

EASTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

Telephonic  
October 15, 2020  
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sue Entsminger, Chair  
Andy Bassich  
Andrew Firmin  
William Glanz  
Timothy McManus  
Donald Woodruff  
Robert Wright  
Charles Jagow

Regional Council Coordinator, Katya Wessels

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

2  
3 (Telephonic - 10/15/2020)

4  
5 (On record)

6  
7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Good morning  
8 everyone.

9  
10 MR. GLANZ: Good morning.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, the  
13 first thing that we're going to take up -- the Eastern  
14 Interior RAC is now back in session and the first thing  
15 to talk about is with Jeff Gross. Is Jeff Gross on  
16 line?

17  
18 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah.

21  
22 MS. WESSELS: Are we.....

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, yeah.

25  
26 MS. WESSELS: Are we going to do public  
27 and tribal comments first, though?

28  
29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, we can  
30 do that. I apologize.

31  
32 Public or tribal comments this morning  
33 on non-agenda items.

34  
35 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, this is Tim  
36 McManus.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.

39  
40 MR. MCMANUS: Is it okay if I do a  
41 prayer before we start.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes,  
44 appreciate that.

45  
46 MR. MCMANUS: Dear Heavenly Father. We  
47 just want to thank you for this day and give your  
48 guidance to these decisions that we're making.

49  
50

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1 Lord, in Jesus name we pray.

2  
3 Amen.

4  
5 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you  
6 very much, Tim. I appreciate that and always remind  
7 me, I really do appreciate it very much.

8  
9 Okay.

10  
11 Are there any non-agenda comments from  
12 the public or tribal.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, hearing  
17 none, there's a special request to have Jeff Gross come  
18 on this morning, Jeff are you on?

19  
20 MR. GROSS: Hi, Madame Chair, this is  
21 Jeff Gross, area biologist for Fish and Game in Tok.

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, okay.  
24 Andy, how would you like him to start?

25  
26 MR. BASSICH: Well, thank you, can  
27 everyone hear me okay, we're kind of cloudy here and  
28 I'm not sure how good my reception is.

29  
30 REPORTER: It's great.

31  
32 MR. GLANZ: You're loud and clear there  
33 Andy. Coming in loud and clear.

34  
35 MR. BASSICH: Okay, very good. Yeah,  
36 Jeff, I put in a request yesterday to try and get you  
37 on this morning. I know there are a lot of people in  
38 the Eastern Interior regional area that want an update  
39 on the caribou and also would like a better  
40 understanding of why some of the decisions were made  
41 and in particular, my biggest question is why we  
42 departed from the one tag only process, meaning one  
43 caribou tag or a moose tag, and why it was opened up to  
44 where a hunter could carry both moose and caribou tags  
45 at the same time.

46  
47 And the reason I'm referencing this is  
48 I didn't hear any feedback from the Coalition, I don't  
49 know if the Coalition was ever contacted to give input

50

1 on these decisions and our -- in particular, the Eagle  
2 AC has worked really hard over the last 15 years to try  
3 and make organized and safe hunts along the Taylor  
4 Highway and reduce some of the impacts to the Eagle  
5 population due to large numbers of hunters coming into  
6 the area and competing with them.

7  
8 So if you could maybe first address the  
9 reasons for the more liberal caribou harvest management  
10 this year and then if you could also address the moose  
11 and caribou tag carrying process and why that was  
12 determined and who made those decisions.

13  
14 Thank you.

15  
16 MR. GROSS: Yeah, you bet. Again, good  
17 morning, this is Jeff Gross with the Alaska Department  
18 of Fish and Game in Tok and I'm the area wildlife  
19 biologist in Tok in charge of the Fortymile Caribou  
20 Herd.

21  
22 So we did do some new releases back in  
23 early August and following completion of our mid-summer  
24 or late summer modeling of the population of caribou in  
25 the Fortymile Herd, we were unable to get a photo  
26 census this past summer. Again, we tried really hard  
27 but everybody's, I'm sure, is very aware of how wet the  
28 summer was and we really need hot dry conditions for,  
29 you know, a better part of a week to get the right  
30 congregations to be able to photograph the herd. That  
31 did not occur this year so we utilized our other  
32 demographic data on the population to -- population  
33 models on the herd and in consultation with the Yukon  
34 Department of Environment and their modelers, we all  
35 concluded that the herd is likely -- and, again, I say  
36 likely just simply because we like to see an actual  
37 photo census to prove our models are correct. But the  
38 models indicate that the herd started a fairly  
39 precipitous decline in the past couple years, but is  
40 this is the first summer that it's been obvious enough  
41 since our photo census of 2017 that we're really able  
42 to definitively say that it's declining rather rapidly.

43  
44 We figure the herd will likely peak out  
45 somewhere between 75,000 and 80,000 caribou roughly.  
46 We feel that as of this summer, or this past spring  
47 that we likely were down to anywhere from high 50,000  
48 to 65,000 caribou so we feel we've lost a fairly  
49 substantial portion of the herd and that is, we've

50

1 concluded, due to nutrition, low nutrition which we've  
2 been talking to the harvest management coalition, the  
3 working group for the herd for years now.  
4

5 Anyway, in order to try to arrest the  
6 decline, and this may be somewhat counter-intuitive,  
7 but in order to arrest the level of decline, in other  
8 words where the bottom is going to be, past research on  
9 other herds, including the Mulchatna, Northern  
10 Peninsula, Delta, Western Arctic Herds that have  
11 experienced sorts of decline in the past 40 years,  
12 research indicates that the best thing to do is to  
13 reduce the number of animals on the landscape as  
14 quickly as possible to a more sustainable level.  
15

16 So this year, I was instructed -- once  
17 our modeling exercise was done, was instructed by  
18 headquarters to work with some of our past retired  
19 caribou biologists and come up with a plan for trying  
20 to mitigate the decline of the herd.  
21

22 The plan that was developed, which was,  
23 again, something that Headquarters ultimately made the  
24 final decision to implement, was to start with a  
25 harvest of 5,000 caribou during the fall hunt. In  
26 order to do that, I'm sure everybody's aware we went to  
27 a two caribou bag limit and it was, again, an early  
28 season opener again this year. For the last few years  
29 we've had an earlier season opener following the  
30 harvest management plan. And -- but we -- if anybody  
31 would like to look it up in the harvest management  
32 plan, what -- the objective that we fell to because of  
33 the nutritional condition of the herd and the decline  
34 that's occurring, is under objectives in the harvest  
35 plan, if you look at Objective C to deliver a  
36 population reduction alternative. That's the  
37 alternative that we fell under this year.  
38

39 Obviously there's some ramifications  
40 from having this sort of hunt structure. We had a  
41 meeting -- the Fairbanks AC had a meeting last night  
42 and we had some public input and we've heard a lot from  
43 the public about it. One thing I would tell folks is  
44 we're hoping that we don't have to repeat this level of  
45 harvest again in the future. We're hoping this is  
46 going to be -- we're going to be able to reduce the  
47 population enough this year to bring things, hopefully,  
48 under better control and hopefully slow down next year,  
49 but we're going to kind of let the animals determine  
50

1 that and hopefully get a photo census.

2

3 So anyway that was the reason for the  
4 high quota this year, was to deliberately try to start  
5 bringing the herd down. We'd like to see the herd down  
6 at or below 50,000 caribou, which is where the herd  
7 started to show significant signs of nutritional  
8 restrictions. As the herd grew, unfortunately now that  
9 the herd has gotten as large as it has, it is likely to  
10 show those same sorts of nutritional indicators below  
11 50,000 simply because the range had so many caribou on  
12 it for so many years. But we're going to -- our  
13 intention is to reduce the herd and continue to watch  
14 the population parameters, the reproduction of young  
15 animals, fall calf weights, animal condition.

16

17 For the upcoming winter hunt we are  
18 analyzing the data we collected during the last couple  
19 of weeks on the herd, including looking at calf  
20 weights, female calf weights, which we've already  
21 determined are right about at the lowest calf weights  
22 we've ever seen in the fall. In addition, we  
23 euthanized 20 caribou calves and did necropsies on  
24 them, including looking at bone marrow, that's still  
25 being processed to look at that percentage in bone  
26 marrow, which is another thing that's been documented  
27 in other herds in the state as being an important  
28 indicator of herd health. Hopefully we're going to  
29 have those results tomorrow, so we're a little bit out  
30 on that yet.

31

32 Based on those things we will determine  
33 whether or not to go with a harvest quota of 5,000  
34 again, or if the herd -- the idea was, if these  
35 indicators showed that the caribou are in better shape  
36 than we previously thought we'd bring that down. But  
37 as of now we're at near record low calf weights and  
38 just looking at some of the bone marrow samples before  
39 they're dried and analyzed, they're not looking well  
40 either. The one bright point in this, however, is the  
41 general necropsies done on the caribou calves that we  
42 did collect, the 20 caribou calves, we didn't find any  
43 kind of obvious diseased or signs of phenomena in the  
44 calves, that's definitely a good sign. We'd be even  
45 more concerned if we had seen that so hopefully we are  
46 not in as dire shape as we could be.

47

48 And anyway, we will be putting some  
49 more information out on the harvest strategy this year

50

1 and the status of the herd as we get time in this  
2 upcoming winter. We have not made arrangements to do  
3 another harvest management coalition meeting as of now  
4 but we'll, I'm sure be looking into that. I think Don  
5 Woodruff did ask about it. And, anyway, once we get  
6 through all of our fall work here and get a little  
7 further into the winter we'll be addressing that.

8  
9 Before I go on to the either/or permit  
10 restriction, anybody have any questions for me.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Questions.

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
17 Andy.

18  
19 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. Thank  
20 you, Jeff. So I have a couple of -- two different  
21 questions.

22  
23 The first one is identifying the poor  
24 health of the calves, I understand all of that process  
25 and everything, but it's going to take awhile for the  
26 range to rebound so I would expect that you would still  
27 continue to see poor nutritional rates and poor  
28 parturition rates from the caribou herd for a couple of  
29 years. There's going to be a lag there before the  
30 habitat rebuilds. So what are your parameters, what  
31 are your benchmarks that you're going to be looking at  
32 that would help you to establish what the herd would  
33 be. My line of thinking is that if you continue to  
34 reduce the herd, I don't know that that's really going  
35 to help and it's going to slow the rebuilding process  
36 or stabilization at a higher level once the range gets  
37 back.

38  
39 So the first question is about that.

40  
41 The second question is, once these  
42 decisions were made for this years increased harvest  
43 management, I'm curious as to why, because we departed  
44 from -- it's such a drastic change, why there wasn't  
45 more outreach to the coalition, to the ACs within the  
46 region, there was nothing until the hunt opened up and  
47 I find that a little disturbing given that we have  
48 three coalition members on this RAC, that there wasn't  
49 at least a head's up about what was going to go on

50

1 ahead of time.

2

3 So if you could address those and then  
4 I would appreciate what your thoughts are on that.

5

6 MR. GROSS: Sure. I'll start with the  
7 head's up there. So we finished our modeling exercise  
8 right at the end of July. By the time it all went up  
9 the chain it was -- we were getting into the 3rd, 4th,  
10 5th of August and we were up against a deadline to get  
11 EOs out. The instruction, quite honestly came straight  
12 down from headquarters of what we were to do there.  
13 Had we had a little more time I do think we would have  
14 been able to reach out and that's not an excuse, it's  
15 something we, in hindsight, you know, we realize we  
16 should have tried to pull something together. Being in  
17 the summer it's really hard, as everybody knows, to get  
18 everybody together. It was really a timeline thing as  
19 much as anything.

20

21 So I don't have a good excuse or  
22 explanation for that.

23

24 You know I think this is kind of  
25 unprecedented. I think all the biologists were kind of  
26 in shock when we saw the actual modeling come out.  
27 None of us were expecting that. And things got --  
28 well, they involved headquarters pretty quickly on it.  
29 So it was kind of an out of the ordinary situation. I  
30 think we'll -- you know, it's duly noted and we'll try  
31 to do any kind of major departure like this, hopefully  
32 better, in the future. We did, of course, look in the  
33 harvest plan and part of the -- one of the options was  
34 to deliver population reduction alternatives, and we  
35 have been repeatedly told by the HMC that, you know, if  
36 there's a real emergency, a real bad situation, that  
37 we're expected to just go ahead and take action to try  
38 to do the best job we can from population, and that's  
39 kind of what we did.

40

41 But, again, duly noted, Andy, and  
42 that's something that I think we'll talk more about  
43 internally and we can certainly talk about it in the  
44 next HMC meeting.

45

46 As far as the delay in the rebound of  
47 habitat and our nutritional parameters improving, what  
48 research has shown and we'll go over, again, in the HMC  
49 meeting, especially, we'll try to provide more

50



1 information about this and we'll try to provide more  
2 information in any educational materials we put out  
3 over the winter, but research has indicated in the past  
4 that these herds actually respond quite quickly within  
5 a year or two of these herds -- these other herds that  
6 have experienced precipitous decline within a year or  
7 two. The pop -- or the nutritional parameter seems to  
8 bounce right back up. Now, having said that it doesn't  
9 mean that that exact thing will happen to the Fortymile  
10 Herd and we're well aware of that. And so kind of  
11 going off of the -- when the indicator started showing  
12 up in the population as at least a starting point. And  
13 that's -- as we approached and exceeded 50,000 caribou,  
14 that's when the nutrition indices really started to  
15 decline. And so as of now, knowing that the condition  
16 of the range at that point, back in the -- oh, around  
17 2008, 2010, somewhere in there was likely in better  
18 shape than it is now, we feel reducing the herd to  
19 around 50,000 or a little -- or somewhat less is a good  
20 starting point to try to achieve and then try to hold  
21 it there to see what happens with nutrition. This is  
22 assuming, of course, the herd doesn't continue to  
23 decline on its own. But I don't think there's any  
24 intention right now to utilize harvest to reduce the  
25 herd much more than that.

26  
27 MR. BASSICH: And, Jeff, can you  
28 address the either or caribou tag issue, please.  
29

30 MR. GROSS: Yep, I'd be happy to do  
31 that. So the first I heard about that it was -- I  
32 believe the decision had already been made to go with  
33 eliminating the either/or restriction for the  
34 registration hunt on the Taylor Highway. That decision  
35 was made in Headquarters. And we were told about it  
36 after the fact.

37  
38 My understanding was there was  
39 discussion with one of the Board of Game members and  
40 I'm not really privy to everything that was discussed  
41 there but.....

42  
43 (Teleconference interference -  
44 participants not muted)

45  
46 MR. GROSS: .....that restriction was  
47 going to be lifted to -- and my understanding was that  
48 it really was to try to increase the level of caribou  
49 harvest and, again, we -- as far as at the local level

50

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1 we were not involved in that decision.

2

3 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Jeff.

4

5 Madame Chair, just a comment that I'd  
6 like to make to the Eastern RAC and that is, I would  
7 like to have an understanding if the Board of Game  
8 actually had deliberations on this.....

9

10 (Teleconference interference -  
11 participants not muted)

12

13 MR. BASSICH: .....a decision that was  
14 made with no public comment, and the reason -- I want  
15 to give you the reason behind that.

16

17 Since the late '90s the Eagle AC worked  
18 very closely with Fish and Game to try and develop this  
19 either/or tagging system because of the high level of  
20 hunter pressure on the Taylor Highway, the unsafe  
21 conditions that were put in place there because of  
22 that. And I think it was -- it took -- my personal  
23 feeling is it's very irresponsible not to have outreach  
24 to the communities and to the ACs, it's very  
25 disrespectful not to at least inform them of a  
26 decision, but for it to just happen. It took everybody  
27 by surprise. I don't feel it was done in the proper  
28 methods. And in this day and age with email, and  
29 texting and everything else that we have for  
30 communication, I find this to be very, very much an  
31 affront to those of us who gave a lot of our time,  
32 volunteered time to try and work on these issues to  
33 make sure that we have long-term sustainable access to  
34 a resource. That's why we put these measures into  
35 place. That's how important it is to the people of our  
36 communities. And I'm not just talking about Eagle,  
37 it's all rural communities.

38

39 So I'm really distressed about the  
40 method and the means by which these decisions were made  
41 and the lack of outreach and the lack of seeking public  
42 input prior to making these decisions, and I feel, we,  
43 as a RAC, should draft a letter to the Commissioner and  
44 to the Board of Game on this issue.

45

46 That's all I have for now, Madame  
47 Chair.

48

49 Thank you.

50

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1 And thank you, Jeff, I appreciate your  
2 comments. I don't mean to put you on the hot spot  
3 there, I'm just trying to get a better understanding of  
4 how and why things are taking place because they go 180  
5 against everything we've been working towards in many  
6 ways.

7  
8 I understand that trying to reduce the  
9 herd and the reasons for it, but the methods and the  
10 means were not done very well.

11  
12 That's all I have, Madame  
13 Chair, thank you.

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Andy,  
16 I would like to hear from other Council members on  
17 this. And you suggested a letter, so I need to hear  
18 from everybody, did you want a motion, or is there  
19 other questions of Council members -- any other  
20 questions of Jeff.

21  
22 MR. WRIGHT: This is Charlie, Madame  
23 Chair.

24  
25 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
26 Charlie.

27  
28 MR. WRIGHT: I agree with Andy.

29  
30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, there  
31 was noises, could you repeat that.

32  
33 MR. WRIGHT: Madame Chair, this is  
34 Charlie Wright. I agree with Andy. I don't have no  
35 questions but I do agree with Andy.

36  
37 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Any  
38 other Council members.

39  
40 MR. FIRMIN: Yeah, this is Andrew  
41 Firmin in Fort Yukon. I have just a couple of things  
42 to point out or maybe a question.

43  
44 Jeff, did you guys take into account  
45 when you set like a harvest goal, did you take into  
46 account the amount of possible negligent waste or, you  
47 know, like if people are like shooting into the herd,  
48 you know, do you take that into account, the things  
49 like well, we'll figure if we shoot for 5,000, six --

50

1 like an extra thousand might get taken due to just  
2 hunter negligence to the amount of people up there or  
3 is that a factor.  
4

5 And then the other question was, for  
6 range rejuvenation and stuff, has it ever been  
7 discussed, you know, to take the off -- you know, the  
8 off road vehicle portion out of it because if we're  
9 worried about the range rejuvenating and healing and  
10 stuff, to be able to better sustain the herd, then how  
11 do you justify letting 20,000 ATVs go off road out  
12 there on top of it. I mean that can't be good for any  
13 rejuvenation or does that take into account that it's  
14 stirring up and basically rototilling the soil for next  
15 year's plants.  
16

17 I don't know, those are some questions  
18 I had. Forgive me if I'm a bit naive to the whole herd  
19 management deal with caribou but those are some of my  
20 questions. And I've expressed the feeling, like I've  
21 expressed before that I don't feel half the caribou  
22 herd's going to lay down and die because there's poor  
23 range at where they're at, they're going to go some  
24 place else, at least some of them will. And that's  
25 just the feeling in my mind. I mean Mother Nature's  
26 not going to -- doesn't commit suicide, proverbial  
27 suicide.  
28

29 And that's all I have for now.  
30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So  
32 Andrew.....  
33

34 MR. GROSS: Madame Chair, this is Jeff  
35 Gross again with Fish and Game.  
36

37 As far as wounding loss we do try to  
38 take that into account. However, it's -- it is a  
39 difficult thing to get a handle on. We do try to look  
40 around following some of these hunts to see what we  
41 see. Probably the best indicator of caribou that end  
42 up dying from wounding loss are the actual hunters on  
43 the landscape. And with as many hunters as we did have  
44 on the landscape this year, there were certainly, you  
45 know, a number of reports. The other way we can  
46 determine hunter -- or wounding loss is from our sample  
47 of radio-collared caribou and how many are found dead  
48 following a hunt. As of now I don't have a real good  
49 estimate for that from this year, but we'll be working  
50

1 on that.

2  
3 As far as the OHV and the impact to  
4 habitat, while OHVs do impact certain trails, as far as  
5 the overall landscape and that -- or the habitat on the  
6 landscape available for the caribou, it's just a an  
7 extremely small percentage and it really doesn't have  
8 any kind of bearing on food availability for the  
9 caribou. It's -- I understand it's very disturbing to  
10 an awful lot of folks and we weren't, obviously, very  
11 cognizant of the impacts, this year, especially in the  
12 first two days of the hunt, it was raining, and that  
13 exasperates it, of course, and we will be addressing  
14 the OHV trail issues as time goes on.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Andrew, did  
17 you have anything else, did he answer your questions  
18 okay?  
19

20 MR. FIRMIN: Sort of. I was just  
21 curious. I guess to the big picture they don't care  
22 that ATVs are all over the place and I've seen new  
23 trails pop up this year. I've seen other trails go to  
24 -- turn into truck trails now. I did see one incident  
25 of somebody taking a truck off the road. I passed  
26 through the Steese about four times during the hunting  
27 and it was ridiculous that I had to drive like 20 miles  
28 an hour over the summit just due to the amount of  
29 people land vehicles parked on the roads up there. And  
30 it was -- I should have tried to harvest one on my  
31 first trip because there wasn't hardly anybody around  
32 and I wasn't still -- I was still leery on where the  
33 rules and stuff were, and which side of the highway  
34 should I be on and then I come back and both sides are  
35 crawling with people, and I'm like, well, I should have  
36 just took the chance of getting a ticket the first  
37 time, but I still didn't see any enforcement at all  
38 through there. And it would be ridiculous to try and  
39 even -- I mean maybe they need a checkpoint or  
40 something, or just on the way back, I don't -- instead  
41 of trying to check all those people that were up there  
42 on the top of the summit.  
43

44 But, yeah, I don't know if the two --  
45 you know, two tag hunt made a difference in the amount  
46 of people up there but it sure seemed like it this  
47 year, or maybe just because the hunt was -- you know,  
48 the herd was more on the Steese side than the Taylor  
49 side and, you know, I've yet to witness the Taylor  
50

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1 Highway hunt, but just seeing the Steese Highway hunt  
2 it was pretty crowded up there going over the summit.

3  
4 That's all I have to say. Just thank  
5 you for the information, Jeff.

6  
7 MR. GROSS: You bet, thanks.

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Other Council  
10 members, do you have.....

11  
12 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Andy, is that  
15 you?

16  
17 MR. BASSICH: Yes, please. So just to  
18 answer Andrew's question about the Taylor hunt. It was  
19 very similar, probably not as bad as the Steese but I  
20 did travel the highway during the hunt, counted over  
21 254 vehicles just that I could see from the road. That  
22 doesn't include people in back areas or camp sites.  
23 And coming back to Eagle I decided to travel at night  
24 up the highway to avoid some of the traffic and was  
25 quite shocked to find that there was quite a number of  
26 people hunting at night with very bright lights. I was  
27 forced to pull over two or three times because of the  
28 blinding lights, so there were people hunting at night  
29 from their ATVs.

30  
31 So it just goes to show that when you  
32 open it up like that it creates bad situations all the  
33 way around. And I understand maybe the desire to try  
34 and reduce the herd, but we've experienced this and  
35 there's a lot of public testimony out there about the  
36 effects of these slaughter type hunts and the  
37 displeasure from the communities that they are around  
38 and the danger involved in it and I would have hoped  
39 that we could learn from that and figure out other  
40 means and methods for reducing the herd.

41  
42 (Teleconference interference -  
43 participants not muted)

44  
45 REPORTER: So could we all take a  
46 second to mute our phones please if you're not speaking  
47 directly.

48  
49 MR. BASSICH: So I'd like to have a  
50

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1 letter from the RAC to the Commissioner of Fish and  
2 Game and the Board of Game, the State of Alaska in  
3 regards to the Fortymile caribou hunt and the  
4 management and the opening of being able to carry a  
5 moose tag and a caribou tag.  
6

7 So I'd like to put that on the table  
8 for a motion.  
9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, there  
11 is a motion on the floor, is there a second.  
12

13 MR. FIRMIN: This is Andrew, I second  
14 that.  
15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: A motion to  
17 send a letter.  
18

19 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair, speaking to  
20 the motion. I'll just reference my earlier comments  
21 and I'm happy to work with you, Katya, and I think if  
22 there's anybody else interested in being involved  
23 that's fine, but I'm happy to work with you and Katya  
24 to draft that letter.  
25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Anyone  
27 else want to volunteer to be on -- looking at that  
28 letter?  
29

30 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair.  
31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Pippa.  
33

34 MS. KENNER: Hi, yeah, this is Pippa, I  
35 volunteer.  
36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Good. But I  
38 was thinking about the Council members if they want to  
39 be part of reviewing the letter.  
40

41 MR. WRIGHT: This is Charlie, Madame  
42 Chair -- Charlie Wright. I would love to witness that,  
43 thank you.  
44

45 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I  
46 think we'll run it by the Council after it's written  
47 but we'll have like a -- this will be a little working  
48 group to work with Katya and Pippa to write the letter.  
49  
50

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1 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, this is Tim  
2 McManus.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Tim, are you  
5 -- I'm sorry, did you say -- I talked over you, say  
6 again.

7  
8 MR. MCMANUS: This is Tim McManus. I'd  
9 like to see those letters too and just maybe if you  
10 could just send them out to all the Council members and  
11 then we could give feedback if we want.

12  
13 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. A  
14 working group and then we'll send it out to all the  
15 Council members.

16  
17 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, Madame Chair, this  
18 is Katya.

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
21 Katya.

22  
23 MS. WESSELS: We definitely can send  
24 the draft letter to all the Council members so everyone  
25 who wants to contribute can contribute at that point.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Sounds good.

28  
29 MS. WESSELS: Before it's finalized.

30  
31 MR. MCMANUS: Thank you.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Uh-huh.

34  
35 MR. MCMANUS: Thank you.

36  
37 MS. WESSELS: You're welcome.

38  
39 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. The  
40 motion is to write to the Commissioner and the Board of  
41 Game and Andrew had his points on discussion so is  
42 there any other discussion.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
47 Hearing none, do you -- if there's no disagreement to  
48 the letter I will say that we have unanimous consent.

49  
50



1 Any disagreement.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. It  
6 passes by unanimous consent.

7

8 And, thank you, Jeff, for coming on.

9

10 MR. GROSS: You bet, thank you, Madame  
11 Chair.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right.  
14 Now, hopefully I'm not forgetting anything here. The  
15 next thing on the agenda is the Fisheries -- 2021  
16 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

17

18 MS. KENNER: Yes, Madame Chair, this is  
19 Pippa Kenner.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
22 Pippa.

23

24 MS. KENNER: Thank you. First of all,  
25 am I too loud.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Not for me.

28

29 REPORTER: No, you're perfect.

30

31 MS. KENNER: Thank you. Hello, Madame  
32 Chair, members of the Council. My name is Pippa Kenner  
33 and for the record I'm an anthropologist at the Office  
34 of Subsistence Management. This presentation is posted  
35 at our website. It's called the 2022 Fisheries  
36 Resource Monitoring Program, and it's also in the  
37 Council book starting on Page 216. I'm also going to  
38 read these materials to you. At the end of my  
39 presentation we will ask the Council to approve  
40 priority information needs for the Yukon region.

41

42 The Office of Subsistence Management  
43 administers the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program  
44 and funds research that helps manage subsistence  
45 fisheries on State public lands and waters in Alaska.  
46 The Monitoring Program also supports collaboration and  
47 cooperation among Federal agencies, the State of Alaska  
48 and Alaska Native and rural organizations.

49

50

1                   Every two years the Office of  
2 Subsistence Management announces a funding opportunity  
3 for projects that address priority information needs  
4 identified by our Regional Advisory Councils. The  
5 Office of Subsistence Management works with the  
6 Councils to identify issues of local concern and  
7 knowledge gaps. This information is used to develop  
8 regional priorities that guide researchers in proposal  
9 development. Three primary types of research are  
10 requested. Harvest monitoring, traditional ecological  
11 knowledge and stock, status and trends. Harvest  
12 monitoring and traditional ecological projects provide  
13 information directly from subsistence users, including  
14 descriptions of fishing effort and harvest and use  
15 patterns. Stock, status and trend projects address  
16 fish abundance, fish migration and fish behavior in  
17 specific fisheries. Research priorities that fall  
18 outside of the scope of the Monitoring Program are not  
19 considered, and they include projects focused on  
20 habitat protection, mitigation, restoration and  
21 enhancement, hatchery, propagation, restoration  
22 enhancement and supplementation, and contaminant  
23 assessment evaluation in monetary. These kinds of  
24 projects are most appropriately addressed by the local  
25 land management or regulatory agency.  
26

27                   Since 2000 the Office of Subsistence  
28 Management has funded 126 projects in the Yukon region  
29 through the Monitoring Program.  
30

31                   Last Wednesday volunteer members from  
32 the Eastern Interior Alaska and Western Interior Alaska  
33 Councils met to exchange information concerning these  
34 priority information needs for the upcoming notice of  
35 funding opportunities. We started by reviewing the  
36 most recent list developed by the Councils and we  
37 revised the list by adding and removing items. The  
38 revised list was emailed to the Council members and  
39 it's also at the website, it's supplement material No.  
40 3.  
41

42                   Volunteers from your Council were  
43 Andrew Bassich, Charlie Wright and Tim McManus. So  
44 normally at this point we would hand them out to you at  
45 the Council meeting so next I will read the 12 items on  
46 the list of priority information needs developed for  
47 the Yukon region by these volunteers when you are  
48 ready.  
49  
50

1 (Teleconference interference -  
2 participants not muted - put on hold)  
3

4 MS. WESSELS: Pippa, may I interrupt,  
5 this is Katya.  
6

7 MS. KENNER: Yeah.  
8

9 MS. WESSELS: I just wanted to say,  
10 Council members, that this list that Pippa is talking  
11 about, I emailed to you and I also mailed it to you and  
12 I believe some of you received that.  
13

14 I think somebody put us on hold.  
15

16 REPORTER: Okay, hold on a second  
17 Pippa. This is Tina. So I can break in a call to the  
18 operator -- oh, never mind, I think it just stopped.  
19

20 (Pause)  
21

22 REPORTER: Okay. No, it didn't. Do  
23 you want me to call the operator and have that line  
24 disconnected.  
25

26 MS. WESSELS: Please.  
27

28 REPORTER: Yes. Okay.  
29

30 (Pause)  
31

32 MR. WRIGHT: That was me and I was  
33 trying to get on a different teleconference at the  
34 office. So that's probably me that was making all the  
35 noise.  
36

37 MS. WESSELS: Well, there is still  
38 noise, there is still music going on.  
39

40 REPORTER: Right. Charlie, so do you  
41 still have the other line on hold.  
42

43 MR. WRIGHT: That music is not coming  
44 from me.  
45

46 REPORTER: Okay, thanks. I'm still on  
47 hold waiting for an operator.  
48

49 MS. WESSELS: That's what we were  
50

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1 worried about, the music.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: You mean  
4 somebody put their phone on hold.

5

6 REPORTER: Yes. Sorry, still waiting  
7 for an operator, sometimes they're right there, and  
8 sometimes they're not.

9

10 (Pause)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So should we  
13 call back.

14

15 REPORTER: So I haven't got a hold of  
16 the operator yet, I can either maybe disconnect this  
17 call and it will drop, and then redial back in and open  
18 the meeting. Nobody really needs to hang up, that might  
19 get rid of it, or we can just stay waiting for the  
20 operator. Generally they respond much quicker than  
21 this, they may be busy this morning.

22

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Sounds like  
25 it quit.

26

27 REPORTER: Oh, awesome, okay, go ahead,  
28 Sue. Sorry.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Were you able  
31 to do that Tina?

32

33 REPORTER: I don't -- no, either  
34 somebody realized they put themselves on hold or -- no,  
35 the operator never came on, so anyway sorry for the  
36 interruption, there's things we can't control.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, for  
39 everybody that's on this teleconference, if you put  
40 your phone on hold we get this horrible music and it  
41 disrupts the meeting so if you can keep that in mind  
42 not put your phone on hold.

43

44 So where were we, we were discussing --  
45 Katya, you had said something.

46

47 MS. WESSELS: Oh, I was just saying  
48 that the list Pippa is referring to, that list was  
49 emailed to all the Council members, a list of the

50

1 priorities. And I also printed a copy of it and I  
2 mailed it to you last week, so I believe at least some  
3 of you received that in the mail.  
4

5 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So the  
6 Council members who are sitting by a computer, all that  
7 meeting material is in order on the website and it's  
8 also easy to pick up -- if you're on a computer I  
9 understand how that.....  
10

11 (Teleconference interference -  
12 participants not muted - put on hold)  
13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
15 Pippa.  
16

17 MS. KENNER: This is Pippa Kenner  
18 again. It's supplemental material No. 3 at the  
19 website.  
20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
22

23 MS. KENNER: Shall I continue.  
24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, go  
26 ahead. Council members if you have any problems,  
27 please speak up, any time, just but in.  
28

29 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
30 Again, for the record, this is Pippa Kenner with the  
31 Office of Subsistence Management. I was just getting  
32 ready to read the 12 items on the list of priority  
33 information needs that were developed for the Yukon  
34 region by this volunteer group of Council members.  
35

36 The first one is impacts of climate  
37 change in continued harvest and use of fish. And  
38 impacts of climate change on fish. For example,  
39 impacts to fish migration, spawning and life cycle.  
40

41 The next one is effects of  
42 environmental stressors, such as heat stress on salmon  
43 mortality during adult up river migration and/or pre-  
44 spawn mortality within spawning tributaries.  
45

46 Next, effects of ichthyophonus  
47 infection on chinook salmon mortality and spawning  
48 success.  
49  
50

1 The next was knowledge of population  
2 reproduction and health of spawning habitat for Bering  
3 cisco and humpback whitefish.  
4

5 The next, reliable estimates of  
6 chinook, summer chum, fall chum and coho salmon  
7 escapement and/or harvest, particularly substocks that  
8 are large contributors to the total run.  
9

10 Estimates of quality of escapement  
11 measures for chinook salmon. And when we talk about  
12 quality of escapement, we're talking about the age,  
13 size and length escaping chinook salmon. So, again,  
14 the estimates of quality of escapement measures for  
15 chinook salmon, for example, potential egg deposition,  
16 age, sex and size composition of spawners, percentage  
17 of females, percentage of jacks, and spawning habitat  
18 utilization with an emphasis on Canadian origin stocks.  
19

20 Another is reliable in-season estimates  
21 of salmon harvest in the lower, middle and upper Yukon  
22 River subsistence fishery.  
23

24 Another is reliable estimates of age,  
25 sex, length and genetic composition of salmon harvested  
26 in the subsistence fishery with emphasis on chinook and  
27 fall chum salmon.  
28

29 In-season estimates of genetic stock  
30 composition of chinook, summer chum and fall chum  
31 salmon runs and harvest.  
32

33 Reliable methods of forecasting  
34 chinook, summer chum, fall chum and coho salmon run  
35 abundance.  
36

37 Assessment of incidental mortality with  
38 gillnets, dipnets and seines with particular  
39 consideration for delayed mortality from entanglement  
40 from drop-outs and live release of chinook salmon. For  
41 example, loss of chinook salmon from six inch mesh nets  
42 during chum salmon fisheries and the live release of  
43 chinook salmon from dipnets and seines.  
44

45 Finally, traditional ecological  
46 knowledge. I want to add that the YK-Delta Council, a  
47 priority information needs, and it was distribution,  
48 abundance, condition and survival of juvenile and out-  
49 migrating salmon in the Yukon River drainage.  
50

1 And there was another priority  
2 information needs that was studies that advance  
3 understanding of the geographic distribution migration  
4 patterns and feeding habits of chinook salmon during  
5 marine residency. And we had to remove that because  
6 the Monitoring Program generally funds research in  
7 fresh waters. It was determined also that there -- you  
8 identified a lot of research going on in marine waters  
9 now that I can present to you.

10  
11 Again, we are seeking comments on this  
12 list of priority information needs, and we repeated  
13 this process with the Western Interior and YK-Delta  
14 Councils at their meetings this month.

15  
16 Thank you, Madame Chair and members of  
17 the Council. I am ready to discuss this list with you.

18  
19 And that's the end of my presentation.

20  
21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Council  
22 members.

23  
24 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, this is  
25 Don Woodruff.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
28 Don.

29  
30 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
31 Yeah, I've been sitting kind of quiet listening and I  
32 think that the -- it must be about the 10th one down,  
33 reliable methods of forecasting chinook, summer chum,  
34 fall chum, coho run abundance.

35  
36 So my thought is a YRDFA surveyor that  
37 checks us and asks us what our catches are on a weekly  
38 basis and if they would increase their survey system I  
39 think that that would fulfill all of those species  
40 qualifications. And in-season run timing as well. So  
41 that's kind of the same thing. Not quite the same as  
42 abundance.

43  
44 But anyway, that's my comment, thank  
45 you.

46  
47 MS. KENNER: Uh-huh, yeah, thank you.

48  
49 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, it's Tim

50

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1 McManus.

2

3

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,

4 Tim.

5

6 MR. MCMANUS: Yes, this is for Pippa.  
7 Looking at your what you guys do here, I don't see  
8 anything past the rapids on the Yukon, do you guys, you  
9 know, I do fish past the Yukon River bridge, so I was  
10 just wondering, you know, we do give our harvest report  
11 but that's after the season and in a remote camp I got  
12 no cell phone access, the price and gas and stuff, so  
13 when I go there, I stay there. So my question is what  
14 kind of information do you have on fish after the  
15 Rampart besides telephone, I don't think there's  
16 nothing out there.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 MS. KENNER: That's a good -- thank you  
21 very much for the question, Tim. Again, for the  
22 record, this is Pippa Kenner.

23

24 Right off the top of my head, I can't  
25 list the projects that exist above the Ramparts but  
26 what I do know is that these PINS are exclusive to any  
27 part of the river so what we might be looking for in  
28 terms of these PINS are projects that may not be in  
29 existence now but would help in management.

30

31 MR. BASSICH: Pippa, Andy.

32

33 MS. KENNER: Hi Andy.

34

35 MR. BASSICH: Hi. Yeah, thank you for  
36 your work on pulling us together to get this. I guess  
37 from my mind, you're asking us to identify priorities,  
38 is there a particular number or a funding -- what's the  
39 criteria and how many are you wanting us to prioritize.  
40 What are you specifically looking for in this  
41 deliberation here?

42

43 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Andy. I've got  
44 something going on here, just a second.

45

46 (Pause)

47

48 MS. KENNER: There we go, okay. I had  
49 a intrusive noise that I just fixed.

50



1                   So there's no requirement for how many  
2 priority information needs we're looking for. These --  
3 so one of the five criteria by which these applications  
4 are rated is addressing strategic priorities and  
5 priority information needs. So if an applicant comes  
6 in addressing one of the priority information needs,  
7 they potentially will score higher. So I think it  
8 would be.....  
9

10                   MR. BASSICH: Copy that.  
11

12                   MS. KENNER: I think it would maybe be  
13 good to look at it and go well what I notice is about  
14 this is that we used to -- it seems like in the past  
15 maybe we were more chinook centered, whereas now these  
16 priority information needs are stressing other runs of  
17 salmon. Also we don't see a lot of non-salmon fish in  
18 these priority information needs, we are kind of  
19 focusing on salmon. So just to give you an idea of  
20 what might be rated higher by the reviewers.  
21

22                   MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. Madame  
23 Chair, Andy. So a few comments, just more in the way  
24 this is presented, I think it would help, instead of  
25 having bullets by each project, to have a number, and  
26 it'd make it a little bit easier for us to identify to  
27 you via teleconference like this, maybe for future  
28 formatting for this presentation, or whatever.  
29

30                   My thoughts on this are there are two  
31 things going on the Yukon River that affect food  
32 security for people along the Yukon River. Obviously  
33 king salmon is one of the higher priorities for most  
34 people and certainly summer chum for the middle and  
35 lower river. So understanding those and what impacts  
36 are happening to those are highly important. But given  
37 the fact that the chinook salmon is likely to be in  
38 fairly low abundance for a number of years to come and  
39 will probably have a minimum of two years of poor fall  
40 chum before they start to bounce back, I think it's  
41 really important to do some studies on non-salmon  
42 species and also to do outreach and encourage people to  
43 utilize those species where possible. That's the  
44 natural thing that has happened over historic times and  
45 that's what's going to have to happen now.  
46

47                   So my priorities, most importantly to  
48 me, because it used to be, when I got involved in the  
49 Yukon River Panel in the late 90s, 50 percent of the  
50

1 run was from Canada and now we're down to about 40 to  
2 42 percent of the run is from Canada, that's a huge  
3 decline in the number of fish contributing to the  
4 overall Yukon escapement. So projects that identify  
5 quality of escapement, and what I mean by that as you  
6 identify the size of females and the number of eggs  
7 crossing the border and potentially being put on the  
8 spawning grounds is the number 1 priority if we want to  
9 try and rebuild that component of the run. That's  
10 extremely important.  
11

12 The second thing that's really  
13 important that is addressed in this is that the out-  
14 migration of fry salmon is affected by non-salmon  
15 species. Pike and sheefish, in particular, are heavy  
16 predators on salmon fry in their one year, in the case  
17 of king salmon, going out to the Bering Sea. So  
18 information on some of the predatory effects of that  
19 and in trying to do some outreach to encourage people  
20 to harvest more sheefish and whitefish and other  
21 predatory species on salmon fry is another way that we,  
22 as humans, can help effect better runs into the future.  
23

24 Once dog teams left the Yukon River, in  
25 abundance, people were no longer in fish camps with  
26 multiple amounts of dogs to feed. When that started  
27 happening we stopped harvesting a lot of these non-  
28 salmon fish. So I think that's an impact that's  
29 overlooked on our out-migration.  
30

31 That's about all I have to say but  
32 those are my two areas that I think are information  
33 needs.  
34

35 And then one that can't be addressed,  
36 obviously, hatchery production, and I would like your  
37 input as to you've identified that it should be other  
38 agencies or organizations that would gather that  
39 information, and if you could help guide us in who we  
40 should address to try and get some informational needs  
41 on hatchery production increases from the 80s to  
42 present, that would be very, very helpful to all of the  
43 RACs in understanding the impacts of hatchery  
44 production on wild stocks in Western Alaska.  
45

46 That's all I have, Madame Chair.  
47

48 Thank you.  
49  
50

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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Council  
2 members. Any other suggestions or questions.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Pippa, you're  
7 just looking at the discussion, correct, you don't need  
8 a motion?  
9

10 MS. KENNER: Thank you for the  
11 question, Madame Chair. For the record this is Pippa  
12 Kenner. This is an action item and we are looking --  
13 we were hoping that the Council relies on the  
14 volunteers, like Andy, who contributed to the list, to  
15 agree to -- make a motion and then agree that this is  
16 the list that will move forward for the Yukon region.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: And Andrew  
19 and Timothy were the other ones that were on the  
20 committee?  
21

22 MS. KENNER: And Charlie.

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah. Do you  
25 guys have anything you would like to say?  
26

27 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, this is Tim  
28 McManus.  
29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
31 Tim.  
32

33 MR. MCMANUS: I make a motion to  
34 support the list.  
35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: There's a  
37 motion to support the list. Is there a second.  
38

39 MR. WOODRUFF: This is Don Woodruff,  
40 this is a second.  
41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
43 Further discussion.  
44

45 (No comments)

46  
47 MR. WOODRUFF: Question.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
50

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1 The.....  
2

3 MR. BASSICH: Wait a minute, I have --  
4 this is Andy.  
5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Andy.  
7

8 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, I think what  
9 Pippa's trying to get from our Council is some other  
10 input as to what priorities to put there. Having the  
11 list is great, but what are some of our priorities for  
12 funding needs for this Council. And I think it would  
13 be great to hear from other Council members on where  
14 they feel that there's some information needs in their  
15 communities. I know a lot of discussion at our  
16 committee level was about environmental factors and  
17 TEK, and the need for more information on that. So I  
18 -- before we do a vote on it, I think it'd be really  
19 nice to hear from a few other Council members what's  
20 most important in their minds even if it's a general  
21 sense, to help Pippa address this and give greater  
22 weight to that for applicants.  
23

24 Thank you.  
25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right.  
27 Okay. Yeah, Tim are you hearing okay, is your phone on  
28 mute and you can't talk.  
29

30 MR. MCMANUS: I'm here.  
31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Did  
33 you have anything priorities that you want to speak to  
34 on this?  
35

36 MR. MCMANUS: No, I said my peace  
37 earlier about nothing past the Ramparts, that's it.  
38

39 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: What about  
40 Charlie Wright and Andrew.  
41

42 MR. FIRMIN: This is Andrew. I kind of  
43 feel that, just going from memory here, I don't have it  
44 in front of me, but some of my personal needs over the  
45 past year is, you know, this past summer we didn't have  
46 the Chandalar sonar, we haven't had the Sheenjek River  
47 sonar lately for a few years and now we're beginning to  
48 see impacts to the chum runs and not having those  
49 indicators or knowing what went up those rivers, or may  
50

1 have gone up them, is kind of detrimental to  
2 management's knowledge of, you know, what may have  
3 given them an indication of what's going on, or what  
4 fish might be going there, if any at all.

5  
6 I kind of, you know, what Tim was  
7 saying about nothing being past the Rapids, and  
8 actually I don't think Stan Zuray has been funded at  
9 the Rapids for quite some time and he's kind of doing a  
10 lot of his own data collection on his own now, and it's  
11 nice to -- it was always nice to see what data he put  
12 out and it's sad to see that none of it is really  
13 funded anymore. And there is nothing past. So if you  
14 take him out of the funding equation there's really  
15 nothing past the mouth of the Yukon until Eagle. And  
16 that's something that I, you know, other than YR DFA's  
17 surveys, and I kind of like Don's suggestion that maybe  
18 if YR DFA had more funding stuck into that program to,  
19 you know, I say this as I've been a surveyor for YR DFA  
20 for a good 10 years, and I see the potential for use  
21 there that, you know, if they've already got a system  
22 and a bunch of people in place, that they've got the  
23 framework already there, they just need to hire, you  
24 know, add a few questions to the survey and stick a few  
25 more people in there, in different villages that -- you  
26 know, key villages along the way and I think that could  
27 be something else that could go.

28  
29 The other thing was just the -- over  
30 the summer, I don't know how, you know, it seems like  
31 from when I first got into the fisheries and got on the  
32 RAC over 10, 11 years ago, we've just -- we've come  
33 full circle and we're back to square one again now.  
34 Because it just seemed like this summer there was, you  
35 know, no fishing opportunity up here regardless if  
36 there was fish in the river or not and it was almost  
37 back to oops management again, where people are selling  
38 fish on the lower river and we're not even allowed to  
39 catch anything, you know, and that's pretty sad.

40  
41 So I'd like to see some windows put  
42 back in there so there are something guaranteed for  
43 people up here on the upper end. You know the openings  
44 that we did have were, sure, go ahead and fish but they  
45 put us on windows knowing that there was no fish in the  
46 river, so it was for nothing. You know it was just to  
47 give people hope that they can go out and catch a few  
48 -- I don't know catch a few whitefish I guess, because  
49 there was nothing in the river when we were allowed to  
50

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1 be fishing in it. It's almost, you know, knowingly  
2 done on purpose, I guess, because they're trying to  
3 protect the run. So I just think that in the future  
4 that needs to be -- something needs to be changed about  
5 that and I don't know if this is the right place to  
6 address it but, you know, maybe that's more of a  
7 management -- should be directed more to management,  
8 but that's just my opinion anyway.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So I  
13 guess.....

14

15 MR. WRIGHT: Madame Chair, this is  
16 Robert.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Robert, go  
19 ahead.

20

21 MR. WRIGHT: I'd like to echo what  
22 Andrew said. My concerns are the report of fish  
23 turning off into smaller tributaries, being king  
24 salmon, on the summer before and the heat stress. So  
25 things have changed, things are changing rapidly.

26

27 Salmon, fresh water fish, normally  
28 things change slowly and evolve into the next, the way  
29 it's going to be in the future, but we've been getting  
30 slammed with climate, things are changing fast, causing  
31 a lot of hardship on a lot of fish and game. So I  
32 think there needs to be more monitoring above the --  
33 going up the Yukon River. Like Andrew said, we need to  
34 have people on the ground looking to see where these  
35 fish are going and see what's happening. A lot of  
36 people depend on this -- on the Yukon River and other  
37 rivers in Alaska, they depend on the resource, and a  
38 lot of people weren't able to get that resource this  
39 summer. And our priority is people having food on the  
40 table.

41

42 So I think a little bit more needs to  
43 be put into that, seeing -- monitoring the small rivers  
44 in the Yukon River Valley especially above Rampart,  
45 above the Rapids. Things have changed rapidly and it's  
46 going to cause a lot of hardship to a lot of species of  
47 fish, game, birds, everything.

48

49 So need to pay more closer attention, I

50

1 think.

2

3

Thank you.

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MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Any  
other Council members.

7

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(No comments)

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MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So Pippa, I  
take it this is what you're looking for?

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MS. KENNER: Oh, yes, and as Andy said  
it's not that it's already in the priority information  
needs but it just really helps us flesh it out. So  
what I'm thinking is where we have reliable estimates  
of escapement, I think maybe we should emphasize the  
Chandalar and Sheenjek River. And -- just a minute,  
let me read this, and expanding the in-season survey  
program, for instance, with more funding that YRDFA  
does, to get more reliable estimates of in-season  
harvest.

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24

MR. WOODRUFF: That's correct.

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MS. KENNER: And when Andrew brought  
up, like the windows in management, I think that having  
better indicators of what the escapement actually is in  
some of these tributaries does help. And I think we  
have -- I think we've addressed these issues about, you  
know, climate change and the environment, effects of  
environmental stressors such as heat stress and, of  
course, these came up because this is what people have  
been noticing and talking a lot about.

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And as far as hatchery production, who  
to address, so our wonderful Greg Risdahl, who actually  
heads the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program at OSM,  
he was at the -- he was our leadership team member at  
the YK-Delta Council meeting and he was able to address  
this more. We did have a couple of presentations from  
NOAA and I believe that you all have those  
presentations and their research going on about the  
marine ecology of Western Alaska juvenile salmon as a  
demonstration of the research that is out there.  
During his presentation -- or during his response to  
the Council, Greg Risdahl, you know, said that we under  
-- that he understood that people needed OSM Staff to  
pull together some of this information, like about the

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1 effects of hatchery production to present to the  
2 Council, but one of our issues is that we're so under  
3 Staffed, but that we do recognize that and we recognize  
4 that we should be and it would be very helpful for the  
5 Councils to be -- bring those reports to the Council.  
6

7 Those are the two modifications I would  
8 be making to the priority information needs based on  
9 people's responses, and thank you very much, Madame  
10 Chair.  
11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
13

14 MR. WRIGHT: Madame Chair, Andy.  
15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, go  
17 ahead, who's speaking?  
18

19 MR. BASSICH: Andy. Thank you. Thank  
20 you, Pippa. If it helps you I concur with Andrew and  
21 Charlie. I think more money needs to go to YRDFA for  
22 in-season harvest estimates. I think that's a very  
23 high priority, probably one of the highest and the most  
24 achievable. The best bang for the buck. So I would  
25 put that at the very top of my list for funding  
26 priorities.  
27

28 And as far as the hatchery production  
29 goes, I don't know if you guys put out a call, or how  
30 the call goes out, but if a third-party could gather  
31 that information, it's just information and data  
32 gathering, if a third-party, like UAF or some other  
33 party, University project could put in for that and do  
34 that, that would be very beneficial to all of the RACs.  
35

36 And then the final thing, along the  
37 same lines as the early 2000s, Dr. Kocan, out of, I  
38 believe Seattle, did a tremendous amount of work on  
39 ichthyophonus, given that ichthyophonus is showing up  
40 again, I think it would be very prudent to pull  
41 together all of his research and presentations and  
42 present those to the three Councils on the Yukon River  
43 as soon as possible so that we don't try and reinvent  
44 the wheel. There's a tremendous amount of work that  
45 was done, very accurate, very good work, so I would  
46 hate to see a lot of money spent to just recreate that.  
47 It's more of a public outreach. There's nothing we can  
48 do about ichthyophonus other than just be aware of it.  
49  
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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
2 wondering if our discussion is what you need, and the  
3 motion on the floor is to accept this list, and I had a  
4 second, and now we're just discussing priorities and  
5 that will do, I assume.  
6

7 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair, I know you  
8 were probably addressing the Council, but just my point  
9 of view, I think this is a very good list of priority  
10 information needs. We can work with this.  
11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. And  
13 then the discussion that has occurred?  
14

15 MS. KENNER: Yes.  
16

17 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
18 Council members, is there any other discussion to add  
19 to this.  
20

21 (No comments)  
22

23 MR. BASSICH: Question.  
24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: The question  
26 has been called for. I will ask for unanimous consent.  
27 If anyone opposes they should say so now.  
28

29 (No comments)  
30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. The  
32 motion passes. And thank you Pippa and members.  
33

34 The next thing on the agenda is to  
35 identify issues of the annual report.  
36

37 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
38 This is Katya Wessels. At this point of the meeting we  
39 are going to work on identifying the issues that the  
40 RAC would like to put in their 2020 annual -- fiscal  
41 year 2020 annual report. And I just would like to  
42 remind the Council that according to Section .805(a)  
43 ANILCA, Title VIII, the Council has the authority to  
44 submit an annual report to the Board. And this report  
45 can contain such items as identification of current and  
46 anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife  
47 population within the region, and evaluation of current  
48 and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife  
49 populations within the region. A recommended strategy  
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1 for the management of fish and wildlife populations  
2 within the region to accommodate its subsistence users  
3 and needs and recommendations concerning policies,  
4 standards, guidelines and regulations to implement this  
5 strategy.  
6

7 You have your previous years annual  
8 report with the annual report reply in your meeting  
9 materials books. It should be on Page 223 of your  
10 meeting material books.  
11

12 And at this time I would like to invite  
13 any Council member to speak on the proposed topics for  
14 the Eastern Interior Council's annual report.  
15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Council  
17 members. Any topics.  
18

19 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, this is  
20 Don Woodruff.  
21

22 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Don, go  
23 ahead.  
24

25 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, so to start this,  
26 importance of subsistence needs, on that category.  
27

28 Since we had very few chinook and  
29 possibly zero harvest of fall chum, then the only thing  
30 we had to eat this summer would be whitefish, pike,  
31 suckers, stickleback, and those are important food  
32 sources for the people. And Andy and I have been  
33 talking about this for five years, at least, that when  
34 the chum crash this is our food source, and, personally  
35 I've lived out of my net eating pike for 30 days and I  
36 was just fine. A little skinny but just fine. And so  
37 that just proves that that food source is critical for  
38 a lot of people. I'm not just an exception.  
39

40 And so I think that should go into our  
41 annual report saying that, when there are no salmon  
42 species to harvest, then it's really important for the  
43 managers to give us a little something and so we -- we  
44 had no use for our four inch nets, there was no  
45 openings for those until Monday, this last Monday it  
46 was eight degrees, so no one's going out there to get  
47 whitefish.  
48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So you would  
50

1 like that as a topic, Don?

2

3

MR. WOODRUFF: Yes, Ma'am.

4

5

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

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7

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Don.

8

9

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: And if  
10 anybody disagrees with these topics just speak up.

11

12

13

14

MS. WESSELS: Yeah, and if anyone wants  
to add anything to what Don has to say I would welcome  
that.

15

16

MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

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MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Andy, go  
ahead.

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MR. BASSICH: I agree with Don. One  
thing I'd just like to point out is I've done a lot of  
personal studies on the CPUE, the catch per unit effort  
of non-salmon species up here that are in the river  
during the summertime and also later in the season and  
it's pretty dismal. It's pretty hard to -- unless  
you're willing to spend all day long, every day of the  
week to feed yourself from non-salmon species, it's  
pretty difficult to do it. You can feed yourself day  
to day but it's very difficult to put any fish above  
and beyond what you would consume. And it's certainly  
not even -- it doesn't help at all in dog food. That  
the abundance of fish up here, non-salmon, for dog food  
is negligible. It's a losing proposition to try and do  
it unless you only have like three or four dogs.

37

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41

So these are issues we're grappling  
with up here. I don't know what the answer is other  
than let's hope that the fall chum come back quicker so  
at least there's some food.

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But Don is correct, the fact that they  
didn't even open it up in the upper region here for any  
kind of four inch mesh to try and supplement, at least  
a little bit, was pretty dismal and pretty frustrating.  
Subsistence harvest records show that Eagle relies on  
king salmon and caribou. And those are the two  
resources that we rely on here. And so we're also  
probably the second largest dog community on the Yukon

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1 River, and none of these needs are being met, with the  
2 exception of maybe caribou this year because of the  
3 liberalization of that. So we're hurting pretty bad up  
4 here right now, as is most people.

5  
6 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Andy. Does  
7 the Council have any kind of recommendation to the  
8 Board on this topic?

9  
10 MR. WOODRUFF: Katya, this is Don. Do  
11 you mean that some kind of an action by the Board?

12  
13 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, if you're looking  
14 to do something, you know, yes, some kind of action.

15  
16 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah. And my  
17 perspective is that since we didn't even get a chance  
18 to use our four inch mesh, Y4 were using a three inch  
19 mesh, we never -- there never was an announcement or  
20 even a consideration that we would use a three inch  
21 mesh. So I think the only thing they can do is get the  
22 State managers to understand that a pike in the fry pan  
23 is better than no pike in the fry pan. Period.

24  
25 MS. WESSELS: Thank you.

26  
27 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, this is Andy. And  
28 add on top of that please, our Federal manager for  
29 fish, I believe it's Gerald Maschmann right now, that's  
30 where actions can take place on his level, he's there  
31 to co-manage the fisheries with the State of Alaska, so  
32 when it comes to Federally-qualified users, if we have  
33 a situation like this year, that's the time when the  
34 Federal manager should step in, survey the people in  
35 the communities being affected and try and make an  
36 opening up for Federally-qualified users. That would  
37 be the one thing that I would put on the report as a  
38 recommendation, or to find out what capabilities there  
39 are for that to happen.

40  
41 Thank you.

42  
43 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, this is  
44 Don again.

45  
46 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Andy.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
49 Don.

50

1 MS. WESSELS: Don.

2

3 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, Andy, so are you  
4 referring to an .804 process?

5

6 MR. BASSICH: Well, no, I'm not sure  
7 what I'm referring to Don, but I do know that we have a  
8 Federal manager there that can take actions above and  
9 beyond what the State is doing so let's look into that,  
10 let's see what can happen in years like this.

11

12 MR. WOODRUFF: He must have been asleep  
13 this year. Thank you.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Katya.

16

17 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Do you -- I'm  
20 sure -- how do you want to handle this, normally people  
21 list things and then we all agree, want to go through  
22 the process like that?

23

24 MS. WESSELS: Yes. Yeah, we don't need  
25 to vote on each separate topic.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

28

29 MS. WESSELS: We just need to come up  
30 with a list of topics. And I mean you -- it's an  
31 action item but you don't really need to have a vote --  
32 it would be good to have a motion at the end, just that  
33 you decided to put these topics on the annual report,  
34 and, you know, just remember I'm going to draft the  
35 annual report and then you'll have that draft for your  
36 approval during the winter 2021 meeting, so you can add  
37 to the topics, or you can add additional topics. Of  
38 course it's always better, you know, if you have most  
39 of your topics outlined in the fall meeting because  
40 then OSM has more time to actually develop these topics  
41 to your satisfaction. When you add new topics during  
42 the winter meeting, you know, there is less time to  
43 actually develop a meaningful content for that topic.

44

45 And, of course, even before, you know,  
46 you are going to see the draft annual report, I'm going  
47 to send each individual topic to the Council members  
48 who initiated those topics, like in this case it's Don  
49 and Andy, I'm going to send them the first draft and

50

1 work with them on the language.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. So  
4 that's one topic for the next annual report. Council  
5 members, does anyone else have any other topics.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: And if you  
10 look at the letter from -- the letter was sent to us  
11 August 2020 addressing the topics of our 2019 topics.  
12 So often times we reiterate topics.

13

14 Council members, do you have anything  
15 else.

16

17 MR. BASSICH: This is Andy. Well, I'd  
18 like to just still hear more information on hatchery  
19 production. So I identified that both in the Fisheries  
20 Resource Monitoring Program and we addressed that in  
21 last year's request through this process, and we're not  
22 getting any information.

23

24 But, you know, Virgil Umphenour has  
25 talked about this for over 20 years, very passionately,  
26 I think it's time that people on the Yukon River be  
27 better informed about the potential impacts to their  
28 fisheries due to what's happening with hatchery  
29 production in the state of Alaska and around the  
30 Pacific Rim. This is a long-term problem that, if  
31 nothing else, we need information. We may not be able  
32 to do much about it but we need to understand what's  
33 impacting our fish, not only in the environment but we,  
34 as human beings are doing to impact our fish.

35

36 So I'd still like to see data on --  
37 just a historical data on hatchery production from 1980  
38 to present.

39

40 Thank you, Madame Chair.

41

42 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Andy. I just  
43 want to bring your attention to the annual report reply  
44 that you have in your books. That's a reply by the  
45 Board from your last year's annual report topic. The  
46 topic No. 4, it says analysis of biological impacts of  
47 hatchery productions on Alaska's fisheries. So that  
48 topic was in last year's annual report. And if you  
49 notice, the reply from the Board says, that the Board

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1 can only authorize research through FRMP but, however,  
2 you know, the Board has -- will instruct OSM to extend  
3 invitations to subject matter efforts from management  
4 agencies and universities on the topic of effect from  
5 hatchery production of wild Alaska fisheries to present  
6 at the -- it says at the upcoming Council meeting, that  
7 didn't happen, but we definitely do it during the  
8 winter time. We can invite subject matter experts, you  
9 know, maybe that will alleviate your need to add the  
10 hatchery production topic to the annual report.  
11

12 But we still can include it, but I'm  
13 just saying that that's what the Board recommended, to  
14 invite subject experts to talk with you, with the  
15 Council.  
16

17 Thank you.  
18

19 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you, Katya. I  
20 agree. I saw that, I just want to keep this front and  
21 center on this Council's priorities needs because I  
22 think it's very important. So I'm hoping that we can  
23 get some presentations and get some dialogue going over  
24 the course of the next year on this and I look forward  
25 to that.  
26

27 MS. WESSELS: Thank you.  
28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Council  
30 members, anything else.  
31

32 (No comments)  
33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: We had eight  
35 topics last time and now we have addressed two.  
36

37 Anything else.  
38

39 MR. BASSICH: Sue, the only other thing  
40 in regards to gain is if there's any information out  
41 there, any research that's been done on climate change  
42 and the impacts of putting moose into rut, you know,  
43 how that's affecting wildlife and potentially could  
44 affect our legal hunting seasons. That's something  
45 that we need to begin to think about as climate change  
46 happens, we may need to work with managers in the State  
47 and the Feds to change some of the hunting seasons to  
48 correlate more with when moose are in rut.  
49  
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1                   So I don't know if there's any  
2 information out there on that but it would be really  
3 interesting to start studying that or at least try and  
4 get some kind of search out there on white papers that  
5 have been written on that.

6  
7                   And, I guess, the way to say it would  
8 be the impacts of climate change, or warming  
9 temperatures, rutting of moose.

10  
11                   MR. WRIGHT: Madame Chair, this is  
12 Robert.

13  
14                   MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Robert, go  
15 ahead.

16  
17                   MR. WRIGHT: I would like to add a  
18 little bit to that, what Andy was talking about.

19  
20                   MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

21  
22                   MR. WRIGHT: I brought it up at the  
23 last meeting and asked some questions. We are seeing  
24 smaller moose in the springtime, in March, this last  
25 March I did see a small calf moose being protected by a  
26 grown up moose, but very small in March. I did ask a  
27 few questions about that to some Fish and Game people  
28 and they said that they're not seeing any indications  
29 of that. So I was just wondering if they're really  
30 working, maybe some places are different. But I did  
31 see with my own eyes, small moose in March, and that  
32 really gave me some concern.

33  
34                   And I said yesterday that the moose are  
35 not going into rut until the end of September at all in  
36 my area, so I know that there's some change happening  
37 so it would be really nice to know more about that.

38  
39                   Thank you.

40  
41                   MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. And as  
42 we talk about these topics, if anyone has any problem  
43 with the topics you need to speak up because I'm  
44 assuming that we're okay with the topics that are  
45 coming up.

46  
47                   (No comments)

48  
49                   MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Am I

50



1 hearing any other topics?

2

3

(No comments)

4

5

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: The only one  
6 that I wanted to bring up and it really has to do with  
7 the response. The continuation of the hunter/ethics  
8 and education and dialogue with rural communities, and  
9 we had suggested, for an example, we want to create a  
10 sub-committee to find mutually beneficial solutions to  
11 situations like the Arctic Village Management Area.  
12 And in this response they put the onus back on us.

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And it bothers me a little bit because  
I was tasked with taking something to the Board in  
October of '19 and that's when we had Zach and he was  
new to our Council, and then it just got really -- and  
it was a teleconference, and it just got really muddled  
up. I don't know, I find it hard to -- feel like we're  
beating a dead horse sometimes, but I think dialogue  
with Arctic Village would be nice and with the people.  
Actually I do want to report that Staff -- the Federal  
Fish and Wildlife Staff, they were going to work on  
maybe getting me up to Arctic Village and talk to the  
people and then Covid hit, so everything seems to have  
been pushed back, I don't know, but I think I would  
like to have some kind of dialogue with Arctic Village  
and I don't know if it's in the annual report. It  
would be a nice place to start.

MR. WOODRUFF: Sue, this is Don  
Woodruff. I concur. This is an example of how the  
Arctic Village people can become proactive with the  
management of their wildlife, and it can be an example  
for future for other villages.

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, thank  
you, Don. I appreciate that.

MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
Katya.

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.

MS. WESSELS: I just wanted to also add  
that yesterday when I was presenting the results of  
.805(c) reports, when I presented the Board's vote on  
the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area proposal, I  
mentioned that several Board members were also

1 indicating that a workable solution needs to be found  
2 and, you know, a working group needs to be created. So  
3 that would go along with what the recommendations were  
4 during the last Board meeting.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, and I  
7 agree and if we could put that in the annual report,  
8 that we would like to pursue this and we're volunteers,  
9 so how do we go about it, that we need Staff and they  
10 need to help us.

11  
12 MS. WESSELS: Okay.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right.  
15 And is there any other -- and like I said if anybody  
16 disagrees you need to speak up.

17  
18 (No comments)

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Is there any  
21 other topics that anyone would like to bring up at this  
22 time. We will have a draft at our next meeting and  
23 we'll have three topics on it.

24  
25 MS. WESSELS: Well, it's actually four.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, sorry,  
28 four.

29  
30  
31 (No comments)

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
34 assuming we're finished on that topic. I hope that  
35 helps you Katya.

36  
37 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, that's great. Like  
38 I said, I'm going to work with the Council members who  
39 initiated each topic before you, you'll see a complete  
40 draft in your winter Council meeting materials.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, thank  
43 you.

44  
45 MS. WESSELS: You're welcome, thank  
46 you.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: You're  
49 welcome. Next on the agenda is National Park Service

50

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1 request for a delegation of authority to the NPS for an  
2 individual C&T use determination. And I'm going to let  
3 the Council know that I think there's some new  
4 information here and would Marcy be doing this with  
5 Barbara or just Marcy.  
6

7 MS. OKADA: Yes, Madame Chair and  
8 Council members, I'll be presenting this information.  
9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Go  
11 ahead, Marcy.  
12

13 MS. OKADA: So at the request of your  
14 RAC Chair we've modified a little bit -- we've modified  
15 our presentation a little bit. I'll just provide a  
16 brief background and then also a summary of how the  
17 previous RACs have voted, and then also SRC comment.  
18

19 So in order to streamline the process  
20 of making individual customary and traditional use  
21 determinations for local rural residents who have a  
22 long time pattern of use for Park lands, but are not  
23 covered by existing community-based customary and  
24 traditional uses, the Federal Subsistence Board is  
25 considering delegating authority to the National Park  
26 Service, Alaska Regional Director, to make these  
27 determinations on a more flexible schedule versus  
28 rather -- rather than the every two year regulatory  
29 proposal process that's currently in use by the Office  
30 of Subsistence Management.  
31

32 And so how this all came about was the  
33 National Park Service recently received an individual  
34 customary and traditional use request for Denali  
35 National Park and it was initiated because a family had  
36 moved from Cantwell to Healy due to the husband's  
37 employment at Usibelli Coal Mine. This person would  
38 like to continue hunting with his extended family in  
39 and around the Cantwell traditional use area. This  
40 person's extended multi-generational family has  
41 depended upon moose in the Cantwell area as their  
42 primary source of sustenance for four generations. So  
43 he would like to continue this use and he would also  
44 like to be able to continue to pass his knowledge down  
45 to his children.  
46

47 At their July work session, the Federal  
48 Subsistence Board deferred action on the proposed  
49 delegation of authority to allow time for the RACs to  
50

1 be briefed on and also have an opportunity to provide  
2 input on the delegation of authority at their fall  
3 meetings. So at the request of the Eastern -- at the  
4 request of Sue we are providing an update on the  
5 comments by the RACs that have met up until now and the  
6 SRCs.

7  
8 For Denali National Park, the  
9 Subsistence Resource Commission did not formally vote  
10 on the delegation of authority but no opposition was  
11 expressed.

12  
13 For the Kodiak/Aleutians Regional  
14 Advisory Council, they voted to support the process and  
15 the delegation of authority. But it's important to  
16 note that they do not have any Park Service lands in  
17 their region.

18  
19 For the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional  
20 Advisory Council, they voted to take no action on this  
21 request because they believe they can't make a sound  
22 judgment at this time. They want to hear what the  
23 other regions have to say. And it's also important to  
24 note that they do not have any Park Service lands in  
25 their region.

26  
27 For the Southcentral RAC, after a  
28 report from the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource  
29 Commission meeting, the Council unanimously supported a  
30 motion for the Federal Subsistence Board to postpone a  
31 decision until the process can be vetted and considered  
32 by the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource  
33 Commission.

34  
35 The Wrangell-St. Elias SRC made two  
36 modifications to the proposed delegation of authority  
37 before it took a vote, adding deference to the relevant  
38 SRC recommendation on an individual C&T determination  
39 was part of the original motion. The SRC also  
40 unanimously supported an amendment to request that a  
41 definition of individual C&T be added to the standard  
42 operating procedures. The SRC then unanimously opposed  
43 the delegation of authority with its recommended  
44 modification. The SRC felt that it needed more time to  
45 understand and vett the proposed process and  
46 delegation.

47  
48 So I believe that Sue wanted to provide  
49 some additional perspective on the discussion that  
50

1 occurred at the Wrangell-St. Elias SRC meeting.  
2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. So it  
4 was my understanding in talking with Barbara that there  
5 was a meeting with Joshua Ream and Amy and Barbara and  
6 yourself, and am I not understanding this right, but I  
7 thought you guys met and you plan on working on this  
8 some more.  
9

10 MS. OKADA: That's correct. We did  
11 meet minus Joshua, and so Barbara, Amy and I all met  
12 and we're presenting the information today just as a  
13 very, very brief overview. We're not presenting the  
14 same information that we've shared at the other RAC  
15 meetings, but we'd like to share a table with the  
16 Council at this time. Katya sent it out via email and  
17 also by postal mail and it's just a table that  
18 summarizes how the process currently goes and what's  
19 being proposed. So it's a side by side comparison  
20 table of the current process versus the proposed  
21 process for making individual C&T determinations.  
22

23 MS. CELLARIUS: Marcy, this is Barbara  
24 Cellarius and maybe I can respond to what I think Sue  
25 is asking.  
26

27 MS. OKADA: Okay.  
28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, go  
30 ahead.  
31

32 MS. CELLARIUS: We did talk -- we had a  
33 conversation about given the SRC's concern about their  
34 feeling like they needed some additional information,  
35 and Josh has also talked with some folks at OS -- well,  
36 actually with the InterAgency Staff Committee, and they  
37 suggested that we go ahead and let the RACs all know  
38 about the proposed delegation of authority and so the  
39 briefings to the RACs are continuing.  
40

41 And so is that what you're asking on?  
42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: You're asking  
44 me now?  
45

46 MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah, so here's --  
47 yeah, I found my note from Josh. There was a  
48 suggestion that the RACs should still have a chance to  
49 hear the talking points and ask questions. And then  
50

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1 it's a little unclear when the decision will be made by  
2 the Federal Board, but we wanted to at least provide  
3 this introduction. And then as Marcy said, I've put  
4 together a table that compares -- because really it's a  
5 change -- it's not about whether individual C&Ts are  
6 going to exist, it's about the process for making those  
7 determinations and so we -- I put together a table  
8 summarizing what the current process is and what the  
9 proposed process is and then that is what Marcy was  
10 offering to go over with the Council. We're also happy  
11 to answer any questions that folks might have.

12  
13 And I will turn it back over to Marcy.

14  
15 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
16 Katya.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Katya, you go  
19 ahead.

20  
21 MS. WESSELS: Okay. I have a couple of  
22 questions. I mean one question and one point I want to  
23 make. Marcy and Barbara, a question that I have, is  
24 this still an action item or is it just information  
25 sharing at this point?

26  
27 MS. OKADA: I mean at this point I'm  
28 assuming it wouldn't -- it's no longer an action item  
29 for this RAC.

30  
31 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. And the other  
32 point that I wanted to make is the table that both  
33 Marcy and Barbara are referring to, like Marcy said, I  
34 emailed it to the Council members as well as I mailed a  
35 hard copy to you in the mail. It also can be found on  
36 the Federal Subsistence Program Management website  
37 under the Eastern Interior meeting materials, and it's  
38 like one page and the table is titled, comparison of  
39 current and proposed review process from National Park  
40 Service individual customary and traditional use  
41 determinations.

42  
43 So hopefully you have it in front of  
44 you one way or the other but like I said it can be  
45 found on line and for any public, so they know what  
46 we're talking about.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I  
49 would like to give more information for why I asked  
50

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1 this to be short. Since it's not an action item but I  
2 still want to give you more information of what I -- I  
3 have a lot of information on it actually.  
4

5 A lot of you may not know this but the  
6 Park Service is the only entity in the Federal system  
7 that can give an individual C&T. And this was told to  
8 me probably 30 years ago and then it was kind of  
9 interesting, it was told at the meeting, said no that  
10 guy is not right, that Park Service person, there's no  
11 individual C&Ts and then they found out, yes, it's in  
12 ANILCA, there can be an individual C&T on Park lands.  
13 So there's been, I believe they said 12 individual C&Ts  
14 statewide since ANILCA. And, Barbara, correct me, each  
15 time if I say it wrong, and three of the individuals  
16 are from my family. We asked for a C&T when we found  
17 out for the Wrangell-St. Elias for mountain goats  
18 because we have C&T for sheep and we're in there  
19 hunting and then we can't hunt the mountain goat and we  
20 received that C&T and we went through that process.  
21 And once the SRC took it up, it just gets kind of  
22 muddled up and I think it's something that does need  
23 more information. It is in on our agenda, and we  
24 brought it up and I would suggest that we -- if you  
25 have any questions, to ask them now.  
26

27 But it's something that we now we don't  
28 have an action item on so I just wanted to give you a  
29 little more information about what I know about it.  
30

31 Are there any questions.

32  
33 MR. WOODRUFF: I got a question, Sue,  
34 this is Don.  
35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
37 Don.  
38

39 MR. WOODRUFF: So at our working group  
40 meeting this spring, we spent most of our time with  
41 Park Service discussing cabin permits and so one of the  
42 criteria that we discussed quite a few meetings before  
43 was the C&T for that family or that person that's  
44 looking, you know, to use at the Federal public cabins.  
45 And it came up that these folks didn't have a C&T for  
46 say martin or beaver or wolves or whatever they were  
47 trapping. So I'm curious about how that process works.  
48

49 MS. OKADA: Don.....  
50

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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So are you  
2 saying -- Marcy, do you want to answer that.  
3

4 MS. OKADA: Sure. So Don the  
5 individual C&T proposal that we're putting forth only  
6 applies to Parks and Monuments and not Preserves.  
7

8 MR. WOODRUFF: Parks, uh-huh. Thank  
9 you.  
10

11 MS. CELLARIUS: Madame Chair.  
12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Barbara, go  
14 ahead.  
15

16 MS. CELLARIUS: So I'd like to clarify  
17 that this does remain an action item. It's a little  
18 unclear exactly how things -- what kind of action the  
19 -- whether the Board will take action in January or  
20 not, but the Board has requested that the RACs be  
21 briefed on this topic and have a chance to weigh in at  
22 these fall meetings. And my understanding is that that  
23 request from the Board has not changed. And I  
24 apologize for the confusion.  
25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. So the  
27 reason I shortened it was to help the Council members  
28 out is the SRC couldn't agree on doing this, there is a  
29 trust issue for some members, the Park Service, and  
30 then the -- I listened in to the Southcentral RAC  
31 discussion and it went similar to the discussion where  
32 people started veering off on the delegation of  
33 authority and talking about what C&T means and it got  
34 very confusing and they -- Marcy did say what they did,  
35 they didn't make a decision to endorse it.  
36

37 So my suggestion to the Eastern  
38 Interior RAC based on two meetings on this subject, is  
39 that we, too, need more information and it just doesn't  
40 come up to me as an urgency to deal with it right now.  
41 And I do understand if you do have that process, that  
42 the current process is going through the Federal Board,  
43 and the proposed process is going through the Park  
44 Service Director -- Regional Director.  
45

46 So if you guys want to do something  
47 else and hear the whole process I won't stop you,  
48 you're open to do that and if you have other questions  
49 go right ahead.  
50



1 (Teleconference interference -  
2 participants not muted)  
3

4 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: But Don and  
5 Andy, it's only on Park, not Preserve, because people  
6 can still hunt on Preserve lands providing they still  
7 have a subsistence season but it's at the Park limits  
8 it just to subsistence.  
9

10 (Teleconference interference -  
11 participants not muted)  
12

13 MR. WOODRUFF: What was that?  
14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Something's  
16 going on there, background noise.  
17

18 REPORTER: Yeah, if everybody could take  
19 a look at their phone and make sure it's muted unless  
20 they're directly talking would be appreciated.  
21

22 Thanks.  
23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Somebody.  
25

26 MR. BASSICH: This is Andy speaking.  
27

28 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.  
29

30 MR. BASSICH: I just had.....  
31

32 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair. Madame  
33 Chair.  
34

35 MR. BASSICH: I just had a.....  
36

37 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.  
38

39 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, Katya.  
40

41 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
42 Katya.  
43

44 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, you  
45 can't hear me?  
46

47 MS. WESSELS: No, I couldn't hear you.  
48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Is my phone  
50

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1 dying, go ahead, it says it's full.

2

3 MR. GLANZ: Yeah, we can hear you Sue.

4

5 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I couldn't hear you  
6 saying go ahead. I just want to perhaps clarify to the  
7 Council that, you know, there was confusion about, you  
8 know, if it's an action item or not an action item. I  
9 think we need to listen to get a little bit of more  
10 information from Marcy on the topic and if the Council  
11 wants to weigh in in some way or if you feel like you  
12 will need more information later and, you know, you can  
13 vote on that, and say that you will need additional  
14 information at the next meeting or you want to postpone  
15 your decision or maybe defer it until next time, or, you  
16 know, whatever you decide to do after you hear the  
17 information that Marcy has to provide.

18

19 I think we just need more information  
20 in order to really understand the topic.

21

22 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Andy, go  
25 ahead.

26

27 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. I guess  
28 from my perspective, this is the way I understand it so  
29 I'm asking for clarification.

30

31 This process has been in place but for  
32 a permit person to ask for this permitting to happen,  
33 they had to go through the entire Federal Subsistence  
34 Board in the past and what's taking place now is that  
35 the Federal Subsistence Board is now going to delegate  
36 this authority to the National Park Service to make  
37 that determination to try and streamline the process  
38 and take that off their plate.

39

40 Is that a fair analysis of what's  
41 taking place here?

42

43 MS. OKADA: That's correct. That's  
44 correct, Andy.

45

46 MR. BASSICH: Okay. Okay. That being  
47 said, the process, the criteria is already in place at  
48 this point in time -- or it has been in place and all  
49 they're asking to do is for the RACs to weigh in on

50

1 whether they feel that the Park Service should be given  
2 the authority alone to do this.

3

4 Is that a correct assumption?

5

6 MS. OKADA: Yes. For Parks and  
7 Monuments.

8

9 I think the best way to kind of give  
10 the nuts and bolts comparison would be for us to take a  
11 look at the table and just kind of go through it and if  
12 folks have questions based off of that we'd be open to  
13 answering those questions.

14

15 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you, Marcy.  
16 So from my perspective, I'm fine with the Federal  
17 Subsistence Board delegating that authority to the  
18 National Park Service, given that the criteria is --  
19 it's kind of in their ball park so to say anyway, for  
20 this, and if it's going to take some of the work load  
21 off of the Federal Subsistence Board I'm comfortable  
22 with that.

23

24 The one question that I did want  
25 clarification on from you Marcy is on Page 238 of our  
26 book, the final paragraph under notes, it says permits  
27 will be issued for a lifetime for the applicant so long  
28 as they retain their eligibility as a Federally-  
29 qualified subsistence user. So does that mean that if  
30 a person, say like the example you gave earlier, moved  
31 from Cantwell to Anchorage they would not longer be an  
32 eligible applicant for this?

33

34 MS. OKADA: So they would really not  
35 qualify as a Federal subsistence user if they moved to  
36 one of the urban communities so.....

37

38 MR. BASSICH: Copy that.

39

40 MS. OKADA: .....they would be  
41 considered a lifetime user but we also plan, as  
42 subsistence coordinators, to stay in touch with the  
43 applicant and maybe just, you know, every few years or  
44 so, every five years, just touch base with them to see  
45 that their primary residence is still in one of the  
46 rural communities.

47

48 MR. BASSICH: Thank you for that  
49 clarification. That was a loophole that I was

50

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1 concerned might be exploited by some parties. So I  
2 think given that statement from you I'm quite  
3 comfortable with what's being proposed here.  
4

5 Thank you, Madame Chair.  
6

7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, Council  
8 members, if you want to take this up we can go for it.  
9 I thought it would save us some time because I noticed  
10 what had happened at the other two meetings.  
11

12 I'm open, whatever you'd like to do.  
13 Table it for.....  
14

15 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, this is  
16 Don Woodruff.  
17

18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, Don.  
19

20 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, I think that we do  
21 need more information and I think if we can defer this  
22 to another meeting after we have more information we  
23 can make a sounder decision. But I'm kind of with Andy  
24 on this process, I think that trusting the Park Service  
25 to do the right thing is not such a big stretch.  
26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, so  
28 maybe -- what happened at both the other meetings was  
29 that we heard the whole thing and then it turned into  
30 analyzing the whole process of how they find a C&T, and  
31 it just got unclear. And actually the SRC, there was a  
32 motion to add that the Subsistence Resource Commissions  
33 are the ones that has deference to any of the  
34 individual C&Ts. So if you guys want to hear more  
35 about it you just need to tell me. I don't mean to  
36 hold information from you, this is your time to listen  
37 to the whole thing if you'd like to.  
38

39 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
40 Katya.  
41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah.  
43

44 MS. WESSELS: I think that maybe in  
45 order to gather information we should go ahead and go  
46 over the table that Marcy was referring to.  
47

48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah.  
49  
50

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1 MS. WESSELS: Because it's a very short  
2 table so I don't think that will take very long.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

5  
6 Marcy.

7  
8 MS. OKADA: Okay. So as Katya had said  
9 it's available on the OSM website under your EIRAC  
10 materials, supplemental 4, and then she also emailed it  
11 to you or you might have it in front of you if you  
12 received it in your postal mail.

13  
14 (Teleconference interference -  
15 participants not muted - put on hold)

16  
17 MS. OKADA: So currently right now the  
18 application window to seek individual and customary use  
19 determination requests is a pretty narrow window. It's  
20 during the call for regulatory proposals, which is  
21 every two years. Under this proposed process for the  
22 Park Service it would be an open window, continuously,  
23 so it would just be taking these applications as they  
24 come and processing them.

25  
26 (Teleconference interference -  
27 participants not muted - put on hold)

28  
29 MS. OKADA: Currently proposals -- the  
30 current process is proposals may be invalidated if  
31 they're incomplete, or if a 1344 permit is needed, and  
32 that would switch to, under a Park Service delegation  
33 of authority, Park Service Staff interviewing the  
34 applicant to ensure that all information regarding the  
35 eight factors for C&T is documented and then also if  
36 that person needs a 1344 permit, it would also be  
37 processed and that application would also be processed  
38 concurrently.

39  
40 For the proposal analysis, it currently  
41 follows the standard format for C&T proposals using the  
42 eight factors and the analysis is prepared by both Park  
43 Service Staff in combination with OSM Staff. And under  
44 the proposed delegation of authority it would continue  
45 to follow the standard format for C&T proposals using  
46 those same eight factors but the analysis would be  
47 prepared by just Park Service Staff.

48  
49 For Advisory Committee review, it's

50

1 currently under the Federal subsistence Regional  
2 Advisory Councils, and so then that would be  
3 transferred to the National Park Service Subsistence  
4 Resource Commissions. And we have Subsistence Resource  
5 Commissions for all of our Parks and Monuments.  
6

7 Currently the decision maker is the  
8 Federal Subsistence Board. It would be transferred to  
9 the National Park Service Alaska Regional Director.  
10

11 And then lastly the current decision  
12 timeline is at a fixed schedule at annual regulatory  
13 meetings for the Federal Subsistence Board, but it  
14 would change to a more flexible schedule following  
15 receipt of a Subsistence Resource Commission  
16 recommendation.  
17

18 So what we're really trying to do is  
19 allow more streamlining and flexibility so that we're  
20 able to process these applications should they come in.  
21

22 Is there any questions?  
23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any  
25 questions.  
26

27 (No comments)  
28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: So I have a  
30 question of Barbara because she went through this  
31 process with the SRC. If this was handled like this  
32 and not the other information that's in the book, what  
33 we went through at our SRC meeting, it may have went  
34 differently because we ended up talking about a lot of  
35 things besides this delegation of authority?  
36

37 MS. CELLARIUS: That was a question?  
38

39 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, it is.  
40

41 MS. CELLARIUS: I do think that just  
42 going over the table and focusing on the process would  
43 have been really helpful for the Subsistence Resource  
44 Commission. There was a question that came up with the  
45 Subsistence Resource Commission which I didn't have the  
46 answer to at my fingertips in terms of what patterns of  
47 use is evaluated and I've since gotten an answer to  
48 that pattern that what we're really looking for, and  
49 it's in the eight factors is a long-term family pattern  
50

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1 of use and that was a concern, another concern that the  
2 SRC had. So, you know, I think with the table focusing  
3 on the process and what the proposed change was and  
4 then have been able to answer that question, which was  
5 unrelated to the change in the process but a concern  
6 for the SRC, I think things would have gone much  
7 differently.

8  
9 But, you know, that's sort of in  
10 hindsight.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Uh-huh.  
13 Well, that's what I'm seeing now. And the other  
14 question would be, okay, I'm going to let it go back to  
15 other Council members.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, Council  
20 members, I did -- I'm having a brain fix here, it has  
21 to do with this whole process. Barbara had explained,  
22 if people do not like or trust that the Park Service is  
23 doing a good job, the delegation of authority letter  
24 could be lifted. So that is something that we ended up  
25 discussing, just her and I when we had a discussion on  
26 the phone. So I'm just giving you more information,  
27 and Barbara you would concur?

28  
29 MS. CELLARIUS: Yes, that's my  
30 understanding. Is that the Board can rescind a  
31 delegation letter.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: But in the  
34 meantime, Barbara, the Park Service is still going to  
35 be talking about all the things that were brought up at  
36 the two meetings that I listened to?

37  
38 MS. CELLARIUS: We have those comments  
39 on the record so, yes.

40  
41 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: And one more  
42 thing, the SRC, was it in this proposal, that they  
43 would be the entity that looks at it as an Advisory  
44 Committee?

45  
46 MS. CELLARIUS: So, yes, it is --  
47 although all along it has been part of the process as  
48 Marcy described with the table, that there -- and if  
49 you look at the materials that are associated with this  
50

1 agenda item, there's actually a formal recommendation  
2 from the SRC is part of the process. So at an SRC  
3 meeting there would be a presentation about the request  
4 and the analysis of the request and then the SRC would  
5 be asked to make a formal recommendation on the  
6 determination as part of the process.

7  
8 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, Council  
9 members, are there any other questions or discussion,  
10 how would you like to proceed.

11  
12 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair, Andy.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
15 Andy.

16  
17 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, if no other Council  
18 members have any heartburn over this I'd like to make a  
19 motion that we would approve this process and would  
20 like to stay informed by the Federal Subsistence Board  
21 as it develops. But if -- if I'm not hearing any  
22 heartburn from anybody let's just move on and give our  
23 support to it.

24  
25 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Is that a  
26 motion?

27  
28 MR. BASSICH: Yes, it is.

29  
30 MR. GLANZ: All right, I'd like to  
31 second the motion. Bill.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
34 Discussion on the motion.

35  
36 MR. BASSICH: Speaking to the motion, I  
37 feel like the process is already in place, the Federal  
38 Subsistence Board has deliberated and made the offer to  
39 the National Park Service to take on this  
40 responsibility and I agree with the SRCs request to be  
41 informed and be able to give input to the Park Service  
42 on any application and I think that has some good  
43 checks and balances in place and I'm quite comfortable  
44 with moving forward on this and giving my support to  
45 it.

46  
47 Thank you, Madame Chair.

48  
49 MR. GLANZ: Madame Chair, this is Bill.

50



1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
2 Bill.  
3

4 MR. GLANZ: I agree with him on that  
5 also because the SRC seems to be involved with it,  
6 there's no trickery the way I look at it. Anyway,  
7 that's all my comment is.  
8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, thanks,  
10 Bill.  
11

12 Any other discussion.  
13

14 (No comments)  
15

16 MR. GLANZ: Question.  
17

18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. The  
19 question has been called for, roll call.  
20

21 MS. WESSELS: Okay, thank you, Madame  
22 Chair. So we are going to do the roll call of the  
23 motion that Andy proposed to approve the process for  
24 individual C&T and just asking the Board to inform the  
25 Council -- keep the Council apprised on the progress  
26 and their decision.  
27

28 Timothy McManus.  
29

30 (No comments)  
31

32 MS. WESSELS: Tim, are you on line.  
33

34 (No comments)  
35

36 MS. WESSELS: Maybe he's having with  
37 his mute button again.  
38

39 Okay, Bill Glanz.  
40

41 MR. GLANZ: Yes.  
42

43 MS. WESSELS: Support.  
44

45 MR. GLANZ: Yes.  
46

47 MS. WESSELS: Okay. Charlie Jagow.  
48

49 MR. JAGOW: Support.  
50

1 MS. WESSELS: Support.  
2  
3 Don Woodruff.  
4  
5 MR. WOODRUFF: Support.  
6  
7 MS. WESSELS: Andy Bassich.  
8  
9 MR. BASSICH: Support.  
10  
11 MS. WESSELS: Support.  
12  
13 Charlie Wright.  
14  
15 MR. WRIGHT: Support.  
16  
17 MS. WESSELS: Support.  
18  
19 Andrew Firmin.  
20  
21 MR. FIRMIN: Yes, I support.  
22  
23 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Andrew.  
24 Support.  
25  
26 Sue Entsminger.  
27  
28 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I'm really  
29 torn on this one based on what I went through but I'm  
30 going to support it at this time.  
31  
32 MS. WESSELS: Okay, thank you, Sue.  
33  
34 Tim, are you on line. Timothy McManus.  
35  
36 MR. MCMANUS: I'm here, I don't know if  
37 you guys could hear me or not. Hello.  
38  
39 MS. WESSELS: Yes, we can. Yes, now we  
40 can. Do you support or oppose Andy's motion.  
41  
42 MR. MCMANUS: Support.  
43  
44 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. The motion  
45 passes with unanimous vote.  
46  
47 MS. OKADA: Thank you, Madame Chair and  
48 Council.  
49  
50

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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thanks Marcy  
2 and Barbara.

3  
4 Okay, next are agency reports.

5  
6 Tribal governments. Any tribal  
7 government reports.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Next is  
12 Native organizations, TCC fisheries program report.

13  
14 MR. MCKENNA: Yeah, hi, Madame Chair.  
15 This is Brian McKenna with TCC.

16  
17 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, hi,  
18 Brian. Well, I guess you got the note that we would  
19 like to keep it short.

20  
21 MR. MCKENNA: Yes, I sure did and I  
22 will do my best for that.

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
25 thank you. Go ahead.

26  
27 MR. MCKENNA: Are you ready.

28  
29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, go  
30 ahead.

31  
32 MR. MCKENNA: Okay. Yeah, good  
33 morning, Council members. Again, for the record my  
34 name is Brian McKenna, fisheries biologist with TCC.

35  
36 We provided a report of activities in  
37 your meeting booklet so I'll just do a real quick brief  
38 recap of our activities and then I'll be happy to  
39 answer any questions you might have.

40  
41 (Teleconference interference -  
42 participants not muted - guitar playing)

43  
44 MR. MCKENNA: We currently have two  
45 ongoing projects funded through OSM Fisheries Resource  
46 Monitoring Program. The first project is the Henshaw  
47 Creek Weir. This summer we did not operate the weir  
48 due to the Covid19 pandemic. We made that decision for  
49 health and safety concerns for both our Staff members

50

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1 and the members of the villages that we operate out of.  
2 We did use this summer's off season to make a bunch of  
3 repairs to the weir. At the end of the 2019 season  
4 flooding caused a lot of damage to the weir so we did  
5 fix the weir this summer and it's ready for operation  
6 next year.

7  
8 Our second FRMP project is a joint  
9 study with YRDFA and we're utilizing traditional  
10 knowledge of salmon and whitefish.....  
11

12 (Teleconference interference -  
13 participants not muted - guitar playing)  
14

15 MR. MCKENNA: .....to update the  
16 anadromous waters catalog. To do so we're using a  
17 combination of ethnographic interviews with local  
18 knowledge holders, also analysis of water samples for  
19 environmental DNA that will allow us to target specific  
20 areas throughout the Draanjik Basin that are critical  
21 spawning rearing habitats for salmon and whitefish.  
22

23 Again, because of Covid we were unable  
24 to conduct any field work this summer but we do plan to  
25 operate next field season and to conduct aerial surveys  
26 in the spring, summer and fall to identify spawning and  
27 rearing habitats for chinook, chum and coho salmon in  
28 that drainage.  
29

30 And then lastly we just started with a  
31 pilot study this summer in collaboration with UAF and  
32 we're examining the effects of wildfires on rearing  
33 chinook salmon in the Chena River. It's known that  
34 wildfires can lead to increased erosion, sedimentation  
35 and turbidity, which can negatively affect spawning and  
36 rearing habitat for salmon. So one aspect of the study  
37 is investigating the feasibility of using drone-based  
38 multi-spectral imagery as a rapid assessment tool for  
39 estimating turbidity and other fire-related effects of  
40 salmon habitat. This summer between July and September  
41 we conducted several aerial missions over a few  
42 different sites of interest in the Chena above and  
43 below the recent Nugget Creek Firestar and this winter  
44 we're going to be analyzing the multi-spectral imagery  
45 to determine if turbidity and other important  
46 characteristics of salmon habitat can be estimated from  
47 the aerial imagery.  
48

49 So that's the end of this quick recap  
50

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1 for what we've been up to this last season and kind of  
2 going into next year and I'll be happy to take any  
3 questions at this time.  
4

5 Thank you.  
6

7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,  
8 Brian. Any questions.  
9

10 (Teleconference interference -  
11 participants not muted - guitar playing)  
12

13 MR. FIRMIN: This is Andrew, I have a  
14 quick question.  
15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: It sounds  
17 like someone's playing a guitar.  
18

19 MS. WESSELS: I think someone put us on  
20 hold again.  
21

22 REPORTER: Yes, they have, or playing a  
23 tune.  
24

25 MR. FIRMIN: Somebody's tuning up.  
26

27 (Laughter)  
28

29 MR. GLANZ: You're right Andrew.  
30

31 (Laughter)  
32

33 MR. FIRMIN: Brian this is Andrew  
34 Firmin in Fort Yukon. How long is the fire study along  
35 the Chena going to be, is it one year, a couple years,  
36 or, you know, are you going to be collecting data for a  
37 few years, or do you have any preliminary data that  
38 you've put out yet that I could look for in the book.  
39

40 MR. MCKENNA: Yeah, through the Chair,  
41 thanks for the question Andrew.  
42

43 This is our first year doing the study.  
44 It was a pilot study that we just kind of came up with  
45 this summer. We don't have any data out yet but we do  
46 plan to maybe analyze the multi-spectral data this  
47 winter and I'd be happy to share that with you or I can  
48 go directly or through the Council here.  
49  
50

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1 MR. FIRMIN: Yeah, sure either way.  
2 I'd be curious to see it for my own personal thoughts  
3 more than anything.  
4

5 MR. MCKENNA: Okay.  
6

7 MR. FIRMIN: Yeah, it'd be interesting  
8 to see what you come up with. Thank you, Brian.  
9

10 MR. MCKENNA: And then Andrew, in your  
11 meeting booklet there's a little bit more information  
12 in there as well on that study so you can take a look  
13 there as well and then I can contact you as I kind of  
14 get into the data analysis this winter.  
15

16 MR. FIRMIN: Okay, sounds good, Brian.  
17 Thank you very much.  
18

19 MR. MCKENNA: Thank you.  
20

21 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
22 Katya.  
23

24 (Teleconference interference -  
25 participants not muted - guitar playing)  
26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I can't hear  
28 you.  
29

30 MS. WESSELS: I was just going to ask,  
31 Tina, is there anything we can do about it, about these  
32 music sounds?  
33

34 REPORTER: So the only thing I can do  
35 is contact the operator to see if she can cut that line  
36 out. But in order to do that it does put the meeting  
37 on hold until she answers. Sometimes they answer  
38 quickly, sometimes they never answer.  
39

40 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, you need to  
41 get rid of that, it's impossible to hear what's being  
42 said.  
43

44 REPORTER: Or I can just stop the call,  
45 restart it, and see if that gets rid of it.  
46

47 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes, please -  
48 (echoing).  
49  
50

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1 MS. WESSELS: Maybe we should all call  
2 back in.  
3  
4 MR. GLANZ: Hey, it got quiet.  
5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, yeah, now  
7 it's quiet.  
8  
9 (Laughter)  
10  
11 MS. WESSELS: I think it's still there.  
12  
13 REPORTER: Yeah, I think it's still  
14 there. And, everybody, please check your phone and  
15 make sure it's muted unless you're directly talking.  
16 Of course they can't hear us because they're playing  
17 their guitar or put us on hold.  
18  
19 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, they  
20 can't hear us.  
21  
22 MR. FIRMIN: Whoever's doing the  
23 guitar, put your phone on mute.  
24  
25 REPORTER: Really, I think it's  
26 somebody that's just not muted because I don't think  
27 that's music, I think it's like Andrew said, it's  
28 somebody tuning their guitar.  
29  
30 (Laughter)  
31  
32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I do too.  
33 Well, let's give it a minute here.  
34  
35 REPORTER: Okay, there you go, someone  
36 muted.  
37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: It sounds  
39 like it quit.  
40  
41 (Pause)  
42  
43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right. I  
44 want to ask if there's any other questions of Brian.  
45  
46 (No comments)  
47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
49 assuming we got it taken care of.  
50

1 Next is the Yukon River Drainage  
2 Fisheries Association.  
3

4 MS. FITKA: Hi, good afternoon. This  
5 is Serena Fitka with YRDFA.  
6

7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, go  
8 ahead.  
9

10 MS. FITKA: Good afternoon, Madame  
11 Chair and Council members. Thank you for the  
12 opportunity to present to the Eastern Interior Regional  
13 Advisory Council. I am pleased to represent the Yukon  
14 River Drainage Fisheries Association. My name is  
15 Serena Fitka and I am YRDFA's Executive Director.  
16

17 I'd like to begin with the Yukon River  
18 salmon pre-season management meeting, was held on May  
19 12th, 2020 via teleconference due to Covid19. We were  
20 unable to host a face to fact meeting this year. We  
21 had 116 participants join the call and it lasted for  
22 150 minutes. The main concerns that were voiced were  
23 the 2019 die-off of chum salmon and the ability to  
24 harvest fish in light of the pandemic.  
25

26 I'll move on to our Yukon River in-  
27 season salmon management teleconferences. This year we  
28 were able to extend our teleconferences by having two  
29 extra calls in May, two extended calls in September.  
30 This year we had higher than average participation  
31 along with the length of the calls. We averaged about  
32 120 minutes with 80 participants per call. The  
33 communities reported high water throughout the summer  
34 season with (indiscernible - muffled) subsistence  
35 harvest for chinook or chum salmon. Ichthyophonous was  
36 reported early on in the season by fishers and remained  
37 prevalent in the salmon throughout the fishing season.  
38

39 We were awarded additional funds to  
40 host monthly off-season teleconferences in October,  
41 November, January and February. Our first  
42 teleconference will be held next week on October 20th  
43 at 1:00 p.m., and we will be discussing the Covid  
44 relief funds (indiscernible - muffled) Cares Relief in  
45 the fisheries disaster declaration process. We will  
46 have guest speakers from Yukon Delta Fisheries  
47 Development Association, USDA and NOAA as well. Our  
48 monthly topics include a bycatch update and research  
49 presentations pertaining to the Yukon River. We will  
50



1 be utilizing the State in-season teleconference number  
2 and pin.  
3

4 A group of organizations which include  
5 Jennifer Hooper with AVCP, Stephanie Quinn-Davidson  
6 with the Yukon InterTribal Fish Commission and TCC,  
7 Jennifer Williams and Ragnor Alstrom with Yukon Delta  
8 Fisheries Development Association along with Catherine  
9 Moncrieff and myself of YRDFA have been meeting since  
10 August to discuss how we will approach the fisheries  
11 disaster requests. It was determined that YRDFA would  
12 take the lead since our organization represents all of  
13 the Alaska communities along the Yukon River. YRDFA  
14 will be partnering with the Yukon Delta Fisheries  
15 Development Association urging the Governor of Alaska  
16 to declare a fisheries disaster for the Yukon River.  
17 That letter was sent out on Friday. And a support  
18 letter and resolution was sent out to the tribal  
19 communities and offices along the Yukon River. If your  
20 tribe or city has already passed a resolution those can  
21 be emailed to Serena@yukonsalmon.org, or faxed to our  
22 number at (907)272-3142. These resolutions and support  
23 letters will be used to support our request to the  
24 Governor.  
25

26 Now I'd like to turn it over to  
27 Catherine Moncrieff to report on her projects.  
28

29 MS. MONCRIEFF: Hi, thank you. This is  
30 Catherine Moncrieff and I'm the YRDFA Staff  
31 anthropologist and I want to thank you for this  
32 opportunity to report to your Regional Advisory  
33 Council.  
34

35 I just want to add a few more things to  
36 Serena's report and give you -- just highlight the in-  
37 season subsistence salmon survey program and let you  
38 know that we have details about the program both in  
39 your books and in the supplemental report.  
40

41 But just as a highlight we were able to  
42 survey, or conduct 384 interviews this summer with 146  
43 households in 10 Yukon River communities stretching  
44 from Alakanuk to Eagle during the king salmon  
45 (indiscernible - cuts out). And some of our results,  
46 we found that many of the participating fishing  
47 families did not meet their needs this year and you can  
48 see a table on the handout about that.  
49  
50

1                   Next, I'd just like to mention another  
2 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Project, which Brian  
3 McKenna gave a really great report about, thank you,  
4 Brian. And I just want to add to his report and let  
5 you know that due to Covid19 pandemic we did request  
6 and receive an extension on this project. It was due  
7 to end March of 2021 and because we had to delay some  
8 of our activities, it now will end March of 2022.  
9

10                   And I guess I just have one -- we have  
11 a new project starting that you might be interested in  
12 funded by the North Pacific Research Board. This  
13 project is called, They Told Us There'd Come a Time, A  
14 Catalog of Elders Warnings, it's a partnership between  
15 YRDFA and the TCC Young Adult Emerging Leaders. Our  
16 research team will work together and will be trained to  
17 do archival research in the first year and ethnographic  
18 interviews in the second year. And our goal is to seek  
19 traditional ecological knowledge of conservation  
20 practices and warnings of potential declines in salmon.  
21 And in the final year we'll produce outreach products  
22 that share our results.  
23

24                   And I'd just like to turn it back over  
25 to Serena and we can take questions at the end if you  
26 have them.  
27

28                   Thank you.  
29

30                   MS. FITKA: Thank you, Catherine, for  
31 providing your update. I would just like to inform the  
32 Board of upcoming meetings. YRDFA annual board meeting  
33 will be held on December 15th and 16th through  
34 teleconference. We are requesting nominations for one  
35 alternate in the Coastal communities and Districts Y1,  
36 Y2, and Y5. We are also looking for two young fishers  
37 seats, one to represent the lower Yukon River and one  
38 to represent the upper Yukon River. Please contact me  
39 for further information.  
40

41                   The post-season meeting will be held on  
42 December 17th and will be utilizing the in-season  
43 teleconference number and code.  
44

45                   The off-season teleconference, monthly  
46 teleconferences will be held the third Tuesday of  
47 October and November, January and February at 1:00  
48 p.m., and like I said before our first monthly off-  
49 season teleconference will be next week on October 20th  
50

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1 and we'll be discussing Covid relief funds, USDA tariff  
2 relief and the fishing disaster declaration process.

3  
4 Thank you everyone for listening and we  
5 welcome any questions at this time.

6  
7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

8  
9 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair, Andy.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, go  
12 ahead.

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Yeah, thank  
15 you Serena and Catherine. I just want to -- not really  
16 a question, but just wanted to offer my gratitude and  
17 support for YRDFA. I think it's an amazing amount of  
18 really good work.

19  
20 And I just wanted to give you a head's  
21 up that earlier in our discussions today there was some  
22 discussion by our RAC members to actually increase the  
23 in-season harvest reporting of salmon on the Yukon  
24 River to a greater extent to help fill in some gaps,  
25 and so I'm hoping that you will look into that and  
26 maybe work with the Resource Fisheries Monitoring  
27 Program to seek some funding to continue to build on an  
28 already successful project. It's been identified as  
29 something that's a need on the Yukon River, and I think  
30 you're doing a great job of beginning to get a better  
31 understanding of the harvest, so just more of a head's  
32 up.

33  
34 But thank you for the work you do and I  
35 look forward to those reports in the future, Catherine.  
36 I think elder/youth is definitely the way to go to work  
37 on outreach communication and problem solving with the  
38 low abundance of salmon runs moving forward.

39  
40 Thank you, Madame Chair.

41  
42 MS. FITKA: Through the Chair. This is  
43 Serena Fitka. Thank you Andy for those comments and  
44 we'll definitely look into other funding opportunities.

45  
46 MS. MONCRIEFF: And, Madame Chair, this  
47 is Catherine.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.

50

1 MS. MONCRIEFF: I also want to thank  
2 Andy very much for those comments. And I also want to  
3 thank the whole Council and assure you that I was  
4 listening to your discussion and I appreciate your  
5 comments and we will be contemplating that and reaching  
6 out for feedback from others and do what we can to  
7 provide the support.

8  
9 Thank you.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, thank  
12 you. Any other questions.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
17 thank you, ladies.

18  
19 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair.

20  
21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, go  
22 ahead, Tim.

23  
24 MR. MCMANUS: Tim McManus.

25  
26 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.

27  
28 MR. MCMANUS: Thank you, Serena and  
29 Catherine. Just was wondering on your youth  
30 delegations. I know a little bit about this, but how  
31 many applications have you received so far and when is  
32 the deadline again, can you tell me that, and the age  
33 groups you're looking for.

34  
35 MS. FITKA: Through the Chair, this is  
36 Serena Fitka.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.

39  
40 MS. FITKA: We have received a couple  
41 inquiries from the lower Yukon River, community of  
42 Mountain Village, but we haven't received anything yet,  
43 just questions and interests at this time. We'd really  
44 like a nomination for something by the annual Board  
45 meeting so we can provide the Board with some  
46 information about the candidates.

47  
48 MR. MCMANUS: Okay, thank you. That's  
49 all.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any other  
2 Council members.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
7 not hearing any other questions. Anything.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
12 are you guys able to hear me?

13  
14 MR. WOODRUFF: I hear you.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Next  
17 on the agenda is U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2020  
18 summary of the Yukon/Wildlife Refuge projects and  
19 issues.

20  
21 MR. FOX: Madame Chair, can you hear me?

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.

24  
25 MR. FOX: Thank you. For the record  
26 this is Jimmy Fox, I'm the Refuge Manager for Yukon  
27 Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

28  
29 It's an honor to be here with you all  
30 today although regrettably we're not together in  
31 person, but I have been attending on line or on the  
32 phone here with you folks yesterday and today and I  
33 feel connected to you and appreciate all the  
34 discussions thus far.

35  
36 I'll try to keep this brief and I don't  
37 want to stand between you folks and lunch and we've got  
38 a lot to cover.

39  
40 So I think it's useful for all of us to  
41 just remember the purposes for which the Yukon Flats  
42 Refuge was established and I won't read those verbatim  
43 but essentially we have four primary purposes: to  
44 conserve fish and wildlife populations in their habitat  
45 and natural diversity; to fulfill international treaty  
46 obligations of the United States with respect to fish  
47 and wildlife and their habitat; to provide a management  
48 system with purposes set forth in ANILCA the  
49 opportunity for continued subsistence uses by local

50

1 residents and then the last; to ensure, as much as  
2 possible that we protect water quality and water  
3 quantity within the Refuge.  
4

5 As a reminder the boundary of the  
6 Refuge encompass 11 million acres and U.S. Fish and  
7 Wildlife Service manages 8.63 million acres within the  
8 boundaries so there's quite a bit of private property  
9 within the boundaries of the Refuge.

10  
11 I'll shift now to Staffing updates.

12  
13 We have had some positions remain  
14 unfilled but we do have two new Staff members. I'm  
15 tickled to share that we have an assistant Refuge  
16 Manager now, Ally Mulligan, and she is fresh out of  
17 college and she's got some great experience and  
18 knowledge. She will be a great asset to the team. And  
19 also Cody Smith, who's been on for about a year, he is  
20 the Fish and Wildlife officer. He's also serving  
21 several other Refuges, but he's been out on the Flats  
22 now a couple falls and some of you may have actually  
23 met Cody.  
24

25 We submitted a 19 page report to you  
26 folks back in August and, you know, hopefully you have  
27 time at some point to look through there if you've not  
28 already. We have a lot going on for a really small  
29 Staff of just about less than a dozen folks. I won't  
30 go through all those but there's some good work that  
31 continues despite Covid. Covid was a huge blow for all  
32 of us, not only did we have to work from home,  
33 initially, but, you know, it did shut down our field  
34 operations in a big way. Fortunately we had a couple  
35 pilots that live together and so we were able to get  
36 some aviation projects done this summer. So some of  
37 those normal annual surveys, aerial surveys continued  
38 this year despite Covid19.  
39

40 You know, obviously climate change and  
41 other environmental changes are continuing and I know  
42 that's an issue and concern for all of you folks, it is  
43 for us and then the trickle effects on subsistence  
44 uses. And I think we've been hearing about that a lot  
45 today and yesterday.  
46

47 I mentioned the Staff positions that  
48 remain unfilled and that's going to be, I think, a  
49 trend continuing into the future, that's an issue for  
50

1 us.

2  
3 Also in the report you will see  
4 reference to the Doyon Hilcorp project that was  
5 announced last December. Doyon and Hilcorp did fly  
6 over the Refuge in May and early June conducting an  
7 aerial gravel-metric survey looking for hydrocarbons,  
8 not only under Refuge lands, but also under ANCSA lands  
9 and I believe that they are moving towards some kind of  
10 on the ground exploration project and there will be  
11 more to learn about that in the days and weeks and  
12 months ahead.

13  
14 Invasives. We are increasingly alarmed  
15 about more invasives in Alaska and we are concerned  
16 about the aquatic invasive elodia issue on up, that  
17 would be a tremendous impact to the things that we all  
18 care about on the Yukon Flats and we're continuing to  
19 do work there and remain vigilant.

20  
21 I think maybe one thing that maybe  
22 doesn't show up in the report so much but it's  
23 certainly something that we're spending more and more  
24 time on is just our relationship with tribes and ANCSA  
25 corporations, and we're spending more and more time  
26 just communicating and maintaining those relationships.  
27 We've got a number of tribes and a number of different  
28 corporations that we're neighbors with and so we're  
29 spending a lot of time there and trying to do a great  
30 job.

31  
32 I think another thing that you all  
33 should know is that, you know, the government is  
34 complex and with reduction in Staffing and new computer  
35 processes, I know you all experienced some of these IT  
36 frustrations, we're experiencing those kinds of changes  
37 too so there's a lot going on to try to deliver on  
38 those purposes that I mentioned a few minutes ago.

39  
40 I want to spotlight one thing and  
41 really celebrate this and kind of leave you with a high  
42 note. We were able to negotiate with the Council of  
43 Athabascan Tribal Governments a new project within the  
44 annual funding agreement with them that I'm sure you  
45 all are familiar with. We have this two year agreement  
46 with CATG and the Council actually employs folks to do  
47 work in partnership with the Refuge Staff. We  
48 negotiated a new project that will start this winter  
49 and run through next year. And Bruce Thomas at CATG

50

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1 likes to call it the eyes in the bush program, and  
2 we're going to employ folks in Circle, Fort Yukon and  
3 Venetie to do just that, to be the eyes on the ground  
4 and they will be reporting on a number of different  
5 things. They will be looking for invasive ticks, like  
6 the winter tick that's a concern in Canada and ADF&G is  
7 certainly concerned that winter tick not show up in  
8 Alaska. We'll be looking for river break up, is river  
9 break up happening early. About snow depth. How about  
10 permafrost thaw in these three communities. And so  
11 CATG will have folks that will be monitoring a number  
12 of different things and reporting those things through  
13 the Indigenous Sentinels Network. And it's an online  
14 monitoring site for Alaska and particularly for rural  
15 communities and that project with CATG is actually a  
16 partnership with Indigenous Sentinels Network, the  
17 Northwest Boreal Partnership and a number of different  
18 Federal and State agencies. We're really excited about  
19 that and where that's going to go and I think it's  
20 going to be a model for other Refuges in Alaska.

21

22 And that ends my report, thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any  
25 questions.

26

27 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, Tim  
28 McManus.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, Tim, go  
31 ahead.

32

33 MR. MCMANUS: Yeah, you mentioned  
34 something that I was really wondering about for awhile  
35 now, is that winter tick in Canada and it possibly even  
36 Alaska. Is there any kind of research that's being  
37 done right now or just in the beginning stages of it,  
38 or anything about that.

39

40 That's my question, thank you.

41

42 MR. FOX: Through the Chair. I'm not  
43 aware of research that is being done. I think there's  
44 certainly concern that it's moving northward, the tick  
45 species is moving northward and westward and so  
46 monitoring, looking for the tick seems to be, you know,  
47 the focus of different folks that are concerned and  
48 aware. And Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the  
49 University of Alaska-Anchorage partnered up and they've

50



1 mounted a pretty aggressive public outreach campaign  
2 last year. Some of you may have seen posters about  
3 reporting ticks that you find. It's -- yeah, so I  
4 don't know if there's any particular research but I  
5 wouldn't be surprised -- I'm probably the wrong person  
6 to ask but I will find out and circle back and get back  
7 with you on that.

8  
9 MR. MCMANUS: Yeah, thank you. One  
10 more question, what animals are they looking at, every  
11 one of them, all the winter animals or all the  
12 furbearers, what animals are they targeting, do you  
13 know anything?

14  
15 MR. FOX: Through the Chair. Yeah,  
16 that's a great question. And the Eyes in the Bush  
17 program with the Council of Athabascan Tribal  
18 Governments, will have folks that will be asking to  
19 inspect harvested moose. But I think that overall, the  
20 concern -- we have six -- if I understand we have six  
21 Native tick species in Alaska and we have seven non-  
22 Native tick species in Alaska so far that have been  
23 documented. And so I think those non-Native ticks are  
24 coming in on domestic pets and so the agencies are  
25 asking people to monitor their pets, look for ticks,  
26 but also wild birds can transport ticks. Of course  
27 they migrate and can bring new ticks in. But the  
28 winter tick, in particular, we'll definitely want to be  
29 looking at moose and trying to see if they have the  
30 winter tick. And there is a pre-collection program  
31 that the University of Alaska-Anchorage is running and,  
32 you know, if a community wants to submit samples of  
33 ticks they find on moose to the University they will  
34 gladly accept those samples.

35  
36 MR. MCMANUS: Okay, thank you.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Are there any  
39 other questions.

40  
41 (No comments)

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I want  
44 to thank you Jimmy. Is that it from your Refuge?

45  
46 MR. FOX: Yes, Madame Chair, thank you.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right.  
49 Thank you very much.

50

1 Okay, next is the Arctic National  
2 Wildlife Refuge summary.

3  
4 MR. HAWKALUK: Yeah, good morning or  
5 what's left of the morning, Madame Chair, members of  
6 the Council. For the record this is Nathan Hawkaluk,  
7 Deputy Refuge Manager for the Arctic National Wildlife  
8 Refuge.  
9

10 I will just really quickly and briefly  
11 hit a few highlights within our summary of activities  
12 report, which should be in the meeting materials and  
13 then I'll just field any questions that there might be.  
14

15 To start off with, you know, one of the  
16 highlights, it does use up a lot of our time at the  
17 Refuge and that's the relatively new oil and gas  
18 leasing program. As many of you have probably heard,  
19 the leasing EIS was -- the record of decision was  
20 signed about two months ago and the selected  
21 alternative was Alternative B, which opens the entire  
22 Coastal Plain within Arctic Refuge to oil and gas  
23 leasing. Outside of that we haven't heard much more  
24 relative to that part of the Refuge and the leasing  
25 program. A little bit of talk and discussion about  
26 possible seismic this winter but a lot to be determined  
27 there still.  
28

29 As with most agencies and  
30 organizations, the pandemic slowed our field projects  
31 down quite a bit. We did have a lot of field projects  
32 and research planned through the Coastal Plain this  
33 year. 19 individual research projects were planned, 16  
34 of those were completely cancelled and three others  
35 were greatly reduced in their scope and scale.  
36

37 Moving on, a couple of the inventory  
38 and monitoring projects that might be of interest to  
39 the Eastern Interior RAC, this is from back last year,  
40 2019, our Refuge biologists and pilots were able to  
41 complete the western portion of the Refuge dall sheep  
42 survey. That data is still being analyzed with some  
43 cooperators but hopefully we'll have data soon to share  
44 with the Regional Advisory Council.  
45

46 Even more importantly, I feel, for this  
47 RAC, would be -- I know we field questions about this  
48 quite a bit, like, we were able to get a survey done  
49 this August on the Arctic Village Sheep Management  
50

1 Area. Our pilot and biologist spent several days in  
2 that area. Again, there's some more composition data  
3 that needs to be analyzed, but just sheer numbers, we  
4 had a count of 279 sheep within that Arctic Village  
5 Sheep Management Area. And previously it had been  
6 surveyed in 2012 and there was a reduc -- you know,  
7 documented 309 during that 2012 count, so a bit of a  
8 reduction in overall numbers. But I wanted to be  
9 cautious with those numbers since there's still some  
10 analysis to be done with that. But we do want to get  
11 that information in front of the Regional Advisory  
12 Council.

13  
14 And just a couple other highlights  
15 before the noon hour and then I can field questions.  
16

17 The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was  
18 successful in promulgating a regulation restricting the  
19 use of certain domestic pack animals on the Refuge. So  
20 domestic pack animals are sheep, goats and cameliods,  
21 such as llamas or alpacas, and this was to mitigate  
22 disease transmission to wild ungulates, primarily dall  
23 sheep and this was a directive from our 2015 revised  
24 CCP, which we were finally able to get into regulation  
25 this past year. I believe it went into effect in late  
26 August.

27  
28 And finally 2020 does mark the 60th  
29 anniversary of the establishment of the Arctic National  
30 Wildlife Refuge. This was intended to be noteworthy  
31 for our Refuge and we were hoping to do some public  
32 outreach and environmental education around that  
33 anniversary. Unfortunately as we've already mentioned,  
34 like many things, the pandemic slowed that down. We  
35 still hope to have some event and recognition for it  
36 albeit in the next year, but still recognizing that the  
37 Refuge has been established 60 years ago.

38  
39 And with that, I'll go ahead and close  
40 down my comments and field any questions if there are  
41 any from the Council.

42  
43 Thank you.

44  
45 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,  
46 Nathan. Council members, any questions.

47  
48 (No comments)

49  
50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I'm not  
2 hearing any questions, so -- Nathan.

3  
4 MR. HAWKALUK: Yes.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
7 thank you.

8  
9 MR. HAWKALUK: Thank you.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Next is the  
12 2020 Yukon River salmon season summary.

13  
14 MR. MASCHMANN: Madame Chair, this is  
15 Gerald Maschmann with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
16 Service.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Hi, Gerald.

19  
20 MR. MASCHMANN: I didn't know if you --  
21 there could be a lot of discussion on this topic, I  
22 don't know if you wanted to go to lunch first or for me  
23 to just go ahead and do it.

24  
25 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I'm going to  
26 ask the Council members because two of them have to  
27 leave at 1:00. So Council members, would you like to  
28 continue and hopefully we will be done at 1:00.

29  
30 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes.

31  
32 MR. GLANZ: Yes.

33  
34 MR. BASSICH: Yes.

35  
36 MR. MCMANUS: Yes.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I'm hearing  
39 yes so let's continue.

40  
41 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay, Madame Chair, I  
42 heard -- unfortunately I was listening to Western  
43 Interior yesterday so I didn't quite hear your Council  
44 concerns but I was listening this morning and I heard  
45 some things so I think that your Council Coordinator  
46 may have sent you the 2020 preliminary Yukon River  
47 summer season summary by the Alaska Department of Fish  
48 and Game. This is a pretty thorough summary of the  
49 season, I won't read it obviously, but I will give you  
50

1 some highlights and then I'll transition to the fall  
2 season.

3  
4 Yeah, it was a tough season this year.  
5 We started out thinking we'd have a run size of 144,000  
6 to 220,000 chinook salmon which is slightly smaller  
7 than 2019. We had a summer chum outlook for an average  
8 run of about 1.9 million fish. We formulated  
9 management strategies that were fairly similar to what  
10 we've been doing in previous years and we got fishermen  
11 input at YRDFA's pre-season management meeting on these  
12 strategies. You know, the main strategy was that we'd  
13 start the season out restricting to six inch or smaller  
14 mesh gillnet early in the season and then additional  
15 restrictions or relaxations would be based on the in-  
16 season assessment.

17  
18 We started the season out doing just  
19 that. We restricted the lower Yukon to six inch or  
20 smaller mesh gillnets on a half window schedule. We  
21 even restricted the southern Coastal district to six  
22 inch or smaller mesh gillnets. If you have that  
23 document, Page 5, Table 2 summarizes the subsistence  
24 salmon fishing restrictions for the summer season. As  
25 the season progressed it appeared that both the chinook  
26 run and summer chum runs were coming in weak and late  
27 with chinook salmon run coming in below the low end of  
28 that pre-season projection. The subsistence salmon  
29 fishing period was cancelled in Districts 1, 2 and 3,  
30 and then it was returned to a half windowed schedule  
31 using selective gear only. In late late June we  
32 offered a couple of selective commercial fishing gear  
33 opportunities but harvests were small and then kind of  
34 immediately after those couple of openings we realized  
35 that the summer chum run was coming in weak and so  
36 there was really no additional commercial opportunities  
37 after that in the lower Yukon. By early July, chinook  
38 salmon projections were improving and indicating a run  
39 above the low end of the projection, subsistence salmon  
40 fishing in the lower river was relaxed back to six inch  
41 or smaller mesh gillnets to a half windowed schedule  
42 and, again, that would be two 18 hour periods per week,  
43 and then further into kind of the first of July it was  
44 relaxed further to 7.5 inch or smaller mesh gillnets  
45 for the full regulatory windowed schedule. District 4  
46 saw similar restrictions with subsistence fishing being  
47 restricted to six inch one a half windowed schedule.  
48 And then back to six inch -- I'm sorry, the two periods  
49 were cancelled in District 4 and then it went back to  
50

1 two six inch or smaller mesh gillnet on a half windowed  
2 schedule, and then subsistence fishing was returned to  
3 7.5 inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear around mid-July,  
4 at first on a half schedule and then back to the normal  
5 regulatory schedule. 5A, B and C, it was closed early  
6 in the season and reopened on six inch or smaller mesh  
7 gillnet gear on a half windowed schedule. The period  
8 was pulled in mid-July and subsistence for -- or the  
9 subdistricts returned to the half windowed schedule  
10 with six inch or smaller mesh gillnets for two weeks.  
11 And in late July fishing was closed for all gear  
12 including the four inch or less mesh gillnets for the  
13 rest of the summer season. Subdistricts 5D was closed  
14 early in the season and that was until further notice  
15 and was placed back on a half windowed schedule with  
16 six inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear until late July.  
17 From late July through mid-August all fishing was  
18 closed including the opportunity for four inch or  
19 smaller gillnet gear for non-salmon species, and I can  
20 talk a little more detail on that.

21  
22 So in -- I kind of heard some things in  
23 your discussion earlier that, you know, the four inch  
24 mesh gillnet gear was restricted in 5D, when 5B was  
25 closed June 23rd until further notice four inch was  
26 also closed and that was to protect the chinook salmon  
27 that would happen through 5D. Effective June 27th that  
28 four inch restriction was reinstated. So four inch was  
29 allowed after that. There was some stipulations that  
30 we asked fishermen to fish that from shore, and that  
31 their four inch mesh gillnet gear be 60 feet or less in  
32 length. And that was, again, we were asking fishermen  
33 to target non-salmon. Effective July 3rd in 5D -- 5D  
34 was placed on a schedule of one 84 hour period per week  
35 with six inch or less mesh gillnet gear. One of those  
36 periods was restricted further to, I believe 48 hour  
37 period. Again, that was to attempt to kind of get a  
38 few more fish past 5D, past the sonar. There was some,  
39 if I recall Andrew -- I believe Andrew Firmin was on  
40 the teleconference when we talked with fishermen about  
41 that.

42  
43 Yeah, it was a tough season. You know  
44 we saw Pilot Station was fully operational this year.  
45 We had an estimated passage pass the sonar of 162,000  
46 fish. Summer chum, you know, in 2019 summer chum were  
47 pretty late too but then they came back like  
48 gangbusters and we had a pretty decent summer chum run  
49 last year but this year they didn't materialize and it  
50

1 kind of looked like maybe the age four class was not  
2 very good. And only 100 -- or 691,000 fish passed the  
3 sonar and that was the third lowest summer chum run  
4 that we've seen since 1995. It was still above the  
5 lower end of the drainage-wide escapement goal of  
6 500,000.

7  
8 Eagle Sonar was fully operational this  
9 year. Unfortunately only 31,200 chinook salmon passed  
10 the sonar this season and that was well below our  
11 Canadian obligations. And it was below what we were  
12 expecting based on the Pilot Station sonar. Again,  
13 like 2019, we thought we had more fish going past the  
14 lower Yukon and they just didn't materialize, you know,  
15 up in Eagle. There were reports -- you know, in 2019  
16 we had a lot of reports of hot water and maybe  
17 mortality due to that hot water, again, we're still not  
18 sure what happened. This year we had reports of  
19 ichthyophonus infection in subdistricts 5A, B and C,  
20 and we had a lot of high water this year in the  
21 mainstem Yukon and perhaps that also contributed to  
22 mortality. And, again, as I mentioned, the proportion  
23 of age four summer chum coming in the lower Yukon was  
24 the lowest since sampling began in 1964, so something  
25 happened to that age four class for summer chum.

26  
27 Now, that's the summer season.

28  
29 The fall season, again, we had a pre-  
30 season projection in the spring of 800 to a million  
31 fish but we have that performance relationship between  
32 the summer chum and fall chum and because of that poor  
33 performance of the summer chum, our fall chum  
34 projection was revised to less than 450,000 fish and  
35 our coho run, we were expecting to be around average.  
36 You know a run of 450,000 fall chum necessitated  
37 starting the season on a regulatory windows schedule  
38 starting in the lower Yukon and a run of that size also  
39 meant there would be no potential commercial fishing  
40 openings. So there were no commercial fishing openings  
41 for fall chum in the lower Yukon this year, or at any  
42 point on the Yukon.

43  
44 As the fall chum run reached its  
45 typical midpoint in the lower Yukon it became clear  
46 based on assessment information that this year's fall  
47 chum salmon run was coming in below the threshold to  
48 allow any salmon fishing, including subsistence salmon  
49 fishing. Subsistence fishing for fall chum salmon was  
50

1 closed throughout most of the drainage for the rest of  
2 the season and depending on the fishermen's area and  
3 what district, subsistence fishermen had various  
4 options to fish for other species using selective gear  
5 and four inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear.  
6

7 So the final passage of fall chum --  
8 for fall season chum salmon past the Pilot Station  
9 sonar was 262,000 fish. Based on genetic analysis  
10 approximately 189,000 of those would be considered fall  
11 chum salmon. This was well under the 300 to 600,000  
12 fall chum necessary to meet the drainage-wide  
13 escapement goal. This is the lowest estimated passage  
14 on record for fall chum.  
15

16 Coho salmon ended, you know, somewhat  
17 below average past the sonar of 108,000 fish.  
18

19 The Eagle sonar, approximately 21,000  
20 fall chum salmon passed the Eagle sonar this year so  
21 that's well below our interim management escapement  
22 goal for Canadian origin fall chum which is 70 to  
23 104,000 fish.  
24

25 So it was -- yeah, it was a miserable  
26 year for fall chum, miserable year for the entire  
27 season, really summer and fall, but, yeah, fall chum  
28 were really miserable.  
29

30 You know we're still assessing fall  
31 chum escapement at the Fishing Branch weir in Canada  
32 and we're still working -- the Department's still doing  
33 some aerial, foot and boat surveys for fall chum and  
34 coho on their spawning grounds. And similar to the  
35 summer chum, age four fall chum were well below  
36 average. Chum runs were down across the AYK region,  
37 Kuskokwim and Norton Sound chum stocks also saw a lower  
38 than expected age four. I expect there'll be further  
39 discussion this winter concerning the causes of this  
40 and how the -- what the age four -- missing age four  
41 class might be expected, with missing age five class  
42 for next year. So that's going to be a topic of  
43 discussion this winter.  
44

45 I was -- it was good to hear Andrew  
46 Firmin talking about -- or the Council talking about  
47 having an assessment project in 5A, B and C. He  
48 mentioned Stan Zuray's project not getting funding. I  
49 think Stan got tired of running the project or retired  
50



1 from running the project, I can't speak for him, but I  
2 think he was just kind of done running it. He still  
3 does report as a subsistence fishermen, his catches,  
4 and still does some ichthyophonus monitoring, but not  
5 in an official manner. I do think that InterTribal  
6 Fish Commission is maybe making some moves to try and  
7 get a project going in that area because it is a  
8 missing black box, it's a missing area for us as  
9 managers, we would like to see something in that area.

10  
11 And I'm glad to see that you guys  
12 support the YRDFA in-season interviews. I will say  
13 that they do not collect harvest estimates, it's more  
14 of a qualitative type of interview. It's getting folks  
15 involved, it's an outreach project for us, it gets  
16 involved in each village to, you know, see how they're  
17 doing, you know, some people don't want to go on the  
18 YRDFA teleconference and report what they're seeing so  
19 they have someone in their village to kind of go to and  
20 make that report for them. So it's really a  
21 qualitative estimate, it allows us an idea to see what  
22 fishermen are doing and what they're seeing and what  
23 they're having problems with. So -- but we're glad  
24 that you support that project and if we can get it  
25 expanded to more villages that would be good.

26  
27  
28 As far as the four inch that, you know,  
29 5D was closed to four inch mesh, that's not true. Four  
30 inch mesh was reinstated in for the fall season. So if  
31 folks in upper 5D thought they couldn't fish with four  
32 inch mesh, I need to figure out how we're communicating  
33 because it seems like we sent news releases and we sent  
34 news releases to the radio stations and these news  
35 releases are forwarded to tribal entities and to anyone  
36 who wants to subscribe to the news releases as well as  
37 on Facebook. So if folks in upper 5D thought they  
38 couldn't fish with four inch all season, that's a  
39 concern I have, yeah, something needs to be better  
40 communicated.

41  
42 So that's my report and I'll take  
43 questions if you have them.

44  
45 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any  
46 questions.

47  
48 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
2 Andy.  
3

4 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, Gerald, in the  
5 management of king salmon later in the season most of  
6 the years you open up to 7.5 mesh below Tanana late in  
7 the season to allow chinook opportunity. This year we  
8 knew there was very little chinook and the abundance of  
9 chum, which normally causes you to open 7.5 inch mesh  
10 to avoid chum salmon was in place, there were very few  
11 chums. So I don't understand the logic of why, given  
12 all the discussion on quality of escapement into  
13 Canada, the Department would open up 7.5 inch mesh to  
14 people in the middle -- lower and middle river when  
15 we're trying to get better quality of escapement and  
16 some chum runs are so poor that that's not an issue  
17 with people catching too many fall chum. We're trying  
18 to reduce harvest on king salmon on a low year but yet  
19 you opened it up to 7.5 inch mesh.  
20

21 I don't understand the logic.  
22

23 Can you talk about that a little bit.  
24

25 MR. MASCHMANN: Thanks Andy. Through  
26 the Chair. Yeah, this is Gerald Maschmann.  
27

28 So, you know, we have that assessment  
29 project in the lower Yukon, Pilot Station and the  
30 genetics and we did not open the lower Yukon until --  
31 to 7.5 inch mesh, in District 1 was July 7th and  
32 Districts 2 and 3 was July 5th, again, those were --  
33 that was on the windows schedule, at that time, you  
34 know, we thought we were above the low end of the pre-  
35 season projection. That's what Pilot was telling us.  
36 The Pilot Station genetics was telling us that we  
37 actually had pretty good return of Canadian origin  
38 chinook. Additionally, you know, that late in the  
39 season in the lower Yukon it tends to be more heavily  
40 Alaskan stocks that they're fishing on. So as we -- as  
41 the run moved up river, most fishermen kind of in the  
42 middle and in -- particularly, you know, District 5A, B  
43 and C were reporting that maybe their harvests weren't  
44 as good and so we kind of scratched our heads and we  
45 thought, well, it's been high water, a lot of debris,  
46 you know, maybe they're just not having as good of  
47 fishing, and then Stan Zuray was reporting catches of  
48 chinook in his wheel that had high -- like really high  
49 ichthyophonous and so by the time, you know, fish gets  
50

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1 to 5D and the Eagle sonar we just did not have the  
2 number of fish that we thought we should be having. So  
3 unfortunately 5D, you know, did not have the  
4 opportunity to fish with 7.5 like, you know, the folks  
5 in the lower and middle, you know, got to fish with 7.5  
6 inch on the tail end, which, again, it's tended to be  
7 more Alaskan stocks than Canadian stocks, but there's a  
8 few. I'm not sure how well they did, that remains to  
9 be seen. You know, some folks who fished hard did okay  
10 and other folks didn't.  
11

12 So, you know, the rationale was is in  
13 the lower Yukon, we just thought we were doing better  
14 with chinook than we ended up doing when we got up to  
15 5D.  
16

17 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair, Andy again.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.  
20

21 MR. BASSICH: Just to clarify it, I  
22 believe that the Department is not planning on opening  
23 the upper 5D chinook fisheries to 7.5 inch ever to try  
24 and protect Canadian bound quality -- for quality  
25 escapement so the point that I'm making is, with all of  
26 the discussions we've had for over 10 years, almost 20  
27 years on quality of escapement, on a year like this it  
28 behooves me to understand why we would even open up 7.5  
29 inch mesh to anyone on the Yukon River. And I heard  
30 your comments, I understand your rationale, but I am  
31 that vehemently opposed to that especially on years  
32 with low chum and chinook salmon abundance.  
33

34 So, you know, we've got to start doing  
35 something to get the Canadian component of the run back  
36 up to the historic levels if we want to rebuild this  
37 run. That is quite obvious.  
38

39 And I will reiterate that the quality  
40 of the run that I saw in the very few fish that I  
41 caught was extremely poor, soft, small, not very good  
42 looking fish, a lot of sores on them.  
43

44 And then the final statement I'd like  
45 to make is I'm a little bit tired of hearing all of the  
46 numbers not reaching the border because of  
47 ichthyophonous or hot water or high water, we've got to  
48 start looking at what's the harvest, reported and  
49 unreported, and if we can't figure that out then we  
50

1 have real serious problems with our management. There  
2 is harvest taking place that is not reported or not  
3 captured in the subsistence surveys and until we get a  
4 handle on that we will continue to have this problem  
5 indefinitely.  
6

7 That's all I've got to say.  
8

9 I'm a little irritated that people  
10 won't just look at what are the potentials that's  
11 causing it.  
12

13 MR. MASCHMANN: Madame Chair, this is  
14 Gerald.  
15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yep, go  
17 ahead.  
18

19 MR. MASCHMANN: Yes, thank you, Andy.  
20 And I know it is frustrating. You know as managers we  
21 don't have any guidance on, you know, quality of  
22 escapement's important and people are talking about it  
23 more, you know, right now we're managing based on  
24 abundance. We don't have any guidance on what folks  
25 want to see as far as quality, does that mean, you  
26 know, number of females across the border, does that  
27 mean number of big females, does it mean, you know,  
28 numbers of a certain size, so I think quality of  
29 escapement has been a topic that you've definitely  
30 brought up and others have brought up and I think  
31 that's probably where things are moving, and I'm sorry  
32 it's been slow but at this point regulatory-wise, our  
33 hands are tied to being managing based on abundance  
34 until someone can say we need you to base on, this is  
35 the score, you know, this is where the touchdown is,  
36 the score, or the line that we need to move.  
37

38 So I think we're moving that direction  
39 and I know it's frustrating but right now that's where  
40 we're -- we're managing based on abundance so until  
41 that changes or until people tell us what to manage by  
42 that's -- that's what we're limited to.  
43

44 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any other  
45 questions.  
46

47 MR. WOODRUFF: I've got a question,  
48 this is Don.  
49  
50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
2 Don.  
3

4 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, Gerald, I saved my  
5 emails from this summer and previous summers, and the  
6 Department is not stating that we can use four inch,  
7 three inch, they say that fishing is closed. So I was  
8 up on the Kandik and I put my net in whether it's  
9 closed or not and I got some pike and suckers and threw  
10 the stickleback back in the river. So it's almost  
11 inhumane not to allow people to use a three or four  
12 inch mesh net to put a pike or a sucker or a whitefish  
13 in their fry pan. And I don't know how you can change  
14 that but it was not in a lot of -- in the emails that  
15 we could use four inch mesh.  
16

17 MR. MASCHMANN: Okay, thanks, Don. It  
18 sounds like we need to maybe be -- we need to look into  
19 how we communicate. I can -- I can go over the news  
20 releases and the numbers of the news releases that I  
21 have, or I can maybe summarize them and send them to  
22 you, but, yeah, fall news release No. 9 on August 11th  
23 announces for a 5D, lower and middle, and news release  
24 -- fall news release No. 15 on August 19th was 5D  
25 upper; for summer season, it was summer season No. 10  
26 was when we closed the four inch during closures and  
27 No. 16 on June 26th the four inch was reinstated. And  
28 summer news release No. 20 on June 29th was when we  
29 announced the four -- or the one 84 hour period per  
30 week.  
31

32 And so it sounds like what you're  
33 telling me is we need to be more communicative up  
34 there.  
35

36 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, and I know the  
37 squeaky wheel gets the grease but I'm not going to get  
38 on the phone and call you and cry about not getting  
39 some fish but it just seems unconscionable that you say  
40 the fisheries is closed and that we can't fish in a  
41 slough where a salmon never swims and never would swim  
42 because it's all muddy bottom and they're out in the  
43 gravel.  
44

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

48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, go  
49 ahead.  
50

1 MR. MASCHMANN: Jeff, are you on --  
2 Jeff Estensen.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MR. MASCHMANN: I don't recall if  
7 tributaries were closed -- I'm sorry, not Jeff, Deena.

8  
9 MS. JALLEN: Oh, hi Gerald, yeah, this  
10 is -- I'm here, and also Jeff Estensen is also here.  
11 I'd have to look at the specific news releases, but  
12 yeah the 5D upper reopened for four inch or smaller  
13 mesh gillnet on August 19th and it was open for the  
14 rest -- you know it's open now for four inch or smaller  
15 mesh gillnet.

16  
17 When we did close -- when we reopened  
18 the opportunity for four inch gillnets, we did ask  
19 people to put those nets where they wouldn't intercept  
20 salmon. We only institute that closure when we're  
21 really trying to protect -- you know, in the case of  
22 summer season, we're really trying to protect any king  
23 salmon migrating through the mainstem river. And so  
24 when we did reel out four inch gillnets, we asked  
25 people to set that net in sloughs and side channels  
26 where they wouldn't intercept salmon and then, yeah, of  
27 course, when it was reopened on August 19th in the fall  
28 season, people could set four inch gillnets, you know,  
29 wherever they wanted, but we did ask people to avoid  
30 catching fall chum salmon to protect that species.

31  
32 MR. ESTENSEN: And, Madame Chair and  
33 Mr. -- members of the Council, this is Jeff Estensen  
34 and can I just add to that, please.

35  
36 The full intent of using the four inch  
37 mesh or less or continuing to allow it in the fall  
38 season was put -- you know, a decision that had some  
39 push back on it because of the fact that there could  
40 have been some fall chum that would have been harvested  
41 incidentally or people abusing that.

42  
43 The main reason and the only reason for  
44 allowing that even with that push back was to allow  
45 some opportunity for folks in your neck of the Yukon to  
46 be able to harvest those non-salmon species. And,  
47 again, we encourage folks to not abuse it or try to  
48 fish in places -- or spots that you know that would not  
49 be any fall chum being captured.

50

1 I am, like Gerald, greatly concerned  
2 that any individual member of the public was not aware  
3 of this. And I kind of echo what Gerald just said is  
4 that we're going to have to work a little bit harder to  
5 get the word out. And I apologize if you did not get  
6 the word, but it was open and it was open for that  
7 specific reason, was to let folks be able to harvest at  
8 least something in light of all the, basically the  
9 salmon closures or the lack of no salmon fishing at all  
10 in subdistrict 5D, the upper, for the entire season.  
11

12 So I just wanted to add that, thank  
13 you.  
14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any other  
16 Council questions.  
17

18 MR. JAGOW: Yeah, this is Charlie, I've  
19 got one quick question.  
20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, Charlie,  
22 go ahead.  
23

24 MR. JAGOW: Do you have any numbers on  
25 the escapement on the Salmon Branch, the Porcupine?  
26

27 MR. MASCHMANN: This is Gerald with  
28 Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fishing Branch is  
29 pretty low. I don't have the numbers right in front of  
30 me, I can pull them up unless Jeff has them at his  
31 fingertips better. The Porcupine River sonar out of  
32 Old Crow was not operated this year due to Covid but  
33 the Fishing Branch weir was operated. I can pull it up  
34 here. It's about 5,000 fish which is well below the  
35 historical median of it looks like 28,000, 26,000 so,  
36 yeah, Porcupine chum did not do well either.  
37

38 MR. JAGOW: Thank you.  
39

40 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, I got one  
41 more question for Gerald.  
42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.  
44

45 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you. Gerald, do  
46 you feel like there's some kind of systemic distrust of  
47 the fishermen that they would try to abuse their four  
48 inch or three inch mesh, you know, we never had a -- I  
49 don't care if you want to say three inch mesh, I mean  
50

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1 that's going to reduce any kind of chinook harvest, or  
2 most of the chum harvest, so you don't necessarily  
3 distrust us as fishermen, you just think that people  
4 should be reminded not to abuse the fishery?

5  
6 MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, Madame Chair,  
7 this is Gerald. Thanks, Don, I think as managers we've  
8 been pretty happy with fishermen. Folks on the Yukon  
9 don't seem to abuse it. But we do -- you know, we get  
10 comments a lot that fishermen want to be informed and  
11 so we try and be informative on the news release and we  
12 try and provide these reminders so, you know, someone  
13 doesn't maybe accidentally abuse it or think that that  
14 they can, you know, fish for salmon with the four inch  
15 mesh if it's not on the news release.

16  
17 So, you know, Yukon fishermen,  
18 particularly the, you know, the past 10 or 15 years  
19 have been -- we've tried to be more informative, we've  
20 tried to communicate better, and we've noticed when  
21 fishermen are involved and feel like they can  
22 communicate with the managers and the managers can  
23 communicate with the fishermen that, you know, for the  
24 most part fishermen on the Yukon are complying, you  
25 know, reluctantly, they don't like it but they comply  
26 and they seem to understand the reason for restrictions  
27 and, you know, the four inch closure in upper 5D, I  
28 think was probably five or six days the entire season.  
29 So, you know, it was closed for five or six days and  
30 that was strictly, you know, for -- to protect those  
31 chinook salmon that were passing through at that time.

32  
33 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Gerald.

34  
35 MR. MASCHMANN: And like Jeff said --  
36 like Jeff said, you know, there are other people on the  
37 river who don't even think four inch should be allowed.  
38 So there's pressures, you know, from both sides, some  
39 people want bigger mesh and there's other people on the  
40 Yukon who think any mesh is -- should not be allowed.

41  
42 That's all I have, thank you.

43  
44 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Gerald.

45  
46 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Are there any  
47 other questions.

48  
49 (No comments)

50



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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
2 hearing no more questions so.....

3  
4 MR. FIRMIN: This is Andrew, I got  
5 something I got to get off my shoulders, I guess.

6  
7 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, go for  
8 it.

9  
10 MR. FIRMIN: I know it's kind of  
11 detrimental to, you know, biologically the salmon run,  
12 how it's turned out this year, it's unfortunate for  
13 everybody, but if this is going to be the new norm,  
14 then perhaps -- I know Andy kind of hit on it earlier,  
15 is that perhaps we need to go to some type of  
16 allocation process, maybe -- Andy kind of sparked the  
17 lightbulb in my head earlier that if we're back to oops  
18 management, and oops, sorry, you guys don't get any  
19 fish but only the lower river does, I mean I hate to  
20 pit us back and forth against each other, but maybe  
21 that's when the Federal manager needs to step up and  
22 say, well, this amount of fish is going to go to the  
23 Federal people, the Federally-qualified users in  
24 Federal waters. And I mean if the State, last year,  
25 opened a brand new driftnet fishery that caters mostly  
26 to urban folks in Fairbanks, then probably their  
27 subsistence harvest isn't really -- isn't brought up or  
28 even marked, you know, down in District 4, and 5, where  
29 you have the influx of folks from Fairbanks going over  
30 jumping off the bridge there and going down river to  
31 fish, and the biggest reasoning behind opening that  
32 fishery was because of overcrowding in other areas and  
33 because so many people were doing it illegally that  
34 they just made honest fishermen out of them. So I  
35 don't (indiscernible - cuts out) in other areas. And  
36 now you've got an influx of people who are fishing  
37 there, that, from my understanding a lot of them are  
38 from Fairbanks. And are those people's harvests in  
39 your subsistence harvest surveys, I don't know how you  
40 guys keep track of them if they're going that far and  
41 they're not needing a permit. And that's just  
42 something, another idea that I wanted to throw out  
43 there, was, maybe that's the way we need to do it is to  
44 allocate fish for certain areas, if this is the way  
45 it's going to turn out. I mean that's what ANILCA was  
46 created for, or part of the reason, was to give us  
47 equal, you know, give us an equal shot at things.

48  
49 I think a lot of the miscommunication,  
50

1 some of the summer -- at least in the Fort Yukon area  
2 is -- with the mesh sizes, is a lot of buildings were  
3 closed to the public over the summer, and with people  
4 being quarantined and being out in the villages and out  
5 in the rivers, they're not phone accessible so they  
6 were more dependent on the radio station to get their  
7 information. Like a lot of the public buildings were  
8 closed, you couldn't walk into them, you had to call  
9 in, or they were just closed period, so you couldn't  
10 walk into the building and look at the billboard like a  
11 lot of people do at the various, you know, post office  
12 and store and stuff. However, I don't know the  
13 solution to that but, you know, maybe if push -- I  
14 don't know there's got to be better ways. I know the  
15 radio station here has its own set hours, maybe they  
16 need to, you know, work with them on when they can  
17 announce their PSA's besides in the morning and  
18 afternoon, maybe they need to do them at night or  
19 something.

20  
21 But those are just some thoughts I had  
22 but other than that I know it was a bum run this year,  
23 it wasn't -- nothing anybody could really predict, I  
24 guess, other than we've been -- like Andy said, we've  
25 been trying to be conservative for how many years and  
26 it seems like we kind of did away with some rules and  
27 regulations in the last few years and now it's just  
28 like we're back to square one when I first started on  
29 this process on the RAC 10 years ago, it seems like  
30 we've just come full circle. I just really hope that  
31 we can put our heads together this winter and come up  
32 with a better way to get it. I know harvest -- harvest  
33 isn't the answer, but equal and fair harvest is  
34 something that needs to be considered because it's just  
35 lame that I got three fish given to me this summer and  
36 we weren't able to fish the majority of the summer, and  
37 here I go down -- you go down river and people are  
38 selling fish all day long.

39  
40 I mean I hate to pit that up river,  
41 down river against it again, but it's hard for me to  
42 sit here and watch that stuff. To go see fish for sale  
43 on the lower end of the river when I got three  
44 camouflaged fish that were, like Andy said, poor  
45 quality, I mean that's life I guess but it's not  
46 something I'm happy about and I know I'm not the only  
47 person that probably feels that way in the region. And  
48 if I'm representing our region then that's why I'm  
49 putting it out there. I mean I know some people that

50

1 did get out there and fish with multiple gear, and  
2 tried hard, and they did manage to bring home some  
3 fish, but other people, you know, one case of jarred  
4 fish is all I got but there's cases for sale on  
5 Facebook, so go figure.  
6

7 Thank you, Madame Chair.  
8

9 MR. WOODRUFF: Madame Chair, this is  
10 Don Woodruff. I.....  
11

12 MS. JALLEN: Madame Chair, I --  
13 sorry.....  
14

15 MR. WOODRUFF: .....I'd like.....  
16

17 MS. JALLEN: Madame Chair, this is --  
18 okay, sorry.  
19

20 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I heard Don  
21 Woodruff first.  
22

23 MR. WOODRUFF: Yep, I would like to  
24 thank Andrew for that comment. I think that he spoke  
25 with his heartfelt interest for the people he  
26 represents and that's all of us.  
27

28 Thank you, Andrew.  
29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Then I heard  
31 a female voice.  
32

33 MR. MASCHMANN: Madame Chair, I think  
34 that was Deena.  
35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, Deena,  
37 okay.  
38

39 MS. JALLEN: Yeah, thank you, Madame  
40 Chair, this is Deena Jallen, I'm the summer season  
41 assistant manager with the Alaska Department of Fish  
42 and Game. And, yeah, I can just kind of address a  
43 couple of things.  
44

45 So in the middle Yukon, near the bridge  
46 area, fishermen that go to that area do need to have a  
47 subsistence permit so they do have to get a permit,  
48 report their harvest. Fishermen that do fish outside  
49 the permit area, we do try to contact through other  
50

1 means, we survey them like we survey other households  
2 that do live in the area and fish in that area.

3  
4 And I'm not sure whether it was just  
5 gillnet fishing, but drift gillnet fishing is legal in  
6 subdistricts 4B and 4C and so that's kind of an  
7 expansion of drift fishing that was allowed in Federal  
8 waters, kind of got expanded to all the waters of 4B  
9 and 4C, so there is drift gillnet fishing in that area,  
10 but there's no drift gillnet fishing allowed in  
11 District 5.

12  
13 And as to those surveys, of course,  
14 we've got surveys that are going on now, the household  
15 surveys aren't happening door to door, but each year  
16 the post-season subsistence salmon harvest survey tries  
17 to survey somewhere upwards of 1,600 households  
18 throughout the entire drainage and so that's a pretty  
19 big effort, they put in a couple months of trying to  
20 contact all the households and then get -- there's a  
21 couple more months of all that data entry and getting  
22 all those numbers crunched and then we do have  
23 estimates so that if we don't survey a household,  
24 they're accounted for by other households that are in  
25 their harvest group and within that community. So we  
26 do know that it's an estimate, it's got a confidence  
27 intervals, we know that we don't talk to every  
28 fisherman, we do estimate for fisherman -- or  
29 households that we don't contact or that refused a  
30 surveyor or that we don't get information from.

31  
32 So, yeah, and we just want to, of  
33 course, thank the fishermen for their participation and  
34 their cooperation this year, we know it was a difficult  
35 year with all the management restrictions and the poor  
36 run sizes, high water. You know we were able to get  
37 projects operating in Pilot and Eagle. We do have  
38 assessment that takes place on the Tanana River but  
39 that was really hampered by high water this year.  
40 Aerial surveys were hampered by high water. So it was  
41 kind of a challenging year but we want to thank the  
42 fishermen for all the information that we do get  
43 throughout the season. So if you do see information  
44 about people selling fish illegally, like, you know,  
45 you can always pass that on to myself or to the  
46 Troopers because people shouldn't be selling  
47 subsistence caught fish. There was commercial harvest  
48 for summer chum salmon on the lower Yukon but the  
49 harvest was extremely low and the season was cut short  
50

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1 after just about a handful of openings. So it was kind  
2 of a hard year all around for a lot of people, but,  
3 yeah, thank you for -- thanks to Gerald for giving the  
4 season summary. We work together all year long and  
5 yeah look forward to working together next year too.

6  
7 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MS. KENNER: Hello, are you still on  
12 the call?

13  
14 REPORTER: Yes, you are Pippa.

15  
16 MR. GLANZ: Yeah, I don't know if  
17 anybody else is.

18  
19 REPORTER: Yes, we're on.

20  
21 MS. KENNER: Hello, Madame Chair, this  
22 is Pippa.

23  
24 REPORTER: I don't know where Sue is  
25 but go ahead, Pippa.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, I'm  
28 sorry, I was on mute, go ahead Pippa.

29  
30 MS. KENNER: Oh, okay, I was just like  
31 well I just wanted to let you know, I thought maybe you  
32 weren't recognizing me and so I wasn't going to speak.

33  
34 Okay.

35  
36 So I just wanted to do an addition to  
37 what we just heard. I really appreciate all the  
38 fishery managers coming on. Customary trade, that's  
39 the trade of salmon for cash is legal for fish that are  
40 taken under Federal subsistence regulations off of  
41 Federal public waters in the Yukon River drainage,  
42 however sales can only occur among Federally-qualified  
43 subsistence users that are residents within the  
44 drainage.

45  
46 Thank you, Madame Chair.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I'm  
49 not on mute, right.

50

1 REPORTER: No, Sue, you're good.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Right, Tina.

4

5 REPORTER: Right.

6

7 MS. KENNER: You are not on mute.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Yeah,  
10 is there any other discussion on this.

11

12 MR. FIRMIN: Sue, this is one thing I  
13 had to follow up, this is Andrew.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah.

16

17 MR. FIRMIN: I was just curious as to I  
18 just wanted to ask again, I guess in Fairbanks, Deena  
19 said that they survey, you know, 1,600 households, you  
20 know, do they survey the door to -- well, probably not  
21 doing the door to door this year, but how do you grasp  
22 the people from Fairbanks, that survey, they're not on  
23 the river, do you go door to door in Fairbanks and ask  
24 them, I mean do you just expect them to turn in catch  
25 calendars, I mean that's a big portion of total  
26 harvest, I think that maybe Andy was kind of getting at  
27 too, is, if we don't know what people are harvesting  
28 then how can you, you know, accurately get any of those  
29 numbers, especially if you have a bunch of people from  
30 urban areas flocking out to fish and then you don't  
31 know -- I mean just because you go beyond the permit  
32 area, that's only 20 miles from Circle to get down here  
33 to Fort -- you know, below, outside of the permit area  
34 off the Steese Highway. I mean it's not that far to go  
35 and not -- and probably all the locals -- you have to  
36 go that far to get away from all the local fish camps  
37 anyway, so how -- I mean I could see that being the  
38 same way at the bridge, especially if they're going all  
39 the way down to District 4, or outside of District 5,  
40 you know, that's the areas that I've seen -- I don't  
41 know, maybe local people will have a different story,  
42 or, you know, the Western Interior might have a  
43 different perspective on it, but it seems like from my  
44 knowledge and input and my info from people that I know  
45 in Galena, it seems like, you know, that's where  
46 there's an influx of people from Fairbanks hitting  
47 those areas. Granted they might be related to people  
48 in those areas or something, but if all of a sudden  
49 you've got an extra set of people going down to an area

50

1 to harvest a bunch of fish and go back to Fairbanks  
2 with it, is that, how is that even counted, or, you  
3 know, how is that even measured.  
4

5 And, again, I just also wanted to point  
6 out, like I did mention at the -- I hate to be so  
7 negative, but I did talk to some of our dog mushers  
8 here in town and with the lateness of opening for fall  
9 chums, I think I talked to one musher who's a young --  
10 he's a young teenager, I think he's got -- he's got six  
11 dogs and he knocked his team down to six dogs and  
12 that's all he's got fish to feed them for for the year  
13 and he got rid of the rest of his team, I think, so --  
14 and he used to have over 12, 15 dogs and that's pretty  
15 common for a lot of mushers around town here at this  
16 point in time. So hopefully there is something like  
17 what Serena mentioned for the disaster relief, but I  
18 don't know if that's going to come after the fact that  
19 half of the dog teams disappeared in town.  
20

21 So just to put that out there, that  
22 it's kind of hard when you don't even have a four inch  
23 mesh net to go fish with for half the year, or after  
24 August, but I think a lot of people knew that but  
25 fishing with a four inch mesh net for anything other  
26 than for food is, you know, just personal eating is  
27 pretty difficult to do.  
28

29 So that's all I have to say.  
30

31 Thank you for the hard work you guys  
32 put in though as managers over the summer. I'm not  
33 trying to put anybody down or, you know, anything like  
34 that, I'm just trying to make suggestions and point  
35 things out there. Thank you, guys.  
36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,  
38 Andrew. Council.....  
39

40 MS. JALLEN: Madame Chair, this is.....  
41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.  
43

44 MS. JALLEN: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
45 Thank you, Andrew for those comments. And, yeah, if  
46 people fish inside the permit areas, so that's near the  
47 bridge and up near Eagle they have to have a permit and  
48 report their harvest. If they fish in the Tanana River  
49 they have to have a harvest -- a permit. So people  
50

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1 that do fish outside that area, a lot of times they'll  
2 -- you know, they'll check in with Fish and Game, we  
3 know who they are, we'll try to survey them by, you  
4 know, we send them a calendar if we've got their  
5 address, we call them, so, you know, I'm sure there are  
6 some people that we don't know about but a lot of times  
7 they are fishing at other areas that do get a permit,  
8 we do know about them, or they're fishing with family  
9 and so we hear about people who are fishing in the  
10 area, or there may be households that are, you know,  
11 going back and forth, have a -- you know, have an  
12 address in that community and have an address in  
13 Fairbanks. So we do try to get a hold of people as  
14 best we can and get that harvest. We know it's an  
15 estimate. We know that we don't count every fish  
16 that's harvested. But it would be, you know,  
17 impossible probably to know every single fish that was  
18 harvested by everybody throughout the entire drainage.  
19 But we do -- you know, it's an estimate. A lot of our  
20 projects are estimates. It's a methodology that's been  
21 used, at least since 1989, and then even further going  
22 back, all the way back to statehood, we've been  
23 estimating subsistence harvest in one way or the other.

24  
25 And, yeah, if you know of someone who  
26 is a total stranger fishing in that area, let us know  
27 and we'll try to make sure that we've got some way to  
28 get a hold of them.

29  
30 Thank you.

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
33 Anything else.

34  
35 MR. WOODRUFF: Sue, I've got one  
36 comment.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes.

39  
40 MR. WOODRUFF: So I know several of  
41 these fishing survey people that work for Fish and Game  
42 from the past, back in the '70s and '80s, and I think  
43 it's time to upgrade, since statehood, the way we  
44 survey harvest. It just seems unconscionable that  
45 we're still doing it like we did back in the '40s.

46  
47 Thank you.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. So

50



1 Council any.....  
2

3 MS. JALLEN: And, Madame Chair, if I  
4 might add to that. Yeah, the methods have changed over  
5 time. It used to be a boat survey where they'd count  
6 fish hanging on fish racks, now the methods that we've  
7 been using largely been in place since 1989, it  
8 involves a comprehensive household list of all the  
9 households in that community. They're split into  
10 stratified harvest groups. So we use responses from  
11 each -- each harvest group to estimate for any  
12 unsurveyed household in that harvest group. So there's  
13 a fair amount of, you know, using information from  
14 households to account for households that we don't  
15 contact, there's some specifics that go behind it.  
16 It's not just, you know, counting fish on fish racks,  
17 or counting fish in cribs, so, yeah.

18  
19 And this year, of course, it's moved to  
20 being more via mail, or via phone, or even on line,  
21 there's an online harvest app so fishermen can report  
22 their harvest, you know, whenever they want, when that  
23 app is up and live -- or when it's running.  
24

25 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.  
26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. All  
28 right, is there anything else.  
29

30 (No comments)  
31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right. I  
33 hope that this helps managers and more things can be  
34 done.  
35

36 All right, the next one would be the  
37 Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge.  
38

39 MR. LORENZINI: Good afternoon, Sue,  
40 this is Tim at Tetlin Refuge.  
41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Hi, Tim, go  
43 ahead.  
44

45 MR. LORENZINI: I just have a brief  
46 summary here for the last year.  
47

48 I'll start with a Staffing update. We  
49 were able to hire a new biologist and his name is Brent  
50

1 Jameson and he's here in Tok now for the last few  
2 months and so he'll be heading the biology program  
3 going forward here.  
4

5 You know this year, like probably every  
6 other Refuge, we've had some issues with the pandemic  
7 and then projects going forward, but we were able to  
8 accomplish a few projects this summer including we  
9 banded over 400 ducks in the Tok area, and we're  
10 starting to get reports back from some of those.  
11

12 Also, we are continuing with the lynx  
13 project which I talked to the RAC last year about. The  
14 hare numbers appear to be dropping according to the  
15 pellet counts in the area. And also just people seeing  
16 fewer of them. And a lot of the lynx are also dying,  
17 so their collars send out a mortality signal and quite  
18 a few have died in the last year and a lot of them have  
19 made big movements as well.  
20

21 And Yukon Flats, I saw in their  
22 summary, they have a little bit more details on that so  
23 I won't go into too much detail on that one right now.  
24

25 They're trying to collect as many of  
26 the mortalities as they can, it obviously matters where  
27 the lynx dies, some of them are going over to Canada or  
28 they're just in a real inaccessible area, but they have  
29 been trying to collect some information about, you  
30 know, what is causing their death. And so they plan to  
31 go out this winter, beginning in late January, they do  
32 have a safety plan that they are crafting right now  
33 that will need to be approved before they do that, but  
34 that's the -- the intention is to continue field work  
35 on that project this winter.  
36

37 And as far as the subsistence hunt on  
38 the Refuge here, as far as the moose hunting is  
39 concerned, it's been fairly consistent for 2019/2020  
40 season. A similar amount of effort and harvest, that's  
41 been stable.  
42

43 And then last year they had a fairly  
44 successful caribou hunt for the winter hunt for  
45 Nelchina caribou. There were several groups that  
46 wintered in accessible areas and local hunters were  
47 able to be more successful than average years. We  
48 didn't get a record harvest but last year was a good  
49 year for caribou hunters. We'll have a consultation  
50

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1 fairly soon here for the 2020/2021 Federal caribou hunt  
2 on the Refuge and informal conversation with Fish and  
3 Game, it looks like the Nelchina Herd is doing pretty  
4 good and we expect that to be a limit of one caribou,  
5 but that will be discussed in the next couple of weeks  
6 of the limit and the season dates for that hunt.

7  
8 So this summer without hav -- the  
9 Canada border was closed to non-essential travel, we  
10 usually have a visitor's center that greets the  
11 traveling public but due to concerns with Covid19 as  
12 well as just not any tourists coming through, we kept  
13 our visitor center closed for the first time in its  
14 history for the entire summer. And we limited to no  
15 public events with the public, so we've had to put  
16 those on hold until future notice. With that being  
17 said, we were able to complete a lot of projects for  
18 our visitor facilities, while we had lower use. We  
19 kept our campgrounds open throughout the summer, and  
20 they continue to be open and we were able to just  
21 complete a lot of projects that otherwise would have  
22 been more difficult when they have more people around.  
23 So hopefully next year we'll have our -- our facilities  
24 will be in better shape than they normally would be  
25 because of those projects have been completed.

26  
27 We're trying our best here to work with  
28 teachers and provide them with activities where we can,  
29 and like I said it's been real limited and my direct  
30 interaction has been much lower than I'd like. But,  
31 you know, we have provided some materials and some  
32 activities to local teachers to keep the kids engaged  
33 with outdoor recreation and environmental education.

34  
35 And that is what I have and if anyone  
36 has any questions I'm hopefully ready to answer them.

37  
38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Are there any  
39 questions.

40  
41 (No comments)

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
44 Then.....

45  
46 MR. FIRMIN: This is Andrew.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
49 Andrew.

50

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1 MR. FIRMIN: I'd like to say thank you  
2 for your report, I always like to hear about the lynx  
3 and stuff.  
4

5 But I just wanted to let you guys know  
6 I got to sign out, I've got another tribal court  
7 hearing that starts here at 1:00 o'clock, so if I can  
8 -- if it's quick I'll sign back on, if not, talk to you  
9 all next time.  
10

11 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.  
12

13 MR. GLANZ: Thanks, Andrew.  
14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
16 Andrew, thank you.  
17

18 I'm hearing no other questions.  
19

20 So next on the agenda -- well, I need  
21 to find out, it is 1:00 o'clock, Council members, do  
22 you need a break and get the rest of the reports or do  
23 you want to try to finish.  
24

25 MR. WOODRUFF: Let's finish.  
26

27 MR. BASSICH: Let's finish.  
28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Is  
30 there any objection to just finishing.  
31

32 MR. WRIGHT: Finish.  
33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Then go ahead  
35 then, the Park Service is next, Yukon-Charley.  
36

37 Marcy.  
38

39 MS. OKADA: Madame Chair and Council  
40 members. Matt Sorum, our biologist is going to be  
41 sharing the update for Yukon-Charley.  
42

43 MR. SORUM: Hi, Madame Chair, this is  
44 Matt Sorum.  
45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.  
47

48 MR. SORUM: I'm the wildlife biologist  
49 for Yukon-Charley National Preserve. And I'm here to  
50

1 share you a quick update, I'll make it quick here and  
2 it's largely going to be a biological update.  
3

4 So for the wolves, wolf studies, NPS is  
5 currently monitoring eight packs within the Preserve,  
6 seven of them which denned during the summer. The  
7 spring pack count was 7.1 wolves per pack, which is  
8 higher than the long-term average of 5.7. Over the  
9 2019 biological year we tracked about 24 GPS collared  
10 wolves, of the 24 wolves, five died, five dispersed  
11 outside of the Preserve. We're working on a study to  
12 evaluate how wolf deaths in the pack affect pack  
13 structure and productivity, how prevalent disease is,  
14 how wolves use the landscape and what their winter diet  
15 consists of.  
16

17 For Fortymile Caribou Herd. A large  
18 team of collaborative scientists recently published a  
19 new study showing the abundance of lichen across the  
20 range of the Fortymile Herd. Researchers used the map  
21 to test the importance of lichen cover on Fortymile  
22 Herd caribou distribution from 2012 to 2018 during both  
23 summer and winter. In both seasons, caribou avoided  
24 areas with little lichen cover and showed strong  
25 selection for lichen cover as it increased to about 30  
26 percent.  
27

28 And then I'll jump on to, lastly, just  
29 moose here. Over the last year we conducted a moose  
30 survey. Ultimately what we found -- and last fall we  
31 found we had 28 moose per square mile, which equates to  
32 about -- is exactly equal to the long-term average over  
33 the 20 years we've been surveying the moose population,  
34 however, it does represent a 23 percent decrease since  
35 the 2015 survey. So just consider that.  
36

37 And then we conducted -- we began in  
38 March of 2020, the first -- NPS biologists began the  
39 first GPS project in Yukon-Charley National Preserve.  
40 Our main goal is to better understand moose survival,  
41 reproduction, and movements within the Preserve. We  
42 deployed 21 collars on adult female moose and tracked  
43 their movements. This spring we conducted calving  
44 flights to count for how many collared females gave  
45 birth and what proportion gave birth to twins. From  
46 the calving flights we found that 81 percent gave  
47 birth, and that the twinning rate was 41 percent. We  
48 were able to determine the timing of calving from the  
49 GPS, using the GPS data as well. And the average  
50

1 calving date turned out to be May 18th and it ranged  
2 from May 8th to June 7th. With that calving study, our  
3 goal is to better understand moose production and  
4 recruitment. And we're looking at -- we want to look  
5 at factors such as what habitat, how habitat, climate,  
6 predator abundance influences calving recruitment. And  
7 to kind of further, you know, improve that study we've  
8 collaborated with ADF&G to compare the Taylor Highway  
9 on population, which they have a collaring study over  
10 there with the Yukon-Charley.  
11

12 And so maybe just I'll finish with a  
13 question to the Board here and just to make sure, you  
14 know, our plan is to follow up this calving study for  
15 the next four years doing flights in the spring and  
16 then in the fall and then again in late winter just to  
17 kind of round out what is annual and seasonal calving  
18 survival. But we just want to make sure that this is a  
19 priority or something that's an interest to you and  
20 adds value to what you need.  
21

22 And with that I am done.  
23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, thank  
25 you very much. Any questions.  
26

27 MR. WOODRUFF: I've got a question,  
28 Madame Chair, this is Don.  
29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
31 Don.  
32

33 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah, Matt, are you  
34 still doing the whiskered diet survey?  
35

36 MR. SORUM: Yeah, so we are in our  
37 analysis phase right now. I presented our initial  
38 findings to the Eagle Subsistence Working Group last  
39 fall, or last -- this last spring -- before Covid --  
40 and we are analyzing more whiskers from wolves that we  
41 got collected this -- during the captures this year and  
42 then we should be trying to finalize a (indiscernible -  
43 cuts out) that began right up over the next year on  
44 that paper.  
45

46 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Matt. One  
47 other statement. The geography of the Taylor Highway  
48 south, in particular, is remarkably different than  
49 Yukon-Charley, so you might keep that in mind when  
50

1 you're comparing data with those.

2

3

Thank you.

4

5

MR. SORUM: Okay. Great. Yeah, thanks,  
6 Don. Hey, I'll mention, I was picking up collars this  
7 -- wolf collars late in September and I was up the  
8 Nation on a boat and I had lunch outside your cabin  
9 there. It looked like it was in good shape.

10

11

MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.

12

13

14

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Are there any  
other questions.

15

16

(No comments)

17

18

19

MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
thank you, Matt.

20

21

Next would be the Wrangell-St. Elias.

22

23

24

25

26

27

MR. SARAFIN: Hello, Madame Chair. This  
is Dave Sarafin, the fisheries biologist with Wrangell-  
St. Elias National Park and Preserve. And I have a  
quick fisheries update.

28

29

30

31

32

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37

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41

42

43

First, talking about some fishery  
research monitoring projects that we had going on.  
This year we got kind of impacted by the Covid  
mitigations and it kind of impacted both projects where  
we didn't have a crew that could be hired to operate  
those, also Tanada itself, the creek, and then the  
really high water throughout the whole summer, which  
kind of impeded trying to get into the water there. So  
one thing to note, we will be recruiting this winter,  
if anyone knows of any local Slana, or Mentasta Lake or  
Chistochina area local people that would be interested  
in working, who would be interested -- or I'd be  
interested in hearing from them and it'd be great to  
get some response from locals for hiring opportunities  
for next summer.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

And then moving on to the upper Copper  
River Federal subsistence fishery. For the 2020 season  
we issued -- well, the Federal subsistence salmon  
fisheries of the upper Copper River, they were open  
from May 15th through September 30th, and we issued 217  
Federal subsistence permits for the Chitina subdistrict

1 and 377 for the Glennallen subdistrict, and then one  
2 Batzulnetas permit. That's on record through September  
3 4th. And I provided Tables 1 through 3 that show  
4 historical harvest records, however, we are still  
5 getting in reports so I haven't been able to get any  
6 kind of estimates for the 2020 season yet. We're  
7 currently at about just over 40 percent have been  
8 returned with the deadline being October 31st for those  
9 to come in. So they're still coming in but will  
10 continue throughout the winter, too, so as the off-  
11 season goes on we get a better handle on what the  
12 harvest actually was.

13  
14 And for 2020 the Copper River salmon  
15 run strength and management actions. So during the  
16 season the commercial fishery in the Copper River  
17 district was very limited in response to the weak  
18 salmon return. ADF&G reported total season harvest  
19 through July 28th to be the fourth lowest commercial  
20 harvest in the last 50 years for the district. The  
21 ADF&G sonar at Miles Lake provided a season total  
22 estimate of 530,313 salmon migrating up stream, and  
23 that estimate is 85 percent of the cumulative  
24 management objective of 624,709 salmon for that date.  
25 And ADF&G reported that to be the 12th lowest season  
26 estimate on record since 1978.

27  
28 The performance in the commercial  
29 fishery and that in-river sonar passage are primary in-  
30 season assessments that we use for the salmon returning  
31 to the Copper River. And overall returns of both  
32 sockeye and chinook were very weak. In-river  
33 assessments of chinook salmon return, along with the  
34 assumption of up river harvest indicate the sustainable  
35 escapement goal of 24,000 fish may not have been met  
36 for the season, we won't know until, again, we get a  
37 better handle of post-season harvest and hatchery  
38 contributions. So as well, the minimum threshold --  
39 that was for the king salmon. For the sockeye salmon,  
40 again, that may not have been a met the sustainable  
41 escapement goal again.

42  
43 For State subsistence fishery in  
44 Glennallen subdistrict, it was open from June 1 through  
45 September 30th, and the State did several actions  
46 restricting sport and also their Chitina personal use  
47 fisheries during the season and we issued -- no Federal  
48 special actions were issued by the in-season manager  
49 this season.

50



1 And that concludes my report and open  
2 for any questions.

3  
4 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any  
5 questions.

6  
7 (No comments)

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
10 thanks, Dave.

11  
12 MR. SARAFIN: Sure. And I think  
13 Barbara might have some other Park updates from  
14 Wrangell, too.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. Thank  
17 you.....

18  
19 MS. CELLARIUS: I do, and.....

20  
21 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: .....Dave,  
22 and.....

23  
24 MS. CELLARIUS: .....Madame Chair.

25  
26 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: .....then --  
27 okay, Barbara.

28  
29 MS. CELLARIUS: And hopefully Council  
30 members have a copy of our written report. It has my  
31 email address and phone number along with the email  
32 address and phone number for Judy Putera. So I'm going  
33 to be super quick and would encourage you to either ask  
34 questions or to contact us later. I recognize that  
35 you're under some time constraints.

36  
37 I did want to mention the Chisna  
38 Caribou Herd. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
39 was able to deploy six new radio collars in the spring.  
40 And just this week that herd, my understanding is that  
41 the number of collars on the animals in that herd had  
42 gotten quite low, this is a small herd, it's in the far  
43 southeast corner of Unit 12 and goes across into  
44 Canada. And just this week they were able to deploy a  
45 number of additional collars with the assistance  
46 between -- it was a joint project between Fish and Game  
47 and the Park Service. I don't have the exact number,  
48 they were actually in the field this week, but the  
49 report was that Judy was quite happy with the success

50

1 of the collaring.

2

3 In terms of the hunt on the Chisna  
4 Caribou Herd, we issued a total of seven permits this  
5 year and the reports that I've gotten is that three  
6 caribou were harvested. It's possible that reports --  
7 we'll have an additional report harvest but I think  
8 it's unlikely, I asked them to get in touch with me  
9 pretty much as soon as they -- you know, within three  
10 days of the harvest and I've only heard of those three  
11 harvests.

12

13 I also wanted to mention that some dall  
14 sheep surveys were done, there's count areas -- so Page  
15 3 of the wildlife report has a map that shows the count  
16 areas for our sheep surveys and with respect to Unit  
17 12, count areas 3 and 4W lie between the upper Copper,  
18 the Nabesna and the Chisna Rivers and they're pretty  
19 popular areas for both subsistence and recreational  
20 harvest. And we did get a survey done that week but  
21 that -- we did survey those areas this year but we  
22 don't have the results yet so those will be provided at  
23 the spring 2021 meeting.

24

25 And that's all I was going to sort of  
26 talk about but if there's anything in the report that  
27 you have questions about I'll take a shot at answering.

28

29 Thank you, Madame Chair.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,  
32 Barbara. Anyone have any questions.

33

34 MR. WOODRUFF: This is Don, I have one  
35 question.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
38 Don.

39

40 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you. And when I  
41 was reading in your report in detail there's an area of  
42 the sheep survey, that the population doubled, do you  
43 have any explanation for how that could happen?

44

45 MS. CELLARIUS: I do not but I can  
46 ask.....

47

48 MR. WOODRUFF: Good answer.

49

50

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1 MS. CELLARIUS: .....Judy if she has an  
2 idea what happened. I'm just looking at the table to  
3 see -- total sheep -- oh, I see what you're talking  
4 about. There was a quite -- it was -- you know there  
5 was -- that was a comparison of 2015 to 2020, so there  
6 was some amount of time and it looks like both ram  
7 numbers and ewe number went up -- actually -- yeah, and  
8 I don't know much about count area 12, but I can ask  
9 Judy and see if she has any more insight to that.

10

11 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, you  
14 could send it to me, too.

15

16 MS. CELLARIUS: Okay, will do.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Any other  
19 questions.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.  
24 Hearing none, we have Denali. Was there anything else  
25 on the Park there, Barbara, I'm sorry.

26

27 MS. CELLARIUS: No, I -- I was just  
28 trying to be really quick. My report includes the  
29 number of permits that we issued this year for hunting  
30 -- hunting permits, and the various projects that I've  
31 got going on.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I was  
34 just -- I didn't know if there was another person  
35 testifying -- okay -- or reporting, I should say.

36

37 All right, thank you.

38

39 Any questions, again.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right.  
44 Next is the Denali.

45

46 MS. OWEN: Yes, good afternoon. This  
47 is Pat Owen, wildlife biologist at Denali. Good  
48 afternoon, Madame Chair and Council. Thanks for giving  
49 me the opportunity.

50

1 Just a couple of quick things. There's  
2 a lot of things, of course, because of Covid that  
3 didn't happen, there are a few things in the Park that  
4 did. This report is -- or has been, actually, I guess,  
5 loaded to the OSM website, so I'm not going to go into  
6 it in great detail to save you guys some time. But a  
7 couple of things that I will point out, just touching  
8 on each one of these as I go through the report.  
9

10 We've had a bear monitoring program in  
11 effect in Denali since the early '90s. As of last year  
12 the funding for bear monitoring in Denali has ran out  
13 although we do have a couple of bears, six at the  
14 moment, still wearing radio collars that will  
15 automatically release over the next two years. So the  
16 report includes a little bit of information on some of  
17 the data analysis that we've done so far. The bottom  
18 line with that is the data analysis for that entire  
19 project won't be completed until we get all the collars  
20 back which will be at the end of September 2022. So  
21 that one is just sort of in maintenance mode until the  
22 rest of those collars come off.  
23

24 A couple of years ago we started a bear  
25 DNA citizen science study where we had folks, visitors  
26 to the Park, in the backcountry collecting bear scat  
27 samples for us. Due to Covid this year and our low  
28 visitation we realized that it really wasn't going to  
29 make a whole lot of sense to try to collect samples  
30 this year so that project is on hold. We did, in the  
31 spring, send another 100 samples in for analysis, we  
32 have not gotten the results of those analysis back yet.  
33 So nothing really earth shattering to report on that  
34 project. We do hope to get that project under way  
35 again next summer, fingers crossed that visitation and  
36 backcountry use will be up enough to warrant doing that  
37 project.  
38

39 Probably the big news for Denali this  
40 year, not all of it great, had to do with bear  
41 management. We started out the early part of the  
42 season with a bang where we got a report from our road  
43 crew that was clearing the road for a part of spring  
44 road opening in the middle of May, that there was a  
45 trailer full of dog food and human food that our own  
46 kennel (ph) had left at the Wonder Lake Ranger Station,  
47 this is nothing out of the ordinary, it's something  
48 that has been done in the past, but a bear had broken  
49 into that trailer and consumed probably the better part  
50

1 of -- we're estimating about a dozen 50 pound bags of  
2 dog food. We headed out that way immediately with  
3 traps and collars and all of the equipment that we  
4 needed to catch and collar this bear, our intent was to  
5 do something that we've done in the past, and been  
6 successful with, it's a hard release on site, and what  
7 we do is catch a bear in a culvert trap, put a radio  
8 collar on it, immobilize it, put a radio collar on it,  
9 when it recovers release it on site with a lot of  
10 commotion, barking dogs, firecracker rounds out of a  
11 shotgun, rubber slugs, bean bags, honking horns,  
12 whatever we can throw at it, this has worked really  
13 well for us in the past. Once we got out there and  
14 looked at the area, we also visited some private  
15 properties out there and found out that the extent of  
16 the damage was far beyond anything that we had  
17 expected. We realized that what we were dealing with  
18 was probably a bear that we were not going to be able  
19 to manage with a hard release, and we made the  
20 decision, because of the extent of the damage and the  
21 amount of food that this bear had acquired that if we  
22 were able to catch this bear and positively ID it, we  
23 were going to destroy this animal. Well, we tried for  
24 three weeks to catch that bear without any success. I  
25 -- the bear kind of disappeared on us after three weeks  
26 and I made sure that I told management around here that  
27 this wasn't over, I fully expected that bear to come  
28 back, which it did. At the beginning of September we  
29 started getting reports from some of the lodges in  
30 Kantishna that they had facilities that had been broken  
31 into. Subsequently we were in the middle of road  
32 lettering at the time, which of course added an extra  
33 bit of complication for us, but nonetheless we got  
34 Staff on sight in Kantishna and within a few days we  
35 were able to catch this bear and we did destroy it. We  
36 were confident based on the size of the animal, and  
37 track size and tracks that we found in the area that we  
38 were dealing with the right one. And it was a really  
39 unfortunate circumstance, and we learned a lot of  
40 lessons. As humans we can do a much better job of  
41 keeping things secure when it comes to bears. I will  
42 say in my over 30 years here at Denali I've never seen  
43 anything quite like this, the amount of damage was  
44 unbelievable.

45  
46 So, anyway, that was probably the big  
47 news worthy thing, of course, because, you know, the  
48 media gets a hold of that and it goes far and wide. So  
49 it happened. We, like I said, have learned a lot of

50

1 things, and we are already implementing a lot of  
2 measures that we hope will keep this from ever  
3 happening again.  
4

5 Also on the bear management front, we  
6 did have a bear in the Savage River area. Of course  
7 with Covid, bus traffic in the Park was greatly  
8 reduced, down to probably roughly around 10 percent of  
9 normal, and so the Savage area is right at the end of  
10 the portion of road that people can drive a private  
11 vehicle and so it gets a lot of use, and we had a bear  
12 there that was kind of getting mixed up with people and  
13 we were getting a little concerned about it's  
14 interactions. We eventually caught that bear and did  
15 do a hard release on site and to this day that bear has  
16 stayed away from the area. It has been in plenty of  
17 places that have been far away from the road and on  
18 occasion near the road where it has been viewed by  
19 people, but it seems to be steering clear, so we're  
20 pretty happy about that.  
21

22 In addition to the reduction in busses,  
23 we had five, what we call private vehicle weekends,  
24 kind of similar to the road lottery, the big difference  
25 there was these were timed entry permits, meaning  
26 people had a specific hour during which they could  
27 enter the Park, and the numbers were greatly reduced  
28 over what we typically do on a single day on a road  
29 lottery. We had 70 cars on the road per day as  
30 compared this year -- 300 cars on the road per day for  
31 the five days of road lottery. It was a jungle to  
32 manage, Staff-wise, because of course our summer  
33 seasonal Staff, because of Covid, was greatly reduced,  
34 and so it definitely pushed the limit of our Staff  
35 capacity. Fortunately no serious incidents, human,  
36 wildlife, conflict related happened during any of those  
37 weekends. I think the number of people we did manage  
38 to put on the road Staff-wise, and the fact that a lot  
39 of bears were far from the road were sort of our saving  
40 grace on that.  
41

42 So I'd really like to get back to buses  
43 on the road because it's a whole lot easier to manage  
44 and I think way kinder on the wildlife out there.  
45

46 So that's probably the big news from  
47 us.  
48

49 The rest of this report, I'll just  
50

1 mention a couple of things in terms of moose  
2 monitoring. This was not our year for any moose  
3 surveys so the information in the report is from past  
4 surveys.

5  
6 Sheep surveys. The ground-based sheep  
7 surveys that we typically do were not done. We did do  
8 the aerial sheep surveys, those were done in July. And  
9 folks in surveying essentially are the ones that do all  
10 of the data analysis for us on that so we typically  
11 don't get the data -- the analysis of the data back  
12 from that for some time. I will say that it looks  
13 initially like the sheep numbers were down pretty  
14 substantially, especially lambs.

15  
16 Wolf monitoring, again, there is a link  
17 in the report to the Park Service web page that can  
18 give you all the information on the wolf project here.  
19 But as of March we had 68 wolves in 20 packs -- I'm  
20 sorry, 12 packs, with a mean pack size of 5.7. We were  
21 in the middle of capture in March when Covid really hit  
22 with a vengeance and lots of things were abbreviated as  
23 were those capture efforts, they were cut short,  
24 although some did get done.

25  
26 The Alpine wildlife project is on hold,  
27 again, due to Covid. I will just mention that most of  
28 our projects that did not take place this year, the  
29 reason that they didn't was mostly because of our  
30 inability to provide adequate housing. Most of our  
31 seasonal housing -- well, actually all of our seasonal  
32 housing is at a minimum, double occupancy, and the  
33 decision was made early on that we would only allow  
34 single occupancy in any of those residences, and so  
35 basically that right there cut our Staff in half. So  
36 lots of things didn't get done because we didn't have  
37 the Staffing to do it.

38  
39 The end of this report includes a whole  
40 list of avian projects. Some of those -- some of the  
41 past projects did actually happen early on. Golden  
42 eagle monitoring did not this year, at least not nest  
43 surveys on the ground. All of that stuff, because it  
44 was aviation related. We did have some restrictions on  
45 what we were allowed to do with aircraft as well.

46  
47 And then the last thing on that list is  
48 fish. You know, obviously Denali has not had a huge  
49 fisheries program, but we have the past couple of years

50

1 employed a summer seasonal who's done some fishery  
2 surveys for us. Also in the middle -- or in the  
3 process, I should say, of literature and program  
4 review, the first draft of that literature and program  
5 review is now complete and we are in the process of  
6 reviewing that and hopefully will have that completed  
7 in the next -- probably in the next month or so. And  
8 let's see most of the other fish work, the survey work  
9 that we had intended to happen this year did except  
10 that there was a survey on Moose Creek in Kantishna at  
11 the end of this season that we cut short, this one not  
12 because of Covid, but because of the road at Purdy  
13 Rocks (ph) that you may be aware of, also from the  
14 press, we have a section of road that is basically some  
15 sliding (ph - muffled), and it's right now moving at  
16 about three inches a day and by the time those folks  
17 were about halfway through the survey we realized that  
18 the road had subsided at that location by about a foot  
19 already and we cut their survey short and asked them to  
20 return to headquarters, to make sure that they could  
21 get vehicles across that section of the road.

22  
23 So wildlife-wise, that's about it.

24  
25 I guess the only thing that I would  
26 just mention is I have been issuing subsistence  
27 permits, basically what I've been doing is having folks  
28 provide me with their information, I generate and print  
29 the permits and then mail those to our subsistence  
30 users. And as of today I've issued 40, which is right  
31 about where we usually are for subsistence permits.

32  
33 And I guess the only other thing that I  
34 would mention is that we have been, for quite some time  
35 now, operating management-wise with an acting  
36 Superintendent. A number of folks have cycled through  
37 that position because our Superintendent is now the  
38 Acting Regional Director, and we've also been, as of  
39 late, operating with an Acting Deputy Superintendent,  
40 as of just a couple of weeks ago we have actually hired  
41 a permanent Deputy. We are still operating with an  
42 Acting Superintendent, and I'm not clear on what the  
43 forecast is for when that position will be filled  
44 permanently.

45  
46 And I think that's about it.

47  
48 So that's the end of my report and if  
49 anybody has any questions I'd be glad to take them.

50



1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you.

2 Any questions.

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,

7 Pat.

8

9 MS. OWEN: Thank you.

10

11 MR. MCMANUS: Madame Chair, Tim

12 McManus.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,

15 Tim.

16

17 MR. MCMANUS: Yeah, I sit on the Denali  
18 SRC. We had a meeting August 25th by teleconference.  
19 There were no action items and it was mostly Park Staff  
20 just giving information. That's all I got.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
25 thanks.

26

27 Next, BLM.

28

29 MR. HERRIGES: Yes, Madame Chair, this  
30 is Jim Herriges and I'm a wildlife biologist for the  
31 Eastern Interior Field Office of BLM.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

34

35 MR. HERRIGES: And I'll just list some  
36 of our activities here and -- but first, let me  
37 congratulate you guys on some serious meeting marathon  
38 endurance. Impressive. But thanks for your attention.

39

40 One of our projects in our Covid  
41 reduced field activity this summer was to conduct a  
42 thorough helicopter survey of some hundreds of miles of  
43 trails in the Steese Conservation Area, documenting use  
44 and condition. We were also able to revisit a few  
45 portions of those trails after the hunting season and  
46 document some of the damage to soils and trails, which  
47 resulted from that. We use this inventory in our  
48 ongoing development of a travel management plan, which  
49 I've mentioned at a couple previous meetings and which

50

1 will guide motor vehicle use in the Steese Conservation  
2 Area and the White Mountain Recreation Area. Currently  
3 a range of alternatives is being developed and should  
4 be out for discussion in winter or spring.

5  
6 BLM is trying to -- or has been trying  
7 to initiate a study of moose movements and distribution  
8 in the upper Draanjik drainage since the time that we  
9 were developing our resource management plan, we had  
10 some discussions with local communities and about moose  
11 migration patterns and calving areas. And hopefully  
12 with cooperation from the Yukon-Charley Preserve Staff,  
13 who have a moose study going now, we hope to begin our  
14 study next spring and we'll be communicating with the  
15 surrounding communities prior to that.

16  
17 BLM continues to work with the  
18 Department of Fish and Game and the Yukon government in  
19 monitoring the Fortymile Herd movements with satellite  
20 radio collars and we assisted Fish and Game in  
21 measuring some of the indications of nutritional  
22 condition, like rump fat during the hunt, and also  
23 after the fall hunt.

24  
25 And speaking of the hunt, which has  
26 been discussed some already, after coordinating with  
27 Yukon-Charley and some other managers, BLM did open the  
28 Federal season for the first time on August 1st, giving  
29 Federal subsistence hunter opportunity to hunt caribou  
30 prior to the start of the State season on the 10th.  
31 And then after the Federal hunt began, Fish and Game  
32 announced a bunch of liberal regulations that had been  
33 previously -- including a caribou harvest limit of two  
34 caribou, and a quota of 5,000 caribou. So later in the  
35 month BLM changed the harvest limit to two caribou as  
36 well. And then that season remained open through  
37 September 30th. A record number of hunters, I believe,  
38 showed up on the Steese Highway prior to opening day,  
39 thanks to that two caribou limit and 5,000 caribou  
40 quota, and also interestingly, I think possibly also  
41 because of increasing tendency for people to share  
42 information on social media, there were, for whatever  
43 reasons there was a lot of people. I drove to Central  
44 the night before the hunt from Fairbanks and there were  
45 vehicles, RVs, tents, lining both sides of the highway  
46 in some areas and the road side pull outs and gravel  
47 pits were totally packed, cars gathered out on the  
48 tundra in some places and like, Andy, I counted some  
49 vehicles as I went -- I started on the east side of

1 Eagle there -- the 12 mile summit and counted 560  
2 vehicles just on the immediate edge of the road before  
3 I got down off of Eagle Summit. So there was likely  
4 several thousand hunters out, if you consider all the  
5 other places that vehicles were parked. And nearly  
6 1,200 caribou were harvested on that first day, which  
7 actually would have been probably much higher had  
8 caribou not already kind of started to shift away from  
9 the highway zone. Over the whole season, nearly 18,000  
10 permits were issued for this hunt and almost half of  
11 those reported hunting with more than 5,300 caribou  
12 were harvested.  
13

14 More so than in previous years, ATVs of  
15 all types were traveling very widely in search of  
16 caribou including, as you may have heard, along the  
17 Pinel Mountain National Recreation Trail. Some of the  
18 wetter portions of this hiking trail is covered by  
19 boardwalk and plastic geogrid panels in places and some  
20 of those were ridden over and just buried in some  
21 places and it was transformed from sort of a single  
22 narrow hiking trail in some of those wetter places into  
23 what's now like a wide muddy braided corridor of  
24 trails. And that is unfortunate that the trail isn't  
25 marked with signs over its entirety but even more  
26 present, the signs were often ignored even since being  
27 placed right at the trailheads, was ignored by some.  
28 It seems like with a large number of hunters who are in  
29 a hurry, in some what of a competitive situation, that  
30 seems to encourage some -- quite, what you might call,  
31 heavy on the land kind of driving behavior, and then  
32 combined with the very wet summer it made for some very  
33 visible impacts. Side by sides are generally not  
34 allowed on BLM lands, but were widely used and many  
35 hunters were unaware of any ATV restrictions or even --  
36 which -- even the land ownership patterns.  
37

38 So upcoming winter hunt. The season is  
39 not yet set or announced, and so it's still open to  
40 discussion, which is welcome. But tentatively we're  
41 planning to open on the same day as the State, October  
42 27th with the harvest limit of two caribou, which is  
43 likely what the State will decide on. And then we plan  
44 to keep that season open through the end of March while  
45 the State season may or may not close earlier, and  
46 hopefully we'll get some snow prior to the 27th.  
47

48 And that's all I have and I'd be happy  
49 to receive any comments or questions.  
50

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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thanks, Jim.  
2 Any comments or questions.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I  
7 wanted to see if Bill was still on, are you on the road  
8 -- or still on?

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, I guess  
13 if there's no other questions, we will move on.

14  
15 But I got to apologize to the Council  
16 members, we have been trying to keep the reports to  
17 five minutes and this isn't happening and I apologize  
18 to you guys, I should remind people every time.

19  
20 Next, is there any BLM -- I mean Alaska  
21 Department of Fish and Game reports.

22  
23 MS. MCDAVID: Madame Chair, this is  
24 Brooke McDavid with ADF&G Subsistence. I just have a  
25 brief update.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay, go  
28 ahead.

29  
30 MS. MCDAVID: Yeah, so I just wanted to  
31 let the Council know that the final report has been  
32 published for the subsistence study that we did in  
33 Yukon-Charley. And I previously shared the results of  
34 the harvest surveys with the Council but the final  
35 report also includes the ethnographic analysis that was  
36 completed that summarizes the observations, concerns of  
37 community members from those communities. So I'd like  
38 to thank everyone who participated in that study. Also  
39 thanks to the Park Service for letting us be involved.  
40 And if anyone would like a personal hard copy of that  
41 report you can reach out to me or I'm sure, Marcy, and  
42 it will be available on the internet in the near  
43 future. We're having some problems getting it uploaded  
44 at the moment.

45  
46 Also P.O. Box holders in Eagle,  
47 Central, and Circle will all receive a summary handout  
48 of the results of that report in the near future.

49  
50

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1 And that's all I had, thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
4 thank you.

5

6 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair, this is  
7 Katya.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
10 Katya.

11

12 MS. WESSELS: Brooke, I was just  
13 wondering when the report will be available on line, if  
14 you would be able to send me the link, this way I make  
15 sure that whoever is interested on the Council can get  
16 at least the internet link.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 MS. MCDAVID: Through the Chair. Yes,  
21 Katya, as soon as it's available on line I can  
22 definitely send you a link in my email.

23

24 MS. WESSELS: Thank you.

25

26 MS. MCDAVID: You're welcome.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay.

29

30 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead,  
33 Andy.

34

35 MR. BASSICH: I'd like to request to  
36 get that when Katya gets that link, thank you.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Okay. I  
39 believe Katya will get it to all of us.

40

41 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I definitely will.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Next on the  
44 agenda is the Office of Subsistence Management.

45

46 Tom Kron.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

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1 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Hey, Tom, are  
2 you on.

3  
4 MR. WOODRUFF: Somebody text him.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: All right,  
7 while we're waiting for him to get on.

8  
9 MR. KRON: Let's try that, I had my  
10 mute on.

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Oh, okay.

13  
14 MR. KRON: Nobody's made that mistake  
15 before.

16  
17 First of all, we wanted to thank you  
18 all we wanted to thank you all, you, Madame Chair and  
19 the members of the Council for your work.

20  
21 It's been very difficult for all of us  
22 dealing with the Covid19 environment. We've been  
23 holding all 10 fall 2020 Regional Advisory Council  
24 meetings via teleconference. This decision was made  
25 with the utmost consideration and concern for the  
26 health and safety of Council members, families, rural  
27 communities, the public, and the Staff who are all part  
28 of the Council meetings. The health and safety of  
29 everyone is the highest priority. The Center for  
30 Disease Control and Prevention guidelines suggests that  
31 people avoid travel and refrain from meeting in person  
32 to minimize risk and to help prevent the spread of  
33 Covid19.

34  
35 The Regional Advisory Councils are the  
36 foundation of Alaska's Federal Subsistence Management  
37 Program. We recognize that holding face to face  
38 Council meetings in rural communities across Alaska is  
39 preferable to engage the public most effectively. The  
40 Federal Subsistence Management Program is fully  
41 committed to resuming in person Council meetings across  
42 Alaska as soon as possible as it can be done safely.

43  
44 Next, just a short update, and I'll  
45 condense this. There have been a number of Staffing  
46 changes and changes that are expected at OSM.

47  
48 Tom Doolittle, the former acting  
49 Assistant Regional Director and he's the Deputy  
50

1 Assistant Regional Director is retiring this fall.

2

3 Chris McKee, who was OSM's wildlife  
4 division lead took a job with BLM. But he's going to  
5 serve on the InterAgency Staff Committee. We're  
6 grateful for that.

7

8 Suzanne Worker, one of the wildlife  
9 biologists at OSM took another job in the U.S. Fish and  
10 Wildlife Service.

11

12 Lisa Maas, who was on the conference  
13 call yesterday, is currently acting OSM policy  
14 coordinator.

15

16 Two of our fishery biologists took  
17 promotions in other parts of the Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service.

19

20 And OSM has made a little progress on  
21 hiring. We've hired two fishery biologists. One of  
22 them Cory Graham, was on yesterday, and I don't know if  
23 he's on again today or not. But anyway we made a  
24 little bit of progress there.

25

26 And also a lady by the name of Sherry  
27 (indiscernible) was hired as a clerk.

28

29 And we also hired a supervisory  
30 anthropologist, Dr. Brent Vickers, and he'll be  
31 arriving later this year.

32

33 A couple policy changes.

34

35 During the August work session of the  
36 Federal Subsistence Board there was some changes  
37 approved that involved closure policy and the non-rural  
38 determination policy which the Councils previously were  
39 briefed on. The Board also approved revisions to the  
40 special action section of the tribal consultation  
41 implementation guidelines. Copies of theses documents  
42 are available upon request as well as on the OSM  
43 website.

44

45 Another update you've been hearing  
46 about the past couple of years is the ID issue. The  
47 due date was originally October 1, 2020, however, this  
48 has been postponed and now is October 1st, 2021. And  
49 we all need to note that all Council members will need

50

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1 to make sure that they have the correct ID to travel  
2 next fall. If you don't have a correct ID, please,  
3 make sure you get it between now and then.  
4

5 Now an update on the lawsuit.  
6

7 And I'm sure many of you have been  
8 hearing bits and pieces of this. On August 10th, the  
9 State of Alaska filed a lawsuit against the Federal  
10 Subsistence Board after it adopted its emergency Special  
11 Action WSA19-14. This allowed the village of Kake to  
12 engage in a community harvest of two antlered moose and  
13 five male Sitka blacktail deer. Also included in the  
14 lawsuit was Temporary Special Action WSA20-03, which  
15 closed Federal lands in Units 13A and B to non-  
16 Federally-qualified moose and caribou hunters.  
17

18 As part of the lawsuit the State asked  
19 the court to issue two preliminary injunctions, one to  
20 prevent the Unit 13 closure from taking effect, another  
21 vacating the Kake hunt and prohibiting the Board from  
22 allowing any additional emergency hunts related to the  
23 impact of Covid19. On September 18th, the U.S. District  
24 Court denied the State's request for a preliminary  
25 injunction on the Unit 13 closure. The Court found,  
26 and I quote, "Because the State has not demonstrated  
27 either a likelihood of success or serious questions on  
28 the merits of its case, the Court need not consider the  
29 remaining elements of the preliminary injunction  
30 analysis."  
31

32 As of this writing, the Court has not  
33 yet ruled on the request enjoining the Kake hunt or the  
34 adoption of other Covid-related emergency actions. A  
35 ruling on the preliminary injunction does not resolve  
36 litigation. Barring a settlement with the State, the  
37 question raised by the State concerning the Board's  
38 authority to take these actions will be argued over the  
39 coming months. The Solicitor's Office estimates that  
40 the briefings should be complete by late winter or  
41 spring of 2021 and that the Court will issue its  
42 decision in early summer.  
43

44 Based on legal guidance, Program Staff  
45 do not comment on any active litigation directed  
46 against the Federal Subsistence Board beyond what has  
47 been set forth here.  
48

49 Again, I'd like to thank you all for  
50



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1 your work and I will answer any questions that you  
2 have.

3  
4 Thank you.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Thank you,  
7 Tom. Are there any questions.

8  
9 MR. BASSICH: Sue, Andy.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yes, go  
12 ahead, Andy.

13  
14 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you, Tom.  
15 Sue. Tom, you know, bringing up the matter that was  
16 discussed a little bit yesterday in regards to possible  
17 solicitation of people's testimony by the -- to the OSM  
18 on some of these issues, I'm hoping that you guys will  
19 look into that and rectify that and make sure that that  
20 never happens again. I just found that very troubling  
21 to hear that yesterday. I have a lot of faith in this  
22 process. I put a lot of time into this process. And I  
23 don't want to see it undermined by acts like that.

24  
25 So I just wanted to put that on the  
26 record and hopefully that will never happen again.

27  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 MR. KRON: Yeah, thank you, Andy.  
31 Madame Chair. That distressed me a great deal as well  
32 to hear that. I talked to Staff last night and this  
33 morning, starting at 6:00 o'clock, worked to  
34 communicate that to senior leadership at OSM and,  
35 again, like you, that sort of thing cannot happen and  
36 we'll get to the bottom of it.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Now, that I  
41 hear this Andy, I think this would actually be a great  
42 topic on our annual report.

43  
44 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, well, you know, my  
45 feeling is they don't really need to blow this out of  
46 proportion, I just wanted it on the record that it  
47 concerns me. I'm sure that it will be looked into.  
48 I'm sure that it will be addressed within OSM. I don't  
49 think it needs to go beyond that unless it happens

50

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1 again, but I think really the prudent way to act is  
2 just to give our displeasure, our concerns about it and  
3 hopefully we'll never have to deal with it again.  
4

5 I don't want it to be blown into  
6 something that it's not. I don't want it to become  
7 something that goes so public that it puts a black eye  
8 on the program because I think it's a great program.  
9 So I, at this point in time, I think I'd much rather  
10 just keep it -- from my perspective, I'd much rather  
11 keep it -- let it be taken care of in-house, so to say  
12 and move forward.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Sounds good.

15  
16 Okay, sounds good.

17  
18 Any other questions.

19  
20 (No comments)

21  
22 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: I thought I  
23 heard something -- any other questions.  
24

25  
26 MR. WOODRUFF: Sue, I got a question.

27  
28 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Go ahead.

29  
30 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Sue, this is  
31 Don Woodruff. Is it appropriate to send Mr. Doolittle  
32 a letter of appreciation from our Council?

33  
34 MR. KRON: I would say, yes. I had  
35 worked with the leadership team and Staff to try to set  
36 up a going away socially distanced masked get together  
37 for him tomorrow but because of the rise in Covid19  
38 cases in the Anchorage area, I ended up cancelling that  
39 on Monday. But I think sending him something in  
40 writing makes a lot of sense and it could happen, it's  
41 up to you.

42  
43 Thank you.

44  
45 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Tom. Katya,  
46 maybe we can make that happen.

47  
48 MS. WESSELS: Sure. If Council would  
49 like to do that I'm going to draft it.  
50

1 MR. WOODRUFF: Great.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, I just  
4 had something happen here, somebody had a car accident,  
5 could you finish the meeting for me.

6

7 MS. WESSELS: You're asking me, Sue?

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENTSMINGER: Yeah, go  
10 ahead and do it for me, I need to take care of some  
11 stuff.

12

13 MS. WESSELS: Sure, no problem.

14

15 Okay, so we reached a point where we're  
16 finished with all of the agency reports and we already  
17 took care of the future meeting dates, designation, and  
18 does any of the Council members have any other  
19 questions for Tom Kron or any other presenters for that  
20 matter.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 MS. WESSELS: Okay, hearing none. We  
25 will move on to the next item on the agenda, closing  
26 comments, and who would like to begin with closing  
27 comments.

28

29 MR. WOODRUFF: I'll start, this is Don.

30

31 MS. WESSELS: Okay, Don, go ahead.

32

33 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Katya. I  
34 really appreciate all the sacrifice that the Council's  
35 gone through to get this meeting together and I think  
36 it's ran fairly smoothly except for some of the  
37 background noise, which can't be helped, and I  
38 appreciate Tina's help with this, and the Staff, being  
39 safe, we're all trying to be real safe.

40

41 So look forward to seeing you folks in  
42 person at perhaps the next meeting.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Don.

47

48 Who would like to go next.

49

50

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1 MR. WRIGHT: Charlie Wright here.

2  
3 MR. BASSICH: Katya, Andy.

4  
5 MS. WESSELS: I think was it Charlie  
6 Jagow, were you in.....

7  
8 MR. WRIGHT: Charlie Wright. Charlie  
9 Wright.

10  
11 MS. WESSELS: Oh, Charlie Wright, okay,  
12 Charlie go ahead.

13  
14 MR. WRIGHT: I'd like to thank all you  
15 guys for all your continued hard work, especially you  
16 guys that organized the meeting. I know things are not  
17 easy during this time. I thank all the Board members  
18 who are taking time out of their busy lives and we're  
19 getting ready for winter and cutting wood and putting  
20 away things. I hope you all have a safe and productive  
21 fall, and good trapping, and I look forward to talking  
22 to you all again.

23  
24 Thank you.

25  
26 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Charlie.

27  
28 Andy, you were next, right.

29  
30 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. I agree  
31 with the earlier statements. I really appreciate Katya  
32 and Sue did a great job on running the meeting.

33  
34 And I guess one of the things I miss,  
35 I'm glad we're doing it this way because of Covid, but  
36 I really miss at the end of the day being able to go  
37 out and have a beer and catch up with stories and then  
38 talk about some other things with some of the Council  
39 members, I really value that time, learn a lot. So  
40 that's the one down side from my perspective. But I  
41 think we did a good job.

42  
43 I also, the fishery managers, I want to  
44 let them know, you know, there's a lot of frustration  
45 on the Yukon River all the way around and I'm sure  
46 there is, even within their own offices, it's been a  
47 really tough year. They're going to hear some pretty  
48 strong criticisms but I do want to reiterate that I  
49 have a lot of faith in our systems and I know that all

50

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1 the people engaged as managers, both in fish and game,  
2 do the best of their abilities and I respect them very  
3 highly for what they do. It's not an easy job and I've  
4 often said no matter what they do they're going to make  
5 some people happy and they're going to make some people  
6 sad. So you know the comments that we make and the  
7 points that we bring up, we bring up because we're  
8 concerned about our communities and -- but it should  
9 never go to a personal level or be taken at a personal  
10 level, but I think we're all here to just try and make  
11 sure that the resources are sustainable for the people  
12 in our regions because that's what it takes to live out  
13 in the Bush.

14  
15 Thank you all, have a safe winter and  
16 look forward -- I'm sure I'll be speaking with more of  
17 you later on as the winter goes on in various meetings  
18 and things, so appreciate it.

19  
20 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Andy.

21  
22 And if you're missing a beer hour, we  
23 can organize a virtual beer hour if you would like to.

24  
25 (Laughter)

26  
27 MR. BASSICH: I'm a home brewer Katya,  
28 so I got my supply, I just miss having it with some of  
29 you guys.

30  
31 (Laughter)

32  
33 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, side Zoom meeting  
34 with all the Council members so we can share stories or  
35 a beer.

36  
37 Okay, who would like to go next.

38  
39 MR. MCMANUS: Tim McManus.

40  
41 MS. WESSELS: Go ahead, Tim.

42  
43 MR. MCMANUS: Holy, I've been talking  
44 for a long time, I don't know what's wrong with this  
45 system here. But I'd just like to start off, Madame  
46 Chair, thanking you, the co-Chair, the Board members,  
47 especially the Staff. This was a really great meeting  
48 by teleconference. I've been on quite a few and like  
49 he said, without the background noise, you know, it's

50

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1 good. I'd like to thank the other Councils and Boards  
2 and departments for all their time.

3  
4 I do want to throw out a prayer for  
5 Zach, really missed him, really missed him, hearing his  
6 voice, he was such an energy guy at the last meeting,  
7 when I got tired a couple times, you know, I just look  
8 at him and it would spark me up a little bit.

9  
10 Thank you to all you guys for your  
11 time, you know, taking your time out of your days. And  
12 like Andy said, miss going to town, but just missing  
13 the people and the conversations. Other than that,  
14 everybody stay safe, just keep thinking about the  
15 future and what it holds for us and our kids.

16  
17 And with that we'll see you guys,  
18 hopefully see you at the next meeting.

19  
20 Thank you.

21  
22 MS. WESSELS: Thank you very much, Tim.  
23 And I will pass your thoughts on to Zach.

24  
25 Okay, so Bill is gone. Charlie Jagow,  
26 are you still on line.

27  
28 MR. JAGOW: Yep, I'm here. Just wanted  
29 to thank you all for putting this together and making  
30 it happen. I know it's difficult doing it via  
31 teleconference but it seemed like it went fairly  
32 smooth, all things considered. Hopefully next year  
33 we'll actually meet in person and I hope you all have a  
34 safe productive winter.

35  
36 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Charlie.

37  
38 And I think Andrew Firmin is gone as  
39 well, and Sue. So I just would like to make a closing  
40 comment as well.

41  
42 One of the things I didn't talk about  
43 with the Council members but I'm just going to make  
44 personal calls to all of you about, you know, the  
45 soliciting more applications for the Council for this  
46 upcoming year. If you know anyone please send them my  
47 way or if you need any applications I can provide  
48 applications for you.

49  
50

1 The three Council members, your term  
2 expires next year so you will need to submit your  
3 applications before February 14th and the sooner the  
4 better and I will send you the applications in the mail  
5 and email, and the members who's terms are expiring is  
6 Charlie Jagow, Donald Woodruff and Tim McManus. But I  
7 can talk more about that with you personally.  
8

9 I would like to thank all the Council  
10 members for being steadfast supporters of the  
11 subsistence lifestyle in their regions and representing  
12 their communities well. You all called in and were  
13 able to stay on the teleconference for two days, even  
14 though maybe sometimes it was difficult to listen to  
15 presentations on the phone for so long, but you stayed  
16 focused and connected and picked up on the right points  
17 at the right time. And I'm very thankful for everyone  
18 on the Eastern Interior Council and for you being such  
19 great and contributing Council members.  
20

21 I would also like to thank all of the  
22 Staff at OSM, and the leadership team for providing the  
23 greatest support and being there at the right time and  
24 providing the information when needed and helping us to  
25 have these successful meeting for the last two days.  
26

27 And I also would like to thank all the  
28 tribal and government representatives who hung out on  
29 line with us for a long time, you know, waiting for  
30 their turn to speak and were able to adjust their  
31 presentations at the last moment to make them shorter  
32 to accommodate Council members and were there to answer  
33 questions.  
34

35 So thank you everyone very much. All  
36 of you contributed to the success of this meeting. And  
37 like everybody else I'm hoping that next time we can  
38 meet in person, but we also know that we can do it if  
39 it's necessary by teleconference, but of course nothing  
40 can replace a meeting in person.  
41

42 Thank you.  
43

44 And I would like to say if anyone at  
45 this point would like to say anything else before we  
46 ask for a motion to adjourn.  
47

48 MR. BASSICH: Hey, Katya, it's Andy.  
49 I'm just curious you brought up membership. Is William  
50

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1 Koeller still being considered, do you know if his  
2 application went with that -- where that's at right  
3 now?  
4

5 MS. WESSELS: You mean Michael Koeller?  
6

7 MR. BASSICH: I'm sorry, Michael, I  
8 said William -- Michael.  
9

10 MS. WESSELS: Well, he -- this is the  
11 information that cannot be disclosed at this moment  
12 because the application packets are still going through  
13 all the process. We will know, hopefully, in December  
14 who was appointed to the Council, you know, and at that  
15 point we can disclose the names of the applicants who  
16 applied. But before that point we cannot disclose the  
17 names of the applicants.  
18

19 MR. BASSICH: Fair enough.  
20

21 MS. WESSELS: But we're always looking  
22 for new applicants because, you know, it's great that  
23 we have two new -- well, not so new anymore, but two  
24 younger -- well, one younger Council member right now,  
25 Charlie Jagow, and if Michael applied, you know, then  
26 if he's selected then we might have another younger  
27 member, but we also always looking for new Council  
28 members because things happen and people move out of  
29 the region, other things happen, so we're always  
30 looking for a crop of new applications to get the most  
31 qualified representatives on the Council.  
32

33 Right now we have two vacant seats on  
34 the Eastern Interior and last cycle we had enough  
35 applications to fill all the seats but, you know, of  
36 course we never know the results of the vetting, that  
37 is not done by our office.  
38

39 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.  
40

41 MS. WESSELS: I hope that answers your  
42 question, Andy.  
43

44 MR. BASSICH: Yeah, thank you. This is  
45 Andy, I make a motion to adjourn this meeting.  
46

47 MS. WESSELS: Do I hear a second.  
48

49 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.  
50



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1 MR. WRIGHT: This is Robert Wright, I  
2 have one question first before we adjourn.

3  
4 MS. WESSELS: Okay.

5  
6 MR. WRIGHT: You were talking about new  
7 Board members Katya, and there's been people that have  
8 signed up for the Board and had interviews and still  
9 not heard back whether they've been accepted or not.  
10 What's the hold up? Who do we talk to?

11  
12 (Laughter)

13  
14 MS. WESSELS: Well, you can't really  
15 find this out. The Federal Subsistence Board reviews  
16 all the applications during their August 2020 meeting  
17 and after that OSM submitted a packet with all the  
18 applications that were forwarded to the Secretaries of  
19 the Interior and Agriculture, so the whole packet is  
20 with the Department of Interior, and it just goes  
21 through the steps there, you know, it needs to go  
22 through several offices for their approval and  
23 signatures before -- and they also do the vetting.  
24 We're not privy to that information.

25  
26 So after we hear back from them,  
27 hopefully it will be in December that we hear from  
28 them, but this being an election year, it might be  
29 later than that.

30  
31 So as soon as I know anything we will  
32 send out the letters to all people who are appointed  
33 and not appointed.

34  
35 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you very much.

36  
37 MS. WESSELS: I hope that answered your  
38 question.

39  
40 MR. WRIGHT: Yes, it did thank you.

41  
42 MS. WESSELS: Okay, we have a motion on  
43 the floor to adjourn, all in favor say aye.

44  
45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46  
47 MS. WESSELS: Okay. By the unanimous  
48 vote this meeting is adjourned.

49  
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Thank you.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

