already having problems with our fish
47 throughout the region. We got no salmon coming in, no
48 fish coming in and now we have this new disease coming
49 in to our marine mammals out there, I'm pretty sure

50

0177

1 it's going to affect our fish too.

2

3 So is there any study being done
4 concerning our kelp and our fish because this spring
5 when the ice is gone and the herring, everybody is
6 going to be going out there going after kelp and
7 herring eggs and the herring. So that's my concern,
8 once this algae gets blooming and the plankton and
9 stuff get into it and the fish get into the plankton,
10 then what, is that being studied?

11

12 MS. SHEFFIELD: All right, so there's a
13 lot in your statements and questions so that's good,
14 and I'm really glad you voiced up. So know that the
15 algae doesn't affect the fish, it doesn't affect the
16 crab, they can eat it and they're okay with it, it
17 bothers seal -- you know mammals and birds, and we're a
18 mammal as well. So it won't bother the herring eggs,
19 it won't bother the -- actually it won't bother the
20 crab, the thing is that we need to know when it is in
21 high number so we know not to eat the stomach of the
22 crab, that kind of thing. So -- and we know not to eat
23 the guts of the herring, something like that.

24

25 But, you're right, as it is in the food
26 chain, it can concentrate, like in a clam, like in a
27 herring, and then a whale comes and eats a herring,
28 maybe it gets a dose.

29

30 So we've been living with alexandrium
31 all this time. All this time. And if you go back,
32 when I -- if this is any comfort, Wenton Wayapuck, Jr.,
33 from Wales, when this first issue broke, he wrote me a
34 letter and this was about 2016 when they first started
35 talking about this, and he wrote, and I've never met
36 him in person, but he wrote me and said, you need to
37 look back, I think we've gone through this before, long
38 ago, so he said you need to go find -- the Park Service
39 has a book of place names and he goes, I don't know
40 where, the name of the book or anything, but find that
41 book so I went to the Park Service and there is a book
42 of place names for the northern Seward Peninsula and
43 there is a place called Ipnarik*, which is about 18
44 miles northeast of Shishmaref where they turn the dogs
45 around during Spring Carnival, if that gives you an
46 idea. And in that place name history, it doesn't give
47 a date, it's from long ago, if you know what I mean.
48 That place name is a place where several people died
49 after eating -- or several people died during a red

50

0178

1 tide and often times red tide is another word for
2 harmful algae bloom. So maybe when things were
3 warming, or times were different, we have lived with
4 this.

5
6 We do know that recently, up until
7 fairly recently it's not unusual to find it in the guts
8 of walrus or the guts of bowhead even, even up in
9 Barrow. Sea lions. Bearded seal. Small amounts of
10 it. It's only recently that we're starting to realize
11 that there's maybe sometimes in the summer when it does
12 start growing a little too fast and that is being
13 studied. So I hope that is being studied, we need more
14 of it. I think this region should be -- you know I
15 heard this meeting yesterday, there's a lot of concern
16 about -- god, there's a lot of concern, I didn't know
17 the Western Arctic Herd was in the state it was or the
18 -- or, you know, the level the trouble the people are
19 having voicing up about the bycatch, but, anyway, know
20 that it is being studied. We, of course, need more.
21 And I think the biggest -- I don't know what community
22 you're in, do you know?

23
24 REPORTER: Stebbins.

25
26 MS. SHEFFIELD: Okay. Stebbins.

27
28 MR. KIRK: Stebbins.

29
30 MS. SHEFFIELD: Stebbins. Okay, so
31 Stebbins, yep.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Stebbins.

34
35 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yep. So Norton Sound
36 Health Corporation is going to be coming to Stebbins
37 and asking for help with your -- through your IRA
38 Council for sampling the sea water so we can get a
39 handle on whether or not there is a growth, a big bloom
40 or a high growth of the harmful algae species and I
41 would encourage you to have your Council work with the
42 Norton Sound Health Corporation on that. That is
43 local. That is paid. And that is going to provide
44 really important information on a long-term monitoring
45 of our region. And you're in southern Norton Sound so
46 that matters, especially.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

0179

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron. Thank
2 you, Gay.

3
4 MR. KIRK: One more question, Mr.
5 Chair.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think Tommy you got
8 a short quick one. I got -- we got time constraints
9 here, we're going to have somebody calling in here
10 about now, so Tommy's got something.

11
12 MR. GRAY: So I hear not to worry about
13 crabs but in the guts it can get caught up in it, in
14 the seals and oogruks and that's a delicacy to us,
15 right, the guts, can this, whatever you call it,
16 compound year after year and get more toxic and more
17 toxic over time or it kind of washes out? And a good
18 example of a concern would be look at all the crabs
19 that people ate in the last two weeks. And -- and I
20 mean if it's washed out of the system and not an issue
21 that's fine, but hopefully everybody's looking at all
22 different angles on this.

23
24 MS. SHEFFIELD: Good point. So it's a
25 plant. So right now, hopefully our water is too --
26 still too cold, we're ice covered, I mean it's not -- I
27 mean it's not -- I don't think people are really
28 concerned when we have sea ice because that's not the
29 environment it wants, it's a warm water loving plant.
30 It does not build up its toxin, it's got enough giddyup
31 as it is so it just is what it is, it's just a plant
32 that produces a toxin. There's several different
33 kinds. But this one you really don't want and we seem
34 to -- we've had it.

35
36 MR. LEAN: Let me.....

37
38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Charlie's got
39 something to add here.

40
41 MR. LEAN: So -- so saxitoxin is
42 consumed by clams or filter feeders and then something
43 like a crab, crabs eat lots of clams, seals eat lots of
44 clams and so it bioaccumulates in those predators of
45 the second and then saxitoxin in people has a half life
46 of two years or something. So if you get really sick
47 from saxitoxin and then get a small dose a year away
48 you could -- it could be much worse than you think it
49 should be so there is a -- a half life, it's pretty
50

0180

1 short, but there's always some -- it takes awhile to
2 get out of your body.

3

4 So I think that's the answer.

5

6 You know, and also on the kelp -- kelp
7 is not a plant that would -- kelp doesn't eat other
8 algae, so it's not susceptible to this at all. And
9 eggs, like herring spawn is an encapsulated thing that
10 has a shell on it and it can't -- the eggs themselves
11 don't get saxitoxin.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, well,
14 thanks, folks. That's a lot of good information for
15 people to be packing around in their back pocket and
16 taking it home.

17

18 MS. SHEFFIELD: Call if you see
19 anything.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah.

22

23 MS. SHEFFIELD: That's the thing.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, we got somebody
26 online here but just a comment, I seen over 10 years
27 ago raven killing the murrens over here in Dry Creek as
28 a bus driver, and I caught pollock and I caught grey
29 cod back in the late '90s, late '90s here, so
30 something's been changing for a long time in our water.

31

32 But, anyway, we have Brian Newland
33 online, am I right?

34

35 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa for.....

36

37 MR. NEWLAND: You betcha.

38

39 MS. PILCHER:the record, I
40 believe.....

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Gay.

43

44 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Charlie.

47

48 MS. PILCHER: All right, Brian, are you
49 available?

50

0181

1 MR. NEWLAND: Yes, ma'am.

2

3 MS. PILCHER: All right, the floor.....

4

5 MR. NEWLAND: You betcha. All right,
6 well, good morning everybody. I hope you're all doing
7 well. Mr. Chairman, thanks for having me here with the
8 Council today. My name is Brian Newland. I serve as
9 the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian
10 Affairs here at the Department of the Interior and
11 appreciate the opportunity to join you all by phone
12 today to talk about the President's proposed budget for
13 the upcoming fiscal year and the proposal to move the
14 Office of Subsistence Management from the Fish and
15 Wildlife Service over to our office here at the Office
16 of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

17

18 I think most of you know that last year
19 the Department of the Interior, along with USDA and
20 NOAA hosted a number of tribal consultation sessions as
21 well as listening sessions on how to improve our
22 Federal Subsistence Management Program so that we can
23 better meet the needs of subsistence users and Alaska
24 Native subsistence users. One of the top asks of all
25 of those who participated in those consultations and
26 listening sessions, and this was consistent across the
27 board was a request that we move the Office of
28 Subsistence Management from the Fish and Wildlife
29 Service to the direct supervision of the Secretary of
30 the Interior, or policy office. And this is consistent
31 with what we, here, at the Department heard way back in
32 2010 when the Department was conducting a statewide
33 review of the Federal Subsistence Program. So this has
34 been a consistent ask of folks of the Department for
35 the past 13 years.

36

37 And, you know, I think everybody on the
38 line and in the room knows that subsistence practices
39 are vital to the way of life for Alaska Native
40 communities and people and in addition to non-Native
41 rural Alaskans. Alaska Natives and other rural
42 Alaskans depend heavily on subsistence to meet their
43 food needs and for Alaska Natives it's vital to
44 maintain their way of life.

45

46 During our consultation sessions last
47 year we heard a number of comments about the harmful
48 impacts of climate change. I came on the line just now
49 and was listening to some of that and we recognize that

50

0182

1 these impacts affect all subsistence users in Alaska.
2 And the comments that we heard in the consultations
3 also highlighted the need for us to expand tribal
4 partnerships and improve the incorporation of
5 indigenous knowledge into our subsistence management
6 program.

7
8 So elevating the Office of Subsistence
9 Management to my office is going to, we believe, ensure
10 that the Program gets a higher level of policy
11 visibility here at the Department of the Interior, as
12 well as access to resources necessary to carry out its
13 mission. And if this proposal is adopted by Congress
14 the Office of Subsistence Management will continue to
15 provide support for the Federal Subsistence Management
16 Program for the benefit of all rural users consistent
17 with Title VIII of ANILCA. And the Department believes
18 that this move would strengthen the program and all
19 users would benefit from the additional opportunities
20 here in our office to leverage indigenous knowledge and
21 enhance partnerships and collaboration with tribes
22 across Alaska.

23
24 So as for the details itself, what I
25 can share with you today is that under this proposal,
26 all of OSM's functions and funding would move from the
27 Service over to our office here at the Assistant
28 Secretary level at Indian Affairs and that all OSM
29 Staff would retain their positions and responsibilities
30 unless they chose to remain with the Fish and Wildlife
31 Service. So I want to emphasize this, again, that this
32 move would not result in changes to Staffing. All OSM
33 Staff would keep their positions and responsibilities.
34 Of course, those who are Fish and Wildlife Service
35 employees who want to remain with the Service would
36 have the ability to do that at their choice.

37
38 As part of our budget request we're
39 also asking Congress to provide an additional 2.5
40 million dollars to OSM, which would add 1.5 million to
41 the existing FRMP Program, and another million dollars
42 to begin a Wildlife Resource Monitoring Program similar
43 to the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

44
45 As it stands right now this proposal
46 wouldn't go into effect unless Congress approved it as
47 it's currently structured in the upcoming
48 appropriations process and as I mentioned at the top,
49 this proposal has been submitted to Congress, and we're
50

0183

1 going to continue to work with Congress over the next
2 several months as it works on the President's FY24
3 budget request and getting a new budget in place for
4 the upcoming fiscal year.

5

6 So, with that, Mr. Chairman, and
7 members, I want to thank you again for allowing me this
8 time to join you this morning, and I'd be happy to take
9 a few questions.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brian.
12 Anybody at the table.

13

14 Tommy, go ahead.

15

16 MR. GRAY: So my head is spinning here
17 trying to keep up with what you were saying. You know
18 I'm -- I guess a couple of questions. This move from
19 Fish and Wildlife sounds -- it sounds like a good thing
20 but like anything else -- I'm the head of the Beluga
21 Whale Committee and I'm under NO -- with NMFS and I am
22 starting -- I have no program dollars on -- and so it
23 sounds like you're moving money over and you're going
24 to get a couple million extra dollars to improve on
25 programs which sounds great, but, you know, I guess the
26 one question is, is it reality that we're going to be
27 able to improve the program in dollars in the program
28 under this new regime and maintain our -- where we're
29 at, I guess.

30

31 The other issue is with this move, I
32 would think that there would be help with our
33 subsistence salmon issues here in Alaska. Hopefully
34 Biden and his team would look at our -- you know,
35 nobody wants to acknowledge we have a salmon problem
36 and our salmon resources are dying and I mean look at
37 the Yukon River, it's all but dead. And we need help
38 from agencies like the agency that you're moving this
39 program to and -- and make it a big deal. I mean the
40 politics involved in this has the -- the players on
41 let's rape the resource side, and we need help.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Tom.

44

45 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you for that. Let
46 me just respond to that, is that, I am a member of
47 President Biden's Team and Administration here and I
48 will say that -- I will acknowledge that there are --
49 we have a lot of concerns with the state of salmon and,

50

0184

1 particularly in the Yukon and Kuskokwim, and I've been
2 up to Alaska several times in the last year to engage
3 in tribal consultations and meetings with folks about
4 that and working with colleagues here at the Department
5 of the Interior, as well as Commerce on addressing that
6 very issue. And I just wanted to make sure I
7 acknowledged that part as well.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brian.

10 Just a comment. There's been a study done on this and
11 it took into the consideration the health of the
12 Pacific Rim, I think, and it had to do with salmon, and
13 now at that point of time when they did that, it was
14 like in the early 2000s, I think. It's been a long
15 time since I seen the report. But, anyway, it honed in
16 on the necessity of salmon throughout, you know, the
17 Lower 48, Northwest Alaska, Japan, Russia and what not,
18 but there were two salmon production areas identified
19 on the West Coast of Alaska and one was the Bristol
20 Bay, we all hear about the big red salmon fishery down
21 there. It seems to be going along just fine, it's
22 healthier than heck. But the other one is the Norton
23 Sound. Now the Norton Sound has been tripping over
24 itself for the last 40 years, so I just wanted to put
25 that in your hand there, that you might want to look
26 into the Norton Sound. It's not just the Yukon and the
27 Kuskokwim, the Norton Sound was the first failures in
28 Nome Subdistrict to be exact, where the beginning of
29 the chum crash started, that I recall, in my last 40
30 years around here. So you might want to stick that one
31 in your pipe to allow -- and add that to the Yukon and
32 Kuskokwim, Norton Sound is an important contributor to
33 the salmon population of the Pacific Rim.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anybody else online
40 have anything to add or ask of Brian.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing nobody online
45 I'll go to Tommy.

46

47 MR. GRAY: This is Tom Gray again. And
48 I just assume that you would understand our situation
49 up here, you know, Norton Sound is -- has struggled

50

0185

1 with the salmon issues and both Norton Sound and the
2 Yukon need -- I don't want to call it political help
3 but I think we do need political help. And it -- we're
4 -- we're not going to solve our issues without some
5 higher powers or somebody that has a lot more control
6 than we do. We've been pushed aside for 20, 30 years.

7

8 And the -- the heartache that I have is
9 agencies will not pay attention until it's a crises,
10 well, we're in a crises mode now. And we do need help.

11

12 But the reason I got back on is you
13 talk about moving from Fish and Wildlife to
14 subsistence, how far out are you looking at this move
15 happening?

16

17 MR. NEWLAND: Well, this is -- so this
18 is a budget proposal. It's in the President's budget
19 request. and the way that would work is Congress would
20 have to approve it and I think in an ideal world, you
21 know, the old days, you know, budgets were done earlier
22 in the year but I think realistically we're looking at
23 several months to coordinate with Congress on a budget
24 for the next year and then the move -- the process of
25 moving would begin after that. That's the best
26 timeline I can give you right now. So it's --
27 realistically that process wouldn't begin for, at
28 least, several more months, depending on when Congress
29 takes up the budget.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for your
32 comment, Tommy.

33

34 One of the things Brian -- this is
35 Louis Green, sorry I didn't introduce myself earlier,
36 I'm the Chair.

37

38 You know, I kind of threw it out there
39 that co-management's kind of a buzz word anymore, it
40 seems to me. I've been involved in this stuff for 30
41 years, going back to 1993 when I first got involved in
42 these discussions at committee levels, and one thing I
43 really want to stress is that if it's going to be a co-
44 management, the Feds and the State need to start
45 working together, because those fish maybe they're out
46 in the Bering Sea for our area, the Bering Sea where
47 they're rearing and they start off in the river, and
48 they go out into the Bering Sea and they go back to the
49 river, and when they're not getting back to the river,

50

0186

1 that's a marine problem. If they're leaving in good
2 numbers of our rivers, through the State system,
3 they're getting out in the Federal waters and they're
4 not coming back, there's something going on in the
5 marine waters.

6
7 Yeah, there's climate change, I get all
8 that, but there are other fisheries taking place under
9 Federal jurisdiction.

10

11 So that would be my biggest concern is
12 whether or not the Feds and the State are really going
13 to co-manage our resources. They haven't in the last
14 30 years I've been involved. I haven't seen a very
15 good working relationship so I would like to see you
16 carry that to the President, or whomever you're working
17 there with.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Mary Freytag, Council.

24

25 MS. FREYTAG: Yes, thank you. Not a
26 question, just a comment. I just want to applaud the
27 traditional customs and knowledge that you guys are
28 going to be incorporating into the program. It's very
29 critical because a lot of the subsistence users, you
30 know, are indigenous to this region and all of that
31 knowledge there needs to be shared, so I just want to
32 applaud your guys' mission.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mary. Any
37 other Council.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Online, Ron and
42 Robert.

43

44 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, Ron Kirk,
45 Stebbins.

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Was that you Kirk?

48

49 MR. KIRK: Hello, Brian, Ron Kirk,

50

0187

1 Stebbins. I am concerned about our fish. If the
2 Federal government is going to take over the U.S. Fish
3 and Wildlife, my concern is we're having fish problems
4 around the Norton Sound and the Kuskokwim area and the
5 Federal government allows commercial fishing down in
6 the Bristol Bay area or somewhere, and how do you --
7 how do we know that our stock doesn't mingle with the
8 Bristol Bay fish, then start coming up and by the time
9 it gets here it's a way less stock than before. If
10 we're stopping commercial crabbing and commercial
11 fishing in the Yukon area, why can't we put a little
12 damper on the commercial fishing elsewhere to
13 revitalize our stock, bring it back up. Because we're
14 subsistence all over the state of Alaska and, we, on
15 the Board right now -- Federal Seward Peninsula Board,
16 all of us on this Board, we're not fighting for
17 ourselves, we're fighting for our children's children's
18 future. What are they going to be looking at in their
19 future, in their lives, when we're gone.

20

21 That's my concern.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron.

26

27 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you for that.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Brian.

30

31 MR. NEWLAND: I was just going to
32 acknowledge Ron's comment there and thank you for that.
33 I share your desire to protect traditional ways of life
34 for coming generations. That's something that's
35 important to Secretary Haaland. It's something that's
36 important to me, not only in my role as Assistant
37 Secretary, but personally and making sure that --
38 making sure that future generations have the ability to
39 exercise their rights and to maintain their way of life
40 as our ancestors have worked to protect.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brian.

43

44 MR. KIRK: Yes, that would.....

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I would -- oh, go
47 ahead, Ron, you're still on.

48

49 MR. KIRK: Yes, that's my concern

50

0188

1 there, is our children's children's future is we have
2 to think about them, not us, them. It's their future
3 we're thinking about. They have to live and try to
4 live off the land, and with all this algae and all this
5 flu going around, bird flu, and marine mammal flu,
6 everything happening out there in this planet, we have
7 to think about how to teach them to learn and survive a
8 subsistence way of life.

9

10 Thank you, Brian.

11

12 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you. Friends, I
13 apologize, I'm going to -- I can maybe take one more
14 quick question or comment, I have another meeting
15 coming up in four minutes, but I appreciate, again, the
16 chance to visit with you by phone today and just kind
17 of explain a little more in-depth about the proposed
18 move of OSM.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brian. So
21 just one last comment out of me, I'm Chair.

22

23 You know this study that I talked about
24 that took place back in the, I think it was in the
25 '80s, it was so important to do that study that when
26 the findings of it pointed to the necessity of having
27 salmon in our streams, tribes and the Federal
28 government and maybe the States down below there, I
29 think California, Oregon and Washington, they got all
30 behind it and they cleaned their rivers up, they got
31 rid of the dams, or they made water ladders or whatever
32 it was for the salmon to get around. But today the
33 Columbia River salmon is so important, they're working
34 on that right now. They're -- I've heard something in
35 the news, I haven't followed up on it yet but it's
36 really important down there, but we have the Yukon and
37 the Kuskokwim and the whole Norton Sound, Norton Sound
38 being one of two salmon production areas in Western
39 Alaska, those are really important to the whole outlook
40 of the health of the Pacific Rim also.

41

42 So I hope that from our conversation
43 here that you can bring that to the table, too.
44 Because we're not any less important than Washington or
45 Oregon or the Columbia River.

46

47 So thank you very much for your time.

48

49 MR. NEWLAND: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

50

0189

1 And let me just emphasize that the tribe that I come
2 from, we're based in the Great Lakes. I grew up in a
3 fishing community. We have Treaty fishing rights, a
4 difference in subsistence fishing, but what I wanted --
5 the reason I share that and what I want to emphasize is
6 that I understand deeply, just as a person who grew up
7 with my life experience and my family, how important
8 this way of life is, and it's important for tribal
9 people in the Great Lakes, important for the people --
10 tribal people on the East Coast, it's important, of
11 course, for tribal people in the Pacific Northwest and
12 every bit as much, if not more so it's important for
13 Alaska Natives and people who depend to hunt, this
14 life, this way to feed themselves and their families.
15 And I value that, I appreciate you emphasizing that and
16 that's something that we have in mind when we come to
17 work everyday.

18
19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. All right,
20 well, thank you very much for calling in.....

21
22 MR. NEWLAND: I want to thank you for
23 your comments.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN:and having this
26 conversation with us Brian, it's really appreciated.

27
28 MR. NEWLAND: You bet. Thank you guys,
29 take care.

30
31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You, too, thank you.
32 So that moves us into -- we have two Council members
33 here that didn't get to do their community reports and
34 Mary Freytag and Martin Aukongak, you have the floor.
35 Starting with Mary, she looks like she's ready. You're
36 still awake over there somewhere.

37
38 MS. FREYTAG: Alrighty, thank you, Mr.
39 Chair. It's a pleasure to be here. It's my first
40 report, village report.

41
42 I'll begin with the moose. The moose
43 quota was met. The only concern that we had was
44 outsiders coming in with their nice planes during moose
45 season on our Federal lands and that was a big concern
46 because they take the big bulls, that's their target.
47 And that was concerning the moose.

48
49 As for the fish. The king salmon was
50

0190

1 marginal but was able to put a couple kings in my
2 freezer and like everyone else just a couple, a couple
3 three, four, five into the freezer, which is better
4 than nothing.

5

6 As for the caribou. Our hunters travel
7 each spring all the way to Granite or toward Buckland
8 for their harvest of the caribou. There were times,
9 like every 50 years the caribou do come all the way
10 down towards Unalakleet and even farther down towards
11 the Yukon, but last time that happened was when my 30
12 year old son was in middle school.

13

14 As for the muskox. A couple of
15 residents were able to harvest as the muskox has
16 migrated towards the Unalakleet area. We're getting to
17 see more and more muskox in our area right there in
18 Unalakleet.

19

20 As for the other subsistence of fish
21 such as trout and grayling. Very abundant as well as
22 the Tom Cods.

23

24 Trapping as well. We have a few
25 trappers out there and they had a really good trapping
26 season.

27

28 For the herring egg harvest. It was
29 phenomenal, boat loads and everyone got to share and
30 eat all the good, yummy, crunchy stuff.

31

32 And my last thing would be on the
33 berries. We had a very high storm surge that went all
34 the way into our mouth of the river and flooded our
35 flats where we pick the salmonberries so the
36 salmonberries last summer were very scarce but a lot of
37 the residents did fly here to Nome, Alaska because
38 there was an abundance of salmonberries here. So that
39 took care of, you know, a lot of the people for our
40 salmonberries.

41

42 And, Mr. Chairman, thank you. That is
43 the end of my report.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mary. That
46 leaves Martin.

47

48 MR. AUKONGAK: Mine's pretty short.
49 Everybody knows I wasn't here for the last meeting,
50

0191

1 sorry about that. We had that Merbok and we had to do
2 a lot of clean up.

3
4 I'm very thankful we got moose from
5 White Mountain and we got from Unalakleet too, so that
6 was very good for the community of Golovin.

7
8 And right now, you know, they get a lot
9 of Tom Cod, trout, trapping is good. My cousin got a
10 few caribou.

11
12 Moose. In January, a few people got
13 some.

14
15 And I'm very happy to be here, thank
16 you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Martin. I
19 guess we pushed it off to the side yesterday, the
20 election, so I'm going to hand that over to Nissa at
21 this point. You're on Nissa.

22
23 MS. PILCHER: All right. Once, again,
24 this is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the
25 Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council.

26
27 In accordance to the Council charter
28 Council members elect a Chair, Vice Chair and
29 Secretary for a one year term. This usually starts at
30 the beginning of the calendar year. Right now we're
31 doing it right now so this would be the officers for
32 this meeting, the remainder of this meeting and then
33 the fall meeting. So I will take the reins for the
34 election of the Chair and then I will turn it over to
35 the newly elected Chair.

36
37 So currently I would like to open the
38 floor for nominations for the Council Chair. Just keep
39 in mind that the nominations do not need to be
40 seconded.

41
42 All right.

43
44 MR. GRAY: And who -- who's in the
45 seats.....

46
47 MR. KIRK: Ron Kirk, Stebbins. I
48 nominate.....

49
50

0192

1 MR. GRAY: Who's -- who's in these
2 seats.....

3
4 MR. KIRK:Louis Green for Chair
5 and move to close nominations.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hold on, we got three
8 microphones on. Excuse me, Tommy had a question and
9 Ron had a question. So Tommy, go first.

10
11 MR. GRAY: Who fills these seats right
12 now?

13
14 MS. PILCHER: So currently Louis Green
15 is the Chair. You, Tom Green -- Tom Gray, sorry --
16 Tommy's the vice Chair, and then Elmer is the
17 Secretary. And currently we're just doing Chair.

18
19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Ron, your turn.

20
21 MR. KIRK: I nominate Louis Green for
22 Chair and move to close nominations.

23
24 MR. GRAY: I second.

25
26 MS. FREYTAG: Question.

27
28 MR. KIRK: Question.

29
30 MS. PILCHER: So Mr. Green was
31 nominated to serve as the Council Chair. Since there
32 was no other nominations I don't believe a vote is in
33 order but we could do it anyway just -- just to say we
34 did it because I'm not sure of the propriety -- yeah. So
35 all in favor say aye.

36
37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38
39 MS. PILCHER: All right. So I -- Mr.
40 Green was elected as the Council Chair.
41 Congratulations. So I will turn it back over to the
42 Chair to handle the elections for the Vice Chair and
43 then the Secretary.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, well, thanks to
46 the Council for your vote of confidence for another
47 year. I don't know -- I can't wait until Tommy gets
48 into this seat.

49
50

0193

1 MR. GRAY: No.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. So now we
5 have -- we're looking at nominations for Vice Chair at
6 this point. So I'll call on the floor -- somebody.

7

8 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair. I nominate Mr.
9 Tom Gray as Vice Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nominations need no
12 second.

13

14 MR. KIRK: I close -- I move to close
15 nominations, Mr. Chair. Ron Kirk.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Ron's moved to close.
18 Do we need a second for that.

19

20 MR. SEETOT: Second.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Elmer seconds to close
23 nominations.

24

25 MS. FREYTAG: Question.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Question's been
28 called. Those in favor say aye.

29

30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tom, you are now the
33 Vice Chairman for another year.

34

35 MR. GRAY: Okay, thanks for.....

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You can take over the
38 meeting.

39

40 MR. GRAY:the confidence -- no, I
41 -- I'll have to learn how to not talk so much.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
44 Tommy. Okay, so now that moves us into the third and
45 final, right, is the Secretary, so we're looking for a
46 nomination for an individual for Secretary.

47

48 MS. FREYTAG: This is Mary Freytag.
49 I'd like to nominate Elmer Seetot, Jr., for Secretary.

50

0194

1 MR. GRAY: Second and ask for unanimous
2 consent.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Elmer, you got
5 something.

6
7 MR. SEETOT: May I rebutt, I -- I think
8 I'm not -- I'm pretty much at the close of my tenure
9 over at the Federal Subsistence -- or the Seward
10 Peninsula and would like to get someone younger, you
11 know, to at least learn what -- what is being
12 circulating, you know, in these positions. I -- I woul
13 -- I mean let me say, I do not reject the nomination
14 but I would prefer, you know, that someone, you know,
15 learn the ropes along the way. That's what I'm trying
16 to get at.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. If you decline
21 -- if you decline the nomination then if you want to --
22 do you want to pick somebody -- do you want to nominate
23 somebody or do you want to take it.

24
25 MR. GRAY: Too late.

26
27 (Laughter)

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Too late, you're
30 already -- you've been overruled by the Vice Chair.

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So all those in
35 favor.....

36
37 MR. KIRK: You're stuck Elmer.

38
39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, somebody
40 else out there.

41
42 MR. KIRK: I was just telling Elmer
43 he's stuck with it now.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And we closed
46 nominations and there was unanimous consent, I think,
47 Elmer you are the Secretary and it's all done.

48
49 Thank you.

50

0195

1 All right, we filled all three seats
2 for another year. And that moves us into.....

3
4 (Pause)

5
6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So Nissa's pointing
7 out something here about, under M?

8
9 MS. PILCHER: Yeah.

10
11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. Under new
12 business there's an Item M, proposed changes to hunting
13 and trapping regulations in National Preserves in
14 Alaska, National Park Service, and who would be doing
15 that. Jeanette.

16
17 Jeanette.

18
19 There's two microphones ladies.

20
21 (Laughter)

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That girl with Diomede
24 written all over her shirt, she needs to sit up there
25 and be noticed too.

26
27 (Laughter)

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: My children have
30 ancestry from Diomede.

31
32 Okay, ladies you're on.

33
34 MS. KOELSCH: Good morning. (In
35 Native). Through the Chair. My name is Jeanette
36 Koelsch. For those that don't know me, I've been the
37 Superintendent of the Bering LandBridge National
38 Preserve since 2009. And I'm here to seek comment from
39 the Seward Peninsula RAC membership on a proposed
40 wildlife rule for the National Park Service and I would
41 like to give some background on this rule that began in
42 2015, was amended in 2020 and now the Park Service has
43 been asked by the Department of Interior to, again,
44 reinstate that rule.

45
46 And do you want to say who you are
47 Nikki, just in case.

48
49 MS. BRAEM: Sure. Good morning. My
50

0196

1 name's Nikki Braem and I am the Cultural Anthropologist
2 here at Bering LandBridge National Preserve in Nome.

3

4 MS. KOELSCH: I believe this rule is in
5 your packet -- yeah -- no?

6

7 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

8

9 MS. KOELSCH: Okay. Just in case, I
10 just want to make sure.

11

12 The National Park Service proposes to
13 amend its regulations for sporthunting and trapping in
14 National Preserves in Alaska. Now this proposed reg
15 would only affect sporthunters in National Preserves.
16 And Bering LandBridge is a National Preserve. This
17 would not affect any other Federal lands within the
18 Bering Strait region, just Bering LandBridge National
19 Preserve and other Preserve lands in Alaska.

20

21 This proposed rule would prohibit
22 certain harvest practices by sporthunters including
23 bear baiting and prohibit predator control or predator
24 reduction on National Preserve lands.

25

26 Some quick background on this.

27

28 ANILCA, the Alaska National Interest
29 Lands Conservation Act, allows harvests of wildlife in
30 National Preserves for subsistence purposes by local
31 rural residents under Federal regulations. ANILCA also
32 allows harvest of wildlife for the purpose by any
33 individual under the laws of the State of Alaska that
34 do not conflict with Federal laws. ANILCA requires the
35 National Park Service to manage National Preserves
36 consistent with the NPS Organic Act of 1916, which
37 directs the National Park Service to conserve the
38 scenery, natural and historic objects and wildlife in
39 the units and to provide for the enjoyment of the
40 scenery, natural and historic objects and wildlife in
41 such a manner and by such means as will leave them
42 unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

43

44 The older proposed rule in 2015 -- or
45 rule in 2015 was reversed. The 2015 rule outlined
46 certain sporthunting practices that would not be
47 allowed in National Preserves. Those included bear
48 baiting -- let's see, I don't want to forget what they
49 are -- sorry.....

50

0197

1 MS. BRAEM: Jeanette, would you like me
2 to weigh in?

3
4 MS. KOELSCH: It's a lot of papers.

5
6 MS. BRAEM: Yeah, I'll just.....

7
8 MS. KOELSCH: They included -- oh,
9 sorry -- bear baiting, harvesting of black bears, cubs
10 and sows with cubs in dens, hunting wolves and coyotes
11 during the denning period and hunting swimming caribou.

12
13 And that 2015 rule was reversed in 2020
14 to allow for those practices by sporthunters.

15
16 Now the Park Service is going back, as
17 asked, to create a reg that prohibits those practices,
18 which also includes no predator control or predator
19 reduction in National Preserves.

20
21 I don't know -- I don't know, I feel
22 like I'm droning on, or am I missing anything Nikki.

23
24 MS. BRAEM: I would just point out that
25 the take home message here is these changes affect
26 sporthunters, not Federally-qualified subsistence
27 users. So this rule change doesn't affect you or you
28 or anyone at this table, it would affect sportshunters
29 coming in to hunt on National Preserve lands in Alaska.
30 So I think that's the most important message besides
31 the various practices.

32
33 MS. KOELSCH: And those -- and just to
34 reiterate those practices that we're proposing not to
35 allow on National Preserves in Alaska would be bear
36 baiting, you know, for several reasons. The National
37 Park Service believes that bear baiting habituates
38 bears, this includes brown bears, to human food and
39 creates a public safety issue. The other one is the
40 harvesting of black bear cubs and sows with cubs in
41 dens. Hunting wolves and coyotes during the denning
42 period and would prohibit the hunting of swimming
43 caribou by sporthunters.

44
45 Did I forget anything?

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So what I'm getting is
48 it doesn't apply to the residents, basically, that are
49 Federally-qualified?

50

0198

1 MS. KOELSCH: Yeah, this only applies
2 to non-Federally-qualified, or sporthunters.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any questions.

5
6 Tommy.

7
8 MR. GRAY: Yeah, I'm -- I'm thinking
9 about wolves, and I have a problem with the wolves, and
10 if I could kill every wolf on the Seward Peninsula I
11 would.

12
13 I went to Fish and Game with the
14 question, can I kill little baby wolves, brand new born
15 baby wolves, can I kill them? And they said, according
16 to our regs you can. I just want to make sure that I
17 still have that right, especially if I end up with
18 reindeer again. And you guys are a long ways from
19 where I'm at but that -- you know, I guess I'm talking
20 on behalf of the reindeer industry also. I just -- you
21 know, we're going to be all locals and we'll fit the
22 box.

23
24 But, again, I don't condone baiting.
25 I'm a big game guide. I have -- you know if we got to
26 bait bears, black bears, brown bears, I don't condone
27 either one of them. The industry has built a
28 reputation around black bear and baiting and, you know,
29 it's unfortunate that the whole United States is in
30 that ball park. If I had my way nobody'd get to bait,
31 but on the other side of the coin if I shoot a moose
32 and I go back to that moose gut pile is that baiting,
33 to kill a bear.

34
35 So a couple of oddball questions, I
36 guess.

37
38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So that question.....

39
40 MR. GRAY: And we have Walker back here
41 who probably has more insight on that than all of us.

42
43 MR. GUSSE: I'd prefer everybody
44 to.....

45
46 REPORTER: Walker, come on up.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Your turn to the mic.
49 You can't just sit there for another day without saying
50

0199

1 something.

2

3 MR. GUSSE: Through the Chair. This is
4 Walker Gusse with the Bureau of Land Management out of
5 Anchorage. I don't have the regulation book in front
6 of me for the State regs but I'd refer everybody to the
7 State regulations as to the trapping rules and for the
8 baiting rules.

9

10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. That's your --
11 are you done, Tom?

12

13 MR. GRAY: Yeah, I'm done.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, you're done. So
16 the question I had was this is referring to the Bering
17 LandBridge Preserve, there are other Federal lands out
18 here so it doesn't apply to those. I just wanted to
19 make sure that.....

20

21 MS. KOELSCH: It doesn't apply to those
22 but it does apply to other National Preserves in the
23 State of Alaska including Wrangell-St. Elias, Noatak
24 National Preserve, the Preserve part of the Gates of
25 the Arctic, the Preserve part of Katmai National Park
26 and Preserve. Am I missing another one here?

27

28 MS. BRAEM: I think you got them.

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tommy likes it. Just
31 like that commercial of Life Cereal.

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 MS. KOELSCH: Do you have any other
36 comments that you would like to bring to the record in
37 regard to the Park Service's proposed rule to limit the
38 sporthunting practices as well limiting, or prohibiting
39 predator control and predator reduction in National
40 Preserves before we go?

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any folks on the
43 Council. Mary, you have something.

44

45 MS. FREYTAG: Not directly for the
46 Bering LandBridge, but our area, we consider certain
47 areas critical subsistence that have been utilized by
48 our ancestors for eons and eons and we had tried to
49 list them as critical so that no mining can take place

50

0200

1 but we had gotten the response back that those areas
2 that we chose weren't going to be protected. So I just
3 wanted to bring that to your attention that there are
4 still are critical areas that people do utilize for
5 subsistence and have been utilizing since time and
6 memorial, so I really thank you for this information.
7

8 MS. KOELSCH: I think, too, if you --
9 through the Chair, is it okay if I answer.
10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: (Nods affirmatively)
12

13 MS. KOELSCH: There was some discussion
14 yesterday about the Bureau of Land Management's plans
15 and input from the tribes and public and how tribes and
16 the public could comment on BLM land plans. So I do
17 know that Unalakleet has a fair amount of BLM lands and
18 so I would refer to some BLM folks here if you have
19 questions about that, those plans. Is that what you
20 were going to say Tom -- sorry.
21

22 MR. GRAY: My -- I'm going to turn my
23 hat a little bit and I'm going to be a reindeer herder.
24 I wear too many hats. You know we talk about predator
25 control. And if the reindeer industry ever got up and
26 running, up in the Park, there's going to be need for
27 predator control, I'll just say it, wolves are going to
28 be an issue. And hopefully you guys will work with the
29 locals to address those kinds of issues.
30

31 You know the industry, it's real easy
32 to say, oh, it's your problem. I mean the State said,
33 oh, it's not a big issue. We got overwhelmed by
34 caribou, we are hanging on by our fingernails as an
35 industry. We need to rebuild that industry. But we
36 need partners and work together to address issues,
37 rather than, oh, go fight it yourself. We don't
38 condone this. You know we need to be able to sit at
39 the table and work out issues.
40

41 MS. KOELSCH: I agree. And we have, at
42 the Reindeer Herder meetings, Maggie Stang, when she
43 was the State Wildlife Trooper talked to the herders,
44 that was before she went on sabbatical, maybe three
45 years ago, yeah, about predators and property and she
46 laid out the State regs for protection of life and
47 property for the reindeer herders.
48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, so just to
50

0201

1 follow up on all of this, this does not apply to
2 Federally-recognized, and Federally-recognized, I'm
3 sure, would be reindeer herders. Is there somebody
4 that would -- Nikki, go ahead, is that?

5

6 MS. BRAEM: This rule applies to non-
7 Federally -- only to non-Federally-qualified hunters.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right. Sporthunters,
10 okay. So I think that kind of seals the deal there
11 that it's local only use.

12

13 MS. KOELSCH: Yeah, and of course it
14 doesn't mean that folks can go and do these things
15 unless it's in the books to allow for it, even for
16 subsistence. So you still have to follow the State and
17 the Federal handy-dandy's for what you can and cannot
18 do so.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, I recall
21 a herder up there on the upper side of the Bering
22 Strait -- or the Seward Peninsula, there was some
23 question about dealing with defense of life and
24 property and reindeer herders, somebody's property, and
25 it was kind of getting muddled up, I think this was
26 back in the '70s or maybe even early '80s and that
27 person took a bear, it mixed with the herd, and froze
28 it and then took a chainsaw and cut it in half and
29 tagged it, freight collect to Fish and Game.

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So I just wanted to
34 throw a little bit of humor in there.

35

36 MS. KOELSCH: I did get a comment
37 online from somebody who texted me and they said that I
38 didn't make it clear enough that it would prohibit
39 sport taking of caribou, swimming caribou. So I'm just
40 clarifying -- clarifying that, that it's about swimming
41 caribou for sport so.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Any more
44 information from you ladies on this?

45

46 MS. KOELSCH: (Shakes head negatively)

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any more questions or
49 comments about it.

50

0202

1 MR. KIRK: Ron Kirk, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Ron. Let Ron go first
4 -- is that Ron?

5

6 MR. KIRK: Yes, Mr. Chair. Just
7 concern -- this is concerning the Bering LandBridge,
8 she had mentioned about predator control, there's no
9 predator control on the Bering LandBridge, is that my
10 understanding, and if that's my understanding, you have
11 to realize that we need predator control even on the
12 Bering LandBridge because a pack of wolves -- let's
13 take -- let's go wolves, let's go to the area of
14 wolves. A pack of wolves will travel over a 100 miles
15 to go get their -- to go get something to eat. Now,
16 they don't know where the Bering LandBridge ends. They
17 will cross over to Federal lands or State lands and do
18 whatever they have to do and then bring the food back
19 into the Bering LandBridge. If there's no predator
20 control in Bering LandBridge, I'd like to see that we
21 have predator control in the Bering LandBridge because
22 it's going to affect the subsistence way of life
23 outside the Bering LandBridge. Because wolves, they
24 got no -- they don't know there's an invisible gate
25 saying you can't cross the Bering LandBridge and go
26 over there and hunt something or put down a moose.

27

28 So that's my concern there.

29

30 We need to have predator control on the
31 Bering LandBridge, too.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron. I
36 think what this applies to is sporthunts and non-
37 resident, non-Federally-qualified people can't go in
38 there and do any of this and, you know, people are
39 allowed in the LandBridge that are local to take
40 wolves, take bears, there's the State defense of life
41 and property. If a bear is tearing your cabin up or
42 going after your reindeer herd or taking your dry
43 fish, ripping your stuff apart then you have the right
44 to do that, take the life of that bear, or take into
45 the wolf population if you need to remove some. so
46 that doesn't take the right away from the Federally-
47 recognized people, just the sporthunters.

48

49 Tommy.

50

0203

1 MR. GRAY: So you caught me off guard
2 there when you talked about swimming caribou. I
3 thought that all the rivers were State controlled and
4 there must be Federally-controlled waters that -- that
5 are being shut down to outsiders, so to speak, is that
6 the case?

7
8 MS. KOELSCH: So in National Preserves,
9 non -- specific to non-navigable waterways in the
10 Sturgeon case, those are still for subsistence
11 purposes, Federal water ways. If they were under --
12 truly under State management for that it would -- they
13 would also -- I don't know how to explain the issue
14 with Federal subsistence.

15
16 So in National Preserves, still, unless
17 it's been adjudicated by the State, those water ways
18 are still under Federal jurisdiction. So I guess that
19 is what I'm saying. Everything else I just said didn't
20 make any sense, I apologize. It's a -- it's
21 complicated.

22
23 Nikki's laughing.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That was a good
26 answer, you cleared it up there, it's under the
27 Federal.

28
29 MS. BRAEM: Excuse me. One -- one
30 correction.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oops, go.

33
34 MS. BRAEM: Just a minor point. So
35 there's a lot of water ways in Alaska where the
36 question of navigability has not been adjudicated and
37 -- whether it's navigable or not, a lot of water ways,
38 some are up in the Preserve. It is the BLM ultimately
39 that does the adjudication, not us and not the State of
40 Alaska. So we're all kind of in a state of one day
41 this will all get sorted out.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Nikki. Are
44 we done with this, what are we -- Nissa.

45
46 MS. PILCHER: Nissa Pilcher for the
47 record. Just so you guys are aware, this is an action
48 item so what we can do, if you wish, is we can -- I
49 believe the comment date for this is the 27th so it is
50

0204

1 looming very quickly. What we can do is we can compile
2 your comments into a -- it would be a rather short
3 comment to submit to the National Park Service about
4 this if you guys so choose to.

5

6 Just to be clear, basically what I did
7 hear from the Council was as the -- the concern of this
8 Council was ensuring that the current practices of the
9 Federally-qualified subsistence users are maintained
10 and as long as those are maintained there's no problem
11 that this Council currently has with the proposed rule
12 going forward. Is that correct?

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think you hit the
15 nail on the head, Nissa. That's fine.

16

17 (Council nods affirmatively)

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm seeing a lot of
20 yes nods here.

21

22 MR. GRAY: So moved.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second if
25 we're voting on it.

26

27 MR. KIRK: Second.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Second, Ron Kirk. All
30 those in favor.

31

32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
35 same sign.

36

37 (No opposing votes)

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none it
40 passes. Thank you, Nissa. So that's -- we're done
41 with you ladies, thank you very much.

42

43 (Pause)

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Where are we?

46

47 MS. PILCHER: So when we approved the
48 agenda yesterday we added going over a wildlife special
49 action request, 22-05. It was supposed to go after the
50

0205

1 Board of Game wildlife proposals but we kind of jumped
2 around but we can start again and start with that one,
3 if that works, and then we can work down the rest of
4 the agenda.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep.

7

8 MS. PILCHER: All right. So that would
9 be Dr. Voorhees, and I will pass out the special action
10 request as it was submitted.

11

12 (Pause)

13

14 MS. FREYTAG: Mr. Chair. Just a
15 clarification, when Nissa goes through the agenda, if
16 she can point out where, on the agenda, the number and
17 the thing, so we can correspond. Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, thank you, Mary.
20 We're kind of bouncing around here so much that --
21 she's passing out this wildlife proposal here.

22

23 (Pause)

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: This is Northwest --
26 Northwest has this out there, the Kotzebue folks, the
27 group, or the Council I should say, for Mary's sake,
28 Martin -- Ron, are you there, he doesn't have a copy of
29 this.....

30

31 MS. PILCHER: Oh.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN:I'm sure, him and
34 Robert -- Robert and Ron won't have a copy.

35

36 MR. KIRK: Yeah, I'm still here, Mr.
37 Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, this was added
40 after the book was sent out, too, so go ahead Nissa.

41

42 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, apologies for that.
43 Yeah, we just got it, I believe, on Tuesday. It is on
44 the meeting website materials but that's probably --
45 oh, yeah.....

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Maybe we could take
48 pictures and send it to your cell phones.

49

50

0206

1 (Pause)

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. Ron, did
4 you hear me, this is Louis?

5

6 MR. KIRK: Yeah, I heard you. If
7 you're going to do that, you can send it to 944-1182.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, I heard 944-
10 1182, is there another number also?

11

12 MR. MOSES: This is Robert, 739-1334.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: 73.....

15

16 MR. MOSES: 9.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you.

19

20 MR. MOSES: 1334.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: 1334.

23

24 (Pause)

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep, she's doing the
27 side show over here, you guys have the main floor show.
28 Start dancing.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Brian.

33

34 Dr. Hannah.

35

36 DR. VOORHEES: Good morning, Mr. Chair
37 and members of the Council. This is Hannah Voorhees,
38 Anthropologist with Office of Subsistence Management.
39 And this is a brief presentation on a special action
40 request pertaining to caribou in Unit 23. This was
41 recently submitted by the Northwest Arctic Regional
42 Advisory Council and it's been named WSA22-05.

43

44 This is an action item so I'll be
45 looking for the Council's formal recommendation.

46

47 During their meeting on March 6th and
48 7th, the Northwest Arctic Council submitted a special
49 action request asking that the Federal Subsistence
50 Board reduce the harvest limit in Unit 23 to four

0207

1 caribou, only one of which may be a cow per year, for
2 the remainder of the 2022 to 2024 regulatory cycle,
3 which ends on June 30th, 2024.

4

5 This request is intended to align with
6 proposals submitted by the Kotzebue AC and the Western
7 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group to the Board of Game.
8 The Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group also
9 expressed its intent to submit their proposal to the
10 Federal Subsistence Board.

11

12

13 These proposals are being submitted in
14 responses to the declining caribou herd numbers. The
15 most recent estimate for the Western Arctic Caribou
16 Herd based on the 2022 census places the herd at
17 164,000 and in addition to their special action
18 request, the Northwest Arctic Council also submitted
19 this proposal as a standard regulatory proposal. And
20 that means, if adopted, the regular proposal would go
21 into effect in July 2024, but this special action that
22 I'm putting before you right now is meant to cover the
23 time until then.

23

24

25 So currently in Unit 23, as you know,
26 there's a harvest limit of five caribou per day under
27 Federal subsistence regulations and residents of Unit
28 22 have a customary and traditional use determination
29 for caribou in Unit 23, and this is why this special
30 action request is coming before your Council.

30

31

32 And OSM will be scheduling a public
33 hearing, we don't yet have specific information on when
34 or how that will be held but we should know soon and
35 there will also be an opportunity for consultation by
36 tribes and ANCSA Corporations, if requested, through
37 OSM.

37

38

39 So there's not yet an analysis for
40 WSA22-05 since this was a very recent special action
41 request so we don't have much more information to bring
42 before you right now. But this is your opportunity to
43 weigh in as a Council on this request.

43

44

45 Thank you, Mr. Chair. And Brian
46 Ubelaker and I are here if you have any questions.

46

47

48

49

50

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. So what

0208

1 you're saying, that if this gets implemented -- when?

2

3 DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair. There's no
4 set timeline for the special action request but I would
5 wager that it could be in effect for the fall hunting
6 season this year.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. That's some
9 kind of a timeline now. So if everybody votes this in
10 -- which is -- because we're part of the -- we utilize
11 part of that herd it's coming across our table, folks.

12

13 Anybody got a comment, I think Tommy's
14 smiling over here.

15

16 MR. GRAY: So my comment was is I was
17 part of that process to come up with four caribou so
18 I'm going to support it.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And so this is one
21 year, this is a yearling thing or is this going to be
22 -- yeah, that's what I'm asking, is it permanent?

23

24 DR. VOORHEES: This is a special action
25 request so it would be in place for one regulatory
26 cycle.

27

28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

29

30 MR. GRAY: Except you're also asking it
31 to go into the regular cycle which would -- now what
32 would it be, a permanent?

33

34 DR. VOORHEES: So we currently -- OSM
35 has an open period and we're accepting proposals to
36 change Federal subsistence regulations for wildlife and
37 so this proposal, assuming that we do, in fact, have it
38 submitted as a regular proposal, will be coming before
39 this Council at the appropriate time and then would go
40 into effect in July 2024.

41

42 MR. GRAY: You didn't answer my
43 question.

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 MR. GRAY: If it goes through the
48 Council in '24 and is adopted, is that law from then on
49 until it's a -- a proposal goes in to change it back?

50

0209

1 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair,
2 that's correct. Any standard regulatory proposal is in
3 place until changed by another regulatory proposal.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So it's a --
8 when is that cycle coming up? I'm just trying to make
9 sure. If we're going to do something like this, and my
10 feeling is if it's a one year, this is a special action
11 for one year, I could see that but the one question I
12 was going to have is you pointed out it might be in
13 place in the fall hunt, is that -- what does that do
14 for sporthunting, that's all, there's a lot of
15 sporthunting going up on up there.

16
17 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you for that
18 question. There is currently a closure on a portion of
19 Federal public lands in Unit 23 and a small portion of
20 26A for caribou, it's a closure to non-Federally-
21 qualified users so while this -- this only applies to
22 -- this change that's been proposed would only affect
23 Federal regulations -- yeah, there currently is a
24 closure. So I don't know if that answered your
25 question.

26
27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, so it only
28 applies on Federal lands and non-qualified can't hunt
29 on Federal lands so this applies to basically local
30 folks.

31
32 DR. VOORHEES: they can apply -- excuse
33 me -- they can hunt on some Federal public lands for
34 caribou in Unit 23 but -- and I can read the closure
35 language to you if you'd like.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So I guess I'm
38 trying to home in on this -- I know the State's got a
39 hunt up there, we're looking at Unit 23, is what I'm
40 referring to.

41
42 DR. VOORHEES: Uh-huh.

43
44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So there's a State
45 hunt up there too, is this going to apply to only
46 Federal lands or will it apply to State lands?

47
48 DR. VOORHEES: This will only apply to
49 Federally-qualified subsistence users hunting on
50

0210

1 Federal lands, however, a similar proposal has been
2 submitted to the Alaska Board of Game.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so there you go,
5 that filled the gap.

6

7 Nissa.

8

9 MS. PILCHER: Nissa Pilcher for the
10 record. Just to -- just to note. So the proposal was
11 submitted to the Board of Game, it would not be enacted
12 for this current hunting season, they'd vote on it in
13 January of 2024 for the 20243 hunting season. There is
14 a process to submit the equivalent of a special action
15 request to the Board of Game but they have timelines --
16 it would actually be an emergency petition at this
17 point if one was submitted. So I'm just saying that
18 there might be a lag on the State side. This is an
19 immediate -- the special action request would be an
20 immediate action. The proposal that was submitted to
21 the Board of Game is going to have a lag just because
22 of how their process works.

23

24 That's all.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So it's going
27 to happen to both but if we -- if -- if this one goes
28 through then it gets enacted on Federal lands by the
29 fall hunt?

30

31 DR. VOORHEES: Most likely.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that only applies
34 to local folks.

35

36 DR. VOORHEES: Correct. And thank you,
37 nissa, for those qualifications.

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So in other words if
40 the -- on Federal lands for local folks this applies
41 this coming fall, State sporthunters can still hunt and
42 they can get five a day; am I right?

43

44 DR. VOORHEES: That's exactly right.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That kind of sounds a
47 little bit out of balance.

48

49 Tommy, go ahead.

50

0211

1 MR. GRAY: So I was involved with the
2 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group when this all
3 was proposed. The State's going to come in line. They
4 are going to follow suit on this thing. The -- the
5 problem that we have, and now I'm wearing my Western
6 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group hat, the problem
7 we've got is we're down to 165,000 animals and we have
8 a management graph that dictates how many harvestable
9 surplus animals are available and in reality we're
10 below the ANS. Our subsistence users, and I'm just
11 going to use -- exaggerate numbers -- our subsistence
12 users need 15,000 animals and what is out there with
13 165,000 animals is 7,000 harvestable surplus; we're in
14 an ANS situation, and the State recognizes that. They
15 don't want to deal with that. And this process right
16 here is the outcome. I mean if we push the ANS issue,
17 the State is going to blow up and be pissed off. And
18 the ANS, it automatically has shut out outsiders and
19 outside hunters are not going to be able to caribou
20 hunt after this all -- the dust settles, it'll get shut
21 down.

22
23 You know your concern about people from
24 outside, it's on its way because the numbers are so low
25 and that's what's driving all of this and that's why we
26 went -- I mean, gosh, you could have shot five animals
27 a day -- Tom Gray could have, 365 days a year, and
28 we've gone to four animals, I mean that's a drastic --
29 that's what we recommended to the Feds and to the State
30 so it's coming. It's going to happen.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so I hear what
33 you're saying Councilman Gray. My problem is, if this
34 thing gets Federally -- the Federal side enacts it then
35 Federally-recognized folks can only get four caribou
36 this year, this fall. And then if you're hunting on
37 State lands you can get five a day for a total of 20,
38 if I'm right, so I'm trying to weigh this out here.

39
40 I suppose -- I might be answering my
41 own question.

42
43 A Federally-recognized person can still
44 hunt in the State -- can still go under the State
45 regulation so they can still get their equal share of
46 20 caribou for the season, am I tracking good -- if --
47 if we do this and it's enacted in the fall hunt, it's
48 only Federal lands, this -- the State hunt is still on
49 and it's still open to a resident up there so they can
50

0212

1 still -- they could not -- we're not going to hunt on
2 Federal lands, we're going to go hunt on State lands
3 and get our five a day -- so am I tracking correctly on
4 that?

5

6 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct. And if
7 someone from the State wants to jump in as we're
8 discussing the specific State regulations, I'm happy to
9 hear that. I believe it's five caribou per day, not
10 like a 20 numbered limit.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hello Sara.

13

14 MS. GERMAIN: Good morning, how's it
15 going. This is Sara with Fish and Game in Nome. Yeah,
16 you're right it depends on what side of the line you're
17 on so in Unit 22 it's up to 20 total, five a day, but
18 Unit 23 there's no limit. So like Tom was saying up in
19 23 you could get five a day every day out of the year
20 but in 22 it caps out at 20.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So we're
23 limited to 20 already on State lands.

24

25 MS. GERMAIN: (Nods affirmatively)

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I thought they were up
28 in Northwest.

29

30 DR. VOORHEES: We're talking about Unit
31 23.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is it the same up
34 there?

35

36 MS. GERMAIN: Through the Chair. Can
37 you repeat what your question was?

38

39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There was talk that
40 you could get five a day for the whole year but I think
41 -- I thought they implemented the 20 total per hunter,
42 five a day, up to 20 per season, or per year I should
43 say, in 23 also.....

44

45 MS. GERMAIN: (Shakes head negatively)

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN:wasn't -- it's
48 not there. Okay, so they've been able to do it --
49 okay. So anyway, what this does is it applies on
50

0213

1 Federal lands, it would be the Preserve this fall is
2 basically in our area and any BLM lands, would
3 that.....
4

5 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 So if we look at Unit 23, the current closure area is
7 in Noatak National Preserve including the Nigyu River
8 portion of the Preserve in Unit 26A and BLM managed
9 lands between the Noatak and Kobuk Rivers in Unit 23,
10 and importantly this is only for August 1st to
11 September 30th that this closure exists, and that's to
12 non-Federally-qualified users. So for the rest of the
13 year, and for lands that don't fall within that
14 description, Federal public lands that don't fall in
15 this description in Unit 23, other than National Parks
16 and Monuments, then there would be this more liberal
17 limit under State regulations on State lands and it's
18 true that Federally-qualified subsistence users could
19 hunt those regulations.
20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So I understand
22 now that this is just for 23, okay, and it won't apply
23 to 22 on the Preserve?
24

25 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct. As
26 written right now this special action request is only
27 for Unit 23.
28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. That's where I
30 was having a problem there and I was worried about
31 people getting -- getting a decrease in what they are
32 able to get in our -- in our Unit 22. Okay, so I'm
33 settled with it. These folks want to implement this on
34 their own selves, if it's good for them, it's good for
35 us in my mind.
36

37 Brian, you got anything to add?
38

39 MR. UBELAKER: For the record, Brian
40 Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist with OSM. And, no, I
41 believe Hannah covered everything that needed to be
42 said. It sounds like you got it all figured out.
43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I don't know if what I
45 said anybody followed.
46

47 (Laughter)
48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. All right, so
50

0214

1 we need to take action on this, or if we choose to? Do
2 we want to act on this Tommy, Vice Chair?

3

4 MR. GRAY: What's that?

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Do we want to act on
7 this and help our friends up north?

8

9 MR. GRAY: It's a matter of time and
10 it's all going to be four.....

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, if we
13 want to vote on it let's vote on it now so it could be
14 an action item for us if we want to do it.

15

16 MR. GRAY: Like I'm saying, that.....

17

18 REPORTER: Tom. Tom, come to the mic.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any Council have
21 comments. Raymond, go ahead.

22

23 MR. HUNT: I was going to ask when --
24 when would we start on this if we were to vote on it,
25 you know, a date as to on the plan?

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hannah alluded to the
28 fact that it could happen to them, in Unit 23, by this
29 fall on Federal lands up there, not on our -- in our
30 unit, 22, correct?

31

32 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct. There's
33 a process with special action requests such as this.
34 It's for a temporary action so there will need to be a
35 public hearing, an analysis will be developed and there
36 will be a special Board meeting, the timeline of that
37 is a bit uncertain but once that's complete then it
38 could go into effect.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. So
41 the curtain is coming down, Tommy Gray has alluded to
42 that, the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group has
43 already been a part of this process so this is only up
44 in Northwest around the Kotzebue area that this is all
45 about and it falls in to place on Federal lands in the
46 fall. Is that clear enough?

47

48 (Council nods affirmatively)

49

50

0215

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So if somebody wants
2 to vote.....

3
4 MR. GRAY: I want to say something.

5
6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Tommy's got
7 something to add.

8
9 MR. GRAY: You know, I guess it really
10 surprises me that the State and the Feds didn't get
11 their act together because the message that we sent
12 from the working group was all players are going to get
13 to shoot four animals a year. It doesn't matter where
14 you live or whatever, it's four animals, whether you
15 live in Nome or you live in Wainwright, or whatever,
16 that was the intent, and I was part of that process and
17 here we are talking about dictating to Kotzebue and
18 they have proposed this to bring the numbers down
19 themselves and, yet, the Seward Peninsula's going to
20 stay at 20 animals. And now it's going to be a catch
21 up thing. I mean people are going to -- you'd think
22 there'd be some uniformity on this thing and people
23 working together to come in line to do the management
24 of this with the intent that the Western Arctic Caribou
25 Herd Working Group was trying to set up and, you know,
26 here, I've got Louis sitting next to me, that's not
27 fair, they're going to get to shoot five animals a day
28 and I'm limited to 20, and I mean that's reality.

29
30 You know, if we're going to manage this
31 resource and -- and there was a big push from the
32 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group that we want
33 to start conserving, we want to come in line and make
34 this work and, yet, you know, you guys need to be
35 working together with the State and everybody playing
36 ball together. Let's all work it out in the sandbox.

37
38 But, anyway, I just had to say that.

39
40 I'm going to vote in favor of this
41 thing but we're going to be fighting this battle this
42 fall. You guys -- somebody's going to come in and say
43 you need to go down to four animals a day and we're
44 going to propose Unit 22, I mean believe me somebody's
45 going to bring that up and here we are a half a year
46 later when -- when it could have been addressed now.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So my intent
49 earlier about this was that it was going to take our
50

0216

1 hunters down to four in Federal lands and it's not.

2

3 MR. GRAY: Not right now.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's not going to.

6 But it's going to take those folks up there in the
7 National Wildlife Refuge -- I don't know, BLM, it
8 applies to BLM lands too for Kotzebue in 23, so all
9 these lands up here, they still have open State lands
10 that they could exercise their one a day every day, or
11 10 a day or whatever it is, it's not going to go away
12 from them until the State clamps down on it.

13

14 So all I wanted to do was make sure
15 that we still had the opportunity in our area because
16 of subsistence and we're here because of subsistence
17 and I didn't want to see it limiting us and it doesn't
18 apply to us.

19

20 Brian.

21

22 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair. Brian
23 Ubelaker, OSM. Thank you. And, Mr. Gray, it's
24 actually fortuitous that you said that because the call
25 for wildlife proposals is now open and if Unit 22 would
26 like to submit a proposal to change Federal harvest
27 regulations now is your chance to do that and you can
28 take care of it now versus a half a year or year down
29 the road when population is really in trouble.

30

31 MR. GRAY: I've told you my stand on
32 proposals and managing wildlife and I think the
33 managers need to step up, you know, and not make Tom
34 Gray submit a proposal, you know, the managers need to
35 take a stand and -- and manage the regulations
36 accordingly so -- you know Tom Gray's not going to put
37 in a proposal, not for this issue. It's going to come.
38 Somebody's going to put it on the table because we
39 can't have Kotzebue having five animals a day, Nome
40 having 20 animals a year, and somebody else having four
41 animals annually, I mean shit's going to hit the fan.

42

43 So, anyway, I'm not interested in
44 proposals, but I think you guys should be talking to
45 somebody to make it happen.

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Tommy. We
48 do need to have a little bit of courtesy on the mic.

49

50

0217

1 MR. GRAY: I apologize.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I didn't call point of
4 order, I just figure I'll say it now.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so we understand
11 what this is about, it's about 23, they're asking --
12 they're putting this out there, if we want to act on it
13 we can, if we don't need to -- we don't need to act on
14 it.

15

16 MR. GRAY: No, we don't.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And so -- oh, Hannah,
19 you're going to go, maybe you're going to correct me.

20

21 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
22 just wanted to note that this would apply to Federal
23 public lands on the northern part of the Seward
24 Peninsula in Unit 23, there's some BLM lands there and
25 the Bering LandBridge National Preserve and also this
26 would apply -- so since residents of Unit 23 are
27 Federally-qualified hunters for caribou in Unit 23,
28 because you have a customary and traditional use
29 determination, this would apply to residents of Unit 22
30 if you're hunting further north.

31

32 So I just wanted to clarify that.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: North of this line.
37 This is the line, right? This is ours?

38

39 DR. VOORHEES: Uh-huh.

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: This is 23?

42

43 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct. I just
44 wanted to.....

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that's what you're
47 talking about.

48

49 DR. VOORHEES:clarify, yep.

50

0218

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anything over the
2 line.

3
4 DR. VOORHEES: Yes. Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. We're looking
7 at Deering and what not, the north -- let's see the
8 Imuruk Lake on the Kuzitrin, the Good Hope River,
9 that's all in 23, Buckland. And that would apply this
10 fall -- this is 23, so, go ahead Elmer.

11
12 MR. SEETOT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 Anyone at the table like we are, we can pretty much
14 determine -- or we just think about human removal of
15 animals and then, oh, the numbers are so down, you need
16 to look at predators -- predators that -- predators can
17 do a lot of damage to a resource. I seen that happen
18 before, whether it be the swift caribou, whether it be
19 the milling (indiscernible), whether it be the moose; I
20 seen these things happen. We talk about it all the
21 time. But it just seems that we really never take into
22 account the removal of animals by nature, extreme
23 weather events. Western Arctic Caribou Herd, they just
24 don't know, or ADF&G or U.S. Fish and Wildlife, just
25 doesn't know how many animals were in 1975, they have
26 an unknown number. But what got to me was the
27 presentation on the weather extremes in 1960 to '75, I
28 was -- I was -- that was very cold. That was very,
29 very cold. Because when I was maybe 8 or 9 maybe, we
30 used to wait for the Northstar under BIA to go to
31 Brevig because, you know, we were little tykes, poor,
32 you know, we didn't have no -- nothing, no sweets at
33 that time but Captain Mo, he used to bring candy all
34 the time and we looked forward to that. That one year
35 in September, in mid-60s, Port Clarence froze in
36 September and in that first week in September and --
37 and then looking at what was presented by Sheffield on
38 the ice conditions and it pretty much affects the whole
39 region, is that very extreme cold conditions and I
40 assume that, you know, I have -- I have heard from
41 elders in the past about the animals and -- and I think
42 that, you know, rain, frozen ground on top of their
43 feed would -- would get them to maybe expire because
44 they didn't have no food to eat.

45
46 So -- so we -- we could talk about the
47 human related removal of any natural resource to death
48 but you just got to look at the other extreme. We hunt
49 during the day, the animals at night. We don't know.
50

0219

1 The agencies, the biologists do not know what is being
2 taken from our natural resources because they don't
3 have no monitors, they don't have anybody out there to
4 see what's being removed. If I got five fish, I'll
5 know how much fish I got, without any predators taking
6 it, but if I'm not careful they are going to expire
7 sooner or later -- what -- what I'm trying to get at is
8 we mostly talk about harvesters from the human side but
9 we're not really too sure of what happens on nature
10 side and I think we're pretty much equal on that and
11 that we impose restrictions on the removal of animals
12 within our area, within the region but -- but then
13 natural wildlife, as it is, the predators, they go in,
14 when they're hungry they're hungry and they know how to
15 survive out there.

16
17 And that was pretty much what I was
18 trying to point out. We could talk forever about human
19 cause but not so much about natural mortality, predator
20 take and what not, because I have seen that happen in
21 the past and I have heard things in the past that where
22 large -- large number of natural resources, whether it
23 be fish, whether it be ducks, whether it be something
24 on land. Last summer, area the size of this space in
25 my fish camp we have Ranger Creek, where the humpies --
26 humpies, let me put it technically -- pink salmon -- go
27 to spawn. And then after they -- after they -- or
28 maybe from the year before, after they pretty much turn
29 into small fish there was a little creek that -- or
30 water way that went out but was kind of blocking --
31 kept flowing into that and it was the size of -- size
32 of this space right here and that was small fish that
33 were -- would not be able to add back to the inventory
34 out there. So many things seen and unseen that we
35 think is pretty much human caused but we just got to go
36 out there and look. Mother Nature does its duty to for
37 its own natural resources so that's where I was at.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Elmer, thank you
42 for your comment there. I'm -- if anybody wants to
43 move on this we can move on it, it's -- these folks up
44 there in 23 are doing this and they're requesting it, I
45 don't think we need to act on it if we don't want to.

46
47 MS. FREYTAG: Mr. Chair, this is Mary.

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Mary.

50

0220

1 MS. FREYTAG: Not a question, just a --
2 well, actually maybe a question. This proposal for 23,
3 was that based on a survey that was done prior to the
4 proposal or what prompt -- when was that survey done
5 and did they take climate change into effect because
6 there was a lot of rain that's been happening during
7 the winter and a lot of thick ice built up too so I was
8 just curious.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. This
13 is the result of the last photo census that ADF&G
14 conducted and I don't know the date off the top of my
15 head, they try to do one, I believe, every year.

16
17 DR. VOORHEES: Last year.

18
19 MR. UBELAKER: Okay, last year, 2022.
20 Which showed the population at 164,000 animals, which
21 prompted the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group,
22 which I was just handed their proposal they are
23 submitting, is to limit pretty much everybody that
24 hunts on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. So it would
25 include Units 21B, 22, 23, 26A, 24B, C and D. That is
26 the expected proposal that the Federal Subsistence
27 Board will be getting and I believe Northwest Arctic
28 acted preemptively to try to get ahead of it to put in
29 the special action to limit it to four for this coming
30 season.

31
32 DR. VOORHEES: For Unit 23 only.

33
34 MR. UBELAKER: Correct. Sorry.

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Oh,
37 somebody's -- go ahead, Tommy.

38
39 MR. GRAY: So I hate to put Charlie on
40 the spot but I see, and a meeting for the AC which
41 Charlie and I sit on, and I checked on that agenda, is
42 caribou, and I would assume that we're going to talk
43 about caribou issues, and he might be able to shed a
44 little light on this. He also sits on the Western
45 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and he went through
46 this process. I don't mind making a motion to adopt
47 this or support it and I will at the appropriate time
48 but the -- the proposal that you read and you said it's
49 going to the Federal Big Board is a State proposal that
50

0221

1 is going through the State system or is that just a
2 Federal proposal going through the Federal system?

3

4 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair.
5 There is an expected proposal coming to the Federal
6 side and I believe also through the Board of Game on
7 the State side, both proposing the same thing.

8

9 MR. GRAY: So like I said it's coming
10 and anyway I don't know if Charlie would have anything
11 to add to this.

12

13 MR. LEAN: So the working group, which
14 I participated in, was talking about they -- they
15 actually -- we debated whether we should try to
16 accelerate the passing of this proposal or just let it
17 go into the normal Fish and Game cycle which is a year
18 out so there was apparently disagreement with the
19 Kotzebue group and the general working group as a
20 whole, because they've taken action to move it ahead a
21 year, but the working group's proposal is still a year
22 out and, yes, we -- the language that was -- was
23 described is what we voted on and it was agreed that it
24 should be the entire -- the entire range of the Western
25 Arctic Caribou Herd, all people affected equally was
26 the thought pattern.

27

28 There was debate about the Teshekpuk
29 Herd up on the North Slope and we -- I don't remember
30 taking specific action but I think we kind of expected
31 the people in the Barrow area, or the Utqiagvik area to
32 say -- they wanted a little bit different rule for the
33 -- the Teshekpuk Herd is doing better than the Western
34 Arctic Herd, so that -- I'm not clear what's going to
35 happen there.

36

37 But the Unit 23 contingent was adamant
38 that this needed to happen soon, and they put their
39 money where their mouth is, they're trying to move it
40 up as fast as they can.

41

42 So that's what I had to say.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Charlie,
45 for weighing in.

46

47 Tommy.

48

49 MR. GRAY: So I move to support this

50

0222

1 proposal.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There's a motion on
4 the floor to support, is there a second.

5

6 MS. FREYTAG: This is Mary Freytag. I
7 second.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Call for the question,
10 somebody.

11

12 MR. SEETOT: Question.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Question's been
15 called.

16

17 MR. KIRK: Question.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Question's been
20 called. All those in favor say aye.

21

22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
25 same sign.

26

27 (No opposing votes)

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, motion
30 passes to support Unit 23, Northwest.

31

32 Thank you folks for the enlightenment.
33 Thank you, Charlie.

34

35 (Pause)

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nissa wants to be next
38 she said it's me turn. She kept saying me.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, me, it's all
43 yours.

44

45 MS. PILCHER: I was trying to be
46 succinct, so maybe I was a little too succinct.

47

48 Okay, the next item on your guys'
49 agenda is review and approve the FY22 annual report.

50

0223

1 Your annual report can be found on Page 11 in your
2 supplemental materials packet, it's the one you got at
3 the meeting, that blue folder, or the blue -- the first
4 page. I did send copies to Ron and Robert, but I can
5 certainly read it into the record if that is preferable
6 as well.

7
8 So as a reminder, your annual report
9 ensures the Board has the most up to date awareness of
10 issues, concerns and current events that impact your
11 subsistence way of life. With your report and
12 recommendations, the Board can make informed decisions
13 on regulatory and policy actions. At your last meeting
14 in October, your Council identified three different
15 topics that your Council wanted to include in this
16 report.

17
18 Topic 1. The presence of resident
19 caribou herd in the northern Seward Peninsula and the
20 lack of data on them.

21
22 Topic 2. Your concern over marine
23 mammals being taken in the Bering Sea and Aleutian
24 Island trawl fleet fishery.

25
26 Topic 3. Was to inform the Board that
27 the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee is working on
28 updating the Alaska Beluga Management Plan.

29
30 At that meeting you were informed that
31 I -- after hearing from everyone at that meeting, I
32 would draft the report and I would bring it back to you
33 at this meeting to review for you to provide edits, any
34 additional information and then ultimately approve it.

35
36 As noted, if you guys would like me to
37 read it into the record, it is two pages so it would
38 take a minute, but I'd gladly do that if you'd like.

39
40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Nissa,
41 please read it.

42
43 MS. PILCHER: Okay. I am going to skip
44 the opening paragraph and the end paragraph which is
45 all standard language, so I'll jump right into Topic 1.

46
47 Resident caribou herd in the northern
48 Seward Peninsula. The Council discussed the presence
49 of a resident caribou or reindeer population in the
50

1 northern Seward Peninsula. This topic was previously
2 brought up on the FY21 annual report to the Board.
3 During its fall 2021 meeting the Council heard from the
4 Alaska Department of Fish and Game on the estimated
5 population and movement of this resident herd. At that
6 time ADF&G stated that no genetic research had been
7 done on the herd to determine if it is comprised of
8 rouge reindeer, members of the Western Arctic Caribou
9 Herd or a mix of both. Furthermore, no work has been
10 done to determine if this resident population affects
11 the migration of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

12
13 Your recommendation was:

14
15 In the FY21 annual report reply, the
16 Board acknowledged that this request for --
17 acknowledged this request for additional information.
18 It stated that the Bering LandBridge National Preserve,
19 or BELA recognized that the President's -- presence of
20 this resident herd but noted its population status and
21 extent of its range was unknown. The report reply
22 specified that BELA Staff would initiate tribal
23 consultations, conduct a literature review and engage
24 with Staff from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks
25 reindeer research program to learn what genetic work
26 had been accomplished with the reindeer on the northern
27 Seward Peninsula. The Council requested that this work
28 be started as the report reply further stated that
29 these efforts are obtainable within the near future and
30 that information will be brought forward to the
31 Council.

32
33 Topic 2. Impact to marine mammals in
34 the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands trawl fleet
35 fishery.

36
37 The Council recently became aware that
38 many traditionally important marine mammal species are
39 caught and discarded as bycatch in the Bering Sea and
40 Aleutian Islands trawl fleet fishery or the BSAI. The
41 National Ocean -- or Oceanic Atmos -- sorry --
42 Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA fisheries website
43 states that in 2022 NOAA observers recorded harbor
44 seals, humpback whales, ribbon seals, ringed seals and
45 stellar sea lions killed or injured in the BSAI fishery
46 as the -- as the BSAI fishery was conducted. This is
47 of great concern to the Council as marine mammals are
48 heavily relied upon as subsistence foods by subsistence
49 users and are of vital importance to this region and
50

0225

1 its culture. Marine mammals are Federally protected
2 animals under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972
3 and many culturally important marine mammal species are
4 already in a population decline.

5

6 Recommendation.

7

8 The Council requests that the Board be
9 made aware of this bycatch harvest and asks the Board
10 to direct Federal agencies to review whether the
11 current practice violates the Marine Mammal Protection
12 Act and other protections in place for marine mammals
13 that prohibit the take of these animals other than by
14 Alaska Natives. The Council also requests that these
15 agencies review any current bycatch numbers and caps on
16 marine mammals in the BSAI fishery and report back to
17 the Council with information on this topic.

18

19 No. 3. Update to the Alaska Beluga
20 Management Plan.

21

22 The Council would like to inform the
23 Board that the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee, or the
24 ABWC, is currently updating the Alaska Beluga Whale
25 Management Plan, or the ABWMP. The ABWC is a co-
26 management committee made up of representatives from
27 approximately 30 communities that harvest beluga whales
28 as well as Federal and State managers and scientists.
29 The intent of the ABWC is to manage beluga whales for
30 sustainability and the updated plan will assist with
31 this intent. The updated ABWMP will have harvest
32 number targets as well as list areas of biological
33 importance to the species such as calving and --
34 calving and molting areas. The ABWMP is currently out
35 for review in the communities that harvest beluga
36 whales.

37

38 Recommendation.

39

40 None at this time. The Council would
41 just like the Board to be aware of these ongoing
42 efforts.

43

44 And then that's -- after that is the
45 conclusion paragraph which is standard.

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Nissa. Any
48 Council want to weigh in here. Ron and Robert.

49

50

0226

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none.....

4

5 MR. MOSES: No comment, but that sounds
6 good.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Okay, Ron, are
9 you there.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any Council.....

14

15 MR. KIRK: Hello, Mr. Chair, I'm here.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sorry.

18

19 MR. KIRK: No comment.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Did you have any
22 comments or anything to say about it?

23

24 MR. KIRK: No, no comment, Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you guys.
27 Anybody in the room here.

28

29 Elmer.

30

31 MR. SEETOT: Concerning the resident
32 caribou in northern Seward Peninsula. Western Arctic
33 Caribou Herd or any biologists notice any movements
34 from that herd, I wonder, because our residents noticed
35 two large bands of reindeer or caribou in and around
36 Igloo Creek, that -- that goes up around Mary's Igloo
37 -- not Mary's Igloo -- American River, that joins the
38 Agiapuk, and then the Igloo goes up and around and --
39 and east and it's kind of close to these -- it's kind
40 of close to the Serpentine River area or the northern
41 Seward Peninsula, in and around that area is the big
42 beds of -- lava beds that I went through one time,
43 along with another hunter and we keep trying to go a
44 shortcut but we have to keep turning back because the
45 lava beds are humongous, I mean you're just a little
46 fellow on a snowmachine, you -- you got all these rocks
47 there, but the Shishmaref hunters were having
48 difficulty trying to locate the caribou in and around
49 these areas during the summer/fall season, I guess, up
50

0227

1 that way, they -- they might have been in higher
2 elevations but I really haven't heard anything about
3 those reindeer, caribou that are situated in that area.

4
5 But I just wanted to know if there was
6 any movement from that area. Because wherever the
7 animals are the predators will be right behind, no
8 sweat about it, because that's their -- that's their
9 food. And when -- when we're talking about the
10 predator control, pretty much that's all they eat if
11 they have no other available food source nearby then
12 they'll deplete that resource very rapidly.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer, for
17 your comments there. Anybody else, any comments,
18 concerns. Is somebody pointing somewhere.

19
20 MR. GRAY: She's sitting at the table
21 there.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, sorry, Jeanette,
24 Park Service.

25
26 MS. KOELSCH: For the record, Jeanette
27 Koelsch, Bering LandBridge National Preserve, through
28 the Chair. i do have a draft recommendation to change
29 this report. Bering LandBridge National Preserve
30 Staff, at least, the Superintendent, does not recognize
31 that there is the presence of a resident herd and I
32 only say this because there has not been enough work
33 done to make a determination as to whether or not there
34 is one.

35
36 I, specifically, feel that we can't --
37 I don't believe we should label something until there
38 is the work done to do it, if that makes sense.

39
40 I do agree that we need to do tribal
41 consultation, work with the State of Alaska and try to
42 figure out some type of coordinated monitoring plan
43 with them and that would be the State, but at this
44 time, to say there is a resident caribou herd without
45 specific data -- like we don't know numbers, we don't
46 know any of that. We do know that there is calving on
47 the Seward Peninsula but that is not the only
48 indication without collaring, that there is some kind
49 of resident herd or if it is Western Arctic Herd
50

0228

1 occupying the Seward Peninsula for longer periods of
2 time.

3

4 So I would just like clarification that
5 I -- you know, I understand this, it's been talked
6 about for quite some time but as the Superintendent, I
7 don't recognize the presence of a resident herd.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. What are
10 we looking at at where the -- was there something about
11 the actual National Park recognizing -- how did that
12 get in there, how did that become?

13

14 MS. PILCHER: I believe it was directly
15 from the FY21 annual report, which I was not in the
16 room for, so I can't say anything other than what I
17 read.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: subsistence Okay.

20

21 MS. KOELSCH: Yeah, and I don't think I
22 would have said that. It may have been another Park
23 Service Staff person that said it, but as far as
24 management, yeah, I mean I think we need to do work on
25 it thought. So -- oh, Tom, was going like this.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: No, I'm next, I'm the
28 Chair.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So I recognize there's
33 something there because I've been hunting on it for
34 three decades so there is something there, and the
35 State recognized it because Alex, the fellow from
36 Kotzebue, I had some discussion with him over the
37 phone, I think he was -- he had -- had participated in
38 our meeting and they haven't done the work, that's
39 correct. But there is a herd here that has been there
40 since the time of the Dorothy Isabelle, Barbara, and
41 the other side of the range in the Bendelebens, and so
42 the first time I ever heard about it was from Maggie
43 Olson where her and her husband used to target them.
44 The other one was Stinky Hardy, so that goes way back
45 so there is a distinct herd there and people need to
46 get this down and get it -- because if this herd is
47 just different than the Western Arctic Caribou Herd,
48 chances are it can get obliterated so.....

49

50

0229

1 MS. KOELSCH: Through the Chair. I'm
2 not -- I'm not saying there isn't, I'm just saying that
3 I don't feel that I feel comfortable acknowledging the
4 presence in the way that this is written. I do believe
5 that there needs to be work done in coordination with
6 the State of Alaska. Alex isn't -- Hansen, isn't here,
7 but you do have a State wildlife biologist that might
8 -- if they wanted to.....

9
10 MS. GERMAIN: (Shakes head negatively)

11
12 (Laughter)

13
14 MS. KOELSCH: Nope, she doesn't want
15 to.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 MS. KOELSCH: I'm just asking that.....

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We could take that out
22 of there, I guess. We can take the comment in there
23 and.....

24
25 MR. GRAY: Can I comment?

26
27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, in a minute. We
28 could take that out if we wanted to. But, Tommy Gray,
29 your turn.

30
31 MS. KOELSCH: I do believe the
32 population status does need to be determined, though.
33 So it's just a small part of that is all I'm asking,
34 but I mean it's up to you ultimately if you want to
35 edit your own report.

36
37 MR. GRAY: So I thank you for bringing
38 this up. I really do. I brought this up at the
39 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group probably 115
40 years ago when Jim Dau was there. Jim Dau and I had a
41 big fight. I wanted to know, are these reindeer, are
42 these caribou, let's put satellite collars on them.
43 Kyle Joly came to me and said, hey, I got satellite
44 collar money let's go put them on, I said, great idea,
45 and -- and the State said no way. So it got killed
46 putting satellite collars on. Today it might be a
47 different story.

48
49 The reindeer industry, back in the day,
50

0230

1 back when Jim Dau was around, Jim Dau kept saying,
2 these are young animals, these aren't staying on the
3 Seward Peninsula, they're moving off the Seward
4 Peninsula. Animals that stay are probably yearlings or
5 young animals, and I said let's put collars and find
6 out, I mean that's the only way we're going to find
7 out, and his -- his solution to this was, okay, let's
8 do a DNA study. The University of Alaska Reindeer
9 Program did their DNA study on reindeer, the State did
10 not. And this thing has just fallen through the
11 cracks. And in the meantime we have people for 20
12 years have been shooting animals up there saying, I got
13 a caribou, I got a caribou, there's no -- no -- you
14 know, the reindeer industry can be saying, no, you
15 don't have a caribou, that's a reindeer, and we go in
16 circles.

17
18 I've got my reindeer hat on now.

19
20 I'm saying we need a study. We need to
21 understand what these animals are. And, you know, I
22 would dearly like somebody to take the lead in saying,
23 yep, we're going to do a project, whatever that project
24 is. The public has -- they don't care if they're
25 reindeer or caribou at this point, they're calling them
26 caribou and is that right, you know, I'm a reindeer
27 herder so to speak, without reindeer, I look at those
28 animals thinking, man, I could have reindeer in there.

29
30 And so anyway I do think we need to do
31 some kind of a study and get our act together. I don't
32 think the State is -- I mean, how can I say this -- I
33 think it's going to take a bunch of people sitting down
34 at the table saying this is what we want to do, this is
35 what we want to accomplish and, you know, there's
36 public opinion, there's going to be people that are,
37 nope, those are caribou, and that's great, whatever,
38 let's get down to the nuts and bolts of it.

39
40 If you look at the reindeer industry
41 side of it, Weywana, Goodhoop, Leonard, Teller, there's
42 so many herds that got wiped out that those animals
43 could be residue of those herds.

44
45 So with that said, there's one other
46 issue in this particular thing that says, engage with
47 the Staff, University of Alaska-Fairbanks research
48 reindeer program; there is no program anymore, it's
49 gone. So Greg is gone, that whole program got shut
50

0231

1 down in Davis' time. So anyway it is an issue.

2

3 Now, one thing I would suggest that was
4 kind of a heartburn in this meeting, we're not talking
5 about the fish and the State of Alaska, our fish
6 issues. And maybe we need to somehow insert fish
7 issues in this letter.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, let's take care
10 of this one first. Okay, thank you.

11

12 So, you know, the caribou, the Western
13 Arctic Caribou Herd doesn't start moving into the Kobuk
14 or the Noatak early on, what is it, like September --
15 all right.

16

17 MS. KOELSCH: August.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right.

20

21 MS. KOELSCH: August, September.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, way up there,
24 right. They're well documented when they're moving.

25

26 MS. KOELSCH: Yeah, in their calving
27 areas they're well documented.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So the animals
30 that Tommy and I are talking about were already in the
31 Bendelebens in August, I've seen them there.

32

33 MS. KOELSCH: I'm not disputing your
34 indigenous knowledge. What I'm.....

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So what I'm --
37 so now let me finish, I'm sorry.

38

39 She has something to read here from the
40 Federal Subsistence Board level on this subject so I
41 just want to bring this to light, it has something to
42 do with what you're talking about on this report. So,
43 Nissa, go ahead and.....

44

45 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, Nissa Pilcher for
46 the record.

47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN:put that on.

49

50

0232

1 MS. PILCHER: So the report reply from
2 the Federal Subsistence Board dated July 27th, 2022
3 does state, in response to this concern from FY21
4 annual report, the Bering LandBridge National Preserve
5 or BELA, recognizes that there are caribou year-round
6 on the northern Seward Peninsula but the population
7 status and extent of the range is unknown. And is
8 there -- and there is no assessment project in the
9 works.

10
11 MS. KOELSCH: That is correct. It
12 doesn't say resident herd though. That is the wording
13 that I have a little bit of heartburn with but you --
14 we do acknowledge that there are year-round caribou.
15 So I mean you don't have to change your report but I'm
16 just -- I'm leery of calling it a resident herd without
17 having the means to do the research and I do believe
18 that through -- like your indigenous knowledge, Louis,
19 and other peoples, like Shishmaref and Wales and
20 Deering, that should be incorporated into some study
21 about this and we should also look at finding funding,
22 possibly, to do some work on this. But it would take a
23 cooper -- I feel like we could do a cooperative effort
24 with also other Federal land managers because it's not
25 just Bering LandBridge, right, we're just the northern
26 part -- part of the northern part, it would take a
27 coordinated effort to discuss this.

28
29 But that was the only heartburn I had,
30 was the resident caribou herd language.

31
32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That's -- okay. It is
33 a my tech, and Tommy's tech that I find it's fine to
34 write resident herd because it is a resident herd and
35 it's not being identified so I don't have a problem
36 with it.

37
38 Tommy, go ahead.

39
40 MR. GRAY: So this is what Fish and
41 Game, back in the day, their attitude was there may be
42 caribou on the Seward Peninsula but the -- what I've
43 been told is the caribou staying are young caribou that
44 aren't smart enough to go off the Seward Peninsula. A
45 year later they follow the herd and a different batch
46 of caribou are staying. This is what Jim Dau put on
47 the table to me. And you're right, that there are
48 caribou on the Seward Peninsula, but, quote, resident
49 caribou, is a whole different story. And I do know you
50

0233

1 guys flew this herd and looked for calves and you
2 struggled finding calves so that tells me that the
3 animals staying on the Seward Peninsula -- the caribou
4 will calve in June, the reindeer will calve in May and
5 -- and, you know, it tells me if they're not seeing a
6 lot of calves out there there is some truth to this
7 changing of guard on the animals and -- and, you know,
8 that's why I agreed to the DNA process.

9

10 But rather than fight this out at the
11 table, I think somebody needs to organize a meeting
12 with the RHA and the State and you guys and talk this
13 out reasonably.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you,
16 Jeanette. So are you telling me, Tommy, that there's a
17 difference between a year-round herd and a resident
18 herd?

19

20 MR. GRAY: Yes.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I want to hear
23 that again.

24

25 MR. GRAY: So what I have been told
26 from Fish and Game and Jim Dau is there's a changing of
27 the guards. The animals that are here let's say in 22
28 are probably moving up to the North Slope in 24 or 23
29 and different animals are staying here so what -- what
30 I would call a resident herd is -- has moved off and
31 now we have new players and they move off and that's
32 what Fish and Game was saying. They wouldn't
33 acknowledge that there's animals staying and
34 establishing a resident herd, quote/unquote, they're
35 not -- they're not calving. And, again, I go back to
36 these guys, did a lot of flying and looking at the
37 animals on the range looking for calves and they
38 weren't there. So that told a story in itself.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Uh. Nissa, you have
41 something to add.

42

43 MS. PILCHER: Yep. So I did write this
44 and my background is in fisheries and I didn't realize
45 there was a distinction between year-round and
46 resident, so first off I apologize. And the current
47 language in the draft does say, it's stated, as
48 referred to the annual report reply and it did state
49 year-round and not resident, and so if you guys are
50

0234

1 fine with that I will gladly change it.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Follow the
4 report, what was already currently written.....

5

6 MS. PILCHER: Yep.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN:prior.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: Yep. And then the other
11 thing that was brought up was in the 2021 report reply
12 the Board did reference the Fairbanks Ranger Research
13 Program, which Member Gray did mention doesn't exist
14 anymore so that could potentially be removed, or at
15 least a side comment could be put that it no longer
16 exists.

17

18 MR. GRAY: So what I know as the
19 reindeer research program was Greg and Doctor -- I mean
20 there's a whole bunch of -- there was a program that
21 came -- 40 years of program, that died. It got
22 completely wiped out and what is referred to there is
23 no longer there, it's gone. And, you know, the -- what
24 I tried to get done, in the end was, let's do a DNA
25 study because we can all point fingers and say, yep,
26 those are caribou, I mean I'm going to put Charlie on
27 the spot, Charlie's shot animals up there, he's going
28 to say there's caribou there, Tom Gray's going to say
29 there's reindeer there. And we're going to be at odds.
30 And the only way to resolve that is go do a DNA study.
31 And he may be right, maybe there's animals up there.
32 You know when it comes to push come to shove I'm going
33 to submit to science but until then I'm not so.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. The verbiage is
36 going to be around -- year-round, okay, because that's
37 what she misinterpreted and wrote resident, so we're
38 going to go back, it's going to be year-round; and I
39 don't know the difference yet. If they're year-round,
40 they're resident so it's like the halibut out here. I
41 found resident halibut out here identified back in the
42 late '90s so that means that they're here.

43

44 (Laughter)

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so we're done
47 with this so we beat it to death.

48

49 MS. PILCHER: It's an action item.

50

0235

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's an action item,
2 do we approve it with the change, the addition -- the
3 additional change of year-round and elimination of
4 this.....

5
6 MS. PILCHER: Reindeer -- caribou --
7 Fairbanks.....

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Say it again.

10
11 MS. PILCHER: Sorry. Fairbanks
12 Reindeer Research Program.

13
14 MR. GRAY: So I'm going to throw the
15 question out, during this meeting there was a big to-do
16 about the fishery, and -- and then when they talked
17 about moving the Subsistence Program over to -- out of
18 Fish and Wildlife over to another program, that seemed
19 like a big, big issue, and I just wonder if we need to
20 talk about a couple of these things in the letter to
21 the Big Board.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So anyway, that
24 kind of leaves a gap in there. But this intercept --
25 this intercept and the trawl fishery stuff that we talk
26 -- we homed in on the marine mammals, but it also
27 applies to chum salmon and chinook salmon, king salmon
28 or whatever you want to call them. How would we enter
29 that in there, we never had the discussion of it so we
30 need to discuss it before we put it in the letter.

31
32 MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair, this
33 is Nissa. So, yes and no. So one of the things that
34 you were doing with this report was bringing it back
35 up, editing it, and adding anything you wanted to, so
36 you can certainly add that. You've already had the
37 discussion about your concerns about the fishery, and I
38 believe without verifying, but I can do that over the
39 lunch break, that similar veins out of your concern
40 about this fishery has been in previous reports -- or
41 annual reports to the Board, so I can come up with some
42 verbiage over lunch or if you're comfortable with it I
43 can come up with it and then run it by Louis prior to
44 it being submitted to the Board.

45
46 MR. GRAY: It's fine with me.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's fine with the
49 Vice Chair it's probably fine with everybody else.

50

0236

1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Because he's the only
4 one that's going to bark at me.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so Nissa -- we
9 can vote on this with the additional verbiage that she
10 puts in there after, so there needs to be.....

11

12 MR. GRAY: So moved.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second.

15

16 MR. AUKONGAK: Second.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those.....

19

20 MR. KIRK: Second.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN:in favor.

23

24 IN UNISON: Aye.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any against, same
27 sign.

28

29 (No opposing votes)

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, we've
32 passed the report with the additional verbiage that
33 Nissa will add in there.

34

35 MS. PILCHER: I was just going to
36 clarify, so the removal -- the changing of the -- the
37 one word -- the removal of the other phrase about UAF
38 and then work with you on the correct language to
39 submit about the fishery concerns.

40

41 MR. GRAY: And maybe an afterthought, I
42 -- you know, I suggested that the powers that be get
43 together and create a plan to address that herd can be
44 incorporated in that letter also, that way it will help
45 push the Federal side of this thing and maybe the State
46 side. You know the State was the resistance in the
47 beginning and, you know, I think we need some help, but
48 if Jeanette wants to go forward and try to pull a
49 meeting of all the power players to address that herd,
50

0237

1 just a blurb in this letter would help put that
2 together, I think.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So you're talking
5 about a one sentence deal sort of?

6

7 MR. GRAY: One sentence. The Board
8 discussed cooperation between all the entities and
9 hopefully they can put a meeting together to address
10 this year around herd.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Local herd.

13

14 MR. GRAY: Local herd, or whatever,
15 yeah.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: My pets.

18

19 (Laughter)

20

21 MR. GRAY: Yeah.

22

23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Those are my
24 Bendeleben pets.

25

26 MR. GRAY: Yep.

27

28 (Laughter)

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Tommy you got
31 it -- are you done.

32

33 MR. GRAY: I am.

34

35 MS. PILCHER: Okay. So.....

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Nissa.

38

39 MS. PILCHER: So just to -- okay, so
40 Tom initially voted and then he added -- does the
41 second concur to add the additional language of what
42 Tom just said, insert an additional sentence to go.....

43

44 MR. GRAY: Do you need a.....

45

46 MS. PILCHER: We didn't vote the first
47 time so I think.....

48

49 REPORTER: Yes, you voted.

50

0238

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We did vote.

2

3 MR. GRAY: Yep.

4

5 MS. PILCHER: You know what, we did
6 vote?

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We did vote.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: So, yep, start over, we
11 need a.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can we -- can we
14 rescind that and.....

15

16 MR. GRAY: Okay, I agree to rescind my
17 motion. Who seconded it?

18

19 REPORTER: Martin.

20

21 MR. GRAY: Second, do you rescind?

22

23 MR. AUKONGAK: (Nods affirmatively)

24

25 MR. GRAY: Okay. And I'll make a
26 motion to the new effect that will include the language
27 of the State and the reindeer industry and the Park all
28 getting together to -- to create action to address the
29 year around animals up around Serpentine.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Serpentine,
32 Bendeleben.

33

34 MR. GRAY: Yeah, wherever.

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go, all
37 right. Because there's -- all right, so if he wants to
38 look at that, Nissa, and.....

39

40 MR. GRAY: I'm good with it.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, whatever she's
43 got there then -- you might want to read it anyway.

44

45 MS. PILCHER: Who seconded it?

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, we're done.

48

49 REPORTER: Wait, Martin, did you second

50

0239

1 it, you nodded only.

2

3 MR. AUKONGAK: (Nods affirmatively)

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, Martin.

6

7 MR. GRAY: I moved, do you second?

8

9 MR. AUKONGAK: (Nods affirmatively)

10

11 REPORTER: Yeah, okay, nods.

12

13 MR. GRAY: Okay.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So there's a
16 motion and a second on approving what we're sending
17 forward to the Federal Subsistence Board, our report.
18 So all those in favor.

19

20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against,
23 same sign.

24

25 (No opposing votes)

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none, motion
28 passes with the amendment, verbal -- verbiage in there.

29

30 Thanks.

31

32 Okay, are we going to do a lunch here?

33

34 MS. PILCHER: More than likely that
35 would be a good idea. We do have a time certain at
36 1:30, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, Diana
37 Stram will be online at 1:30. That is not an action
38 item, it is a presentation.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so we're back at
41 1:25.

42

43 MR. GUSSE: Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

46

47 MR. GUSSE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 Walker Gusse with the Bureau of Land Management. I
49 learned early on in my career not to quote the regs
50

0240

1 without having them in my hands so answers to Mr.
2 Gray's questions earlier.

3
4 First, regarding leaving a gut pile and
5 taking a bear on that. In your definitions in the reg
6 book you'll see that parts of legally taken animal that
7 are not required to be salvaged and which are left at
8 the kill site are not considered bait. So like with
9 everything in law enforcement, you change one little
10 thing and it can change the whole situation. So if you
11 move any of those parts they could become bait pretty
12 quickly. So at the kill site.

13
14 The second one, much more complicated
15 and I'm tracking down the answer. I'm going to need to
16 get my hands on the 50 CFR full book regarding wolf,
17 wolf pups. The one I found is there's not a
18 differentiation between an adult and juvenile wolf in
19 the reg book here. So you're probably good to go
20 there. However, furbearers and fur animals, which
21 wolves aren't, they're big game, you can't disturb
22 their den. So -- excuse me -- fur animals, you can't
23 disturb their den, wolves are big game so I'm tracking
24 down if there's also something in 50 CFR that says you
25 can't disturb their den. Now, again, that's within the
26 subsistence regulations.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks for answering
31 the hard questions, Mr. Walker.

32
33 Okay, we're adjourning for -- or --
34 what am I saying, not adjourning, we're.....

35
36 REPORTER: Taking a break for lunch.

37
38 MS. PILCHER: Standing down, take a
39 break.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Recess.

42
43 REPORTER: Yes, for lunch.

44
45 (Off record)

46
47 (On record)

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, folks in the
50

0241

1 room, it looks like we're ready to go. We have a
2 presentation here by Diana Stram and it is now 1:35.
3 Diana, you now have the floor, and if you -- I guess
4 you already got your deal in the page number.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 DR. STRAM: Thank you. This is Diana,
9 can you all hear me okay.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I can hear you, it's
12 all that counts -- no, I'm kidding.

13

14 (Laughter)

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, you're coming
17 across everybody's speakers, thank you.

18

19 DR. STRAM: Okay, great, thank you very
20 much. Thank you for the time. My name is Diana Stram.
21 I work for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council
22 and I'm going to provide you a brief overview of what
23 -- both what the Council's jurisdiction is and where we
24 are at with addressing salmon bycatch at the moment in
25 the pollock fisheries.

26

27 Next Slide, Slide 2.

28

29 Just to acquaint everyone with kind of
30 what our jurisdiction is. Under the Magnuson-Stevens
31 Act it was adopted in 1976 in addition to establishing
32 the 200 mile limit, three to 200 miles offshore. It's
33 a Federal fishery. It also established both the
34 National standards, which are what the Council is
35 required to address and any management efforts, there
36 are 10 of them, as well as establishing eight regional
37 fishery management councils. So we are the North
38 Pacific Fishery Management Council. Our jurisdiction
39 is in the Bering Sea, the Gulf of Alaska, and the
40 Arctic. We do have representation on our Council from
41 members in Seattle as well as Oregon, but most are from
42 the state of Alaska.

43

44 Slide 3.

45

46 So together we manage the Federal
47 fisheries with the National Marine Fisheries Service,
48 so the Council makes policy recommendations that are
49 sent to the Secretary of Commerce to approve or

50

0242

1 disapprove and once approved the National Marine
2 Fisheries Service does the in-season management. For
3 some stocks, specifically, Bering Sea crab stocks as
4 well as Alaskan scallop stock, we manage jointly with
5 the State of Alaska.

6
7 Fourth -- next slide.

8
9 Just a little bit more overview. We do
10 meet annually five times and these are where the needs
11 are located are part of the Magnuson Act, so
12 Congressionally mandated we meet in Anchorage three
13 times a year, once a year we meet in a local Alaskan
14 fishing community and then once we meet in Seattle and
15 Portland. All of our meetings are open to the public.
16 So our Advisory Panels, it's a science and statistical
17 committee, which is the SSC, and the advisory panel
18 meet at the -- concurrently with our Council and
19 provide their input to the Council at every meeting.
20 All of our meetings, again, are open to the public and
21 public testimony is taken at every agenda item that's
22 taken up by the SSC (indiscernible) Council. Our
23 meeting agendas and our schedules are published online.
24 And even prior to Covid we were livestreaming. We now
25 have arranged, since Covid, and will continue into the
26 future, to allow for remote public testimony as well.

27
28 Slide 5.

29
30 I already covered kind of the regions
31 that we manage, the Arctic, the Bering Sea, the
32 Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska.

33
34 Slide 6.

35
36 Moving more into specifically what is
37 bycatch. The bycatch is something that's defined
38 specifically under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. And it's
39 fish which are harvested in fishery but are not sold or
40 kept for personal use. That includes both economic
41 discards and regulatory discards so that's important
42 because those have different distinctions. So
43 basically bycatch is the discarded fish that are caught
44 in a targeted fishery. Economic discards then are fish
45 that could be legally retained but are of insufficient
46 value to retain so things such as scolpin,
47 (indiscernible) brittle stars, regulatory discard are
48 fish that are harvested -- required by regulation to be
49 discarded when they're caught but are required by
50

0243

1 regulation to be retained and not sold. And so
2 prohibited species catch, which we call PSC, is a
3 special type of regulatory discard. Those are fish that
4 must be returned to the sea with a minimum of injury
5 and that includes all Pacific halibut, herring, all
6 species of salmon, steelhead, king crab, bairdi, and
7 opilio crab.

8

9 Next slide. I'm on Slide 7 now.

10

11 So we focus our management measures on
12 chinook and chum bycatch and primarily what we're
13 talking about here is the Bering Sea pollock fishery.
14 So the Bering Sea pollock fishery encounters both
15 chinook and chum salmon bycatch. And the -- when we
16 manage them they are managed as two separate
17 categories, chinook bycatch and then total non-chinook
18 bycatch and the reason why this table is on the screen,
19 it shows you the other five species that comprise the
20 -- I'm sorry, the other four species that comprise the
21 non-chinook category. We have coverage and so this is
22 just showing you that 99.9 percent in any year are chum
23 salmon. So when we talk about non-chinook bycatch
24 we're really only talking about chum salmon, the
25 fishery does not encounter sockeye, coho or pinks.

26

27 Next slide. So this is Slide 8.

28

29 This is just showing the trends and
30 I'll walk through this to go through how we've managed
31 over the years. This is a trend from 1991 through 2022
32 of chinook and chum salmon bycatch. The chum is in the
33 blue and chinook is in the red and they are on
34 different axis because they have different magnitudes
35 and this just shows you the bycatch in the pollock
36 fishery over those years.

37

38 The next slide then.

39

40 This next slide then just shows you --
41 so the pollock fishery is prosecuted in the A season,
42 which is the winter season which begins January 20th
43 and technically goes until June but is always wrapped
44 up by the middle of April. And then the B season,
45 which is the summer season begins June 10th and
46 operates under November and it's usually wrapped up in
47 October. The pollock does not encounter chum salmon
48 until the B season. So that's what this graph is meant
49 to show you, is the amount of chum on the top in red

50

0244

1 that's encountered in the A season. But they do
2 encounter chinook salmon in both the A season and the B
3 season. And what these black dots are showing you,
4 this is over from 2011 to 2022, is just showing you the
5 general nature, it's a very predictable trend and that
6 they run into some chum salmon in the beginning, in
7 July, but the majority is in the first couple weeks in
8 August and so those -- those are meant to show you over
9 all those years, how much -- what the trend is and then
10 the -- the width -- the height of the box as well as
11 the whiskers on either side show you the variability
12 and the dots just show you when something is -- is
13 outside of the general variability of that, but in
14 general always for chum they encounter -- the pollock
15 fishery encounters them only in the B season, for
16 chinook they definitely are encountered in the
17 beginning of the -- the -- during the A season, winter
18 season, as well as in the B season and typically, and
19 what you're looking at are statistical weeks, typically
20 they tend to run into chinook more during the latter
21 part of the B season, so into September and October,
22 which is why, as I'll get into, we have management
23 measures that are structured more specifically towards
24 that.

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Diane.

27

28 DR. STRAM: Next slide, Slide -- I'm
29 sorry, go ahead you can ask questions at any point too.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, this is Louis.
32 Somebody was wondering if -- because you're kind of
33 muffled on the mic, or whether you're too close to it
34 or not, I can't tell, but I mean it seems if
35 something.....

36

37 DR. STRAM: Oh, I'm sorry, can you hear
38 me okay here?

39

40 MS. FREYTAG: Much better, yes.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep, she says you're
43 better. Thank you.

44

45 DR. STRAM: Okay, sure, I'm sorry.
46 I'll try like this -- I'm just holding my phone as
47 well.

48

49 Okay, on Slide 10 then, just to walk

50

0245

1 you through historically how the Council has managed.
2 We've been managing salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea
3 pollock fishery since the early 1990s but we've -- the
4 Council has changed management measures as trends and
5 issues have changed. So throughout the '90s into the
6 early 2000s we had very large scaled salmon saving area
7 closures for both chum and chinook so they had a limit
8 associated with them, and when that limit was reached a
9 very broad area of the Bering Sea would be closed to
10 either chinook or chum, depending on the timing. And
11 that was how, for awhile, during the '90s and the early
12 2000s that's how that was being managed.

13

14 Next slide, Slide 11.

15

16 What we found is from about 2002 to
17 2004 those large scale area closures, which were called
18 salmon savings area closures, they seemed to be
19 exacerbating the bycatch so there was one portion of
20 the fleet that could fish inside the closures when the
21 rest of the fleet was kicked out of the closures and
22 they were experiencing lower bycatch rates than the
23 fleet was outside of it, so those closures were set up
24 based up on historical bycatch patterns and it just
25 seemed to be that that was a dated way of managing.
26 And so in 2005, while looking at the -- the fleet
27 encountered the highest ever level of chum salmon
28 bycatch of over 700,000 chum salmon so the Council
29 immediately started looking into how could we change
30 management of salmon bycatch, at that time,
31 particularly chum, in the Bering Sea because those
32 closures weren't working. So as an interim measure the
33 Council developed what we call Amendment 84, which
34 allowed the fleet to have developed a rolling hot spot
35 program to -- as long as everyone was participating in
36 the very short-term, so when they saw high quantities
37 and hot spots of chum or chinook, as long as they were
38 participating in that program, of being kicked out on
39 three to seven day measures, they weren't held to the
40 overall closure.

41

42 Next slide, No. 12, then.

43

44 While we were developing all of this,
45 in 2007 then, the fleet ran into over 120,000 chinook
46 salmon and that really changed the whole nature of the
47 prioritization of management measures and chinook
48 stocks were obviously in decline then as they are now
49 so the Council then put measures and started to develop
50

0246

1 overall caps on chinook salmon and so our -- for a
2 series of time our science and statistical committee,
3 our SSC held multiple bycatch workshops to try to
4 advance knowledge of how best to manage this. And then
5 the Council created a bycatch committee to assist them
6 in developing cap levels.

7

8 Next slide, now I'm on Slide 13.

9

10 That led to development of what's
11 called Amendment 91 and we began doing extensive
12 outreach to Western Alaska communities. We have
13 participated in the -- the Regional RAC meetings since
14 2009 to try to help explain what the Council's doing
15 and what the rationale is behind the management
16 measures for chinook. The Council took action on
17 Amendment 91 in 2009.

18

19 Next slide.

20

21 So I will go through some of the
22 provisions of Amendment 91 but it's important in terms
23 of our process it takes awhile from the time, both the
24 way that analysis to the Council as well as how much
25 time it takes from the time the Council takes final
26 action until a program is put in place. Amendment 91
27 is extremely complicated. And so it was almost about
28 18 months from the time of final action before it went
29 into place. So in the beginning of the fishing year in
30 2011 Amendment 91 was implemented and there are a
31 number of additional factors to that in addition to
32 just the cap level. The National Marine Fisheries
33 Service is -- systematic genetic sampling so rather
34 than the opportunistic genetic sampling that we had
35 gotten from 2005 to 2009, beginning in 2011 every 10th
36 chinook that's brought on board is sampled for
37 genetics, every 30th chum that is brought on board is
38 sampled for genetics. And those genetic reports are
39 reported back to the Council on an annual basis. In
40 addition to that, there was a census requirement for
41 salmon counting so there are -- they're on board on
42 both vessels as well as at shoreside processing plants,
43 so every single salmon that is brought on board is
44 counted. In addition to that requirement, in order to
45 make sure of compliance, there are also electronic
46 monitoring requirements put into place so there's
47 cameras on board at every point of entry so that it is
48 clear that every single salmon is being counted and
49 that there's no way to avoid it, so everywhere the fish

50

0247

1 is being moved there are cameras. Immediately
2 following the implementation of Amendment 91 in 2011,
3 the Council started developing chum bycatch measures to
4 revisit where they were at with what to do with chum
5 bycatch and in 2012 we -- the Staff came to the Council
6 with an announcement of different cap levels for chum
7 and at the time more than one year of implementation of
8 Amendment 91 the Council decided to table that analysis
9 because all of the information -- the best information
10 we had at that time was that we needed (indiscernible)
11 measures on chum would then -- would undermine the
12 priority for avoiding chinook.

13

14 Next slide. Apologies. I have a
15 little bit of a sore throat so I hope this that this
16 comes through okay.

17

18 While looking at chum measures, the
19 Council also looked at how performance was underneath
20 Amendment 91 and immediately in 2011 we saw a spike
21 even though well below the cap levels, but the
22 intention of Amendment 91 was to have every vessel
23 avoiding chinook at all levels of encounter, so whether
24 it was low encounter or high encounter, to stay below
25 the cap level. And so in response to both the low
26 returns in chinook as well as the indications that we
27 had that maybe not all vessels were working as
28 stringently as all of them. Amendment 110 was
29 developed and that set up a cap system where the cap is
30 -- is dropped in years of low chinook abundance.

31

32 Next slide, 16 then.

33

34 So this just provides you kind of the
35 overall how we manage chinook salmon bycatch right now.
36 So under Amendment 91 there are two different cap
37 levels and it's important to realize that those cap
38 levels are allocated by the four sectors of the pollock
39 fishery as well as by season. So there's an overall
40 limit but the sectors are allocated as specific part of
41 their performance standard and if they are to reach
42 their performance standard in more than two of seven
43 years they are restricted to a lower cap level. Under
44 Amendment 110 then we put in the three river system
45 index and so if the -- every year in October ADF&G
46 provides the Council an estimate of the chinook salmon
47 abundance using this index that's based on a post-
48 season in-river chinook salmon run size for the
49 Kuskokwim and Unalakleet and the upper Yukon, so it's
50

0248

1 an aggregate and if that is below 250,000 there is a
2 lower cap level that goes into place in that year and
3 that has been the management system for the last
4 several years including in 2023. The pollock fishery
5 also has (indiscernible) plan agreement, those are in
6 regulations and they have requirements for how we must
7 manage in order to stay below the performance standard.
8 So that includes different measures of both
9 (indiscernible) strict measures for the pollock fishery
10 to avoid chinook salmon bycatch. We also -- the
11 Council also included chum avoidance as part of the
12 Amendment 110. And so the little graph to the lower
13 right of your slide, that just shows you some of the
14 locations of some of the hot spots that the SeaState,
15 third party initiates, they have information sharing
16 and so when they see high abundance of chum or chinook
17 they will close the fishery for -- anywhere from two to
18 seven days.....

19

20 (Teleconference interference)

21

22 DR. STRAM:from specific
23 (indiscernible) -- I'm sorry, is there a question, I
24 couldn't hear.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 DR. STRAM: Okay, I'll keep going.

29

30 Moving on to Slide 17 then.

31

32 REPORTER: So Diana.

33

34 DR. STRAM: This slide.....

35

36 REPORTER: Diana.

37

38 DR. STRAM:one -- oh sure.

39

40 REPORTER: Yep, could you hold up a
41 minute. So could you just slow down a little bit while
42 you're talking. There's a couple of Council members
43 that are having a difficult time understanding.

44

45 DR. STRAM: Oh, I'm sorry.

46

47 REPORTER: Okay, just -- yeah, just
48 slow down a little bit. Thank you.

49

50

0249

1 DR. STRAM: Okay. Sure. I'm going to
2 stay with Slide 16 then that has the regulatory
3 measures in place. And just to note that under the
4 industry agreement, in order to stay below the cap
5 levels, they have a number of measures. Those hot spot
6 closures, which are short-term closures that are
7 identified based on observers data and the fleet has to
8 move out of those for three to seven days. There are
9 also salmon escape panels, which I'll go over in the
10 next slide, on all of the nets that are used in the
11 pollock fishery as well as provisions to donate to an
12 organization called SeaShare which is a hunger relief
13 organization. And so because we cannot retain or sell
14 any salmon that's brought on board, those that are able
15 to be processed by the industry to food grade quality
16 on their own dime are donated to an organization called
17 SeaShare, which then redistributes that to different
18 hunger relief organizations, both in Alaska as well as
19 outside.

20

21 Next slide, Slide 17 then.

22

23 Just to explain a little bit about what
24 salmon excluders are. So right now every vessel that's
25 fishing has a salmon excluder device built into their
26 nets. And so that's something that the pollock
27 industry themselves have been developing. And so
28 starting with the graph on the left side, the general
29 intention of that is that as the fish enter the -- the
30 trawl net there is a -- basically a hole and a flap
31 that's built into the net prior to the cod and where
32 the fish congregate and because salmon are better
33 swimmers than pollock, the salmon are able to move into
34 the area of the net, having that hole in the net means
35 that the current is less at that area and they are able
36 to find the area of less current and swim out of the
37 net. So there are a variety of designs for salmon
38 excluders that have been tested over the years. They
39 do work better for chinook than for chum. And the
40 results of them are fairly variable by vessel and by
41 horsepower. The most recent tests show that the range
42 is up to about 39 percent of chinook that can escape.
43 They've been testing these in various ways to try to
44 see how best to get the chinook out of the net without
45 losing the pollock as well. So to the lower right in
46 that graph you just see two different excluder devices.
47 They tried putting an excluder on the top and bottom as
48 well as one just on the top. If you are interested in
49 more information I included the email address for
50

0250

1 John*Kruger, who has been really working on behalf of
2 the pollock industry and designing of the excluders.

3

4 Moving on to Slide 18 then.

5

6 Just a little background on the pollock
7 fishery. The graph that you see shows you years on the
8 X (ph - cuts out) axis from '91 to 2021 and catch and
9 it just -- the color coding is just showing you A
10 season versus B season, so winter versus summer and
11 east and west of 170 west longitude. So to the right,
12 the maps that you're looking at, that's just showing
13 you basically the locations. It's somewhat consistent
14 but it can be variable, but from 2019 to 2021, just
15 giving you a snapshot of where the fishery is fishing
16 in the winter season. So in general the shoreside
17 fleet is restricted to an area that's very close to
18 Unimak Island. The rest of the fleet, the mother ship
19 and the catcher/processors are fishing slightly to the
20 Northwest but in the winter they're constrained by ice
21 cover so that's why you see them pretty much restricted
22 west -- south of the Pribilof Islands.

23

24 Slide 19. Next slide then.

25

26 This just shows you the exact same
27 information but for B season, so the summer season.
28 And here you can see that, again, the fishery is
29 concentrated to the north of Unimak Island and that is
30 generally the shoreside, catcher vessels, but the
31 catcher/processors move much further north and west up
32 along the shelf edge all the way up until the 200 mile
33 border in most years.

34

35 Next slide, 20.

36

37 Moving into a little bit of an overview
38 of the genetics summary.

39

40 Slide 21 then.

41

42 Starting with chinook. This gives you
43 -- this graph is just showing you, again, the same
44 trend in the number of chinook bycatch in the pollock
45 fishery and then in red is what the PSC limit is, so the
46 overall limit for all sectors is and then what the
47 performance standard is. And then when you see that
48 drop, that's because of the low chinook abundance where
49 a lower cap was in place. The lower pie chart then is

50

0251

1 showing you what the genetic composition is of the
2 bycatch. So, in general, for chinook, and this is just
3 a snapshot, but in general for chinook about more than
4 50 percent of the bycatch is from a grouping called the
5 Coastal Western Alaska or CWAG grouping (ph). The only
6 way to differentiate genetics for chinook across
7 Western Alaska is in two groupings, the upper Yukon we
8 can differentiate genetically from the other fish, the
9 rest of the fish in Western Alaska cannot be
10 differentiated so they end up in a very large group
11 called the Coastal West Alaska Group. They also can
12 break out the North Alaska Peninsula, British Columbia
13 and then an aggregate for all other areas.

14

15 And I apologize, I didn't update this
16 number, but th -- for this week -- but as of earlier
17 this month the number of chinook caught as bycatch in
18 the pollock fishery in 2023 was about 8,300.

19

20 Next slide.

21

22 This is showing similar information for
23 chum. And generally for chum, the proportion to
24 Western Alaska is much, much lower because it's -- the
25 chum that's caught as bycatch in the fishery is
26 dominated by Asian hatchery releases of chum. I would
27 note that preliminary information that we just received
28 earlier this week in our salmon bycatch committee that
29 the 2022 information shows a higher proportion of
30 Western Alaska than this 2021 stock composition
31 estimates indicates and the Council will be receiving
32 those reports in a week and a half.

33

34 And, again, chum bycatch spiked in
35 2021, was lower in 2022, the highest still is in 2005
36 but there's been a renewed focus on trying to address
37 chum bycatch measures by the Council particularly based
38 on the recent spike.

39

40 Slide 23 then.

41

42 A little bit of a head's up on what's
43 going on with the Council. In June we received a lot
44 of salmon reports and the Council created a salmon
45 bycatch committee. That committee had an open
46 nomination period over the summer with the committee
47 appointed in November. There were specific tasks of
48 the committee. The Council has many standing and issue
49 specific committees, so this would be an issue specific
50

0252

1 committee. The committee was tasked with reviewing the
2 State of Alaska Bycatch Task Force recommendations and
3 that includes -- if you're familiar with the State of
4 Alaska Bycatch Task Force they have some subcommittees
5 as well, one of which was the Western Alaska Salmon
6 Subcommittee and they have different recommendations as
7 well. As Staff we provided a discussion paper in
8 December on chum salmon bycatch and the committee
9 reviewed that and then the committee is also tasked to
10 review current information, including local,
11 traditional and subsistence knowledge and discussions
12 of research to determine what's driving the Western
13 Alaska salmon decline. In December then, the Council
14 received the first report from the committee as well as
15 a discussion paper on chum salmon bycatch and tasked
16 that committee to provide recommendations to the
17 Council on the range of management measures both
18 regulatory such as a cap as well changes that could
19 occur within the pollock incentive plan agreement
20 structures with a report intended to the Council in
21 2023.

22

23 The next slide, 24.

24

25 So this is just a what's next.

26

27 We just completed the salmon bycatch
28 committee, the salmon bycatch committee met January
29 25th and then met again March 20th and 21st, so earlier
30 this week the committee met. We will have a report
31 from that committee, we're still writing that as Staff
32 coming out of the committee two days ago. That
33 committee provided a purpose and needs statement to the
34 Council by consensus and then a group of conceptual
35 alternatives including caps and changes to the IPA,
36 those were not by consensus. The report from that
37 committee will be posted to the Councils agenda most
38 likely near the end of next week but I provided the
39 address for that there. It was a public meeting. We
40 had a number of people that attended, both in person as
41 well as online. The Council will be meeting in April.
42 The intent of the Council meeting is to review the
43 salmon bycatch committee's recommendation and then
44 while we can't predict what the Council will do, the
45 assumption is the Council may adopt a purpose and needs
46 statement as well as alternatives to initiate an
47 analysis and that Council meeting will be happening in
48 Anchorage when the Council convenes beginning April 6th
49 through 11 and the agenda for that meeting and the

50

0253

1 schedule are posted to our website.

2

3 Next slide, 25.

4

5 So this slide is just to kind of -- we
6 have a cumbersome process for making changes. In
7 general, this is the way that process occurs. At best
8 a process change requires almost two years to be
9 initiated. When it's extremely complicated it takes
10 longer. But in general it starts with a proposal from
11 the public or from a committee and then the Council
12 will develop a problem statement, also called a purpose
13 and need, as well as alternatives that would address
14 the purpose and needs. Sometimes those discussion
15 papers are iterative to try to figure out what the best
16 alternatives are, and sometimes there's committee input
17 as we have right now with our salmon bycatch committee.
18 So when it comes to the analysis stage, and, again,
19 everything above the dotted line is Council issue, the
20 Council will then take an initial review of the
21 analysis and they might change the alternatives at that
22 point and then they will eventually take final action
23 which is on a public review draft and then at that time
24 they'll select what the preferred management approach
25 is. From that point forward, the Council then refers
26 that information to the National Marine Fisheries
27 Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service then
28 is responsible for the rulemaking aspect and that means
29 that they are publishing a proposed rule. They also
30 have a public comment period associated with that and
31 then they publish a final rule and then eventually it
32 goes to the Secretary of Commerce to review and approve
33 the regulation and the rule and then it's implemented.

34

35 Next slide, please, Slide 26.

36

37 So this is just the same graphic but I
38 just circled where we are in the process right now.
39 We're very much in the process of developing a purpose
40 and need and alternatives that will address that, and
41 this is specific to chum salmon bycatch. The Council's
42 identified that right now they're interested in looking
43 at management measures to address chum salmon bycatch
44 because it is currently managed within the pollock IPAs
45 but without an overall cap or an area closure
46 associated with it.

47

48 Next slide, 27.

49

50

0254

1 This is just additional resources. Our
2 website, NMFS website, and additional information.

3

4 And I'm very happy to take any
5 questions on anything and I hope I didn't go too
6 quickly through.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 (Pause)

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Diana, I
13 couldn't quite hear you.

14

15 DR. STRAM: Did I lose audio? Oh, I'm
16 sorry, I just said that I'm happy to take questions and
17 I hope I didn't lose you all, I -- it looks like I lost
18 audio for a little bit.

19

20 REPORTER: We didn't lose you Diana.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, very hard to
23 hear. This building here we're in is kind of like an
24 echo chamber so I was way to the back where I could
25 kind of hear better. But I'm going to ask anybody on
26 the Council here, on the phone -- I'll ask you first,
27 are there any questions from Ron or Robert.

28

29 MR. KIRK: Just one, Mr. Chair.
30 Through the Chair. Ma'am, are all your bycatch
31 counted, for real, through the pollock fisheries,
32 because I brought this issue up with Congresswoman Mary
33 Peltola a couple days ago when I was talking to her
34 through a computer.

35

36 DR. STRAM: Hi, this is Diana,
37 hopefully you can hear me okay. Thanks for the
38 question. Yes, as part of the -- since 2011. So t
39 here was basket (ph) sampling that was occurring prior
40 to 2011, but since the implementation of Amendment 91
41 there is a requirement for a census for all salmon
42 species, both chinook and non-chinook so there are
43 observers that are censusing the salmon on board
44 catcher vessels and motherships and then there are
45 observers at the processing plant shore side to ensure
46 that all of the salmon that are brought on board are
47 censuses. So it is an exact count, yes.

48

49 MR. KIRK: I still have a little

50

0255

1 problem with that because even the census counters on
2 board the ship have to take a little 15 to 20 minute
3 break to go use the restroom and nobody's counting the
4 bycatch at that time and I'm pretty sure the captain
5 won't want his crew to count bycatch knowing t hat if
6 he catch too many bycatch he might be shut down for
7 that day for commercial fishing and he's not about to
8 lose money because of bycatch.

9

10 So that's my concern.

11

12 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thank you for the
13 comment. I mean I understand that concern. All I
14 would say is that in order to implement the Amendment
15 91 Program which has the ability to legally shut down
16 the pollock fishery at any time if they reach those
17 caps, there are a lot of requirements that were legally
18 required to go into place including cameras on every
19 point of entry of salmon coming on board, so there are
20 observers that are censusing all of the salmon that are
21 coming on board during a -- the -- on a
22 catcher/processor, there are cameras that are
23 specifically on vessels to show every point of entry to
24 ensure that there is compliance with censusing the
25 salmon and that that can't occur.

26

27 MR. KIRK: Okay, yeah, thanks for that
28 information. But I still have a problem because we're
29 having salmon shortages all over Alaska and that's our
30 table out there and that's how we survive with our
31 subsistence way of life is through our salmon and our
32 fish and that's my concern, because that's my
33 children's future, their children's children's future.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron. Any
38 other Council.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Okay, so this
43 is Louis Diane. I got a couple here. What is the
44 percentage of coverage -- of the observer coverage
45 that's required?

46

47 DR. STRAM: Sure, thanks for the
48 question. It's 100 percent observer coverage. We call
49 it 200 percent on catcher/processors because there are

50

0256

1 more than one observer but all of the hulls are
2 observed and, again, that is a requirement as of 2011.
3 Less of the shoreside fleet was covered by observers
4 prior to 2011. When you look at like how -- what the
5 percentage on the catch is, but since 2011 it has been
6 a requirement that 100 percent of the catch is
7 observed.

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's 100 percent of
10 100 percent of the vessels fishing?

11
12 DR. STRAM: Yes, in the pollock fleet,
13 yes. It's different in other fleets but in the pollock
14 fleet, largely as a requirement of this management
15 program the observer coverage had to be increased so
16 that all of the catch was observed.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. How many
19 vessels are involved in this pollock fishery?

20
21 DR. STRAM: Oh, gosh that's a question
22 I -- I do have another Staff member on the line as
23 well, that's Dr. Kate Haapala, I -- I would -- it
24 varies by year, primarily in the shore side sector but
25 I am just going to ball park it, we're probably talking
26 about 120 vessels, of which maybe three-quarters of
27 those are catcher vessels that are either delivering
28 shore side or are delivering to mother ships and
29 there's less vessels in the catcher/processor fleet and
30 then at the CDQ sector tends to be prosecuted by the
31 same vessels that are in the catcher/processor fleet.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. How many
34 CDQ boats are involved? Ball park.

35
36 DR. STRAM: Oh, gosh, I can probably
37 get back to you on that. I can let Nissa know but I
38 don't know off the top of my head the exact number of
39 CDQ vessels that are involved. The CDQ has a -- they
40 receive 10 percent of the pollock quota and a
41 percentage of the -- as well, of the salmon bycatch
42 limit, but they are closely prosecuted. Their
43 incentive plan agreement is encompassed in the
44 catcher/processor agreement because they are fished off
45 the same vessels but I can certainly get that
46 information back to you but I don't know it off the top
47 of my head. I'm sorry.

48
49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. That
50

0257

1 would be good to have that at a later date, I guess.
2 You know we hear about genetics. There's been a couple
3 of studies that I know of in the past that were
4 targeting the genetics of our salmon in Western Alaska
5 and one of them is the Jim Seeb and Lisa Seeb study in
6 the early 90s and then there was a WASSIP study and I
7 hear there's another one. How good is that -- how good
8 is that science when it comes to you folks taking
9 samples of the fish on board? We used to hear a lot
10 about, oh, the Asian salmon, it's all Asian, we hear
11 that at Area M also, so I'm curious. How good.....

12

13 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for the
14 question actually.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN:is the.....

17

18 DR. STRAM: So we work -- we worked
19 closely with the Seebes when we were doing Amendment 91
20 and it was actually their data from 2005 through --
21 they worked also with the pollock fleet to get some
22 data in 2007 so we had opportunistically sampled data
23 so not the best but still a good estimate and that's
24 when we worked with both Jim and Lisa Seeb on -- for
25 the genetics that we used to identify Western Alaska
26 salmon, chinook salmon specifically for Amendment 91.
27 But since 2011, again, as part of the requirements,
28 there's not systematic sampling so the precision is a
29 lot better. I wouldn't say that the results have
30 varied so substantially for chum, it is still dominated
31 by Asian fish. For chinook it is still dominated by
32 Western Alaska fish. But what we are seeing is,
33 especially as we're talking about chum and most
34 recently, in the last couple years, we are seeing that
35 where the fishery operates has an impact on the
36 proportion in the bycatch of Western Alaska fish. And
37 that's pretty consistent. We've been working with
38 ADF&G so we have talked to them about the WASSIP
39 results. You know they just did a one year survey for
40 identification of the Area M fishery under WASSIP. I
41 don't know if it was under WASSIP, but it was of the
42 Area M fishery for the last, most recent year, and
43 their results are pretty consistent with the genetic
44 results that we're getting from the pollock fishery in
45 terms of relative proportions, but that fishery
46 operates in an area where the genetics are identical.
47 They're using the same decline but the Area M fishery
48 is operating in an area that intercepts more Western
49 Alaska fish than the pollock industry does, but the

50

0258

1 genetic, as a baseline, are exactly the same.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
5 that. It's really interesting to see from like -- I'm
6 gaging this from about 2002 to about 2008 where those
7 spikes went up to over 700,000 fish and that -- I guess
8 that was both for kings and chums. And about that same
9 time, somewhere in that timeframe it was about the same
10 number that Area M was intercepting chums that I
11 recall. I haven't seen those reports for a long time.
12 But that's just a -- what I remember from seeing that
13 in the past. So you see those spikes go way up in
14 about a six year period and then you (indiscernible)
15 see them drop and they're finally starting to work
16 their way back up again, it's almost like it indicates
17 that there was a high catch of these fish out there and
18 then the returns, the returning fish never made it back
19 home to spawn and then you show up with these low
20 numbers of intercept bycatch. Kind of almost like
21 correlation to what took place when you did have the
22 spike, you got a low some years after.

22

23

Care to elaborate on that?

24

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DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that. We
are looking into all of that. Obviously our
jurisdiction is not Area M, that's squarely within the
Board of Fisheries, and the magnitude of what we know
is that when we look at the genetics by sector. The
sector of the fishery that's fishing closer to the
southeastern Bering Sea is going to intercept more
Western Alaska chum. So right now we're dealing with
chum. Chinook is a different story. And that -- that
is the same area that the Area M fishery operates in
that relative area. So we know that the fish that are
coming back from the Gulf of Alaska into the Bering Sea
and the ones that are returning to spawn within the
Bering Sea are moving through that area. We're trying
and we will eventually, in an analysis to the Council,
do our best to estimate what the impacts of, again,
solely the pollock fishery because that's our only
directly regulated entity, we don't have any
jurisdiction over Area M, what the relative impact of
the pollock fishery interception of Western Alaska chum
is. We're a little bit limited both by the genetic
specification, we can't determine which rivers those
are coming from. They've just broken out Kotzebue
separately and that's something that will come out in a
report next week, but they still can't break out for

0259

1 chum anything other than the upper Yukon and the rest
2 of Coastal West Alaska. So we can't say specifically
3 what would have gone back to the Kuskokwim or the lower
4 Yukon or anything like that. We can just estimate what
5 amount of -- the composition of the bycatch of fish
6 that would have gone back to Western Alaska in any one
7 year and we make estimates on -- you know, obviously
8 they're not all going back in that same year so all the
9 fish that's caught in the bycatch isn't going back in
10 that year so for both last year and this year about
11 50,000 of those fish would have originated from Western
12 Alaska but their ages range from about three to five
13 years. And so not all of them were going back in that
14 year so the impacts are disproportionate. But we also
15 don't know to which river system within the entire
16 Coastal West Alaska they would be returning to.

17
18 I know that doesn't directly address
19 your question but hopefully that helps a little bit.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
22 that. Are you seeing a lot of immature kings in your
23 catches?

24
25 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks. In general
26 it's been pretty consistent for king salmon and then in
27 general it ranges between three to seven but the
28 majority of them are around three, four, five, and for
29 chum it's almost entirely three, four, five. So we're
30 not seeing a lot of mature fish, but we are seeing sort
31 of the middle range.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And so if you've got
34 -- okay, so you're catching -- you're not catching
35 mature kings, but you're catching immature kings, is
36 there a limit on the pounds of kings you can catch?

37
38 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that
39 question. There's a limit on the number of fish. So
40 we don't do it by pounds, we do it by the number of
41 fish and so each fish is censused so there is an actual
42 number associated. It doesn't matter if it's immature
43 or mature, or how old the fish is. It just matters
44 whether or not each fish is counted as one fish and
45 that corre -- and then that goes against the limit that
46 is allocated to the fishery by season, by sector, and
47 then within the sectors each of the vessels has a
48 specific limit that they're trying to not reach by
49 number.

50

0260

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you for
2 that. I used to fish halibut so I'm just going to
3 throw this one in there, I know it's a little off the
4 salmon conversation. So there's a lot of halibut
5 bycatch and I know that what I've seen in data is that
6 there's -- these halibut are getting to be like the
7 size of say a five pound fish. Is halibut on
8 individual number or is halibut based on bycatch --
9 bycatch limits based on the weight?

10

11 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks that's a great
12 question. I have also just recently spent a great deal
13 of time working on a halibut bycatch analysis. Halibut
14 is not based on the number of fish, halibut is based on
15 overall weight and discounted by discarded mortality
16 rate that is associated with the vessel and gear that
17 catches it. So it's very different for halibut than
18 it is for salmon, it is not based on number of fish.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you.
21 Thanks for that answer. And so if you've got a million
22 pounds of bycatch of halibut and they're 30 pounds as
23 opposing to five pounds, you're going to catch fewer
24 halibut at 30 pounds apiece to get to that million
25 pounds but if you're catching -- your bycatch is five
26 pound fish, if you get to a million, I'd venture to say
27 that you're really killing the future of those fish.
28 Have you people discussed any of that?

29

30 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that
31 question. It definitely a little bit of a conundrum.
32 So there's been a lot of effort on deck sorting.
33 Halibut has the same prohibitive species status as
34 salmon does and there's been a lot of effort by the
35 industry for deck sorting so that they are able to
36 return primarily large halibut back to the sea quickly
37 rather than them going into a hold and so they -- they
38 are returning the bigger fish. It doesn't help with
39 the issue of potentially catching the smaller fish.
40 And these are, again, conversations that have been
41 occurring between the agency and the Council in terms
42 of what the most appropriate method. We -- the Council
43 did take action two years ago on -- two years -- a year
44 and a half ago, on an analysis to lower the bycatch
45 limits for halibut depending on the relative abundance
46 that's observed in both the International Pacific
47 Halibut Commission set line survey and the NOAA Eastern
48 Bering Sea trawl survey. So there is -- we're awaiting
49 implementation of new measures that the Council's spent
50

0261

1 a lot of time debating on lowering limits when -- when
2 the halibut abundance appears to be lower.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. So -- I
5 haven't heard that. I've been made aware of that orca,
6 I've seen pictures, okay, I don't know when the dates
7 are of the photos of orcas and gear on the deck of a
8 trawler, but I've been lead to believe that orca follow
9 these boats. I remember the day when the hook and line
10 was working on the Aleutians that orcas were taking the
11 black cod off the hook. I used to longline out of
12 Kodiak. So, anyway, I've been led to believe that orca
13 were following these trawlers and as those fish are
14 going over the side, I think orcas are feeding on them.
15 Have you had those discussions?

16

17 DR. STRAM: Gosh that's a great
18 question. I -- I sit on the stock assessment plan team
19 so I hear a lot about the sablefish stock assessments
20 of black cod and I know they do adjust for whale
21 depredation in the survey in terms of setting the
22 appropriate catch limits because the whales are
23 definitely feeding off of those lines. I haven't
24 actually heard that with respect to trawls or discards
25 in trawls, I mean as it relates to at least salmon
26 those are not they -- they are brought shore side, at
27 least for the catcher vessel fleet and then discarded
28 at sea so it's 100 percent mortality for salmon. For
29 halibut it's a little -- it's different. There's a
30 discard mortality rate applied. For pollock fishing
31 trawl halibut it's 100 percent mortality. For some of
32 the other gear types, hook and line it is -- it's much
33 less than 100 percent assumed mortality when they go
34 back into the ocean but I -- I haven't heard and I
35 can't say that that's not something that somebody's
36 considering but I haven't heard those conversations as
37 it relates to halibut and hook and line gear. But for
38 sure it is something that we talk about annually as it
39 relates to black cod.

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. We have
42 had conversations here about sea mammal bycatch,
43 bearded seals, ringed seals, walrus. So there is some
44 of that going on and I find -- I find that hard to
45 believe that it's allowed with the trawl industry, that
46 you can take a sea mammal when a sea mammal is under
47 the Marine Mammal Protection Act. I think that was
48 back in '71. What are you seeing there and what is the
49 discussion about sea mammal intercept for bycatch?

50

0262

1 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that
2 question. As it relates to the pollock trawl that's
3 not the case. I -- we were trying to work and Nissa
4 maybe could speak to this better, with the National
5 Marine Fishery Service. That's a little bit out of my
6 wheelhouse for anything I work on as it relates to
7 marine mammals. So we were trying to work with the
8 National Marine Fishery Service to provide you guys
9 more information on how they're addressing marine
10 mammal and marine mammals under the Marine Mammal Act.
11 So I guess I would be less comfortable trying to
12 address that and trying to refer you guys to the
13 regional office for the National Marine Fishery Service
14 for more information on that. But it's not -- it's not
15 something -- if we're talking only about the pollock
16 trawl industry that is not something that is an issue.
17 Whether it's an issue with other fisheries in the
18 Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska, I'm really not the
19 best one to speak to on that.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you on
22 that one. I -- I had overlooked a question I had here.
23 Hatchery fish. Have you been able to identify hatchery
24 fish salmon when it comes to salmon? We got the
25 genetic.....

26
27 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for.....

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN:study, you can do
30 genetics but I was wondering about hatchery ID?

31
32 DR. STRAM: Thanks, that's a great
33 question and one we talk about all the time. So the
34 issue with hatchery fish is that the only way to
35 identify them, genetically, they're exactly similar to
36 non-hatchery fish from the same region of origin unless
37 they're thermally marked and their otoliths are
38 thermally marked. So when we have thermally marked
39 otoliths, the -- the bone in the ear, again, we can
40 tell if it's a hatchery fish. The general assumption
41 on Asian chum is that it is almost entirely hatchery
42 origin. So we try to maintain the -- the National --
43 the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission provides
44 information on hatchery uses by country on an annual
45 basis and so we try to pay attention to that and those
46 fish are not thermally marked. But the general
47 assumption is that the Asian origin chum salmon, at
48 least, in the Bering Sea, are almost entirely hatchery
49 origin. There are no -- there's no Alaska hatchery
50

0263

1 origin fish for -- for chinook so that's not -- it's
2 not an Alaskan issue. For chum it is an Asian issue.
3 And it gets to carrying capacity issues and -- and
4 overall general ecosystem level considerations.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. So if
7 there was a Western Alaska hatchery salmon caught in
8 your gear you wouldn't be able to tell if it was
9 thermally -- if it was thermal marking of the otolith
10 you'd be able to tell where it came from, right?

11

12 DR. STRAM: Yeah. There were some --
13 there was some tagging going on in the Gulf of Alaska
14 and so for awhile we had some, basically, like some tag
15 releases and that sort of stuff on -- on fish from the
16 Gulf of Alaska. There are no hatcheries in Western
17 Alaska so when we're focusing our efforts on the Bering
18 Sea and we're looking at returns to Western Alaska
19 fish, the hatchery component of the Western Alaska
20 salmon is not part of it.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: How is that you can
23 tell that it was Asian stock?

24

25 DR. STRAM: Oh, sorry, based on the
26 genetics. So the genetics, they -- they can break it
27 out by -- in general they aggregate it by about six
28 groups and so genetically they've got a lot of markers
29 (indiscernible) markers that they use to aggregate the
30 genetics and to different areas so they can very easily
31 show you the genetic origin of both northeast Asia and
32 southeast Asia fish so differentiating there, Russian
33 fish. And then unfortunately most of Western Alaska
34 kind of bleeds across genetically because of the lower
35 river systems so they just -- they've intermingled so
36 much that you can't tell the difference between a lot
37 of the lower Kuskokwim or Yukon type fish. But the
38 genetic signature of Asian fish versus Russian fish
39 versus Pacific Northwest those are very easy for our
40 geneticists to identify.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So what you're
43 saying is that Western Alaska fish that are -- the
44 genetics aren't specific enough to a river but you can
45 identify them?

46

47 DR. STRAM: Yes. They can definitely
48 -- thank you for the question. Yes, they can
49 definitely identify what's coming from Western Alaska

50

0264

1 as well as -- so the upper Yukon for the fall chum is a
2 -- has a different genetic signature as does the upper
3 Yukon chinook. So those they can differentiate. But
4 all the rest of Western Alaska, for the most part,
5 because of the tributaries kind of crossing each other
6 and the way the intermingling has occurred, the
7 genetics of those get much more difficult so they can
8 definitely identify them to Western Alaska but within
9 Western Alaska it's difficult to identify them to
10 specific river systems. When they have been identified
11 to specific river systems, Kate Myers had some tagging
12 studies from way back in the early '90s to identify,
13 like for the Yukon, the Kuskokwim, but you would have
14 to do it that way, you couldn't do it by genetics.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So the genetics
17 are not river defining but they are defining Western
18 Alaska salmon stocks, so.....

19
20 DR. STRAM: Yes, they're defined
21 regional.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN:if you had
24 thermally marked salmon, that would direct you to a
25 specific river, wouldn't it?

26
27 DR. STRAM: You would have to tag --
28 because they're wild -- they're all wild stocks so the
29 only way they would thermally mark is -- my
30 understanding is if it's a hatchery so without -- with
31 no hatcheries for Western Alaska you'd have to do more
32 of a tagging study on fish in order to figure out which
33 ones they're coming back to. But the genetics are very
34 good at determining to Western Alaska, just not -- you
35 just -- for example, with chinook, you can't tell the
36 difference between the Kuskokwim, the lower Yukon,
37 Nushagak. For chum they've just figured out a system
38 for how they could define Kotzebue separately based on
39 genetic markers to Kotzebue fish because they're a
40 little bit more removed from the rest of the Western
41 Alaska lower river systems.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So I guess what
44 my question was more about was if there was a hatchery
45 marked, thermally marked chum salmon, or chinook, you
46 would be able to define it to a certain river, right?

47
48 DR. STRAM: That's my understanding.

49
50

0265

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Mr. Gray,
2 did you have something. Thank you, Diane, appreciate
3 you answering all my questions. I think the.....

4
5 DR. STRAM: Absolutely.

6
7 MR. GRAY:Vice Chair had a
8 question or two. He's just coming back from the coffee
9 machine. That's what keeps us old guys going.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Here you go, Tom.

14
15 MR. GRAY: So I guess I apologize, I'm
16 not as well versed as some of these guys around the
17 room on bycatch and on and on and on. The one thing
18 that did catch my eye was the graph of bycatch in 2005,
19 somewhere in that ball park, there was real high
20 bycatch. And in the recent years, you know, we have up
21 and down spikes but the bycatch is a lot less. And to
22 a layman like myself, I thought, well, maybe in 2005
23 there was lots and lots and lots of king salmon and
24 chum salmon and whatever, and all of us are screaming
25 nowadays that there's no more kings. I mean I look at
26 the Yukon River and you can't set nets for kings on
27 the Yukon. My river, Fish and Game came in and cut out
28 the escapement goal so there is no escapement goal for
29 my river for king salmon.

30
31 Anyway, I -- I guess in my mind the --
32 the fishery, king salmon and chums and so on and so
33 forth have taken such a hard hit, I was thinking to
34 myself these -- these lower spikes look good on a graph
35 but with our king runs and chum runs, what they are,
36 the takes, your bycatch may be way out of line still.
37 And the other thing that I -- I try to read into was
38 you're at 8,000-something bycatch on king salmon and
39 you made a comment that's from -- the kings are coming
40 from Western Alaska. And, you know, those of us
41 sitting around the table we're here to represent
42 subsistence and yet what we're talking about is
43 industry and -- and their bycatch is probably quite a
44 bit more than the take of Western Alaska today. It's
45 frightening to see the subsistence issues not -- not
46 taken into consideration. I mean you've got a board
47 that regulates all this stuff and power players at the
48 table but subsistence, I don't feel is at that table.
49 And somehow we need to change this way of thinking and
50

0266

1 addressing resources so it doesn't impact Western
2 Alaska. I mean we've got a handful of boats that might
3 -- might help X amount of people but we got whole
4 Western Alaska being impacted by this process.

5
6 I just -- I don't know.
7

8 One thing I thought of and maybe I'll
9 throw this at you, is, do you guys understand the
10 numbers in the runs of fish in Western Alaska, you
11 know, to me that -- that shouldn't be that hard to put
12 together. I'm the Chairman of my Native Corporation
13 and we have a fish counting tower on our river system
14 and for 20-some years we've been counting fish on our
15 river system and we have a good idea of what's going
16 on. 8,000 kings in Norton Sound, I'll guarantee you
17 there's no escapement of 8,000 kings, it's -- it's
18 horrible and you throw the Yukon and the Kuskokwim in
19 that king escapement, you know, the numbers are going
20 to go up but the 8,000 is going to be a high
21 percentage, I think, of take and can we afford it.
22

23 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that. I
24 guess the only way I can really respond is that we did
25 -- we have just had a committee meeting this past week,
26 the committee's comprised of five Western Alaska in-
27 river representatives and five members of the pollock
28 industry so we've been having all of these discussions
29 in a public forum at the committee meetings. That will
30 continue at the Council meetings. We do have all the
31 information. We work closely with ADF&G so that we can
32 provide the Council with stock status information by
33 river system. Again, we're not able to break out,
34 genetically, by river, so it's important to keep in
35 mind when you look at an overall number of bycatch --
36 you know you can do a rough percentage by multiplying
37 it by the rough percentage from the genetics but the
38 age matters as well, so those are not the numbers that
39 would have returned to any individual river system in
40 that year.
41

42 But I just would say that we are taking
43 all that information into consideration and we do work
44 closely with the -- the State of Alaska obviously has a
45 seat on the Council and has been extremely responsive
46 trying to raise all of these issues. And we do work
47 with ADF&G. We worked with them extremely closely in
48 developing Amendment 110 in order to figure out the
49 best way to determine what are years of low abundance
50

0267

1 for chinook salmon in Western Alaska and that is
2 something that the Council is receiving information on.

3

4 Thanks.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Diane. I'm
7 going to -- I have a Council Member Mary Freytag out of
8 Unalakleet wanted to ask questions.

9

10 MS. FREYTAG: Yes, thank you, Chairman
11 Green. This is Mary Freytag. Actually I got a two
12 part question.

13

14 The first part is I don't know if
15 anyone watches the TV as I do during the winter, but on
16 some of the episodes of Life Below Zero or, anyway, I
17 would -- it would be neat to see some research done on
18 the upper inner Yukon area where the salmon go to
19 spawn. Seeing all these resident non-Natives take tons
20 and tons of chum and salmon and feed them to their
21 dogs, I mean that's our food that they're giving to
22 their dogs and I would just be curious if that's in the
23 radar.

24

25 And my other question would be
26 concerned about regulation. Is there any way to change
27 the regulations on the bycatch of salmon to where they
28 need to save and process them and not just throw them
29 away because it's such a shame to throw them away
30 especially with the villages not able to harvest salmon
31 or does it take the act of Congress?

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 DR. STRAM: Thanks for the question.
36 To answer your second one first. In terms of changing
37 the regulations -- we are looking at regulations for
38 minimizing the bycatch. In terms of changing the
39 regulations for discarding of the fish, that was
40 originally put in place to disincentivise catching
41 them. A lot of them, again, are being processed and
42 provided as food quality donations to SeaShare which
43 then redistributes them and since 2011 they've worked
44 extremely hard to provide distribution centers in
45 Western Alaska, understanding that that doesn't
46 mitigate in any way, shape or form the actual bycatch
47 but that those fish that are from Western Alaska should
48 be returned to distribution centers in Western Alaska
49 within the ability of SeaShare to distribute them.

50

0268

1 The Council has often considered
2 changing the way the regulations are. At this point
3 right now that's not something that I have heard is on
4 their radar screen but it -- it could always be
5 something that they consider in terms of changing them.
6 There's -- I think some of the concern is the
7 consequences of changing a regulation where those fish
8 -- they -- they don't want the bycaught fish to be
9 something that is profitable to industry and that's the
10 reason why both halibut and salmon as well as crab, the
11 regulations are written the way they are so that those
12 are something that you are inscentivized to avoid, not
13 retain.

14
15 To your first question about research
16 on the upper river, that would probably be better
17 directed to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as
18 that -- we -- we only manage three to 200 miles off
19 shore so we -- we -- the National -- the North Pacific
20 Fishery Management Council is responsible for the off
21 shore trawl fisheries, the Alaska Department of Fish
22 and Game has sole jurisdiction on -- on managing within
23 rivers as well as research programs that they have in
24 place for -- for in-river fisheries.

25
26 I hope that answered your question.

27
28 MS. FREYTAG: Is there any specific
29 reasons why the Federal and State don't work together
30 collaboratively on this matter since it's so very
31 important? Even though the outreach is 200 miles out
32 there, the salmon are going up there so you have to
33 work together, come together as one to make something
34 happen. Just my suggestion, thank you.

35
36 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that. The
37 only thing I guess I would say is, is the way the
38 Council process is set up is the Alaska Department of
39 Fish and Game, the Commissioner has a seat at the
40 Council table and right now that seat is run by the
41 Deputy Commissioner, Ms. Rachel Baker, and they are
42 taking the lead on this, so -- so we are -- we, as the
43 Council itself, is working collaboratively with the
44 Alaska Department of Fish and Game through the Council
45 process to address a lot of these issues, understanding
46 that our process is restricted to regulations on the
47 off shore fisheries but we are working with the Alaska
48 Department of Fish and Game through our Council process
49 to address the issues that we understand are of concern
50

0269

1 in Western Alaska.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mary. I
4 have Councilman Martin Aukongak.

5

6 MR. AUKONGAK: We all know trawling is
7 bad. Do you have any plans for those big boats when
8 there's nothing to trawl, you're going to have a bunch
9 of lead in the port and maybe you're going to have to
10 have a new career because you're not regulating. We
11 just regulated caribou about a few hours ago and
12 there's a bunch of paperwork in front of me saying
13 regulate, but trawling is bad at the end of the day.

14

15 DR. STRAM: Thanks for the comment.
16 There's -- I mean there's not much I can -- I can
17 augment to that. I mean obviously you can provide
18 public comment to the Council at any point to make
19 different regulatory changes in terms of gears and
20 species that are prosecuted.

21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I've got Councilman
23 Tom Gray.

24

25 MR. GRAY: So I sit on a lot of boards
26 and I keep hearing the same issue, that's not part of
27 my -- what I'm regulating or what I'm deemed to manage,
28 that's somebody else's problem, let them manage it.
29 And I'll take the king salmon that go from the ocean to
30 Canada, I mean there's so many players involved in
31 that. And yet trying to get people at the table to
32 talk and manage this resource as a whole, you know,
33 it's mind boggling that we have any fish left.

34

35 You go a certain way up the river and
36 the State's managing it and then another piece the Feds
37 are managing it, you go way up and a whole 'nother
38 country's managing it, and you know I -- I come back to
39 subsistence because everybody forgets about subsistence
40 and that's supposed to be the No. 1 priority in Alaska
41 for our resource, is subsistence, and, yet, industry
42 has set up regulations and laws and on and on that I
43 sure don't understand and if I can't understand it a
44 lot of people in Alaska will never understand it. But
45 somehow we need people like you and players and the
46 State and on and on to work together to manage the
47 resource and it's not only this issue here, it's all
48 the resources. I'm the head of the Beluga Whale
49 Committee and I'm deemed to -- I'm supposed to manage

50

0270

1 beluga whales but there's a lot of players that need
2 help.

3
4 So anyway I just -- subsistence.

5
6 Subsistence.

7
8 Subsistence.

9
10 And we can't forget that, that's more
11 important than all these boats out in the ocean, so,
12 anyway.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilman
15 Gray. This is Louis again, Green.

16
17 I've been to believe that the trawl,
18 the pelagic gear is on the bottom, 40 percent to 100
19 percent of the time, something that just came out here
20 as of late, is that true?

21
22 DR. STRAM: Thanks for the question. I
23 don't actually have the information on that in front of
24 me, but, yes, it is true that the pelagic gear is on
25 the bottom some of the time. It's -- it's designed
26 quite differently for mid-water trawls than bottom
27 trawls are, but the National Marine Fishery Service
28 did an examination -- I believe it's posted to our
29 December agenda and may come up again in June in terms
30 of ways of establishing the relative impact of pelagic
31 trawling on -- on the bottom.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, thank you. And
34 I've been led to believe also that in the crab saving
35 areas where pelagic gear is allowed in there, that it's
36 also being drug on the bottom, is that true?

37
38 DR. STRAM: Again, that would be the
39 same analysis because the National Marine Fishery
40 Service and the Council are looking at an analysis of
41 the red king crab savings area and so that -- that's
42 exactly why they're looking at the percentage or some
43 ability to estimate whether through a fishing effects
44 model or number of crab that are caught in pelagic
45 trawl nets, or for how much time that trawl is near the
46 bottom instead of higher up in the water.

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So I see that
49 you're the scientist and so that's why I'm asking you
50

0271

1 these questions, I figure you might know something
2 about this stuff. So it's all over the internet and I
3 just wanted to follow up and see what was factual and
4 what was not factual.

5
6 One thing I would.....

7
8 DR. STRAM: Yes, thank you. And I'm
9 happy to.....

10
11 CHAIRMAN GREEN:request -- I'm
12 sorry,go ahead.

13
14 DR. STRAM:send some links and --
15 oh, sorry. I can try and provide some links to some of
16 those analysis to Nissa to distribute to the committee
17 if that helps that would provide more specific
18 information that they have been trying to estimate more
19 recently. This has certainly been an issue that's been
20 discussed at the Council in recent meetings.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that. I
23 guess one other request for this Council, I would like
24 to see the total tallies of all bycatch since 1992, and
25 I'm sure you folks have got that information. And it's
26 probably easier for you to pull it up than it would be
27 for me to go look for it, I'm a little bit old
28 fashioned, but I'd like to have that for the Council at
29 some later meeting.

30
31 But, you know, I come from a community
32 that was the only -- was the first and only Tier II
33 salmon fishery in the State's history and the depletion
34 of salmon seems to have migrated from the Nome
35 Subdistrict south. And back in the '90s we were
36 talking about the trawler industry and the Area M
37 intercept industry, fishing industry there, State, that
38 if they weren't managed together in a real co-
39 management effort that we were going to have what we
40 see today. So I have a hard time understanding why
41 people who need these fish and the culture of it, to
42 practice their traditions and it just -- it doesn't
43 matter what race you are, if you're living in the Bush
44 you're needing these fish. It also is noted that the
45 nutrients from these fish also pass on to vegetation,
46 they pass on to animals that live off the vegetation
47 and other animals that live off the animals that eat
48 the vegetation so there's a big circle there. And
49 noting that the importance of salmon in the Pacific Rim
50

0272

1 through a study that had gone through many years ago
2 created all this enhancement of salmon runs down in
3 California, Oregon and Washington and I think some has
4 happened up in Alaska but Western Alaska is untouched.

5
6 So what I'm saying is I find it very,
7 very unfair that the trawler industry can go out there
8 and continue fishing in a wasteful manner and the rest
9 of us from the Bering Sea fishermen of the Big Bering
10 out there all the way to the little folks up the Yukon
11 River, the Kuskokwim River and Norton Sound have to sit
12 on the beach. I feel that the trawler industry needs
13 to shoulder a good portion of the brunt of conservation
14 that you have never had to.

15
16 So I know that sounds kind of harsh but
17 we're living the nightmare and as my old cousin Jack
18 Fagerstrom used to say, welcome to my nightmare when we
19 were at Board of Fish meetings in the '90s.

20
21 I don't know if anybody else has
22 anything. I think Elmer Seetot, one of my other
23 Council members has a question or comment.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 MR. SEETOT: Comment from Elmer Seetot,
28 Brevig Mission.

29
30 Going back to TV, you look at that
31 5,000 miles seaweed that is going on on the eastern
32 side of USA, you also hear of fish turning belly up due
33 to lack of oxygen in the water. It's not only over
34 there but it's happening in the state of Alaska where
35 fish are turning belly up because either they're -- the
36 place where they spawn is being blocked by other
37 species such as beaver or -- or that our water is being
38 so polluted now that all we talk about is bycatch. By
39 the time the bycatch problem is solved there'll be no
40 more fish to talk about.

41
42 Why?

43
44 You look at TV reports of micro-plastic
45 out there, our water is being polluted from all sides.
46 Sewer discharge, accidental oil spills and then
47 increased traffic that is going in the Bering Straits
48 on the Russian side. Wales -- Wales has people that
49 keep track of ships that go over there and every ship
50

0273

1 or every boat that passes, or goes through the water is
2 going to leave some kind of discharge, whether it be
3 waste discharge from the engine itself, or from human
4 discharge, which I would think -- nobody's watching me,
5 but I'll just do it anyway -- and that's -- I think
6 that's one of the main things -- well, everybody's
7 talking about bycatch, I'm not too sure who's taking
8 care of the waters that these fish inhabit. And by the
9 time, like I say, you try and get the pounds down, no
10 other stuff will be there to be regulated.

11

12 Thank you, very much.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Any other
15 Council.....

16

17 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thanks for that. I
18 guess the only thing.....

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oops, sorry, go ahead.

21

22 DR. STRAM:I could say is we are
23 looking -- sorry, just to comment. I -- I do
24 understand all of that and I would say that outside of
25 the individual -- so when we look at different changes
26 to our management system we tend to be very specific to
27 the actual change, I would say that we are looking more
28 broadly -- so we're looking more broadly in terms of
29 climate change over the entire Bering Sea, we are
30 looking more broadly over our entire groundfish harvest
31 system so to -- to the extent that it is possible to
32 pay attention to the Council process, the Council is
33 looking at a more programmatic overall view of all of
34 these changes, it's just not specific to this one
35 particular issue. We understand that they're all
36 interrelated.

37

38 I hope that helps.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Diane. I
41 think we're pretty much at the ends of questions. I
42 don't see anybody else. I don't hear anybody online
43 unless Ron or Robert, one last shot.

44

45 MR. KIRK: Yes, Mr. Chair. Ron Kirk,
46 Stebbins. Trawler fisheries, you're -- you're talking
47 about at the end of the year you have 8,000 -- 8,000
48 salmon -- fish that you've counted as bycatch, to you
49 that's a low number, to me that's a big number. Why?

50

0274

1 Because each salmon is carrying, what, 200 eggs there,
2 and you take that and you times it by 8,000, you're
3 talking 18,000 salmon being destroyed in one season by
4 bycatch with the pollock fisheries, maybe even more.
5 That's a big concern we have in our State of Alaska
6 here because it affects the Kuskokwim, it affects
7 Bering Straits, it affects all of our fisheries
8 throughout the state, we live off our fish.

9
10 So you're not only taking 8,000 fish
11 out of our sea, you're taking 18,000 fish out of our
12 seas.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: This is Louis back on
17 again, and I'm not trying to step on my Councilman
18 Member's toes, but it's 16 million eggs out of 18,000
19 fish killed.

20
21 MR. GRAY: 8,000.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Excuse me, I jumped
24 the number. 8,000 fish killed, 16 million eggs, yes.
25 So a lot of wasted resource.

26
27 Anyway, I think that will bring us to
28 an end there Diane, and appreciate you calling in and
29 giving us your presentation. I think that will be all
30 we need today.

31
32 Thank you.

33
34 DR. STRAM: Yeah, thank you for your
35 time, we're always happy to provide information.

36
37 Thanks.

38
39 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So we're at -- Nissa's
40 got something to add here real quick.

41
42 MS. PILCHER: The original -- this is
43 Nissa Pilcher. On the original agenda it did say
44 salmon bycatch as well as marine mammal bycatch update.
45 IT took a long time to track down who was responsible
46 for tracking that and by the time I found her, it
47 wasn't that far away from the meeting, and she was
48 going to be out of state during your meeting, and she
49 was very apologetic, she would love to be here and
50

0275

1 present and so she gave me something to read to you
2 guys and we're supposed to connect about getting her on
3 the agenda at your next meeting.

4
5 Her name is Dr. Suzie Teerlink, and
6 she's a marine mammal specialist for the Protected
7 Resources Division of the -- of -- for NOAA, and she
8 wanted me to read:

9
10 NOAA Fisheries and Marine -- excuse me
11 -- NOAA Fisheries and Fish and Wildlife Service is
12 responsible for implementing the Marine Mammal
13 Protection Act, which includes stipulations for marine
14 mammal and fishery mortality and serious injury or
15 bycatch. NOAA Fisheries generates and publishes an
16 annual Marine Mammal Protection Act list of fisheries
17 which tracks marine mammal mortality and serious injury
18 from fisheries and uses -- and uses them in management.
19 The specific mortality and serious injury levels are
20 found in the marine mammal stock assessment reports,
21 which are located online, which I -- I am unavailable
22 for this meeting, though, I would love the opportunity
23 to dig more into detail and share specific fisheries
24 data at the next meeting.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that --
27 following up on that Nissa and reading that to us. I'm
28 sure we'll accommodate her to give her presentation at
29 a later meeting.

30
31 And Mr. Scott Ayers, it's your turn to
32 try to crank this thing up and speed up and roll us out
33 the door. You're first, thank you.

34
35 MS. FREYTAG: Who is he wi.....

36
37 MR. AYERS: All right, thank you, Mr.
38 Chair. Members of the.....

39
40 MS. FREYTAG: Yeah, I know but with
41 agency and where are we on the agenda.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, okay, sorry.
44 Yeah, he needs to do that, I kind of just opened it
45 with his name -- sorry.

46
47 MR. AYERS: No problem. Thank you, Mr.
48 Chair and members of the Council. This is Scott Ayers.
49 I am with the Office of Subsistence Management. I'm
50

0276

1 the Fisheries Division Supervisor there. And I'm going
2 to be talking to you this afternoon, hopefully briefly,
3 about an update to the Subsistence Regional Advisory
4 Council correspondence policy. So the best way for us
5 to have this conversation is Page 96 of your book has
6 the existing Council policy and then there is also a
7 supplemental handout that Nissa provided for you that
8 says Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
9 correspondence policy at the top and it's got a bunch
10 of bold font on it.

11

12 MS. PILCHER: That's Page 15 of that
13 supplemental material pack that you were given.

14

15 (Pause)

16

17 MR. AYERS: All right, so the Office of
18 Subsistence Management would like you to review and
19 comment on a suggested update to the current Council
20 correspondence policy. This policy has been in effect
21 and unchanged since 2004. So that's what's in your
22 book, is the original policy that's been in place since
23 2004. We have an update to it. It's meant to
24 streamline and clarify the policy and, hopefully, the
25 edits eliminate any unnecessary language or
26 information, and clarifies guidance on the official
27 scope of Council correspondence and to whom Councils
28 may or may not correspond directly with and the
29 process.

30

31 So, again, the item in your
32 supplemental materials shows any new language in bold,
33 although the removed language is not represented on
34 there.

35

36 The primary changes in the draft policy
37 include a shortened preamble, that section at the very
38 beginning that introduces policy and summarizes the
39 intent of the policy.

40

41 Element 1 uses clear language to define
42 the content and focus of Council correspondence.

43

44 Element 5 combines elements that define
45 the correspondence process.

46

47 Element 7 confirms that Councils can
48 submit comments on State regulatory proposals directly
49 to the Board of Fish and Board of Game without review

50

0277

1 by the Assistant Regional Director for the Office of
2 Subsistence Management.

3

4 Element 9 clarifies that the Councils
5 may not write directly to Federal elected, or appointed
6 officials due to Hatch Act restrictions.

7

8 Finally, and most importantly, these
9 changes will not prevent Council members from writing
10 to whomever they wish as private citizens or in other
11 capacities.

12

13 So we're asking you to take a moment to
14 review these suggested changes and we will hope that
15 you share any comments or questions that you have,
16 which will be noted, and then the Board is planning to
17 take action on this draft policy during a summer work
18 session and then you'll be updated in the fall on what
19 action came of that.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And, of course, this
22 is not an action item guys, gals.

23

24 What else do we need, Mr. Scott?

25

26 MR. AYERS: Ultimately this is
27 something that hasn't been updated since 2004. We've
28 made some updates to clarify items that have popped up
29 over the years and we're just seeking input from the
30 Councils all around the state on their thoughts on the
31 changes we've made.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a timeframe?

34

35 MR. AYERS: We're hoping to get
36 comments from the Councils at this meeting because I
37 believe the Board is going to take up the draft during
38 a work session this coming summer.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any Council members
41 have anything to add or comment on on this. I don't
42 have anything.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It looks like it's a
47 thumb's up, Scott, the way it is. Thanks.

48

49 MR. AYERS: Well, I really appreciate

50

0278

1 that and thanks for the time and happy to keep moving
2 things forward here this afternoon.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Speedy delivery.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So we got the -- I
9 should look at mine, I got it right here. The 2021
10 Council charter review and Nissa's going to present
11 Page 1 of 2.

12

13 MS. PILCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Members of the Council. For the record my name is
15 Nissa Pilcher, the Council Coordinator. Your Council's
16 2021 charter can be found on Page 102 in the meeting
17 book.

18

19 So all 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory
20 Councils were chartered under the Federal Advis --
21 Advisory Committee Act, also known as FACA. Under the
22 Act, each Council charter needs to be renewed every two
23 years, so approximately a year before it is renewed
24 each Council can have a discussion to see if there's
25 anything you want to change. Most of the language
26 currently in the charter is required by FACA and it's
27 implementing policies and that required language cannot
28 be changed, but you can request to make minor
29 modifications to such things as the name of your
30 Council, the number of seats on your Council, the
31 number of frequency of meetings, adding language on
32 desired geographic membership balance. Just please
33 keep in mind that any requests to change or modify the
34 charter must be accompanied by a detailed
35 justification.

36

37 One thing to note that specifically
38 speaking regarding membership balance, of course, you
39 guys know we receive applications, so while you can
40 request as a broad diversity of possible on the Council
41 it depends on who submits applications to the Council
42 in order to make sure that we can carry through with
43 that.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Who is submitting?

46

47 MS. PILCHER: Uh?

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What was that about

50

0279

1 who is sub.....

2

3 MS. PILCHER: Oh, it just depends on
4 who submits, like who turns -- who -- who applies to
5 sit on the Council.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

8

9 MS. PILCHER: And, of course,
10 individuals can do it for themselves and also, you
11 know, tribal councils can submit names as well, or
12 applications for individuals so it's a pretty -- pretty
13 broad range of that.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Nissa. Any
16 questions or comments.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Ron, anything.

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Oh, I didn't.....

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oops.

25

26 MS. PILCHER: I'm sorry, I forgot to
27 turn the page.

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hang on folks.

30

31 MS. PILCHER: Some of the changes made
32 to the charters over the last four years include
33 language on carryover terms, which allow Council
34 members to continue to serve on the Councils if a new
35 round of appointments have not been made before the
36 winter Council meetings, which you guys have run into
37 the last couple goarounds.

38

39 Another change in language added a
40 clause on out of cycle alternate appointments that
41 allows vacated seats to be filled by previous years
42 applicants to make sure that we have as many people on
43 the Council as we can.

44

45 These two language additions hopefully
46 allow less vacant seats on the Council during meeting
47 cycles.

48

49 If the Council is satisfied with all

50

0280

1 charter provisions, as is, and requests no changes then
2 the Council can just simply vote to forward the charter
3 to the Board. If the Council would like to make a
4 request for modification you would need to provide
5 justification and then I can provide the InterAgency
6 Staff for review, that, in turn, will provide this
7 request to the Federal Subsistence Board that will
8 review it and decide to move it forward to the
9 Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture for their
10 approval. If you did wish to modify your current
11 charter that would make this agenda item an action
12 item.

13
14 And please let me know what your wishes
15 are.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: At this point I have
18 no desire to change anything. Anybody else.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Seeing none in the
23 room, anybody online? Ron. Robert.

24
25 MR. KIRK: Ron Kirk, Stebbins. No
26 desire.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron.
29
30 Robert.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 MS. PILCHER: He did say that he might
35 need to step out to attend to some powerline stuff.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Okay, yep. All
38 right, we've gone around the table, we're -- this is --
39 we're done with that one. So we're on to the next item
40 here.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 This would be -- is this something to
45 do with Hannah here, Fisheries Resource Monitoring
46 Program update -- Doctor Hannah, I got to remember
47 that.

48
49 DR. VOORHEES: Good afternoon, Mr.

50

0281

1 Chair and members of the Council. This is Hannah
2 Voorhees, Anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
3 Management. My colleague, Fisheries Biologist, Jarred
4 Stone, is also on the line.

5

6 I'll be providing an update on three
7 fisheries program topics, including the Fisheries
8 Resource Monitoring Program, Partners for Fisheries
9 Monitoring and the fisheries regulatory cycle. These
10 will be brief updates and they're not action items.

11

12 First up is the update on the Fisheries
13 Resource Monitoring Program. The mission of the
14 Monitoring Program is to identify and provide
15 information needed to sustain fisheries, subsistence
16 fisheries on Federal public lands. The Monitoring
17 Program also supports meaningful involvement in
18 fisheries management by Alaska Native and rural
19 organizations and promotes collaboration among Federal,
20 State and Alaska Native and local organizations.
21 During the open funding opportunities the Monitoring
22 Program seeks applications for projects that address
23 priority information needs developed by Regional
24 Advisory Councils such as this one. The most recent
25 funding opportunity closed recently on February 24th.
26 Applications will be reviewed by the Technical Review
27 Committee and summaries of project proposals submitted
28 for your region will be presented to you at your next
29 meeting for your input.

30

31 If there are any questions, Jarred and
32 I would be happy to address them now. And that
33 concludes my presentation on this first fisheries item.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Hannah. I
38 don't think anybody has any questions or comments,
39 please continue.

40

41 DR. VOORHEES: Next I'll be presenting
42 on the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring.

43

44 This winter the Office of Subsistence
45 Management sought proposals for the Partners for
46 Fisheries Monitoring Program to strengthen Alaska
47 Native and rural involvement in Federal subsistence
48 management. The Partners Program funds salaries for
49 biologists, anthropologists or educators and Alaska
50

0282

1 Native rural non-profit organizations with the intent
2 of increasing the organizations ability to participate
3 in Federal subsistence management. The Program also
4 supports a variety of opportunities for local rural
5 students to connect with subsistence resource,
6 monitoring and management through science camps and
7 paid internships. For this funding cycle it is
8 anticipated that approximately that \$1 million will be
9 available yearly. There were 15 proposals received for
10 this cycle and the review panel met in mid-February to
11 determine which applicants.....

12
13 (Teleconference interference -
14 participants not muted)

15
16 DR. VOORHEES:would b funded.
17 More information about that will be provided in the
18 near future through a news release from OSM and Karen
19 Hyer is the point person in our office for that
20 Program.

21
22 Are there any questions about the
23 Partners Program.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Looking around the
26 table, no, I don't see any. I don't have anything,
27 thank you.

28
29 DR. VOORHEES: All right. And next the
30 fisheries regulatory cycle update.

31
32 The Federal Subsistence Board took
33 action on all of the fisheries proposals and closure
34 reviews at their January Fisheries Regulatory meeting
35 and we expect the new regulations should be published
36 in the Federal Register in late spring or early summer.

37
38 The Board rescinded closures to
39 subsistence fishing in the Federal waters of Kanuti
40 River and Bonanza Creek and supported FP23-02, Yukon
41 River customary and traditional use determination for
42 salmon by residents of Chevak, Hooper Bay and Scammon
43 Bay for fishing in the Yukon River drainage. I'm
44 mentioning those proposals and closure reviews, in
45 particular, because these are the ones for which this
46 Council has customary and traditional use
47 determinations.

48
49 We will begin our next fisheries cycle
50

0283

1 during your winter 2024 meeting. At that meeting we
2 will provide the Councils with draft closure reviews,
3 if there are any for your region, and we'll also
4 solicit proposals to change the Federal fish and
5 shellfish regulations.

6
7 This concludes the fisheries regulatory
8 cycle update. And, again, please let me know if there
9 are any questions.

10
11 Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Dr. Hannah.
14 Thank you, Dr. Hannah. I got to push my button for
15 Tina.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 REPORTER: Yep, thanks.

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anybody. Mary.

22
23 MS. FREYTAG: Yes, you mentioned the
24 villages on the -- the three villages being closed,
25 those are the lower river areas near the mouth. Do you
26 guys consider the whole river, not just the lower
27 villages, do you guys go all the way up the river to
28 those other villages, those other little towns and
29 regulate up there also? I just would like to know.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you. I don't --
34 I'm not the best person to address your question since
35 I don't work on the Yukon and Kuskokwim River regularly
36 but I know for those three communities, there was a
37 regulatory history that was rather complicated and it
38 appeared that most communities in the area had already
39 appropriately been included in a customary and
40 traditional use determination, but those three villages
41 had not, and in the process of going back and looking
42 at our regulations it was decided that they needed to
43 be added as well so -- but it was for a wider customary
44 and traditional use determination.

45
46 Sorry, I'm not the best person to
47 answer that question and if there's anyone else on the
48 line right now who would like to jump in, please, go
49 ahead.

50

0284

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Mr. Scott.

4

5 (Teleconference interference -
6 participants not muted)

7

8 MR. AYERS: Thank you. Again, this is
9 Scott Ayers with OSM. The fisheries regulations do
10 cover -- the Federal subsistence fishing regulations do
11 cover a number of the portions of the Yukon River
12 drainage that are within the bounds of the Federal
13 public lands on that river, so there's kind of a
14 patchwork so the regulations apply there to communities
15 -- rural communities throughout that drainage. So our
16 regulations do cover that area. The State fishing
17 regulations also cover that area and that's part of our
18 area of dual management, is along the Yukon River
19 there. So if your question was whether or not the
20 regulations do cover those communities, they do, they
21 cover the communities all the way up the Yukon River,
22 and so the State and Federal managers work together to
23 manage harvest along that part of the river. And,
24 unfortunately, for the last several years there hasn't
25 been much, if any, in the way of salmon harvest along
26 the Yukon River just because of the very low returns.

27

28 MS. LAVINE: Hello, Mr. Chair. Scott,
29 members of the Council, this is Robbin.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Robbin, it's
32 about time you spoke up.

33

34 (Laughter)

35

36 MS. LAVINE: You all are doing a really
37 good job. I am having a wonderful time listening to you
38 all. The only reason why I'm speaking up is because I
39 am actually having a hard time hearing you.

40

41 Somebody on the line who's listening
42 like me, needs to mute their phone. I can hear papers
43 rustling, I can hear clanging, maybe kitchen, maybe
44 somebody eating so please check and make sure that your
45 phones are muted so I can continue to enjoy your
46 wonderful meeting even though I'm not there.

47

48 Nice to hear you all, bye.

49

50

0285

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Robbin. I
2 was going to blame it on Tina but I looked over there
3 and she was just standing there looking at everybody
4 else, quietly.

5
6 (Laughter)

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So thanks whoever
9 turned their phone off.

10
11 Where are we at? Any questions. Mary,
12 you're good with Scott's and Hannah's answers?

13
14 MS. FREYTAG: (Nods affirmatively)

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Oh, Elmer.

17
18 MR. SEETOT: I just have a comment.
19 Elmer Seetot from Brevig Mission. I fish on the
20 northwest side of Grantley Harbor. I have a fish camp
21 there and my only source of communication is a radio
22 and throughout the summer last summer I listened to
23 reports, ADF&G reporting closures along the Yukon,
24 Kuskokwim drainage areas and also later on in the year
25 they -- they were mentioning closures for the Pilgrim
26 River area where Nome, in the past, used to really go
27 up there and go for the reds. However, this year it
28 was very different and then they kept announcing closed
29 -- that it was still closed because the red salmon did
30 not make it and enough escapement numbers for them to
31 be comfortable to open that area. However, we -- we do
32 have a lot of chum salmon that -- that usually -- the
33 Agiapuk River, in our area, and that -- that's -- I
34 would say that's the third fish I would have in line
35 with kings -- kings and reds, and then chum. For me,
36 silver is a good fish fry but I -- I try to smoke or
37 salt, I think their flesh is just a little bit too
38 thick and they didn't -- my salted fish didn't turn out
39 as good as they were, so I had to kind of adapt to the
40 chum salmon in that -- what we call (In Native), or
41 half dried or just -- just -- I would say drained --
42 drain of saltwater. I smoked them at least one hour.
43 If you do more than two hours or if we do three hours,
44 before you put them away then I think that's a little
45 bit too smoky but that -- that's a good alternate, you
46 know, for having a sandwich because, you know, that --
47 that have a little smoke behind them but that -- that's
48 how we have kind of adapt in -- in that the red salmon
49 runs that go through Port Clarence, Grantley Harbor,
50

0286

1 Toksook all the way to Pilgrim, that -- that fed a lot
2 of people in and around the Seward Peninsula even
3 though they weren't close communities, but -- but I was
4 -- like I said before I was very happy that our
5 forefathers did not allow commercial fishing for red
6 salmon. Why? Money. Where money is involved you
7 argue about it. When arguments are about, you argue
8 more and the fish resource won't be there -- on the
9 human side.

10

11 What we really don't look at is the --
12 is the natural side of things, you know, it's --
13 Unalakleet River, belly up salmon, you know, oxygen
14 deprivation. I -- I seen other types of fish being
15 harvested by marine mammals over -- over at Teller
16 between the channels where seals will come together and
17 then just corral -- corral the fish to the -- and have
18 their take. So -- so that's one of the things that I
19 think we kind of overlook is that there are other
20 natural resources that -- that consume fish, we're not
21 the -- we're not the only ones and then -- and also the
22 -- the cycle in which natural events occur, we just
23 kind of dismiss that and say, oh, nobody told me about
24 that. I think many of you around the table that
25 represent the communities, you hear of a lot of stories
26 about fish going belly up or -- or this and that, and
27 that's part of the issues that never really get out to
28 the public or -- or in a public forum. Because you
29 know many of the community members fish for certain
30 stocks and then, you know, if they don't get certain
31 things then they have to kind of adapt to other maybe
32 non-salmon species, which is fine, I think, but for --
33 for many of them that rely on the salmon, you know,
34 that's a big departure from their diet of good red,
35 good kings and then, you know, stuff like that.

36

37 But I would say they would continue to
38 do that until the fish are no longer or -- or that they
39 have no other means.

40

41 The one other thing about bycatch, they
42 thought well discarding fish -- discarding fish --
43 during the days of dog team, 30 years ago maybe, I
44 would think so, our relatives used to go to Agiapuk
45 River and pick up the chum salmon that had died from
46 after spawning, bring them home and then have them for
47 food. Because the -- the more that -- the -- I mean
48 when they (In Native).....

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: (In Native)

2
3 MR. SEETOT: Yeah, those ones when they
4 change color, when they go from salt water --
5 freshwater it gets their flesh soft and that's what --
6 that's what these oldtimers used to prefer. Even
7 though it stayed in the sun out there, you know,
8 subsisting with the predators, wolves, fish and others
9 that -- that ate these discarded salmon, we still
10 continue the tradition of eating food that is their --
11 it -- it might not look very appetizing but it
12 nourishes the body that -- that we subsist on because
13 our metabolism -- when we live out in the country our
14 metabolism is very different compared to ones in the
15 city because we need to have these foods that energize
16 us, that keep us warm and keep our energy level up.
17 And many of our young people switching over to
18 commercial food or to store bought food it doesn't
19 provide the necessary energy or the warmth to last
20 throughout the day because that's -- that's -- today,
21 they look so tired, they do this and that, but that's
22 one of the main things that we, at the table, that have
23 been in this region for a long time, that's what we
24 continue to kind of promote, you know, because that's
25 been engraved in our society. Do not waste the
26 resources, you know, make every use of it as possible.
27 Because most of the food, I would say 50 percent of our
28 food is not -- it's not stored frozen directly out of
29 the freezer, from the water to the freezer, it's cut --
30 it's fermented, Tom Cod -- you know, Tom Cods and
31 herrings, you know, they're hung, I see whole Tom Cods
32 over at -- maybe in the '60s because at that time our
33 elders, our parents, our grandparent were the ones
34 actively doing that and -- and they were still going by
35 that knowledge, the more you use the resource, the more
36 it will be there for you. I still put that out to my
37 child -- to my grandchildren. I say don't -- can I put
38 this in the dump, no, give it to me I'll hang it up
39 and, you know, do this and that because all the food
40 that we consume is not eaten directly out of -- not
41 eaten fresh or -- or straight out of the container,
42 it's processing the way that the dried fish tastes a
43 lot better, we can store it for awhile.

44
45 And -- and by the way if you're
46 listening Ron I had some dried herring. They were very
47 good departure from what I usually just have, just
48 dried fish, like dried humpies and stuff but I -- I
49 would like, you know, something like that happening,
50

0288

1 you know, where you look at that, no, it doesn't look
2 very appetizing but once you get into it it's very
3 beneficial.

4

5 That's my -- that's my take there.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.

10 You've been here what, 25, 30 years doing this.

11

12 MR. SEETOT: I think.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah.

15

16 MR. SEETOT: Since I was a young tot I
17 pretty much, you know, learned the ropes like that.
18 Pretty much trial and error but watching and learning
19 and not -- not at this table, just when you're arguing
20 over resources, that's not the way I was taught but,
21 you know, give and share. But that's how we are, we're
22 taught at an early age that this is how you're going to
23 -- if you teach them early they will keep it in their
24 heads to continue. And -- and for me I was doing it
25 for awhile and then, oh, there's -- there's other stuff
26 that I need to take care of, you know, during the
27 younger days, that's -- I think that's when I forgot
28 quite a bit because our parents, our grandparents they
29 taught us a lot of things and then most of it kind of
30 filtered out of our minds and then, oh, I got to get
31 somebody else -- aft -- after losing our community --
32 parents and stuff like that, what -- whatever a woman's
33 chore, you know, it was separated, you know, women do
34 this, women do that now I'm all just like that for
35 taking care of food, anything from a way the way women
36 prepare it to the way men hunt and stuff like that. I
37 integrated it all to enjoy because who else can I ask.
38 My -- my relatives, I don't think -- they might not
39 have the necessary skills or experience to make that
40 food taste like our parents, or grandparents made it so
41 -- so I'm -- I kind of started late but that's where
42 I'm going right now.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer,
47 again. So we.....

48

49 MR. KIRK: Elmer, Ron. It took you

50

0289

1 awhile to try herring, you got to try it a little bit
2 fermented.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, Ron. I
5 might be -- I might be into that.

6

7 Okay, so we've got to move on here.

8

9 Thank you two folks, Scott and Hannah,
10 for going through your material there for us. And that
11 puts us in -- we were looking at -- we don't have any
12 tribal governments on the line?

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none. Native
17 organizations.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Not hearing that. We
22 got National Weather Service on here and they've been
23 waiting for a long time. It's nice of them to make it
24 nice and sunny outside so we can suffer in here and
25 look out at the sunshine.

26

27 (Laughter)

28

29 MS. SOPOW: I speak for all of us when
30 I say we're thrilled. We will send you an invoice for
31 the sun so keep your eyes out for that.

32

33 My name is Kitty Sopow. I'll introduce
34 myself and then I'll move on -- okay. I'm from St.
35 Louis, Missouri. Both my parents are from there as well
36 as all four of my grandparents. I'm the first female
37 in my lineage to leave the area actually since we
38 immigrated over so I'm pretty proud of my background
39 and so I thank you for letting me share that with you
40 today.

41

42 I'm a student of Playspace learning.
43 So I really do well coming to a community living and
44 experiencing the environment, including the weather,
45 along side my new neighbors, so thank you for having me
46 this winter. I got here on December 27th. My biggest
47 job at the Weather Service is to like figure out
48 innovative ways to improve the service of the Weather
49 Service. And I then translate the context in which

50

0290

1 risk exists to my colleagues, like MaryBeth here.

2

3 Do you want to introduce yourself.

4

5 MS. SCHREK: Sure. So I am MaryBeth
6 Schrek. I am with the National Weather Service in
7 Anchorage but I work with the SeaIce Program, which is
8 a statewide program so we analyze sea ice, forecast sea
9 ice for all of Alaska waters, everything from the
10 Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, Bering Sea and Cook Inlet.
11 And so we've been working to learn how we can support,
12 especially our land based people better, and so that is
13 part of what we're here for today.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Well, I hope they're
16 land based because the only time there's anybody on the
17 ice, if they ain't hunting, they're going on to their
18 journey to the next world.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 MS. SCHREK: But there are people that
23 want the information from a marine based, like, you
24 know, stay away from it, or work within it or
25 something, so, yeah.

26

27 MS. SOPOW: And I don't want to forget
28 about our best friend over there, Ryan Metzger, he's
29 the Fairbanks forecaster and warning coordination,
30 meteorologist. And so if you ever have any questions
31 about the forecast Ryan is who would be the one in the
32 office helping to answer your questions or to calm your
33 nerves or concerns.

34

35 So we really just wanted to introduce
36 our faces, specifically, show up, let you meet our
37 personalities and kind of just try to connect in a way
38 post-Covid, that we're finally able to.

39

40 And we also wanted to let you know
41 about a project that's going on at UAF that the Weather
42 Service is assisting with. MaryBeth, nor I, or Ryan
43 are doing research at this time, we're Staff support
44 for the University but we're trying to figure out a way
45 to improve the communication of seasonal ice
46 informational, seasonal to sub-seasonal, expanding the
47 outlook in which we can predict ice behavior based on
48 how ice has behaved in the past. And through these
49 conversations with the University and other Staff at
50

0291

1 the Weather Service we're slowly starting to really
2 focus on how we can forecast, or if it's possible, ice
3 quality. The biggest thing we keep hearing about is
4 the quality of the ice that's important, not
5 necessarily the extent only, we need the extent, plus
6 quality to create a more useful product for our users.
7 And so that's basically the first year of the project
8 right now, is, just trying to learn more about like
9 what types of quality is useful and if you were to
10 receive information on the type of ice, would it help
11 you make safer decisions when you're out there.

12

13 And so at this time we could answer any
14 questions and by, we, I mean MaryBeth, because she's
15 the sea ice expert.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Council, anybody have
18 any questions or comments.

19

20 Elmer.

21

22 MR. SEETOT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 Last year I mentioned that our summer sun, it's rising
24 directly over Red Mountain in Brevig Mission. Over the
25 -- before that time it used to rise pretty much north,
26 northeast, now it's directly pretty much north -- north
27 of our village. I -- I think I'm fortunate to have
28 witnessed that. Because if I lived in the city, you
29 know, I wouldn't care much about it because I'm in a
30 comfortable place but then we're -- we're having more
31 wind extremes. This is a -- he lives in a community
32 where I have, over the past couple months, heard winds
33 in excess of over, you know, hurricane force, and then
34 coming to that I notice that we live in communities
35 near the water and then I think, you know, water plays
36 an extreme part in how the wind shapes up. I used to
37 camp with my sister-in-law -- or I mean my sister and
38 her brother-in-law on the south side of Port Clarence
39 in the springtime to marine mammal -- or to subsistence
40 hunt, and -- and then when it used to -- when the ice
41 broke up we had constant winds because there's a strip
42 of land where the camp was and it was constant wind all
43 the time but then in Brevig, which is on the north side
44 of Port Clarence that used to be calm. So I'm kind of
45 associating wind with -- extreme wind conditions, you
46 know, because of maybe the temperature of the water or
47 stuff like that.

48

49 And many of these forecasts, they

50

0292

1 mention about the -- for the Bering Straits, or St.
2 Lawrence Island usually happens more towards the
3 western -- western portion of the Seward Peninsula.
4 Wales is a good example. They're right at the tip.
5 They get the extreme wind condition. Tent City (ph) is
6 another part, they're high up -- you know high up in
7 the altitude but it's right part of where -- those --
8 those two places are pretty windy, pretty windy when it
9 gets windy because I -- I've been in part of a spring
10 hunt in that area in the springtime even though -- even
11 though it looks calm you could have water, water
12 blowing up on the sides, right down the sides of -- the
13 south side -- the south side of mountains of Tent City,
14 the loran station, I'm not -- or not loran station, the
15 station bubble, what they call the bubble, and then
16 this constant wind from there -- up to Cape -- after
17 that I -- I think that that kind of full of mountain
18 ranges and low hills and mountain ranges, that kind of
19 determine the wind velocity especially when it breaks
20 up. So that -- that's something I kind of look at.

21
22 And then if -- if I'm seeing the
23 mountain straight -- or the sun straight -- straight
24 from Brevig, is that because the Earth tilted or what
25 happened to our Earth in the past 20 years. I heard of
26 massive earthquakes, you know, in other parts, like
27 Chile, how many years back, said that it moves their
28 monument about 10 feet or so, we don't know of these
29 natural things that are happening in other parts of the
30 world. And that's what our elders used to kind of talk
31 about, you know, of the present even though -- even
32 though do they have the credibility due to the -- but
33 -- but we continue to put that forward because they --
34 they kind of mentioned something about like two winters
35 in a row that we'll be seeing, the -- the fish will be
36 the first to go, stuff like that that I hear from --
37 not the ones that have passed on but people that I hear
38 from other communities mention that also. So that --
39 that's one of the things that I kind of look at is
40 what's going to happen, you know, afterwards.

41
42 But what I was just curious, does the
43 Earth have a chance to tilt, is it because of too much
44 bombings over at Ukraine, or too much oil extraction up
45 north, or what -- what's happened. That -- that's --
46 you know many of these things, things happen because
47 it's constantly happening somehow.

48
49 Thank you.
50

0293

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.

2

3 MS. SOPOW: I'm not familiar with

4 Robert's Rules of Order so I can just respond.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: (Nods affirmatively)

7

8 MS. SOPOW: Okay. Well, you know, for

9 those who are not aware, you know, Elmer and I are

10 going to speak -- we spoke last night about the sun

11 rising and setting in a different location and I found

12 that to be really fascinating and I really am looking

13 forward to learning more about this and how the

14 earthquake, like you mentioned, might be a catalyst for

15 this effect. You know we do have tons of people on

16 staff that can help me answer this question and I can

17 relay the information to you when I'm ready, or when I

18 have a more accurate answer.

19

20 And then I also -- you know, I really

21 wanted to say thank you for saying earlier in this

22 meeting how severe storm weather, such as post-Typhoon

23 Merbok can impact animal population. I've been

24 receiving images of, you know, marine mammals washed up

25 on shore post that event and I hadn't really been able

26 to combine those, like the access to subsistence or our

27 predictive services that we provide, together, so

28 creating this opportunity for us to present, like the

29 products that we can provide to your group is something

30 I think we have plenty of Staff hired that are excited

31 to work with you, to figure out how we can work towards

32 forecasting food security as well.

33

34 MR. SEETOT: I notice that you're

35 disciplined in certain topics, you know, when you come

36 to the meeting, I think for many of us here, we were

37 taught at an early age, you know, how to survive, it's

38 just not only everyday life but, you know, something

39 that was told to us to look for in the future and we

40 keep an open mind. So even though we're not well

41 educated in the sense of the Western World, our

42 ancestors, our forefathers, our parents, our

43 grandparents, our friends, our relatives, people from

44 other places they put out the same information that I

45 kind of hear from this, not exactly word for word but

46 at least this thing that's going to happen because this

47 is what was told to me. So everything that we -- we

48 kind of talk about is kind of handed down orally, not

49 in written paper, you know.

50

0294

1 Some of it might be, you know, when
2 they do studies or discussion about that, but most of
3 that information that I put out it was heard from
4 passed down from people that I just met from relatives
5 or from others. So that's what I want to put out.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tommy.

10
11 MR. GRAY: So you two are with the
12 weather, you're going to study weather, so to speak, is
13 that true?

14
15 MS. SOPOW: Yes.

16
17 MR. GRAY: Okay. So my suggestion is
18 go into this with an open mind because if you think
19 you're going to study ice, you could study ice for 10
20 years here and you will still not understand ice. But
21 Tom Gray, I'm out in the country quite a bit, I'm out
22 all over, I -- you know, I'm going bear hunting pretty
23 soon, after bear hunting I go seal hunting, after seal
24 hunting I move to my camp, I spend all summer at my
25 camp, so let me -- for example.

26
27 The ice is going to go out by
28 Unalakleet, by Mary's place and the ice -- the ice
29 moves this way 150 miles and gets to Nome, when the ice
30 turns to water we're going to have all kinds of wind
31 and we better be done seal hunting. So, you know, my
32 world, I measure my life and I watch the weather
33 according to the seasons. You know, seal hunting, I
34 got to be done by the time the water gets to Nome. I
35 got to be done seal hunting because it's going to get
36 windy. The first two weeks of July, I -- I have to dry
37 my fish because it's going to be windy and then it's
38 going to start raining and it's going to rain the rest
39 of July and -- and in August we got real spotty times
40 and we try to smoke salmon and kind of hit and miss.
41 Then in September it could rain like the dickens or it
42 could be beautiful. October it freezes up. And, you
43 know, that's my weather world.

44
45 And, you know, you -- I don't know what
46 you're after or who you're trying to appease or a
47 project or whatever, but there's lots of projects, lots
48 of ways of looking at weather, so keep an open mind.

49
50

0295

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
2 Are you -- you want to talk.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Yes.

5
6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Elmer.

7
8 MR. SEETOT: One thing I forgot to
9 mention was that long range forecasting, our people
10 before us, they knew how to look -- go out in early
11 morning and look at the weather, look at the sun -- I
12 mean look at the moon, the formation of clouds, stuff
13 like that. Other things were -- were looking at
14 animals, body condition, fur, stuff like that, is it
15 going to be a long winter, is it going to be a cold
16 winter, or is it going to be normal. Looking at the
17 horizon, kind of hazy, it's windy over there, you look
18 at the stars, twinkling, it's windy up that way. So --
19 so it's a fast moving world, I guess, nowadays for long
20 range forecasters to predict the weather accurately.
21 Everything moves so fast.

22
23 When I was growing up, ice broke up --
24 ice break up along the Bering Straits took a long time
25 and we had long summer -- I mean long, warm, calm days
26 when the ice was moving through. Other -- other times
27 when the low pressure came that's what brought the ice
28 out but we still continue that. Five, six years ago we
29 had constant east winds in Port Clarence Bay, I -- I
30 kept track of the dates. Our -- the ice in Port
31 Clarence Bay froze January 4, that same year it melted
32 May 24, so that's -- that's one thing I constantly look
33 at. Things certainly have changed. Before that time
34 it was constant -- constant easterly winds maybe for
35 about 10 years or so that that kept the bay open and
36 anywhere from May to December that was the freezing
37 dates, but constantly kept the bay open, but nowadays
38 weather is so unpredictable so, oh, okay, listen to the
39 weather forecast.

40
41 One thing that I think I can get out of
42 that is that being in Port Clarence I have a safety
43 net, it's called Port Clarence East, east of Port
44 Clarence the winds are 10, 15 miles less than the west
45 coast. And then the south side, maybe seven -- seven,
46 eight miles south of Brevig on Port Clarence Bay,
47 that's constantly windy. So -- so we might be in a
48 protective bay but when south winds come around you
49 better watch out because they -- either from the
50

0296

1 southwest or the southeast it will reach over the top
2 and I seen that happen maybe about five times so far
3 since maybe about 1974 so that's constantly, you know,
4 going in our face of trying to see how the weather's
5 going to be.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that was the end
8 of that. Are we done?

9
10 (Council nods affirmatively)

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Everybody's done.
13 Anybody on the phone.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing nobody on the
18 phone, thank you ladies.

19
20 MS. SOPOW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
21 Council members, I really appreciate your time.

22
23 MS. SCHREK: Thank you. And I just
24 want to say that our base mission in the National
25 Weather Service is to protect lives and property and so
26 we are here to help you stay safe and I know that
27 traditionally we have had a very, you know, distinct
28 way of like here is the weather information and our
29 goal is to learn how we can do that better for all of
30 you. So if there is something we can do, please reach
31 out.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. So next
36 time you present to us you'll be like to go to the
37 movie house there, when you go 3D, you get sunglasses
38 so when you come in here bring sunglasses next time.

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. All right,
43 I think we're done on the agenda here, or we're getting
44 close to meeting dates, folks, or did I miss something.

45
46 MS. PILCHER: We do have.....

47
48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Who's -- who's
49 missing.

50

0297

1 MS. PILCHER: We do have a presentation
2 from Brian, and I'm going to mess his name up.

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, that's right.

5
6 MS. PILCHER: But just a quick time
7 check, Martin does have to pop out in about 30 minutes.

8
9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right.

10
11 MS. PILCHER: I don't think Brian's
12 presentation will be that long but if we could do the
13 calendar stuff real quick just so everybody possible's
14 in the room. Brian, sorry, hopefully it won't take
15 very long.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are we doing the
18 calendar thing while he's here?

19
20 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. Okay, did you
23 look at your calendar with your three-ring binder or
24 whatever it is, with one ring.

25
26 MS. PILCHER: Okay. The first thing is
27 -- sorry, Nissa Pilcher for the record.

28
29 So we're looking at your next three
30 meetings, which we did discuss at your last fall
31 meeting, we were going to start asking you to project
32 three meetings out. So the first is confirming that
33 you would still like to meet in Nome November 1st
34 through the 2nd. And so there's.....

35
36 MR. GRAY: So where's.....

37
38 MS. PILCHER: And you're going to want
39 to look at the one in the ring-binder and not in the
40 one in the comb-bound because these are updated with if
41 any Councils have made any other changes.

42
43 MS. FREYTAG: What page?

44
45 MS. PILCHER: Starting on Page 35.

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

48
49 MS. PILCHER: And, also, please keep in
50

0298

1 mind, of course, that we can only do two Councils in
2 two weeks [sic] so if they already have -- like if you
3 wanted to move it to the previous week, Bristol Bay and
4 Southeast are already meeting so we wouldn't be able to
5 do that.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What's over here?

8
9 MS. PILCHER: So that's -- that one's
10 different. So the winter meeting.....

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: These here?

13
14 MS. PILCHER: This gets more
15 complicated because we're going to try to do an All
16 Council meeting in winter of 2024.

17
18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, All Council
19 meeting.

20
21 MS. PILCHER: Yep, so you guys are all
22 meeting together so we're looking at the fall.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Right. That's already
25 set right there, okay.

26
27 MS. PILCHER: Yep. Yep, I'm just
28 making -- I'm just confirming. I think we're supposed
29 to confirm.

30
31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. Okay. I'm good
32 with November 1st and.....

33
34 REPORTER: So if we're all going to
35 talk someone needs to turn at least one microphone on.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

38
39 MR. GRAY: I'm amazed, I have the 1st
40 and 2nd in my phone already so I guess I'm okay.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You're psychic.

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So that's this fall,
47 we've got fall of '23, November 1st and November 2nd.
48 Anybody have any conflicts there, Tommy doesn't, he's a
49 psychic, he already put it in there because he wanted
50

0299

1 it -- I don't anticipate anything. Are we settled on
2 that, the 1st and 2nd for the fall meeting.

3

4 (Council nods affirmatively)

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So then we flip
7 it over to the winter of 2024 and Nissa says
8 something's complicated.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: Okay. So complicated may
11 be the wrong word. So in winter of 2024 we're looking
12 at doing an All Council meeting, which you guys would
13 have participated, for those that were on the Council
14 in 2016, it's where we pull all 10 Councils in to
15 Anchorage, have a joint Council session where all 10
16 Councils meet together and then we'd have break out
17 sessions as well as you would break out and have your
18 own Council meeting on that day, it would be an
19 abbreviated meeting. Last time it was a day instead of
20 two days. Also included would be informational
21 sessions. Last time there was stuff on -- I'm trying
22 to find some of this -- customary and traditional use
23 determinations, Council member roles and
24 responsibilities, understanding co-management, there
25 were also panel discussions on tribal consultation,
26 holistic management, challenges in outreach. So
27 there'd be educational components as well.

28

29 So what we're looking at during this --
30 on the winter 2024 calendar is basically what areas
31 would work the best for you guys. The idea would be it
32 would be a four to five day meeting, it would be in
33 Anchorage. One issue that Eastern Interior and Western
34 Interior have is there's no flight service on the
35 weekends sometimes so they were -- well, Eastern
36 Interior so far has requested we do it over a weekend
37 and so basically where on there works the best for you
38 guys. This one is different, in that, your previous
39 one you picked, that's when it's going to happen, on
40 this one, we're going to have to figure out where it
41 works best for the most people and schedule it then.
42 So it might not necessarily be what you picked but it
43 is what it's going to have to be unfortunately.

44

45 MR. GRAY: So buyer beware, if I have
46 my way I'm going to be driving reindeer and I will not
47 be in a meeting.

48

49 MS. PILCHER: Duly noted.

50

0300

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What day?

2

3

4 MR. GRAY: I'm planning on starting to
5 drive animals from Stebbins, St. Michael area the first
6 part of March and I will be driving to White Mountain
7 and if it all comes together I won't be there. If it
8 doesn't come together I may make it. So pick your
9 dates according to you guys.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Iditarod starts the
12 beginning of the month of March and that's an Anchorage
13 meeting, I don't know if anybody's interested in the
14 Iditarod while you're going to the meeting but the
15 potential's there, but that's on a Saturday.

16

17 (Cell phone ringing)

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Somebody's phone is
20 ringing, it's not mine. But you can see this Eastern
21 Interior RAC is right there, Southcentral, Bristol Bay,
22 Southeast, so -- and then Northwest is down on the
23 bottom there. I don't know I'm kind of liking towards
24 the end of the month of March or something. Well,
25 there's the beginning of March.

26

27 Elmer.

28

29 MR. SEETOT: I would think less chance
30 of poor travel if you do it later in the month or
31 something like that. Because I think with Iditarod
32 starting you're going to have a lot of people coming
33 into Anchorage or something from other parts of the
34 world that will make lodging and transportation maybe a
35 little bit difficult for people.

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Good point. I kind of
38 like towards the end of the month but that's just me.

39

40 MS. PILCHER: Would you want to say the
41 week of the 18th is your first choice and the week of
42 the 25th is your second.

43

44 MR. SEETOT: Either way.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I guess we'll follow
47 with the Northwest Arctic, they got a first and second
48 choice there. Right.

49

50 MS. PILCHER: All right. Then that

0301

1 would lead us to the fall of 2024. And, of course,
2 you'll have an opportunity, probably at each meeting
3 until this meeting to verify that those dates work so
4 just 'cause you say this is where you want it right now
5 doesn't mean it's set in stone.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I guess we could be
8 like.....

9
10 REPORTER: Louis. Louis.

11
12 CHAIRMAN GREEN:in here, right?

13
14 MS. PILCHER: Uh-huh.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: The end of.....

17
18 REPORTER: Someone put a mic on.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Excuse me.

21
22 REPORTER: Okay. Thank you.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Southeast is out at
25 Ketchikan, they're at the October 22nd, we need three
26 days, or two -- two days, right, so what about the end
27 -- that week, the 21st or somewhere in there. It's
28 more away from what we're doing around here at that
29 time of the year, farther away from whitefish chasing
30 to the -- better for me -- beluga -- whitefish.

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So that week there,
35 October 21st to the 25th, we fit it in there, two days,
36 the 24th, 25th.

37
38 MR. GRAY: Uh-huh.

39
40 MR. SEETOT: Uh-huh.

41
42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, the 24th to 25th
43 for now.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: Just to verify, does
46 Bering Air fly on Saturdays to your guys' communities?

47
48 MR. AUKONGAK: Yep.

49
50

0302

1 MR. KIRK: Every day.

2
3 MS. PILCHER: Okay.

4
5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, so we'll just
6 say that for now.

7
8 MS. PILCHER: All right.

9
10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are we close to the
11 end here.

12
13 MS. PILCHER: All right, so that would
14 go back to the next presentation by -- from.....

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: With Brian?

17
18 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, with Brian.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

21
22 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Can you hear me?

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Can you guys hear
27 me?

28
29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep, we can hear you.

30
31 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Okay, great. Just
32 let me know when it's up on the screen and I'll get
33 started.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There's a nice green
36 pasture by the mountains on the screen.

37
38 MS. PILCHER: Hold on let me figure
39 out.....

40
41 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Uh-huh.

42
43 MS. PILCHER:something -- hold
44 on.

45
46 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: So my name is
47 Brian Brettschneider, I am with the Alaska region.....

48
49 REPORTER: Wait a second Brian.

50

0303

1 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER:National
2 Weather Service.....

3
4 REPORTER: Brian. Brian, hold up.

5
6 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Yep -- yes.

7
8 REPORTER: Yeah, hold up. She's
9 getting it up there, not quite there yet.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 MS. PILCHER: Okay.

14
15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, there we go
16 we got the main page to begin with, the title page. Go
17 ahead.

18
19 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: All right. All
20 right, thanks. So, again, my name is Brian
21 Brettschneider. I'm with the National Weather Service
22 in the Alaska region and I work with Kitty and MaryBeth
23 and Ryan, not in the same office location but we're all
24 part of the National Weather Service. I wish I could
25 have been there in person. I did have the chance to go
26 up to the Northwest Arctic fall meeting a few months
27 back and it was a great privilege to be there and I
28 hope some day to get to Nome to be there in person for
29 another RAC meeting.

30
31 But what I'd like to talk to you guys
32 about today is the spring climate outlook. And so
33 we've got some hints of what we think the spring is
34 going to bring for us. Of course, we're already kind
35 of into our spring a little bit but we have some
36 information that the members of the RAC may find useful
37 in your planning for either activities or for other,
38 you know, for any other activity really.

39
40 So if you could go to the next slide.

41
42 And it shows a bar chart of some red
43 and white and blue indicators, and this is the
44 likelihood of where we are for ElNino or LaNina in the
45 coming months. And I really like to show this because,
46 you know, from the seasonal time scale, you know,
47 predicting what the climate's going to be like there's
48 a lot of uncertainty there. And one of the things we
49 really clue in on is the state of ElNino and LaNina.

50

0304

1 And for those that aren't that familiar with it it
2 represents the state of the ocean, really straddling
3 the Equator in the Central Pacific Ocean. And so we
4 might say, well, how is that going to affect Alaska.
5 And it turns out the things that cause that part of the
6 Pacific Ocean to be either warmer or cooler, strong
7 trade winds and resulting big tropical thunder storms
8 have really a global effect on wind patterns and where,
9 you know, storm tracks are and it's really kind of a
10 remarkable set of events that track with ElNino and
11 LaNina. So what this chart shows is that -- and on the
12 bottom the FMA, MAM, those are the months, so
13 February/March/April, March/April/May and it shows
14 right now we are in what we call insoneutral conditions
15 so basically that part of the tropical Pacific Ocean is
16 unremarkable. So we just came out of three years in a
17 row of LaNina but now LaNina is officially declared
18 gone and we're kind of in a transition period and it
19 looks like we are going to transition, more likely than
20 not, into an ElNino over the next six to nine months.
21 So that's something to kind of keep an eye on.

22
23 But knowing kind of what the state of
24 the ocean is, you know, gives us some clues about what
25 our climate is going to be like over the next three to
26 six, even nine months.

27
28 Next slide.

29
30 So the next slide, Slide 3 shows --
31 remember we're kind of in an ElNino neutral state right
32 now, so not Nina, not Nino, just neutral, and this kind
33 of shows what our expectation is based on past history
34 of what spring conditions are like.....

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can you hold.....

37
38 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER:spring
39 conditions are like, spring temperature conditions.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can you hold up just
42 for a second here, they're chasing the screen.

43
44 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Yes. Yes.

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay.

47
48 MS. PILCHER: So we're looking at.....

49
50

0305

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: We're looking at the
2 Alaska.....

3
4 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Right, hopefully
5 there's a map up there. Yeah, a map of Alaska. And
6 this shows kind of what the temperatures historically
7 are like during the spring when we have this
8 insoneutral conditions like we do have now. And it
9 shows, you know, for the Seward Peninsula, a very
10 slight tilt toward warmer than normal conditions. Not
11 a really strong signal. Really what we find statewide
12 if there's not a lot of predictability in the spring
13 season, but to the extent that there is some
14 predictability it is -- just tends to be a little bit
15 warmer, all other things being equal.

16
17 So next slide should be a precipitation
18 slide.

19
20 And hopefully that has loaded up and if
21 it hasn't just let me know.

22
23 And it shows how precipitation
24 generally performs or how much precipitation we get
25 compared to normal, or compared to average when we have
26 ElNino neutral conditions in the spring months. And
27 what we find is in the Seward Peninsula there is a
28 slight tilt toward wetter than normal conditions. So
29 not a strong signal and not -- you know, not
30 insignificant, but to the extent that it is predictable
31 we do feel, in general, that there's going to be -- all
32 other things being equal, a slight hint of wetter than
33 normal conditions.

34
35 So next slide -- and really the next
36 two slides I'm going to skip through, because when I
37 put this presentation together we were still in LaNina
38 so I was kind of hedging my bets and having some LaNina
39 maps up. So we're no longer in a LaNina.

40
41 So if you could actually go to Slide 7
42 and that should be a map of Alaska all painted in
43 green. Let me know when you have that.

44
45 MS. PILCHER: Yep.

46
47 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Okay. So this is
48 a little bit wonky but it's a statistical map and it
49 shows the relationship between those oceanic
50

0306

1 temperatures in the tropical Pacific and spring
2 temperatures in Alaska. And basically what it's
3 showing is that the warmer the temperatures are in the
4 ocean the warmer our spring temperatures will be, and
5 conversely the cooler those ocean temperatures are the
6 cooler our temperatures will be. So we're really
7 watching that ElNino, LaNina region, or insoregion,
8 it's warmed up really rapidly the last two months. And
9 if that were to continue we actually may end up in an
10 ElNino sooner than we think. So maybe keep this map in
11 mind that when, you know, the more that it warms up in
12 the ocean the more that Alaska warms up.

13

14 And there really is -- you know I like
15 to tell people in LaNina's -- LaNina's in Alaska tend
16 to be cool, occasionally warm but mostly cool, ElNino's
17 are really the opposite. It's just how warm is it
18 going to be. Is it going to be a little warm or is it
19 going to be really, really, really warm. So we really
20 kind of take cool conditions off the table when we have
21 an ElNino.

22

23 So next slide, No. 8.

24

25 And it shows the relationship between
26 spring precipitation and the ElNino conditions and that
27 is -- so a little bit of green on the western Seward
28 Peninsula, a little bit of purple on the eastern Seward
29 Peninsula, and that just indicates there's not a lot of
30 strong relationships but that green would mean more --
31 the warmer the ocean water gets the more precipitation,
32 and the purple would be the warmer the ocean waters get
33 the less precipitation, so kind of right on the edge of
34 where we would find that relationship. So just not a
35 lot really to go on there. So that ends kind of the
36 ElNino part.

37

38 But I really wanted to go over that, or
39 the ElNino, LaNina because it really does drive a lot
40 of our thinking non the seasonal predictions of
41 temperature and precipitation.

42

43 So if we go to Slide 9.

44

45 Just sea ice is a major factor in
46 spring conditions. And certainly MaryBeth Schrek there
47 could spend a lot of time talking about all the
48 intricacies of what they do in monitoring sea ice.

49

50

0307

1 But on Slide 10 you can see that kind
2 of -- that right interior panel, and this is today's
3 plot, hopefully it says March 23rd at the top, it kind
4 of shows the approximate state of sea ice. This is an
5 automated assessment, this is not what the Alaska Sea
6 Ice Desk produces, they produce more detailed, more
7 informational content, but this is an automated product
8 that is produced by the National Data Center and it
9 shows that we're basically, for the last 20 years,
10 we're running today, we're at 93 percent normal in the
11 Bering Sea. Of course Chukchi and Beaufort Seas are
12 fully iced over and it kind of gives an idea of what
13 conditions have been like on this date, you know, going
14 back -- well, to 2007. It's actually dated a little
15 farther back than that, but this goes back to 2007.
16 And, you know, normally during this time period we'd
17 have about 718,000 square kilometers and we have
18 765,000 square kilometers so a little bit below our
19 recent historical but, of course, well below the longer
20 term historical.

21
22 In some recent years, like, you know,
23 2019, 2018, 2020 as well had much less ice on this date
24 and, of course, those ended being a very poor spring
25 ice conditions.

26
27 Now, let's get to the actual official
28 outlooks.

29
30 So if we go to Slide 12.

31
32 This is the official, you know, formal
33 spring temperature outlook. So spring being
34 March/April/May, and this was issued on February 16th.
35 And it shows that the -- really the entire West Coast
36 of Alaska is favored to be warmer than normal, and
37 there's a couple of things for Alaska that go into
38 this. One is the expectation that there would be less
39 sea ice than normal. Now, as it turns out we're kind
40 of hanging in there on sea ice so maybe with that in
41 mind you would maybe think it's not going to be a
42 little -- quite as warm as they thought, and it also
43 has trend in there as well, and the trend has been
44 warming. So that trend and the expectation of sea ice
45 being less extensive really drove this to be warmer, so
46 to that extent we could probably think of it as not
47 being as warm as they originally thought. However,
48 those tropical ocean temperatures have increased faster
49 than they thought. So that would kind of tilt us back
50

0308

1 toward warmer.

2

3 So, again, overall, probably not a big
4 surprise we should expect temperatures to be a little
5 bit warmer than normal this spring.

6

7 And then Slide 13 is precipitation.

8

9 And the precipitation expectation is
10 that it's going to be a little bit wetter than normal
11 and at the seasonal time scale to have that little
12 second shading of green, in this case over the western
13 Seward Peninsula, that's -- that indicates a fairly
14 strong signal. But I think in this case, again, most
15 of -- most of the models were showing not much of a
16 tilt toward wet or dry, but the trend has been wetter
17 in recent years. So that really drove this seasonal
18 outlook.

19

20 So that's the official Climate
21 Prediction Center temperature and precipitation
22 forecast for the spring so warmer than normal and
23 wetter than normal.

24

25 Then the last couple of slides, if you
26 go to Slide 14.

27

28 This is kind of some under the hood
29 stuff, some -- some of the -- the ingredients that they
30 look at when they put together those official outlooks.
31 And this is a -- what's called the NNME, this is their
32 spring temperature outlook and that was issued in
33 February and it shows -- this is a grouping, a
34 clustering of a bunch of computer models that originate
35 in North America and it shows kind of a less -- less of
36 a warming signal for the Seward Peninsula and really
37 all the West Coast. So that's, you know, something
38 that if we believe this, and this does not take trend
39 into account, this does not estimate sea ice extent.
40 So this is purely kind of how it views the atmosphere,
41 and based on the way it views the atmosphere it tends
42 to think that there may be a slight tilt toward warmer
43 than normal for the Seward Peninsula but -- but overall
44 pretty typical for -- compared to all recent springs.

45

46 Slide 15, which is the NNME's spring
47 precipitation outlook.

48

49 And that actually has quite a strong

50

0309

1 wet signal. So something in the atmospheric dynamics
2 that it's -- that the models have kind of caught on to
3 really pretty strongly indicates wetter than normal
4 conditions. So -- you know, so particularly at the
5 spring time of the year -- now, spring is the driest
6 season of the year so a signal that shows, you know,
7 wetter than normal, that still may not mean a lot of
8 precipitation but as you know it's already been a
9 pretty wet start to the spring and that's going to
10 certainly continue for the next week or so and possibly
11 -- possibly longer. So, again, something to keep in
12 mind.

13

14 And then Slide 16.

15

16 This is a set of European models. So
17 the previous one is North American models, these are
18 European models and this is for the temperature.
19 Actually the heading of the slide says winter, that's a
20 mistake, this is actually the spring outlook, so
21 apologize for that. And it shows really no tilt toward
22 warm or cold in -- in most of the state, including the
23 entire West Coast, you know, south of, you know, the
24 North Slope basically. So the European model has this
25 kind of typical near normal temperatures. And really
26 to be honest the European models tend to perform a
27 little bit better than the North American models. So,
28 again, to the extent that we want to kind of focus in
29 on one set of models over the other, you know, this one
30 might be one to kind of keep more in the back of your
31 mind.

32

33 And then just two more slides. Well, I
34 guess, three. Trends.

35

36 So like I said a minute or two ago,
37 trends that the computer models really -- or the
38 official forecast take trends into account. We can't
39 -- you know, we can't really ignore the fact that we
40 live in a warming world.

41

42 And so on Slide 18.

43

44 You know trends are not our friend.
45 The spring, the upper right map panel shows what the
46 trend is in March through May temperatures over the
47 last 50 years. And as you can see it's just orange,
48 shades of orange and red everywhere, everywhere in the
49 state and particularly on the North Slope but also as
50

0310

1 you can see the Seward Peninsula -- at least the
2 northern Seward Peninsula is in that second -- or is in
3 the brighter red, but really everywhere in the West
4 Coast has a significant warming trends in the spring
5 and that's -- that's driven largely by reductions in
6 sea ice but also earlier spring, snow melt-off. Once
7 that snow melts out the sun, the ground, very
8 efficiently absorbs solar energy and things warm up
9 quite quickly. So -- so trend is a significant part of
10 our assessment of how we expect the climate to do.

11

12 If we know nothing else, we should
13 expect things will be warmer than cooler.

14

15 And then finally, Slide 19.

16

17 This is kind of a local -- this is how,
18 you know, if you look at, say, all of 2022 and how the
19 ocean sea surface temperatures look -- you know, when
20 we get south of the Alaska -- I'm sorry, the Aleutian
21 Islands, record to near record warm ocean temperatures
22 and that actually extends right where the map cuts off
23 to the west and the western Bering Sea, you know, we
24 got a little bit of a reprieve in the Bristol Bay, you
25 know, to Nunivak Island, but warming temperatures as
26 you head farther north.

27

28 So with -- with the LaNina kind of
29 having now faded away our expectation is that, you
30 know, this kind of surge of warm waters from the south
31 will advance northward and we would expect warmer ocean
32 temperatures and then all the things that that does to
33 influence the temperature and precipitation locally.

34

35 So I think I used up my time but I --
36 if there is any time leftover I'm happy to take any
37 questions or if there's not I'm happy to have questions
38 forwarded to me and I would be happy to answer them at
39 a later time.

40

41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brian.
42 This is Louis. Anybody, questions or comments.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think we all know
47 that fish drying season is going to be a little rough
48 this year, damp and warm, is that what you said?

49

50

0311

1 (Laughter)

2

3

4 MR. BRETTSCHEIDER: Well, that's --
5 that's -- you know that's the best bet but, again, it's
6 important to keep in mind that seasonal forecasts don't
7 always work out and, in fact, during the LaNina winters
8 the last three years, our seasonal forecasts were --
9 did quite poorly actually. We kept thinking it was
10 going to be cool, cool, cool and it was kind of warmer
11 than normal most of the time. Not all the time, but
12 most of the time, so those didn't really work out. So
13 hopefully these ones do.

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. I think that
just about does it for us here. I don't see anybody
raising their hands or hear anybody on the phone.

I'll tell you I appreciate your
presentation, we have a little bit of an outlook and
we'll see how it turns out.

Can we go home now?

MS. PILCHER: Uh? A little bit longer.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm sorry, what?

MS. PILCHER: A little longer.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, what do we have
next. Jeanette. She's -- right, because we don't
have these other ones, right.

MS. PILCHER: Okay.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yep, the NPS.
Jeanette.

MS. KOELSCH: Jeanette Koelsch, Bering
LandBridge National Preserve and ShareBringing Heritage
Program. I just wanted to let you all know about some
projects that we've been working on and I wanted to
start with some cultural resource ones and some
partnership projects.

Bering LandBridge entered into a
PL93638 self-governance agreement with Kawarek on
several projects. From 2022 to 2025 Kawarek will work
on some maintenance of the Serpentine Hot Springs roof

0312

1 and three public emergency shelter cabins in the Park.

2

3

4 Kawarek will also be producing a
5 manuscript on indigenous knowledge having to do with
6 indigenous -- Bering Strait indigenous beliefs in the
7 environment.

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(Outside disturbance)

MS. KOELSCH: And then another part of
that agreement was about enhancing tribal engagement in
the Park Film and Exhibit Project.

(Outside Disturbance)

MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, anybody still
there, it's awfully quiet.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: We're still here, we
just have something complicating the thing here.

REPORTER: Just tell them online that
we're on pause for a little bit.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Uh?

REPORTER: Just tell them we're on
pause for a minute.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, we're on pause
right now.

(Outside disturbance)

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Jeanette.

MS. KOELSCH: Okay. So the next
agreement -- part of this agreement with Kawarek also
is for enhancing tribal engagement in the new exhibits
the Park Service is working on in the Sitnasauk
building and the new Park Film. We also have an
agreement with Maniilaq Association for the
participation of Deering residents for that same
project.

We're working with Kawarek at Pilgrim
Hot Springs. The National Park Service is working at

0313

1 the -- the -- on this.....

2

3 (Outside disturbance)

4

5 (Pause)

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Tina, you
8 ready.

9

10 REPORTER: Yes. Go ahead, Jeanette.

11

12 MS. KOELSCH: I'll be quicker. So
13 we're working.....

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, you're done,
16 thank you.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'm just kidding.

21

22 MS. KOELSCH: Jeanette Koelsch,
23 National Park Service. We're also working with Pilgrim
24 Hot Springs on their cemetery project. We're doing
25 some ground penetrating radar to locate -- we located
26 two mass graves and some unmarked graves there.

27

28 Letty has been working on several
29 projects. She was not feeling well today. She just
30 completed muskox population survey at Cape Krusenstern
31 outside of Kotzebue. We were not able to help with the
32 moose survey in 22A. The pilot that we hired got ill
33 at the last minute. She's waiting for a data on a
34 project that Nikki is also working on on fish
35 assemblages and genetic stock determination of salmon
36 in Bering LandBridge. I don't know if you have
37 anything to add to that besides waiting for data.

38

39 MS. BRAEM: This will be the third and
40 final year of sampling on the four major rivers in the
41 Preserve basically from the headwaters on down so it's
42 good that we finally got this done.

43

44 And, that's it.

45

46 MS. KOELSCH: All right. And we have
47 got a -- the last time we met we let you guys see a
48 water flow device at Serpentine. And we're going to
49 monitor that this summer and see how it works, very

50

0314

1 similar device to what they put at Pilgrim when it
2 started flooding the road out.

3

4 Letty's also analyzing moose brows in
5 22E, that project. The -- she also has a proposal in
6 to do some monitoring of beaver at Serpentine Hot
7 Springs.

8

9 The project that Carol Gayle's talked
10 about from the Habs (ph) Project that was housed here,
11 the National Park Service funded that project. And
12 also we were engaged in several mortality surveys along
13 the coast of -- the northern coast on the bird
14 mortality events that have been happening the last few
15 years and Letty works on those projects.

16

17 And that's it.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Usually about May this
20 time of the year there's mortality of birds.

21

22 (Laughter)

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There's mortality of
25 birds this time of the year.

26

27 (Laughter)

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, anything else.

30

31 MS. KOELSCH: I don't know. Nikki.

32

33 MS. BRAEM: This is Nikki, for the
34 record. I haven't been giving my name but you know who
35 I am.

36

37 REPORTER: I do.

38

39 MS. BRAEM: I would add that the
40 seabird mortality events, the unexpected mortality
41 events maybe has been ongoing for several years. We
42 expect it will happen in BELA. They'll do two survey
43 periods in the spring and fall as they hear about
44 things, we get reports they will collect carcasses for
45 sampling and document, you know, how many they see in
46 species and the researcher involves is very good at
47 communicating with Gay Sheffield over at the SeaGrant
48 and with Austin Ahmasuk as well so it's not just
49 everybody with their little bins of information, she
50

0315

1 makes a really good effort to reach out and share
2 information.

3

4 I think that's it, we should call it
5 good.

6

7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, ladies.
8 That brings us to Bureau of Land Management, if there's
9 anybody.

10

11 MS. PILCHER: They just left.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I seen him
14 running with his suitcase, so I think he's on his way
15 out. It says Tom Sparks on there but I think Tom's
16 out.

17

18 MS. PILCHER: Yeah.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So we'll just go right
21 on beyond that one. Alaska Department of Fish and
22 Game, I don't believe there will be a report, maybe?

23

24 MS. GERMAN: (Shakes head negatively)

25

26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: None.

27

28 MS. GERMAN: (Shakes head negatively)

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Nope. Thank you,

31 Sara, Girls.

32

33 And then OSM has the final word.

34

35 Thank you, Scott.

36

37 MR. AYERS: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair
38 and Council members for what's turned into a very
39 interesting meeting.

40

41 On behalf of OSM I want to thank all
42 Council members for your exceptional work on behalf of
43 your communities and user groups. We value your
44 expertise and the contribution of your knowledge and
45 experience to this regulatory process. I'm going to
46 quickly cover four areas as part of our report.

47

48 The first item is continuation of in-
49 person meetings. Last fall we held our first in-person

50

0316

1 Regional Advisory Council meetings since the beginning
2 of the Covid 19 pandemic three years ago. All 10
3 Councils were able to meet as scheduled in rural and
4 hub communities across the State. It's been a
5 tremendous honor to work with all of you, our Council
6 volunteers, OSM Staff and our multi agency colleagues
7 in subsistence to accomplish our goals of informed
8 subsistence management and the implementation of Title
9 VIII of ANILCA. We plan to repeat this success for the
10 winter of 2023 Council meetings as we are and we're so
11 very happy to work with you all face to face again.

12
13 Second item is RealID for travel to
14 Council meetings. Over the past few years we've
15 reminded Council members about the change in
16 requirements for U.S. travelers who must be RealID
17 compliant to board domestic flights and access certain
18 Federal facilities. Beginning May 7th, 2025, so they
19 pushed this back again, every air traveler will need to
20 present a RealID compliant driver's license or other
21 acceptable form of identification such as a passport to
22 fly within the United States. This is applicable even
23 when you fly on small commercial Bush carriers. Please
24 note that all Council members will need to make sure
25 they have required RealID for travel to the 2025
26 Council meetings. You can find more information on
27 RealID requirements on the State of Alaska's Division
28 of Motor Vehicles website.

29
30 The third item is the Federal
31 Subsistence Board fisheries regulatory meeting. The
32 Federal Subsistence Board recently held the fisheries
33 regulatory public meeting in Anchorage the week of
34 January 31st, 2023. This was the Board's second in-
35 person meeting and first regulatory meeting since the
36 Covid 19 pandemic. The Board had a packed agenda
37 addressing fisheries proposals and closure reviews,
38 deferred wildlife proposals and agenda items touching
39 on important subsistence and regulatory issues across
40 the State. We also listened to you, the Councils,
41 through your participating representatives at the
42 meeting. The Board is always better informed by your
43 experience.

44
45 The last item I have is changes in OSM
46 staffing. As for changes in staffing at OSM there's
47 not much new information to report since the last time
48 we met. OSM is advertising for a cartographer or map
49 maker position to help with our mapping needs. The
50

0317

1 closing date for applications was February 24th. We
2 hope that during the fall meetings we'll be able to
3 announce the hire for this important team member.
4

5 While there have been no new additions,
6 there has been one very large subtraction. The great
7 Tom Kron retired in early February after more than 22
8 years with the program. Tom's been an institution at
9 OSM and his generosity and wealth of knowledge will be
10 greatly missed.

11
12 And with that I'd be happy to answer
13 any questions.
14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Good job. Any
16 questions on the phone.
17

18 MR. KIRK: Just one, Mr. Chair. They
19 mentioned RealIDs, our tribal IDs should work because
20 our tribes are Federally-recognized, so our tribe IDs
21 should work as a RealID.
22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron.
26

27 Scott.
28

29 MR. AYERS: Yeah, I've got a little
30 footnote in my notes here that say other forms of ID
31 that are RealID compliant include a valid passport, a
32 valid military ID and some forms of tribal photo IDs
33 and there's a full list of valid IDs available that I
34 can provide anyone that wants.
35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Scott. I
37 think that just about does it, it's a wrap, uh?
38

39 Oops, what did I do.
40

41 MS. PILCHER: Closing comments.
42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, yeah, everybody
44 gets to talk.
45

46 (Laughter)
47

48 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And tell us their
49 comments, end of the meeting comments. You guys ready,
50

0318

1 go ahead, Elmer. Closing comments.

2

3 MR. SEETOT: It's been a long time
4 since we had a full meeting, this is the first time in
5 how many meetings that we had for two days, a long
6 time.

7

8 The weather outlooks and forecasts.
9 Sometimes it depends, is it going to be bad enough
10 where I'm going to have to be stranded in Nome, I think
11 that's a major factor in whether to make it to a
12 meeting or not, you know, in a certain time period
13 because, you know, they talk about weather forecasts
14 are kind of extreme and the duration is of a long time
15 but I -- I -- I'd just like to make sure that, you
16 know, just in case we get storm bound that OSM will
17 take care of whatever we need to do.

18

19 And then thank you to the Staff and
20 presenters for this meeting here other than the wake up
21 call we just had awhile ago.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MS. PILCHER: Free entertainment.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.

28

29 Councilman Gray.

30

31 MR. GRAY: I think I've talked enough
32 so thank you Staff and have a good spring everybody.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you.

35

36 Mary.

37

38 MS. FREYTAG: Yes, thank you, Chairman
39 Green and all the Board members here. This is my first
40 in-person meeting. My first meeting was
41 teleconference. This is a real eye-opener and I really
42 enjoyed myself engaging with all of you and all of the
43 agencies and just sharing my knowledge also. I look
44 forward to the future meetings and I just wish everyone
45 a very safe spring and happy harvesting.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mary.

50

0319

1 Raymond.

2

3

4 MR. HUNT: Thank everyone for
5 presenting. It's my first time here and I enjoyed it
6 and I look forward to the upcoming years coming here.
7 And I'd like to add comment to your comment on the
8 trawling, you know, you couldn't have said it any
9 better, you know, like is one fisheries worth trying to
10 fish for and are we -- is -- why do we have to suffer,
11 you know, because of this fishery. I don't know what
12 pollock tastes like but it must take good, I don't
13 know, you know, because of their fisheries, you know,
14 why -- how -- we're suffering from that and that's an
15 eye-opener.

15

16 (Siren)

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 MR. HUNT: But yeah it's an eye-opener
21 though on the trawling. Like I said you couldn't have
22 said it any better. But, again, I look forward to the
23 upcoming meetings and thank you for having me here.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for
26 volunteering Raymond. There's Ronald and Robert.

27

28 MR. MOSES: This is Robert. I'd like
29 to say thank you to everybody for all the input,
30 especially for those that been there the longest, like
31 Charlie and Tom and Louis. They say it takes something
32 to make it happen and like we see in and go through the
33 changes here but them guys have gone through, no matter
34 how much testimony that they provide like Charlie said,
35 he's been there like 50 years and gone to school and
36 done his work and has a lot of hats like other people
37 and the people in the office, they look at the data,
38 what -- what they provide, and they look at it and it's
39 on paper, they don't experience living in the Bush what
40 we have to go through and live through to do our
41 subsistence.

42

43 They also mentioned about the elders
44 and that's a good thing, knowledge is passed down from
45 generation to generation and we learn from our
46 grandparents in a good way, you know.

47

48 But I'd thank everybody and look
49 forward to other meetings.

50

0320

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Robert.

2

3 Ron.

4

5 MR. KIRK: Yeah, Mr. Chair, it was good
6 to listen to everybody's comments and I enjoyed the
7 meeting and thanks to the Staff for making it possible
8 for us to attend it teleconference.

9

10 I have one more thing I'd like to bring
11 up, and we discuss -- you almost discussed it at the
12 ending of the last fall meeting when you mentioned
13 honorarium. We need to get that up and running because
14 a lot of us get out of our -- get away from our jobs to
15 attend to volunteer for this meeting and there's no
16 supplement, honorarium -- supplement income for us
17 there and so -- and if we get stranded in Nome that per
18 diem is only for two days, what happens if we get storm
19 bound for almost a week, that's my argument there.
20 That's why I'm bringing up honorarium because that's --
21 can our Secretary write to the Secretary of the
22 Interior and bring that up for all RACs throughout
23 Alaska.

24

25 And thank you for everything.

26

27 And, Raymond, pollock -- imitation
28 crab.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 MR. KIRK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 MR. MOSES: What'd he say?

35

36 MS. PILCHER: Imitation crab is what
37 they call pollock.

38

39 MR. HUNT: Oh.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Imitation crab.
44 Imitation shrimp. Fish sticks. Yes. Anyway, yuck.

45

46 MR. KIRK: That's what pollock makes.
47 It's all made out of pollock.

48

49 (Laughter)

50

0321

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: (In Native)

2

3 Okay, well, that leaves me here.

4

5 Appreciate the Staff's hard work
6 getting us here, getting this all set up. They have to
7 pick up and run here just like some of us -- the rest
8 of us do, but they have a pile of luggage when they do
9 it so I really appreciate it.

10

11 Tina, it's always been working with
12 you. Stick around. You might have to.

13

14 So, anyway, my fellow Council members,
15 appreciate the work that you do, it's not easy to be
16 sitting here. And we go through some -- we've been
17 doing this for a long time, some of us and like I said
18 in my comments yesterday, I remember doing the same
19 thing in 1993 I'm doing today and something didn't get
20 fixed along the way and I'm really, really kind of set
21 back because of that. When I'm hearing testimony about
22 certain fishing, like Area M and the pollock trawler
23 industry, like I said, we were talking about that in
24 the '80s and '90s and we're still talking about it. So
25 hopefully we can get to some kind of resolution in
26 what's going on here. Like I said I think that
27 everybody ought to be on the beach -- if somebody's
28 grandma has to sit on the beach and can't cut fish or
29 do anything like that then the trawlers should be
30 sitting on the beach in Seattle for all I care.

31

32 So, anyway, thank you.

33

34 Have a good spring everybody and safe.

35

36 And that lady that's covering the news
37 over there, thanks for putting up with us. I hope it's
38 a good article.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, everybody.

43

44 MS. FREYTAG: Chairman Green.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anybody going to make
47 a motion.

48

49 MS. FREYTAG: This is Mary, I move to

50

0322

1 adjourn the meeting.

2

3 MR. SEETOT: Second.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Mary's first and Elmer
6 seconds it. Meeting's adjourned.

7

8 (Off record)

9

10 (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, VOLUME II taken electronically on the
15 23rd day of March 2023;

16

17 THAT the transcript is a true and
18 correct transcript requested to be transcribed and
19 thereafter transcribed by under my direction and
20 reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and
21 ability;

22

23 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or
24 party interested in any way in this action.

25

26 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 30th
27 day of April 2023.

28

29

30

31 _____
32 Salena A. Hile
33 Notary Public, State of Alaska
34 My Commission Expires: 09/16/26

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